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Gubanov48@mail.ru

CAUSES OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MENTALITY

SUMMARY. Four reasons of the historical development of mentality are disclosed: 1) self-determination, generating mental innovations; 2) interaction of social systems; 3) change in socio-economic conditions; 4)change in social structure. Recommendations are made to ensure the integrity of mentality during social crisis periods.

KEY WORDS. Mentality, self-determination, crisis mentality, acculturation, mentality integrity.

In the last decade, the category of mentality has occupied a prominent place in socio-humanitarian cognition, as it has new heuristic potential, compared with traditional approaches, for our social science spiritual life notions. The notion of mentality reflects the totality of social and psychological features of a subject, determining his/her specific perception of the world as well as the special character of his/her activity. Mental characteristics include personal qualities (capabilities, traits of character, etc.) and the content of the inner world (ideas, attitudes, notions, etc.). Since mentality determines human activity's focus, it seems necessary to explain mass actions in one or another period of time to know the specific characteristics of that epoch's mentality, and also due to what reasons mentality is historically changeable and what the particularities of crisis mentality are. An attempt to throw light on these underexplored issues represents the goal of the article.

It should be noted that some authors, for instance M.U. Shevakov, deny the hypothesis of mentality development [1]. Others like P. Burke admit mentality development, but find difficulties in establishing the reasons for it [2]. The idea that mentality changes throughout time is proved by the fact that there is a difference in kind between historical epoch mentalities. Indeed, no-one doubts the fact that the antique mentality differed from that of the Middle Ages, the Middle Ages mindset from the mentality of the Renaissance, and so on until the present time. Alongside that, certain invariants of national mentalities in the course of historical development remain; that allows us to speak of existence throughout various epochs of Greek, French, Italian and other mentalities.

At the heart of mentality development, from our point of view, the following reasons lie.

The first of them is self-determination, which serves not only as one of the methods for forming individual mentality but as the reason for its historical development. The creative activity of the human soul generates diversified innovations, namely original ideas, ways of activity, new value notions. These new

meanings enrich the Creator mentality and then can disseminate in ethnic groups, religious confessions, political parties, countries and regions.

The second driving force for mental development represents interaction between social systems and groups as part of a complicated socium. In the course of such interaction acculturation occurs.

Acculturation means these systems undergo cultural change, as do their bearers' mentalities accordingly.

Within the framework of relations between a dominant and subordinate cultures, acculturation can have different forms. They are acceptance (full replacement of a cultural pattern by a new one, taken from the donor group); adaptation (partial change of a cultural pattern for a new one); reaction (full rejection of the donor group culture and as a result strengthening of the positions of one's own cultural norms) [3]. But the most significant outcomes of acculturation arrive when not one-way impact but interaction of cultures happens. In this case, the following processes are involved: combination of cultural elements of the groups in contact, fusion and mixture of these elements and their synthesis, in the course of which fundamentally new cultural senses appear. These meanings enrich the mentalities of the interacting social communities. The dialogue between representatives of different social groups, countries, civilizations allows us to consider a variety of aspects relating to each existential issue. This dialogue is of specific value in the situation when its subjects find the value of the other not only in similarity but in contrast to themselves. Such a dialogue can give rise to new approaches and ideas, more optimal than in separate groups. It is precisely the latter which are capable of enriching group mentalities with a variable degree of generality.

Interaction between representatives of different civilizations and cultures has intervened throughout human history. This intercommunion has become particularly enhanced in the period of Globalization. During this time, contacts between people of various countries and regions have increased in number and intensified. In this case, of considerable importance are the following factors: migration of population, tourism, education abroad, international scientific, musical, sports and other cultural events, television, cellular communication and the Internet. A number of authors reasonably use the notion "polylogue" [4] to denote a new form of intercultural interaction in the period of Globalization. This concept expresses the state of communication of many people with many interlocutors or a dialogue of many communicators according to the network principle.

The third reason for mental development represents changes in the economic and political field of society and the conditions of human life. There exists both a direct link and feedback between mentality and social conditions. Therefore, changes in the socio-economic and political environment, initiated mainly by the moral elite mentality, also evoke new alterations of a given socium's mentality on the whole and of its separate groups' mentalities. It often happens, thus, that initial mental motivations in the socium, being in the state of bifurcation, cause drastic and resonant transformations that were not expected at the beginning and were not provided for. This happens according to synergetics due to the self-organization processes in complicated systems being unbalanced. L.E. Grinin rightfully points out that "at the point of bifurcation (revolutions, wars, restructurings, etc.) society can turn in one direction or another under the influence of a variety of reasons,

even insignificant ones on the whole. Certain individuals hold pride of place among these reasons" [5; 187]. During these bifurcation times the role of social leaders' mentality enhances repeatedly.

Thus, for instance, in our country ideas of perestroika, publicity (glasnost), creative initiative, self-financing initially were intended for the transition from the established autocratic socialism (which in fact was state capitalism) to democratic socialism (the present system). Implementation of these ideas evoked intensive and unexpected processes that caused the country to return to the historically natural and inevitable stage of market democratic capitalism. The latter serves as a step to the future post capitalist society of social justice and harmony.

The political and socio-economic conditions caused by the above-mentioned ideas of perestroika have begun to change the mass mentality, focusing it on the values of market economy, personal success and enrichment. As a result the current Russian mentality is not unified socially and politically. It combines specific characteristics of the former Soviet market mentality and the modern one. The first mentality features are primarily characteristic of senior citizens, and the second ones — to a greater extent of young people.

Let us offer one more example of the mentality's resonant effect on the social environment. In 1991, on the decision of Yeltsin, Kravchuk and Shushkevich, the Soviet Union, at that time in a state of bifurcation (chaos, demoralization, exhaustion and apathy), was dissolved almost instantly and without opposition. When it was stable and had an integral, upbeat and patriotic mass mentality, the USSR had withstood powerful fascist aggression, whereas in the state of bifurcation an insignificant, one can say, negligible as such, mental factor, namely the will of three persons unworthy of their nations, acted as a trigger to disintegrate a great country. These three persons betrayed the people's trust, since at the referendum over 90% of citizens expressed themselves in favor of the preservation of the USSR. In turn, the collapse of the USSR had a strong influence on the mentalities of the former fraternal Republics' population. In particular, it resulted in a situation where many people began manifesting nationalism, Russophobia, cosmopolitan sentiments and an orientation towards life abroad.

The fourth reason for mentality development is the change in the social structure of society and in the mentality bearers' (subjects) social base. Social structure varies continuously: new social groups form, the social base of certain groups gets narrower and on the contrary that of other groups widens. The following factors change: number, qualitative composition, position, opportunities and functions of social groups within the society. All these diversified social alterations have an adequate impact on mental dynamics by means of direct connections and feedback. Certain social groups cease existing and disappear from the historical arena together with their mentalities. Thus, in our country the noble and Cossack mentalities have practically disappeared. On the other hand, an entrepreneurial / ex-merchant mentality is under regeneration.

A specific state is characteristic of mentality in the course of development within periods of social crisis. During this time, first of all, a struggle strengthens between the mental innovation to be borne by one part of the socium, and the mental tradition represented by the remaining part of this social medium. Secondly, unexpected changes rapidly emerging in the period of the crisis as well as diversified destructive

events lead to elimination from the mentality of some components, which are unable to function under crisis due to their inadequacy. While out-dated, inadequate mental characteristics get eliminated, new, appropriate ones are late to be established.

This crisis situation's destructive effect on mentality is dangerous to its integrity and its character that rallies and integrates people's activity. In the case of an extreme, critical impact of a crisis situation on the mentality, the following factors may occur: the mentality's destabilization, stratification and breakdown of unity for the group members, which in turn may result in the collapse of the social community. The state emerging due to the above-mentioned processes may lead to the appearance of many deviant behaviors and acute psychological crises among the representatives of the given social community.

This community's behavior turns out to be, first of all, and sometimes exclusively, destructive on the socio-political plane. In this case appears a specific, more precisely, a crisis mentality that serves as the manifestation of a certain breakdown of the formerly steady social and political entities. A pre-crisis mentality, i.e. the mentality specific to the stable state of the social environment, is distinguished by the integrity, relative stability and adequacy of social conditions — the ability to integrate the social medium and further its members' efforts towards constructive activity. The crisis mentality is characterized by an absence of integrity, excessive situational conditions and changeability, inability to ensure the socium's unity, and counter, destructive social processes. Feelings of isolation, of fear of the unknown and perplexity are expressed in the crisis mentality. In the course of reflection and an existential dialogue in proportion to the mobilization of human mental resources, fear may give way to admiration of the possible or new, and perplexity may change to self-discipline and thought. The crisis mentality emerges most commonly under rapid transition from a totalitarian regime to a democratic one.

One more characteristic of the crisis mentality is its disunity, lack of integration, and excessive inconsistence. Contradictions may also happen in the pre-crisis mentality. Disunity means the presence of disagreement in the very core of the mentality, namely its valuable and motivational component. There are mutually exclusive values, senses, ideals in the modern mental setup that fight, then exist independently of each other. Zh.T. Toschenko notes that "prior characteristics of consciousness have considerably changed (certain ones have totally disappeared), whereas new properties have not taken hold yet in real social practice…"; public conscience "in the most fanciful way combines previous and new political ideas, cosmopolitan and nationalistic orientations, republican and monarchical guidelines, religious and atheistic views, labor and consumer attitudes" [6; 10]. A person may be an internationalist and a chauvinist at the same time. One case reveals his/her attitude to one or two problems and fixes, for example, his/her attraction towards internationalist views ("I respect the rights of each nation to its culture and language"). «And as far as another problem is concerned a person shows nationalistic or chauvinistic views. He/she considers them as true for himself/herself and is sincerely persuaded of the views' authenticity ("I will kill people of this particular nationality" (it is specified of which nationality)" [7; 13].

Another example of mutually exclusive mental positions represents a communist-businessman, identified by Zh.T. Toschenko as the type of centaur-personalities. Authentic communist ideas imply the rejection of private ownership, whereas

entrepreneurial activity, on the contrary, is based on it. Since mentality manages human activity, the mentality disunity dictates inconsistence and unpredictability of the mentality subject's behavior, which in its turn may lead to the growth of social disorganization. Redundant mental distinctions that mean disruption of the public conscience create, according to Zh.T. Toschenko, a background required for the collapse of the country's economic and political system [6-7].

During social crises and rapid alterations in a socio-cultural environment, people may face mass identity change or even lose it. This may have both positive and negative consequences. In the event that a person responds to social shifts that happened in a creative and adequate way, his/her mentality changes and such a person grows to be an active member of the society, successfully exists and develops. If there are no mental changes required for adaptation, such phenomena as estrangement, anomie, marginalization, mental pathology and deviant behavior are observed. The Russian mentality twice in the 20th Century underwent drastic changes. The first happened after October 1917, and the second after 1991. Transformation of the former Soviet mentality into the modern Russian one is still under completion.

Knowledge of the above-mentioned characteristics of the crisis mentality is of significant importance for efficient implementation of various socio-economic and socio-political reforms. One of the conditions for these reforms to be successful and painless is ensuring the mentality's integrity. In order to achieve this, the following measures are required: firstly, forecasting the expected social reality and secondly, an anticipatory system creating new mental characteristics relevant to the forecasted reality.

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