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**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE
POPULATION OF A LARGE SIBERIAN REGION TO MODERNIZATION
(BASED ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE KRASNOYARSK TERRITORY)***

SUMMARY. This article continues a series of publications within the framework of research on social and cultural issues in the regions of Eastern Siberia under the program “Socio-cultural evolution of Russia and its regions” with the support of the Russian Scientific Fund for the Humanities. The author of the article describes a direct association experiment carried out in the form of a semi-structured interview among the population of the Krasnoyarsk Territory in 2013 as an effective method to identify socio-cultural aspects of the attitude of the population of a Siberian region to modernization. With the help of questions-stimuli, an opinion poll was held and characteristics of the image of modernization were studied. It was found out that the semantic field of modernization is deeply rooted in people’s collective consciousness. The study showed that the majority of the respondents are convinced of the usefulness and profitability of modernization for themselves and for the country and perceive it as a process of positive socio-cultural changes. However, a number of the respondents do not clearly understand its meaning and express different concerns towards this concept. The author comes to the conclusion that the majority of the respondents have a positive attitude towards modernization, while at the same time there are certain fears, prejudice, and misunderstanding of the purpose of this process in the collective consciousness of the residents of the region.

KEY WORDS. Social and cultural processes, modernization, Siberia, association experiment.

This article continues a series of publications within the framework of research on the social and cultural situation in Eastern Siberia under the program “Socio-cultural evolution of Russia and its regions in the context of modernization”. The director of the program is Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Social Sciences, Professor L. Belyaeva. Among Siberian regions the Tyumen Region holds a place of importance [1]. In September 2006, the all-Russian scientific conference “Implementation of the methodology of recreation of a socio-cultural portrait of the region” was held in Tyumen; on its basis the experience in different regions under study was summarized and its results were included into the research project [2]. On

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the basis of the gained experience, we managed to prove the possibility of application of qualitative methods to analyze socio-cultural aspects of modernization in Russia and its regions.

This study was conducted in the Krasnoyarsk Territory in 2013 with the employment of the method of a semi-structured interview. The sample population (n = 520) was selected on the basis of age, gender, the territorial structure of the region, and the level of education of the respondents. Thus, we can safely say that the selection objectively represents the whole population of the Krasnoyarsk Territory.

In order to study the Krasnoyarsk Territory inhabitants' attitude to modernization, it was decided to include association experiment into the method of a structured interview. Association experiment is known as a method designed to identify an individual's free associations. Originally, it was borrowed by sociologists from the arsenal of psychosemantic methods [3], [4]. Nowadays association experiment is widely used in socio-political, socio-cultural, and marketing research [5], [6]. This method has proved effective for the analysis of the attitude of the inhabitants of the Krasnoyarsk Territory to modernization as it focuses on revealing the unconscious component in the respondents' minds, without which it would have been impossible to effectively analyze a respondent's attitude to a particular phenomenon.

In the course of the structured interview, respondents were asked the following question: "Who do you think modernization is useful for?"

Content analysis of the responses revealed that a vast majority of the respondents do not share such characteristics of modernization as "useful" and "beneficial". About 30% of the respondents emphasized that modernization was useful for all people, whereas it was beneficial only to those who could profit from it either in terms of money, or power. Almost all the respondents were of the opinion that modernization was useful and profitable to them personally and to people around them. Some of the respondents expressed the opinion that the advantages of living in a modernized society would only multiply.

Characteristically, most of the respondents are in favour of modernization because they hope that it will help them improve their own quality of life. Almost half of the respondents (48%) believe that modernization is beneficial to all the residents of the country and to the region under study. Furthermore, many residents of the Krasnoyarsk Territory gladly accept and quickly adapt to the innovations of the modern information society.

15% of the respondents believe that modernization is useful and beneficial primarily to businessmen and tycoons, in other words, to those who have resources and opportunities to make money. 3% of the region's residents hold the view that modernization is useful and beneficial to young people who are oriented to the future. 2% are convinced that modernization is useful only for criminals and corrupt officials who strive to enrich themselves and to "hog" the power. In contrast, 2% of the respondents claim that modernization is profitable to "those who fight for the interests of Russian people", and also to true patriots who are interested in the prosperity of Russia.

During the association experiment the respondents were given the image of a human as a stimulus object which was supposed to help them envisage and verbalize the notion of modernization.

According to the content analysis of the responses to the stimulus object of the association experiment, 68% of the respondents imagine modernization in the form of a man, 16% — in the form of a woman. 15% see it as a sexless anthropomorphic or non-anthropomorphic being. This creature can be viewed as an archetypal image of the androgyne, which can be regarded as evidence of the activation of the collective unconscious.

These results demonstrate that the semantic field of modernization is deeply rooted in people’s subconsciousness. It is common knowledge that in everyday life the term “modernization” is used rather rarely. However, its deep semantic content and personal meaning turn out to be quite significant for the respondents because the majority perceive modernization as a positive phenomenon. Those who described modernization as a “positive male image” frequently used such characteristics as goal-oriented, calm, sociable, athletic, responsive, determined, cultured, conscientious, and highly moral (table 1).

Table 1

Men

Positive characteristics	Negative characteristics
<p>With modernization I could compare, for example, Head of the State, President, or people who introduce global changes which directly affect the country’s well-being, and affect modernization itself too.</p> <p>It is a dark-haired man, of medium build, wearing a suit, rigorous, to some extent harsh, ambitious, goal-oriented;</p> <p>It is a young man, in his late twenties, tall, athletic, in a business suit, with a formal hairstyle. But in spite of his external rigor, he looks happy and is able to inspire others with his smile just as easily as he can encourage and inspire people.</p> <p>A goal-oriented, calm, sociable person, an athlete, a responsive, decisive, calm man of Slavic appearance, reasonable; someone who knows what to do and what is the best way of doing it;</p> <p>The most important thing for a person is to be competent, communicative, well-mannered, conscientious, he should not cheat or lie;</p>	<p>A young modern man in his thirties in an expensive designer suit, arrogant, pushy, aggressive; someone who knows what he wants from life; who believes that the aim justifies the means, who is ready to neglect morality in order to achieve his goals;</p> <p>A dark-haired man with tousled hair, goggle-eyed, with very long arms, greedy and envious, of male sex, “Serdyukov” (a Russian Defense Minister who was accused of corruption and removed from the post), a man who has no idea what he is doing, and even if he knows what to do, he does it all wrong; he introduces modernization only to destroy something; he is a crook and a thief who plunders everything;</p> <p>A pathetic young man unable to achieve success, a young man with the appearance and behavior of a drug-addict; a party animal enjoying life; a schizophrenic who dreams of complete gibberish, a very thin man, a listless pale male; a tycoon who wouldn’t mind taking bribes and stealing;</p>

Positive characteristics	Negative characteristics
<p>A person in thin bright overalls, of male sex; A determined person, highly moral, with high IQ; A man wearing glasses, probably a bioengineer; he efficiently operates a computer, is familiar with breakthrough technologies; a man who is constantly immersed in work, does not see the world, doesn't see people who he loves and cares about; he probably doesn't even have such people.</p>	<p>An unpleasant man, a short, round-shouldered, nondescript man, blatantly lying, not keeping his promises, is not able to put thoughts into words; A fat lazy male at the age of thirty, muscle-bound, can force his way, extremely self-confident, behaves like a chameleon, a big bulky guy: goes ahead and destroys everything on his way; middle-aged, slightly below the average height, stout, spiteful, grouchy, dirty, unkempt, in a soiled dark green waistcoat with black stripes; thin, in a filthy yellow shirt under a jacket, with hairy arms.</p>
62%	38%

The negative image is often expressed in the form of associations with various corrupt officials well-known in Russia, similar to the former Defense Minister A. Serdyukov. Some respondents include well-known tycoons into the "infamous list". The respondents name such character traits of the male image as ambition, self-assurance, inability to keep promises, desire to put aside any moral and ethical values in order to achieve one's goals. They also mention such qualities as mendacity, laziness and proneness to theft.

Among the respondents' answers one can notice references to physical uncleanliness of the person (dirty clothes, unwashed hair and the like, although outwardly he may be well-dressed). These responses show that the respondents often link physical uncleanliness with a lack of moral scruples. Of special interest are the images of an old sick man or an emaciated person, indicating that some of the respondents express doubt as to feasibility of coping with the challenges facing modernization in Russia.

Table 2

Women

Positive characteristics	Negative characteristics
<p>It is a long-haired woman, wearing high heels, young, goal-oriented and ambitious; It is a powerful and determined woman, energetic and strong-willed; It is an elderly teacher; Modernization is a responsible, strong-willed woman, tolerant and determined to achieve any goal; a beautiful brunette with long hair, a rigorous business woman in a suit;</p>	<p>An elegant lady, fickle, unreliable and wayward; A fat sweaty bumpkin, too noticeable in the crowd; An old senile woman; An anorexic girl who is gradually getting fatter and fatter until she bursts; her main behavioral traits are audacity and rudeness; A woman lacking good manners;</p>

Positive characteristics	Negative characteristics
An athletic, stylish thirty-five-year-old lady of medium height, with several university degrees, good-natured and friendly; A hardworking leader, a good housewife, a woman well-versed in mathematics, literature, politics and economics; Probably a woman, blonde, light-hearted, attractive; A spectacled young woman in a business suit, serious, professional; a pregnant woman about to give birth to something new and beautiful; A woman keen on self-development, self-education, extremely business-like, a multitasker; she works a lot, has no family and feels lonely.	An old liar; a young puny girl, cunning and evil; An unscrupulous woman, servile and obsequious; A red-haired tigress; A young bitchy woman; A young girl, an immoral careerist; A young career-minded girl, cunning, malicious, treacherous; A selfish woman with curvy, unnatural forms.
81%	19%

In the collective consciousness of the respondents the female image of modernization looks somewhat more positive than male (table 2): 81% of the respondents describe it using predominantly positive attributes, and only 19% employ negative ones. The positive image is characterized by such traits as commitment, perseverance, inner strength, and responsibility. A great number of the respondents who see modernization as a female image note such features as youth, beauty, self-development, industry, good professional and business skills, and a rich cultural background. Especially interesting is the following statement: “a pregnant woman about to give birth to something new and beautiful”. Isolated responses emphasize loneliness, which is indicative of the fact that not all people are keen supporters of modernization. Obviously, some respondents associate modernization with concrete women, probably their acquaintances who have excelled in the “modernization” of “something”. Several respondents pointed at the “unnatural” shape of the “person” (curvy or anorexic), which, in their opinion, obviously speaks of “artificiality” or unreal character of modernization. As for the associations of modernization with a sexless creature, perceived as a human or a non-anthropomorphic being, their analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Sexless anthropomorphic or non-anthropomorphic creatures

Positive and neutral characteristics	Negative characteristics
A Venetian mask, a shapeless garment holding a soldering iron and a screwdriver, with a scroll in its pocket; A neutered creature, easy-going, kind, resilient;	A sexless creature looking like a robot or a Rambo, or something of this kind; Something like the Terminator (made of iron, square and mechanical);

Positive and neutral characteristics	Negative characteristics
Gender is not important; athletic, creative, educated; Something between a man and a woman; A snowman; A cyberman or a robot; This "it" cannot be represented in the form of a human; Gender does not matter; smart, capable to think quickly in a variety of situations, easy-going; A thirty-year-old robot, hard-edged, uncompromising, cold and indifferent; A two-faceted creature, half-male, half-female; A handsome tall transvestite, better than others, combines positive and negative qualities; Half-male, half-female, strong, tall, educated, intelligent; A person with good looks, charismatic, erudite, with high IQ, able to think outside the box.	A sexless creature, determined, easily achieves its goals, heartless; An alien, a spy who is not welcome and does not understand what is really going on; Something vague, scary, causing no desire to talk; An eight-armed scarecrow with a computer instead of the head; A strange creature of extraterrestrial origin, hypocritical; On the one hand, it tries to show that it wants to help people, on the other hand it does everything the other way round; A creature that is tricky and tough; its image is dark: this person should not be a boor, but should be pushy, should have the qualities of a huckster; This is a person who knows how to negotiate, to listen, he is authoritarian, able to conceal his thoughts and emotions; A selfish person for whom money is like a drug; A constantly changing image trying to conform to various situations, a hermaphrodite.
60%	40%

The majority of the respondents (60%) perceive these creatures as positive, whereas the minority of the respondents (40%) assess them negatively. In a positive sense, this may be a robot or a transvestite possessing high moral and professional qualities. However, very often the same characteristics are attached to the negative image of modernization: one can see the same image of a robot, or an alien, but in this case they are portrayed as something terrible, cruel, greedy, cunning, fickle, inconsistent, and most importantly – indescribable. Obviously, this experiment shows how people verbalize their fear of modernization. It helps to reveal people's lack of understanding of its meaning and purpose, and their fear that it might lead to deterioration of their lives.

Thus, this study indicates that the majority of the respondents are convinced that modernization is useful and profitable for themselves and for their country. In this case, the employment of the structured association experiment conducted to reveal the Krasnoyarsk Territory residents' attitude towards modernization showed that the majority of the respondents perceive it as a process that brings about positive sociocultural changes. However, a considerable number of the respondents do not clearly understand its essence and express doubts and fears concerning its implementation. In this regard, it is difficult not to agree with M.M. Akulich that "people's lack of motivation regarding modernization remains one of the most

important scientific and practical problems”. Perhaps now alongside the two eternal Russian questions “Who is to blame?” and “What to do?” an additional question “Why and what for?” has evolved. And maybe if all people found an answer to this topical question, they would become consciously involved in the process of modernization; and if they understood its social and personal significance, they would find their own place in the modern and rapidly changing society [7, 180].

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