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PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

ETHOS OF YOUTH SUBCULTURES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SPIRITUAL SITUATION IN UKRAINE

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Annotation. Reception of the problem of spiritual self-determination of youth in the context of the realities of contemporary society is carried out. Among the current challenges we have systematized the following: individualization and atomization of society; dissemination of simulated information flows against the background of the development of communication technologies; domination of consumerism. It has been substantiated that one of the reasons for the value vacuum among young people is their confusion in front of the “market” of ideological paradigms in which both true values and their ersatz are present. Against this background, the following become natural ways of choosing a personality positioning model in relation to them: conformism, non-conformism and a kind of ideological compromise, which, in our view, is transmitted by subcultural formations.

Key words: axiology, spiritual values, conformism, non-conformism, youth subcultures, ethos.

Introduction and setting of the problem. The modern information society is characterized by pluralistic, often multidirectional and contradictory effects on human. These influences can hinder the processes of his spiritual self-determination while offering a person a wide horizon of freedom. This is not surprising. Freedom implies responsibility for choosing your own life path. The wrong choice or inability or unwillingness to make it is accompanied by the loss of life senses and the emergence of an existential vacuum. At a young age, the crisis of value self-consciousness is accompanied by the search for own comfortable environment – a certain community of people. Alternatively, such an environment can be youth subcultures that form the axiological basis of a young person’s life position while reproducing the attributes of group belonging. This is the prerequisite for the relevance of studying the phenomenon of youth subcultures in order to understand the patterns and main trends in the development of the axiological sphere of modern youth.

Foreign and Ukrainian philosophers paid attention to the problems of formation of the personal value system, in particular: Iryna Vasyliieva, Wilhelm Windelband, Nikolai Hartmann, Soren Kirkgaard, Serhii Krymskyi, Sergei Levitzky, Abraham Maslow, Viktor Emil Fankl, Erich Seligmann Fromm, Andrii Chaus, Max Scheler, Volodymyr Shynkaruk, Vasyl Yaroshovets, Olena Viacheslavova, Nataliia Ishchuk. A significant part of existentialist philosophers, representatives of personalistic philosophy and philosophy

of life, as well as materialist philosophy have addressed the problems of human self-determination, in particular: Nikolai Berdyaev, Albert Camus, Emmanuel Mounier, Jean-Paul Sartre, Ludwig Andreas von Feuerbach, Viktor Emil Fankl, Max Scheler, Karl Theodor Jaspers and others. Such domestic researchers paid attention to the problems of transformation of value paradigms of modern youth, humanization of the education system as: Viktor Andrushchenko, Iryna Vasylieva, Svitlana Dorohan, Vasyl Kremen, Tanita Liuryna, Valentyn Molodychenko, Petro Saukh and others.

The purpose is to analyze the specifics of the phenomenon of youth subcultures in the discourse of its socially adaptive potential.

Main results of the study. A contemporary young person, as an active subject of life, a spiritual and creative being, enters into a relationship with the natural and social environment, has a significant impact on the formation of his value system. The phenomenon of personal values is determined by both objective and subjective factors. However, as Kagan rightly notes, value is an internal guideline of activity, emotionally mastered by the subject, and therefore is perceived by him as his own spiritual intention [2, p. 164]. A person that emotionally experiences values not only acts in accordance with them, but also forms a subjective attitude towards himself, other people, world's processes and its phenomena. Possessing freedom of choice, a young person can act as a carrier, transmitter or critic of a certain axiological model. In this case, we are talking about his willingness to accept or reject the prevailing value model in a society or to distance himself from it. The so-called conformism is a partial or complete perception of axiological models of one or another type of society or nonconformism – their decisive rejection. Looking ahead, in our opinion, one of the mechanisms of distancing from conformist imitation is youth subcultures that act as cells for the transmission of certain nonconformist intentions.

Let's name the main threats to traditional spiritual values that are relevant in contemporary society. Among them are: individualization and atomization of society; dissemination of simulated information flows against the background of the development of communication technologies; domination of consumerism. Overall, these factors negatively affect the young generation's perception of fundamental spiritual values: goodness, truth, beauty. For example, individualization and atomization not only determine, but also act as a consequence of people's alienation from each other. As a result of this, modern man loses the feeling of what Vittorio Hösle calls the experiences of community, "experience-We" [3, p. 88]. In fact, it is the loss of a sense of common destiny and spiritual kinship that arise within communities, interests. Instead, the Other is perceived as a competitor, enemy or a stranger. Youth is losing the "skills" of identifying themselves with a particular social group, and hence with an axiological system. Individualistic intentions lead to a gap between the norms of universal and individual morality. In its rigid forms, it generates a personality that is blind to the world of absolute values [4, p. 80], which makes interpersonal interaction superficial.

Consumerism has a similar effect on interpersonal interaction. Thanks to it, a certain value reversal is carried out – from the spiritual to the material. As a result, the

feeling of authenticity is leveled both in society and in a person. As Nataliia Ishchuk justly notes, consumerism resonates with the logic of the market, forming a person as a monadic consumer – a “market Proteus”, a “situational I”, which does not adapt to the situation so much, but adapts to the market idol. Consequently, a market assessment comes and devaluates the human personality, leading to oblivion of the highest values “in the thirst for the acquisition of a certain thing, service, impression” [5, p. 394-395]. As a result, self-development is replaced by mass production and consumption of psychological exciters, which is supported by powerful means of manipulating people through television, advertising, political technologies (elements of mass culture) [6, p. 205]. Thus, an individual is formed that is incapable of personal self-awareness and holistic perception of social reality. These processes provoke in a person an increase of such negative signs as: uncertainty, anxiety, isolation and so on.

The information society affects ambivalently the transmission of value paradigms. Together with positive consequences, such as access to a variety of information, convenience and speed of communication, etc., opportunities for abuse are created. In particular, social myths can be created and broadcasted via the Internet, giving rise to simulacra of false social projects and ideologies. In order to bring “peace” to society and relieve tension, the media provoke further mass production. Instead of informing, they weaken the “social field”, which is steadily “shrinking” under their influence [7]. Information directed to a specific target audience does not require a high intellectual and spiritual level of the individual’s development and assumes just such an instant effect. As Iryna Vasylieva rightly notes, today we are talking about total, global and spiritual pressure on human subjectivity. “In the process of manipulating human subjectivity, there is an impact on its various levels and layers: consciousness, subconscious, unconscious, ideals, values, meanings, emotions, feelings, etc.” [8, p. 100-102]. As a result, the formation of a multicultural communicative space is observed, accompanied by dissolution and dispersion of consciousness, confusion and frustration of a person in a sea of heterogeneous, contradictory information. The means of virtual reality provide for mastering the attention of the broad masses of people, which contributes to the formation of a paradox, when other people’s opinions, judgments, assessments and conclusions can be perceived by consumers of virtual information as their own. The prerequisite for mass culture is the possibility of forming an unconditional belief in an illusion, the prevalence of the irrational over the rational. The consciousness of a person of mass culture is so mythologized that such a person easily agrees to consume the proposed product [9, p. 64]. Often information from Internet resources and the media is aimed at unconditional perception by the audience and actually excludes the moral and ethical aspect. The power of information resources is so significant that a person of mass culture loses the ability to critically perceive it, which can destroy his personality.

Information flows on the Web have a spontaneous, multifaceted, contradictory character. A user, sitting for hours in front of the screen, loses the ability of autonomous conscious existence and the protective cognitive filters. Such uncriticality causes his uncriticality in practical activities – social, professional and everyday. Researchers note

that manipulators implement their own needs in this way and level our individuality [10, p. 22-26]. Such means of manipulation are used not only in the field of marketing, but are the powerful means of manipulating public consciousness. A person finds himself in a game situation when the moral and ethical component of his choice is leveled and, as a result, his personal integrity is lost. In particular, the immersion of a person in the virtual world connects with a number of factors, the main one of which is the desire to escape from the “I”-Real and the search for possible ways of successful self-realization in cyberspace. Attempts to escape from objective reality, in turn, leads to depersonalization of the personality, its destabilization in various spheres of life, and therefore favors the loss of identity [11, p. 26-30]. A person living in a global, dehumanized society reaps the bitter fruits of inhuman (often technicalized) social interactions when such universal human values as kindness, mercy, empathy, etc. are reduced to nothing. These factors cause a number of negative consequences. Among them are: unwillingness to show empathy and empathize in co-existence with the Other; failure to build constructive dialogue in personal and professional spheres. At the same time, it should be noted that a significant part of critically-minded people such a situation causes resistance, which is an absolutely positive phenomenon.

As the founder of logotherapy Viktor Frankl rightly notes, the need to find the meaning of life is actualized not only in a state of difficult life circumstances, but also in a state of certain well-being. The vast majority of people are constantly busy trying to somehow satisfy their vital needs. But when these needs are satisfied, they suddenly find themselves in a state called by Frankl “existential vacuum”. In such a situation, the spiritual in a person rises above the social, bodily and mental. Moreover, the most viable, even in extreme conditions, are people who are “directed towards the future, towards the cause that awaited them, towards the meaning that they wanted to realize” [12, p. 12]. It is also natural that people, in search of authentic meaning, are trying to connect with their like-minded people, which, in our opinion, is one of the key factors in the formation of youth subcultures.

Let's turn to this problem in more detail. Subculture is a system of norms and values that distinguish a group from the majority of society. It is understood as a community of individuals that differs from the dominant culture or (in its ultimate expression) is hostile to this culture (counterculture). Subcultures are characterized by mandatory attempts to form their own worldviews, oppositional (not necessarily hostile) to the worldviews of other social groups or generations, peculiar demeanors, clothing and hairstyle, forms of leisure, etc. Subcultural movements emerged at the junction of generational conflict. It is no coincidence that KIIS experts associate the emergence of innovative subcultures “with the denial of the “basic” culture of society, when a total negative interpretation of the norms and values of traditional culture turns the subculture into a counterculture” [13, p. 75]. It is obvious that subcultures exist for a comfortable entry into the world in accordance with the requirements of time, as well as rejection of the unnecessary (as their representatives believe) parental experience. They are reactionary formations directed against the paradigms of a consumer society, the substitution of material values for spiritual

values; leveling the ethical “minimum” that we see everywhere in modern society.

Nonconformism is a significant determinant of subcultural formations. As a strategy of social behavior, it presupposes the development and observance of moral norms that contradict those generally recognized in society. Nonconformism has a group character and it assumes the existence of a community of like-minded people, friends, acquaintances, but not individuals. Its essence lies in the departure from the passive tacit consent of the majority, social pressure, coercion, as well as the rejection of non-working social dogmas. On the one hand, nonconformism implements values that are “disadvantageous” for an authoritarian society, and on the other hand, the imperative of serving the total whole is leveled. The desire to peacefully get out of social oppression generates a need-challenge to society – to create a system of personally perceived and experienced meanings that are capable of working in a democratic society. The designated social tendency assumes the recognition of a certain personal significance of its role in the life of society. Thanks to this, usually, material interests are not implemented, but social contradictions are eliminated. Conscious personal experiencing of a nonconformist choice contributes to the realization of values that are relevant to a person’s inner needs. Thus, a personal model of behavior is formed, which is a certain compromise between the requirements of society and existential needs, combining high adaptive capabilities and personal uniqueness.

Subcultural communities are active, which ensures the ability to influence the axiological core of culture in the future. For example, the youth of the 1960s in the United States opposed the consumer society, racial inequality, and the Vietnam War, which became a serious social factor influencing these processes. It is significant that the subcultural movements everywhere, albeit somewhat demonstratively, defend precisely the universal values of Good, Mercy, Justice, Truth, Beauty. The formation of subcultures is associated with the awareness of the spiritual crisis of contemporary society and the transition to a postmodern one, implemented by attempts to level the negative influence of an obsolete culture (Jean-François Lyotard, Leslie A. Fiedler, Paul-Michel Foucault and others). It is generally accepted that the values of previous eras are perceived by a significant part of young people skeptically and sometimes even negatively. The personal position of a significant part of young people in relation to contemporary society is not yet formed. On the one hand, such situation is favorable for the crystallization of a clear life position. On the other hand, this demographic group is capable of falling under the manipulative influences of the environment, which can disintegrate it in the social and information space.

Quite often, culture and subculture mutually condition and complement each other. Subcultures are formed on the basis of the dominant culture, and therefore do not necessarily dissonant with each other. Culture and subcultural movements are not necessarily contradictory or mutually exclusive, as it is the case with anticulture and counterculture. A number of researchers (Sliusarevskiy, Sokolov, Stepin) note that these movements are capable of generating new ways of people’s activity, without violating established social customs, law and order. Also, their participants are trying to form

their own position, to invent something of their own. “Perhaps, the system of principles according to which the choice is made – is the most important characteristic of a subculture” [14]. The moment of choosing a culture, the acceptance of certain types of behavior by an individual young person foresees the formation of a conscious life position and the acceptance of cultural norms of a particular subculture. Youth movements are characterized not by the reproduction of long-standing norms and patterns of behavior, but by the attempts to form their personal. This fact is one of the criteria for the emergence of informal youth associations. On this basis, we can judge the postfigurative culture in contemporary society. At the same time, we agree with Voloshyn, who notes that the existence of subcultures and the possibility of youth joining them “guarantees ... a sense of security and stability, offering a certain set of values and social roles that young people were deprived of in the traditional spheres of social life” [15, p. 45].

Participants of subcultural movements are trying to realize the need to create their own ideas, symbols, different from the dominant culture. Often, behind the shocking look of young people, there is an attempt to find a balance in the incomprehensible world of adults. Subcultures everywhere mitigate the authoritarian influences of popular culture. Thus, youth is trying to escape from the control of adults, realize the need for friendship with peers, informal, trustful communication. Betrayal is unacceptable in the youth environment, and therefore one of the basic values is compliance with the norms of their group morality. Thus, the level of anxiety is somewhat reduced, a group of like-minded people is formed, which is constructive from the standpoint of avoiding social isolation. The positive factors of the subcultural activity of youth include the focus on communication with peers, the desire for self-expression in creativity and sports, the discovery and development of talents, the formation of confidence, and support for a healthy lifestyle. Although the values and morals of these communities are not universal, but precisely of a group nature, these associations often implement not personal selfish motives, but humanistic meanings, which provide for the protection of the rights of oppressed communities.

Without a doubt, subcultural movements also have a number of negative factors associated with demonstrative behavior, which acts as an external marker of cultural protest. Among these factors, we note the following: nihilistic moods, shocking behavior, the desire to try the “forbidden fruit” like drugs, dangerous entertainment, etc. However, to one degree or another, these markers are inherent in all young people, even those who do not belong to subcultural formations.

Conclusions. The reception of anthropological and socio-philosophical factors in the formation of subcultures shows that the main determinant of their emergence is the need for self-determination of youth in the context of the “challenges” of contemporary society. The social catalysts that determine their emergence are the following: individualization and atomization of society; dissemination of simulated information flows against the background of the development of communication technologies; domination of consumerism. The value vacuum generated by these factors gives rise to many models of life strategies, including a subcultural

“response”. In the conditions of a total spiritual crisis in contemporary society, the following value strategies are capable: conscious or unconscious perception of social values (conformism); moderate critical position, which is transmitted by subcultural formations; conscious rejection and protest (non-conformism) demonstrated by countercultural formations. It is substantiated that youth subcultures act as a certain compromise between the paradigms of mass culture and counterculture. Anthropological and psychological factors in the formation of youth subcultures are age-related personality problems, which are perceived catastrophically against the background of constant social perturbations. As a consequence – the desire to create an own value system, as well as the need to belong to a certain community of people that is ready to share certain value intentions.

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