

THE PHENOMENON OF INTERACTION OF CULTURES IN THE MODERN SOCIETY

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Migration brings cultural diversity to contemporary societies, but the question if the process is beneficial or detrimental to human history remains unanswered. As far as the phenomenon of multiculturalism has become an acute issue nowadays, its advantages and disadvantages are described, and the events that caused the emergence of the term are considered. In the article, the concepts of multicultural, cross-cultural and intercultural approaches to building a society are explained and compared. They are presented as the alternative ways of putting an end to discrimination and racism. The necessity of achieving a balance between assimilation and preserving diversity, which would mean respect for and recognition of differences, is substantiated and defined as a primary goal of peaceful coexistence of diverse cultures throughout the world.

Key words: multiculturalism; ethnic minorities; cross-cultural; intercultural; migration.

Today many contemporary countries are characterized by multiculturalism, multilingualism, and different ethnic and confessional views. In this article, the concept of multiculturalism and related notions are considered. To explain them better, it is worth turning to history.

In 1948, with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the world community formally declared the rejection of the old hierarchical approach which allowed and justified the dominance of some peoples over others. After the end of the Second World War and, to an even greater extent, after the end of the Cold War, the policy of many Western states towards their ethnic and cultural minorities became «desecuritized» [5]. It means that this policy was no longer considered to be in direct connection with the problem of protecting national security.

One of the first experiments on the implementation of the multiculturalism model took place in Canada. It was based on an attempt to synthesize two basic cultures: English and French – as the cultures of immigrants – and the culture of native population. This was embodied in the constitutional principles and acts. In 1971, a new doctrine of social policy in Canada, based on the principle of inclusion, received the status «multicultural». A bit later, the same term appeared in the official political rhetoric of another former British colony, Australia, and, almost simultaneously, New Zealand. Multicultural discourse has moved from the New to the Old World. By the end of the twentieth century, words such as *Dutch multiculturalism*, *English multiculturalism*, or *the Swedish model of multiculturalism* became common.

Nevertheless, in the current multicultural discourse, the traditional problems of multiculturalism are discussed exclusively in a critical way and few people know the differences between the terms *multicultural*, *cross-cultural* and *intercultural*.

The concept *multicultural* characterizes a society consisting of more than one group of people with a different religion, language, cultural traditions. Such groups coexist together without interacting with each other.

In *cross-cultural* society, one of the groups dominates, and the others are in opposition to it. The differences are visible and understandable to members of other groups, but there is no cultural assimilation.

The term *intercultural*, however, is comprehensive and depicts communities where different groups understand, accept and actively participate in the life of other groups one way or another. People exchange experience, knowledge, language. Such society is the most stable and approximated to the ideal model of a society with a number of different cultural groups.

As the idea of multiculturalism prevails in the world, we will consider it in more detail. So, living in a multicultural society can be challenging initially but its advantages are obvious.

- To start with, this is *adaptability*. A person living in a multicultural society adapts to everything new much easier, it is harder to take them by surprise. They are also less susceptible to stress due to changes in their environment or place of residence, as they can more easily bear the consequences of cultural shock. A person begins to cope with all the unexpected much better, finding ways out of the most difficult situations.

- Then, *open mindedness*. As soon as a person begins to live in a multicultural society, his horizons expand. This, undoubtedly, affects their views of life, increases tolerance, which, in turn, leads to the elimination of such a concept as racism.

- Finally, *supportive environment*. Many people who differ from their group members for one reason or another may face persecution and harassment. However, if a person lives in a multicultural society, they can always find support in the communities where their differences are not something abnormal or punishable.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that everything has its disadvantages and so does multiculturalism. Let us consider some of them.

- Firstly, the *disappearance of culture* is possible. When several cultures influence each other there is a threat of absorption of one culture by another or the loss of one of some culture's distinctive features [4].

- Secondly, there will inevitably be the *increase in hatred*. When several cultures exist side by side, it is almost impossible to avoid violence and

conflicts. Communities begin to prove that only their religion, language, beliefs are correct.

- Thirdly, the *host society* may be affected. There are many questions about the readiness of migrants from developing countries to adapt to the cultural values of host countries, to achieve mutual respect between indigenous and visiting populations, to combat various types of phobias, and to prevent inter-ethnic conflicts.

Many individuals around the world today are constantly migrating to other countries for better education, employment and for other reasons. The below list of recommendations can be helpful to those people who are willing to live in a multicultural society.

- Do not expect much. One of the key reasons why a person may experience difficulties in the modern multicultural society is having certain expectations from other cultural groups. To avoid it, a person should be ready to face the situation where their expectations will not meet reality [3].

- Be open minded. A person should be able to accept what the other culture believes without contradicting or trying to establish supremacy.

- Read and prepare. It is important to understand the basics of other cultures, especially patterns of human behavior, attitudes and words that may be offensive and avoid the same in all situations.

The results of the multiculturalism policy are evaluated differently in the modern world. The consequences of mass migration are a serious concern of the politicians of many developed countries for their population. Critics of multiculturalism believe that it leads to the destruction of the cultural foundations of the host society. If the low level of cultural development of newcomers increases, the high level of culture of European societies invariably falls. No state is interested in the infinite multiplication of ethnic and cultural differences, otherwise it may lose the opportunity to manage the ethnic composition of the country's population. Such problems could possibly be solved by forming a common communication and cultural space, achieving mutual transformation of cultures of all communities of the country.

As for particular ways of dealing with the issues of a multicultural society, they are diverse and may come from different ideological structures, but the central one is the understanding of culture as a whole and the relationship of individual cultures. Modern society needs a system of shared values that should not, however, be constructed at the expense of the values of national cultures.

Integration of cultures is an inevitable phenomenon. Like any process, it has its own characteristics, advantages and disadvantages. However, societies should accept this and learn how to live with it.

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