

## **THE TRADITIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF UKRAINIANS AS AN ETHNIC-PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPT**

For the purpose of creating a theoretical model in the research of ethnic-psychological peculiarities of the Ukrainians we ought to turn to the traditional, ethnic-pedagogical system of education. Without studying the social and cultural environment of the family and directions of the “interiorization” (or incorporation) of social and normative attitudes, it is hard to comprehend the mechanism of “enculturation” (psychological anthropologists consider enculturation to be the process of becoming competent in one’s culture. In contrast to socialization which usually applies to the childhood years, enculturation is thought of as continuing throughout one’s life)<sup>1</sup> or the intergenerational transmission of culture which represents the instrument of creating the habits which meet the demands of the social environment and which her informs social roles and social interactions.

From the view of anthropologists who consider man as a culturally and determined person, a basic problem of human life is the safety and continuity of various cultural models and their transmission from generation to generation during socialization. In this respect, researching the system of social (sexual) and age stratification of traditional Ukrainian society as original cultural and normative stages of a vital cycle, principle attention should be granted to the so called “child culture” that is a composing part of the whole nation. The necessity of the conceptual trying to understand this cultural construction lies in the fact that “by the way, we have to do not only with the imitation of today’s culture of adult, but to deal with the traditional possessions which are transferred to children from generation to generation”<sup>2</sup>.

No wonder that the transmission mechanisms of ethnic-cultural information on example of the traditional system of education were given considerable attention by the scientists of the Ukrainian diaspora, such as: Kulchytsky, Vaschenko, Hryhoryiv and others. In particular, Vaschenko in his work “The ideal of education” is using cultural and normative approach to the study of national disposition which contains comparative description of the certain cultural configurations, typical for variety of societies. One of his tasks was also to study the upbringing process in the Ukrainian families. In his turn, B.Tsymbalytsky, the diaspora’s researcher of the ethnic-psychological problems of the Ukrainians stresses that the influence of culture on individual disposition, on mentality, on man’s temper exerts during his early years of existence through the family which reproduces cultural environment of given ethnic group and the method of family upbringing, forming the certain features of national disposition (fathers come forward in the role of the original transmitters of the traditional and custom models and the norms of behaviour of the Ukrainian nation).

Together with the introjection of the original family environment the certain system of values is acquired by the unconscious child. Later cultural influences mostly exert on the surface of psychics. From this point of view the national disposition is a product of a given culture and, simultaneously, being personified by its carrier and the successor of cultural traditions and norms in the future generations. Usually, in its individual display the national disposition is also caused by the concrete inheritance of man that determines certain abilities, its former experience, as well as social environment. Aggregate of these factors provides the personal form and level of assimilation of available culture”<sup>3</sup>.

The investigations of Ruth Benedict concerning the disposition of the Japanese and Margaret Mead – about Bali inhabitants confirmed the thought about those cultural influences which are transmitted with the help of families and formed the mentality and people’s temper. The traits typical for given ethnic community are caused by the spirit of family which itself is determined by the whole social structure and cultural community<sup>4</sup>.

The national disposition is caused by the method of family upbringing which a man gets from his first years. Besides, the national temper comes forward as the original personification of culture of given ethnic (national community) and as the embodiment of specific world outlook on traditional being in ambient world, as well as the reflection of ethnic-cultural disposition in the shape (dichotomy) of “we-they” under the circumstances of permanent social and cultural interactions with other ethnic communities.

With the aim to comprehend the role of traditional system of education and domestic life, B.Tsymbalytsky applies to the structure of the Ukrainian family, the peculiarity of which is in (as the scientists stresses) important

role of woman. This specifically reflected in the Ukrainian folklore and in the Ukrainian religiousness. It is to mother that deep love and even pietism of her children during all their life are addressed. Even Ukraine most frequently is mentioned under this symbol: “Mother-Ukraine”, “Mummy-Ukraine”. It is mother who overwhelmingly participates in education of her children. In B.Tsymbalisty opinion, father only from time to time interferes in the punishment of a child that’s why a child identifies himself chiefly with his mother, inheriting conduct norms typical for womanish consciousness and moral disposition. It means the womanish origin in the Ukrainian national disposition which produced mental features such as: “cordocentrism” of the Ukrainian temper” which forms the prevailing of emotional origin over rational and volitional ones, which, in its turn, causes the lack of resoluteness in achieving the global creation aim to have an own state and influences on the attitude of the Ukrainians to the authority in general<sup>5</sup>.

B.Tsymbalisty this fact interprets the way that the father most frequently comes forward as the punitive factor or as the retributive instance; a child internally rebels against it and even hates his father. Growing up he attempts as soon as possible to break out from the power of his father. In adult age a man returns to the same attitude which even becomes stronger, taking into account, that the authority is strange and despotic. New psychological motive is added to instinctive hatred which functions on the level of subconscious: sons’ equality of the same mother is impossible to disturb, from here the special attitude to the idea of equality enrooted in the Ukrainian “soul”. In his opinion, the escape of the Ukrainians to “the little groups” and individualism is the basis of egocentrism of Ukrainian people<sup>6</sup>.

As a whole, organization of the child activity adopted in ethnic structure, influences on his psychic properties. One of these regulators is the norm of social interference accepted in society. Adopting the normative form of action, a child acquires corresponding norms. The social norms are quite various, that’s why the adoption process of public norms, regulations and values does not play the last role in the genesis of the Ukrainian ethnic-psychological peculiarities.

This process starts too early: from the moment, as Vetuhov supposed, when a child begins to perceive the sense of lullabies. On his persuasion, the Polish lullabies contribute to forming a devout child (in lullabies a mother asks for blessing to her child) and economical one (there are many calculating rhymes); the Persian lullabies immortalize the subdued position of a woman. In its turn, the lullabies of the Ukrainians contain the considerable layer of social and ethnic standard or attitudes. In Ukrainian lullabies the public interests come forward first and foremost. In these songs family happiness is put above personal one, but common weal is immolated for all above-mentioned:

Бодай спало – не плакало,  
Бодай росло – не боліло,  
Головонька й все тіло –  
Отцю й матері на потіху,  
Добрим людям на службу.

Besides, the ethnic standard of boldness will depend on the degree of dissemination of the plot and games role playing in a society: a daring man is who “can fight”, is not afraid of anybody, or “who can intercede for a girl” etc.

For the purpose of inoculating a child with respect to a strange property, the parents sing the lullabies which have the prohibition on getting, snatching and even touching the private property:

А-а, коток!  
Украв у баби клубок  
Да поніс до Галі,  
Положив на лаві  
Стала Галя kota бить,  
Не вчись, коте, красти,  
Да учися робити!

Люлі, люлечки...  
Шовковії вервечки,  
Колисочка новенька,  
Дитиночка маленька!  
Спи да рости  
Да все в радості;

А як будеш великий  
Будеш в золоті ходити  
І нянечок, і мамочок  
Будеш жалувати<sup>7</sup>.

Thus, the norm begins to establish in the early sensory and motor experience of the child as the form (or culture) of his conduct, as a special type of his mutual relations with the interesting objects. Not excepting, it is social rate that causes the peculiarities of the associative reactions among the representatives of different nations<sup>8</sup>.

In the following lullaby the basic leit-motif is maternal damnation for violation of laws of the genitive moral, specific system of values which has a stable hierarchy, where disobedience, disrespect to father-mother comes the most sin. In particular, this topic is vividly brought up in such folklore genre, as the “duma” (elegy ballad), according to the old testament formula: “if he does not obey father-mother, he should die”:

Мати сина колихала  
Дня і ночі не доспала,  
Да думала: “добрий буде,  
Що він мене не забуде”.  
Аж він самий п’яниченька

Й великая ледащиченька:  
Де мед чує, там ночує;  
Де горілку, то там днює;  
В корчму йде – вигукує;  
До дому йде – бенкет веде;  
Свою неньку зневажає,  
З двору її виганяє.  
“Да йди, нене, гості у мене,  
То й не треба тебе у мене!  
Будуть куми, побратими...”  
Пішла мати, да плачучи,  
свого сина проклинаючи:  
– щоб ти, сину, щастя не мав,  
що ти мене з двора прогнав!...<sup>9</sup>

Another important aspect of this question is a set of proverbs, riddles and by-words (scientists use the term of “paremia” which derives from Greek and it means-parable) and which represents certain indicator of the structure of ethnic mentality by means of reflecting the nature and social conditions of the existence of nation.

Reflecting the peculiarities of social flora and fauna, landscape and climate, paremias give to an individual the image of natural environment, his Homeland and form the natural background of associations, creating the “first level” of the ethnic mentality. However, researching the reflection in paremias of social reality of concrete ethnic community we ought to pay our attention to forming the ethnic mentality together with the peculiarities of national environment. Sometimes they (paremias) consolidate with natural images, sometimes come forward as the basis of independent appearance which constitutes the “second level” of ethnic mentality.

Notions and images are included into associative processes of an individual from the sphere of social system, religion and economical activity, life and ethnic history. Besides, it is very important to ascertain the psychological and pedagogical sense of popular rites. In the opinion of scientists, “the force of ceremony” is in its ability to remind about the task of future reality, in its self-descriptiveness (or in the capacity to be the reference in man’s activity). Secondly, the ceremony is so called the “program of action” for a man, who accomplishes it<sup>10</sup>.

The ritual practice comes forward also as a carrier of the “collective subconscious” and archetype symbols. It is a specific combination form of the “ethnic levels” of consciousness into united psychogenetic complex which, in its turn, represents the basis for the creating of the traditional characteristics of mentality of our people.

The ritual practice acquires a principle concern during the process of people’s upbringing as the essential method of child socialization, drawing him as a personality and the carrier of traditional norms of behaviour: “Birthday, christening, weddings, death and burial, festal ritual ceremonies were reflected in the child funs. According to these events which take place in the peasant life, children play in wedding, burial etc. and strive thoroughly to imitate the adults. In all these funs girls usually identify themselves with women, and boys with husbands...”<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, the basic ceremonies of the traditional Ukrainian society are modeled in the “child culture” which associates with the above-mentioned complex of the sacral and ritual sphere of life. For example, reproducing christening “they (children) make a small doll which is considered to be a baby. The Godparents of the baby are chosen among the children. Then the Godparents take the baby and go to the priest who will give a name to the baby. Shortly afterwards they return home and begin to have dinner...”<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, the peculiarities of psychic development of man on the different stages of his existence, a game as the method of psychic upbringing of a child and as the method of his socialization, adhering to the certain social and behavior stereotypes take considerable place in the act of education as the necessary condition for the transmission of knowledge, acquired habits, rules of conduct and moral prescriptions etc.

In its turn, drawing the sexual and age group of children into the ritual and custom system occurs by means of their immediate participation in the cycle of calendar and festal rites: “On Monday, at a wedding, children come together in a bridegroom... The children go for a walk, listen and look attentively at everything that take place at a wedding. Little girls and boys play the role of so called “svitylka” and “boyarun”, also the whole day on “Schedra Kutya” (kutya – boiled rice with raising and honey) during the New-Year holidays boys unite and say: “We shall lead a goat”.

The boys from 8 to 12 years (and elder) lead the goat. Usually, they group 8 – 10 persons and choose the boy who will make a goat. All these boys are called the goat-carrier: they interchange every two – three cottages and get creep under the sheepskin. It is interesting for everybody to be a goat”<sup>13</sup>.

In general, we proceed from the thesis that ritual and custom culture arises as the oldest method of information preservation in illiterate society. The information, fixed and maintained in the system of the rituals of the nation, contained the picture of the world and certain model of people conduct (stereotypes, standards) in special conditions. The purpose of the ritual consists of its reiteration and recreation of the world picture that is formed in a tribe, including the conceptions about adequate behavior for critical and extreme circumstances. The maintenance of the rituals is considered by archaic society to be the guarantee of safety and prosperity<sup>14</sup>.

While considering the traditional Ukrainian educational system as the ethnic-psychological concept we can draw the cognitive scheme which includes such analytical constructions as:

- interiorization (as a process of internal adoption, integration) of socio-normative attitudes through the complex of the lullabies, the complex of the Ukrainian songs;
- interiorization of socio-normative attitudes and behavioral models by the method of imitation, succession of the important events of the peasant family life in the child’s funs and games;
- enculturation or transmission of the ethnic-cultural information by means of drawing sexual and age group of children in the ritual and custom system which is the method of self-organization of society and effective form of its preservation. First of all, this system includes:
  - incorporation into the “child culture” of the basic ethnic-cultural regulations, ethnic standards and stereotypes of thinking through the immediate participation in socio-cultural life;
  - modeling in the child consciousness the calendar and festal rites that represent the approving and arranging the form of the peasant society and the adaptive mechanisms of the conservation and reproducing traditional ethnic characteristics.

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<sup>1</sup> Applebaum, Herbert Psychological Anthropology Introduction // Perspectives in Cultural Anthropology. – New York, 1987. – P. 138.

<sup>2</sup> Заглада Н. Побут селянської дитини // Матеріали до української етнології. – Київ, 1929. – С. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Храмова В. Українська душа. – Київ, 1992. – С. 26 – 27.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. – С. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. – С. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Чубинський П.П. Труды этнографо-статистической экспедиции в Западно-Русский край. – Т. IV. – СПб, 1877. – С. 19 – 21.

<sup>8</sup> Павленко В.М., Таглин С.А. Факторы этнопсихогенеза. – Харьков, 1998. – С. 131 – 134.

<sup>9</sup> Чубинський П.П. Труды. – Т. IV.– СПб, 1877. – С. 29.

<sup>10</sup> Павленко В.М., Таглин С.А. Факторы этнопсихогенеза. – Харьков, 1998. – С. 120 – 121.

<sup>11</sup> Заглада Н. Побут селянської дитини // Матеріали до української етнології. – Київ, 1929. – С. 113.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. – С. 114.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. – С. 152.

<sup>14</sup> Мечковская Н.Б. Язык и религия. – Москва, 1998. – С. 53.