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AGEING: SOCIO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS

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The phenomenon of ageing in the aspect of socio-cultural dynamics has been studied in this scientific research. The main directions of the study of ageing as a subject of scientific analysis, their short characteristics were highlighted and analyzed. Socio-philosophical and cultural aspects of the study of the process of ageing of a person, as well as the occurrence of such phenomena as gerontophobia, are also considered. Process peculiarities of a person's ageing are the subject of scientific research of separate sciences and require a complex approach, in particular, in biological aspect is studied by gerontology and geriatrics, and social aspects of ageing of the population of countries and continents by demography and economic theory, political science and sociology, peculiarities of ageing at the personal level became the subject of research of psychology, pedagogy, in particular, social pedagogy. However, the interdisciplinary nature of this problem of the research contributed to the emergence of new areas of knowledge, in particular social gerontology, psychology of old age and ageing, andragogy, etc. All this points to the relevance of research on the ageing process both at individual and social levels. Consideration of the problem of old age, in our opinion, as a social-cultural phenomenon in general, using social-philosophical and cultural analysis allows us to distinguish the main directions of its research, that is to study both the peculiarities of the social life of the older person in modern society and attitude of society to the older persons. The study of the ageing process has two main lines: the ageing of a person as an indicator and the ageing of society in general. In our opinion, the main directions of the study of the problem of old age are: biological, economic-political, psychological-pedagogical, social-philosophical and cultural. Such notions as social and biological ageing are allocated. The concept of ageism has been studied.

Key words: ageing, fear of ageing, ageism, social ageing, gerontophobia.

At first glance, it may seem that the problem of ageing or the fear of old age is not of much scientific interest. But let us note that the features of human ageing, firstly, are the subject of scientific analysis of individual sciences, first of all, in the biological aspect – gerontology and geriatrics. Demography and economic theory, political science and sociology turn to the study of the social aspects of population ageing in countries and some continents (Europe). In addition, psychology studies personality development in old age, and education for older persons is considered by pedagogy; questions of adaptation of old people, peculiarities of assistance to them – social pedagogy. Secondly, the study of the features of human ageing has influenced the emergence of new branches of knowledge that lie in the interdisciplinary flatness – social gerontology, the psychology of old age and ageing, andragogy, etc. This testifies to the relevance of the study of ageing as an individual and society as a whole. In addition, it is impossible to investigate

all aspects of this problem in the framework of one science, in our opinion, because it has a pronounced interdisciplinary nature.

Socio-philosophical and cultural analysis of the problem allows, in our view, to look at the problem of ageing as a whole as a socio-cultural phenomenon and to highlight the main directions of its study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the features of the social life of the elderly in modern society, as well as the modern attitude of society towards the elderly. Furthermore, in our view, it depends to a large extent on the way and prospects of life of the old man soon in Europe.

Conditionally analysis of ageing can be divided into studies of the features of the ageing of the person as an individual and the ageing of society as a whole. In so doing, it is possible to point to the interrelationship between the real position of the elderly in society and the attitude of society towards them.

It should be noted that it was Ancient philosophy that first turned to the understanding of ageing, because Plato was one of the first to draw attention to the position of the elderly in modern society, calling them sacred: "... who has in the house a precious treasure in the form of father, mother or their burdened with old age parents, one should not think that he can have a more significant shrine: no, the parents in his house make the shrine of his hearth, if the owner of the house properly respects them". It is significant that the Plato concept of the State even provides punishment for disrespect to the elderly, because "... if anyone in our country neglects his duty to his parents and does not encourage and fulfil all their desires rather than those of his sons, all his children and even his own, let the victim inform, himself or through the messenger, three of the oldest guardians of the law, as well as three female marriage guardians. They'll take care of it and punish the bullies with beatings and jail". The main contribution to Mark Tullius Cicero's socio-philosophical thinking on ageing was the attempt to identify the reasons why old age seems pathetic and to try to disprove them. He singled out four of them: old age removes from deeds, weakens the body, deprives almost all pleasures and, in addition, approaches death. But he comes to a somewhat strange conclusion, despite the attempt to "justify" life in old age: "As one struggles with illness, so one must struggle with old age...". In fact, this means that old age is a disease that must be fought. But it is difficult for modern man to agree with this, because in our opinion, old age is a full stage of human life, as well as youth or maturity, and for which, of course, one must prepare, but one must live fully.

There are many examples of thinking about old age in the history of philosophical thought, but we need to understand: how did modern society come to the social, psychological and moral "killing" of older persons? They were physically destroyed in primitive society or the early civilizations, as a social ballast such a group was considered by many groups and in a later period (for example, Aztecs or inhabitants of Oceania). Over time, however, the value and respect for older persons have increased. This was primarily due to their wisdom and, therefore, their life experience. But in modern society, there have been processes that have again made old people feel a little uncomfortable. Although, of course, it's not about physical violence.

To begin with, let's highlight the main areas of research, in our view, regarding the problem of old age: biological; economic-political; psychological and pedagogical; socio-philosophical and cultural.

The biological direction includes problems related to the ageing of the body and the study of the phenomenon of longevity, which is the subject of study, first of all, gerontology and geriatrics.

The subject of the study of demography, political science, sociology and economic theory is the socio-economic aspects of the problem of population ageing. And since the second half of the twentieth century, the above issue has been given special attention, as it has touched upon various

aspects: together with the overall increase in the world population, given the limited resources, the population of the developed countries began to age catastrophically, and in the future, it could change the geopolitical picture of the world. The results of the analysis of statistics have led the international organizations of the world to undertake activities to study the problems of population ageing and its social and cultural consequences. First of all, the UN held and developed the following: First World Assembly on Ageing (1982), Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing (1982), October 1 was declared as International Day of Older Persons (1990), UN Global Goals on Ageing (1992), International Year of Older Persons (1999), United Nations Research Programme on Ageing (1999-2000), Second World Assembly on Ageing, with the theme "Building a society for all ages" (2002), Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) etc.

It should be noted that the level of cultural and economic development of a society affects its gender and age structure. There is also a reverse process: the age structure of the population causes socio-cultural and economic-political transformations in society. In the former case, the need to "survive" (for example, in primitive society) caused an imbalance in the sex (male increase) and age (high child mortality and the killing of older persons) structure of the population. Also, the development of culture and the subordination of man to the economic expediency of the time was the reason that women died earlier than men (early childbirth, disregard of hygienic norms etc.) and the birth of a girl in the family was considered unprofitable because there was a need for male labour, child neglect was the norm, the killing of elderly people was not condemned (they were considered ballast for society): "...an oversight of the need for a dramatic increase in the productive part of the population could cause the killing of children, the elderly and women... [1, pp. 208]".

It is obvious that at the present stage of the cultural development of society it is impossible to correct the sex and age structure of the population by such methods. But demographic processes in the modern world, such as the ageing of the population of the developed countries of Europe, are causing economic changes in society, which are intensifying its cultural and social transformations and "... social programs for old age conflict with the new social roles of young people. The ageing of the population reduces the chances of the well-being of the younger generation and the chances of a higher birth rate [1, pp. 150]". Thus, older people become economic ballast, and their increase in society "pressures" the working population, which causes such negative phenomena as ageism, disrespect to the elderly. But modern morality does not allow them to be destroyed physically but allows them to do so socially and psychologically.

In addition, the consequence of the rapid updating of information is an ultra-rapid "ageing of the employee's knowledge" in certain industries and the devaluation of the acquired knowledge and experience of the person. This calls for lifelong learning and, given the limitations of a person's psychological and physiological resources, it is difficult to teach older persons something new.

Economic changes also lead to political instability. First, there are basic principles of the economy, for example, that expenditures should not exceed income. Therefore, when the number of older persons in the population increases, the mandatory step is to increase the retirement age. Politically, this is an unpopular measure that causes protests among the population. In addition, it is necessary to take into account such nuance as the quality of life and average life expectancy. Quality of life means full life and the ability to perform at an adequate level of professional duties. Also, the retirement age must not exceed the average life expectancy. Secondly, the ageing of the country's population meant the gradual extinction of the indigenous population, with the renewal taking place at the expense of immigrants, which led to increased social conflict and other negative phenomena associated with that process.

With this in mind, the psychological and pedagogical direction of studying the problems of old age becomes an important subject of study of the psychology of ageing, as well as pedagogy and andragogy. They need to find out the patterns of human development in old age and the peculiarities of their needs and capabilities. But if you analyze the literature on age psychology, you can see that often psychologists pay more attention to the study of childhood, adolescence, young adulthood and noticeably less old age. And this period of human life has not only its psychological characteristics, but it is also important to prepare the person for the onset of old age. In our view, pedagogy should play a special role here. First, a system should be developed to train social educators to work with older persons, and secondly, to study and develop teaching methods for older persons, as the need for care for the elderly (sick, lonely, etc.) grows daily and the teaching of the so-called "third age".

As for the socio-philosophical and cultural directions in the study of the problem of ageing, they are only beginning, in our view, to develop, although they can comprehensively consider the position and sense of the elderly in modern society. Let us point out that it is important to clearly distinguish two seemingly similar and related at the same time, but still different concepts – social and biological old age (also phenomena). Because age is a relative term. If we consider the classification of types of age, we can find that scientists distinguish biological, passport, functional, psychological, etc. age, which depend both on biological indicators and the self-awareness of a person, his position in society (working or retired) and the stereotypes of the society in which he lives. Therefore, biological old age is primarily related to the physiological aspects of human life, and social (retirement) often comes before biological and, by changing abruptly social position, social circle, occupation, and rhythm of life, leads to psychological changes, often to the feeling of psychological discomfort, social irrelevance, etc. In fact, social old age ceases to be a "social death", and the first years of pension – a crisis in the existence of man.

A man rarely wants to be old. On the contrary, the thoughts about future old age frighten many and people by right and wrong try to postpone the onset of old age, instead of living it fully. The above age types show that old age is not only a change of body but also the inner sense of the person, as well as his social status.

But why is it that the changes that we undergo in our transition from childhood to adolescence, from adolescence to adulthood, do not cause such fear and anxiety as the onset of old age in any of its manifestations? The first answer that comes to mind is that ageing (including longevity) is the last human frontier before death. But, in our opinion, the appearance of fear of ageing is primarily influenced by the negative social stereotype image of the old man. Ageing is described as a period of life that is characterized by a change in bodily fitness, leading to the decrepitude of the organism (decline of physical activity, slowdown of psychic processes, diseases), as well as associated with the metamorphosis of social position and personal qualities (retirement, loss of spouse, loneliness, powerlessness, poverty, etc.). This social stereotype of ageing gives rise to the fear of old age, which is also linked to fear of death.

Having analyzed the scientific publications, it is clear that there is no clearly stated in the dictionaries the concept of "fear of ageing", which, we believe, is inherent in modern man. Of course, there is a related concept – gerontophobia, but it is also not strictly defined. Because gerontophobia is both the fear of old people and the fear of old age. Therefore, our research has led to an attempt to define the term "fear of ageing". The fear of old age is a human condition that arises from the identification and assessment of the boundaries of the threat to biological, social and uniquely personal existence that is determined by real or future physiological, social and psychological changes in human life, directly or indirectly related to age, the basis of which is the desire for self-preservation and the system of interrelated fears (death, loneliness, disease).

Of course, this definition needs to be improved based on further research into the phenomenon of fear of old age. But it shows, it seems, that old age is not just a biological process. The specificity of modern culture lies in the fact that man, first of all, strives for physical longevity and the preservation of external attractiveness. (Therefore, today there is popular plastic surgery, rejuvenation at any cost and even the use of stem cells extracted from embryos). In the race for the illusion of youth, transcending the permissible, man loses the most valuable – spirituality.

But it is important to stress that, in addition to their internal experiences, older people feel discriminated against by society. We can see in the modern world the transition from the so-called gerontocratic society to the "young society", which results not only in the increase of young leaders but also in the levelling of the needs of the elderly.

However, ignoring the elderly is not as dangerous as ageism. This makes ageing an issue that already exists not only at the individual and personal level but also the social level.

The term "ageism" is relatively recent. It belongs to R. Butler, who defined ageism as "prejudice and discrimination against older persons [2, pp. 425]". But in the scientific literature, there is a treatment of signs such as age discrimination in general. For example, a kind of ageism is both "you're too old for it" and "you're too young for it". Therefore, ageism includes institutional ageism (legal discrimination against people in a certain age group) and internal ageism (offensive, degrading, interpersonal actions, negative statements and behaviours such as neglect, and physical or mental violence). In our view, ageism in today's world manifests itself primarily as discrimination against older persons. It is also possible to separate ageism from the realm of manifestation. Therefore, let's highlight ageism in communication (statements such as "old hag"), in medicine (lack of medical care or treatment), marketing (negative image in advertising), at work (inadequate assessment), etc. Note that ageism in the media is manifested, above all, imposing negative stereotypes about old age, propagating the youth of the body at any cost, directing programs and films to the young viewer, in marketing – with a focus on the young consumer. In our view, the discriminatory aspect of ageism breeds fears of old age, which can be defined precisely as the "fear of social nothingness".

Thus, the problem of old age cannot be fully explored, as it seems, by science alone. Its relevance to the modern world requires, first of all, an interdisciplinary approach to its study. And it is worth emphasizing the value of socio-philosophical and cultural analysis of old age and old-age fear in modern scientific research. Discriminatory attitudes towards older persons give rise to fear of old age and gerontophobia. In our view, it is important to develop a strategy of positive self-perception in the coexistence of people of all age groups. Therefore, in our view, we should emphasize the role of the socio-philosophical and cultural direction in the development of valuable material to minimize the phenomenon of fear of ageing in the life of modern man.

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СТАРІСТЬ: СОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНА ДИНАМІКА

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В даній науковій розвідці досліджено явище старості в аспекті соціокультурної динаміки. Виділено та проаналізовано основні напрямки дослідження старості як предмета наукового аналізу, здійснення їх коротка характеристика. Розглянуто також соціально-філософські та культурологічні аспекти дослідження процесу старіння людини, а також виникнення такого явища як геронтофобія. Особливості процесу старіння людини є предметом наукового дослідження як окремих наук, так і вимагає комплексного підходу, зокрема, в біологічному аспекті вивчається геронтологією та геріатрією, соціальні аспекти постаріння населення країн та континентів – демографією та економічною теорією, політологією і соціологією, особливості старіння на особистісному рівні стали предметом для дослідження психології, педагогіки, зокрема, соціальної педагогіки. Однак, міждисциплінарних характер даної проблеми дослідження сприяв виникненню нових галузей знань, зокрема соціальної геронтології, психології старості і старіння, андрагогіки тощо. Все це вказує на актуальність дослідження процесу старіння як на індивідуальному, так і на соціальному рівнях. Розгляд проблеми старості, на наш погляд, як соціокультурного явища в цілому, шляхом соціально-філософського і культурологічного аналізу дозволяє виділити основні напрямки її дослідження, тобто дослідити як особливості соціального буття людини похилого віку в сучасному суспільстві, так і ставлення суспільства до людей похилого віку. Умовно в дослідженні процесу старіння виділено дві магістралі: старіння людини як індивіда і старіння суспільства загалом. Виокремлено основні, на наш погляд, напрямки дослідження проблеми старості: біологічний, економічно-політичний, психолого-педагогічний, соціально-філософський і культурологічний. Розмежовано такі поняття як соціальна і біологічна старість. Досліджено поняття ейджизму.

Ключові слова: старість, страх старості, ейджизм, соціальна старість, геронтофобія.