

**THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONS ON THE WELFARE OF
COUNTRIES**

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Abstract: The article examines and defines the historical and socio-economic aspects of the research of the economic categories "wealth" and "poverty" from the position of traditions. A brief historical summary of the evolution of the "cultural economy" is given, as well as a comparative analysis of the foreign and domestic influence of traditions on wealth and poverty.

Keywords: wealth, poverty, cultural economy, industrialization, Protestantism, Christianity, Marxism.

Traditions and customs, as everyone knows, play a special role in the life of any society. For centuries, traditions have created the basis for the processes taking place in the historical and cultural sphere. However, in addition to making a huge contribution to the aforementioned categories, traditions have also influenced economic and philosophical categories such as wealth and poverty.

The reasons for the wealth of some countries and the poverty of other countries have always attracted the attention of scientists and researchers. And if until recently attempts were made to explain the origin of wealth and poverty, mainly at the expense of generally accepted economic models and laws, then recently cases of alternative studies of the origin of these categories have become more frequent. One of the alternative directions is the study of the wealth and poverty of countries through the "cultural economy", which in the recent past was considered pseudoscientific, and its ideas were recognized as bad form. In light of this, it can be concluded that society has to some extent returned to its origins,

trying to find the reasons for the differentiation of public welfare in religious and cultural factors.

There are a number of economic and philosophical works that have laid the foundation for the study of cultural and traditional influence on the economic categories of wealth and poverty. The most outstanding of them, in my opinion, are the works of Adam Smith "The Study of the nature and causes of the wealth of nations" and Max Weber "Protestant ethics and the spirit of Capitalism". Despite the fact that in this study these works are put in one row, they have completely different content. If Smith's work has a more abstract character, which is translated at the expense of cultural attitudes (people's concern for their own benefit, without infringing on public interests), then Weber's work has a clearer and more concrete character, explaining how the behavioral and religious attitudes of Protestants contributed to the formation and development of capitalism. Culture actively influences the economy. Thus, religious affiliation determines a person's attitude to redistribution, and the language he speaks is a propensity for savings and a healthy lifestyle. A name alien to a certain culture can cause discrimination against its bearer in the labor market. And if the countries had the same high level of interpersonal trust as in Sweden, the level of GDP in them would be noticeably higher: by 546% — in Africa, by 69% — in Russia, by 29% — in the Czech Republic, by 17% — in Italy, by 7% - in Germany.

Consequently, we see how the fundamental study of the influence of the cultural category "tradition" has its roots in the formation of economic teaching as a science. However, by the middle of the 20th century, such approaches had lost their former popularity and fame. The reason for this was a leap in the economic development of Japan, which to some extent proved the fallacy of the theory that the process of industrialization can only proceed effectively in Western countries that adhere to the ideas of Protestantism. In addition, the emergence and development of new economic categories contributed to a shift in emphasis from culture to the economy in its pure form. Capital and wages were difficult to

correlate with traditions, customs, cultural and religious values. It was easier and more effective to explain everything by the quantitative method.

However, it is important to note that interest in the cultural economy has not completely disappeared. Despite the barrage of skepticism and criticism that has fallen on this area of economic doctrine, there were scientists who were interested in this issue. Consequently, the teaching did not disappear completely, but, as historical reality has shown, it took a temporary pause in order to return later with updated and modernized provisions and proofs.

One of the works that most significantly influenced the leap in the issue of restoring the ideas of cultural economy was Robert Putnam's book "To make Democracy Work", in which he explains the reasons for the difference in economic well-being between the north and the south. His followers explained the influence of culture on well-being through such a category as public distrust. Consequently, the inhabitants of the north are more trusting, it is easier for them to make new acquaintances, while the inhabitants of the south are distrustful. [1]

However, the question naturally arises why countries with similar cultural and traditional orientations sometimes have such different economic conditions. And here scientists resort to a historical chance, pointing out its importance and explaining how historical events that occurred many years ago affect the current state of affairs. A clear example that proves the significant influence of historical accidents is the United States and Mexico. Both countries have similar geographical location, state of natural resources, etc. However, the USA is an economically more successful state. This is due to the fact that Mexicans are more distrustful than Americans. Because of the high crime rate (drug cartels), Mexicans trust their authorities and outsiders less than Americans. Moreover, this example confirms the truth of the theory that Southerners trust Northerners less. The second illustrative example is Namibia and Egypt. In Costa Rica, due to the large number of marginal lands and small farms, the emergence of plantations growing coffee for the European market led to the establishment of equal relations with the state, whereas in Guatemala — to the greed of the government.

In addition to culture, economists are increasingly looking for answers to these questions in government institutions. Some cultural economists argue that the emphasis on institutions proves them right: what are institutions, if not the embodiment of morals, values and beliefs?

For example, differences in the perceptions of Americans and Europeans about the causes of inequality largely explain why the European version of the welfare state is more generous than the American one. In countries with a similar level of well-being, however, the number of women working in various professions in Egypt is about half that. Here there is a fact of historical accident, rooted in the past and associated with agriculture. The specifics of land cultivation in Egypt required male physical strength (the use of a plow). Around the same time, a popular agricultural tool in Namibia was a hoe, which women easily handled. Consequently, we can observe confirmation of the hypothesis that events that occurred many years ago somehow affect the current circumstances of the socio-economic sphere.

In addition to the above factors (religion, traditions, distrust), an important factor is the attitude to work, knowledge, innovation. It is proved that there are more industrious and less industrious nationalities and nations. More hardworking people will be richer, which is logical and natural. However, it is reasonable to ask why, for example, the hardworking peoples of Central Asia are poorer than, for example, Russian society, which according to various estimates is one of the laziest nations. The reason for this phenomenon is a variety of factors, the main of which is the mentality and attitude to constant changes. I agree that the Russian example in this regard is not the most obvious, however, compared to the conditional Tajikistan or Uzbekistan, it is very indicative.

Summarizing the above, we can come to the following conclusions:

1. The factor of religious and traditional influence on wealth and poverty cannot be ignored. Western countries, oriented and inspired by the ideas of Protestantism, are richer than our country, which is Christian. Moreover, the Soviet period, which is hardly Christian, was associated with Marxist theory, which

fiercely hates private property and capitalism in general. Many scientists believe that Marxism is basically a modified and disguised Christianity, which, no matter how rude it may sound, propagandizes "poverty".

2. The influence of historical randomness, social distrust and mental attitudes on such global economic categories as "labor", "innovation", as well as on training, its components and derivatives.

Consequently, it is difficult and even practically impossible to accurately determine the degree of influence of traditional attitudes on wealth and poverty, since for centuries and to this day this topic has been the subject of scientific disputes by authors from different countries. One thing is important, it is incorrect to completely exclude the influence of the cultural factor on the economy, since there are many examples when the main provisions of the cultural economy were confirmed by statistics and facts.

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