SOCIAL AND PHILOSOPHIC FOUNDATIONS OF YOUTH NONCONFORMITY IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to consider and analyse various approaches to understand nonconformity in general and in the youth environment in particular in order to synthesize and learn from the data and knowledge obtained, and develop a more general and integrated perspective on its essence, determinacy and manifestation specifics. The results discussed in the paper deal with the social-and-philosophical point of view on the various approaches to understanding nonconformity both in a historical retrospect and in modern science. The study revealed that in recent decades the concept of nonconformity has lost its negative connotation. Different conceptual approaches used in studying the phenomenon indicate its significance in the society and personality development, its innovative potential to create and develop new social values, patterns of behaviour and moral standards in the dynamically changing world. Various forms of nonconformity manifestation specify the particularities of contemporary youth subcultures and their socializing potential. The materials of the paper may be of theoretical and practical value to develop programs and teaching materials on social philosophy, sociology and social psychology, as well as the programs connected with prevention of destructive forms of nonconformity in order to bring the processes of young people's social adaptation and socialization into compliance.

Keywords: negativism, protest, subcultures, socialization, self-actualization

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1. Introduction

Youth subcultures and various non-formal youth associations created on their basis are the important and necessary institutes of a contemporary civic community. Therefore, the deep and thorough study of their special features is a vital problem of contemporary social philosophy. Being the non-traditional agents of socialization, they are capable of exerting both positive and negative influence on the personal and social development of young people [1].

The majority of youth subcultures have emerged as protest movements against societal attitudes, sociocultural values, behaviour and moral norms [2, 3]. Therefore, they make the foundation for nonconformity as an individual's desire to adhere and defend the attitudes, views, perception, behaviour, and so on, contrary to those that prevail in the given society or group.

The dynamic changes taking place in today's society, both worldwide and in Russia, highlight both the changes occurring in youth subcultures and the forms of expressing nonconformity. To understand these changes, it is necessary to carry out the full and in-depth study of the characteristics of contemporary youth subcultures and nonconformity manifestations features in the youth environment.

In the twenty-first century, the global and domestic changes in political, economic and social spheres have brought about changes in the concepts related to young age and young adults. Since the mid-1990s of the XXth century a new view based on the socio-philosophical interpretation of humanism as a recognition of the intrinsic value of an individual and his/her ability to make a choice on every stage of his/her development has been put forward as a conceptual aspect in the research regarding young adults [4, 5]. Therefore, the value of youth is being considered not only as a biosocial property of an individual but also as the heritage of the country or society [6].

Discussing the concept of social development of youth, V.I. Chuprov & Y.A. Zubok look upon young adults as a social-and-demographic group with three most significant social functions: reproductive, innovative and translative [7]. From the point of view of these authors, while reproducing the structure of social relations that were formed at the time of young adults' socialization, they are not only capable of mastering social experience of older generations, but also to updating it, thus, fulfilling and specifying their innovative properties. This is an essential element of the process of continuity and change of generations: young people grow up and become the source of social experience for the following, next, generation; this is what is meant under the translative function of youth [7, p. 21].

Key points of the concept considering thesaurus of the youth suggested by V.A. Lukov [6] are centred on the idea that youth represent a social group consisting of people mastering and appropriating social personal agency, having the social status of young adults and those who identify themselves as the young. The specific thesauruses are inherent in this social group; they express and reflect their symbolic and objective worlds. The process of assimilation and

acquisition of space, rules and realities of this world by young people is carried out by means of mechanisms of designing the social reality and its further projecting and development. It is important that their designs and projects can differ significantly from those of the reference group of mature adults and, besides, they may change dynamically.

According to I.M. Ilyinskiy the concept of youth is focused on the idea of subjectivity [8]. It considers modern changes in the world as fast and, sometimes, unexpectedly occurring processes that cannot be comprehended to the full and, what is more important, be supervised by the senior generation. In such conditions the accent shifts from the process of transferring the subject from the youth's senior generation to indispensability to rely on the subjectivity of the youth, to effectively guide the society through the present to the future. It represents conceptual reconsideration of the youth's role and the youth's movement in new social and cultural conditions.

Regarding the aspect of the innovative function of the youth in the transformation of the senior generation experience, the relevance of the issue of studying the young adults' nonconformity is associated with considering it as one of the ways of rethinking and changing an existing social reality.

The research into youth nonconformity began at the end of the XIX century when a number of foreign social philosophers and social psychologists raised the issue of a generation gap between parents and their children as the trouble spot of all problems existing in the youth environment between young people and the mature part of society, with youth nonconformity considered as a feature and a consequence of psychophysiological degradation in society. During the twentieth century, the problem of studying youth nonconformity changed and extended from the analysis of 'lost generations' and the need for their psychological and physiological rehabilitation to purely pedagogical concepts and psychological methods that contributed to the effectiveness of young peoples' socialization by extending the age boundaries of human adulthood. During the second half of the twentieth century, modern social philosophy and social psychology mainly discussed the crises in relations between the institutions of socialization, the eternal and centuries-old conflict that can be traced back to the period of archaic culture and ancient literary works (for example, Sophocles' 'Oedipus the King') [9].

The analysis of various scientific positions and concepts showed that there is a stable opinion among them according to which there is no absolute harmony or complete incompatibility in the modern world between civilization, as the embodiment of all social and material, and spirituality integrated with culture. The relationship between them are most frequently reduced to three forms: 1) genetic, in which culture forms a civilization; 2) structural and functional, when culture and civilization mainly embody their side of human activity, that is, spiritual and social; 3) dysfunctional, in which civilization seeks to subjugate culture and spiritual activity [10]. All three forms can become a source of strengthening the youth's non-conformity sentiments, both from the standpoint of civilization against culture and from the standpoint of culture against

civilization. And there is always the third option: a protest against the existing civilizational and cultural norms and values.

2. Literature review

2.1. *Historical origins and current status of the non-conformity concept development in Social Philosophy*

The first mentioning of non-conformity is associated with the story of the Garden of Eden, the best known in the Bible, which explains how Adam and Eve, the first humans, sinned, were separated from God and were expelled from Paradise. There were no negative rules or commands at all in Paradise - except one - to avoid eating of the "Tree of the knowledge of good and evil". For the sake of the right to know, to search for meaning of things, the man tasted the fruits of knowledge, thus going against the rules established by Creator, and suffered his punishment for his disobedience [11].

In ancient philosophy the origins of nonconformity can be traced in the Cynics' nonconformity doctrine. They, living in accord with nature and opposing conventions, were the first to discuss the fact that the natural origin contradicts the normative. The philosophical school of Cynicism founded by Antisthenes (445–365 BC) and Diogenes (412–323 BC) is one of the most original and interesting phenomena of the Ancient Greek philosophy, earned fame mostly because of the uprising against the whole Antique Civilization, which was the first total uprising against civilization in the history of western thought. According to cynics, the means for pursuit of pleasures never suffice. A man is never satisfied with wealth and fame he possesses, there is no end to striving and strengthening of power, and a libertine never finds the ultimate woman to provide him with pleasures in which he could finally calm down. Therefore, all these tools leading to pleasures are not real values at all – the only status they possess is that of pseudo values. After Cynics, there is only one way – to return to the natural temperance – the essential human virtue.

They rejected social ties and material goods. According to Antisthenes, it is better to be with a handful of good men fighting against all the bad, than with hosts of bad men against a handful of good men [12]. Today, the ideas of the cynical philosophers are preserved in the word 'cynicism' as a distrust of other's apparent motives, as a form of jaded negativity, contemptuous and scornful attitude to the generally accepted moral and ethical norms, social and cultural values and ideas.

As a philosophical school or movement, scepticism also originated in ancient Greece and arose in the Middle Ages largely. Referring to an attitude of doubt or a disposition to incredulity either in general or toward a particular object, scepticism was the doctrine that true knowledge or some particular knowledge is uncertain. It was a method of obtaining knowledge through systematic doubt and continual testing; a set of claims about the limitations of human knowledge and the proper response to such limitations.in other words

scepticism is based on the idea that any dogma or norm should be treated critically. Michel de Montaigne, one of the main representatives of scepticism, argued that selfishness is the main source of any human action, and the most important goal for any person is to achieve their own happiness [13]. Pierre Bayle, protesting against the omnipotence of theological dogmatism, constantly pointed to the need for independence of moral actions and values from religious beliefs. He defended the thesis that a society composed only of atheists would be perfectly viable [14].

In the XIX century the concept of nihilism as the philosophical viewpoint that suggested the denial or lack of belief towards the reputedly meaningful aspects of life, asserted no inherent morality, and accepted moral values as abstractly contrived. Nihilism as the philosophical theory is based on three main postulates: 1) there is no reasonable proof of the existence of a higher ruler or creator; 2) a 'true morality' does not exist; 3) objective secular ethics are impossible, there is no objective truth and no action can be better or worse than the other. Nihilistic denial is a social action caused by the disagreement in the system of goals, means and values adopted in a particular society and manifested in the outlook and behaviour of specific individuals [15].

The ideas that influenced the development of non-conformity theory are associated with the ideas of Arthur Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer believed that the 'will-to-life' (the force driving man to survive and to reproduce) was the driving force of the world, and that the pursuit of happiness, love and intellectual satisfaction was essentially futile and anyway secondary to the innate imperative of procreation. For Schopenhauer 'Will' is a mindless, aimless, non-rational impulse at the foundation of our instinctual drives, and at the foundational being of everything. Schopenhauer's originality does not reside in his characterization of the world as Will, or as act, but in the conception of Will as being devoid of rationality or intellect. The will to life creates man's desires that determine his/her behaviour and activities. He wrote that the meaning and moral value of the world come only from man himself and his free will. He rejected the idea that human consciousness and behaviour are determined by the world in which s/he lives, which had dominated in philosophical thought, and claimed that it was man who defined the surrounding world. He considered the manifestation of human individuality and human spirit to be the highest level of manifestation of will and spirit [16].

The fundamentals concerning the issue are also connected with ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche, who applied himself to such topics as morality, religion, epistemology, psychology, ontology, and social criticism. Nietzsche spoke of 'the death of God,' and foresaw the dissolution of traditional religion and metaphysics. He claimed the exemplary human being must craft his/her own identity through self-realization and do so without relying on anything transcending that life — such as God or a soul. His works involved a sustained attack on Christianity and Christian morality, and he worked on what he called the transvaluation of all values.

He claimed the loss of human confidence in the divine foundations of values and moral and ethical norms, resulting in a loss of meaningfulness of life, the denial of existing norms and values, their complete revision and the search for new meanings. And as a result, he proclaims the idea of a Superman (or overman), German Übermensch, that will act as his own God, giving himself morality and value as he sees fit according to him alone, that is, he is able to control his will and mind, be above good and evil, and defines his rules for behaviour or dispositions of character to be cultivated. His own main features are endurance, courage and freedom, firmness and mental strength ability to affect and influence the lives of others. An overman uses the will-to-power to influence and dominate the thoughts of others [17].

Existential philosophy introduces the idea of understanding the absurdity of human existence and suggests the need to find ways to overcome it. As the way to overcome the absurdity, the idea of non-conformity is given in the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre. Nonconformity of Sartre is not associated with a rejection of life; it has no desire to isolate a person from the outside world, but is a desire to change the attitude of man to the world and life. He does not speak of one's self-will and does not welcome the idea of an overman. Sartre understands nonconformity, first of all, as a responsibility of man for himself, for his existence and the world around him. The main ontological element in the philosophy of Sartre is 'nothing'. According to Sartre, a person without any support and assistance is faced with the need to be inventive at every moment, and thus he is doomed to freedom. In such conditions, only the irrational forces of the human subconscious, intuition, uncontrollable spiritual impulses can be really genuine. Sartre states that consciousness is a being not closed in itself, but open to the world; a non-reflexive and spontaneous existence, which is not conditioned from outside; a sphere of absolute freedom, because it cannot be controlled, because it is the source of itself [18, 19].

Modern Humanities consider a number of approaches to understand nonconformity. American sociologist David Riesman considers modern nonconformity as' incomplete emotional preoccupation', that is, boredom, lack of purpose which is able to activate such higher manifestations of man's psyche as moral energy, internal culture and order, altruism and satisfaction from unity [20]. According to him the central element of today's non-conformity of youth is not the issues of status, prestige, coordination with the group, informal socialization, but a deviant, anti-social alternative to the existing society.

D.K. Andramonov [21, 22], studying the value-cultural aspects of the approaches to consider the conformity and nonconformity, noted the fundamental differences in the structural-and-functional and critical theories related to the issue. From the point of view of the structural-and-functional theory, high social conformism is a fundamental condition of social order, the absence of which threatens the very existence of society, and nonconformity is dangerous for society systemic dysfunction. Individual strategy of conformal behaviour in this approach represents a tendency to preserve, maintain and reproduce the social order, while the opposite one is an indication of deviant

nonconformist trends. In the critical theory, conformity is considered only as a consequence of the technologies of developing mass consciousness with the help of manipulation and suggestion practices, which are included in the arsenal of repressive neoliberal post-industrial society. The idea of liberation as the overcoming of social exclusion and the 'revolution of consciousness' is considered to be the cultural value-bases of non-conformity. From this point of view, the individual strategy of conformal behaviour is an irrational and unconscious imitation, and nonconformity is seen as the only reasonable alternative [21, 22].

The postmodern social philosophy has developed their own approach to the issue of conformity versus nonconformity, which differs both from the structural-and-functional theory and the critical one. Postmodern thought is generally characterized by the destruction of traditional modern binary opposites. In social theory, such opposites are social order and anomie. Raising an objection to this opposition, representatives of the postmodern insist on its artificial nature, and, obviously, it is the social anomie in postmodern social philosophy that is considered as a normal state of society. In the social theory of postmodernism, value-normative integration is not as important as it was in the structural-functional approach. Therefore, at the individual level of the postmodern, the level of direct social action, conformity and nonconformity is quite difficult for consideration due to the lack of understanding of the integral subject of social action which, in fact, is a free individual. And if sociality in this case is considered as an illusion, then anti-socialism is also an illusion. And if conformity is a consequence of the total simulation of the social, then nonconformity appears to be a second-order phenomenon in relation to this simulation [21, 22].

Studying non-conformity in the contemporary consumer society, G.L. Khavkin [23] notes that it is the unifying message of accumulated discontent, which allows a person to leave the space of his techno-functional loneliness and contributes an irrational grain of true existence into orderly human existence that makes the basis for modern non-conformity manifestations. The main feature of modern nonconformity is its desire to preserve the natural, 'live' human, internal foundations of the personal anthropocentric attitude in spite of impaled depersonalization, technocracy and consumerism. If non-conformity is seen as a metaphysical revolt against the consumer society, its anthropological significance is not based on the vindictive malice of the rejected, but on the desire to assert the universal value of freedom and a conscious (not inspired) choice. Nonconformity is the self-determination, sovereignty and independence of human thought, it is spiritual provincialism, which opposes the material chauvinism of the social system [23].

L.V. Shabanov notes that by choosing a nonconformist way for the outside world, shocking the denied mass society, the person determines his state achieved at the internal level according to the principle 'I feel good' [24]. On the one hand, the mechanism of public atomization is likely to function here. Initially faceless, deprived of the living human image, the society reveals its

specific social roles, norms, values, interests, worldview and age-and-sex needs characteristic of a youth non-conformist association. On the other hand, it is possible to use another mechanism – a specific reflection of the world of adult in the world of children. Looking upon youth subcultures L.V. Shabanov underlines that the concept of nonconformity in this aspect is very important. At the same time, he understands it not so much as the opposition to the environment, but as a specific form of social adaptation, within which there is a positive personal growth, where the small 'I' (self) of the child acquires an additional, stronger social body in the form of a group of peers. The reason for this phenomenon is that, on the one hand, peers understand each other's problems better, and, on the other, it is in the group that the 'collective self' is formed as a strong and confident individual.

If we talk about the intrapersonal aspects of nonconformity, then we keep in mind that from the point of view of the social psychology it is willingness under any circumstances to act contrary to the opinion and position of the dominant majority in society, and to defend a strictly opposite point of view. Despite the fact that such behaviour is estimated by the majority of researchers as radically opposite to conformal, according to psychological essentials, this form of activity of the individual is not just close, but actually identical to the manifestations of conformity, because in both cases it is possible to see the dependence of an individual on the group pressure. The seeming independence in the manifestation of nonconformity is nothing more than an illusion. Since it is not the individual who makes decisions in a situation of uncertainty, the reaction of the individual to pressure from the group is in any case dependent, notwithstanding the fact whether the activity is implemented in the logic of consent or in the logic of protest. Consequently, the concept of nonconformity, essentially being synonymous with the concept of negativism, in psychological terms is not antonymous with the concept of conformism, though it characterizes the reality described in social psychology as substantially opposite to the one that is estimated as a manifestation of the socio-psychological phenomenon of self-determination of the individual in the group [25].

2.2. Subcultures as a manifestation of non-conformity in the modern youth environment

Traditionally, researchers in most countries of the world have interpreted the subculture as a culture of a group or class, that is, of a given minority differing from the dominant culture in society that defines the way of life and thinking of its bearers, which are characterized by their own customs, norms, value systems and sometimes even social and cultural institutions. That is, the subculture is a kind of culture in the culture. The attitude of subculture to culture may vary from conventional attitude of subordination to open opposition expressed to the dominant culture, at least to protection from the desire for unification and homogeneity. Therefore, we can talk about the existence of two

extreme ideologically opposite types of subcultures: those that agree with and those that oppose the dominant culture [26].

Being a certain system of values, ideals, norms of life for young people, a subculture has an impact on the worldview, and forms the general tendency for changing its consciousness. A subculture is a clear reflection of the vital need of young men and women to participate in genuine authentic communication and activities where there is no place for private and philistine relations. It takes the person out of the area of socio-cultural risk and prevents the development of intrapersonal existential crisis. In the subculture, a person does not live for the sake of the values accepted by the whole society and admits it. He leads a society-condemned way of life and enjoys it. His goal is to sabotage a system that seeks to standardize everyone and everything. He does not burden himself with ordinary banal problems, does not try to solve them aimlessly, spending his/her personal potential. At the same time, he does not seek to impose his life position on anyone, for fear of making it the mass fashion trend that s/he despises. His main mission is to fight the desire to be 'like everyone else'. V. Chernyshenko believes that the essence of the non-conformist subculture is that it is least of all focused on unconditional radicalizing of the young people behaviour, but most likely contributes to its socialization and self-realization [27]. It has a global idea that a person lives in the world for the sake of testing his/her vitality, strength of character, will and other personal abilities needed to preserve individual uniqueness.

In social philosophy, there are several basic approaches to the study of the phenomenon of youth subcultures. From the point of view of the systemic-and-dynamic approach, a youth subculture is considered as a complex system consisting of a set of interrelated elements undergoing systemic changes and having several stages in its development: emergence, active functioning, transformation or fading, and adaptation to general cultural norms and values. It is the synergetic approach that considers the process of interaction of youth subcultures. From the standpoint of the synergetic approach, almost all youth subcultures intertwine, flow into one another, complement each other, and acquire new features. There is also a cross-penetration and complementarity between youth subcultures and the dominant culture. Researchers established that a cognitive approach also can be used in analysing a youth subcultures, which takes into account that the youth informal association is a specific system of world, or reality, cognition, through refraction that makes it possible for young people to receive information and make their own system of knowledge and assessments about the world. In addition to the above mentioned approaches to study the phenomenon of youth subcultures, there is also a functionalist approach. This approach considers the phenomenon as a social institution that provides execution of the function associated with socialization and adaptation of young people in society while proceeding to independent adult life [28].

Cultural and innovative potential of different subcultures (including youth) that have taken place throughout the history of mankind have been the issues of study for M.M. Belousova et al. [29] on the basis of the postmodern

approach in social philosophy. They have pointed out that the correct methodological use of the concept of subculture should assume that any system of culture, as the system in general, is based on the subsystem stratification, the presence of substructures and sub-elements, and that is why consider subcultures. The dominant culture itself can also be represented as a system of subcultures. The authors mentioned above noted that the concept of subculture contains all the variety of systemic forms characteristic to modern culture (primarily the domestic): basic, creative, marginal, destructive, anti-systemic (counter-cultural) and so on.

Youth subcultures in their classical sense originated in the United States and Western Europe in the second half of the twentieth century. They can be attributed to the type of social groups that emerged due to the natural history process. They have all the basic characteristics of a stable community of people formed on the basis of age and having its own system of moral, traditions and customs. Informal youth groups and associations have a clear mechanism of reproduction and transmission of their specific experience: special forms of communication, the scale of values, their own language (slang), the system of signs and symbols, as well as ritual ceremonies [30].

This social phenomenon emerged due to the fact that the young generation needed to create an alternative as a form of a reliable support in socialization, which would not depend on the spontaneous influence of relativistic type of thinking and would be able to resist the senseless reality, from the point of view of young people [30]

Russian youth subcultures developed on the basis of their own specific reasons that differ from those of Western countries. First, it is the long-lasting social and economic instability of society. The economic recovery that has emerged in recent years has not had a fundamental impact on the formation of youth subcultures, and has not led to their change. We can say it is not the needs provoking, or causing, the emergence of various youth movements in the West that are significant for our young adults, but the problems associated with overcoming life difficulties, and sometimes simple physical survival. Secondly, the most important goal for modern Russian youth is to achieve a prestigious social status quickly, rather than to express non-conformity and protest against something at societal level. Such moods exist rather on the mental and spiritual levels and rarely find direct expression in the youth environment [31].

After analysing a number of existing classifications of youth subcultures, we have proposed to adhere to the axiological classification which is based on the values shared in a particular youth subculture. Thus, the Russian youth subcultures can be divided into: 1) romantic-escapist (hippies, Tolkienists), aimed at expanding the boundaries of everyday traditional lifestyle, i.e., 'escape' from this world; 2) hedonistic and entertainment (ravers, rappers), aimed at obtaining pleasure, the search for entertainment; 3) predelinquent (luber, gopnik), striving for 'beautiful' life through criminal means; 4) radically destructive (anarchists, punks), aimed at reconstructing the society, denying existing norms [32].

With regard to the topic of our study, it can be noted that the features of nonconformity can be traced in each of these youth subcultures. And if in the first and in the second case manifestations of nonconformity are rather latent and are focused mostly in cultural and spiritual sphere, are expressed only through appearance, behaviour, and never transform into a direct collision with the existing rules and regulations; the other two manifestations of nonconformity are open, aggressive and are expressed through obvious anti-social behaviour and a clear conflict with the social order.

3. Results and discussion

The phenomena of non-conformity in general and youth non-conformity, in particular, are being studied in different sciences: social and political philosophy, social psychology, and cultural anthropology. Still, though the issues are of large concern, in Russia they have not been extensively investigated to date; there is no sufficient and adequate categorical apparatus to be used in the studies and for scientific precise and unambiguous definition that would allow identifying them as a single and integral subject of study.

Based on the scientific literature review on the topic of the study, we concluded that the existing approaches to understanding nonconformity can be divided into several major areas:

1. According to the structural-and-functional theory, nonconformity is understood as a direct protest against the values, norms and rules existing in society, the current power or authorities, their complete denial and negative attitude to them. Nonconformist behaviour is considered as a deviation, asocial behaviour, which must be fought and all manifestations of which must be suppressed.
2. From the point of view of the critical theory (Frankfurt school) nonconformity is a radical denial of mass culture stereotypes, which depersonalizes and alienates people. The idea of liberation as overcoming such alienation and the revolution of consciousness is embedded in nonconformity.
3. The followers of the axiological approach understand nonconformity as a mechanism of counteraction to the dominant culture; and malfunctioning of the mechanisms of social integration and inculturation bring about the conflict with it.
4. In postmodern concepts, denying all individual, nonconformity is understood as the illusion of disagreement, which appears occasionally as the effect of seeming opposition to total stimulation of all social.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that non-conformity is considered as an integral element of the renewal circle: it helps to overcome some socio-cultural stereotypes by means of others, introduce a new system of stereotypes (innovative function), and adapt them to existing conditions and past experience. This point of view is shared by culturologists, considering nonconformity as an

integral part of any creative process and the process of development of a creative personality.

The point of view of the existentialists is also worth considering. They believe that the true essence of nonconformity is in the fact that it is the most natural way to integrate all the intrapersonal contradictions into a single whole. The purpose of it is a personal protest which is not caused by external conditions, but the internal need, or a contradiction inherent in the feeling and living human consciousness, as well as an existential uprising against the existing order or against pseudo-rational violence against nature, conditioned by the disappointment of a person in himself as he considers himself a social being and a developed holistic personality. Nonconformity in their understanding is, first of all, autonomy, sovereignty and independence of human thought; it is spirituality opposing the materialism of the social system.

Thus, in the modern social philosophy, nonconformity is more rarely considered as a purely dysfunctional manifestation, a protest against the political and social system, economic relations, worldview, values, moral norms and rules of behaviour in a particular society. The phenomenon of non-conformity is increasingly gaining an existential understanding as a creative process, the search for new meanings, the reassessment of reality through which a new perception of the world is formed, and the development of personality and society in accordance with the ever-changing conditions of life and new challenges of the surrounding reality. Nonconformity is embedded in the processes of adaptation and socialization of the individual as a mechanism of its development, formation and understanding of the world.

Since young people are the most dynamically developing part of society whose tasks include transformation of the experience of previous generations and creation of their own adequate current picture of the world, it is at this stage of personal development that nonconformity plays the most important role. Being in search of themselves and their purpose, seeking the ways to assert themselves in society through nonconformity as a critical attitude to the past and the present, young people impact and shape the future of the society, and find sources for progress and innovation.

In the youth environment, nonconformity is most clearly manifested in various subcultures. This understanding of subcultures has also undergone strong changes in recent decades. Nonconformist subcultures increasingly play the role of the institution of socialization for the younger generation that is able to provide new mechanisms to design and construct social reality, which contributes to self-actualization of a young man without the risk of internal existential crisis and preserving his unique identity.

There are different manifestations of nonconformity in the youth subcultures. One can say that nonconformity of the representatives of romantic-escapist subcultures manifests itself mainly in an existential and cultural understanding, while nonconformity of the representatives of the hedonistic and entertainment sub-cultures it is more axiological in nature, and classical form of nonconformity manifestation, i.e., as it is described in the framework structure-

functional theory, is characteristic to predelinquent and radically destructive subcultures.

Consequently, socializing potential of different nonconformist youth subcultures is quite different. Representatives of romantic-escapist subcultures, expressing their nonconformity in an existential form through a temporary escape from reality, receive an incentive for the development of creative abilities, find ways to reconcile their inner self with the unpleasant and traumatic surrounding reality. They often appear to become effectively socialized individuals and achieve social success.

Advocates and followers of hedonistic-and-entertainment subcultures, expressing their nonconformity from the axiological standpoints and through the ascendancy of values related to pleasures over the values of responsibility and personal-social development, waste their life in the entertainment and enjoying sensual pleasures. Their socialization is either incomplete or different deviations may occur in the process. Sometimes such socialization disorders lead to the formation of various kinds of deviant behaviour, including addictive behaviour.

Representatives of predelinquent and radical-destructive subcultures express their non-conformity attitude in the form of direct aggression, violence, illegal actions, and often their socialization proved to be negative.

Therefore, it can be concluded that nonconformity, relevant for various types of youth subcultures, becomes one of the mechanisms for adaptation and socialization of an individual.

4. Conclusions

The study of non-conformity among young people is particularly relevant today, as we have been witnessing reconsideration of not only this phenomenon, but also the attitude to youth and its role in the modern world. Young adults are recognized as a self-value, and the innovative abilities of young people come to the first place in importance. It is understood that the role of young people is not only in the assimilation of social experience of older generations and its subsequent transfer, but in its reassessment and transformation in accordance with the requirements of the dynamically developing world, in the construction of a new social reality and its design. And nonconformity, which is specific to young people, is becoming increasingly perceived as a mechanism of their adaptation and socialization. This undoubtedly requires new approaches to the study of the phenomenon and understanding of its place in the system of social interaction and development of society. The social-philosophical understanding of the phenomenon of nonconformity, especially in the youth environment, is significant because it is a social construct that is emerging and manifesting itself in the process of social interaction, and, consequently, can be understood through the use of philosophical methods, and it is studied taking into account new realities.

This paper has attempted to analyse various approaches to understanding nonconformity in historical retrospect and in modern science from the socio-philosophical point of view. It has been established that in recent decades the concept of nonconformity has lost its negative connotation. Since antiquity, nonconformity has been seen mainly as a protest against established rules and norms, as criticality and cynicism, and as opposition to society. With the development of philosophical thought nonconformity appeared to be associated with freedom of will, with the fact that a man himself forms the world, with conditions and norms s/he follows. With the help of non-conformism, a person is able to change the surrounding reality, and do it consciously and responsibly. In modern social philosophy, nonconformity is perceived as a way to oppose the repressive neoliberal post-industrial society and the soulless impersonal consumer society; as a source of innovation, creativity and freedom, a way to preserve the internal foundations of the personal universe and personal identity.

A few main contemporary approaches to the understanding of non-conformism have been highlighted: the structural-functional theory, critical theory, axiological approach, postmodern concepts, cultural, and existential approaches. They provide a different understanding of the essence of nonconformity, but all agree that it is a specific mechanism of socialization of the individual in modern society.

In the youth environment in modern conditions, nonconformity manifests itself in various youth subcultures. Youth subcultures are increasingly perceived as an institution of socialization, as a kind of system of knowledge through which young people receive information of reality and make their own system of knowledge and assessments about the world. Nonconformity is understood as a way of transforming existing values, norms and rules through critical thinking, as well as adapting them to dynamically changing conditions of existence. At the same time, the nonconformity form depends on the characteristics of the socializing potential of a youth subculture.

The materials of the article may be of theoretical and practical value for the development of educational and methodical complexes on social philosophy, sociology and social psychology, as well as programs aimed at the prevention of destructive forms of nonconformity in order to bring the processes of social adaptation and socialization of youth into compliance.

New questions and problems that need to be addressed have arisen in the process of the study. It is necessary to continue the research on the socio-philosophical understanding of the phenomenon of nonconformity, the features of its manifestation in various social and age groups, study its development and implementation both on the theoretical and empirical level, because it is one of the important components of modern social interaction and development, and, in its destructive forms, may become a destabilization factor for an individual, a social group and a society as a whole.

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