



Identities Management as a Solidarities Constructing Tool in Contemporary Society

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ABSTRACT

The relevance of the problem stated in the paper is conditioned by the fact that in the contemporary world and in Russia particularly, there is an acute problem associated with the identities' management of members of society. This problem is of particular importance for young people socialization's management. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the theoretical approaches to the identities' configuration management through a combination of conceptual provisions of the theory of management, theory of ideology, sociological and socio-psychological dimensions of identity. The leading approach to the study of this problem is a phenomenological approach allowing presenting as a challenge the construction of a civil ideology that combines social groups' multiple identities, including ethnic and religious ones. The article reveals the heuristic potential of the ideology theory and the solidarities' concept for the specification of multiple identifications of young people in modern societies. The ideological dimension of identifications brings to the representation and legitimacy of group interests. Theory of solidarities allows evaluating the possibilities of identities' different configurations emergence among youth groups. The paper submissions can be interesting both for scientists and for practitioners in the fields of management and education.

Keywords: Management of Identities, Social Groups of the Youth, Ideology, Theories of Ideology, Sociocultural Approach

JEL Classifications: I21, I25, I28

1. INTRODUCTION

In modern societies, the issues of social entity's formation and collective opinions' and actions' institutionalization are conceptualized in the framework of the concepts "identity" and "solidarity." Taking into account that the world has entered a phase of turbulent changes that lead to uncertainty increasing it affects the processes of identification too. This uncertainty to some extent is in fashion (the phenomenon of Conchita Wurst), because it reflects the happening in societies changes, manifested in the attempts to revise the inviolability of social roles and functions in society. At the same time the uncertainty in the previously inviolable sphere of identities creates problems in the sphere of political management, management of consumers' behavior,

constructing of social entities in relation to the tasks and projects of social development, not to mention the necessary management and interactions of everyday life. It is not coincidence that the idea of identities' configuration (Kapitsyn, 2014) and social solidarities is discussed actively, which characterize the sphere of the club, informal kinds of activities (Omelchenko, 2013).

The term "identity management" was originally used in the sphere of Informatics and management of network interactions on the Internet. As it is noted by Krylov (2008): 'The management of identity here is aimed at creating of identification system, operating with data and protection of as computer data so personal information of users. However, management of identity, in its "computer" sense, connects social and information systems, giving the users the skills

to deal with their own identity, anonymity and personal data. Such online phenomena like second life, live journal or popular in Russia platform “classmates” make from a simple user the manager of his or her own identity, teaching to promote and “sell” their own electronic image’ (Krylov, 2008).

However, currently the understanding of the need for identity management extends beyond the Internet communications, including work in the field of branding and positioning of companies and territories by personnel and external environment of corporations (suppliers, consumers, government). Who we are and why we need to do something? Or why do we have the right? - Here are typical identifying issues in this case.

Modern management of identities affects political, economic, occupational, environment, body, cultural and many other aspects. For example, typical for political management becomes a discussion in terms of identity of problems on the electorate and elections, legitimacy of statehood, citizenship, etc. Plurality and diminution of identities is particularly relevant in terms of finding ways to manage the socialization of young people and their collective behavior (Tuzikov and Zinurova, 2009).

In modern academic and political discourses the problem of identity in general and youth identity in particular is one of the leading. This is understandable, taking into account that the identity and its configurations directly affect the worldview, social well-being and, ultimately, social actions and practices, as of certain social groups so the societies of the whole countries and regions.

Socio-cultural dimension of social phenomena is inextricably linked with the trend of refusal to consider “human,” “individual” in favor of approaches that emphasize the leading role of culture in the development of social institutions, group and personal behavior. Important sociocultural characteristics of identity are worldview and ideology (Zinurova and Krieger, 2013). Worldview is one of the core social characteristics of individuals and social groups that make up society. Worldview attitudes in addition to general picture of the world belong to ideological components too, which manifest themselves in the processes of social identification, representation, rationalization of social actions and status.

2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The relationship of the category “identity” and the concept “ideology” is first put forward by American scientist Erickson in the context of personality development’s considering. That is why the paper is titled “Identity: Youth and crisis.” Interpreting the identity as a role and ideological adaptation to the changing stages of human “I” development, Erikson clearly points on the fluid nature of identity and emphasizes at the same time that adolescence is a critical period in the development of worldview and is associated with the search for answers to questions like: “Who am I? What I want to be? What I don’t want to be?” Identity crisis, about which so much is said since the collapse of the USSR, manifests itself in a loss of confidence in previous ideology. To overcome it also a new ideology is required as the “unconscious

set of values and assumptions, reflecting the religious, scientific and political thinking” (Erickson, 1996).

If at the macro-group level the functioning of the ideologies is associated with the legitimization of social interests, at the individual and micro-group level their manifestation the sociological science associates with consciousness (self-identification) and the functioning of stereotypes. Self-identity is seen primarily as a “social I,” which is a symbolic link between personality and social environment. Ideology in this case is an important way of self-identification through symbolic structures with which the person or group identify themselves within the social context. The study of ideology in the context of the notion “identity” characterizes a feminist sociology of multiculturalists and postmodernists.

The concept of identity gains prominence within social and cultural studies of issues of ethnicity and gender, sexual and racial minorities. On the one hand, it has materializing potential, giving ontological shade to that what exists only in the context of socio-cultural interactions. This is particularly manifested in the case of this term’s using for the analysis of issues of gender, nation and ethnicity. On the other hand, the problem of legitimacy of group identities (especially through new social movements) involves the use of ideological techniques and, therefore, makes the concept “ideology” using quite functional.

Most ideologies give rise to the interpretations not only of social actions and phenomena, but also the scheme of identities’ constructing. Who are WE and who are THEY? And more often, why WE are good, and THEY, to put it mildly, are not very good. The last question is mainly natural for situations of conflict. Such basic preconditions are certainly to have an impact on “views” and OUR attitude to THEM in standard situations of social interactions. Nationalism of all shades is capable to coordinate the feelings and “opinions” of social groups, sharing nationalist values, and nationalist beliefs about minorities or immigrants. All this may be manifested in the contexts of employment, education, places of residence and nationality. Almost the main cognitive function of ideologies is to organize specific group (or national) attitudes and relations.

Scheme of group identity, defined by ideologies can look in the form of a chain of questions like:

- Who belongs to US and why? (group affiliation)
- What, how and why WE are supposed to do? (target activity)
- What is OUR place in society and relationships with other groups? (position)
- What WE have and what don’t? (what resources)

Of course, the answers to these questions can have different shades and tones due to the nature of socialization of this or that member of the group. For example, individual members of the group can be more Orthodox or “advanced” than others, but that doesn’t change the merits of the case. Finally, a person may belong to several groups at the same time and even confess several ideologies, each of which has its own impact on social practices depending on the situation. Today’s era gives us many examples

of functioning almost chimerical from the traditional point of view structures such as eco-feminism, eco-fascism, or social liberalism. At the same time, the core in a particular situation ideology of the group can be expressed in the discourse. An example is the hidden connotation in the discourse of ethno-nationalism that minorities can't be patriots and therefore be allowed to manage state (Zinurova and Tuzikov, 2015).

If review briefly the main theories of ideology, they directly or indirectly indicate a prominent role of ideology in the processes of identification. And it is equally typical as for traditional Marxism (with its doctrine of class consciousness, class identity, in fact), so for post Marxism theories, including postmodern experiments. For example, in the theory of Althusser's ideology (French neo-Marxism) the identifying mechanism of ideology is embodied in the technique of Interpellation, in fact, of the question "Who am I? With whom and against whom?" (Althusser, 1994). For Geertz (1964), developing anthropological approach, ideology appears as a symbolic reality, which affects identity, giving rise to the interpretations of joint activity of members of the society. That is, the identity of the group and its members in this context can be interpreted as ideologically defined schemes of interpretations of joint actions and their results. It looks like this: WE are those who do this and this for that and that and it is correct and necessary. It is naturally, that actions are reinforced by symbols and rituals that possess "real meaning" and a value (demonstrations, clothes etc.). As rightly notes Sanina (2014) "the task of the researcher, therefore, is to define a set of attributes that people themselves consider significant and perceive as markers of belonging to their own or another group."

Phenomenological and socio-linguistic turn in sociology is introduced by the ideas of discursive construction of social reality. The problems of identity do not stay aside too. One of the classics of the school Cultural Studies Hall (1996) emphasizes that identity is most often conventional and random. He introduces the concept of "discursive identity," noting that in modern society any identity 'is reflected in the game of special modalities of power and, thus, is largely the product of the production of difference and exclusion than a sign of identical, naturally-constituted community "identity" in its traditional meaning' (Hall, 1996).

Language in its social and symbolic significance of discursive constructions (what, how, where and by whom it is spoken, and what is accepted to keep silent) has been considered as the most important tool of formation of social relations. Language is simultaneously an environment and a tool for ideologies' functioning. Respectively, and ideological discourse can be considered as a tool of ideological construction of identities. As the example can be mentioned feminist discourse, the discourse of nationalism, the discourse of extremism, etc.

With the development of modern society ideas of normal (single) identity, begin to give way to the ideas of multiple identities. The ideas of multiple identities become particularly popular in the framework of a new scientific approach to the study of ethnicity (Bart, 2006). In opposition to traditional approach, materializing ethnic identity out of the historical and socio-cultural

circumstances, non-traditional approaches (constructivism, instrumentalism) appeal to the situational emergence and development of ethnicity.

The multiplicity of identities can be manifested in a simultaneous combination of national (civic) and ethnic (ethno-cultural) identity, such as Italian-American origin. Accordingly, in this case, the challenge is to construct a civil ideology, combining both identities. About the possibility of such combinations writes Parsons (Parsons, 1998), insisting that 'maintaining of the unity of the nation does not require "dissolution" of ethnic groups in the national community, and to overcome the ethnic conflict strengthening of the overall civil foundations of modern nation is required.'

Multiple identities in some way contribute to better adaptation, as the loss of one identity does not entail complete self-destruction, as it would happen in case of "single modality" identity.

3. RESULTS

The multiplicity (pluralism of identities) reflects the plurality and hierarchy of social roles, to be performed by people in modern societies, and even in terms of constant dynamics of changes. Ideology in this case can fulfill the function of some kind of backbone and resisting the chaos opposing force. However, the world of modern ideologies is also not strictly hierarchical.

According to the theory of the Slovenian scientist Zizek (1999), "ideological environment" currently is full of "floating signifiers" - of not coupled together concepts with an open meaning like "freedom," "democracy," etc., as well as of some "ideological fastener" giving more specific meaning and interpretations (e.g., order or justice).

For example, the ideology of feminism can be manifested both in the socialist and liberal versions, and even in environmental variant. It is the result of fastener of "floating signifiers" (or ideologeme). In this case, it is possible to create even chimerical structures. And the creation of constructions, allowing at the same time to involve many ideologemes of them in its orbit is the essence of modern ideological struggle.

As a result of "chimeric ideologies" the chimerical identifications arise, building and structuring identifying markers in the context of "ideological fasteners." As, for example, can be interpreted today's "democratic Facebook-global identification" with the nationalism of the most fascist sense, a new democracy or global nationalism?

Multiple identities are particularly popular within the postmodern approach in sociology rejecting the totality of metanarratives, but promoting total relativism. Moreover, priority is given to the admissibility of previously inadmissible to alter the traditional parameters of identities, including gender. In our opinion, the chaos of identity is a negative trait, leading to destructive for the society consequences and having nothing to do with the notion of "progress."

However, the multiplicity of modern humans' identities and the processes occurring in the socio-economic, socio-political and socio-cultural life of modern man and especially young people and put forward on the forefront the problems of identity configuration. Fogelson (1982) puts forward the concept of the "identities' struggle" in which he, separating the idea of multiplicity of identity, identifies four opposing component: Real (the representation of the individual about himself in a particular period of his life), ideal (the model of behavior and existence to which the individual strives), negative ("self-image" which the individual seeks to avoid), shown (a set of images which the individual transmits to others with the purpose to influence their assessment).

Burke et al. (1981) in 1991 puts forward the thesis about the "set of identities," through which tries to "grab" disintegrating plurality of identifications.

Russian researcher Sanina (2014), studying contemporary Russian identity, considers it as a "package of identities," namely of civil, public and ethnic, and stresses the need for balance of these identities as the main configuration mechanism.

The occurrence of polar approaches, in the format traditional objectivity - constructivism and "traditional objectivity" - "subjective objectivity" creates a situation of complementarity search and the multi-paradigm. In the domestic theory and practice of sociological study of identity issues the approach of Capitsyn (2014) can be noted. The author tries to show the dynamics of the folding "unifying" national-state identity. As its components, he distinguishes "partial" identities and their social and political configurations. Social configuration includes "horizontal" identities of the everyday life. Such identities include: Territorial (natural), natural (body), spiritual (cultural), agent (professional).

In common situations, 'the majority of the population prefers a calm daily life. Moreover, people are disconnected with "palisade" of private interests; it is difficult to overcome to start political actions. But if in everyday life there is deteriorating of transportation, environment, utilities, health care, education, employment, etc., the people, going beyond the daily routine, protect their violated rights. Social identity, not "restraining" in the context of everyday life, goes out in the sphere of interests' interaction (political life) where "vertical" identities function with the corresponding values and symbols' (Capitsyn, 2014). Vertical (political) configuration includes the following types of identities: International, state, collective and individual. At the intersection of the horizontal and vertical axes of identities "unifying" identities are formed (national and historical).

"Unifying" National-State identity is multifaceted concept, capturing the content of notions "historical," "Imperial" identities, "citizenship," "patriotism," "nationalism." It is directly related to the integrity of society and the viability of the state.

Capitsyn says: 'People in the perception of themselves, society and the whole world build a universal set of "partial" identities, which

can be identified analytically, referring to everyday life. However, the content of these identities, their balance or dominance of one of them against the others in different ethnic groups and nations varies considerably. Hence the uniqueness of "unifying" national identities of this or that people (state). It also reflects the constructivist impact of ideologists, politicians, political technologists' (Capitsyn, 2014).

One can discuss the degree of completeness of species identities' classification, but the matrix approach to the analysis of identities' configurations looks promising and allows entering the new schemes of interpretation of empirical data (Tuzikov and Zinurova, 2015).

Capitsyn (2014) also allocates the situations where "partial" identities under external impact generate counter-identities, acting as alternatives, destroying "unifying" identities.

External (foreign- cultural) identities (cosmopolitan, transnational, universalist, etc.) can form with the "inner" identities configurations, destroying "unifying" identity, and with it the social order. This occurs primarily as a result of the adoption of foreign real world as a "significant other." This foreign- cultural pattern is imprinted in the consciousness of people (groups, layers) as achievable and embody "here and now." This radical transformation is represented as the inevitable alternative to domestic order. Formation and accentuation of counter-identities are the basis of technologies that destroy "unifying" identity (Capitsyn, 2010). The orange revolutions by Sharp rely on this scheme. This confirms the need for effective management of identities and in this case of their configurations. There is a requirement to develop technologies of such management.

The semantic field of the concept "identity" overlaps with the concept of "solidarity" that reflects the coupling and commitment to act as part of a group with which identification takes place. Developing this approach, the Russian scientist Omelchenko (2014) addresses to new forms of socialization of the Russian youth and notes that "the nature of intra - and inter-group communications is in its focus, which are regarded as most relevant for formation of the shared by their group identity and defining of lines of demarcation that separate own from others" (Omelchenko, 2014). This approach allows us to look across the borders separating groups with similar identification, not only across territorial boundaries (and the Internet erases them), but also socio-cultural ones.

In conducted under her leadership studies "significant ideological and value vectors were revealed, the rods of open or indirectly solidary communication of boys and girls belonging to different subcultures, movements, groupings., from different social environments and educational experiences. They can be roughly positioned within a value continuum, as environment of special attraction and repulsion, harmony and tensions. If the vectors to denote by the conditional polar to each other alternatives, they will look like the following: Belligerence (aggression) - Pacifism; an Order (loyalty) - Anarchism; the Authoritarianism - Democracy (liberalism); Nationalism/Xeno/homophobia - Tolerance; Patriarchy - Gender equality; East - West;

anti-Patriotic sentiment; anti-immigrant sentiment; Pro - anti-capitalist sentiment; Consumerism (glamour-hipster) - Asceticism” (Omelchenko, 2014).

Thus, there is an effect of ideological discursive structures that determine value attitude to identifying practices and “solidary communications.” The very concept of ideology, in our view, retains its heuristic potential in the study of issues related to the configurations of the identity of modern youth. But here the development of management technologies of social solidarities’ configurations is required.

4. DISCUSSIONS

An important aspect in the framework of the interested issues is disclosed by Abrams (1999) establishing that the relationship between the categories, which are the names of identities, and elements of their alleged contents, is dependent depending on the context; by Kimberg and Makarevskaya (2005), who apply to the analysis of the identity concept in order to develop approaches to the creation of a theoretical model of the studied social processes. Among researchers of this problem, mention should be made of Ryazanov (2012), in the spectrum of which the transformation of identities in the Russian regions in the post-Soviet period is considered. His study of the major trends in the management of identity and ethno-cultural boundaries in multi-ethnic regions of Russia, as well as the works of Osipova (2011) devoted to the problems of management of territorial identity also are of great interest. However, the considered aspect of management in configuring of identities is not discussed neither by these nor other authors.

5. CONCLUSION

Currently, the multiplicity of identities reflects the plurality and hierarchy of social roles, to be performed by people in modern societies. At the same time modern societies are characterized by chaos of identities, threatening the progress, to resist which is possible in the framework of certain ideologies. Among the main problems in this field, at least two of them can be denoted to. First, the multiplicity of identities of modern humans and the processes occurring in the socio-economic, socio-political and socio-cultural life of the modern person actualize the problem of identity configuration, particularly in situations where “partial” identities under external impact generate counter-identities, acting as alternatives destroying “unifying” identities. Secondly, identity intersects with the notion of solidarity, reflecting a sense of ownership and commitment to actions as part of a group with which there is an identification that leads to the manifestation of the influence of ideological discursive structures that determine value attitude to identifying practices and “solidary communications.” The solution to these problems actualizes the need to develop mechanisms for effective management of identities.

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