

**SCTMG 2020****International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the  
Context of Modern Globalism»****SELF-ACTUALIZATION IN THE PROCESS OF CONSUMPTION  
OF A CULTURAL PRODUCT**

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philosov416@kemguki.ru**Abstract**

Social constructionism today is one of the relevant approaches to the study of questions about the possibilities of a person as an object of cognition, its practical and transformative abilities. The study presents the result of creating a social construction of the model of “self-actualization” and its interaction with the models of “self-realization”, “human potential”, “cultural product” and “consumption”. The determination of the form and filling of the model took place in the process of studying the problem of needs and their satisfaction (consumption), in particular, the need for self-actualization as a certain act performed by the subject on the basis of goals that are consciously set for themselves in the course of self-realization and their achievement. The model is developed taking into account the ontological aspect and reflects the functional orientation of human/society activities. The model of "self-actualization" was based on the following principles of the functioning of the individual subject, social group and society as a whole: *the natural world*, which characterizes everyday life, the need, the lack of satisfaction as in the condition of maintaining vitality; *cultural (human) potential*, i.e. human resources, human capital, life potential (overall vitality), intellectual potential, personal potential; *cultural form* as an initial sample for subsequent direct or variable reproduction; *cultural filter*, i.e. personal tastes of the subject of consumption, value norms of the subject and society at a certain stage of historical development; *artificial world*, i.e. the world of existing cultural forms, products of human activity.

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## **1. Introduction**

In modern philosophy and science, in order to obtain more and more adequate and accurate knowledge about the world, about the possibilities of man as an object of knowledge, his practically transformative abilities, various philosophical and scientific approaches have developed. One of these is social constructionism, which originated in the mainstream of projective constructivism, which consists of various methodological concepts. Despite its critique in general terms, nevertheless, in solving specific problems it is quite effective. In order to use it more effectively, it is necessary to determine what its features are and how adequate they are in a specific application to solving particular problems within the framework of projective constructionism. In terms of the relevance of this approach, it should be noted that the fundamental factor in social constructionism is that society itself becomes the main agent of construction. As noted by Lektorsky and Trufanova (2019) "... constructionism draws attention primarily to the social constructions themselves, the ways they function in society and their impact on cognition" (p. 103).

## **2. Problem Statement**

It should be noted that in their life, a person/society naturally constantly experiences a certain need or lack of something, satisfaction of which is a necessary condition for maintaining life activity, and which, in turn, act as internal stimulants of human/society activity. In satisfying this need or lack (need), other needs inevitably arise, which, in the case of development, obey the objective law of exaltation of needs, in the case of degradation, and possibly stagnation, there is a tendency to the destruction of needs, up to vital needs, i.e. destruction of a person/society. The above indicates the problem of needs, their satisfaction (consumption), which are determined by social and cultural conditions and factors, as well as the level of development and improvement of the individual or society. Therefore, it is important to clearly understand how the actual satisfaction of the need itself takes place – this is on the one hand, and on the other hand, in what way and how fully it is realized in terms of the quality and quantity of consumption of products (material and spiritual goods, things, services, emotional phenomena, etc.).

## **3. Research Questions**

Among the diverse needs in the relevant scientific literature, in the twentieth century quite a lot of attention was paid to the needs of self-actualization as in the works of foreign researchers and in the works of Russian scientists. The enumeration of researchers dealing with this problem already speaks of its importance in philosophy, psychology, sociology, economics, control theory, etc., i.e., such a study is a rather independent scientific problem.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The outlined problems of our study suggest the creation of not only a social construct, but also a study of its effective functioning in culture and society. In our case, this is the development of a model of the object of "self-actualization" in both the ontological and functional aspects.

## 5. Research Methods

To conduct our study, a simulation method was chosen. In particular, the design of the model of "self-actualization" and its interaction with the models of "self-realization", "human potential", "cultural product", "consumption". In this case, the use of the modeling method is based on its structurally-designing function, when a new object is created on the basis of a certain model as the initial matrix.

## 6. Findings

At the first stage of the study, we paid attention to the interpretation and private proposals and solutions for understanding this issue as an awareness of some model of self-actualization, its structure and functioning in culture and society. For this, we turned to a number of definitions of the phenomenon of "self-actualization."

Bazhenova (2012) conveys the content of the term "self-actualization" as an internal mechanism for the development of a person himself, the process of expending energy, the way "to identify his subjectivity in relation to life in general and its individual areas in particular" (p. 27).

In turn, Maslow (1999) claims that: "... a person must be what he can be. A person feels that he must conform to his own nature. This need can be called the need for self-actualization. <...> Speaking of self-actualization, I mean a person's desire for self-embodiment, for actualization of the potentials contained in him" (p. 68). Maslow (1999) characterizes the noted human desire to actualize his potentials as a tendency. Researcher Ovcharenko (2015) interprets this phenomenon as follows:

"Self-actualization is the unfolding of a personal potential that reflects the generic nature and individual characteristics of a person in the form of a certain ideal and accordingly actualizes the potential; this process has its origins in the inner world of a person, its essence, is based on spiritual values associated with the priority for the individual of the good of another in the broadest context and can be considered as the basic process of self-development of the personality and the integral goal of educational activity that focuses on its." (p. 141)

The interpretation of self-actualization by AntilogoVA, Medvedev, and Gudimenko (2006) is quite interesting.

"Self-actualization is an activity specially organized by the subject, the purpose of which is to identify potential opportunities, actual needs, life meanings, ideas about one's own mission in the world and translate them at the next stage (self-realization) into an active form in the form of motives leading to an irresistible desire to realize them, as well as the result of this activity." (p. 59)

Studies devoted to determining the place of self-actualization in the context of personal growth, development and motives are widely represented in modern foreign literature. Chinese scientists came to the conclusion that self-actualization is synonymous, in its meaning, with the concept of "human capital" and is formed when young people receive special professional education (Ngai, Cheung, & Yuan, 2016). In the study of Murtaza (2011), self-actualization is already considered as the driving force of personal well-being and social (collective) stability, which is consistent with the modern understanding of the

importance of the role and place of human potential in the context of the strategic development of a certain territory, region, country.

Based on the analysis of modern approaches to the definition of the phenomenon of self-actualization, we distinguished its main properties: expediency (goal-setting); tendency (virtuality); connection with human potential; determination of the process of self-realization; internalization (translation from the internal plane of the personality to the external).

By definition, the properties of an object express its quality, which is reflected both in encyclopedic literature and in a special philosophical and scientific one. For example, in his work Malinovich (2013) conducted an analysis of the fundamental linguophilosophical categories of “quantity” and “quality”, as a result of which “quality” appears to us as a category denoting an essential attribute, property that distinguishes one subject from another; the degree of dignity, value of a thing, action, etc., compliance with what they should be. In the works of Bryman (2004), quality is considered from the point of view of symbolic interactionism, which is based on three postulates: 1) people evaluate the quality of things through the prism of the significance of these things for them, at this moment; 2) quality lies in the sense of these things, which arises from social interaction; 3) quality is characterized by the experience (process of interpretation) of a person when working with things that he encounters.

We summarize that the various interpretations of “quality” are somehow related to ideas about the property. In addition, any quality is necessarily associated with a certain quantity, within the boundaries of which the quality remains unchanged, self-identical with the quality of the essence, structure, functions, elements, etc. All of the above fully applies to such an object as "self-actualization". In other words, self-actualization should be considered as an object of research with its inherent quality, which manifests itself in a set of properties indicated earlier, which, in turn, outline the functional field of self-actualization represented through a set of properties-functions.

The above indicates the problem of needs, their satisfaction (consumption). In our case, this is the most important need for a system of human needs – the problem of satisfying self-actualization. Therefore, on the one hand, it is important to clearly understand how the actual satisfaction of the need itself takes place, and on the other, in what way and how fully it is implemented in terms of quality and quantity of consumed products of material and spiritual goods, things, services, emotional phenomena, etc.

Self-actualization in the understanding of Ovcharenko (2015) as “... built on the harmony of spirit, soul and body, is determined not only by the instrumented use of human potentials to achieve personally significant goals, but also to actualize his potential for the benefit of society and all of humanity” (p.142). As the beginning of the process of its implementation or activities to achieve his goals, the initial stage is the stage of awareness of personal motives, personal/public interests, awareness of personal/social goals, the formation of goal-setting to achieve these goals, i.e. stage of self-awareness, self-interpretation, self-explanation, which can be called hermeneutic. At this stage, not only the ideal of self-actualization is formed, its goal, the way to achieve it, the final result, but the image, requirements, and characteristics of the consumed products, both natural to (natural) and natural-artificial, are formed. At the next stage, the stage of movement of a certain phenomenon from the world of the natural (inartificial), natural-artificial (technological) to the sphere of consumption, i.e. in a cultural environment, consumption inevitably leads

to a change in its form, and sometimes its content, i.e. to the conversion process (conversion), for example, GMO products, gene editing, etc. Moreover, as the researchers note, changes occur not only at the stage of production of a new product, but also at the stage of its consumption. Here, the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the consumer (age, gender, education, cultural values) come to the fore, which are able to predict his consumer behavior, his intentions and attitudes (Kottala & Singh, 2015).

The conversion process is carried out through the influence on it by human potential, a cultural filter, a cultural form, where the human potential acts as a potential need, and the cultural form and cultural filter as a way, mechanism of actualization of consumption.

The cultural (human) potential determines the trajectory of the transformation of natural phenomena (natural) and sociocultural phenomena (natural-artificial) into cultural products, and the cultural form and cultural filter cultural products into cultural products, i.e. that which is directly consumed by a person/society/culture. We can say otherwise: the cultural form and cultural filter actualize consumption in the functioning of the production process, distribution of consumption.

We emphasize that the subject of our study was not a comprehensive examination of the cultural (human) potential. This is an independent problem. Therefore, the analysis of human potential as, for example, human capital is not considered.

The last stage of cultural consumption is their disposal, i.e. “inscribing” a phenomenon already used by a person/society into nature without hypertrophied pressure on nature itself, the nature of a person/society/culture. In other words, an artificial world is being created.

Let us turn to the role of cultural (human) potential in the process of satisfying the needs of self-actualization and in the process of realizing self-actualization (self-realization).

In a number of works, the cultural potential is defined as follows. For example, Luhovskaya (2010) notes: “Economic and cultural resources that have formed in the field of culture and are of high semantic and symbolic significance for artistic activity together represent cultural potential, a part of national wealth” (p.79). Kurguzov (2014) defines cultural potential as a “value system of qualitative indicators of human capabilities, encompassing all the attributes of the concept of “culture” (p.20).

In the above definitions, the authors emphasize various components of the cultural potential, either resources or values, etc. A similar picture in the definitions of other researchers. In our opinion, the most acceptable interpretation of cultural (human) potential is a concept, the main provisions of which are:

- on the socio-organizational horizon – human resources,
- on the economic horizon – human capital,
- on socio-environmental horizon – life potential (overall viability),
- on rational-technological horizon – intellectual potential,
- on existential, spiritual horizon – personal potential” (Ashmarin, 2018).

The cultural (human) potential regarding the phenomenon of “self-actualization” plays a dual role. On the one hand, the motives, interests of a person/society in the process of self-awareness immerse and translate the processes of the emotional sphere into the sphere of the rational, thereby objectifying them. On the other hand, motives, interests are actualized and operationalized, i.e. an ideal is formed, goal-setting is accomplished, a way to achieve the goal is constructed. In other words, the artifact in perfect

form in the mind of the subject fits into the system of sociocultural activity to achieve a result, i.e. self-realization activities, where

“self-realization is the process of a person realizing his existing abilities with the goal of self-affirmation, while this phenomenon is to a significant extent practically utilitarian in nature, subject to external influences and can occur in an egocentric direction with the dominance of utilitarian values over spiritual ones ...” (Ovcharenko, 2015, p. 143).

If we discard the personality-utilitarian nature of self-actualization and self-realization, then the consumption by a person/society occurs, first of all, of spiritual, intellectual, spiritual-practical products, services, etc. But this consumption is not the consumption of direct natural (natural) or technical and technological (natural-artificial) products, but various products in their cultural form, under which Flier (2018) understands the following:

“A cultural form can be defined as a set of observed signs and traits of any cultural object/phenomenon, reflecting its utilitarian functions and symbolic meaning, on the basis of which its identification and attribution is made. At the same time, one should not confuse the concept of cultural form as a complex of distinctive features of an object with the object itself in its concrete historical reality, as a rule, which is a private artifact of the use and interpretation of this cultural form. There can be many similar artifacts reproducing the same cultural form, while the cultural form itself remains the initial model for subsequent direct or variable reproduction.”  
(p. 31)

Giving the phenomena of nature, technology, society, culture a cultural form with its subsequent transformation into a cultural product is a natural process of satisfying human needs, including the need for self-actualization. Due to the connection of the cultural (human) potential with the phenomenon of self-actualization, this aspect of satisfaction concerns any of the “horizons” given in the integral interpretation of human potential.

Cultivating a cultural product, i.e. manufactured products, products of NBIC-technologies, results of national crafts, etc. carried out with the expectation of subsequent conversion of the results of these activities into cultural products, i.e. products of culture under the influence of cultural forms are transformed into cultural products.

The presence of cultural products in the area (space) of society and culture determines their consumption not only by the personal tastes of the consumer, his needs, but strictly speaking, by the value norms that operate in society at this particular historical stage, and which are the axiological basis of a kind of cultural filter. But the cultural filter includes not only cultural values, but also a set of sanctions that have not yet acquired the character of the formed values, but have been formed and assert themselves in the process of their functioning either through the media, or through cultural institutions and institutions, or through government institutions, or in a different way.

## **7. Conclusion**

Thus, the process of self-actualization, acting as a process of socialization and inculturation of an individual subject, social group, society as a whole, includes a number of elements:

- The natural world (bio-socio-cultural state of the subject of self-actualization);
- Self-knowledge, including the desire (tendency) for self-determination and self-expression;
- Cultural (human) potential in terms of the integral model: socio-ecological, rational-technological and existential horizons;
- Cultural form according to A.Ya. Flyer;
- Cultural filter;
- The world of artificial, i.e. assigning the products of human activity, in particular, self-actualization, the features of the natural to "fit", "embed" into the natural world.

This model allows us to conclude that self-actualization, in the context of the unfolding of cultural potential, is a combination of human nature, with an emphasis on self-realization, and the consumption of a cultural product is the driving force for satisfying not only personal interests, not well-being in the final goal, but is directed on the formation of an individual's understanding of the principles of sustainable development of society as a whole.

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