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## The Concept of Dispositional Regulation of Individual Social Behavior

After a period of relative neglect by psychologists of issues of social motivation and goal-directed behavior (in favor of attending to the person as a “cognizer,” or reinforcement-shaped “responder”), it is clear that the preoccupations of Miller, Galanter, & Pribram (1960) a quarter-century ago have been taken up with renewed interest. Current investigators are of many different persuasions—e.g., cognitively oriented theorists concerned with “lay epistemology” (Kruglanski & Klar, 1986), “personologists” interested in person–environment interactions (Little, 1983), psychologists attempting to clarify the structure and components of action (e.g., Brenner, 1980), etc. Readers familiar with the work of Leont’ev (1975) and the translations and discussions of related work (Wertsch, 1979) will know that a concern with goal direction has never been absent from psychology in the USSR.

It seems particularly timely, therefore, to publish a translation of the following recent paper by V. A. Yadov, of Leningrad State University. It relates a by now familiar hierarchical scheme of behavior (act-action-activity) to the Soviets’ principal predispositional construct, i.e., *set* (Uz-

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nadze, 1966); it attempts this integration with a hierarchical construction of dispositions, which shares much with the three-component conception of attitude already familiar to Westerners. Yadov discusses the properties of elementary consolidated (and unconscious) sets, socially fixated sets (attitudes), and value orientations and considers the level of behavior each is best suited to explain.

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The social psychological ground shared by sociology and psychology must apparently also take into consideration the general psychological characteristics of personality structure, most importantly, the motivation of its behavior and its specific social conditioning, i.e., its "ties" to, or, more precisely, dependence on, the circumstances of its development, socialization, education, and immediate working environment considered in their social and material sense. The subject-object aspects of the personality should be conceived of here as an entity, but in a certain relationship, namely, with respect to the circumstances of its activity, developed through its previous

experience and based on its natural qualities.

We have every reason to single out the diversity of one's attitudes toward the circumstances of one's activity as a system-forming attribute of personality structure (in light of our particular interest) with the purpose of analyzing these attitudes as a certain system, i.e., an entity.<sup>1</sup>

There is a considerable amount of experimental and theoretical data pointing to the existence of set-related or dispositional mechanisms for regulating individual social behavior. Therefore, it seems legitimate to analyze dispositional and set-related phenomena, within the framework of some general dispositional personality structure, as an integral subject of activity. A system-forming attribute characteristic of this entity should include various states and levels of individual predisposition (readiness) toward perception of circumstances accompanying one's activity, of the behavioral readiness directing that activity, which through ontogenesis becomes, in one way or another, imprinted in the personality structure.

According to D. N. Uznadze's theory,<sup>2</sup> a set represents a condition of readiness experienced by the whole personality, its predisposition to behave in a certain way in a given situation and to satisfy a certain need. As a result of recurrence of the situation in which this need can be actualized, the set becomes consolidated and fixated. A fixated set is secondary, as it were, while the actual situational set functions as primary.

"Attitudinal," or social-set, concepts emphasize a direct relation between attitudes and a certain (social) need and the circumstances of one's activity by which this need can be satisfied. Change and consolidation (fixation) of a social set are also determined by the corresponding relations between needs and the situations in which they are satisfied. The needs, situations, and the disposition itself form hierarchical systems. As for needs, it is common practice to distinguish between the needs of the first (lower) level—psychophysiological, or vital ones—and higher, social needs. However, along with classifi-

cation of needs according to their source of origin, it is possible—and, in our case, more fruitful—to suggest a classification according to the principle of object-orientation of human needs as needs of physical and social individual existence.<sup>3</sup> Under different social conditions, both “find” different material actualization; but in the cycle of individual development (in ontogenesis), they can be classified according to the levels of one’s participation in continually expanding spheres of activity and communication. These levels can be represented as primary membership in the most intimate family environment, then in numerous collectives or small groups, in various spheres of work and other activity, and, finally, in participation through all these and many other channels in an integral social and class system by incorporating society’s ideological and cultural values. The basis of classification in this case is provided by the consecutive expansion of the limits of individual activity, whose source from the subject’s standpoint is the desire or need for definite and expanded conditions for a fulfilling existence (life activity).

Circumstances of activity, or situations in which certain needs of the personality may be actualized, also form a hierarchical structure. In this case the period during which the chief characteristic of the given conditions is preserved will be considered the basis of the structure. The lower level of this structure is formed by “material situations” whose distinguishing feature is that they are created by a specific and rapidly changing material environment. Within a short period of time a person moves from one “material situation” to another. The next level is represented by circumstances of group communication. The duration of these situations is incomparably longer.

The main characteristics of the group in which man’s activity takes place remain unchanged over a considerable period of time. Conditions of one’s activity are even more stable in various social spheres such as work, leisure, and family (everyday) life. Finally, maximum temporal stability (compared with

the above) is typical of the general social conditions of individual life and work that constitute the main characteristics (economic, political, cultural) of the life-style of a particular society, class, and social group. In other words, the general social situation undergoes essential changes within the span of "historical" time; circumstances of human activity in this or that social sphere (for instance, in the sphere of work) may change several times in one's lifetime; circumstances attending a group situation take several years or months to change, whereas the material environment changes within minutes.

If personality dispositions present the result of a "confrontation" between needs and situations (circumstances) in which these needs can be satisfied, and if they are consolidated (fixed) in the personality structure through ontogenesis, then it is natural to suppose that these dispositional formations make up a hierarchy. Its lowest level probably consists of elementary consolidated sets. They are formed on the basis of vital needs and in the simplest situations. These sets represent readiness for action reinforced by previous experience; as such, they are devoid of modality (the experience of "for" or "against") and conscious analysis (cognitive components are absent).

According to D. N. Uznadze, one's consciousness participates in developing a set when a habitual action meets an obstruction and one's own behavior becomes a matter of objectification and reasoning, when a behavioral act turns into an object of reasoning.<sup>4</sup> Although the set does not form the content of consciousness, it "underlies these conscious process."<sup>5</sup>

The second level of dispositional structure is formed by social fixated sets. Unlike elementary behavioral readiness, the social set (and other dispositions to be discussed below) has a complex structure. It probably contains three basic components: emotional (or evaluational), cognitive (rational), and strictly behavioral (the aspect of behavioral readiness). Its formative factors include, on the one hand, social needs related to one's membership in primary and other contact groups and, on

the other, the corresponding social situations.<sup>6</sup> In other words, this is, according to V. N. Myasishchev, an "attitude."

Social sets develop on the basis of operating with individual social objects and in different specific situations. They may be more or less general, since the objects themselves may differ in terms of their common features. Moreover, social sets can be classified according to their predominant orientation toward objects or toward situations,<sup>7</sup> as well as according to the nature of the relevant objects and situations (for example, normative and role sets, manner of action sets, etc.).

The highest level of the dispositional hierarchy is formed by the system of value orientations toward the aims of one's life and activity and the means of achieving them, which are determined by the general social circumstances of the particular individual. It is logical to suppose that the system of value orientations, which is essentially ideological, develops on the basis of the higher social needs of the person (the need to be part of a given social environment, in a broader sense, as an internalization of the general social and class conditions of one's activity) and according to a life-style that provides opportunities for actualizing certain social and personal values.

Within the system of personal values or, more precisely, within the system of value orientations, one can single out, according to our data,<sup>8</sup> a special "axis" that organizes the value hierarchy into a specific individualized structure. This axis represents the person's general existential attitudes, the "balance" of his interest orientations in such spheres of activity as production (work) and consumption (everyday life, leisure, family). The dominating orientation of one's interests toward certain spheres of activity or the relatively uniform identification with activity in the spheres of work, family life, leisure, social-political life, etc., determines, in the final analysis, the most significant features of one's "social quality" in relation to the main characteristics of the life-style typical of one's social milieu. It is precisely these dispositional forma-

tions that can be described as characteristics of the “modal” personality, i.e., of the most popular subject-type, and of the “standard” personality, i.e., the one corresponding most fully to a given stage in social evolution—for instance, the personality of the epoch of developed socialism.<sup>9</sup>

The first essential qualification to be included in the above model is that the dispositional hierarchy is not built with sets as if they were “little bricks” consisting of three components: the cognitive, the emotional, and the behavioral. These aspects reflecting the properties of mental processes form relatively independent subsystems, as it were, within the framework of the general dispositional hierarchy. This supposition is based on experimental data obtained through “attitude” research.

The cognitive aspects of dispositions, investigated experimentally by M. Rosenberg, F. Heider, L. Festinger, M. Ro-keach, and others, have been found to possess the properties of differentiation, similarity, transitivity (the transfer of one’s knowledge or of an attitude based on it from one component to another), and, most importantly, a principle operating within this structure according to which one’s knowledge is “striving,” as it were, toward logical and psychological consistency.<sup>10</sup> According to our findings, it is the higher dispositional formations—the system of value orientations, in particular—that play a leading role in one’s psychologically ordered notions of one’s self and one’s dispositions. Attempts to predict variability in some value structures on the basis of variations of social sets in analogous objects and modes of action have not produced any significant correlations. However, a retrospective “prediction” of social-set variability, based on variations in the hierarchical range of the corresponding values, yielded significant results in G. I. Saganenko’s study of 1,000 subjects.

Emotional aspects of dispositional organization are characterized by tension or “centeredness” regarding the dominant needs of the personality. As for the behavioral aspects, whose



interrelations with the cognitive-emotional system have, strange as it may seem, been studied least of all, these are probably structured according to a principle that differs from the previous two. We shall consider this in greater detail later on when discussing the interaction between the cognitive-emotional and the behavioral subsystems of dispositional structure. At this stage we shall only remark that the functional approach of American social psychologists has inspired quite a few interesting experiments but, at the same time, become a stumbling-block in the development of an integral theory of social sets.

The most essential, if not the principal, function of the dispositional system is psychological regulation of social activity or of individual behavior within the social environment.

Since behavior presents an extremely complicated structure, it—like any other system—can be analyzed from various aspects. If we represent activity in relation to nearer and more remote goals (purposefulness being the leading property of activity) as a structure, we can distinguish several hierarchically arranged behavioral levels. The first level presents one's specific reaction to an actual material situation, one's responses to specific and rapidly changing impacts of the external environment, i.e., *behavioral acts*. Their purposefulness is determined by the necessity to establish an adequate interaction between actual psychophysical need and the current material situation. This interaction immediately turns into a violation of "equilibrium," but owing to the behavioral aspect, it is followed by a new equilibrium.

We can further distinguish an act, or a *habitual action*, consisting, as it were, of a number of behavioral acts. The purposefulness of an act depends on more complex circumstances of the activity and probably corresponds to a higher level of the need to regulate one's behavior in social circumstances. The act is an elementary, socially significant "unit" of behavior, and its aim is to establish a correspondence between the subject's social situation and social need (or needs).

A purposeful sequence of acts forms one's behavior in this or that sphere of *activity* in which the person pursues essentially more remote goals, whose achievement is ensured by a system of acts. And, finally, the integrity of behavior in various spheres is actually a manifestation proper of the whole scope of activity. Goal-setting at this highest level represents a certain "life plan" whose principal element is individual life goals related to the main social spheres of human activity—work, cognition, family, and social life.

At all levels, individual behavior is regulated by one's dispositional system; but in each particular situation and depending on a specific goal, the leading role apparently belongs to a definite dispositional formation.

One may suppose that a principle analogous to the one formulated by N. A. Bernshtein in relation to movement structure on the physiological level<sup>11</sup> is at work here. Just as in the process of movement coordination (to overcome an excessive degree of freedom of a moving organ) we speak of the dominant level of physiological movement regulation, so in dispositional regulation there should be an adequate level or an adequate dispositional formation at the corresponding behavioral level. The rest represents—to use N. A. Bernshtein's term—"background levels" attending to the accessory aspects of activity.

This analogy to the physiology of activity is supported by research on the psychology of set.

When analyzing an elementary behavioral act of the subject of activity, A. S. Prangishvili adopts the notion of the "final common path." "This final path," he writes, "can be compared to the pipe of a funnel where particles of liquid entering its conical part from different directions converge to form a single outpouring stream."<sup>12</sup> The "convergence" in question is achieved through an appropriately timed set that is adequate to the circumstances of the behavioral act. All levels of dispositional structure participate in forming the "stream" entering

the conical part of our imaginary funnel. In a given situation, however, there will be one particular current, or dominant level, since "the will makes it possible to actualize and bring to life a set deemed expedient"<sup>13</sup> for a given activity level.

The expediency of including a certain dispositional formation recorded in previous experience in activity regulation directly depends on: (1) the needs of physical and social existence, and (2) the level ("scale") of the situation or circumstances of activity.

A certain elementary, fixated set may prove adequate for regulation of behavior at the level of an elementary behavioral act in a particular material situation. To regulate a socially significant act under particular circumstances, the leading dispositions will most likely be derived from the system of fixated social sets of the corresponding degree of generalization. In the case of activity regulation in a particular social sphere, it is one's interests and value orientations, as the highest level of the dispositional hierarchy, that bear "responsibility" for the general readiness.

According to N. A. Bernshtein, in some cases higher regulatory levels assume responsibility for controlling lower-level behavioral acts. For instance, following a prolonged illness, one has to learn anew, as it were, how to walk. In this case, too, regulation of the simplest movements occurs on the level of consciousness, whereas under normal conditions consciousness does not control responses on that level. In exactly the same manner in dispositional regulation, a relatively elementary behavioral act may, under special circumstances, be controlled by a higher-level disposition, as is the case when, because of specific circumstances, an unusual social meaning is attributed to a particular act.

In general, at the moment immediately preceding a behavioral act, action, or commencement of a certain activity, the whole dispositional system reaches a state of actual readiness, i.e., forms an actual disposition according to the level of the

activity (material physical environment, social group environment, sphere of social activity, and general social circumstances of a person's life activity). In this case, however, the leading role will be played by those levels of the dispositional hierarchy and specific dispositions that correspond to the particular needs and temporal "scale."<sup>14</sup>

The dispositional hierarchy of the personality, which mediates the connection between circumstances of activity (or situation) and one's behavior, performs motivational functions. Every activity is certainly based on a specific need, or needs. Their satisfaction sustains people's vital activity and enables them to perform their social functions. Although they are at the very root of all behavioral motives and individual acts, the needs may not participate in the direct behavioral "chain," but rather may motivate activity while being in disguise, as it were, through corresponding dispositional formations. If the latter develop as a readiness for action under certain conditions and to satisfy certain needs, then a connection among the need, the situation, and the action is established precisely through the dispositional system.<sup>15</sup>

Let us now discuss some mechanisms of the functioning of the dispositional system. The question that arises first concerns the interconnection of the three main dispositional aspects: the cognitive, the emotional, and the behavioral. We have already noted that it would be wrong to view the dispositional system as a kind of "brickwork" built with elementary dispositional components, each including knowledge, emotion, and behavioral readiness. Such a basically mechanistic notion can hardly correspond to the dialectics of the subject's social activity, since this activity is possible because of the synchronized functioning of a multilevel mechanism.

Therefore, those who study attitudes are confronted with an insoluble problem when they try to elucidate the connections among cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components of an individually treated dispositional formation, be it a social set

concerning a definite social object or a more complex disposition on the level of an attitude toward an integral social situation incorporating a multitude of objects of individual social sets.

In his review paper on this problem, W. McGuire points out that, according to some experimental data (e.g., D. Campbell and L. Kahn's experimental studies of the 1940s), a high correlation between all attitudinal components is revealed, whereas more sophisticated techniques that distinguish among the emotional, the cognitive, and the behavioral aspects of a social set do not confirm these findings (the 1959 experimental studies by D. Campbell, R. Fish, and S. Mann).<sup>16</sup> In 1968, C. Tittle & R. Hill used a very subtle methodological approach to compare various techniques of attitude measurement in terms of the corresponding behavior of the subjects.<sup>17</sup> The results were not encouraging. Having discovered that, of 15 experimental studies conducted by different investigators, only 5 showed a correlation of 0.60 between social set and the observed behavior, they applied 6 different techniques for measuring social sets and 5 for measuring behavior, with the result that in only 2 cases (of 30 experiments—5 x 6) did the correlation exceed 0.60. One may conclude from the above that imperfection of the measurement procedure per se cannot be considered the main cause of inconsistencies between social set and behavior.

Many American researchers, however, continue their search for a solution through perfecting attitude measurement techniques. Moreover, they question the very concept of the three-component structure of social set and propose a return to L. Thurstone's original notion of the emotional nature of attitudes.<sup>18</sup> D. Katz & E. Stotland have gone even further and suggested that social sets are differentiated according to their basic content: some are predominantly cognitive, others are mostly affective, and the rest are dominated by behavioral readiness. Finally, they believe in the possibility of balanced

social sets, in which two, or all three, components are coordinated.<sup>19</sup>

Attribution to individual social sets of a specific function (affective, connative, or cognitive, as suggested by Katz & Stotland), a distinction between “verbal” and “nonverbal” social sets in which the former are believed to represent an attitude toward a verbal situation whereas the latter present an attitude toward a material situation, or classification of social sets according to their orientation toward a social object or a social situation, the goal or mode of action (this line is followed by M. Rokeach and some other authors)—all such attempts to save the general concept of regulation of individual social behavior through “attitude” do nothing but lead to an accumulation of explanations (heterogeneous in their original principles and inconsistent with one another) or some experimental data. As P. N. Shikhirev has remarked, the present-day situation in American studies of attitudes is characterized by an abundance of “minitheories” and an absence of a general theoretical concept.<sup>20</sup>

The mechanism of connections among various elements of the dispositional structure that form different subsystems (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) and different levels (from elementary fixated sets to value orientations) should be regarded precisely as the mechanism of functioning of the dispositional system as a whole, for it ensures purposeful control of individual behavior in its capacity as an integral system in which all elements interrelate and interact in a particular way.

We have mentioned above that actualization of one or another dispositional formation occurs in a purposeful manner, under the influence of the situation and the respective needs, and ensures optimum regulation of behavior on a given level. Let us also recall that dispositional formations with their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects are fixated in previous experience; however, these three aspects should repre-

sent subsystems connected through different principles. Therefore, being fixed in the dispositions, they are simultaneously included in the respective subsystems.

Let us consider as a hypothesis some characteristics of the mechanism of optimizing one's behavior on a certain level from the viewpoint of the dispositional system of personality. Here one can distinguish several processes:

—Extraction from one's general store of knowledge of the elements pertaining to the particular situation, needs, and emotional state of the subject, i.e., extraction of adequate knowledge: Throughout one's life a person accumulates an enormous store of knowledge that can be presented as a kind of "informational field." Individual pieces of knowledge included in this "field" make up its elements, but this does not mean that they bear no relation to dispositional structure. During actualization of a certain disposition, the information related to the given situation and needs is extracted from this "field." This information becomes part of another system, as it were—it acquires new properties and intensifies or weakens the process of actualization of a given social set, value orientation, or any other component of the dispositional system. Formation of cognitive-emotional "links" takes place.

—Development of cognitive-emotional (or emotional-cognitive) links presents a qualitative stage in the process of formation and functioning of the dispositional system. This emotionally colored knowledge represents the main "building blocks," so to speak, of the dispositional system. To complete this process there should be behavioral readiness in the form of a corresponding plan or program of behavior. Which of the numerous component cognitive-emotional "links" will become dominant depends on a number of factors—for instance, on the qualitative characteristics of the knowledge itself and of the corresponding emotions. As far as the former is concerned, the degree of its ramification, i.e., its differentiation regarding the object and the situation of activity, is essential.

As for the latter, the important element here is the intensity of emotion, which is, in turn, determined by the value of the activated need and its “centrality” regarding one’s dominant interests. One should definitely expect a significant influence to be exercised by the subject’s individual psychological characteristics, his psychological type, on the emergence of the dominant element when cognitive-emotional links are being formed.

—Development of behavioral readiness, according to the level of activity: on the lowest level, it is a *situational behavioral readiness*; in a more complicated, social situation, it is a *behavioral plan*; and on the highest levels, it is *behavioral programs*. In this sense, behavior in one or another sphere, and in activity in general, is regulated by programs of conduct; actions, by a behavioral plan; and an individual behavioral act, by a corresponding behavioral readiness. Behavioral readiness is a result of actualization of dispositional formations adequate to the circumstances of activity.

How, then, are the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements of the dispositional system moved into the optimal state for the given circumstances?

At this point we must go back to what has already been said about the hierarchical structure of the whole dispositional system. In this hierarchy, as in other, similar formations, the regulatory role of the corresponding levels is different—that is, higher levels of the hierarchy dominate lower ones, while within the same level various dispositional elements are coordinated.

Although corresponding dispositions are extracted by the subject in conformity with the goal and level of activity, other dispositional levels are probably also activated: lower ones, to provide for the peripheral aspects of this activity, and the higher, to coordinate a behavioral act or an action within the framework of purposeful behavior in a given sphere of activity, etc.<sup>21</sup>



V. S. Merlin showed, in his experimental studies, that, to fulfill a social need ("a social schema," to use his own words), individual psychological characteristics of the personality (such as introversion or extraversion, temperamental qualities, etc.) interact in a manner that will produce, on the highest psychological level, the kind of behavior that corresponds to the social need. "A person's individuality," Merlin concludes, "simultaneously represents an individualization of generalized, socially typical relations (social schemes) and a subordination or regulation of individual expression by social schemas."<sup>22</sup> In our case, it implies a restructuring of the lower levels of the dispositional hierarchy in such a way as to ensure the actualization of behavior regulated by a higher dispositional level adequate to the situation.

This mechanism of dominating the lower levels of activity regulation by the higher ones has been discussed by A. A. Mehrabian, who criticizes psychologists who believe that the leading role in behavior belongs to deep-lying psychic phenomena on which the whole psychic sphere, including individual self-consciousness, is built.

The firmness of this interpretation and analysis of personality structure lies, first, in the methodology of mechanical stratification of psychic functions. It is common knowledge, however, that in the process of evolutionary development, each preceding function is rebuilt under the regulating influence of the subsequent one. . . . It is precisely for this reason that the structure of a new, higher level is the dominant regulator of the whole personality structure.<sup>23</sup>

Many experimental phenomena can be satisfactorily explained within the framework of the proposed dispositional concept. Thus, using the terminology of cybernetics and programmed behavior to explain individual behavior, one can describe dispositions as elements of programs belonging to different levels. The emphasis, however, is not on the regulat-

ing properties of programs themselves (although this is also important for understanding the place of dispositions in personality structure), but rather on their genesis, on the origin of the programs and how they are determined by the circumstances of a person's activity and life-style. The dispositional concept explains well the experimental phenomena of motivation and its hierarchical nature.

It is important to emphasize the difference between conscious dispositions and "directly regulating" ones (A. N. Leont'ev, L. I. Bozhovich). Conscious dispositions present subjective images of behavioral plans and programs, whereas those truly "controlling" one's behavior may sometimes differ considerably from them. This difference is very significant for interpreting inconsistencies between the dispositions recorded by social psychological studies and real behavior. V. S. Magun (1986) showed that the above inconsistencies may, to a considerable extent, be due to a noncoincidence between conscious dispositions and those that really regulate one's behavior.<sup>24</sup>

Relations between individual personality characteristics and various dispositional levels—such as value orientations and sets—have been less studied. There are experimental findings regarding interrelations of type of character, temperament, and dispositional processes.<sup>25</sup> The hypothesis suggesting that these relations are repeatedly mediated through lower dispositional formations is quite legitimate, so that the discovery of "direct correlations" between the individual characteristics and, for instance, the personal system of values (as was stated in M. Rokeach's studies) may prove to be an erroneous conclusion. It frequently happens in science that a discovery of direct dependencies subsequently proves to be a pseudo-discovery, since numerous mediating links have been overlooked.

Over the past 40 years, we have been conducting a number of studies to test the above propositions experimentally. The dispositional concept of regulation of individual social behav-

ior has been confirmed in a general way. Also, our studies have introduced a fair number of more precise definitions into the original hypothesis. Among the most significant are the following:

1. The above division of dispositions into the conscious ones recorded by the researcher and the unconscious ones that truly regulate the subject's activity.

2. The absence of determinative dependencies among the system of values, the general orientation of one's interests, and the level of situational sets. The latter turned out to possess relative independence and to ensure flexible adaptability of the personality to changing circumstances of behavior.

This relative independence of lower dispositional levels is manifested, for instance, in the active destruction of familiar social sets under stress (V. Uzunova's study of gravely ill patients), which does not, however, affect—or affects only slightly—the higher dispositional levels. At the same time, rehabilitation, i.e., patients' return to normal existence following treatment, proves to be far more successful in those whose system of higher dispositions is dominated by such values as family, professional activity, etc., compared with those whose hierarchy is topped by health-related values. It is significant that the somatic condition of both groups after the treatment appeared similar.

An unfinished longitudinal study by N. V. Yadov (on adaptation of young workers in industry) reveals that over a period of one-and-a-half years, the subjects' value orientations showed considerable differentiation, whereas their situational social sets had drawn nearer to one another.

3. The effect of positive-negative asymmetry has been discovered in the integral dispositional structure (V. Gorbatkov). This effect consists in the following: at the stage of the initial contact with a new activity, the subject "leans," as it were, against the mirror image of the dispositional system. He is motivated not by the desire to abide by certain values (for

instance, to be responsible in his work), but rather by the desire not to deviate from the accepted social norm (not to be irresponsible). At the stage of active participation in the activity, there is a positive dispositional regulation: an aspiration toward achievement, an approximation of a positive standard. This phenomenon reminds one of the well-known McGuire phenomenon.

In conclusion, let us emphasize yet again the legitimacy of the attempt at a system(ic) representation of the social context of individual activity as a reflection of this context by the dispositional system of the subject of social action.

## Notes

1. The basic premises of the concept under consideration have been published earlier (V. A. Yadov, [On dispositional regulation of individual social behavior]. In [*Methodological problems of social psychology*]. Moscow, 1975). In the present paper, we introduce into the hypothesis some more precise definitions based on obtained empirical findings.

2. D. N. Uznadze, [*Experimental foundations of the psychology of set*]. Tbilisi: 1961. For an elaboration of Uznadze's theory of set with regard to personality theory, see Sh. A. Nadirashvili, [*The notion of set in general and social psychology*]. Tbilisi, 1974. Sh. A. Nadirashvili, in particular, draws attention to the role of higher social-dispositional formations in regulating individual social behavior, a person's value orientations, and "psychological self-portraits" (Pp. 69-91) and points to their leading role at this level of psychological regulation.

3. See G. G. Diligenskii, [Issues in human needs theory]. In *Voprosy Filosofii*, 1976, No. 9; 1977, No. 2. G. G. Diligenskii develops a very fruitful approach to the issue of needs, claiming that the source of inner psychic tension (energy, activity) is in the confrontation of two tendencies: toward merging with one's social environment, and the opposite tendency toward self-expression as an autonomous unit. The first is manifested through internalizing the ways and models of actions transmitted to an individual in the form of social norms and skills, of information absorption "from others," whereas the second tendency is expressed through developing one's own personal potential, transmitting to others the information accumulated in the process of one's activity and through self-consciousness (*Voprosy Filosofii*, 1976, No. 9, pp. 32-33).

4. D. N. Uznadze, [*Experimental foundations of the psychology of set*]. Tbilisi, 1961. P. 128.

5. Ibid., p. 41.
6. M. Rokeach, *Beliefs, attitudes, and values*. San Francisco, 1968. Pp. 148-52.
7. For more detail, see V. A. Yadov (Ed.), [*A social psychological portrait of the engineer*]. Moscow, 1977. Chap. 3 (The engineer as the subject of work activity).
8. In our previous publications, we have distinguished as a special level of dispositional structure the general orientation of one's interests toward particular spheres of activity. However, a study conducted with a large group of engineers (planners and designers) and covering different aspects of their professional and nonprofessional activity showed that the "balance" of their interests' orientation, the degree of involvement with their profession and with family life and leisure, obviously determine both the structure of value orientations and the various manifestations of social-dispositional mechanisms for regulating their behavior in these spheres (see [*A social psychological portrait of the engineer*]. Pp. 211-26).
9. Dispositions of the highest level also specify characteristics of a moral ideal, i.e., an unrealized possibility of moral behavior demanding its realization.
10. See, for instance, R. Abelson et al. (Eds.), *Theories of cognitive consistency*. Chicago, 1968; F. Heider, Attitudes and cognitive organization. *J. Psychol.*, 1956, 21, 107-112; C. Inskho, *Theories of attitude change*. New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967.
11. N. A. Bernshtein, [*Essays on the physiology of movements and activity*]. Moscow, 1966. Pp. 98-100.
12. A. S. Prangishvili, [*Studies on the psychology of set*]. Tbilisi, 1967. P. 77.
13. D. N. Uznadze, [*Experimental foundations of the psychology of set*]. P. 203.
14. For example, numerous studies of consumer demand and other spheres have shown that a situational social set is capable of accurately "predicting" real actions, such as the purchase of a given product or, say, a visit to a doctor in the case of a previously registered positive set toward preventive medicine. At the same time, the state of value orientations or general social sets toward creativity, initiative, and independence as ways of behavior under the circumstances of engineering activity possess a lesser "predictive" ability of the real manifestations of independence in the subjects in comparison with the situational sets toward readiness for independent action under clearly defined conditions that take into account the stage of development and nature of the projects designed by a given engineer (see [*A social psychological portrait of the engineer*]. Pp. 118-33).
15. D. A. Kiknadze, [On the question of the system of factors of human behavior]. In [*Sociological studies*]. Tbilisi, 1971. Pp. 102-104.
16. W. McGuire, The nature of attitudes and attitude change. In *Handbook of social psychology*. 1969. Vol. 3, pp. 156-57.

17. C. Tittle & R. Hill, Attitude measurement and prediction of behavior. *Sociometry*, 1967, 39, 199-213; I. Ajzen & M. Fishbein, Attitude-behavior relations: A theoretical analysis and review of empirical research. *Psychol. Bull.*, 1977, 84, 888-918.

18. W. McGuire, Op. cit., p. 157.

19. Ibid.

20. P. N. Shikhirev, [Social set studies in the USA]. *Voprosy Filosofii*, 1973, No. 2.

21. It is important to bear in mind that there are individual peculiarities or styles of dispositional regulation. For instance, as our study of engineers has shown, there are two different styles of dispositional regulation. One tends to coordinate everyday activity (in the sphere of production) with value orientations quite well, but with situational social sets less well, whereas the other succeeds better in coordinating actions with situational social sets than with value orientations. These are "strategists" and "tacticians," as it were.

22. V. S. Merlin, [Individuation of social schemes and regulation of personality traits by social schemes]. In [2nd International Colloquium on Social Psychology]. Tbilisi, 1970. P. 213.

23. A. A. Megrabian, [General psychopathology]. Moscow, 1972. P. 212.

24. V. S. Magun, Work performance and job satisfaction: A coexistence of positive and negative correlations. In L. H. Strickland, V. P. Trusov, & E. Lockwood, *Research in Soviet social psychology*. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1986.

25. V. G. Norakidze, [Character types and fixated set]. Tbilisi, 1966. See also note 24.