

УДК 005.32:902

Corporate (Organizational) Culture of Archaeological Expeditions

Ivan S. Baryshev*,
Denis N. Masliuzhenko and Igor' K. Novikov
Kurgan State University
25, Gogol Str., Kurgan, 640669, Russia

Received 17.11.2014, received in revised form 26.12.2014, accepted 18.01.2015

Archaeological expedition as a cultural phenomenon can be analyzed not only through the concept of "subculture" regarding its members, but also through the mechanism of its organization and functioning as a set of corporate (organizational) culture attributes. The use of this term reveals new possibilities for the analysis of this phenomenon functioning as a way to obtain new scientific information by the field research methods as a total of interested people who promote these researches. Expedition, in this respect, has a unique mixture of specific behavior and value norms, traditions and customs, patterns of everyday life in all their diversity and participants' ways of thinking that are often intentionally formed by the expedition leaders to ensure achievement of the field work objectives. Use and perception of this methodological device can potentially allow forming the corporate culture of those expeditions where it has not been formed yet.

Keywords: corporate culture, archaeologists' subculture, archaeological expedition.

Research area: economics.

Introduction

Understanding the phenomenon of "archaeological expedition" has only recently interested both its active participants, i.e. archaeologists and external observers represented by cultural specialists, sociologists and other representatives of the humanities. A fashionable concept of "subculture", which is understood as a part of common culture, values, traditions and customs system, inherent to a large social group and that differs from the dominant culture in language, views of life, behavior patterns, hairstyles, clothes or customs is most commonly used for this [Culture, 2002, p. 819]. In this respect

and with a certain degree of probability all the archaeological community that takes different part in the process of obtaining new knowledge through archaeological research might be a subculture.

The authors of this study suggest to look at this cultural phenomenon as one of the corporate culture models, that is, as a certain kind of behavior, acquired by an organization in the process of adaptation to the external environment and internal integration, that has shown its effectiveness in terms of implementation of the main objectives of the organization and shared by the majority of its members [Asaul et al., 2006: 15-



Lapel pin of the Kurgan archaeologists “Sachem”. The pin is designed by the member of the Union of Artists of the Russian Federation Elena Popova

16]. For this purpose such components of behavior and values norms as traditions and customs of such expeditions, models of everyday life in all their diversity and the way of participants' thinking should be considered. This study, in our opinion, in a greater degree is applicable to the expeditions with the certain developed continuity of generations and constant, but partial rotation with preserving at that the backbone of expedition. Expeditions, that participants include not only professional archaeologists, but school students, university students and volunteers, i.e. groups that are most interested and exposed to the ideas of subcultures formation mostly fall under this criterion.

Conceptological basis of research and problem statement

Corporate (organizational) culture is considered as one of the ways to carry out organizational activity through the use of language, folklore, traditions and other means of propagating basic values, beliefs and ideologies that direct organization activities to the right direction [Morgan, 2006: 137-165]. In this case, the term is applied to archaeological expedition as an organization built on the elements of

corporate culture that is about integral distinctive entity which exists according to its own principles and has a unique life cycle. Apparently, archaeologists' corporate culture manifests itself only when a new field season begins and, in fact, exists only within some time frames during the spring-autumn period in the space of field, and in the rest of the time it exists in the preserved form. Although, in some cases, while retaining field staff under conditions of work in the laboratory, some elements of corporate traditions can be kept during the entire year, including those, in the form of formal mandatory holidays. Ideally, corporate culture should contribute to guiding the participants' behavior to meet well-defined purpose and increase motivation of their involvement to achieve it.

Corporate culture can be consciously created by its leading members, that is, in this case expedition leaders or its oldest members, or it is formed randomly in the course of time due to various internal and external factors. For example, in the Kurgan archaeological expedition corporate culture in its present form began to form in the mid-1990s as a reflection of concerted efforts of its leader at that period of time S.N. Shilov. Moreover, because of his personal interests, it initially had paramilitary structure.

Discussion

It is possible to emphasize the following elements in corporate culture: artifacts, proclaimed values and basic concepts. Artifacts are visible organizational structures and processes. Artifacts can be seen, heard and touched [Schein, 2002: 33]. As a consequence, the objects of this level can be easily described. Artifacts include uniforms, speech pattern (typical for all archaeologists), symbols, rites and rituals of the organization. In archaeological expeditions such everyday traditions as parade, evening bonfire, dedication to archaeologists, etc.,

could be attributed to artifacts. Clothing style is diverse, but there are some common elements (for example, a lot of archaeologists prefer military style). Artifacts may also include various signs of personal identity expression, such as stripes, amulets, hairstyles, tattoos, etc.

Proclaimed values are perceived as statements and actions of the organization members that reflect shared values and beliefs. Proclaimed values are given by management as part of strategy or for some other reasons [Schein, 2002: 35]. The expedition members know about these values, and they make choice by themselves whether to accept these values, to pretend and adapt to the situation, or reject them. If the management is persistent enough in its ambition to adopt certain values, if artifacts that reflect the importance of these values for the organization appear and then the values are tested.

Basic concepts are the foundation of organization's culture, which its members may not perceive and consider inviolable. This exact foundation determines people's behavior in organization and making different decisions [Schein, 2002: 37-38]. They seem so obvious for the group members that behavior variations within the given cultural unit are minimized. Basic concepts are established by ceremonial elements that are implicitly reflected in artifacts and participants' behavior. The most fundamental and important archaeologists' values and ideas are well recorded in folklore, including songs [Liubchanskaia 2008: 88-96]. The ideal and purpose of the corporate culture, the key to its success and effectiveness is full compliance of the proclaimed values with the basic concepts. When they coincide we can confidently assert that there is a positive result.

It is important to note that in most expeditions there is a clear hierarchy, division into seniors and juniors, to the already experienced field workers, and those who came to the field for the

first time, with the obligatory and quite rigid subordination system between them. This exact feature was formed one of the first in the Kurgan archaeological expedition along with the ideas of day regimen. As a rule, it is reflected in the fact that younger participants are disciplined stricter, there are a number of restrictions and prohibitions, they are supposed to do unskilled work, such as firewood collection and bringing water, as well as being on duty and cooking for the whole expedition.

Seniors, in turn, have some privileges, but at the same time bear the whole burden of responsibility and the main duties for camp life and fulfilling its primary function, that is, stable operation of the excavation. In this case, according to the established tradition, they come first to the excavation, and return one of the last. They are responsible for the most difficult skilled work in the excavation (excavation marking, preparation of plans and drawings, office work and reporting).

The younger are patronized, and this is the source of nicknames for the newcomers in various expeditions: green hand, freshers, meat, fledglings. In some expeditions freshmen undergo various tests. But it can hardly be regarded as manifestation of "hazing", thus, freshmen are tested for strength, character and suitability to field life and most importantly, the desire to work in a team, to obey its requirements and to follow the traditions. Already presence in the field by itself could be considered as a constant initiation, and not only for the younger, but also for many "old men" as well. But the most important test usually always happens at the end of the shift. On field practice completion for all the first-year students traditional for many expeditions action – initiation into the archaeologists is arranged. It happens differently everywhere. This may be a small obstacle zone or any other tasks for quick thinking, etc. All this is usually accompanied by

a theatrical performance, as well as a common holiday and a day-off. After initiation, a freshman becomes a productive member of the archaeological community, an insider, and climbs the next step of the hierarchical ladder.

In some expeditions gatherings around the seniors' campfire are considered as a kind of artifact, they can last all night, accompanied by high jinks and loud songs, but in the morning, after a couple hours of sleep, they are the first in the excavations. In this way they as if demonstrate endurance and stamina, not being subjected to external factors and aggressive environment. Thereby, the seniors demonstrate and emphasize their status in the team, confirming that they deserve being in this society, in the forefront, that they are "experienced archaeologists".

In the Ural-Volga region a special institution of "sachem" was developed on this basis. This term was borrowed from the Iroquois Indians, where sachems were elected tribal chiefs. In archaeological expeditions experienced field workers who were involved in archeology for a long period of time are called sachems. Their upper management gave them great responsibility and a variety of duties in the camp, they should be able to administer expedition, mark excavation, lead the freshmen, that is, in the case of temporary absence of management they can replace them. Often, belonging to sachem is also determined by such artifacts as fieldwork during the strictly defined number of seasons and undergoing special initiation. Candidate's selection for this could be done both by management and the board of acting sachems. An interesting artifact for Kurgan archaeologists initiated to sachems is presence of a special badge that visually confirms their status.

To unite all the expedition members to the team of like-minded people, it is necessary to have ideology, i.e., common goals, values,

and ideas about archeological expedition arrangement, from which all the participants benefit and have satisfaction. Corporate culture (as adopted and supported by the whole team views of "good" and "evil") is a powerful internal competitive factor that increases manageability of the expedition, helps it to develop and allows each participant to grow (both personally and financially).

Proclaimed values in the archaeological expedition are obvious, the main objectives set by the expedition leader are to be on time to investigate the object and process the material. He looks forward to successful discoveries, good weather, friendly attitude of the local residents and well-being in the camp. As an administrator, the head of expedition is interested in the successful performance of all the tasks set to the expedition within the set timeframes and without losses. As for the head and a man it is also of high importance for him to keep the human resources available to him. He counts on them in further both field and office work, therefore preserve corporate culture and set its tone is one of his primary goals. Basic concepts of the expedition participants are primarily focused on personal and psychological comfort, and if a participant feels at ease, relaxed, as an "insider", he/she will come back here again and again.

Conclusion

A distinguishing feature of corporate culture is a sense of security of belonging to the expedition or its value system set in the participants' minds. When a participant shares a common culture of the expedition, its priorities and values, his/her personal responsibility for the result increases. If every staff member works with such a mindset, therefore, the general picture improves and labor efficiency increases. Freshmen get involved into working process faster and adequately perceive the events that take place in the team. Thus,

the main objective that is assigned by corporate culture is to get expedition members interested in accomplishing the set tasks by creating friendly and supportive atmosphere in the team.

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Корпоративная (организационная) культура археологических экспедиций

**И.С. Барышев,
Д.Н. Маслюженко, И.К.Новиков**
*Курганский государственный университет
Россия, 640669, Курган, ул. Гоголя, 25*

Археологическая экспедиция как феномен культуры может быть проанализирована не только через понятие «субкультура» относительно ее участников, но и через механизм ее организации и функционирования как совокупности признаков корпоративной (организационной) культуры. Применение данного термина раскрывает новые возможности анализа функционирования этого феномена как способа получения новой научной информации методами полевых исследований и как совокупности заинтересованных людей, двигающих эти исследования. Экспедиция в этом отношении обладает уникальной совокупностью специфического поведения и ценностных норм, традиций и обычаев, моделей повседневности во всем их многообразии и образов мысли участников, которые часто специально формируются руководством экспедиции для обеспечения выполнения целей полевой работы. Использование и осознание этого методологического приема потенциально позволит формировать и саму корпоративную культуру тех экспедиций, где она еще не сформирована.

Ключевые слова: корпоративная культура, субкультура археологов, археологическая экспедиция.

Научная специальность: 08.00.00 – экономические науки.
