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EXTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCE ON MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES OF GERMAN ETHNIC CULTURE

Nina Vasilievna Skacheva (a)*, Natalia Aleksandrovna Gruba (b), Larisa Yasonovna Vavilova (c), Svetlana Vladimirovna Prokudina (d)

*Corresponding author

(a) Reshetnev Siberian State University of Science and Technology, 82, Mira Str., Krasnoyarsk, Russia
sollo_sk@mail.ru,

(b) Reshetnev Siberian State University of Science and Technology, 82, Mira Str., Krasnoyarsk, Russia
ngruba@yandex.ru

(c) Reshetnev Siberian State University of Science and Technology, 82, Mira Str., Krasnoyarsk, Russia
larisa_vavilova@mail.ru

(d) Reshetnev Siberian State University of Science and Technology, 82, Mira Str., Krasnoyarsk, Russia
svp-18478@rambler.ru

Abstract

The era of globalization is characterized by the lack of boundaries when values and norms are becoming all-cultural, and there is more common in spiritual and moral content of various ethnocultures. However, the reverse side of this phenomenon is the desire to preserve cultural identity, to define “personal”, individual, inherent only in a particular culture. Ethnocultural heritage cannot only be material, but also spiritual. The purpose of this study is to identify new realities of the modern world and the basic values of German ethnoculture by considering its spiritual and moral content. The spiritual and moral content of culture is primarily reflected in the language. Phraseological units as well as folklore, traditions and customs constitute the cultural heritage of ethnos and define its identity. In language patterns of ethnoculture not only basic values of ethnos are presented, but also new realities of the modern world thus forming spiritual and moral content of ethnoculture. Knowledge of norms and rules of spiritual and moral content of another culture leads not only to the understanding of every individual in a certain ethnic group, but also as a consequence to adequate intercultural communication with the representatives of this ethnoculture. Besides, knowledge and understanding of spiritual and moral content of any culture contributes to cultural identification. Despite the fact that values of each ethnos change, mutate or are replaced with the new ones, they form the binding beginning of each of us with a certain ethnos.

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1. Introduction

The era of globalization is characterized by the lack of boundaries when values and norms are becoming all-cultural, and there is more common in spiritual and moral content of various ethnocultures. However, the reverse side of this phenomenon is the desire to preserve cultural identity, to define “personal”, individual, inherent only in a particular culture. Ethnocultural heritage cannot only be material, but also spiritual. The spiritual and moral content of culture is primarily reflected in the language. Phraseological units as well as folklore, traditions and customs constitute the cultural heritage of ethnos and define its identity. Let us assume that the language patterns of any ethnoculture reflect not only the basic values of ethnos, but also the new realities of the modern world thus forming spiritual and moral content of ethnoculture.

Hence, it is obvious that the term “new realities of the modern world” should be addressed first. Many scholars mention the term *new realities of the modern world*, however, we have not found an exact definition of this term. Dictionaries define the term “reality” as “a thing, a subject, reality, a phenomenon (from Latin *realis* – true, valid, material). The Large Encyclopedia Dictionary states that “realia” is “a fact, a social process, a phenomenon existing in real life” (Ozhegov, 1960). On the basis of this definition, in terms of the new reality of the modern world, this new phenomenon, which currently exists in the world, obviously bears a global nature. Along with other factors the new realities of the modern world influence the spiritual and moral content of the culture of ethnos. Intangible and spiritual culture includes norms and rules of behavior, values and disvalues, and so on (Kravchenko, 2003). Karmin (2003) writes that “culture is a world of meanings that a person puts into his creations and actions. The person lives not only in the material world of things, he lives in the spiritual world of meanings” (p. 35). Quite often in the works of scientists of the past centuries we can observe the priority of spiritual over material. Thus, such great philosophers, speaking about culture, note such characteristics as humanism, reason, creativity, beauty. These values make a person, on the one hand, its creator, and, on the other hand, its creation. According to Hegel (1959), the combined culture of humanity – “spiritual substance” – constitutes the essence of every individual. Originally, the concept of spirit (in Greek *pneuma*, in ancient Jewish *rouakh*) was interpreted as wind, blow, i.e. had a physical component. *Pneuma* has the meaning of “ethereal” – it is something light, elusive (Berdyayev, 1937). Thus, the Latin meaning of the word “spirit” means blow, breathing. Spirituality is not only the understanding of the world and yourself in this world, but also education, desire to expand self-awareness. In this context, the spirit has an unsightly origin, as opposed to material, natural origin. Spirituality is “a characteristic of a soul consisting in the prevalence of spiritual, moral, intellectual interests over material ones” (Ozhegov, 1960, p. 83). Following this definition, we see that spirituality does not relate to religion. In other words, religion may be a form of spiritual culture, but spirituality is not always religion. Spirituality here has unifying beginning for society in general or for certain people in particular, which is expressed in common traditions and values.

By its origin the concept of morality refers to as the Church Slavonic language. In this language there was a concept of “disposition”, which later turned into the concept of “temper” (Myasnikov, 2010). However, the concept of “moral” began to be used much later, so in the paper *On virtue* Novikov (1951) talks about “moral parataxis”. It was the first mention of morality. There is an assumption that Novikov used this word having read the works of German professor I.G. Schwartz, who used the term

“Sittlichkeit” in the context of decency. But already in 1760 Kant (2000) in his lectures on ethics interprets the concept of “Sittlichkeit” as an internal command of human morality. He suggests that whoever keeps his word always has inner value. This intrinsic value comes from the moral kindness of a person (Kant, 2000). Morality, in turn, is “the internal, spiritual qualities of a person; norms; rules of conduct” (Ozhegov, 1960, p. 73). That is why, in our study, we do not bring into correlation the concept of morality to religion. Thus, morality here is seen as a form of morality, a relationship with society. Let us compare it to an antonym “immoral” – breaking the principles of morals, morality. That is, “moral” relates to the generally accepted norm of society characterized by a common culture that speaks one language.

Thus, the “spiritual” is the unifying beginning of certain people expressed in common values, and the “moral” is the norms and rules of conduct of the people. The elements of intangible, spiritual and moral culture of ethnos are laid since our childhood. The concept of basic value is not new, it can be found even in the works of the famous philosopher Nicolai Hartmann (Hartmann). He considered basic values as good, nobility, fullness and purity. Politicians consider freedom, solidarity, justice, etc. as their basic values. The basic values of ethnos are laid at the design stage. Language is also a basic component in ethnic identification. Among modern ethical communities, only some people speak a language that is considered native. Besides, the representatives of different peoples may speak the same language. Therefore, language and ethnicity often do not coincide. Historically, however, ethnicity and language are united. Therefore, in the study of ethnic culture, language is one of the most important criteria. The founder of domestic characteristic of this term Shirokogorov (2010) defined ethnos as “a group of people who speak the same language, recognize their single origin” (para. 06). Thus, ethnic culture can be presented as the result of the mechanism of historical memory of many generations belonging to a single linguistic family, having blood, historical and cultural integrity thus ensuring the sustainability of ethnos. That is, in the process of its historical development, each ethnos has a single origin, a single language, common basic values.

Phraseological units as well as folklore, traditions and customs, are the cultural heritage of ethnos and define its identity. Cultural heritage cannot only be material, but also spiritual. The intangible cultural heritage of the peoples of Siberia is usually represented by brief information on the ethnic origin of the population of the country, as well as information on past ethnic holidays and festivals. *The History of the Russian State* by N.M. Karamsin shows that the first mention of the Germans in Russia dates back to the end of the first millennium, i.e. more than a thousand years ago. The territory of primary residence of the Germans in Siberia is extensive, which includes Krasnoyarsk Krai. One of the first references to Germans of the Yenisei Province (present Krasnoyarsk Krai) goes back to 1865–1866. The period from 1898 to 1911 is characterized by the so-called migration of “kulaks”, political refugees and border people during the First World War. The second period of German settlement occurred during World War I: in 1915 foreign prisoners of war began to arrive in Yenisei Province and were placed in barracks in Krasnoyarsk, Achinsk, Yeniseysk, etc. The third wave dates back to the period of World War II. Thus, in 1943 the German prisoners of war who worked in industrial enterprises and construction sites were sent to all regions of Siberia. Thus, the German ethnos in Krasnoyarsk region was formed only in the 20th century as a result of several waves of migration – voluntary and violent. The most important sociocultural result of

the life of the German ethnic group was its partial assimilation, one of the signs of which was the mastery of the Russian language (Evmenova, 2009). Despite the fact that many works were written about the Russian Germans in Siberia, including the Germans of Krasnoyarsk Krai, they are all aimed at describing their material values, the fate of individual people, individual settlements, but in our work we are talking about the common spiritual and moral content of the culture of Germans in Russia and Germany. Analyzing the identified language patterns in Germany among the Russian Germans, we find their common ground, their basic values and those acquired under the influence of any external factors on culture, including the new realities of the modern world.

2. Problem Statement

There are many ethnic communities in Russia as in a nation-state. The Russian Germans, who are ethnic Germans, still inhabit much of the territory of modern Russia. For a long time, the Germans have always been present in the Russian state. Since the reign of the Romanovs out of the 30 members of the reigning family, 18 had German spouses. From the school history we all know that Peter I willingly invited German scientists, craftsmen and military personnel to Russia. The German princess, known here as Catherine the Great, has ruled for 34 years in Russia. At the turn of the 20th century, a large number of Russian nobles had German surnames and German roots. After World War II, the Russians settled the lion's share of Germany, and in Russia there remained whole German settlements in Volga region, Orenburg region, Omsk region, Altay region, Krasnoyarsk Krai, etc. Up to now the German population in Russia makes about 394,000 people, and 22,363 representatives of this ethnic group live in Krasnoyarsk Krai. This study will make it possible to understand the spiritual and moral content of ethnoculture not only of the Germans living in our country, but also of ethnic Germans in other countries, including Germany.

At present, Germany is facing an acute question about the existence of German culture. Thus, the German journal *The European* publishes many debates on this topic. This issue is not new; it has been under discussion since 2000. At the same time, the concept of *leitkultur* appears. The founder of this term is Bassam Tibi, who for the first time mentioned the term in 1998. In a 2018 interview he says that many misunderstand the term or do not want to go into detail and read literature. Bassam Tibi himself says that by the term *leitkultur* he understands nothing but secular rules based on values. *Leitkultur* is, first of all, a consensus of values for the internal order. Now this topic is again becoming relevant due to the migration policy in Germany, thus giving rise to the question of cultural identification, how to deal with so many displaced persons. Under the influence of various factors, including the influence of the culture of other nations, there is a change in priorities of culture and the values of ethnoculture. The understanding of identity and influence of new realities of the modern world on one of the ethnocultures makes it possible to determine not only its identification, but also to look at own ethnoculture from a new point of view, which, in the end, contributes to adequate intercultural communication with the representatives of other ethnocultures.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the study includes language patterns (phraseological units), which represent not only basic values, but also new realities of the modern world thus forming spiritual and moral content of German ethnoculture.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study includes language patterns (phraseological units), which represent not only basic values, but also new realities of the modern world thus forming spiritual and moral content of German ethnoculture.

5. Research Methods

In order to identify the spiritual and moral content of the present-day ethnoculture, there is a need to explore the impact of the new realities of the modern world on basic values and the formation of new values and norms. For this purpose, it is necessary to identify relevant values among the representatives of ethnoculture, to define the basic ones and to study the source of formation of new values or change of the old ones.

In order to identify the common values of the Russian Germans and the Germans from Germany we conducted two interviews. The first interview took place in Germany in 2015, where values were revealed through the study of relevant language phraseological units. This interview covered 130 people at the age of 20–50 belonging to different professions, age and gender. Data on phraseological units was collected in such German cities as Dresden, Eisenach, Berlin, Hanover, Hamburg, Kiel and the neighboring small cities. The main criterion for respondents was that they were the carriers of German language and culture. To clarify this criterion, the respondents were asked the following questions: Do you know your family tree? Is German the native language of your grandmothers, grandfathers and great-grandmothers, great-grandfathers? As a result of the interview, the respondents indicated 149 phraseological units, which they use in their daily life. Besides, the same proverb may have very different meaning depending on the context, so it is necessary to know what meaning the interpreter puts into the phraseology to determine its value. In our study during the conversation we offered a context, which helped us to place phraseological units into a certain value-based category: Anerkennung (recognition), Gesundheit (health), Arbeit (work), Sicherheit (safety), Nachhaltigkeit (sustainability), Sparsamkeit (economy), Erfolg (success), Freizeit (free time), Gerechtigkeit (justice), Gemeinschaft (unity), Familie (family), Freiheit (freedom).

The interview of the Russian Germans covered 10 representatives of this ethnoculture from the city of Krasnoyarsk (age group from 30 to 70 years). We used the same phraseological units that were revealed among the representatives of German ethnoculture in Germany. The interview took place in Russian with the use of phraseological units in German. All respondents are descendants of German displaced persons, each honoring German traditions and customs. The result of the long contact between German and Russian ethnos on the territory of Krasnoyarsk Krai was bilingualism. However, the majority of respondents (80%) indicated that they do not speak German at home, but speak their native language

with other Russian Germans and, sometimes, with relatives and other people from Germany. This is likely due to the fact that they were born during the period of prohibition of their native language. Despite this, all respondents know at least 13 phraseological units out of 149. That is, during the interview among the Russian Germans they had to determine whether they knew phraseological units in German or Russian, as well as to describe the meaning of phraseological units as they understood it. As a result of the interviews we made a conclusion not only on knowledge and lack of knowledge of the phraseological units of the Russian Germans used in everyday speech in Germany, but also on their interpretation, which reveals its value content for the representatives of German ethnoculture.

6. Findings

When describing phraseological units, the Russian Germans put the same meaning of value-based content as the representatives from Germany. These phraseological units can be called the cultural heritage of the Russian Germans and are considered basic not only for the Russian Germans, but also for ethnic Germans living in Germany. Some phraseological units are passed from generation to generation, others are lost and new ones replace them representing the important value-based content at a particular moment of time. The value-based content of any language pattern is an indicator of the norm for a given ethnicity. The analysis of responses of the Russian Germans revealed that all respondents know at least 13 axiological phraseological units representing such values as work (Arbeit), family (Familie), health (Gesundheit), economy (Sparsamkeit), freedom (Freiheit), justice (Gerechtigkeit), unity (Gemeinschaft). Since the phraseological units of these value-based contents are the norm for ethnic Germans from Russia and Germany, it can be concluded that these values are the basic values of the German ethnic group, which are reflected in the phraseological units of a language.

Besides, 40 % of the Russian Germans know the phraseological units of the value-based content: success (Erfolg), free time (Freizeit), safety (Sicherheit). This means that under the influence of other cultures on the culture of the Russian Germans the values of success (Erfolg), free time (Freizeit), safety (Sicherheit) are not considered the norm for them. This does not indicate that these values cannot be basic for German culture. Most likely, this shows that in the course of the influence of external factors on the ethnoculture of the Russian Germans, these value-based contents are not axiologically important values for the Russian Germans compared to ethnic Germans of Germany.

Neither of respondents from the Russian Germans knows the axiological phraseological units of the value-based content: sustainability (Nachhaltigkeit), recognition (Annerkennung), and we can conclude that the values listed above are continuity for the ethnic Germans of Germany, which were acquired under the influence of various factors of the surrounding world.

According to Kroeber and Klockhon, regardless of their culture, people are called upon to accept the same universal human problems that then form universal human values (as cited in Kroeber, 1952). The universal human values recognized by the international community include life, freedom, happiness, as well as justice, freedom, rights and duties of people, family ties, self-protection, self-esteem, etc. (Kambarova, 2016). The values of freedom (Freiheit), family (Familie) and justice (Gerechtigkeit) refer to universal human values inherent not only in German ethnoculture, but are also considered basic to German ethnoculture. Besides, the basic values here are work (Arbeit), health (Gesundheit), economy

(Sparsamkeit), unity (Gemeinschaft). In the world German language picture most phraseological units referred to the value-based content of work (Arbeit) in the meaning of “service, source of income”, the main function of work here is to provide everything necessary. Modern Germans, like their ancestors, like to talk about economy (Sparsamkeit). Saving for Germans is important not only concerning money, but also in terms of saving water resources, thermal energy, etc. Despite the fact that German culture is individualist, in the Russian state the Germans united into settlements and autonomies, ran joint household, honored their traditions and customs thus preserving German identity.

In addition to universal human values, there are new realities of the modern world that influence the formation of ethnoculture values. The analysis of answers and the definition of the term “new realities of the modern world” makes it possible to conclude with certainty that such are sustainability (Nachhaltigkeit), recognition (Annerkennung). First of all, the term *Nachhaltigkeit* refers to environmental sustainability of the planet. In Germany, the issue of ecology holds one of the key places not only in the political sphere, but also in the public sphere, i.e. it is important for everyone to bring their contribution to the world ecology. The term *Annerkennung* also has social significance in Germany, which means recognizing a person at work not only as a specialist, but also recognizing the work itself by a person, meaning it is important to have a job that a person likes, which, in turn, is considered a success. The topic of success (Erfolg) also refers to the new realities of the modern world. Quite often a person is assessed by his “position in society”. Free time (Freizeit) also refers to the new realities of the modern world, since digitization leads to the fact that a person shall always stay in touch. As the German proverb says “more time for free time and less time for yourself” (immer mehr Freizeit und immer weniger freie Zeit). The value-based content of safety (Sicherheit) can also be related to the new realities of the modern world. In the 20th century, new terms such as “terrorism” are emerging as a threat to society, for which protection new state security measures are being adopted, especially this is relevant for German State Policy due to migration processes.

7. Conclusion

Ethnic culture has its unique identity, but when facing a different culture or new realities of the modern world the value-based content can change, disappear or be replaced with the new ones. The spiritual and moral content is based on historical values of ethnos, which are represented in a language. Each new era gives new values and norms, only basic values of ethnos remain for a long time there. In our study, we found that for German ethnoculture, the basic values include work (Arbeit), family (Familie), health (Gesundheit), economy (Sparsamkeit), freedom (Freiheit), justice (Gerechtigkeit), unity (Gemeinschaft). Despite some of their modifications, they remained axiologically significant for a given ethnic group. Among them, freedom (Freiheit), family (Familie) and justice (Gerechtigkeit) are considered universal human values.

The spiritual and moral content of ethnoculture is formed on the basis of various criteria: basic values of ethnos, universal human values, new realities of the modern world. The new realities of the modern world also influence the formation of values. For Germany it is sustainability (Nachhaltigkeit), recognition (Annerkennung), success (Erfolg), free time (Freizeit), safety (Sicherheit), which through various social institutions regulate not only public, but also private life, behavior of an individual, his understanding of the norm. If there were no spiritual and moral content of culture, there could not be a

society in the form of which every ethnic group lives. These are its peculiar norms and rules uniting the beginning.

Knowledge of norms and rules of spiritual and moral content of another culture leads not only to the understanding of every individual in a certain ethnic group, but also as a consequence to adequate intercultural communication with the representatives of this ethnoculture. Besides, knowledge and understanding of spiritual and moral content of any culture contributes to cultural identification. Despite the fact that values of each ethnos change, mutate or are replaced with the new ones, they form the binding beginning of each of us with a certain ethnos.

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