

Values and Mobilization: Towards the Dynamics of “Sterile Excitement”

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Abstract

Starting with an overview of the ‘tyranny of values’ notion introduced by Carl Schmitt, this article discusses how values are converted into political goals and managed by societies. While both Schmitt and Robert Spaemann emphasized the danger of ‘automatic enactment’ of values, today in a mobilized society the situation aggravates as the differentiation between a policy system based on violence and orders, and a culture system offering common patterns for comprehending social life diminishes or disappears completely. But this danger is often overlooked by the states, particularly if the communities of states discover the community of values, and their citizens willingly offer them their support in critical situations.

Key words: political philosophy, communities of values, societal community, mobilization, communities of resonance.

This article was almost finished when the German police busted a terrorist network whose members had been plotting a coup. This news, bizarre as it is, has amazingly borne out much of what will be discussed below. References to the past, sometimes quite distant, have turned out to be much more relevant than I could expect (and, most importantly, wanted to see). Perhaps, this gives me an extra reason to leave the text as it is, without worrying that there may be too much of the past in it. Rather, the question is: Is there not too much of the future here?

VALUES COMMAND BATTLE

During the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, renowned German philosopher Robert Spaemann was one of the few public intellectuals who opposed the principles designed to justify NATO’s military operation. He entitled his article, which immediately became widely known, in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* as “Values Against Humans” (Spaemann, 1999). These were meaningful words for the Germans. The academic community understood not only the meaning, but also the genealogy of his arguments. When almost everybody was talking about the protection of values, Spaemann said the war in Kosovo “distorts our notions,” and warned about the danger of the “dictatorship of values.” This formula clearly referred to another prominent German thinker. Carl Schmitt¹ had written about the “tyranny of values” forty years prior, and Spaemann developed his ideas in his own way as he did in his other works. Schmitt’s arguments are very instructive, and I would like to say a few words about them first, before I move on to more pressing issues after dwelling briefly on Spaemann’s position.

In 1960, Schmitt for the first time distributed among a narrow circle of readers what we would now call the preprint of the 1967 essay *The Tyranny of Values* (*Die Tyrannei der Werte*). As often happened with his works, the study of a specific legal issue unexpectedly proved to be such a matter of principle that his book has been reprinted ever since

¹ Schmitt, in his turn, referred the reader to German philosopher Nicolai Hartmann’s fundamental work *Ethik* (Hartmann 1926). Yet Hartmann is almost forgotten today, while Schmitt is quoted and interpreted more and more every year.

(likewise, Robert Spaemann kept talking about values and related dangers almost until his death in 2018).

What does Schmitt say? First of all, an experienced lawyer warns the reader: You should not take whatever you do lightly and you should not dismiss a “dispute over words,” because it is words that often cause the most violent clashes. There is, however, one point that may not be quite clear to every Russian reader. On the unfortunate whim of translators we read the word “value” as “cost” in economic works, while Europeans read it as “value”; these are different words for us, but the same word for them. Without going into details, let me remind you that it is the economic sphere that Schmitt describes as the true sphere of values, and the logic of cost (let us say it the Russian way) as being the most adequate to its subject. This is important because the immanent logic of values became the subject of his concern. Beyond economics, in the philosophy of values that began to develop in Germany from the middle of the 19th century, anything that is on the scale of values has value. Having a bigger or smaller cost is not the same as having a bigger or smaller value. Schmitt repeatedly noted the *aggressiveness* of the logic of values. Roughly speaking, if in the economic sense one thing costs less than another, this does not say anything about its other advantages, and so a toothpick will not be annihilated simply because it costs less than a diamond cufflink. But the value of life implies not only its uniqueness, but also aggressive suppression of all things that deprecate life.

Moreover, asserting a value is not an objective order of things, it is subjective, and values are so different that those who bear them get involved in *a war of all against all*. So, the old war that British philosopher Thomas Hobbes spoke of may seem “quite idyllic” by comparison. Schmitt believed that it is the inescapable “immanent logic of values,” not economic one, that comes into play here: values literally demand that they be enacted, fought *for* and defended *against* other people’s values. He shows how the language of values becomes more and more common: where people used to talk about benefits and interests, values appear, and public life turns into an arena of clashes between groups, each declaring its own values and claiming

their significance, that is, insisting that its demands be satisfied. Instead of aligning interests, each group insists on the exceptional importance of its values that cannot be sacrificed. Ultimately, people say that there are objectively higher values for which it is not shameful to wage a war of extermination. The opponent is reproached that he does not heed the manifest values; or, in other words, he is disqualified as value-blind, and his arguments and his very existence can be declared null and void. From the point of view of the logic of values, the following should always be valid: “for the highest value, the highest price is not too high and must be paid” (Schmitt, 2011, p. 51). This is where another formula appears that has made Schmitt’s work so relevant these days. It is the concern of the legislator and of the laws he makes to ascertain the mediation in the state² through calculable and attainable rules and to prevent—Attention!—“the terror of the direct and automatic enactment of values” (Ibid, p. 51).

The mention of the legislator and the laws he makes is generally quite interesting and takes us far beyond the discussions that led to the creation of that text. It bears recalling that Schmitt was known in the academic community both as a specialist in constitutional law and as an international lawyer.³ And in this case he is talking—contrary to the main array of his postwar publications—solely about *internal* affairs. This is not surprising because discussions centered on the role of the Constitutional Court in West Germany and how the position of judges was determined. If we go back to Spaemann and to the military operation that was the reason for his remarks, we will see that this is a matter of international politics. In this case some states join forces and, acting in the name of their values, destroy the one who is less valuable, that is, the lives of citizens of the opposing state are sacrificed in the name of common values. But domestic and foreign policy problems turn out to be of the same kind and a few years later, following a new refugee and migration crisis, which caused a controversial reaction in Germany, Spaemann wrote: “But a modern secular state is supposed

² Schmitt calls it *Gemeinwesen*, using a term which is impossible to translate to other languages and which is worth exploring in treatises.

³ See Schmitt’s criticism in: Vinx, 2013.

to be based on law, not a set of substantive value commitments. Indeed, although a state committed to individual freedom demands obedience to its laws, it does not demand agreement with the values which form the basis of its legal system. This is the cornerstone of modern freedom, painfully won in the wake of the wars of religion. So, talking about the state as a ‘community of values’ is dangerous because it tends to undermine this secular principle in favor of a dictatorship of political convictions. The Third Reich was a community of values. As a *Volksgemeinschaft* (people’s community), it valued nation, race, health—and these values always prevailed over law ... Today’s Europe should stay clear of this dangerous alley” (Spaemann, 2001). Judging by how often he subsequently returned to this topic, “a community of values” seemed extremely dangerous to him (see, for example, Pilz, 2012).

The word “community,” which the Germans so willingly use when speaking about the danger of the dictatorship of values, is not so harmless and has a long and convoluted history. Taking it into account, we will be able to better understand the meaning of concerns, warnings and, possibly, some prospects for the future. When reading superficially, things look too simple. For example, there are people with certain beliefs, who call things important to them values, but then... Then they unite, form a certain community or group, and try to impose their values on all others. The same happens with states: there are some countries that either unite on the basis of common values, or, having united, declare that they have not only shared interests, but also values. Such is Europe as “a community of values” and such are the mechanisms that determine the behavior of all countries that are not ready to take into account other people’s interests.

But this is still too simple. The German word *Gemeinschaft* is one of the keys to understanding the processes being described. A very long time ago, at the end of the 19th century, German philosopher Ferdinand Tönnies published a book that later became a sociological classic. It was titled *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, that is, *Community and Society* (Tönnies, 1887)⁴. Tönnies really

⁴ Even this kind of translation can be contested. Cf.: (Tönnies, 1940, Tönnies, 1955; Tönnies, 2001).

detested capitalism. He did not like the new relationship between people that was based on rational calculation. And so he suggested considering it a special type of social life, which he called society. He used the old German word *Gemeinschaft* to describe all the emotional connections, almost instinctive love for relatives, and attachment to places. At first, it seemed to him that evolution led to the disintegration of communities, to the spoilage and mechanization of social ties, but then he began to look at things more broadly and did not exclude that some kind of movement back, to *Gemeinschaft*, could be possible nowadays. Tönnies died in 1936 and could see how his reflections were interpreted in a way that was completely unexpected and unpleasant to him (the book was last reprinted during his lifetime in 1935; the Nazis did not like Tönnies personally, and he did not like them, but his concept found its way into their vocabulary). The thing is that anti-capitalist sentiment is not necessarily interpreted in the spirit of progress. After World War I, anti-Western and anti-capitalist sentiments were very strong among the Germans, so it is not for nothing that Spaemann every now and then recalls the twelve years when Germany was a *Volksgemeinschaft*, a people's community. Outstanding German philosopher Helmuth Plessner, in the mid-1920s, described as social radicalism the desire to abandon the rather cold contract, designed more for formal law and a distance between members of *society* (Plessner, 2002), but right-wing radical authors saw exciting prospects there. Actually, based on their own experience, both Schmitt and Spaemann call for caution and prevalence of law.

Why law? Because it requires a certain kind of behavior on the part of people but, strictly speaking, gets by with behavior/action or, conversely, inaction that takes place within the framework of norms. Do not dig into a person's soul if he acts by law! But it is necessary to demand compliance with law even when communities of values appear in a state. However, is it possible to expect everything to be in the hands of legislators and the government? We can see that the dangerous movement has not stopped, and it looks much more complicated and much more alarming now.

I will try again to explain why communities are so attractive and so dangerous. Let's forget about values for a while and focus instead on the special difference between community and society, which, slightly twisting Tönnies' ideas, can be called "solidity." It can be seen particularly well by contrast. When we read in Pushkin's *The Queen of Spades* how "a society of rich gamblers had formed," we get almost exactly into the meaning of the term *opposite to* community, which one day, and quite unexpectedly for many, began to mean "everything social," everything inside a certain state (see also Kharkhordin, 2011). We will get back to that shortly. Society, according to Tönnies, precisely formed: people who are strangers to each other get together and make a deal, and they can break up again, as the social contract theorists showed in modern times. Brothers and sisters can even quarrel, but their kinship will not go away, and it would take some special circumstances to make it suddenly unimportant. Communities can be very different, but it was important for Tönnies and many theorists after him to emphasize the moment of unquestionable togetherness, the understanding that without each other members of a community cease to be themselves, just as an organ cut off from the body ceases to be a full-fledged hand or spleen in the strict sense of the word. A person taking a job can love his friends and the whole team of co-workers, but nothing prevents him from terminating his employment contract and getting a job in another place without changing his profession and status, but there is no way back from a "community of the faithful," except that he who has ceased to be a brother becomes even worse for the others than a dead man. There are many examples of this kind. They all indicate that the concept of community is not so outdated and can serve scientific purposes, that is, allow one to see and correctly name what is happening in social life.

When Schmitt says more care is needed in dealing with values, he mentions "communities of values" without elaborating. The point is that they can be called any name: parties, or fraternities, or even societies, like *secret societies*. What is important here is a special unbreakable bond, the mutual attraction of their members and the understanding that they are together. Add the "immanent logic of values." When a community has common values, is it possible to say that one or more

people have made a decision? Does it not look exactly the way Schmitt and Spaemann saw it? As if the value itself has got into the core of the social body and dictates what it should do and how, sometimes getting dangerous for others and destructive for itself.

Where can we go from here without repeating the same thing over and over again? There are several directions, and they are all important. First of all let us go back (but not for the last time!) to the fact that “communities of values” were identified by German thinkers both in states and in contemporary unions of states. Naturally, no modern state has become a complete “community,” which is impossible due to the peculiarities of modern citizenship, the secular nature of most countries, and many other factors. This does not mean that they cannot be regarded as communities; they can be but with certain limitations. There is a community there to some extent, it is emphasized, and sometimes it plays a key role in making crucial decisions. But there are also communities of a completely different kind.

It seems Immanuel Wallerstein, a renowned sociologist of the late 20th and the early 21st centuries, was one of the first to have noticed them. In 1986, he presented a highly provocative report in Germany, in which he argued that the usual understanding of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* was completely wrong. Wallerstein touched upon a topic that I have so far carefully tried to avoid: Where, in fact, are all these “communities” and “societies” located? Thanks to the prevailing use of words, one may think that society exists within state borders, where old communities fall apart and a modern society emerges. But Wallerstein argued that this was not so. At first, the modern contractual system was created, that is, a huge area of capitalist contracts. It was “society.” And then different *Gemeinschaften* began to arise inside it and on its basis. They still arise. But this is not a transition from *Gesellschaft* back to *Gemeinschaft*. “Rather it is that our only *Gesellschaft*, the capitalist world-economy (and even it is only a partially-contractualized structure) has been creating our multiple, meaningful *Gemeinschaften*. Far from *Gemeinschaften* dying out, they have never been stronger, more complex, more overlapping and competing, more determinative of our lives” (Wallerstein, 1986, p. 12).

Wallerstein, as we can see, does not find the main threat in states or certain aspects of their existence (it is a threat because these communities often emerge unexpectedly, they are irrational and at the same time very influential), but the whole world in some way becomes the place of their origin, their substrate, so to speak.

The most influential American sociologist, Talcott Parsons, looked at the problem from a completely different angle. It is true, though, that the best years of Parsons and his school have long passed. The rise, long and wide influence, and eventually almost complete oblivion of his sociology in America could captivate more than one researcher, but for our purposes it will be enough to say that Parsons, who died in 1979, did not finish his book, which was nevertheless published in 2007 thanks to his followers. It is titled *American Society*, but its subtitle is amazing: “A Theory of Societal Community” (Parsons, 2007). The concepts that sociologists following Ferdinand Tönnies considered opposites were united by him into one key notion. Parsons introduced it into his concept in the early 1950s, refined it and tried, in fact, until his last days, to develop it into a theory, but now it turns out that it has been in use for more than half a century. A handful of Parsons’ followers find it important and working but fail to notice that essentially this is a theoretical bomb.

What worried the great scientist? A sociologist with a good German education combined community and society, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, into one whole to show how the core of social solidarity, the main social collective is formed. None of the traditional communities can be a bearer or performer of what Parsons called the integrative function of the integrative subsystem of the integrative (social) system. If we avoid his overcomplicated language, the idea will seem very simple: to prevent social life from crumbling, people must not only agree on something, but show active solidarity. Standing out among them are those who are most committed to the common values and norms of their society, and they are called societal community. In other words, this famed *Gesellschaft* with its contractual ties can crumble any minute. It cannot be held together by state coercion alone. It will take people connected with each other

so tightly and unbreakably as only *Gemeinschaft* members can be. The only question is whether commitment to the norms and values of one's society would be enough since traditional communities like kinship and neighborhood are clearly unable to cope with this task. In calm times, when it is necessary to preserve, accept from parents (and through them from ancestors) and pass on to children (and future descendants) all the ideas sacred to Americans, in such times, of course, it is more or less easy to find and identify those for whom the norms and values of the country are not an empty sound. But things are not always so easy in more turbulent times, especially when the meaning of tradition is eroded and the number and nature of communities multiply.

We can see the outlines of a truly serious multilateral problem showing through different approaches and different theories created in the last century, if not earlier. Let us look again at what Schmitt and Spaemann considered dangerous and how they tried to counter this danger. They saw the danger in the fact that values would lead their adherents too far, and they saw salvation in law that was understood (in the narrowest sense) as a system of rules to be followed. But why can values lead one too far, but rules cannot? Because the rules of law are “calculable and enforceable.” Law does not require the impossible from a person, and a person does not expect tricks from the legal system. Values have their own logic, which is not always clear to a person who has decided to speak out for all the good and against all the bad. Both law and values mobilize a person, but they do it differently. And yet there is something else that should get our attention. Schmitt, Parsons, and Spaemann were contemporaries. Schmitt published a book on the tyranny of values almost at the same time as Parsons published a fundamental article explaining what adherence to values is. And the American, who had been well acquainted with the German philosophy of values since his youth, did not see any danger either in values or in communities. But why?

This is because he considered societal community a special system. And this system is not based on values at all! It rests on influence, on prestige, on the fact that people listen to each other, but do not

order, force or bind each other with obligations (Parsons, 1968). There is physical violence in social life, and it (or the threat of violence) cannot be avoided if binding decisions need to be implemented, but this is what politics does. There is also commitment to values, but it works quite differently than influence and violence, because values in modern life are quite generalized. In the sociological sense, they mean adherence to a certain type of society, not at all the cohesion of a small team ready to immediately convert their values into obligations to act, that is, into universal mobilization. That's what it is all about. When uniting around a common system of higher values, people do not think that they are dealing with a direct instruction on what they should do, how and why (Parsons, 1982). German scholars have a completely different view on this. The old opposition between the authors, who hardly noticed each other during their lifetime, gets an unexpected continuation closer to our day both in international and domestic politics.

EXCITEMENT WITHOUT RESONANCE

The tyranny of values is by no means a metaphor. Whatever the creators of philosophical systems think about it, for sociology and politics, this is one of the possible descriptions of the empirically fixed human behavior. In cases like this, it is useful to avoid an understandable and excusable, but not very productive tendency to reduce everything to psychology—this tendency, unfortunately, prevails among current observers of current politics. No one will explain the result a mathematician obtains when solving an arithmetic problem by his frame of mind. If you divide ten by two, the rest does not depend on you. The same is true of values, although it is more difficult to explain. The terror of automatic enactment occurs when there is no room for individual self-determination in a “community of values,” and actions become self-evident for its members who believe that it is simply impossible to act otherwise. All doubts and all reasons of a different kind seem to them immoral and not worthy of discussion. As Schmitt said long ago, the most inhuman wars are fought on behalf of humanity and to make sure there are no more wars.

This will require special conditions, of course. Something should work completely differently so that no one has to rely on the norms anymore. But this “something” does not lie in the field of means and ends. Ends can be the same as before. Rather, this is more about the energy and vigor with which actions are performed when they are galvanized by unprecedented enthusiasm. Actually, this is called mobilization.

The word has recently become very popular in Russia, since the *partial mobilization* announced some time ago turned out to be a social event that evoked a vivid public response. Such events usually start something completely new. A trigger event sets off processes that simply cannot be undone or reversed. It is useless to ask what caused the events or whether it was possible to make an effort and let the situation develop differently. Not that these questions are senseless, but the answers to them make no difference. Baked bread will not turn back into flour and yeast, even if you declare yourself an opponent of flour. This is also the case with mobilization: what lies ahead is of greater interest than the causes and possible scenarios of events that existed before its start. And, of course, this has nothing to do with the decree which was issued and which was eventually fulfilled.

I will emphasize over and over again: there is nothing unusual in the fulfillment of an order as such, except that the circumstances can be extraordinary. However, we can be misled by the duality of the notion of ‘mobilization.’ Roughly speaking, mobilization, on the one hand, refers to discipline, and on the other, to self-sufficiency and initiative. In the former case, a mobilized person responds to an order and does what it says. In the latter case, a mobilized person responds to both the external call and the internal impulse, following the calling of his heart, so to speak. The two concepts are not complete opposites, of course, but nor are they fully identical. A person who sees the similarities and differences between a conscript and a volunteer fighter will no longer need further explanations. And yet they will be needed.

The main question does not concern discipline, except for special cases when all hierarchies crumble and orders are disobeyed *en masse*. It is about what mobilization generally means to society in the second

sense of this word. Just being ready to follow orders may not be enough. Since ancient times, it has been known that absolute obedience to orders creates big problems for the person who issues them. In fact, a subordinate does not make his own decisions and waits instead for an order like a talking (but preferably silent) weapon. This is not always appropriate. The commander has to think about the degrees of freedom allowed to those under his command. By freeing up maneuver space for the subordinate, the commander thus frees up room for planning and time for reflection.

The difficulty that lies here is also apparent: relying on the minimal initiative of his subordinate and his ability to decide, the superior cannot know to what extent the subordinate will use it. A skillful combination of discipline and limited initiative constitutes the art of power. No wonder, in order to emphasize the nature of obedience to orders (even against one's will) and the willingness to act according to the inner impulse together with the one who inspires and commands, philosopher Hannah Arendt has introduced a distinction between violence and power and equated violence to the use of other people as a means (Arendt, 1970, p. 4). Goals are set by the superior. Those who fulfill an order relate to the superiors in much the same way the means relate to the ends. Power arises where we enter the realm of the ends.

Where does this happen? To some extent, this happens where the philosopher sees only orders and chains of means put in the service of other people's ends. Limited self-sufficiency and the understanding of tasks and the meaning of "one's maneuver" will be needed anyway. But there can be a problem. Failures occur even where perfect discipline prevails. The shorter the chains of ends and means, the fewer surprises there will be, but the mechanism can break, and a person may not understand an order or may not want to fulfill it. So, when the chains lengthen, the likelihood that communication will not go according to plan increases significantly. It becomes, as prominent sociology theorist Niklas Luhmann liked to say, an unlikely event.

Why did partial mobilization in Russia come as a kind of shock for many? Not only because its announcement was unexpected and not only because the peaceful existence of hundreds of thousands

of people was put in danger and at risk, implying a real need to kill and readiness to be killed. Among other things, mobilization meant a radical change in the planning horizon of one’s life, which was turning into an instrument for achieving someone else’s ends. This does not mean that these ends are necessarily “foreign.” Sympathy, benevolent attitude, and enthusiasm for the declared ends of Russia’s special military operation (SVO) count. The point is different. The entire structure of the order is not designed for enthusiasm as a prerequisite for its implementation, and the interpretation of the SVO as a war requiring broad public participation and uplift was not a priority for many months and, in fact, still is not. Routine social life goes sort of in parallel to the military activities.

Let me point out once again the prevailing interpretation of the SVO ends. As a rule, two emphases were made and two explanations of what was happening were offered in a more or less explicit form. The first one declares the need for the state to act in response to the growing threat to its security. This argument, strictly speaking, is not intended for the popular masses because it is based on the concept of state interest, and its meaning simply cannot be grasped by the majority. Actions based on state interest should not be either transparent in their motives, or highly moral, or predictable, because all this can jeopardize their effectiveness. But, in fact, no extraordinary public enthusiasm is required either. The awareness of the means regarding the final ends is limited to local tasks and short chains within which orders and discipline work. In this sense, war, whatever one may call it, is a continuation of foreign policy, which is excluded from the democratic governance objectives. The second explanation is moral and even religious. It concerned and still concerns the historical fate of the people, the reunification of the Russians, and the fight against global evil and, according to the latest information, against the Antichrist. Naturally, combining the two explanations within one more general explanation is not impossible. But here we bump into what might be called anthropological inertia.

A few years ago, shortly after the reincorporation of Crimea into Russia and the outbreak of the sanctions war, I said in an interview

(Rozanov, 2015) that our authorities wanted to transform the consumer into the warrior with a different set of priorities, a different understanding of the purpose of life, and so on. I ran ahead of time back then because the consumer has remained the consumer, except that the structure of consumption has changed a little. Now there is probably a new edition of the same problem, but our fellow citizens have more chances of becoming warriors. Let us not forget, however, that these are the same people who were not brought up as soldiers in the recent history of Russia, despite the specifics of its domestic and international situation. This was facilitated by the entire structure of modernity, the entire vocabulary of motives and emotions, all the work, as sociologists say, of “cathectic mechanisms.”⁵ This term is used to describe a situation where all our preferences, fears, delights, sacred awe and much more do not appear spontaneously but are produced by society and consumed by society. In fact, quoting, almost literally, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, one can say to a Russian citizen: “And if the state tells you: ‘Go and die!’ you must go and die, because you are still alive thanks to its help and protection.” But, having said this, one must realize that the recipient of these words can understand them, but cannot (or cannot always) immediately convert them into a motive, into an irresistible urge to act, suppressing all other motives. This is an appeal, not an order, or more precisely, this is an order in the form of an appeal, which at the same time strengthens and weakens the effectiveness of both. In order to make one feel the urge to “go and die,” an order would not be enough. It takes cathectic mechanisms, that is, a specially charged motive, enthusiasm. They are different in different societies and in different eras, but they have one thing in common: under the circumstances, the language of culture encourages people not only to judge values, dispassionately distinguishing between the important and the unimportant, but to take things to heart, and feel the flames of love, hatred, fear, and hope.

This reasoning is anything but scholastic. Whenever social scientists are faced with the need to describe political movements, they wonder

⁵ This notion, dating back to Parsons, is currently developed in the original concept by Russian sociologist Dmitry Kurakin. I dare add that my own contribution is to be published in the coming issue of the *Russian Sociological Review* (<http://sociologica.hse.ru>).

whether it was an action by order or by internal need. Or, if one does not exclude the other, how could orders be turned into the engine of enthusiasm? German sociologist Max Weber believed that in such cases (especially involving members of religious communities) a special role is played by the so-called virtuosos, “aristocrats of salvation,” who do not succumb to temptation, methodically work to strengthen their confidence in salvation at the end of physical life and embody the true teaching through their way of life (Weber, 1978, pp. 539-540). This does not mean that such a person does not care about the result and only thinks about following the commandments. Rather, he does not see the desired results of actions where an ordinary person, who has not transcended everyday routine, would see them. Such a mundane attitude towards the world is characterized by a desire to achieve immediate goals and evade threats to physical existence. This does not always work out, though. The world is not equally reliable and predictable. But when it seems that it is still the same and a person just needs to change his attitude towards it, virtuosos can behave differently. Some will try to “get away from the world” because it is irreparably spoiled, while others will seek to control and change it.

This provides an opportunity for interpretations which, thanks to modern German sociologist Hartmut Rosa, can be associated with the *resonance* phenomenon (Rosa, 2019). Rosa calls “desire” and “fear” elementary forms of the attitude towards the world: the world can be attractive to people, but it can also scare them. Resonance is a metaphor that can describe such an attitude, when both a person and the world are sort of two things, open enough to respond to each other, but also closed enough and self-sufficient to preserve themselves and their “sounding.” Fear can develop out of the subject’s fear of “the loss of the world or of the world going mute or conversely of losing him- or herself in the world” (Ibid, p. 123). Rosa also says that “social communities may be called communities of resonance because they inhabit the same resonant spaces; this means that they are first and foremost communities of narration, possessing a common repertoire of resonance-producing and resonance-directing stories” (Ibid, p. 181). It is clear that such a story or a repertoire of stories makes it possible to

build a more or less similar attitude of the members of a community to their experience—genuine or fictional—in which a clear connection with the world is established and passed on to new generations.

However, Rosa does not miss the phenomenon of mobilization! He sees it, in particular, in the people's desire to help disabled persons, refugees and the like often completely selflessly, putting in a lot of their time and effort. Everywhere, he says, we can see a search for resonance and proof that efforts bear fruit, and the world responds. But he also notes that in the modern world there is no active and efficient political subject, the sociopolitical world does not respond, and this provokes new "waves of empty political resonance ... excitement and mobilization" (Ibid, p. 250) with no real consequences. This is all the more remarkable because conflicts flare up where "culturally established and 'practiced' strong evaluations are in play, i.e., where subjects believe that they are connected with something that is genuinely capable of response" (Ibid, p. 240).

So, we can see not only the prospects, but also the dangers of mobilization. It would seem there are no problems, on the one hand. There is an old but tested scheme, according to which a state, like a person, has interests and objectives that may match, but may also disagree with the interests of other states. In order to achieve its interests, even despite external pressure, the state mobilizes the population, that is, orders it to act in a certain way. Since not every citizen can and should understand state interests, the goals of the state, especially unexpectedly announced ones, do not immediately become his own goals. Propaganda helps change his point of view, and discipline allows superiors to count on his behavior, even if propaganda has not fully succeeded. If the interests of the state, which are judged by the authorities, are the ends, then the actions of those who fulfill orders are the means. But what if things are more complicated and do not fit into such a simple scheme? If for various reasons it does not involve the immediate goals, but the ultimate ones, something for *which everything is done*? These are the main questions—the questions of meaning and of the highest values of political existence. It is around these values, *strong evaluations*, as Rosa says, citing philosopher Charles Taylor, that

“communities of values” and “communities of narration” about plans, experience, ideas, etc. can form. Wherever people are willing to talk and discover community, cathectic mechanisms can work by releasing the huge energy of motivation. At the beginning of the last century, Georg Simmel called it “sterile excitement,” and Rosa in our days refers to it as “empty political resonance.”

Why are sterility and emptiness dangerous?

They are dangerous because they tend to strengthen themselves. This is actually a fairly simple phenomenon, well known to everyone from his own experience. Suffice it to recall situations where our efforts cannot achieve the desired result and we double them, thinking that we have not tried hard enough. Schmitt and Spaemann saw the danger of the terror of values in the fact that automatic enactment does not transform the situation into a procedure that is regulated by law and that restores the distance between the ends and the decision to use the means. However, today’s danger may be different. The community of values (both within a state and between states) arises in situations close to a state of emergency in which the rule of law is suspended. Fuses that prevented values from being converted into goals literally and too fast blow. Differentiation between a policy system based on violence and orders, and a culture system offering common patterns for comprehending social life disappears completely or diminishes. Neither law, nor science, nor etiquette work as expected. Whether this will become examples of religious fanaticism or progressive remoralization of the spheres of life in relation to which the application of moral criteria has not been considered possible for a long time, does not make any difference.

It seems this is not always noticed at the level of states, particularly if the communities of states discover the community of values, and their citizens willingly offer them their support in critical situations. However, this is only part of a much broader and unpredictable process. The less successful actions based on the terror of values are, the bigger the likelihood that they will intensify, that the measures already taken will be tightened, and new ones will be introduced, even more reckless and less effective, followed by a stronger excitement. But another

thing is also possible, as Wallerstein cautioned: communities can arise around the world, not only strictly within state borders; communities are affective and irrational. It should probably be added that the usual juxtaposition between state rationality and increased emotionality of the popular masses does not make any sense here. Propensity towards principled, incalculable, improvident, and value-charged behavior can be found everywhere. Unpredictability, uncontrollability, and “irresponsiveness” of the world turns out to be not only one of the causes of the upcoming crises, but also a kind of cure: no matter how much communities of values harm themselves and others, the objective structure of the world can and, hopefully, will become an obstacle to all sorts of enthusiasm.

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