

European Values and Mass Culture

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European civilization has been based not only on the results and the fruits of economic and technical development, but also and first of all on the conservation of spiritual values.

Such crucial things as implementation of new technologies, widespread comfort in everyday life, results of growing productivity, could lose their sense without those values, without cultural basement in the social and political spheres, and could be even dangerous in the condition of some radical political movements.

During last centuries, European civilization significantly enhanced huge experience of effective use of spiritual and cultural values in the development of its society. We are talking not only about enlarged cultural level of people, which of course is absolutely necessary. Culture has become the important measurement of social development in the countries with a high level of life. Attentive attitude to the culture, its support by municipal and state authorities, international organizations are shaping today the level of civilization of society, measuring its stability and ability of confronting to such negative factors as terrorism, racial and religious intolerance. During more than fifty years the European Society of Culture with the creative authority of its members, among which there are famous writers, scientists, laureates of the Nobel prize, - has spreaded ideas and ideals of cultural spiritual values, based on tolerance, understanding and respect for every nation, all over the world, in the West and in the East, trying to solve sharp and painful questions through dialogue, instead of confrontation and force.

Unfortunately, the implementation of these purposes does not always coincide with activity and position in the sphere of spiritual culture - of mass media, in spite of their national belongings.

High qualities of human culture must not belong only to the elite of the society. It is very important that they should come to every person, intervene into mass culture in the whole. This might require a change in the politics of mass media. It is necessary to pay much more attention to the exposition of real achievements and values of culture, international and national, including the rich inheritance of Moscow.

On the way of spreading and confirming human priorities in the society, there are many obstacles - of commercial, psychological, technological character, some aggressive features of mass culture and unspiritual tendencies.

The Moscow meeting of SEC is devoted to these problems and represents the occasion to confirm once more the method this Society has elaborated to deal with them, as well as with other questions: politics of culture. Politics of culture supposes

firm rooting in the essential human values - the leading values of European civilization – to be recognized and understood wherever they are authentically expressed. Such recognition and understanding is not meant as an academic exercise, but implies the moral task of true dialogue, a dialogue having the strength to overcome divergences and change reality for the better.

It is a great honour to submit to members of SEC - who are the elite of European intellectuals - obvious achievements of Moscow in the sphere of culture. Development of a powerful system of museums and fine art galleries, attention of Moscow City government to every such object, support of music culture, construction of the "House of Music", concert halls, help for libraries including those devoted to foreign literature, modern fine art biennales, active mass discussions of the problems of historical inheritance, opening and restoration of a great amount of churches - there is an impressive picture of support by the city of Moscow of human culture, conservation of spiritual inheritance and its contemporary development.