

## STRUCTURE OF SOCIOCULTURAL REPRODUCTION AND ITS DYNAMICS

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### Abstrac

The article discusses development of views on content of sociocultural reproduction. Based on a wide range of sources, the authors have developed the framework for sociocultural reproduction. A structural analysis is a toll for authors to identify a typology of sociocultural reproduction and trace its elemental development dynamics. Based on a functional analysis for a structure of contemporary sociocultural reproduction, they point out to a key role of education in general and vocational education and training in particular. For further successful development of the education system, the authors propose to make its theoretically cultural analysis in the context of sociocultural reproduction.

**Keywords:** sociocultural reproduction, cultural reproduction, reproduction types, socialization, education, vocational education and training.

### Introduction

For the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, a particular interest in problems of education was inherent. It is caused by scientific and technical, technological, social and cultural changes that said about a qualitatively new nature of sociocultural dynamics in the economically developed countries. In terms of constant, rapid, and hardly predictable changes, there are gaps between the young generation adjusting to the available social reality in its own way, and older generations, a function of whom as sociocultural experiencers is often in the lowest demand. This does not only specify relevance of problems in education as a mechanism to transfer and develop sociocultural relations, but also keeps current the analysis of the educational process as a form for a transformation of these relationships.

At the same time, in the research field of educational problems it is necessary to mention some gaps. A historically rich tradition of philosophical and methodological analysis for education in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century was enriched with many Western and national works on sociology and culture studies. However, the conceptualization level of problems in education could not be considered well formed. This does not contribute in overcoming the fragmented and inconsistent nature inherent to the considerable part of empirical research and it complicates development planning for educational systems both regionally and nationwide.

## Methodological framework

### *Development of ideas*

Sociocultural reproduction is one of the main processes underlying the social life availability and development. A considerable contribution in its general studies was made by classics of sociology, such as P. Bourdieu (1987), J. Huizinga (1922), K. Jaspers (1953), B.K. Malinowski (1944), J. Ortega y Gasset (2005), T. Parsons (1951), P. Sztompka (1933) and M. Weber (2002). Their views had not only been congruent, but often in a direct conflict: theory of socioeconomic formations by K. Marx (2010) and theory of social action by M. Weber (Weber, 2002); theory of social space by P. Bourdieu (1987) and theory of social changes by P. Sztompka (1933). Thus, it is impossible today to explore the mentioned phenomenon without the methodologic idea saying that in case of any attitude towards Marxist doctrine, 'it is impossible to understand the present-day society if you have not understood the functioning mechanism of the economic system, and it is impossible to understand evolution of the economic system when you do not take into consideration the activity theory' (Aron, 1967).

According to Weber, religious and ethical attitudes 'influence a nature and a technique of doing business, its motivation, while these or those types of management make changes to religious and ethical principles' (Zborovskiy, 2003).

In terms of the Malinowski's functional analysis, 'culture is essentially a toolkit, with which an individual has an opportunity to cope better with specific problems (s)he faces in the environment to meet his or her needs' (Malinowski, 1944).

According to Parsons, any social action 'is a process in the actor/case system that (process) has a motivational value for an actor or - in case of a community - for individuals who make it (Parsons, 1951).

Bourdieu's logics suggests that 'the social space has been designed in such the way that actors who have similar or adjacent positions are in similar conditions, subject to similar dependencies and they are very likely to have similar reference points and interests, consequently, do similar practices' (Bourdieu, 1987).

As P. Sztompka (1933) has shown, historical changes 'do not only cover actions and practice, nature and consciousness, but also communications between all of them, ways with which they join together generating social dynamics with their actions' (Sztompka, 1993).

At last, as for social prognostics, one should not underestimate Ortega y Gasset (2005) and J. Huizinga (1922) proposals to adjust the European cultural policy. They included three, in our opinion, still relevant and significant points: development of ways to introduce social responsibility among the elite towards the public. Establishment of the holistic outlook paradigm, education as a basis for such responsibility, and promotion of indigenous cultural values.

### *Sociocultural reproduction typology*

Content, typology, mechanisms, and methods of sociocultural reproduction were explored by such Russian researchers, as Ju.V. Ivanova (2005), V.M. Mezhuiev (2006), V.I. Pantin (2009), T.V. Shechepanskaya (2009), and G.E. Yakovenko (2008). All the mentioned authors established the contemporary general scientific idea of sociocultural reproduction, introducing their own aspects. Without their papers considered, any continuation of research on sociocultural reproduction becomes useless.

Interactions between traditions and innovations in sociocultural reproduction were explained by M. Weber (2002), J.G. Herder (2004), B.K. Malinowski (1944), R.K. Merton (1973) and P. Sztompka (1933) as well as our contemporaries A.Ya. Flier (2000), Ju.V. Ivanova (2005), etc.

In papers by contemporary researchers, there are the following definitions (and visions) for social reproduction: '... social reproduction in general assumes continuous reconstruction of

essential elements in the social structure, material and spiritual base of its subsistence and individuals as such in their biological and social roles. At the same time, reproduction of an ethnos as a sociocultural community has its differences from reproduction of other social groups' (Denisova, 2000).

'Spiritual reproduction reflects two coexisting processes in present conditions, a continuity of traditional values reflexed by the history-related consciousness of the young, and establishing of new liberal identities inherent to the today's society. Probably, establishing the new pattern for the Russian national identity will be a consequence of these processes' further development' (Chuprov, 2003).

### *Definition of sociocultural reproduction.*

According to various sources, social reproduction is a process (including biological reproduction and socialization) with which societies replicate their social institutions and social structure. Usually, in particular in relation to modern societies, it is held that this process is followed by elements of social transformation and social reproduction (types of social communities). Besides, social reproduction assumes purposeful activities of people and the society to copy their life (society and public life of an individual), for example, reproduction of members of the society from their birth to their complete socialization, reproduction of the system of social relations in the course of production of goods, reproduction of the system of social relations in research, ideological, and political domains, etc. (Yadov, 2009).

We should not ignore another definition: social reproduction is a process of evolution in the system of social relations in the form of their cyclic renewal; this process makes true the tendencies towards changes in the social system inherent to a specific stage of social development, reconstruction of existing elements of the social structure and relationships between them (basic social reproduction), and appearance of new elements and relationships (expanded social reproduction) (Yadov, 2009).

The definition of social reproduction of the individual is quite interesting as a consequence of social reproduction of the population living in a certain area. Herewith, in social reproduction of the population making a given social and area community such leading components are identified, as demographic, occupational-skill, ethnic, cultural, spiritual, and ideological reproduction, reproduction of the social organization and institutes (historical past, ethnic characteristics, features of culture, such as language, traditions, and beliefs), historically developed job specialization, features of social and settlement structure, etc.) (Shkaratan, 2009).

Not limited to physical reproduction of people, social reproduction as a function of the social and territorial system assumes copying a set of certain social qualities necessary for a normal participation of the population in the public life. The most important aspect of social reproduction in terms of the society is reproduction of the social structure. A social and demographic component of this process at the area level is a demographic renewal social structure components, including social mobility. The occupational-skill component of social structure reproduction defines a nature of interclass differentiation and interclass integration within the process of social development.

### **Results**

Therefore, sociocultural reproduction in our case is a system to transfer the up-to-date set of accrued social, spiritual, and technological experiences from cultural development and consolidation of its bearers. The family, social, and area communities, professional associations, the information system, educational structures, and structures of spiritual production (religions, arts, archives, museums, etc.) act as main institutes for socialization. Depending on a history, outlook, and ideology-related type of culture, as a basic tool to transfer social experience, one of

the abovementioned is highlighted. For example, for the traditional society, this is the family, the post-industrial society has the system of vocational education and training. At the same time, it is necessary to understand that vocational education and training, a focus of which depends on a set of crisis points in genesis of the modern society, nevertheless assumes cross functional education as a process of crises overcoming is connected to a process of preserving bases of cultural self-identification in the globalized world. It is impossible without fundamental knowledge in humanities.

Subjects, objects, institutions with all their functions and, at last, conditions of adjustment and inculturation in the development process of the systems for a transfer of sociocultural experience are historically and socially dependent. The evolution of mechanisms for sociocultural reproduction requires a special attention and will be considered below. However, even now, based on the abovementioned, we can with more or less precision define the structure, content and levels of sociocultural reproduction. Graphically, its structure might be given as shown in Fig. 1.

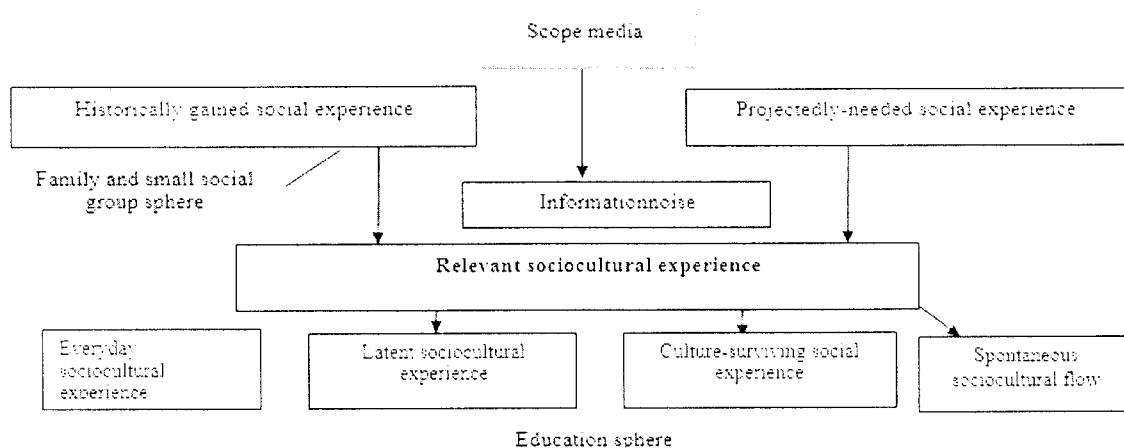


Fig. 1. Structure of sociocultural reproduction: phenomenological level

The system of relationships between the elements of sociocultural reproduction is such that it actually does not have capacities for changes. There are not changes to the system of relationships in question, but the content and importance of its elements. For example, the information noise which is conditionally identified by us in all the sociocultural experience (including folklore forms), is always in place, but it is in the information society that in terms of content and tools it has conditionally got considerable opportunities to influence sociocultural reproduction. The structure of sociocultural reproduction has still included historically-accrued and projectedly-needed new sociocultural experience, which together generate the phenomenon of content for the relevant culture. Later, cells of the identified relevant sociocultural experience are divided into corresponding spheres of their tooling backup, where, as shown in Fig. 1, education dominates.

As for Figure 2, which at the phenomenological level presents a content of sociocultural reproduction, it should be said that such component with in relevant sociocultural experience as cognitive, is today almost completely put by culture in the education sector. The last is capable to control and direct in the quite successful way two other components, value-mental and operational. The last related to the fact that a slow-down of family relations at the level of economic interaction and, at the same time, an increased accrual pace for the cognitive element level when the operational element is elaborated, make experience of previous generations technologically unsuitable for new generations. Moreover, this unsuitability leads to doubts

whether any experience including value-mental one gained by previous generations is overall suitable for the living. The education system in many aspects tries to fill in this gap at least with solid experience and capacity, if not successfully.

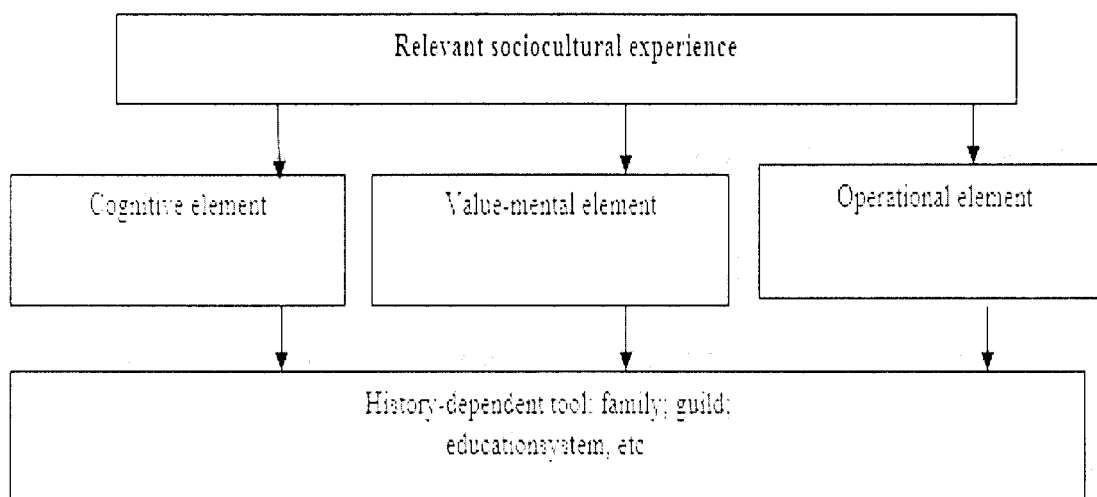


Fig. 2. Content of sociocultural reproduction: phenomenological level

Due to changes to social development, the family has been increasingly put aside from the transfer of cultural principles. Changes to a structure of the mosaic cultural environment and stratum-family interaction play a significant role here. Therefore, value-mental reference points of the present-day individual are increasingly transferred by the education system. In Russia, this has been fixed with the latest-generation standards for general and higher education. The same standards, methodologically competence-based ones, with the competence-based approach as a quintessence of the activity-based or operational approach, stipulate that today for an individual to function in culture the action has come to the front instead of knowledge about a tool for it. Today it is more important to know how to use a gadget, than how it is arranged and works.

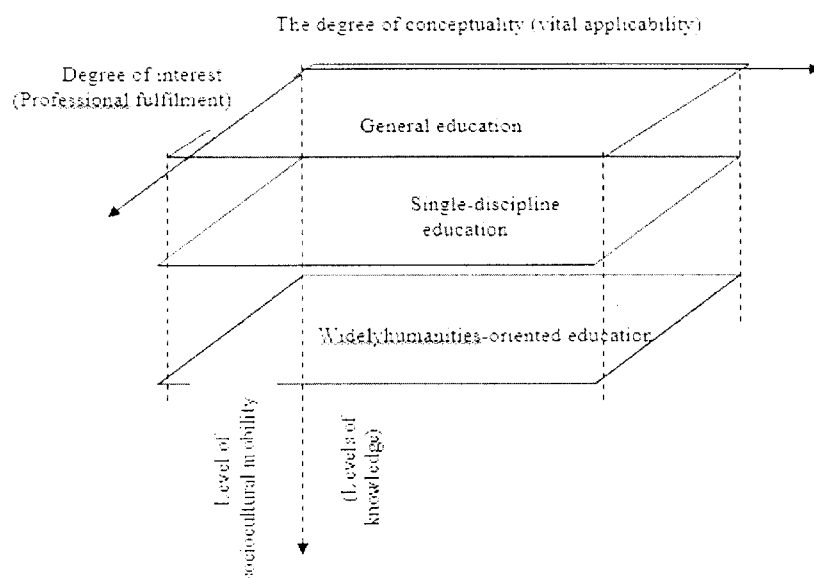


Fig. 3. Levels of sociocultural reproduction

Education plays a special role in time of qualitative changes to the social system. As a social phenomenon that reproduces the human being and that is relatively independent, it can act as a resource for social development. At the same time, behaviour patterns and systems of values reproduced by education in an individual, in case of their conflict with an actual condition and tendencies in social development, sharply reduce a capacity of the social system to self-organization and present the individual with a need to develop spontaneously the ways of adjustment and self-realization.

### Discussions

Social reproduction might be described as a main direction in human activities, their focus on preservation, reconstruction, restoration, and development of established living conditions, social relationships, culture, its meanings, the reproduction activity itself, organized communities, and the environment. Reproduction always acts as an activity that is architectonic tension vector-oriented with the vector defining a reproduction type. Broken architectonic tension leads to disorganized reproduction, decreases its ability to overcome entropy processes in the society. This finally threatens with a catastrophe. The reproduction logical construct depends on overcoming of poles in the dual opposition of any form, firstly, person/society, conditions/means, means/purposes, social relationships/culture, etc. In sociocultural reproduction, there has recently appeared another opposition, culture/education. Modern education in its content is more and more transforming into an agent of globalization processes. A core of any culture is knowledge keeping the value-mental principles, i.e. humanities knowledge. However, in terms of unsustainable and too volatile world's labour market, education in the humanities is getting less in-demanded. The culture as a specific regional and national phenomenon has been losing a basis for self-reproduction.

There are two main types of reproduction. The static, simple type is aimed at preserving the traditional culture, social relationships, the efficiency level of reproduction activities. Intensive reproduction is aimed at development and a progress of all significant parameters in the society, such as culture, social relationships, efficiency, etc. It is also possible to point out to the

destructive type of reproduction described with an inability to overcome social entropy, accruing disorganization, and sliding down towards the catastrophe. The most important task for the first types of reproduction is an ambition to prevent its destructive transformation.

In works on the culture theory Flier makes a division between the concept of social reproduction and the concept of reproduction of culture (Flier, 2000). For him, social reproduction is based on such a feature of the human nature thanks to which sociocultural information, knowledge, skills, behavioural and mental stereotypes, images, estimates, value paradigms, even features of ethnic and social orientation are not genetically transferred from parents to children, but each generation is trained from the very beginning. Culture is not biologically inherited. It is learned in the life. He interprets reproduction of culture as one of the most important cultural processes. Social reproduction of the society and reproduction of its culture are concepts, in essence, identical in their social functions. The society is not just a group of people, but a team gathered together with the system of the common cultural features. At the same time, it is impossible to reproduce this group in the next generation, without those common cultural features (that joined their fathers) transferred to children. In the same way, however, it is impossible to reproduce this culture out of people if we have not train the next generation of members in this society.

The only exception for the mentioned rule is a situation when the society as a bearer of a certain culture, for some reasons physically died, but as a donor it had managed to transfer its culture (or its essential part) to another recipient society. Such cases are frequent in the history, at least, at the level of a partial transfer of cultural features. For example, the Roman Empire – Byzantium; Byzantium – Russia, etc. Cases of 100%transplantation of culture into the soil of another population are unknown.

Another example of transferred culture 'without people' includes its museumification, archaeological and other reconstructions. However, with all the achievements of experts in these areas, there is actually no question of any consistent representation of dead culture. After all, culture assumes, first, alive people, 'playing this game' (Flier, 2000).

The category of reproduction was used in due time by K. Marx to describe preservation and renewal of production conditions and its subject with social, professional, and psychophysiological qualities required for this purpose: keeping an existing method of production and a model of social relations in a certain society. Capitalism considers it a result of continuous and expanded reproduction of capital and associates with preserving the existing economical and social relations with the help of ideology (Marx, 2001). Obviously, social reproduction in general assumes continuous reconstruction of essential elements of the social structure in the society, material and spiritual bases of its genesis, and individuals as such in their biological and social qualities. At the same time, reproduction of a sociocultural community has its own differences from reproduction of other social groups. Unlike other social groups' signs, ethnicity is, as a rule, more deeply and fully accepted by an individual.

When we consider sociocultural reproduction, first, there is a need to define what is exactly reproduced (or is to be reproduced) among the other ethnic, social, and cultural characteristics. By analogy with researches of ethnic reproduction, we might identify its several components. Anthropologists mention that the most important and indisputable characteristic of ethnos is its consciousness (identity). In the most general view, we can define it as 'a feeling of belonging to this or that ethnos expressed in individual's self-attribution to the given ethnic group' (Kozlov, 1994). A transfer of this characteristic between generations is considered so important that 'it is a kind of the 'last boundary' of kept ethnicity as in the historical development, their language, lands, and even cultural traditions might be lost. The image of ethnic 'we' does not pale while ethnic consciousness is kept.

The member of the Academy of Sciences Yu.V. Bromley (1983) in his fundamental works has shown that ethnic consciousness at the community level also has objectified forms: language, regulations, values, rituals, aesthetic ideas, expressed in national arts and crafts, painting, and music. Reproduction of these forms socializes new generations within the sign system and

cultural symbolism of the ethnos. The young accept, make internal the ethnic picture of the world, form the historical layer of consciousness in learning ethnic history, folklore, national heroes, etc. Thus, this is the way to establish individual ethnic identity.

It is also necessary to consider the fact that a resultant quality of sociocultural reality is a historical form of its genesis. This conclusion seems axiomatic and basic and needs an explained concept of historicism as such as general public and scientists in humanities in general and philosophy in particular often interpret historicism as a continuous variability of the genesis form of the system, its content, and functioning. Meanwhile, this is only an external manifestation of historicism.

The historical form of the system genesis assumes, first, regularity of its changes, their inherent motivation, with all significance of the environment influences on metamorphoses that happen in the system. The historical form of genesis is, secondly, a development of the system, a movement from its lowest to its top forms, more elaborated and perfect from the standpoint of the system's relationships with the environment and its own life support. The historical form of genesis expresses, third, an objective focus of the process irrespective of a degree to which this focus is understood within the system itself. A summarizing definition for these features of the historical movement is the concept of self-development as if the change might happen under the influence of both internal, and external reasons, then development is only a consequence of one internal process determination.

Even having recognized an influence of the solar energy or other space forces on the humankind life, following Chizhevsky or Gumilev, it is impossible to explain its development with this influence. First, because this energy cannot be selective, preferring Europe or Asia, Russia or Italy, whereas in different regions of the globe, different countries and even locations of one country, there are synchronous processes, absolutely different in terms of their content, paces, and the ratio between an individual energy and the energy of crowds. Secondly, development as a naturally unrolling process, unlike a simple change of statuses of this system, assumes its self-development, that is changes generated by immanent driving forces.

At the same time, it means that the idea of cultural development as a basic reflection of society development declared in due time is also insolvent as it depends on changes to the economic order. However, the discrepancies that had been in place in that case between this idea and facts were explained with so-called relative independence of development related to the spiritual life, art, and culture, saying that the matter was to have a development perspective, if, certainly, the movement considered by us was really such, related to the internally dependent process. As far as the content of culture is not identical to the content of the society, whatever considerable its influence on it was, undoubtedly stronger, more direct and continuous than that of the space and even the earth climate, geography, anthropology, and the cultural history should be studied as its self-development, though taking into account all the external impacts. The cultural history is essentially a history of sociocultural reproduction.

Nevertheless, K. Marx refers to the society with its economical and political structures, and not about the culture, development of which begins at the material level with hand and steam mills invented, and comes to the end at the level of spiritual and artistic activities. Sociodynamics as an approach to comprehension of cultural reproduction helps to understand how production relations, proprietary forms, establishment of the class structure of the society, its modifications, etc. have an impact that in all the cases is external for culture and incapable to become a determining force in its development. From this two conclusions follow. First, culture does not develop, but only changes influenced by these forces external for it (whether social or space), thereby dividing methodological principles of the local civilizations theory. Or, second, we need to treat the cultural history as self-development of the elaborated multidimensional system in the dynamic natural and social environment, and, respectively, look for driving forces of this process in itself, i.e. sociocultural reproduction. It should be also said that operational activities of people as activities done by human beings, unlike animals' behaviour, is consciously purposeful following a perfect value-oriented project that precedes an action.



## Conclusion

With the developed traditions in research of education as a social phenomenon, its social determination, specific educational systems, and problems of education's influence on other spheres in the social life, there is almost no attention of researchers to procedural specifics of general education as a basis to reproduce sociocultural relations. Moreover, the term of the teaching process itself widely used in the academic literature has no separate status as a category and is mostly applied in its narrow academical understanding as a synonym for the learning and teaching process.

In their initial stage, there are theoretical studies on sociocultural classifications of educational systems, a search for regularities in their dynamics, opportunities, conditions, and borders for control over education as the most important institute to reproduce the personality and the society. The problem of educational system design has not been sufficiently developed. At the theoretical level, researchers have almost ignored the educational process quality as a criterion of its purposes' implementation and their dependence on specifics of sociocultural relationships. Keeping all the above mentioned in mind, there is a reasonable need in a theoretically culturological analysis of education against sociocultural reproduction.

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