

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL SOVEREIGNTY OF PERSONALITY IN INFORMATION SOCIETY: A SUBJECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH

SOBERANIA ESPIRITUAL E MORAL DA PERSONALIDADE NA SOCIEDADE DA INFORMAÇÃO: UMA ABORDAGEM AMBIENTAL SUBJETIVA

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tendências de crescimento da sociedade da informação, a transformação do modo de vida humano em relação ao acesso à informação, à comunicação e à tecnologia da Internet, o impacto dessa transformação na condição espiritual e moral do sujeito da interação de informações, os mecanismos polideterminativos e os fatores de preservação das atitudes morais e dos significados da vida.

Abstract: Studies of the patterns and methods of spiritual and moral transformation in the new information reality have received particular attention in the scientific literature, which has amassed a sizable body of work on the socio-philosophical issues of the information society. In order to maintain the stability of that person's spiritual and moral sphere in the information society, this study aims to answer the question of what personality traits an Internet user possesses under the circumstances of unrestrained information exchange and potential harm to young people's moral values. This research was conducted using a study of current scientific theories regarding the tendencies in the growth of the information society, the transformation of the human way of life in connection with the access to information, communication and Internet technology, the impact of this transformation on the spiritual and moral condition of the subject of information interaction, the polydeterminative mechanisms and factors of preservation of moral attitudes and life meanings.

Keywords: Social psychology. Information society. Sovereignty. Psychological space. Spiritual and moral development. Spirituality. Identity. Isolation. Moral stability. Historical memory.

Resumo: Os estudos sobre os padrões e métodos de transformação espiritual e moral na nova realidade da informação têm recebido atenção especial na literatura científica, que acumulou um corpo considerável de trabalhos sobre as questões sociofilosóficas da sociedade da informação. Para manter a estabilidade da esfera espiritual e moral dessa pessoa na sociedade da informação, este estudo tem como objetivo responder à pergunta sobre quais traços de personalidade um usuário da Internet possui em circunstâncias de troca de informações desenfreada e possíveis danos aos valores morais dos jovens. Esta pesquisa foi conduzida por meio de um estudo das teorias científicas atuais sobre as

Palavras-chave: Psicologia social. Sociedade da informação. Soberania. Espaço psicológico. Desenvolvimento espiritual e moral. Espiritualidade. Identidade. Isolamento. Estabilidade moral. Memória histórica.

1. Introduction

Innovative initiatives to integrate the findings of philosophy, social psychology, pedagogy, sociology, and political science into current information society developments have emerged as a top priority (Bonkalo, 2014).

These novel initiatives should be put into practice while considering the patterns, dynamics, and systems that determine how destructive ideas and beliefs of contemporary youth emerge and develop, how to change their minds, and how to control their mental activity when exposed to information. This requires organizing and conducting fundamental research on the relationship between personality and environment and personality and society and their interaction and interdependence (Bonkalo et al., 2018).

In order to maintain the stability of that person's spiritual and moral sphere in the information society, this study aims to answer the question of what personality traits an Internet user possesses under the circumstances of unrestrained information exchange and potential harm to young people's moral values. This research was conducted using a study of current scientific theories regarding the tendencies in the growth of the information society, the transformation of the human way of life in connection with the access to information, communication and Internet technology, the impact of this transformation on the spiritual and moral condition of the subject of information interaction, the polydeterminative mechanisms and factors of preservation of moral attitudes and life meanings.

2. Retrospective analysis in regards to the information society's impact on human spirituality

As to how the information society affects a person's spiritual life, this is by no means new; it has been extensively researched over many years in a variety of interdisciplinary research. The information society alters the framework of human interaction by producing new conditions for human life and existence.

According to researchers, while the development of information technology, on the one hand, expands opportunities for society's social and economic advancement as well as self-realization and human self-improvement, on the other hand, it also achieves the risks of changing an individual's spiritual and moral values and attitudes, having a negative impact on its spiritual world, and contradicting general moral principles (Molchan, 2019).

As society transits to a new period characterised by the rapid expansion of information processing, new concepts regarding the consideration of the relationship between man and the world have evolved in philosophical thought. One aspect of the environment is how information is developing into a global resource for all people, causing the information society's axiological objectives to emerge (Imomalievich, 2020). One of the key roles in the overall system of scientific knowledge is currently played by the study of the processes of change in the worldview and moral realm of both individual and social awareness.

The idea of the information society, along with its key components and traits, emerged in the 1960s and 1970s of the twentieth century, when several models for the emerging information civilisation were being developed. Since then, scientists have been unable to agree on the key distinguishing characteristics of the new structural reality, its advantages and disadvantages, or how it will affect human progress.

It should be made clear that not all scholars believe that the informatization, digitalization, and computerization of society that are currently being observed will result in the establishment of a new world order and a new structural organisation of society. Two opposing trends are clearly visible here: one of them concerns the recognition of the impending evolution of social reality, due to the changing importance of information in the history of social development; the other is to consider the transformation processes observed as a transitional period, resulting in crisis phenomena in modern society.

There is also disagreement over how the new information society will affect the evolution of spirituality and moral principles. In contrast to its adversaries, supporters of the information society are more optimistic about the situation. D. Ivanov (2004) points out that varied interpretations of the information society's primary resource—the identification or division of information, communication, and knowledge—are the sources of the many conceptions about its future.

It is noteworthy that in the early 1980s, Yoneji Masuda developed an utopian theory of the information society, where he substantiated its conflict-free and classless nature, noting that after a long period of stagnation in scientific thought, information, recognized as knowledge,

would become the driving force that would cause the emergence of a new type of person as a creator and bearer of information and knowledge, a person who understands and knows and is not devoid of traditional moral values, but, on the contrary, transmits them to the world around. Yoneji Masuda (1983) asserts that informationalization and intellectualization are the primary means of creating social harmony, the origins of the eradication of social evil in general, and the triumph of human virtues over vice.

However, it should be noted that there aren't many predictions of how the information society will develop that are so hopeful.

In fact, one of the key topics in attempts to understand the laws governing the development of social systems is the question of how morality will change in the information age. This topic is addressed in the works of both foreign (John Perry Barlow, Daniel Bell, Lev Manovich, Talcott Parsons, Frank Webster, and others) and Russian scientists (Avdeev R.F., Inozemtsev V.L., Rakitov A.I., Simonenko V.B.).

Studies of the patterns and methods of spiritual and moral transformation in the new information reality have received particular attention in the scientific literature, which has amassed a sizable body of work on the socio-philosophical issues of the information society.

Thus, N.V. Sitkevich's writings discuss how, in the information society, people's interests have shifted from spiritual needs to material needs, which, in the author's opinion, has resulted in the formation of a formal type of identity that no longer identifies a person but only a user, in place of his personal identity (Sitkevich, 2010).

Other writers have a similar perspective, as well.

When examining the new realities of the information society, A.M. Bagautdinov (2011) focuses on how they negatively manifest in some areas of human life, which has a destructive impact on the spirituality of the individual and the system of moral values, giving rise to the phenomena of terrorism, extremism, and vandalism, which pose a number of risks and dangers to personal safety as well as to society as a whole.

V.V. Pronin (2012) discusses the simplification of the concept of spirituality in the information society, and therefore, the abstraction of appeals for the resuscitation of spirituality in man, the emergence of a spiritual crisis in society.

Modern researchers have also highlighted the profound spiritual crisis, and they have defined that the only way out of it in the "soulless world" is through the practical application of effective programmes centred on the growth of human subjectivity and sovereignty (Ponarina et al., 2021).

According to E.V. Dineykina (2018), the moral transformation of the information society is only a part of the larger system of human adaptation to the new information realities, the problem of the harmful effects of Internet resources and virtual social networks must be considered through the lens of personality subjectivity.

3. Understanding interactions in the system "man and the information society" using a subjective environmental approach

The term "subject" has a variety of meanings in social philosophy, which is related to both the peculiarities of how this term has been understood throughout philosophical thinking history as well as the topics under investigation by various philosophical schools and subfields. René Descartes's theory of cognition, which examines the validity of information acquired by the subject throughout its acquisition, is where the epistemological conflict between object and subject first emerged. On the other hand, the cognitive subject behaves as a passively perceiving being. The subject is viewed as an active being who is accountable for his activity and behaviour, autonomous, and independent of other people's ideas since Immanuel Kant's theory of cognition, which differentiates two degrees of subjectivity—empirical and transcendental. Man appears in Ludwig Feuerbach's anthropology as a concrete, acting subject.

The subjective method that has been developed in the works of domestic researchers and psychologists stems from the understanding of the self-determination of not only an individual's behaviour and activity, but also of how that activity develops in a certain environment and under the impact of particular objective variables. The position of independence and autonomy of the subject, the insularity and at the same time inseparable connectivity with other persons are postulated in the writings of A.V. Brushlinsky (2003). The researcher formulates the key principles of the subject method on the basis of S.L. Rubinstein's interaction theory, which emphasises that the study of the rules governing man's being must be conducted through the revelation of the relationship between the object and the subject. In his distinction between the terms "the subject of activity" and "the subject of behaviour," B.G. Ananyev noted that object activity is the primary manifestation of the subject's existence.

The relationship between the subject and the personality, the methods and patterns of development of the personality as a subject of activity, and the elements that influence its mental activity are all topics for further study in the problem of subjectivity and the subject.

In the personification theory, V.A. Petrovsky reveals the process of individual representation of the subject in the lives of others and in their interaction (Petrovsky and Petrovsky, 1982). V.I. Slobodchikov (1986) studies the process of personality formation as a subject of his life activity, he focuses his attention on the description of mechanisms that transition from "eventfulness" of personality to its "self-existence"; V.S. Mukhina (2017) establishes the bilateral nature of the process of mental formation of a personality, which is modelled as a synthesis of the mechanisms of identification and isolation.

Special attention is given to issues relating to the subject's interaction with the outside world, the actor and his surroundings, within the framework of the subjective environmental approach. It is based on the probabilistic paradigm and incorporates the key components of the environmental and subjective approaches.

4. The individual's autonomy and subjectivity as the fundamental preconditions for its existence in the information society

The relationships between a personality as a subject of activity and environment are so complex and multifaceted that the study of the environment's influence on the acting subject's personality is conducted in one way or another, taking into account the subject's selectivity, stipulated by his activity and responsibility, the characteristics and degree of his subjectivity's formation as a necessary condition for human existence, and sovereignty as his capacity to establish external and internal boundaries of his existence and being.

S.K. Nartova-Bochaver's subjective environmental approach is based on taking into account the human being in unity with his or her being, the subject -- with the environment of his or her activity, and life activity as a whole. S.K. Nartova-Bochaver's concept states that the growth of a person's subjectivity and sovereignty constitutes the development of the person's personality (Nartova-Bochaver, 2008).

According to S.K. Nartova-Bochaver and O.R. Valedinskaya (2002), "sovereignty is a condition and result of productive activity in different areas and therefore it can correlate with objective and subjective indicators of life success, adequate to the age stage and the specific life situation of a person" (p. 68). An attribute of the person known as sovereignty ensures that person's inseparability from the outside world in which they express their mental activity. Because the person has established and maintained the psychological limits of his or her existence and has protected that space, this non-immersion is made possible.

The idea of sovereignty is closely related to the idea of subjectivity, which is defined as a group of characteristics that define an active subject in both his activity and life as a whole. These characteristics include reflection, self-regulation, self-education, self-development, and other personality traits like responsibility, locus of control, creation, self-affirmation, nonconformity, and independence, as well as privacy and personification. It is important to understand the differences between the concepts of sovereignty, privacy, and personhood in order to comprehend the core of an individual's sovereignty as a subject of activity.

Privacy is viewed by I. Altman (1975) and his adherent M. Wolfe as a process of regulating and controlling information that comes from the Other. Privacy allows the individual to possess information that is known only to him. While personification, on the other hand, entails the transmission and implementation of such information into the outside world, the demonstration of oneself to the Other and thus the transformation of the environment (Wolfe, 1978). Personal sovereignty, in contrast to these ideas, is the capacity to define and recognise one's own self through defending the borders of one's psychological space.

S.K. Nartova-Bochaver identifies the sovereignty of values as one of its components when analysing the structural organisation of a personality's psychological space since it is a reflection of the level of worldview that people have. The author stresses that value sovereignty enables the person to take ownership of his or her opinions and ideas, reject ideological pressure, and maintain his or her worldview and system of sense-life reference points (Nartova-Bochaver, 2008).

Internet resources and virtual social networks are important components of human existence in the information age. There is a growing interest in comprehending the new link between the Internet space and the Internet user as a relationship of person and environment as a result of the rapid rise of Internet users brought on by the widespread usage of the Internet and Internet social networks. According to research, the Internet is a brand-new type of social and cultural environment with unique characteristics that serve as sources for subject-specific values and needs transformation (Chudova, 2002). Due to the emergence and development of new opportunities and risks in the relationship between the Internet environment and the subject of activity, it is noted that the virtual environment, where the world is divided into "own" and "alien" space, becomes a source of both identity and transformation of its personal structures (Shapovalenko, 2014). R.A. Baryshev emphasises that Internet space (cyberspace), on the one hand, offers the erasure of cultural boundaries, which expands the possibilities of sociocultural development of the individual, and on the other hand, creates an "illusion of freedom" which

causes an individual to become alienated from real freedom of responsibility to himself and society (Baryshev and Romyantsev, 2008).

It should be noted that the word "virtual" has its roots in the Latin word "virtus," which means "valour," "dignity and moral perfection," and such perfection, which in real life cannot be attained since it is "unreal.

The issue of how social networks and Internet resources affect a person's social development is currently becoming more interdisciplinary. Three fundamental models of identification—self-reality, self-representation, and self-interpretation—that can be used separately or collectively to determine a new type of personal identification are identified in the sociological study by K.O. Chernyaeva (2010) that addresses the issue of cultural identification of Internet users. When examining the mechanisms governing the operation of social networks' space, E.A. Lavrenchuk (2009) observes that the Internet space system itself absorbs the image of the subject-user that he created and then returns it to him, but already in a modified form, which results in the transformation of both the user's and the social network's identity. Psychological research focuses primarily on issues of patterns and mechanisms of satisfying the essential needs of personality at the expense of communication in the internet space. Research in pedagogy looks at ways to mitigate the detrimental effects of Internet resources and social networks on the personality development of young people.

Theoretical analysis of studies focused on the interaction between the Internet environment and personality and conducted using the subjective resourceful and subjective environmental approaches revealed that the researchers' perspectives on the potential transformation and new content of cultural identification of Internet users, which, in addition to the general progressive characteristics, contains the danger of destructive impact on the spiritual and moral development, are similar (Gorbunov, 2015). Young Internet users who lack sufficient levels of sovereignty, particularly spiritual and moral sovereignty, develop their value system in an atmosphere where information flow is uncontrolled (Biryukov, 2010).

5. The fundamental elements and framework of moral and spiritual sovereignty

The subjective environmental approach views an individual's spiritual and moral sovereignty as the capacity to develop, uphold, and use in their day-to-day activities a system of moral and life values based on socially significant and socially accepted priorities, and moral principles, universal values, and attitudes.

As a subject-user of Internet resources and a subject of the Internet environment, the individual's behaviour and activity are governed by spiritual and moral sovereignty.

It implies the formation of a stable personal system of spiritual and moral motives and needs, ideas and attitudes, moral emotions and feelings, habits, and volitional properties.

The main goal of an individual's spiritual and moral sovereignty in an information society is to ensure self-regulation of his communication behaviour online by evaluating the impact of various pieces of information and having the mental agility to distinguish between information as objective knowledge and information-communication and manipulation, which are based on the falsification of the truth, the spread of unfounded rumours, reinforced by emotions and feelings.

Spiritual and moral sovereignty entails the acceptance of responsibility for one's own views and thoughts as a public person, an orientation towards dialogue as a form of communication between two sovereign subjects, rationalism as a way of interpreting information received and testing arguments and facts for their validity, respect for the sovereignty and sovereignty of another person as a bearer of other values and priorities, empathy and compassion, universal principles, and a commitment to dialogue as a way of communicating between two sovereign subjects.

The degree of integrity, harmony, and maturity of a personality is reflected in its level of spiritual and moral sovereignty, which is a systematic new formation of psychosocial growth. Personal spiritual sovereignty entails upholding the individual's internal sphere of self-determination while accepting various and contentious information, having the capacity to accurately assess their spiritual potential, realising it, and broadcasting it online in conversation with other users. The information society man's spiritual and moral sovereignty ensures him a harmonious interaction with the Internet environment, selectivity of such interaction, without the risk of losing his spiritual self and acquiring an unreliable mechanism for destroying previously formed personal structures.

Due to the multiple and multifarious nature of its constituent parts, the structural organisation of this phenomenon is highly complicated.

Spiritual and moral sovereignty is a systematic new creation as a result of the particulars of living in the information society, and it consists of two interconnected subsystems: the external and the internal (Figure 1).

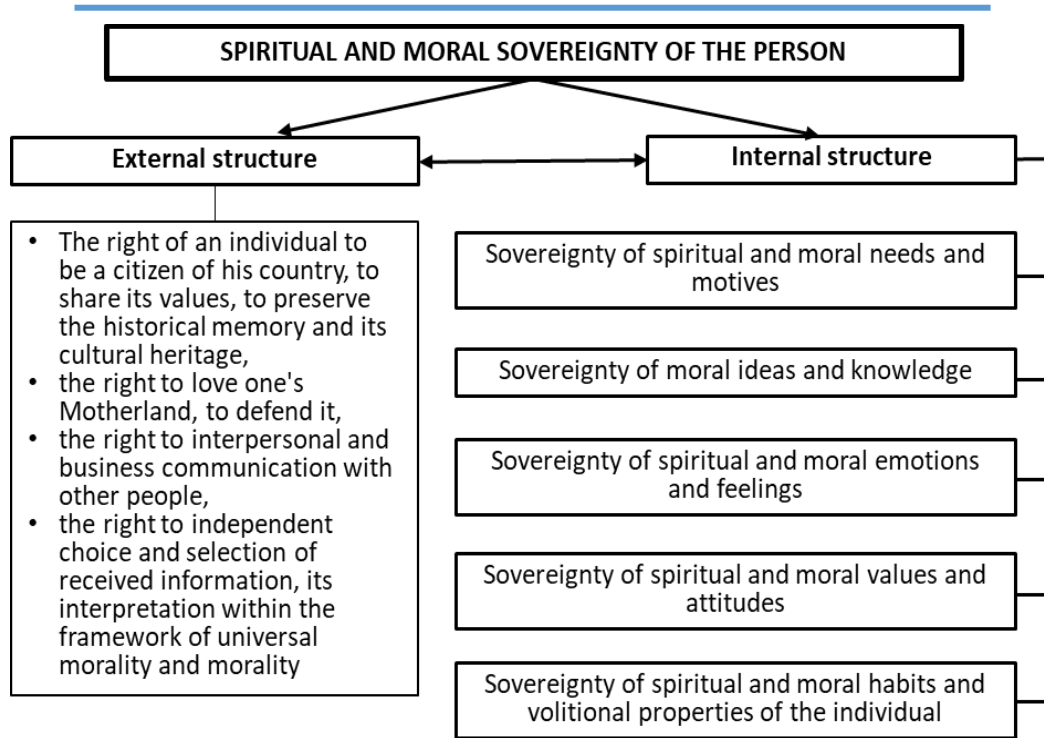


Figure 1. The structure of the spiritual and moral sovereignty of the individual as its systemic neoplasm

The external subsystem of the phenomenon under study reflects the individual's rights to be a citizen of his country, share its values, preserve historical memory and cultural heritage, love and protect his homeland, engage in interpersonal and commercial communication, make independent decisions about information received, and interpret that information in accordance with universal morality and ethics.

The interconnection and interdependence of sovereignty is the internal subsystem of a person's spiritual and moral sovereignty:

- spiritual and moral needs and motivations, such as those for self-realization and development, cognitive and moral, creative needs, needs for good and justice, as well as those for involvement, love, and respect, as well as those stemming from respect, culture, science, religion, and education;

- moral ideas and knowledge (preservation, translation into the Internet community and protection of universal beliefs about good and evil, patterns of moral behaviour derived from global experience);

- sentiments and emotions of a spiritual and moral nature, such as love, friendship, compassion, responsiveness, honesty, patriotism, sense of responsibility, humanity, and justice;

- attitudes and values (personality, civic engagement, humanity, openness, and responsible values);
- moral conduct and personal qualities of the person (determination, bravery, obligation, conscience).

6. Conclusion

The establishment of the highest moral ideals and values, a high degree of humanitarian education, critical and analytical thinking, and moral reliability all contribute to an individual's spiritual and moral sovereignty. In the age of information, digital, and computerization of society, the development of the individual's spiritual and moral sovereignty may become a priority in education. One of the current issues with the information society - its impact on man's spiritual life, its moral dependability and sustainability, the problem of lowering the risk factors of the Internet environment, and the survival of human origin in the development of society - will be resolved by a new educational benchmark.

In order to counteract the detrimental effects of the Internet environment on the consciousness of the developing personality, it appears that the formation of the individual's spiritual and moral sovereignty is a necessary method with the development of the information society and the growth of uncontrolled information flow in the Internet space. This requires additional research on the patterns, mechanisms, and factors of building a purposeful process and, achieving the expected results.

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