

# The role of language in the formation of value models of cultures

**Oksana Leontieva**

Independent scholar  
Kyiv, Ukraine  
dleonit@gmail.com

**Marina Teplenko**

Independent scholar  
Zhytomir, Ukraine  
hamjoddy@gmail.com

## Abstract

*The extent to which the value systems of different cultures influence each other is one of the most important issues in intercultural communication today, as it is closely related to the understanding and acceptance of the Other. Each of the existing cultures has its own value model created by it. The core of this model is formed by the most ancient layers of language, its root basis. Any value that emerged on the philosophical-religious stratum of culture is encoded with linguistic meanings. These codes form the value core of culture. The paper deals with the extent to which the value codes of one culture influence the codes of another culture. Different value models of cultures are proposed and considered and the role of language in creating their value core is shown.*

*Keywords: cultural universe, value model of culture, language family, ancient stratum of language, linguistic conceptualisation of value codes.*

## Streszczenie

### Rola języka w tworzeniu aksjologicznych modeli kultury

*Stopień, w jakim systemy wartości różnych kultur na siebie wpływają, jest jednym z najważniejszych zagadnień współczesnej komunikacji międzykulturowej, ponieważ jest ściśle powiązany ze zrozumieniem i akceptacją Innego. Każda z istniejących kultur ma swój własny, stworzony przez siebie model wartości. Fundament tego modelu tworzą najstarsze warstwy języka, jego podstawowy rdzeń. Każda wartość, która wyłoniła się z filozoficzno-religijnej warstwy kultury, jest kodowana za pomocą znaczeń językowych. Kody te stanowią rdzeń wartości kultury. Obecny artykuł dotyczy tego, w jakim stopniu kody wartości jednej kultury wpływają na kody innej kultury. W artykule omawiane są różne kulturowe modele wartości oraz rola języka w tworzeniu ich rdzenia.*

*Słowa kluczowe: wszechświat kulturowy, aksjologiczny model kultury, rodzina językowa, starożytna warstwa języka, językowa konceptualizacja kodów wartości.*

## 1. Introduction

The issue of value perception of the Other and the influence of value models of cultures on each other becomes one of the important ones today both in intercultural communication and within multicultural spaces. It is obvious that the influence of another culture on the value core of one culture by overlapping the components of its value core or partial replacement by the value codes of another culture is one of the factors of internal instability of culture, society and man and leads to the development of crisis states within culture. Their origins lie in the violation - to a greater or lesser extent - of the value model formed on the basis of the moral and religious system of a culture, in which the personality of the bearer of this culture is formed. It is an unquestionable fact that language protects the core of a culture's value model and encodes new knowledge into codes with comprehensible content already existing in the culture. In this way, language adapts the value codes of another culture to the codes of its own culture or completely levels them out, while preserving the integrity of the core of its own value model.

The desire to replace the meanings of the codes of the perceived culture with the meanings of one's own culture is one of the main reasons for misunderstanding the Other in intercultural communication. Any Other is perceived through the prism of the value model of one's own culture. This error of perceiving another culture becomes an attempt to influence and replace the value code of that culture, which ultimately leads to conflict situations in intercultural communication.

## 2. Culture as the human universe

Man is born in culture and his life ends in it. "For if in history man acts, in culture he lives. Culture, in the end, is the realisation of values as the embodiment of transcendent and living human spirit" (Vyzhletsov, 2016: 16)<sup>1</sup>. Outside of culture a person does not think of himself, he is dependent on it and his life is subject to its laws. Culture represents the meanings characteristic of a given society. On the one hand, a person's life is framed within the inherited stable reality of the culture's world image, but on the other hand, a person is vulnerable to their own unstable reality. The instability of reality is affected by both internal factors inherent to each individual and external factors, in particular the influence of another culture (or cultures), which has become especially active today thanks to modern communication channels. Being in such a complex system of

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<sup>1</sup> All quotations from non-English sources in this article are my own translations, unless otherwise indicated.

multidimensional influence, a person is simultaneously vulnerable both to his/her own reality and to the reality of other cultures, the laws of which he/she does not understand and very often does not realise, accepting or not accepting the Other as his/her own. This happens when cultural values are similar or appear to be so. A person is simultaneously in several fields: a) the field of stable reality of his culture's world image and the values created by it; b) the field of his own unstable reality, in which meanings may fluctuate, but within the framework of his culture's world image, values are subordinated to the culture's values; c) the field of influence of another (alien) culture with other meanings, similar or distinctive, and other values, which are more or less different. Initially a person adopts the culture of his birth, in which he is formed as a person and acquires its values, because a person does not have an innate predisposition to certain values. The content of values is not genetically determined.

The values of a culture are formed in the basis of its moral and religious system. After Nietzschean "God is dead," values became the dominant feature of both human and social existence and replaced the moral laws created by the religious-philosophical system. The eyes of European scholars turned to culture as a way (form, model, system, environment) of personality formation and provision of its values, so culture became a subject of research of different humanities. Man and his universe were placed in the centre of these studies. Culture became man's universe, his environment: the environment of birth, the environment of existence, and the environment of development, i.e. the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. The essence of man began to be sought in his potential universality. Different scientific disciplines with their disciplinary approaches and methods of cultural research took their place in the study of the "human-universal" system. Cultural anthropology sees culture as: 1) a phenomenon, and considers it as an abstraction that does not have its ontological existence (knowledge, beliefs, art, morality, customs, traditions, language, etc.); 2) a process, and considers culture as a system of historically developing suprabiological programmes of human activity. Philosophy adheres to this understanding of culture, which sees culture as a set of stable forms of human activity. Ethnolinguistics, as part of cultural anthropology, demonstrates the relationship between language and culture through conceptualisation. Cultural sociology implies the word "culture," first of all, as "opposite to the natural spontaneous 'animal' behaviour of man, the order of things" (Mitkina, 2018: 19). "Culture is the optimal way of regulating human nature and group egoism for a given time, in other words, in it lies the potency of human evolution and higher organisation and higher responsibility" (Gorelov and Gorelova, 2015: 31). Culture is "the most general form of collective human interaction" (Flier, 2011: 141), and expresses itself as communication (Lotman, 1992: 47).

Being a social being, a human being cannot think of himself outside of social interaction, outside of activity and outside of values created by culture. Values stabilise the unstable human reality. Culture is impossible without man, man cannot be a person with his value sphere outside culture. Thus, culture has become the environment of man's existence, his universe and extends its influence on all aspects of human life.

### **3. Perception of culture as a universe**

Human interaction takes place in the universe of their cultures as a field of their cultural experience, which holds semantic and associative structures, thematic groups, and culturemes. Language, as the basic and most important biological-social programme, is one of the simplest ways of making these connections through communication.

#### **3.1. The value-based representation of the cultural universe**

“Culture is the soul of a nation and the symbol of its identity. Every culture has an identity and every identity has a core of high values and ideals” (Radwan Al-Wreikat, 2022: 1223). The cultural universe contains permanent imperatives (continuity of morality, which represents the highest principle of morality). Values are an important part of the cultural universe and are related to its moral and ethical basis. “Values are cultural representations that saturate the population. The values component of culture is quite stable. It is not easily changed” (Morris, 2013: 21). Whereas morality is the discernment of intentions, decisions and actions and is concerned with the individual as an individual, morality is a way of life and is primarily concerned with society and the individual as part of that society. Whereas for individualistic cultures values are a way of realising moral principles, for collectivistic cultures values are part of the moral basis of society and are not distinguished independently. Values have the property of individualising; they individualise the moral foundations of a culture. They include norms of care and justice as well as values of self-determination. The definition and place of value in culture is in some ways the same and in some ways different. Values in collectivist cultures are woven into ethical norms and are not emphasised as an independent element. Values in individualistic cultures are emphasised as an independent element of culture separated from morality. Conflict arises between the value models of different cultures.

“The world in which we live is driven not only by unconscious forces but also – and more decisively – by human values..... and that the struggle to save the planet becomes ultimately a struggle for higher-order values” (Sperry, 1983: 21). “In all cultural phenomena we shall always

find the embodiment of some value recognised by man, for the sake of which these phenomena were either created or, if they existed before, nurtured by man... and if all value is taken away from a cultural object, it becomes part of mere nature” (Rickert, [1898/1926]1998: 57). Values are based on the cultural heritage of society, “they are then under the protection of culture, thus different cultures can produce a completely different set (and sometimes even opposite) of values” (Mitkina, 2018: 101). Values of culture are universally significant, “any universally significant value becomes truly significant only in an individual context” (Bakhtin, [1986] 2003:18). “Although values appear to be a form of mental representation, people rationalise their behaviour in terms of values, even if this is due to other things” (Morris, 2013: 21). A person’s value orientations are laid down by the culture of the society they inhabit. “Country-level value orientations change slowly, persisting over centuries” (Schwartz, 2006: 158).

Schwartz identified 7 cultural orientations of civilisational values and explained them, and I summarize his thoughts below.

Culture in America differs from that of other English-speaking countries in that there is more emphasis on domination and hierarchy and less on intellectual autonomy, harmony, and egalitarianism. This profile indicates a cultural orientation that encourages an assertive, pragmatic, entrepreneurial and even exploitative orientation towards the social and natural environment. Cultural emphases in the US show a complex pattern: the individualistic aspect of American value orientations is an emphasis on effective autonomy and domination at the expense of harmony. Intellectual autonomy is relatively unimportant. Moreover, both hierarchy and attachment, the central orientations of collectivism, are higher compared to Western Europe. This corresponds to the emphasis on religion, conservative family values punishing deviance.

Concerning “the West” egalitarianism, intellectual autonomy and harmony are higher in Western Europe; mastery, hierarchy and attachment are higher in the USA. Cultural orientations in Western Europe are individualistic in one sense: they emphasise intellectual and affective autonomy and downplay hierarchy and attachment compared to other cultures in most of the world. “That is, this culture calls for selfless concern for the welfare of others” and accommodation “to the natural and social world, rather than striving to change it through assertive action.”

*Confucianism.* “The Confucian-influenced region also exhibits a pragmatic entrepreneurial orientation. However, this orientation combines a heavy emphasis on hierarchy and mastery with a rejection of egalitarianism and harmony as compared with other regions. This region emphasises embeddedness more than all the European and American cultures.” There is little intra-regional variation except in Japan, where the level of harmony of intellectual autonomy is much higher and the level of integration and hierarchy is lower.

*Africa and the Middle East.* The cultural groups of Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Muslim Middle East, which also includes Turkey, Israeli Jews and Cyprus. These cultures have particularly high levels of embeddedness and low levels of affective intellectual autonomy. Thus, they emphasise the need for meaning in life mainly through social relations and the defence of group solidarity and traditional order, rather than through the cultivation of individual uniqueness. Within the region, there are great differences in everything except rootedness, egalitarianism, and intellectual autonomy.

*South Asia.* “The culture in the South Asian region is particularly high in hierarchy and embeddedness and low in autonomy and egalitarianism. This points to an emphasis on fulfilling one’s obligations in a hierarchical system – obeying expectations from those in roles of greater status or authority and expecting humility and obedience from those in inferior roles. As in Africa, here social relationships rather than autonomous pursuits are expected to give meaning to life.” With the exception of the high level of craftsmanship in India, all groups are culturally very homogeneous. The diversity of dominant religions in this region does not produce cultural heterogeneity along major lines.

*Eastern Europe.* “The Eastern European cultures are low in embeddedness and hierarchy compared with Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, but higher in these cultural orientations than Western Europe and the Americas.” Baltic and East-Central states are more harmonious, intellectually autonomous and egalitarian and lower in mastery and hierarchy than Balkan nations and more Eastern states.

*Latin America.* “Latin America is higher in hierarchy and embeddedness, presumably the main components of collectivism, and lower in intellectual autonomy, presumably the main component of individualism.” (cf. Schwartz, 2006: 158-161).

Any values, even contradictory ones, can be reconciled if a specific contextual integration is taken into account.

Acting as a link in the human-universal system, values have their own characteristics: 1) they are not necessarily realised by the individual and society; 2) they are not openly articulated; 3) they tend to be consistent, i.e. the same values attract similar values; 4) if a particular value is inconsistent with a set of already existing values, it is not easily integrated and is often ignored and excluded; 5) values establish social criteria and cultural preconditions on the basis of which good and evil, right and wrong are established; 5) values are the basis for the integration of values into the human-universal system. They are undoubtedly felt and establish what is desired, but it is certainly this passion that can prevent the perception of values different from one’s own; 7) values determine the propensity to act; 8) values are built on epistemological criteria because the way

people have come to know the world affects people's view of the world. "While some cultures see themselves as part of the world around them, others see themselves as fundamentally distant from the 'outside' world. As a result, the meaning and significance of, for example, the word 'flower' can be radically and completely different" (Frey, 1994: 20-23).

Being inside the universe of culture, values are conceptualised, filled with linguistic forms/images and have internal content. Values of any culture have a meaning fixed in language. As a consequence, similar values of different cultures have different contents and are filled with different meanings. Values are conceptualised by forms/images:

1) literal-denotative values extend to physical senses and have literal meaning. For example, in the Old Testament, a desert is a "wilderness" and a cursed land "full of thorns and thistles" (Hebrews 6: 8);

2) metaphorical-connotative values are based on mental conceptualisation and have an implicit metaphorical meaning. They involve more figurative and abstract images, often they are images of qualities and are much less literal in their presentations, they are implicitly compared to existing values, i.e. values of social civilisation, economic use and aesthetic beauty. For example, "Wilderness is the opposite of civilisation" (public civilisation), "Wilderness is useless land" (economic use), "Wilderness is a place where birds fly free and the beauty of flowers shines with the colours of the rainbow" (aesthetic). Rationalism, literary criticism and racial prejudice are based on these values;

3) anagogic-implicative values derive from intuitive or mystical experience and have an implicit metaphorical meaning, such as divine revelation. For example, "The desert is the place where God and all true wisdom can be found." Artistic and religious inspiration is linked to these values (Frey, 1994: 19-24).

And so, values are conceptualised in the universe of culture and can be seen as its mental representations revealed in concepts.

### **3.2. Representation of the cultural universe through its linguistic conceptualisation**

Culture is not fragmentary, culture is holistic, it has an internal logic of development, transforming and changing reality. Despite the fact that the cultural universe is a holistic entity, there are constant changes within it, in particular cultural transitions. Cultural transitions refer to any cultural entity that, moving from one context to another, will generate its own meaning. This metamorphosis can also contribute to the production and reproduction of cultural meanings. Cultural entities are represented as concepts, which are the basic unit of the human thought code (Sternin, 2005: 260). A person lives in the world of concepts. He thinks with them. "A concept is

a lump of culture in human consciousness; something in the form of which culture enters the mental world of a person. In addition, a concept is something through which a person himself enters culture and in some cases influences it” (Stepanov, 2022: 40). A concept (the concept of the sign) is not a static connection between meaning and form. It is a dynamic connection between two philosophical spheres, and both of these spheres are connected to each other through loops of reality (Clair et al., 2018).

A concept is constructed in a particular cultural context, setting a single and unambiguous deep meaning for the bearer of the culture. Cultural concepts encode and transform information. “Cultural concepts are the repository of culture, cultural meanings and values” (Dichkovskaya, 2017, 19-20).

Culture is language. The very existence of language as a phenomenon is impossible without culture, just as the existence of culture is unthinkable without language. Language is an integral part of culture, the main tool of its assimilation, it is the reality of our spirit. Language expresses specific features of national mentality. Culture is included in language because it is all modelled in the text. “It is the lexical composition of language that reflects the uniqueness of culture in the most obvious way. Language also reflects the national characteristics of each nation (its mentality). Such values are reflected, as a rule, in proverbs, sayings, phraseological expressions, cultural standards, precedent texts, situations, aphorisms, etc. Culture lives and develops in the “linguistic shell” (Ziyamukhamedova and Adilbekova, 2022: 539-540).

Science, beliefs, values, arts, laws and traditions are symbols of the universe of culture. Culture embodies its practice of beliefs, values, language, principles, shrines and laws and is a moral force (Radwan Al-Wreikat, 2022: 1225). Human symbols are “open” and very susceptible to acquiring new or different meanings. Given the openness of symbols, it is evident that meaning is not “stored” in symbols, it is not “stored” outside our cultures as if it were a free-floating phenomenon (Wilson, 2018).

Symbols are conceptualised in language, which also allows us to discover a connection with the oldest layers of a nation’s culture, its religious experience, reflection of aesthetic and scientific knowledge of the world. “Man lives in two worlds at the same time - natural and cultural, manifesting his dual essence: social and individual” (Vendina, 2022: 152-153). Language “contains in its concepts a certain picture of the world, transmits it to all members of the language community and allows a person to unite all experience into a single picture of the world” (Weisgerber, [1929] 1993: 250).

By conceptualising symbols, language provides a person with a certain freedom to choose various semantic equivalents; “stable turns indicate that the word is loaded with ethical meanings” (Vendina, 2022: 153).

“There are many ways of linguistic appeal to any concept. One and the same concept can be appealed to with the help of linguistic units of different levels: lexemes, phraseological phrases, free word combinations, sentences. The ways of appealing to the same concept in different cultures, as a rule, are different, which is the main difficulty of intercultural communication” (Karasik, 2002: 171).

Bromley notes that “within one’s own culture one creates a strong illusion of one’s own vision of the world, way of life, mentality, etc. as the only possible one. Only by going beyond one’s own culture, i.e. by encountering a different worldview, worldview, etc., one can understand the specificity of one’s social consciousness, one can understand the difference or conflict of cultures” (Bromley, 1983: 59).

The presentation of the concepts of “value” and “morality” and their content in different cultures is given here as an example.

Values are individual beliefs that motivate people to act in one way or another, guidelines for a person's behaviour. The values people are brought up on are believed and considered right. The personal qualities we choose to embody guide our actions and provide general guidelines for behaviour.

Morality is a set of individual and social standards for good and bad behaviour and character, the quality of being right, honest, and acceptable.

Values (Russian) is the importance, significance, favour, usefulness of something. Externally, value appears as a property of an object or phenomenon. However, significance and usefulness are inherent in them not by nature, not simply by virtue of the internal structure of the object itself, but are subjective assessments of specific properties that are involved in the sphere of human social existence, a person is interested in them or feels the need. The system of values plays the role of everyday reference points in the subject and social reality of man, designations of his various practical relations to surrounding objects and phenomena. For example, a glass, being a tool for drinking, manifests its useful property as a value, a material good.

Morality (Russian) – moral quality of a person, rules that guide a person in their choices.

Value (Arabic) is all the provisions that correspond to legal control and that apply to the individual, to people with different levels of knowledge and their life as the practice of certain situations. They are all judgements that are in accordance with both legal and social rules that are

embedded in the personality of people with different educational, social characteristics and lifestyles.

Morality (Arabic) is a form of human consciousness, it is considered to be a set of values and principles that move people and nations, such as freedom and equality, so that they rise to the point where they become cultural references for these nations. Morality plays an important role in changing the current situation into a good habit. That is why the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, said: "I have been sent for the perfection of your morals."

Values (Chinese) are a personal understanding of things and an attitude based on that understanding.

Morals (Chinese) are the people's value orientation, the norms of common human life and behaviour. The connection is that they both represent attitudes towards things, the difference being that morality is a positive attitude and is collective in nature, whereas values are neutral and represent individual judgements. Moral models are an important banner for society, promoting virtue and doing good.

Value (German) – a set of positive properties of a thing, person and their ideal meaning, value in relation to a certain standard, moral meaning.

Morality (German) – refers to the values and rules accepted in society, what people consider right and good; a system of historical and socially conditioned moral principles, values and norms.

Value (Persian) – the beliefs of people or human groups about desirable and appropriate things. Different values represent major aspects of the diversity of human culture.

Morality (Persian) – the compound of nature and human nature, implying character, temperament, nature, etc., refers to the inner invisible face of man, which can be understood through discernment.

And so, values constitute the core of culture, which is formed from value codes consisting of meaning-filled content. Around this core the universe of culture is built. The universe of culture is represented through its linguistic conceptualisation. The meanings of culture are contained in its concepts as mental units of representation of knowledge about the world. Concepts have different content in different cultures, as it reflects the concept of culture and the peculiarity of its value models. The concept of culture and its value models constitute the universe of culture.

#### **4. Value models of cultures: peculiarities of influence on each other**

The value models of culture remain unchanged due to the stability of its value core, which is provided by the categories of truth and conditional truth. These categories are connected with the

ancient layers of language and represent the root meanings of words. Such words constitute a concept as a mental representation. Only the ways and forms of representation of value models in different time periods can change.

As an example, let us consider the concept of “freedom” in cultures of different language families: in distantly related languages, such as English, German and Russian, belonging to the Indo-European family, in unrelated languages such as Arabic (Semitic language family), Persian (Indo-Iranian language family), and Chinese (Sino-Tibetan language family).

The concept of “freedom” as a value will be considered in terms of truth, conditional truth, and falsehood. The analysis is based on the meaning of the root bases of the word “freedom” in the ancient layers of the language and their reflection in the value core of culture. The core meaning of the word, which is often the oldest, is considered as true; the marginal meaning of the word, which appeared later, is considered as conditionally true; and the meaning of the word borrowed from another culture is considered as false. True within a culture is the oldest stratum of it, which fixes a basic value as a true value. The religious and philosophical systems of culture are built on these true values.

Thus, the value core of culture accommodates the true and conditionally true and does not contain the false. A code different from the basic code of true and conditionally true is perceived as false if the semantic content of these codes is different. Let us consider the influence, for example, of the values of American culture on the value core of other cultures and why errors of perception of the values of another culture occur.

#### **4.1. Closely related languages of the same branch of the language family (American and German cultures)**

The concept of “freedom” in the American culture, which now extends to Western civilisation, combines: a) the state of a free man, i.e. free will (of one’s own accord, one’s own will); b) the absence of restrictions by the authorities; c) the power of self-determination. In the ancient language stratum (Old English), “to be free, not being in bondage, acting of one’s own free will” is seen, because a slave is one deprived of something. What is true in this culture is “freedom as the will of man.” Another value present in Old English, “affection, friendship, peace, love” is seen as conditionally true. The basic meaning of this value is “self and my self-determination,” i.e. “freedom is one’s own choice” or “freedom is self.” In the modern interpretation it is self-confidence, dissolution of personal attachment and independence of personality. Own choice is one of the basic values of this culture. Thus, the model of American culture, according to the code of true “freedom – I,” can be conditionally called “I culture” (see Section 6).

In German culture, the concept of “freedom,” along with a similar meaning in Old English, has a deeper Proto-Germanic layer, which means “beloved” (possibly “friend”) and was applied to free members of the clan (as opposed to slaves). “A community based on friendship, peace and respect” became the basis of the values of German culture. The same value is characteristic of Scandinavian cultures: “peace, personal security, love and friendship.” The code of the truth is “freedom as peace and respect.”

The truth for American culture is the individual’s own choice (this refers primarily to the external manifestations of that choice, since the will is seen as desire – one of the forms of experiencing need in psychology). This culture was the heir to the Ancient Roman civilisation, for which the need was external (material) attributes. A free man provided his needs through external attributes. They became an indicator of a person’s freedom (not slavery) as opposed to a slave who did not have such opportunities, he was deprived of them.

What is true for German culture is the inner criteria, which manifests itself in the external world as “a community based on friendship as equality, where peace and love reign.” Peace is possible through the manifestation of the inner quality of love. Peace and friendship bring people together in community. “Friendship is a personal responsibility and privilege.” Thus, it is important for German culture to nurture love in the self and to realise it in the peacefulness and friendliness of the community. “I” is part of “we” (corresponds to equality).

In the interaction of closely related cultures (Romano-Germanic languages), there is an attempt to substitute values by superimposing them on each other, because the code of conditional truth in American culture, “affection, friendship, peace, love,” coincides with the code of truth in German culture. If American culture belongs to the “I culture” type, German culture, according to our classification, belongs to the “I→We culture” type (see Section 6).

In this situation, the “I” of American culture corresponds with the “We” of German culture, while the core of the value model of German culture is subject to distortions. Let us consider this on the example. Thus, the American “you” in the phrase “dear (you), good morning (you), hi (you),” etc. is a neutral form of address and refers to a mate as well as a person who is older or respected. In German culture these relations are regulated, the forms of address are different – “Sie” for a person older or respected and “Du” for a mate. Nowadays in German society, there is very often a superimposition of American culture on German culture. This is due to active online communication and mainly concerns the behaviour of young people, for whom everyone, regardless of age, status and other criteria, is often referred to only as “Du.” Thus, the traditional meaning of “respect for elders” enshrined by German culture is being changed to a pan-

discriminatory one, which creates an additional mental strain for many members of German society.

The influence of the value codes of cultures of closely related languages of the same language family on each other consists in superimposing the code of the conditionally true “I culture” on the code of the true “I→We culture,” which leads to distortions in the basic value model of the “I→We culture.”

#### **4.2. Distantly related languages and cultures of the same branch of the language family (American and Russian cultures)**

In Russian culture, the concept of “freedom” has very ancient roots, borrowed from Old Slavonic – “belonging to one’s own, community, personality” and further from the Indo-European base – “one’s own, self.” Community and personality are related to each other, i.e. they form one semantic series. Community are individuals, personalities that are their own. This is similar to German, but carries a different semantic equivalent. In Old Russian culture there was no concept of “slave” in the meaning in which it existed in the Ancient Roman civilisation. Slavery did not take root in Russia, so “slave” denoted a bonded labourer, derived even earlier from the Indo-European orphan. The root image of freedom in the Church Slavonic was “self-mastery inherent in man, meeting with oneself in God and with God in oneself.” What has become the nucleus was “one’s own (community) in God/ with God.” Hence, man becomes free when he is in harmony with God. In the Russian understanding, a “slave” is also a free man if he is in harmony with his God.

Truth in Russian culture is the understanding of freedom as “understanding oneself through God”, i.e. self-control. Rallying around God, unity with God, i.e. freedom, becomes a spiritual value. True freedom is spiritual freedom. The code of truth is “self-mastery in the spirit.”

Conditional truth for Russian culture is also internal freedom as a moral ideal, which means freedom of spirit. Therefore, for the Russian person the concept of “freedom” in the sense of American culture as “freedom of will” is unnatural and false, which leads away from the true path of salvation in Christ as spiritual perfection. Without such freedom it is impossible to overcome man’s own lowly nature.

The false in Russian culture is selfish freedom, which is manifested through external attributes and is superficial, shallow, and unfeeling, and in doing so, the value of freedom as the way in Christ is violated. Russian culture belongs to the “We→I culture” type (see Section 6).

In the Russian understanding, only God can have a will (e.g., “God’s will is for everything”), and man submits to his will and, according to God’s will, builds his life. Man’s will is at the mercy of God’s will, so “I” and “God” are indivisible, in contrast to “I culture”, where man’s will

determines the whole order of life. The code of the truth and conditional truth in the “We→I culture” are interrelated. In this case, the error of perception arises between the I-true and the I-false, where “I” is both “spirit” and “will” at the same time (but if it were my will, I would roll mountains). “I-will subordinate to God” and “I-will as God” create a conflict, but it does not violate the value model of the culture. The conflict is between the false (“We→I culture”) and the true “I culture.” This conflict is on the surface and does not affect the value core of the culture.

The influence of the value codes of the cultures of distantly related languages of the same branch of the language family on each other consists in an attempt to superimpose the code of the true “I culture” on the code of the conditionally true “We→I culture.” In this case, the value core of the “We→I culture” is not subject to distortions, it remains integral.

#### **4.3. Unrelated languages and cultures of different branches of the same language family (American and Iranian cultures)**

In Iranian culture, which was formed on Old Persian and whose language belongs to the branch of Indo-Iranian languages, the concept of “freedom” is associated with the meaning of “the one who is dear.” In Iranian languages, the root of the word “free” comes from a concept that refers to the act of birth. In the ancient Aryan language, “free” meant real, noble. The value semantic core of the concept of “freedom” is the notion “born to be noble,” “born to be true.”

The truth for Iranian culture is nobility, “freedom is nobility.” The code of the truth is “nobility.” Nobility as a character trait is associated with high morality, which is coupled with selflessness and honour. These components help a person to be genuine and valuable to society.

Conditional truth is the second derivation from the Indo-European root “free” - based on friendship and built on the reflection of love. Love means freedom. In Iranian culture, the conditionally true “freedom is love for the world and man,” “freedom is friendship between people”, complements and deepens the true “freedom is nobility.” The codes of the conditionally true are “freedom as friendship,” “freedom as love.”

False for Iranian culture is freedom based on obtaining external benefits if in doing so one loses nobility. This type of culture can be categorised as “I→We→I culture” or “birth and rebirth” culture (see Section 6).

The influence of the value codes of cultures with unrelated languages of different branches of the same language family on each other is to try to superimpose the code of the “I culture” on the basic code of the “I→We→I culture.” For the American culture “I” is my will, my desires, my psychic, manifested to the outside world through my desires; for the Iranian culture “I” is born to

be noble, so I am born – I am raised in goodness – I am noble, manifested to the outside world as a benefactor. An attempt to superimpose the code of the true “I culture” on the code of the true “I→We→I culture” cannot affect the value core of the “I→We→I culture.” It retains its integrity and is not subject to distortion.

#### 4.4. Unrelated languages and cultures of different linguistic families

##### 4.4.1. Territorially close (Arabic culture and Iranian culture)

The value core of the concept of “freedom” in Arabic culture is “to be free from impurity, slavery or baseness,” i.e. it is the state of a person who is not ruled by unconsciousness, psychological motives, madness and feelings of moral responsibility. The focus or value is the man himself and his mental state.

The true man and his mental states are the man and his mental states that reveal his capacity in creation. The creative man is the highest value of Arab culture. The code of the truth is “freedom as creation.”

Conditionally true is the integrity of nature and the world (heaven and earth as one). Hence the integrity of the family as a social part of nature. The basis of integrity is honour. It should be noted that in Arab culture the conditionally true is a part of the true and helps to reveal its fullness. The code of the conditionally true is “freedom as family honour.”

Falsehood is the attainment of well-being through impurity and the destruction of a favourable mental state. Welfare attained by destroying one’s mental integrity, i.e. by greed, is impure welfare. The false is on the borderline of the value model (see Section 6). The property of this culture is to purify the foreign and adapt it to one’s own. The model of this culture is a “We→I→We culture,” where we are the family. The self is subordinate to the family and the family is subordinate to the self. It is a culture of cyclical hierarchy.

The influence of the value codes of the cultures of (territorially close) unrelated languages of different language families on each other exists, but it is invisible, because the code of the true “I-good” “I→We→I culture” (Iranian culture) does not oppose the code of the true and conditionally true “we-family” “We→I→We culture” (Arabic culture) and the codes of the cultures do not overlap. The code of “I-ness” and the code of “we-ness” can influence each other and accept the codes in the value models of their cultures as conditionally true, thus complementing and expanding the core of the value models of their cultures.

##### 4.4.2. Territorially distant (American and Arab, American and Chinese)

In Chinese culture, the concept of “freedom” as understood by Westerners is absent. The Chinese language borrowed the word from Japanese, where it was used only in translating documents. The meaning is the same as in English, but outside the business environment, Chinese people generally understand it as “casual sex.” This concept does not exist in the ancient language layers of Chinese culture. But in the ancient layers of culture, we can find something resembling freedom, which is “the way.” According to the treatise by Zhuangzi, life is limitless and knowledge is limited. Our language and cognition already presupposes a “path” to which each of us is bound by past paths. Lao-tzu believed that all processes in nature and in the inner world of man are cyclical and interconnected (Laozi, 2017). The main value meaning of the concept of “path” is infinite movement (infinity between heaven and earth, infinity of “yin” and “yang”). The disruption of the flow of infinity is a kind of loss in the European understanding of freedom, something that can destroy the nature and essence of man and the world. This flow is not interrupted when one practices virtue (benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom, faith).

What is true in this culture is free endless movement in human development. The code of the truth is “freedom as the way.”

Conditionally true is anything that maintains eternal harmony. This is, for example, establishing harmonious relationships between people, where “justice, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom, and trust” are five common ways to establish such harmony. Freedom in this understanding is to act rightly based on the situation, without hassle, and to genuinely take responsibility for others. The conditional true does not go against the true. It sort of explains the place and reason for the likeness of the Supreme on earth. The code of the conditionally true is “freedom as harmony.”

False is anything that does not conform to virtue and does not develop it. These are usually codes that are brought in from other cultures. Such codes stand apart and cannot embed themselves in the value core of a culture. Hence, the replacement of all foreign words with Chinese words, where even the meanings of these words are fitted to the culturally established image of the world (see Section 6). The false is outside the culture, but it is “found” an adaptive analogue within the culture. This type of culture can be labelled as “I→You→We culture.”

The influence of the value codes of the cultures of (geographically distant) unrelated languages of different language families on each other can occur only at the external level, and neither the value core of the culture nor its model itself is affected in any way. At the external level, which is tangential to cultures, the influence can potentially arise at the level of needs: “I-will” as a need (American culture) and “I→You→We→Way” (one infinite path) as a need

(Chinese culture). Even in this potential situation, it is possible to adapt the “virtue” code of “I→You→We culture” to the “affection, friendship, peace, love” code of “I culture,” or vice versa.

We have also defined the semantic fields of the true, conditionally true and imaginary in value patterns. When a culture selects the pattern of true values, we have taken into account: a) for the Indo-European language family (actually, and the cultures formed on their basis), the mental capabilities of the members of the community that help them to exist in the natural world; b) for the cultures of the Indo-Iranian language family, the emphasis on the internal qualities of a person as well as physical characteristics, i.e. the harmony of the external and internal. This can be explained by the fact that in Sanskrit, the ancestor of the written languages of these two branches, one word had dozens of meanings and very often objects were named figuratively. Images were correlated with external characteristics of the described object or phenomenon, otherwise descriptive observation (contemplation) was recorded. For the Arabic culture, whose language belongs to the Afroasiatic family, contemplation of the world through inner purity as a tremendous psychic creative force is true well-being, which, in turn, should manifest itself as a duty, an obligation to society. This is the basic value model of Arab culture. For Chinese culture, such a basic value model is the unity of the natural world and the human world. Nature is benevolent and man is benevolent as long as he is in the flow. Man is good, i.e. physically, mentally and spiritually healthy, when he is in continuous movement and development.

These value models of cultures are embedded in the consciousness of their representatives and are the mental representation of the culture. Different languages create different images of the world. Differences in worldviews do not arise at all because of differences in thinking, but because of the diversity of conditions in which thought processes take place.

It follows that if there is no contradiction between the true and the conditionally true in the value model of a culture, and the conditionally true reveals the essence of the true, then such cultures are not influenced by the value models of other cultures (e.g. Iranian, Arabic, Chinese cultures). On the contrary, if the conditionally true does not fully reveal the essence of the true, then distortions in the value core of culture are possible, which is observed in Western civilisation.

## **5. Six models of culture**

And so, on the basis of the analysis of ancient root bases of words, which constitute one of the value codes of culture, which constitute the core of its value system, 6 models of cultures were preliminarily singled out. The selection of cultures for analysis was conducted not randomly, but taking into account the relation to the existing (or created) earlier cultures-civilisations. Thus,

American (English) culture is the heir to the value component of the Ancient Roman civilisation, German culture – to the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, Russian culture – to the Russian civilisation, Iranian culture – to the Ancient Persian civilisation, Arab culture – to the ancient civilisations and the modern Arab civilisation, Chinese culture – to the Ancient Pre-Confucian and Confucian civilisations. We have not considered all the cultures of all currently existing language families, as our task was to determine the regularities and specifics of the influence of the value systems of cultures on each other, as well as to see the correlation (coincidence) of the value models of cultures with the cultural value orientations singled out by Schwartz (2006).

Cultures belonging to the Indo-European language family in its Indo-European branch are represented by the models of “I culture” (American culture), “I→We culture” (German culture), “We→I culture” (Russian culture). Culture belonging to the Indo-European language family to its Indo-Iranian branch is represented by the “I→We→I culture” model (Iranian culture). The culture belonging to the Semitic languages of the Afroasiatic language family is represented by the “We→I→We culture” model (Arab culture). The culture belonging to the Sino-Tibetan language family is represented by the “I→You→We culture” model (Chinese culture).

Let us explain the meaning of the presented value models. I am an individual, You are an individual, We are a collective/society. The sequence of arrangement shows the order of subordination in culture, which is built on its value core.

- “I culture” – the individual decides and chooses on his/her own.
- “I→We culture” – the individual is autonomous, but co-exists with the collective/community.
- “We→I culture” – the individual is subordinate to the collective/community, the collective dominates personal choice.
- “I→We→I culture” – the personality is born as part of the collective, is in it, subject to its laws, but develops as an individual.
- “We→I→We culture” – the personality is subordinated to the collective, individualised in it, but fully included in the collective/community.
- “I→You→We culture” - each personality develops as an individual and together they form a strong community.

And so, the value models of cultures that we have identified through linguistic analysis practically coincide with the cultural value orientations identified by Schwartz.

## 6. Value systems of cultures of different language families (additional information)

### 6.1. Arab civilisation

Arab culture is a civilisation of phenomena (culture of *fath*, *fath* – “revealing”), Persian culture is a civilisation of wisdom, Russian culture is a civilisation of the word, European civilisation is a civilisation of action, and Chinese civilisation is a civilisation of the way (the centre of heaven and earth).

For example, the imaginary in Arab culture is closely related to the aesthetics of perception and is realised/ manifested through *qasidah* poetry. It is a form of phenomenological cognition of the world. The phenomenological principle is based on the aesthetic principle. Aesthetic enjoyment excites the mind and makes one see the connection between seemingly totally unrelated phenomena, in such a way that it is as if the knowledge or cognition of the world around is slowly revealed. The *qasidahs* chant the same thing, but have different semantic variations. The different semantic variations lead to finding connections between the phenomena through which the human mind comes to understand the phenomenon and further isolate and name it. This is achieved by metaphorising the world and phenomenolising it. In this culture, the imaginary is more socialised than individualised due to the specificity of the culture itself, in which the group is a basic and necessary part of human life (family, society, relatives, friends). In this culture, it is not customary to be alone; a person is part of a family and society. A son is judged by his father, a daughter by her mother. Therefore, the boundaries between the imaginary, the represented and the true are blurred - the imaginary becomes true, the represented also becomes true due to the plurality of words referring to one object or phenomenon. For example, the poet Imruulkais describes an abandoned car park in the desert as follows:

In the sandy valley the traces of hearths have survived  
 And seem from afar to be tattooed on the body.  
 And his contemporary Tarafa complemented and clarified:  
 “The remains of the fire at Ar-Rukamayn are like a tattoo.  
 Like a tattoo that time has licked from the skin.” (Imra al-Qais, 2023a).

Metaphor was a strength of Arabic poetry. A Bedouin could say, for example, that memories “blind him like desert sand” and that a lover’s eyes water from separation as if he had “eaten an unripe melon.” Sneaking up on his enemies, he “wrapped himself in the darkness of the night like

a woman in a fur cloak,” and the bow he drew moaned “like a doe that has lost its calf.” (Imra al-Qais, 2023b).

## **6.2. Chinese civilisation**

Chinese culture as a civilisation of the path (the centre of heaven and earth where “yin” and “yang” come together; cf. Clair et al., 2018) – it is a constant endless path that has neither a beginning nor an end. This path is eternal, the foundations of which are laid in the Chinese philosophy of ethics-socioculture. Man perceives the world from heaven, but lives on earth, and is therefore the centre of heaven and earth. Humanity as it relates to the world in the sky, cognition and actions are dictated by the heart – this is all in accordance with the way of eternity. Everything is born from what is and everything is from what is not. No is a conceptual absolute and a thought fiction. The path represents an invisible law and the device is a material object. Furthermore, the path is a two-way movement and opposites alternate and turn into each other, e.g. “positive is a miracle and good is a demon,” “misfortune is happiness and happiness is misfortune,” “that which benefits is that which benefits,” “the yellow of the earth and the colour of radiance, the colour of youth and the colour of old age, prosperity and withering, wealth and poverty” (cf. Laozi, 2017). In this the cyclical nature of the human journey between heaven and earth is manifested. The interaction of opposites is the inner source of change in things, and the transformation of opposites is a universal law. This is demonstrated by the legendary song book “Shijing” (1987) and shows the unity of music, song and dance and is characterised by subtle observation of natural phenomena and human psychology. The basic human experiences are reverence for duty, the joy of friendship, love of labour, thirst for justice, concern for the harvest, reverence for ancestors, and the fate of the forebears of great houses. “The beautiful past” becomes an inaccessible ideal that one tries to replicate. The texts of the book are useful for the ideal order of things, “the rule of rites and duty” and demonstrate the most common – diligence, orientation “on the common,” spontaneity, the ability to see fleeting beauty (beauty not only as a reflection of the emotional life of man, but also in itself). The system of values is based on five constants - humanity, duty, ritual, knowledge, sincerity.

Traditional Chinese culture is, first of all, a culture of harmony, harmony, unity. Its basic principles are the endeavour to maintain universal order, stability and peace. The basic principle of Confucianism is humanity. From the point of view of Confucianism, the interests of society should be put above one’s own. Thus, the refusal to fulfil one’s own interests in favour of public prosperity is assumed, and is not this notorious European “infringement of the interests of the individual” (Mitkina, 2018:102).

### **6.3. Russian civilisation**

Russian culture is a civilisation of the word. It was based on the Old Slavonic language with its sacred base. The Old Slavonic language was characterised by an increased attention to the word. The Old Slavonic “word” thus received “doctrinal justification,” for the ancient Greek Logos found in the word the flesh of God. Thus was formed the word-centredness of the Slavic culture of the Middle Ages, which placed the word as the supreme reality at its beginning (Vendina, 2022: 154). In the Middle Ages, it had a rich semantic range: word – verb “word, speech” – speech “word” – voice “speech, word, sound” – conversation “word, speech, conversation.” The word became a symbol of enlightenment of Slavs. With the adoption of Slavic writing, the word became the religious symbol that largely determined the development of the entire Russian culture (Vendina, 2022: 153-154). The sacred meaning of the word has been preserved in ethical meanings that continue to live in the cultural and linguistic memory. These hidden meanings of the word help to reveal its syntagmatics, for in the semantic structure of many stable combinations containing the lexeme “word”, traces of its socio-ethical significance are still preserved: decisive opinion (the last word, decisive, authoritarian, weighty word), promise (to keep one's word, to bind oneself by one's word, to give or take one's word from someone) (Vendina, 2022: 154).

The stable turns show that the “word” in the language of Russian culture is loaded with ethical meanings, because it is associated with truth, as well as with the honour of a person, cf. the expression “honest word” (vouching for the truthfulness, truthfulness of something). In addition, the word has a high value, because it can influence or change the fate of a person (put in a good word). Possessing this value culture imposes a ban on “squandering” this value, so the language refers negatively to verbosity, to empty, meaningless conversations (empty talk, waste words in vain). A Russian proverb says, “A superfluous word leads to sin.” Word in the language of Russian culture is synonymous with deed (said-done). The word correlates with the truth.

This magical function of the word suggests that in the depths of the linguistic consciousness of a person of traditional culture, the religious perception of the word merged with the feeling of its magic, which existed in pre-written magic and ritual. Thus, in popular culture, the pagan belief in the magical power of the words of “knowledgeable people” merged with the prayerful veneration of the Christian Word of God.

The basic concepts of the value system of Russian civilisation are the word, labour, work, and truth (truth goes to the world of eternal truth, leaving truth to man).

#### **6.4. Persian civilisation (Iran)**

Iranian civilisation is a civilisation of justice and knowledge. The slogan of spirituality and justice has been upheld for thousands of years. The chief valour is courage. Iranians believe that there is nothing more shameful than lies and debts. The value system is built on the connection between nature and man. The value system was built over the ancient Aryan religion, in which natural forces are sacred and honoured, and the gods are their manifestation and operators (ancient Aryan religion). This is where the tradition of celebrating the birth of a human being came from. It is the biggest celebration of all. One of the principles of justice is the absence of religious prejudice towards other faiths. According to the belief of Iranians: everyone in the world is responsible for their actions. Zoroastrianism supplemented the value system with good speech, good behaviour, good thought, high moral qualities and virtues, possession of knowledge and piety. The first ancient book *Avesta* – a collection of legal laws for a just society, the poetry of the greats: Ferdowsi, Saadi, Hafiz Shirazi and others, demonstrate a deep understanding of values as the basis of morality of society. Nowruz has a special symbol in Iranian culture as it unites all people through the best benefactors. Education and knowledge are revered in Iranian society. In all times of Iranian culture and civilisation, Iranians have been renowned as people of science and knowledge who are well versed in philosophy and mathematics. The Persian language, one of the few ancient languages that have survived to this day, is no less valuable to an Iranian because it is a symbol of Iranian identity. Life for an Iranian is a gift of comprehensive human perfection. Family occupies an important position in the value system. The spirit of moderation and tolerance, tolerance and confidence has accompanied Iranian culture throughout the centuries of its existence. Iranian consciousness has always realised sacred space in original and alternative forms, so high Iranian art has spiritual value. The important values of Iranian culture are equality, fraternity, coexistence with educated people, learning, rejection of ethnic and religious prejudices, respect for moral and human values, promotion and strengthening of human relations and altruism, giving importance to the environment and emphasising on health and cleanliness (Nasih, 2019).

#### **6.5. Western civilisation**

Western civilisation – the civilisation of action or deeds of law (civilisation of statehood according to Toynbee ([1948]2002) and Spengler ([1918/1922]1993)), was formed on the basis of the ancient Roman civilisation. Its formation was greatly influenced by the culture of the ancient Greeks and Etruscans. Toynbee and Spengler believed that Roman culture did not reach the heights to which Greek culture had risen. They treated antique culture or civilisation as a whole, denied the

independent significance of Rome, and believed that the entire Roman era was a crisis stage of antique civilisation. When its capacity for spiritual creativity comes to naught, only the capacity for creativity in the field of statehood (the creation of the Roman Empire) and technology remains.

Toynbee and Spengler also believed that what was done during the long centuries of Roman domination in the Mediterranean in science, philosophy, historiography, poetry, art, was borrowed from the Greeks in a primitive, utilitarian form and reduced to a level accessible to the mass consciousness, which never rose to the heights of the creators of Hellenic culture.

Utilitarianism of the Roman society and the secondary importance of spirituality and morality in many respects predetermined the development of European nations until today. Applied sciences, technology, all that is necessary for a man in this life, are all immediate. Spirituality had an imitative character. The system of values was created, where patriotism as the highest form of existence of society was put in the foundation, the sense of which consisted in divine chosenness of Romans and victories predestined to them by destiny itself (on this, more than one thousand years later, on the territory of Europe the science of eugenics has arisen). Rome was considered as the supreme value and every citizen was obliged to serve it, sparing no effort and life. Rome was considered the “eternal city,” created by will of gods and by their will it was to rule the world. This idea was best expressed by the great Roman poet Virgil (1st century BC):

“Others will forge breathing bronzes more smoothly  
(I believe it at any rate), and draw forth living features from marble.  
They will plead law-suits better and trace the movements  
Of the sky with a rod and describe the rising stars.  
You, O Roman, govern the nations with your power- remember this!  
These will be your arts – to impose the ways of peace,  
To show mercy to the conquered and to subdue the proud” (Virgil, 2012).

Everything that was useful for the greatness of Rome was considered moral. Therefore, the basis of morality was practicality and the greatest value was law.

The value system consisted of: business (or state, or family, or occupation); freedom (the ability to act at one’s discretion, within the framework of accepted laws and rules); fairness and justice as the most sacred virtue. *Virtus* is a set of various qualities that should be shown by an ideal Roman citizen in the service of his homeland – bravery, diligence, dignity, honesty, fairness, loyalty to duty, obedience to the law, willingness to give his life for the sake of Rome and its people. *Fides* was fidelity, honesty, trust, confidence, assurance. Fidelity was impossible without

piety - *pietas*. *Fides* and *pietas* were closely related to each other. *Pietas* was associated with family and clan values, as well as honouring the dead. Religion was a duty to the gods.

## 7. Conclusion

1. The 7 types of value orientations of modern civilisations proposed by Schwartz (2006) practically overlap with those proposed by us on the value models of cultures belonging to the same or different language families.
2. On the basis of our analysis, we identified 6 types of models of cultures whose languages belong to different language families, or different branches of the same language family, or one branch of a language family. These are incomplete types of models, as we did not consider cultures whose languages belong to language families that have not been analysed.
3. Having different philosophical and religious bases, being in contact with different phenomena of the surrounding reality, having similarity or difference in the system of values, cultures differ from each other in their meanings of values and forms of presenting themselves in the world.
4. The value core of culture contains the true and conditionally true and is connected with the most ancient meanings of the words that make up the value code. The value codes are part of the core of the value model, on the basis of which a cultural concept is created.
5. Depending on the contact of cultures within language families or the contact of cultures between language families, their value systems may be influenced. This influence either makes adjustments in the formed system of values, which as a result leads to a crisis state of the value model of the culture, or has an insensible influence on the culture, unable to lead to a crisis of values.

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