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The impact of status of the gift recipient upon female leaders' choice of the present

The "gift" phenomenon appeared, when the people only tried to become rational beings. Building the relations with their like, they discovered the sense of kindness, generosity; gratefulness for somebody's care and kind-heartedness. The way to express these feelings is gift. In Russian this word has a brother-twin: «гостинец», which comes from the word " visitor". It means that according to the custom the man was entering the house with a gift and had been prepared to give presents to the owners and they gave rise to reciprocal exchange.

The review of researches in the field of psychology showed, that the process of giving gifts is not enough studied, moreover, this phenomenon, the gift has not become the subject of different socio-psychological works. Besides it is necessary to underline, that the process of giving gifts accompanies different aspects of human life activity, and at the level of everyday awareness it is clear that the gift plays an important role in the different situations of the interaction.

The particularity of considering the gift from the point of view of anthropology, history, culturology, consists in the fact that they do not study the present but process of giving gifts (U. Lotman, B. Malinovskii, M. Mauss, Takho Gody, Marcel Henaff and others.). V.Iliin believes, that the interest towards gift as the subject of research has arisen in the frame of traditional anthropology first of all [1]. The bases of the studies of this phenomenon were created by Marcel Mauss. In his classic work about gifts *Essai sur le Don* (The Gift) Marcel Mauss described the main principles of this process [3]. According to M. Mauss, the basis of this ancient custom presents exchange is the principle of «reciprocity». In his opinion, to make gifts, to receive gifts, to make the reciprocal dons– this is equally important duties, which must be rigorously fulfilled. Gift exchange must therefore engender friendly feelings. The gift is the thing that must give the pleasure to the recipient. From one point of view, the gift exchange is the free will, but from the other point of view, the voluntariness is rather conventional here. If you deny this custom it is like the declaration of war, denial of union.

We consider the gift as the mean, which accompanies different situations of the interaction between people. After analyzing researches, devoted to gift studies and the process of giving gifts, we are able to give the following definition of the gift from the point of view of social psychology. Gift is the mean of social communication, destined to open up desirable types of relations and satisfy social needs in the determined system of status-role interaction. To be "heartwarming event", the gift must be given by the own will of the doner; to satisfy recipient's needs, correspond to his assessments, the level of his aspiration, status and role; be the sign, symbol of disinterestedness.

Studying the present from the point of view of personality gender identification we can say the following: traditional perception «female» and «male» influences the



choice of the present and the attitude towards it. Some things we give only to women and vice versa. The women receive gifts more often than men. G. Карпова thinks that it is connected to subconscious stereotype, который своими корнями уходит в далекое прошлое: the man is the warrior and getter, he will win himself everything he wants, and if he wants he will share it with the woman [2].

On the other hand, men and women choose the gift and they attack this problem differently. According to American study (Caplow, 1982), women give more gifts, than men, but men's gifts are more expensive.

Receiving the gift, men and women behave themselves in different way. The stereotypes, characterizing the real man, suggest, that he must not speak about his feelings and emotions, that's why the men feel no excitement over the present, – the process of giving gifts is more important for them. The women are very fussed about the gift and openly show their emotions.

In our study the gift is considered in the frame of relations between people. Classical definition of personality relations was given by V.N. Myasishev: relations are the whole system of individual, selective, conscious communications of personality with different sides of objective reality, including three interrelated components: relation of the person towards other people, towards himself, towards the things of the external world [4].

Our study is founded on this concept, the aim of which is to study socio-psychological characteristics of the gift in the system of business relations (managers and subordinates).

112 women from the age of 30 up to 50 years old took part in our research, among them 47 were leaders and 65 subordinates. Using the questionnaire that we have made, we studied such parameters, as: the significance of the gift for the giver (level of significance of the present, which they give, the significance of the gift, what it symbolizes); types of gifts; gender of the gift; aims, that they pursue giving presents, socio-psychological motives of giving gifts.

The result is that, using such criteria, as the significance of the present for the doner, the aims, which they pursue giving gifts, socio-psychological motives of giving gifts, all the sampling was divided into three groups. The first group formed those women who use the gift as the way to change the relation towards themselves. The second group consisted of women who use the gift and the process of giving gifts as the way to change the relation towards the Other. The third group – the people who use the gift and the process of giving gifts to change the attitude towards the situation of giving gifts.

In the first group there are managers and subordinates, but the quantity of managers is much bigger than the quantity of subordinates. The leaders in this group use the gift to take their own fancy, to underprop a reputation, image, to demonstrate their difference from the Others. In the second and the third group there are more subordinates than the leaders. They use the gift to please the Other, to attract and to hold the attention of the surrounding people, to be adequate to the situation of giving gifts.



Let's proceed to examination of gender orientation of the gift. Female leaders' motives of giving gifts to men are the desire of social approval of men- chiefs, attraction and retention of attention of the men-colleagues and underpropping and increasing influence, power over men-subordinate. At the same time female –leaders give the presents to women without taking into consideration their status. They give presents to make pleasure to the recipient.

The main motives of giving gifts of women subordinates are respect display, need of social approval of the leaders (men and women) and feeling themselves adequate the situation, making pleasure to the recipient (colleagues – men and women).

Thus, we can make the following conclusions after carrying out the research:

1. The gift is used to change the relations towards himself, towards the Other and to the situation of giving gifts in whole.
2. Women-leaders' motives of giving gifts depend on the sex of the recipient, and women subordinates' ones depend on the status of the recipient.

The Literature:

1. Iliin V. The gift as a social phenomenon. – www.acapod.ru
2. Karpova G. Gender aspects of gift phenomena. – www.socnet.narod.ru
3. Mauss Marcel *Essai sur le Don (The Gift)*. – Spb: Evrasia, 2000.
4. Myasishev V.N. *Psychology of relations*. – Moscow-Voronezh, 1995.