MULTICULTURALISM AND THE DIALOGUE OF CULTURES IN THE MODERN GLOBAL SOCIETY

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Summary. As the title implies, the article describes the global problems of multiculturalism and the dialogue of cultures in the conditions of the modern information society. Much attention is given to the identification of a comprehensive definition of multiculturalism and theoretical, methodological, and practical aspects of solving the multiculturalism global issues. The importance of dialogue of cultures in understanding universal human values and ethical norms, and intercultural communication is also mentioned.

Key words. Multiculturalism, dialog of culture, intercultural communication.

Introduction

Even at the end of the last century, the world began an epochal movement towards internationalization, globalization, unification, and dialogue of cultures, ethnic groups, and political nations. Based on the theoretical foundations formed by Skler, Robertson, and Beck, from the practical side, these processes could not be implemented without the emergence of multiculturalism. It was this phenomenon that allowed societies made up of several ethnic groups and national groups of different sizes to form and successfully exist in the same territory in different countries with different historical pasts, mentalities, and cultural and religious characteristics.

The relevance of the topic of multiculturalism and the dialogue of cultures stems from the fact that in the modern world the absolute majority of countries are multicultural. From this arises the need for intercultural communication and a tolerant attitude towards different cultural and ethnic communities. At this stage of social development, there are still contradictions and unresolved issues in this area, and this is what makes it necessary to discuss the global problems of multiculturalism and the dialogue of cultures in the conditions of the information society.
The main part

In modern science, multiculturalism is considered in ideological, political-pragmatic, and demographic planes. Scientist A. Kolodiy highlights the concept of "multiculturalism" from different angles: first, as an ideological doctrine and a policy principle based on this doctrine; secondly, as a historically specific phenomenon that arose at a certain time and in certain countries. This is the principle of ethnonational, educational, and cultural policy, which recognizes and supports the right of citizens to preserve, develop and protect their cultural features by all legal methods, and obliges the state to support such efforts of citizens. According to another researcher, V. Kotelnikov, multiculturalism is a concept that proposes to recognize the equality of all cultures and their equal right to exist. This ideology proposes the integration of cultures without their assimilation [1]. Summarizing the vision of various researchers, multiculturalism is one of the important aspects of tolerance, which consists of the need for the parallel existence of cultures for their mutual penetration, enrichment, and development in the universal stream of mass culture.

Chandran Kukatas, an American political scientist and the author of the article "Theoretical Foundations of Multiculturalism", highlighted five possible options for society's reaction to the appearance of ethnic groups different from it in terms of cultural characteristics:

1. isolation (a maximally closed society that does not allow the emergence of cultural diversity or creates obstacles for the immigration of representatives of other cultures);
2. assimilation (the emergence of new cultural groups in society is allowed, but the policy of their unification and rapprochement with the local population is pursued);
3. soft multiculturalism (every individual is given the freedom to choose the level of assimilation with the local population, which is determined solely by the desire of this individual);
4. strict multiculturalism (supporting cultural minorities of various kinds, granting them special rights, and involving them in full participation in the life of society while preserving their traditions);
5. apartheid (complete ban on the assimilation of cultural minorities with the local population) [2].

Of all the possible options, Kukatas calls multiculturalism in the regime of the greatest tolerance, i.e. liberal multiculturalism, the most effective way of interaction in the modern world, which can achieve the set goals. Despite all the opportunities that multiculturalism opens up for societies in the field of cultural enrichment, it faces global problems that deny its effective functioning.

The first of the global problems of multiculturalism is the different perception of the concept of "nation" by citizens of different countries, which forces multiculturalism to develop with significant regional features. According to this, two models of multiculturalism have developed - American (includes the USA, Canada, and Australia) and European [3]. The differences are due to historical features - the population of the countries of the American model was formed from immigrants, so cultural pluralism is natural for them. For example, all ethnic communities that make up the population of the United States consider the United States to be their country.
On the territory of Europe, the attitude to cultural diversity is different, since European nation-states were formed even before the large-scale influx of migrants. This determines the existence of distinct ethnic nations in Europe, which cherish and hold on to their ethnic roots. Therefore, the rhetoric of "cultural pluralism" of the American model does not fully take root in European states but is forced to change significantly.

Even in different European countries, the understanding of "nation" differs - in France, society considers the nation as a political entity, while in Germany, this concept is based on ethnic characteristics. This is also reflected in the implementation of migration policy - the French highlight the exclusive equality of all citizens, considering cultural identity as secondary, which makes their policy more like assimilation than multiculturalism.

The second important problem of multiculturalism is the fundamental difference in values and orientations of different civilizations. Although the historical background separates the USA and European countries about the nation, they are united by the common values of freedom, democracy, individualism, and liberalism, which can be conventionally called Western. It is they who form the so-called Western civilization, which is obviously and significantly different from the Eastern one, such as Hindu or Muslim. In the article "Multiculturalism as a Phenomenon of the Postmodern World", scientist Podskalna cites a quote from Samuel Huntington about Western values: "At a deep level, Western ideas and ideas are fundamentally different from those of other civilizations. Western ideas such as individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, freedom, rule of law, democracy, free market, and separation of church and state hardly find any response in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist, and Orthodox cultures. The West's efforts to promote these ideas often provoke a hostile reaction against the "imperialism of human rights" and contribute to the strengthening of the original values of its own culture. This is evidenced, in particular, by the support of religious fundamentalism among the youth of non-Western countries. And the very thesis about the possibility of "universal civilization" is a Western idea. It is in direct conflict with the particularism of most Asian cultures, with their emphasis on the differences that separate some people from others" [3].

Another global problem of multiculturalism is the difference between its theoretical foundations and practical implementation. In practice, it is much more difficult for societies to tolerate the cultural characteristics of other groups that are completely unrelated or significantly different from them. Often multiculturalism is a hidden manifestation of unifying all cultural groups under the European humane, liberal, and democratic standard. The essence of this problem is revealed in the article "Multiculturalism and the problem of tolerance in a polyethnic socio-cultural space" by scientist Mykhaylova: "One of the most famous critics of multiculturalism, the Slovenian philosopher and sociologist Slavoj Žižek, in the work "The irritable subject: the missing center of political ontology" in the chapter "Multiculturalism" writes that a multiculturalist is tolerant towards the Other as long as he is not a real Other, but by the aseptic Other to modern ecological wisdom, shocking rituals, and so on, the moment he encounters the real Other (with women who are forced to wear the burqa, with the torture of the enemy to death, etc.), with how the Other
regulates the specificity of his own pleasure, tolerance disappears. Žižek considers multiculturalism as the reverse side of globalization, as an ideology that, behind its outwardly attractive side, hides a strong power of exploitation and destruction of manifestations of individuality. [2]

The way to create multiculturalism and understanding and tolerance between different ethnocultural groups is through intercultural communication and dialogue of cultures. The dialogue of cultures is a communicative action aimed at mutual understanding, which is achieved in interactive interaction and involves the reproduction of the culture and personal qualities of an individual. In a broader sense, the dialogue of cultures is revealed through the cultural and historical interaction of ethnic groups aimed at commonwealth and understanding between them. In a narrower sense, attention is focused on the structural and functional status of the components of the dialogue of cultures that are grouped around certain spheres of culture on pragmatic, linguistic, and semantic grounds [4].

An important issue is the possibility of dialogue between representatives of very different cultures. In this process, Gurevich singles out two possible solutions:

1. the way of subjective perception of culture, which requires rejecting everything, even that which contributes to one’s own understanding of the cultural text;

2. the way of objective perception of culture, which consists in finding ways of own understanding without rejecting the originality of culture [4].

Scientist Alla Kozak points out that one of the key features of the dialogue of cultures is cultural-communicative compatibility, which expresses the socio-cultural orientation of the joint activity of people in their desire to reach agreement and is provided by the appropriate base of discourse: value-normative orientation, generally accepted etiquette norms of behavior, public assessment of the socio-cultural experience of the people, a community of spiritual orientations regarding the implementation of dialogue. Accordingly, in the modern information society, there are more opportunities for dialogue between cultures, because the means of information exchange are more developed, the value orientation and etiquette norms of the developed layers of different societies are increasingly approaching and unified, the understanding of universal values comes to a common denominator at different levels - from simple workers to the leadership of the states. Kozak also notes: “A peculiar type of intercultural communication in the context of the dialogue of cultures is the teaching of foreign languages, where the cultural interaction of representatives of different linguistic and cultural communities can be both direct (direct contacts) and indirect (work with a text, a work as an abstract model of another culture ), can also be built on the internal dialogue of a person’s consciousness and thinking with the imaginary world and other people (for example, identifying oneself with the images of artistic works)” [4].

In today’s world, when the question of the need to master foreign languages appears before almost everyone because it opens up new prospects for development in the professional and educational spheres, each individual can be an active participant in the dialogue of cultures and use all available means of communication with the outside world to popularize their own culture and learn about the peculiarities of other ethnocultural groups.
Conclusion

Multiculturalism is an ideological doctrine and a historical-cultural phenomenon, the essence of which is to support the idea of the need for the parallel existence of cultures with the aim of their mutual penetration, enrichment, and development in the universal stream of mass culture. Among all the ways society interacts with a culture that is not its own (isolation, assimilation, soft and hard multiculturalism, and apartheid), liberal multiculturalism, which is based on the principle of tolerance, is the most effective form of interaction. The dialogue of cultures is one of the ways that helps the formation of multiculturalism. The basis on which the dialogue of cultures is built is a value-normative orientation, generally accepted etiquette norms of behavior, public assessment of the socio-cultural experience of the people, and commonality of spiritual orientations. In the modern information society, there are more opportunities for the dialogue of cultures to take place, because gradually even the most different cultural groups come to understand universal human values and ethical norms, and there are also more opportunities for the exchange of information, which also promotes intercultural communication.

References: