Changes in traditional values in Russia: modernization and retreat / Изменения традиционных ценностей в России: модернизация и отступление

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Аннотация: Исследование посвящено изменениям в системе традиционных ценностей в
России под влиянием глобализационных процессов и модернизации. В центре внимания
находится конфликт между современными тенденциями и традиционными социальными
нормами, которые глубоко укоренены в российском обществе. В условиях
усиливающейся глобализации и нарастающего давления со стороны западных

культурных моделей, российское общество сталкивается с вызовами, связанными с сохранением своей национальной идентичности и суверенитета. Основное внимание уделено тому, как эти изменения отражаются в политических и культурных дискурсах, а также в общественных настроениях. Исследование основывается на эмпирических данных, собранных в рамках Европейского социального опроса, проведенного в России в 2006 и 2016 годах. Важным аспектом исследования является анализ того, как российская система ценностей отличается от западноевропейской и насколько значимы изменения менталитета в российском обществе под воздействием глобальных процессов. Исследование использует смешанный метод, включая аксиологический и исторический подходы, статистический анализ данных Европейского социального опроса 2006 и 2016 годов. Научная новизна исследования заключается в комплексном анализе изменений традиционных ценностей в российском обществе под воздействием глобализации и процессов модернизации, с учетом уникальных культурных особенностей России. Исследование впервые предлагает детальный сравнительный анализ изменений в ценностных ориентациях россиян на основе данных Европейского социального опроса за 2006 и 2016 годы. Выводы показывают, что, несмотря на наблюдаемые тенденции к более открытым и индивидуалистическим образам жизни, российское общество продолжает демонстрировать значительное сопротивление изменениям, поддерживая традиционные ценности, такие как безопасность, солидарность и патриотизм. Эти результаты подтверждают, что российская система ценностей остается устойчивой, несмотря на давление со стороны западных культурных моделей. В то же время, исследование подчеркивает важность традиционных ценностей для национальной идентичности и безопасности в условиях глобализации и нарастающей конфронтации с Западом. Это подчеркивает роль традиционного общества как гаранта суверенитета и стабильности государства.

Ключевые слова:

Традиционные ценности, Культурная идентичность, Модернизация, Глобализация, Национальный суверенитет, Россия, Консерватизм, Менталитет, Социальные изменения, Западноевропейская культура

Introduction

Modern living brings qualitatively different meanings and changes, moving towards individuality and self-orientation. The expansion of digital technologies and their interference with all aspects of life are a long-standing problem in the contemporary world. Media communication, which provides a symbolic reality to which society is exposed and reacts promptly, stimulates the social system to perpetuate its cultural norms, attitudes, and values [59]. The level of changes in personality traits, following globally present modern trends, strongly affect traditional values and family life. This situation moved the public policies in Russia in different directions, while Russian cultural norms were perceived as culturally distant from western ones. Globalization and westernization, with their emphasis on change and individualism, are seen as threats to the national stability embedded in traditional religious and family structures. Traditional values emphasize the important position of the religion, family ties, family organization, and outlined national pride, usually accepting national authority passively, rejecting divorce and taking a pro-life stance on abortion, euthanasia, and suicide, showing intolerance to LGTB groups, and insisting on traditional gender roles [30]. Thus, modern Russia is trying to prevent the change of cultural

genotype, loss of national identity, and replacement of traditional customs and values with alien ones, building a new format of relations with the countries of the West on a parity basis [35]. This concern has fueled the rise of political agendas that prioritize the preservation of traditional values, aiming to slow modernization and promote a return to a traditional way of life.

Chimenson et al. [15] examine the changes of cultural values in Russia from the Communist to the post-Communist era, outlining that the inherent character of Russia's cultural competence stems from its innate ability to hold together, manage, and navigate through the duality of cultural values. The coexistence of seemingly contradictory cultural values seems reinforced by Russia's current conflicts with the West. In a way, Russia's transition from monarchy to socialism/communism, through the collapse of the Soviet Union, to the recent imposition of Western sanctions, can be construed as priming mechanisms [27] that triggered and contributed to dramatic upheavals in cultural values in the country over time [15]. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union's economic, social, and political framework in the 1990s, populations within the successor states increasingly prioritized survival values alongside traditional principles. Research by Inglehart and Baker [30] indicates that Russia, like other former communist states, has experienced certain regressive trends in its societal modernization. Acknowledging the significance of maintaining the national mentality and traditional values amid globalization, Russia has identified these elements as crucial for safeguarding its sovereignty, as outlined in the most recent iteration of the National Security Strategy [5]. A recent study by Chimenson et al. observes the paradoxes in the change of Russian cultural values. Observing the cultural changes in societies as stable and internally consistent constructs following Hofstede's [26] model usually overlooks "intra-national diversity" [15]. Chimenson et al. argue that the national culture possesses inherently paradoxical value orientations, used for understanding the paradox and radical changes in Russian cultural values over time.

The primary objectives of this study include: analyzing the cultural distance between Russia and Western European countries through a comparison of value systems; assessing and quantifying societal shifts within Russian value systems using European Social Survey data from 2006 and 2016; exploring the concept of westernization as a detrimental force and its impact on national mentality, as discussed by Russian scholars; and identifying threats to the Russian cultural model, particularly through the erosion of traditional values. The study also aims to highlight the key factors contributing to the degradation of these values and to explore the broader implications for Russian society.

Civilization poles: How different is Russia in inherent values?

Cultural identities, intrinsic to contemporary nations, intertwine closely with national mentality, shaping distinct national stereotypes. National mentality represents a historically ingrained system of values and worldviews, guiding a people's understanding of life, morality, and accepted behaviors. It encompasses a deep-rooted collective consciousness that unites individuals within a nation, fostering a shared sense of belonging and patriotic sentiment. This mentality, reflecting a nation's enduring values, has evolved over centuries, influenced by a myriad of historical, geographical, and social factors. Political scientists have long debated, both during and after the Soviet era, the profound and seemingly unbridgeable cultural divide between Russia and its Western counterparts, often attributing it to the fundamental differences in their respective civilizational paradigms [37].

Cultural distance can have significant implications for intercultural relations [24; 49; 57] and disrupt assimilation and acculturation processes. Grigoriev et al. use the stereotype content model [22] and integrated threat theory [48] to prove ethnic stereotypes as historical contingencies accompanied by distinct emotions and behavioral tendencies directed at other cultures [16]. Believing that the U.S. and Russia in the past had similar geopolitical positions but quite different development, history, and culture, they are being placed in the opposite quadrants of the traditional and secular-rational values measurement scale and the values of survival and self-expression based on universal values [25].

Values represent fundamental ideals that shape the aspirations of both individuals and society, functioning as benchmarks for guiding decisions, judgments, preferences, and behaviors. They provide a framework that influences personal attitudes, cognitive processes, emotional responses, and actions. Psychological theories [39; 46] suggest that both needs and values are systematically arranged within a person and society, reflecting not only their priority but also their scope, universal applicability, and internal coherence. As expressions of cultural essence, values form the foundation upon which societal norms and individual behaviors are developed and sustained [46].

Schwartz's value theory, widely recognized for its comprehensive approach, delineates the dynamic interplay between various value groups, framed through motivational factors such as power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, conformity, tradition, and security. These motivational factors are categorized into four overarching dimensions: openness to change, self-enhancement, conservation, and self-transcendence, with each pair of dimensions positioned in contrast - openness to change versus conservation, and self-enhancement versus self-transcendence. Numerous national-level studies have highlighted significant cultural differences worldwide, illustrating the variation in value priorities both among individuals within societies and across different nations [45; 53]. Schwartz's work goes further by offering a pan-cultural baseline, assessing the significance of 10 core values across nations. The observed cross-cultural similarities in value importance underscore shared human foundations and adaptive functions inherent in values.

Therefore, we have placed a hypothesis **H1**: There is a cultural distance between Russian and West-European value systems (mentality), perceived in the difference of value hierarchy.

The value system continuously evolves, adapting to qualitative shifts in people's lifestyles alongside global socio-economic and political transformations. While the national mentality exhibits a degree of stability across time and space, it significantly influences how globalization trends are perceived and integrated. Gradual changes occur at a slow, almost imperceptible pace under conditions of political and economic stability. However, during periods of instability, transformations accelerate, necessitating national policies that directly engage society to reaffirm traditional norms and the foundational principles on which it was built [5]. Research on the Russian mentality highlights a shift from a once relatively unified macro-society to a more diverse, poly-mental structure [8]. This shift has led to a decline in traditionally valued traits among Russians - such as collectivism, idealism, prioritization of spiritual over material values, patriotism, and a cooperative spirit in work and daily life. In their place, individualism, rationalism, pragmatism, egoism, and cosmopolitanism have increasingly emerged, reflecting the evolving character of modern Russian society [32].

As the extant literature points to the significant changes in psychological traits (mentality) that degrade traditional values, we have placed a hypothesis **H2**: There is a significant change of the value system in Russian society between 2006 and 2016, focusing on the role and relative importance of security and traditional values for perception of national security.

Research methods

The study involved a mixed-method approach, including an axiological and historical approach, as well as statistical analysis and forecasting. Statistical analysis was applied to the database extracted from the core module of Rounds 3 and 8 of the European Social Survey [19; 20] and processed in SPSS 24.0 software. ESS provides a large standardized database with a firmly established methodological approach since 2002, being collected biannually within European space. The core module contains questions related to the human value systems (based on Schwartz's model with 21 items), which were measured on a Linkert scale (1 - very much like me, 6 – not like me at all). Data extracted from the ESS allow quantitative support for the empirically observed societal changes in value systems (mentality) in Russia. Russian participation in ESS started in 2006 and ended in 2016, with Russia participating in Rounds 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 of ESS. As value systems are considered stable, observation of potential changes in traditional values demands a large time-distance, at least a decade.

Table 1.Sample characteristics, Russia (ESS 2006; 2016)

ESS round	Round 3 (2006) Russian Sample	Round 8 (2016) Russian Sample	8 (2016) European Sample
Number of respondents	2437	2430	44387
Male	40.3%	42.7%	47.4%
Female	59.7%	57.3%	52.6%
Average Age	46.35, Std. 19.04	46.73, Std. 18.03	49.14, Std.18.61
Elders (65-94)	21.7%	20.3%	23.7%
Senior Adults (45-64)	29.5%	29.8%	33.7%
Young Adults (25-44)	30.9%	39.6%	30.6%
Youth (15-24)	16.9%	10.2%	11.3%

For examining cultural differences between Russia and other European countries, we have used the more recent ESS 2016 data (44,387 respondents from 23 European countries). Psychological types were determined by performing principal component factor analysis, followed by cluster analysis including a European sample (23 countries) within ESS Round 8, with particular focus on mentality types present in Russia. Further, descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, correlations, and independent sample t-tests for longitudinal data were applied on Russian samples from 2006 and 2016 ESS surveys, which are used for observing potential mentality changes. To measure the changes in Russian mentality, we have chosen the samples with the greatest time distance, Round 3 [19] (2006) and Round 8 [20]. Comparing two Russian samples (from 2006 and 2016) with a time distance of a single decade was intended to indicate the pattern change in basic values. As the samples used are based on longitudinal data, it is essential that the sample characteristics are uniformed, which is granted in the representative samples provided in ESS (Table 1). Two samples were

similar in number of respondents, gender ratio, and age characteristics, providing a good basis for comparing. A special focus is placed on the traditional values and their interrelation with safety, benevolence, and universalism, in which we may observe some changes in personality traits (mentality) among Russian people.

Results and discussion

To check how different Russia is in terms of value system compared to other European countries, we used ESS 2016 data (44,387 respondents from 23 countries: Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, UK, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Slovenia). Initially, a principal component factor analysis was applied to delineate the underlying dimensions of basic human values, testing 21 human values for inter-correlations, Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and the measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) was 0.874, indicating that all variables were acceptable for conducting factor analysis, while Cronbach's alpha was 0.822. Varimax rotation provided four factors identified with a total of 49.9 percent variance explained, using factor loading greater than 0.30. It resulted in definition of four factors, according to Weaver and Lawton considered reasonable if weighted approximately equally: Factor 1 (14.8 percent): 'Self-transcendence' consists of 6 items containing universality and benevolence; Factor 2 (11.9 percent): 'Openness to change' includes 5 items reflecting stimulation, hedonism and self-direction values; Factor 3 (11.6 percent): 'Self-enhancement' contains 4 items representing achievement and power values; Factor 4 (11.59 percent): 'Conservatism' is organized around security, tradition and conformity values, with 6 items (Table 2).

Table 2. Results of Factor Analysis on Human Values

Variable, N = 44387 respondents from 23 countries; ESS Round 8 (2016)	Factor Loadings	Initial Eigenvalue	Variance explained %	Reliability Alpha	M	SD
F1: "Self-transcendence"	.689	3.112	14.82	.750	2.20	1.01
	.654				1.96	.94
- Important to help people and care for others well-being;	.651				2.18	1.08
	.619				2.39	1.07
- Important to be loyal to friends and devote to people close;	.586				2.19	1.05
	.535				2.20	1.09
- Important that people are treated equally;						
- Important to understand different people;						

- Important to care for nature and environment; - Important to make own decisions and be free.						
F2: "Openness to change" - Important to think new ideas and being creative; - Important to seek adventures and have an exciting life; -Important to seek fun and things that give pleasure; -Important to have a good time; - Important to try new and different things in life.	.303 .755 .758 .662 .642	2.499	11.90	.748	2.59 3.84 2.99 2.91 3.00	1.26 1.45 1.33 1.33 1.36
F3: "Self-enhancement" - Important to show abilities and be admired; - Important to be successful and achievements recognized; - Important to be rich, have money and expensive things; - Important to get respect from others.	.716 .718 .636 .597	2.443	11.63	.738	3.22 3.18 4.10 3.17	1.40 1.37 1.34 1.37
F4: "Conservatism"	.699	2434	11.59	.715	3.23	1.40

- Important to do what is told and follow rules;	.698				2.70	1.24
	.607				2.76	1.36
	.549				2.64	1.22
- Important to behave properly;	.459				2.37	1.23
- Important to follow traditions and customs;	.437				2.34	1.20
- Important to be humble and modest, not to draw attention;						
- Important to live in secure and safe surroundings;						
- Important that government is strong and ensures safety.						

Source: ESS [20]; Author's calculations

Further, respondents were clustered by a K-means non-hierarchical cluster analysis and the centroids of the four clusters were used as the starting values to obtain the final solution. The results in Table 3 show that 44,387 respondents were classified into four clusters: C1: 20.5 percent, C2: 20.0 percent, C3: 31.8 percent, C4: 20.8 percent of the sample. To label and better describe clusters, the mean values of the four factors (measured on a Likert-type scale) were calculated (Table 3).

Cluster 1 is labeled as 'Progressive Society' which indicates high levels of self-transcendence and high levels of openness to change, with extremely low levels of conservatism and self-enhancement values. We are talking about part of society that opposes traditional societal hierarchies and rules, preferring to live "free" and "open-minded", becoming "citizens of the world".

Table 3. Cluster Analysis – Segmentation of various personality types

	European Sample: 23 countries, 44387 respondents				
Factor	Cluster 1 Progressive Society	Cluster 2 Transitional Society	Cluster 3 Modern Society	Cluster 4 Traditional Society	ANOVA
	N=9098	N=8875	N=14108	N=9212	
F1: Self-transcendence	-.59435	1.36066	-.24687	-.36945	
F2: Openness to change	-.28499	.09382	-.20052	.49116	
F3: Self-	.97126	.12739	-.05659	-.99022	

F3: Self-enhancement	.97120	.12759	.65559	.99622	
F4: Conservatism	.73981	.17664	-.92682	.50478	
	Means, post-hoc test				F
F1: Self-transcendence	**1.86**(2,3,4)	**3.10(1,3,4)**	**1.86(1,2,4)**	**2.02(1.2,3)**	15660.721
F2: Openness to change	**2.83(2,3,4)**	3.48(1,3,4)	**2.84(1,2,4)**	3.06 (1,2,3)	1316.543
F3: Self-enhancement	4.32(2,3,4)	3.59(1,3,4)	**2.74(1,2,4)**	3.39(1,2,3)	10422.726
F4: Conservatism	3.28(2,3,4)	3.16(1,3,4)	**1.94(1,2,4)**	**2.69(1,2,3)**	12434.083

Cluster 2 is defined as 'Transitional Society' which is marked with extremely low levels of self-enhancement, openness to change, and self-transcendence, with lesser importance of conservatism values as well. This part of society is rather indifferent to any particular values, but compared to other groups seem to mostly lack "self-transcendence" and "openness to change", being most self-oriented group, with strong potential to oppose and reject established societal norms.

Cluster 3 labeled 'Modern Society' reflects general openness to change, with outlined conservatism retained (marked with great level of importance of security, proper behavior and nurturing tradition) and self-transcendence values, with medium levels of importance of self-enhancement, higher than other groups.

Cluster 4 characterized as 'Traditional Society' with relatively high overall importance of self-transcendence and conservatism values, while openness to change and self-enhancement are of lower importance.

The validation of the defined four clusters was enhanced by the results of the multiple discriminate analyses that provided that 94.9 percent of the cross-validated grouped cases were correctly classified. Three functions were statistically significant if they are measured by the chi-square test (p<0.001), while the measure of canonical correlation showed relatively high degree of association between the discriminant scores and the defined groups.

Table 4. Geographical distribution of personality types

National Mentality Types		Cluster Number of Case								Total
		1 - Progressive		3 - Modern		2 - Transitional		4 - Traditional		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
	Austria	230	12%	684	36%	408	21%	588	**31%**	1910
	Switzerland	435	30%	515	36%	107	7%	373	26%	
	Germany	1019	37%	794	29%	276	10%	641	23%	
	France	881	45%	469	24%	388	20%	231	12%	
	Belgium	466	27%	741	43%	255	15%	280	16%	1742
	Spain	578	33%	761	44%	108	6%	292	17%	1430
	Portugal	349	29%	286	24%	305	25%	276	23%	
	Slovenia	174	14%	718	59%	95	8%	239	19%	
	Italy	87	4%	964	42%	644	28%	622	27%	

	United Kingdom	559	29%	598	31%	313	16%	429	23%	
Country	Ireland	464	17%	911	34%	629	24%	651	25%	2730
	Netherlands	552	34%	455	28%	318	20%	284	18%	1991
	Iceland	422	53%	154	19%	91	11%	127	16%	
	Finland	806	43%	570	31%	259	14%	222	12%	
	Sweden	692	48%	358	25%	231	16%	154	11%	1969
	Norway	390	26%	471	31%	391	26%	257	17%	
	Estonia	471	24%	507	25%	548	28%	465	23%	
	Lithuania	18	1%	430	23%	831	44%	607	32%	1886
	Czech Republic	76	3%	632	29%	925	43%	539	25%	1416
	Hungary	65	5%	610	43%	333	24%	408	29%	2172
	Poland	104	7%	676	44%	261	17%	496	32%	2655
	Russian Federation	82	**4%**	642	**31%**	818	**39%**	529	**26%**	1609

Note: *Chi-square p<0.001

According to Schwartz and Bardi[45] cultures at the conservatism pole (Eastern countries) view the person as an entity embedded in the collectivism, finding meaning in life largely through relationships with members of the same group, showing restraint of actions that might disrupt the solidarity and the traditional order (respect for tradition, family bonds, security, honoring parents and elders). On the other hand, cultures at the autonomy pole (West) view the person as an autonomous individual, finding meaning in his own uniqueness, seeking to express his own internal attributes freely. Specific values are considered more or less socially desirable in different societies, thus they are reflecting standardized national cultural norms [5].

Based on the Table 4, we can observe that Russian national mentality mostly fits to the conservative pole with domination of 'transitional' and 'traditional' personality types in general population characterized with high relative importance of conservatism values and lack of 'openness to change' (65%). Significant share of Russian population stepped toward the 'Modern society' group which is characterized with higher levels of 'openness to change' and 'self-enhancement', but still retaining high levels of conservatism and self-transcendence values. Only 4 % of Russian people is attributed to the cluster labeled 'Progressive Society' where the greatest importance is set on 'openness to change' on the account of conservatism. Similar situation is observed in Eastern bloc countries: Lithuania, Czech Republic, Estonia, but also to great extent these two groups dominate in Austria, Italy, and Hungary. On the other hand, most modern societies are present in Iceland, Sweden, France, Finland and Germany. Modern societies are prevailing in Slovenia, Israel, Spain, Poland, Belgium, Hungary, Italy, and Switzerland, characterized with greatest levels of self-oriented and open worldviews but still highly conservative in terms of security, tradition and conformity values. Therefore, we may say that H1 is confirmed. These findings are in line with the findings of Rudnev [40] who confirmed the differences in basic values between Russians and other Europeans.

Table 5.*Comparing Schwartz's pan-cultural norms to Russian cultural norms*

Value type	Pan-cultural norms (Schwartz, 2012)	Russian Cultural Norms (ESS, 2006/2016)
	Mean Rank	Mean Rank

	Mean Rank	Mean Rank
Benevolence	1	**3**
Self-direction	2	**5**
Universalism	3	**2**
Security	4	**1**
Conformity	5	7
Achievement	6	6
Hedonism	7	9
Tradition	8	**4**
Stimulation	9	10
Power	10	8

Table 5 indicates that Russian society is considered highly conservative one. Relative importance of some items, security, universalism and benevolence (relations within the same social group), as well as following traditions and customs retain high ranking in the value system of Russian people, indicating a significant difference between standardized (pan-cultural norms) defined by Schwartz [46] and those relevant for Russia (Table 5). In this line, issues of security appear most important for Russian people, followed by universalism and benevolence values, providing high ranking of collectivism stands in both inner and outer social group relations. Security and conformity are fairly important pan-culturally, but very relevant in Russian mentality, as well as tradition which is well-nurtured compared to pan-cultural norms.

Accepting tradition values contribute to group solidarity and survival, mostly concerning individuals' commitment to the general beliefs and national symbols. Self-direction as intrinsic source of motivation which reflects satisfaction of self-oriented needs and desires (2nd position in pan-cultural and 5th position in Russian value system) is of far less importance in patriarchal societies, creating the greatest cultural gap. Earlier study of Schwartz and Bardi [45] found that conservatism values were more important in East Europe than in Western Europe, being a consequence of the organization of life under the communist regimes, but also reflecting unfavorable economic situation compared to West-European countries whose economic stability grants them self-oriented world view. Evason described cultural dimensions in Russia based on Hofstede's model: the Russian mentality evidences high scores on power distance, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation, while low scores on indulgence, individualism, and masculinity, which corresponds to conservative societies. Russians often attain to the positive approach in describing themselves, outlining courage, sociability, kindness and patriotism as their main characteristics, but outlining negative aspects of aggression being also present [9]. Other research [12; 37; 55] conducted in neighboring countries portrays Russians differently, as less modern, tradition-bound, deeply religious, old-fashioned, generous, and less self-controlled(unpredictable).

Recent changes in Russian mentality

To test H2 we have conducted an independent samples t-test on longitudinal data extracted for Russia from European Social Survey to reveal possible changes in the value system among Russians in the observed period. There were significant differences observed in most values (Table 6). The magnitude of the differences in the means was statistically significant, and most apparent in decrease of universalism, benevolence and security, and rise of 'openness to change' values: particularly moving towards hedonism and stimulation. Despite these changes seem to be relatively small; having in mind a single decade time-

frame, they indicate clear tendencies towards more 'open' cultural model. The recent changes in mentality can be observed in the hierarchy of basic value system which indicates that despite retaining to the conservative norms, slight curve towards 'openness to change' and more liberal norms (seeking fun and pleasure, seeking adventures and having a good time) are being gradually accepted in the Russian society in last decade, while there is a continuous decline in overall importance of self-transcendence values (particularly related to family/friends loyalty, social empathy and general safety). Furthermore, the standard deviation value indicates greatest societal polarization on the specific values: self-direction, stimulation and hedonism, based on standard deviations. Hence, **H2** was supported.

Table 6. *Recent changes in the value system in Russia (ESS, 2006, 2016; Authors' calculations)*

Hierarchy of values		Variables	ESS R.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean Difference	t	S
Openness to change	**Self-Direction**	*Creativity and ideas*	3	2325	2.83	1.34	**0.21**	-5.18	.0
			8	2386	3.04	**1.43**			
	Mean: 2.68	*Freedom in decision-making*	3	2366	2.36	1.18	0.09	-2.64	.0
	Rank: 5th		8	2374	2.45	1.21			
	Hedonism	*Fun and pleasure*	3	2344	3.63	1.54	**0.41**	9.39	.0
			8	2375	3.22	**1.44**			
	Mean: 3.43	*Having a good time*	3	2359	3.37	1.45	**0.24**	5.71	.0
	Rank: 9th		8	2367	3.13	**1.43**			
	Stimulation	*Adventure and Excitement*	3	2349	4.05	1.54	**0.29**	6.60	.0
			8	2365	3.76	**1.52**			
	Mean: 3.5	*Trying different things in life*	3	2352	3.37	1.47	0.05	1.21	.2
	Rank: 10th		8	2377	3.32	**1.47**			
Self-enhancement	**Achievement**	*Being respected*	3	2353	2.67	1.25	0.08	-2.12	.0
			8	2365	2.75	1.29			
	Mean: 2.91	*Abilities and admiration*	3	2355	2.94	1.37	0.06	-1.51	.1
			8	2365	3	1.38			
	Rank: 6th	*Success and recognition*	3	2315	2.88	1.36	0.11	-2.84	.0
			8	2357	2.99	1.39			
	Power		3	2367	3.32	1.45			
	Mean: 3.34	*Being rich*	8	2385	3.36	**1.40**	0.04	-1.05	.2
	Rank: 8th								
Conservatism	**Conformity**	*Following rules*	3	2296	3.17	1.35	0.05	-1.19	.2
			8	2361	3.22	1.36			
	Mean: 2.98	*Humble and modest life*	3	2388	2.7	1.30	0.09	-2.32	.0
	Rank: 7th		8	2366	2.79	1.30			
	Tradition	*Following traditions*	3	2355	**2.54**	1.24	0.09	2.58	.0
			8	2398	**2.45**	1.22			
	Mean: 2.5	*Proper behior*	3	2365	2.56	1.20	**0.19**	-5.39	.0
	Rank: 4th		8	2365	2.75	1.26			
	Security	*Secure and safe life*	3	2386	**2.14**	1.16	**0.22**	-6.28	.0
			8	2377	**2.36**	1.24			

	Mean: 2.15	Strong government	6	2377	**2.36**	1.24	**0.22**	-0.23 .0
			3	2378	**1.86**	1.01	**0.37**	-
	Rank: 1st		8	2388	**2.23**	1.20		11.37 .0
	Benevolence	Helping and caring for others	3	2370	2.6	1.11		-1.82 .0
	Mean: 2.44		8	2366	2.66	1.19	-0.06	
	Rank: 3rd	Loyalty to people close	3	2363	**2.13**	0.96		-7.78 .0
			8	2382	**2.37**	1.15	**0.24**	
Self-transcendence	**Universalism**	Understanding different people	3	2331	2.67	1.18		-2.90 .0
			8	2363	2.77	1.24	0.1	
	Mean: 2.42	Equallity and rights	3	2372	**2.26**	1.14		-9.25 .0
			8	2377	2.57	1.21	**0.31**	
	Rank: 2nd	Environmental awareness	3	2373	**2.04**	1.01		-5.76 .0
			8	2390	**2.22**	1.12	0.18	

Scale: 1 – very much like me, 2 – like me, 3- somewhat like me, 4 – a little like me, 5 – not like me, 6 – not like me at all.

Partly agreeing with the findings of the sociological survey by Antonov and Laktukhina, which suggest that the current departure from traditional values appears superficial, correlating with the weakening of social control within Russian society, the study reveals that these shifts in national mentality extend to a deeper psychological level. There exist universal, or primary, values, alongside higher-order values that shape the meaning and purpose of life for both the society as a whole and its individual members. When these higher values are undermined, a regression to more basic values occurs, leading to erosion of national identity and contributing to political and social fragmentation. Under such circumstances, public consciousness becomes vulnerable to distortion through propaganda and manipulation, a widespread consequence of globalization, westernization, and the formation of a unified information media space [5]. 'Acculturation' is a proxy term that summarizes a large number of complex and overlapping issues, including demographic, socio-cultural (e.g. values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, social relationships), and psychological changes (e.g., identity, identity and ethnicity) [11; 54]. In Russia, the transformation aimed at aligning traditional Russian society with modern Western European cultural standards developed into a one-dimensional approach. Given the resilience of the Russian cultural model and its significant influence within Eastern Europe, the tension between preserving traditional culture and adopting modern cultural elements during the acculturation process became increasingly pronounced [54]. This dynamic has highlighted the conflicting forces at play, where the drive to modernize clashes with the deep-rooted values and traditions that have long defined Russian society.

Conservatism and traditionalism in Russia

Traditional values are considered a factor of cultural self-identification, which begins to revive in the era of the deepest crisis of postmodern society, generated by globalization [7]. Those values are most present in the religious affiliation, family and marriage attitudes, sexual liberties, responsibilities and constraints in everyday life, etc. Societies who embrace these values tend to reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia, sexual liberties and LGBT rights (*The LGBT organization (movement) is recognized as extremist and banned in the Russian Federation*), as well as suicidal acts, expressing extremely high levels of national pride and a nationalistic worldview [30]. According to W. Schubart [44] morality and spirituality have

always been inherent in the Russian man, originating from its mental peculiarities that violate self-identity and identity embodied in the national idea. Anomie, which began in Russia in the late 1980s and persists in various forms today, has inflicted significant damage on society and the national mentality. This ongoing state has led to a deterioration of moral values, where personal comfort, consumption, and the fulfillment of individual desires take precedence, resulting in the devaluation and weakening of family bonds. Although Russia is a secular state, the national mentality of the Russian people has traditionally embodied qualities rooted in religion, serving as a communicative, integrative, and regulatory force. The religious elements within the Russian national mentality remain crucial for the cohesion of modern society, including efforts to revive foundational religious culture and incorporate aspects of secular ethics. Nevertheless, a widely held view suggests that the increasing religiosity in Russia is often leveraged for political purposes. In contemporary society, both modern culture and public consciousness are drifting away from absolute religious devotion [1; 2].

A special place in the system of values of Russian society belongs to the institution of marriage and family. Vereshagina, Samygin ad Stanislavsky [56] argue that Russian society is facing problems of family functionality in the process of transition from traditional family type to a modern one, as the dominant type of demographic behavior of the Russian family is labeled as transformational, unstable and highly unpredictable. This causes a decline in legally married couples, the rise of divorces and preference of single-lifestyles, further influencing the decline in childbirth and household member composition. The enlightened view of family and marriage caused by global trends disrupts the integrity of Russian society's perception of this institution, which represents a stage of its transformation. Such circumstances undermine the surface (changeable, peripheral) layers of the national mentality, which becomes unstable.

In traditional, patriarchal societies, like Russia, there is also a high level of moral panic about homosexuality. In Russia, the issue is often seen as a source of social corruption that has capitalized on broader fears of the Russian population about the future in the face of a perceived demographic decline, fears about living standards, and Russia's loss of international status. Modern tendencies towards 'open sexuality' and LGBT rights (*The LGBT organization (movement) is recognized as extremist and banned in the Russian Federation*) are often seen as one of the preconditions in the process of Europeanization, even being an explicit formal requirement in the EU accession process. Since 2010s narratives about the EU in Russia were placed in the context of a domestic crackdown on Western influence, which has given rise to the term Gayropa [Gay-Europe] as a key geopolitical signifier of difference between the EU and Russia, and reflect the breakdown of Russia's relations with the West because of the Ukraine crisis [23]. Similarly, homophobia was used by some political actors in a foreign policy mechanism that marked a step toward the EU and the separation from the Russian Federation of the Ukrainian government in 2013. The situation was portrayed as a civilizational choice, where inflexible and regressive Slavic values of Russia were contrasted with European tolerance, modernity and open-mindedness (also presented by opponents as perversion and immorality). Within this narrative, the normalization of homosexuality was portrayed as antithetical to Russia's traditional values as an Orthodox Christian and non-Western civilization, leading to anti-homosexuality laws in Russia [58]. Recent changes in public stands among Russians in relation to LGBT rights (*The LGBT organization (movement) is recognized as extremist and banned in the Russian Federation*) go in line with some traditional values and recent appraisal of patriarchal conservatism. Similar public attitudes are present in other Slavic countries, envisaged by

the creation of 'LGBT-free zones' in Poland [36] and persistently strong homophobia in Serbia and Bosnia [31; 34; 50].

The typical Western perspective often characterizes the Russian patriarchal system as a form of barbarism, an outdated remnant that can only be overcome by adopting universal Western (liberal) values across all aspects of governance, society, and daily life. In response, the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, as updated in 2021, explicitly identifies the westernization process as a significant threat to Russia's cultural sovereignty, particularly in Article 88, which focuses on protecting traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, culture, and historical memory. Contrary to the global trend towards secular and progressive values, Russia has been gravitating toward survival values, emphasizing a return to more traditional principles. The erosion of traditional moral and cultural norms, along with the weakening of religious foundations and family structures, undermines the protective and regulatory functions of the national mentality. Russian scholars [3; 4; 6; 8] contend that the pressures of globalization not only threaten state security but also distort the national mentality. The westernization process in Russia is often viewed as a deliberate effort to impose foreign values, creating a narrative embedded in historical and cultural contexts that shape common discourse. Globalization, in this view, is seen as a push for uniformity based on universal principles, blending elements of globalization, modernization, and westernization. American political scientist S. Huntington [28] observed that a clash of civilizations is likely unavoidable in the future, as the unipolarity of the modern world is increasingly challenged, leading to a redefinition of globalization toward a more multipolar and multidirectional framework.

Although Russia is a multicultural and multi-religious society, evidence suggests that ethnic Russians often establish connections with other ethnic groups based on shared territory, religious beliefs, and economic collaboration. However, tensions may arise due to perceived differences in values, beliefs, and attitudes [25], which are sometimes exploited for political purposes to incite conflicts. The underlying issue appears to be a loss of clear identity within Russian society, coupled with unsuccessful efforts to rediscover it independently. These fragmented identities, shaped and reshaped by local contexts, are significantly impacted by global cultural influences [18]. Given the broad regional implications of cultural identity, history frequently highlights it as foundational for national identity formation, with language and religion serving as core components [51]. It enables integration of culturally close ethnic identities (Soviet Union, Yugoslavia), but can also become an argument for political disintegration and hostility among neighboring countries [17]. European Union enlargement in 2004 left Russia on the margins of European political processes and led to widespread suspicion in the Russia's foreign policy establishment of European motives, increasing the resistance to the imposition of European norms, and reinforced negative attitudes towards EU in the Russian political establishment [10]. As always there are opposing social groups, some more flexible and some are sturdier, under pressures of modernization, the escalating conflict between the proper Russian majority and the pro-Western elites. Because of its dominant political power and specific cultural traditions in the region, Russia is in position to claim and defend its national and cultural interests, despite often being perceived by its neighbors as a constant threat to the existing cultural traditions of other countries [37]. Armed conflicts of culturally close societies within the same geographical, cultural and historical space pose the greatest danger in terms of escalation of unresolved course of crisis and historical futility along with generational conflicts and civil wars. The current political situation around Ukraine is a vivid example of

such aspirations, predicted and explained in Brzezinski's book [14] which seems more relevant today than ever.

Conclusions

The ideas and political strives towards unification of the world under common standards (not compromising, but based on the imposed template) are comparable to an experimental operation without anesthesia akin to dissection: it is risky and painful. After all, unification is impossible without destroying the unique features of the nation, which is comparable to the mental deconstruction of the nation itself. Therefore, if the transition towards the "western rails" fails organically, further attempts will be more or less violent. In such circumstances, it is neither possible to remain in a shell of dogmatic traditional values and constant distrust of the world around us, nor to be euphoric about the ideals imposed through westernization, which have been elevated over the past few decades to the rank of role models and the raison d'être of all nations in the world. At the same time, the national mentality should not be perceived by the people as some kind of frozen structure; it is as alive and malleable as the nation itself and must necessarily evolve. Nations considered as the 'second' and 'third' world are already beginning to realize that such differentiation is an imposed aggressive attitude to divide the international space into the best and everyone else, initiated by that very 'first world', which threatens the national security and self-identity of sovereign states. In such circumstances Russia seems to have a special place in the world history. Russia is now placed in a difficult situation, which can be described as a struggle for the survival, while striving to remain a significant player on the world stage. The results of our study clearly indicate the differences in national mentality of Russia compared to other European countries which becomes the source of misunderstandings and becomes a reasonable threat, while the acculturation and modernization process continues and somewhat destabilizes the national identity core of Russian society.

Russian national mentality became divided into a core (an unchanging pillar, a solid foundation) and a periphery (open for changes allowing adaptation to the changing conditions of life inside and outside the country). As Byzov notes, the "Russian world" has fractured into two opposing sub-ethnoses, producing disruption of the internal ideological and political balance between the "new modern Russians" and the "old Russians". Thus, the revival and protection of traditional Russian values with proper adaptation to modern realities and the presence of political will remain a priority of Russia. Currently, national strategies as a priority for Russia outline the need: to get rid of the imposition of alien values; to strive to demonstrate to Russians (in the first place) and to the rest of the world (as far as possible) the advantages and merits of traditional values; and combine them with innovations as an inherent quality of the modern world; to find and fix (rather than simply grip and grasp) the Russian model of further development and the foundations of self-identification. Due to war with Ukraine (and the lasting crisis since 2014), people in Russia surely entered into self-protection mode, which strongly stimulated fast return to conservative pole of proper majority in Russia, forming specific self-preserving balloon. However, the Russian society should not completely abandon the positive aspects of the cultural and political experience of other nations, as it is necessary to take positive examples and gradually implement them into Russian practice.

Limitations and propositions for further research. The analysis was based mostly on quantitative data extracted from European Social survey conducted almost a decade ago, in 2016. These results were complemented with more recent empirical observations and literature review. It would be interesting to observe the potential changes in value system that occurred more recently, after escalation of conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Also,

introduction of additional socio-demographic indicators could further indicate and explain the polarization of Russian society in terms of inherent values.

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Результаты процедуры рецензирования статьи

В связи с политикой двойного слепого рецензирования личность рецензента не раскрывается.

Со списком рецензентов издательства можно ознакомиться здесь.

Автор рецензируемой статьи обращается к анализу исключительно важной социокультурной проблемы отношения к традиционным ценностям в условиях глобального мира. Он верно констатирует ситуацию, в которой оказалась сегодняшняя Россия, пытающаяся предотвратить радикальную смену культурных норм, определяющих национальную идентичность и способность самостоятельно выстраивать образ будущего. Правда, как кажется, автор излишне оптимистично характеризует достигнутое нашей страной положение в этой сфере, когда говорит, будто Россия уже сегодня «выстраивает новый формат отношений со странами Запада на паритетной основе». Скорее, Россия лишь провозгласила курс на поддержание культурной самобытности и политической независимости, но никакого «паритета» в выстраивании отношений со странами Запада на сегодняшний день не просматривается, и к области культуры эта констатация приложима не меньшей степени, чем к области политики и экономики. Именно острота сложившейся ситуации и обусловила появление в российском общественном мнении отмеченной автором «озабоченности», давшей о себе знать в разработке «политических программ, ставящих во главу угла сохранение традиционных ценностей, направленных на замедление модернизации и содействие возвращению к традиционному образу жизни». Конечно, к отдельным выражениям автора в этой связи можно высказать замечания. Он излишне широко использует термин «модернизация», скорее, сохранение национальной идентичности требует более энергичной модернизации в научно-технической и экономической сферах, что и способно создать фундамент политической самостоятельности и позволит отстаивать традиционные ценности, а не «плестись в хвосте модернизации», оценивая, например, эффективность научной работы по числу публикаций в западных базах данных. «Традиционный образ жизни» также нуждается в более «аккуратном» использовании; кажется, проблема ложного (может быть, непреднамеренно упрощённого) истолкования темы синтеза новаций и традиций вообще характерна для отечественной истории. Вспомним, например, несправедливые обвинения в адрес славянофилов, которые были ничуть не меньшими «европейцами» и «прогрессистами», если эти понятия связывать не с модой на бритьё бороды, а с интенсификаций развития тех предпосылок, которые не заимствованы извне, а, действительно, определяют индивидуальное «лицо» России. Хотелось бы сделать также некоторые замечания по совершенствованию изложения материала в тексте. Вызывает сомнение целесообразность приведения столь подробных

таблиц, свидетельствующих о проделанной автором работе. Мало того, что они затрудняют чтение (если их действительно просматривать, а не доверять выводам самого автора, – но тогда зачем их и приводить?), но такая форма вообще не характерна для теоретической статьи. Может быть, имеет смысл опубликовать эти материалы в Интернете (за границами журнальной статьи), а в статье на них просто сослаться? Нечто подобное можно сказать и о библиографическом списке: далеко не каждый источник необходим для получения и обоснования представленных в статье выводов, без ущерба для полноты содержания статьи целый ряд работ можно удалить. Несмотря на высказанные замечания, следует констатировать, что представленная статья заслуживает публикации в научном журнале, автор может скорректировать текст в рабочем порядке.