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CONFRONTATION AND TOLERANCE OF CULTURES: PRO ET CONTRA

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Abstract

The article presents the idea that the modern cultural-historical realities as the form of co-existence of separate cultures are, at one and the same time, the area of tolerance and the area of confrontational cross-cultural interactions. The tolerant character of the cross-cultural interactions is ontologically determined by the complementarity of cultures with harmonious mentalities. Their mentalities prompt these cultures to enter the enculturational and transculturational interactions. The tolerant character of cross-cultural interactions prevails as the modern cultural area is predominated by the cultures with a harmonious paradigm core. This core presents a well-proportioned entity of cultural and civilizational values that makes them potentially complementary, capable for modifications and interactions without the loss of cultural identity. Confrontation, as the fact of cultural interaction, is ontologically determined by the non-complementarity of the value basis of certain cultures, the inharmonicity of their mental basis with the predominance of self-exclusiveness. The ontological bases of such cultures incline them to the clashes of counterculturational interactions. Such counterculturational interactions are typical, as a whole, to the history of cross-cultural relationships. The fact of the world's "narrowing", the constant interaction of cultures at the level of a person, a group, governmental units are the realities of the modern world. This leads to the reaction opposite to the mega-synthesis; to the cultural self-identity growth, to the situational counterculturation. Whereas the situational counterculturation as the response to the global challenges does not necessarily bear the confrontation character provided that the principle of cultures equality is followed.

1. Introduction

Modern era has revealed a number of serious social problems that arise from the difficulty of building the system of cross-cultural, interstate and interethnic relationships. These difficulties were stated as the most acute for Syrian-American, Russian-American and Russian-European relationships. The interethnic realities of Western Europe, the clashes of immigrants with the authorities have proved the inefficiency of the policy of multiculturalism as the policy of interaction between the cultures in the terms of respect to the culture of the titular nation, social integration, discrepancy appeasement, in particular, between the Christian values and the Islamic values. These realities of modern culture-historical environment allow us to regard the time as the era of clash of civilizations. (Huntington, 2002) The modern era is really characterized by the confrontation. The problem of finding the ways to level the following cross-cultural interactions and building the environment of prevailing tolerance is getting more urgent. The aspects of tolerance identity and the clash of civilizations have been at the top of the socio-philosophical, politological and culturological discourse for more than two decades. This theme is of great research interest in different aspects and contexts: in the aspect of conceptual definitions (Reese, Zalewski, 2015); the socio-ethical and cultural aspects (Olfert, Partridge, 2011; Berggren, Elinder, 2012; Von Bergen, Bressler, Collier, 2012; MacDonald, O'Regan, 2013); the problems of cross-cultural interaction through the tendencies of liberalism and multiculturalism (Floare, 2015; Farer, 2014; Berggren, Nilsson, 2016); the perspective of the modern industrial cities development (Van der Waal, Houtman, 2011), while analyzing the definite problems of cross-ethnical communication (Larin, 2011) and etc.

2. Problem Statement

Therefore, a social order was formed for a generalized ontological model of socio-cultural interactions as the existential basis, forming an individual who is ready for tolerant relationships, for eliciting the characteristics of a culture where the characteristics are the agents of tolerance rather than confrontation. Meanwhile, the modern era understands the role-defining nature of a mental culture, its valuable ontological basis as the determinant of interactions at the level of ethnic societies as well as at the level of the state and cultural systems.

3. Research Questions

Dealing with the problem, the authors think that the answer to the challenges of the modern era implies the revealing of cross-cultural interaction types. Main types of mentality and value systems of a culture act as the ontological basis of the relationships. Alternately stated, the research tries to find the answers to the following questions:

Can a modern cultural area be the area of tolerance?

What qualities should the ontological cultural basis possess for the intercultural space of interactions to become the area of tolerance?

Where does the confrontation arise from?

Can the confrontation be overcome?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purposes of the research are to prove that the tolerant and the confrontational interactions are determined by ontological cultural values of the interacted cultures; to find the ways and methods to level the confrontation.

5. Research Methods

The following methodology and approaches were used in the study: the multidisciplinary approach, the method of historical and philosophical analysis, the hermeneutical method, the comparative methodology, the methodology of reconstruction of cultural and historical reality, based on the picture of the culture as the coexistence of unified cultural and historical types, where every element is determined by the system of mental dominants.

6. Findings

To solve the problems set above, it is necessary to view them as the response to the modern era challenges, to identify the types of cross-cultural interactions and the main types of mentality, the value system as the ontological basis of the given relationships in a culture. The inductive methodology distinguishes three types of cross-cultural relations. The positive ones are the transculturation and the enculturation; the negative one is the counterculturation. Enculturation implies a complete acquisition by a culture the cultural values of a more viable culture, a complete substitution of the less viable values by the more viable ones as the basic cultural bases. Transculturation is the result of the substitution when it is still possible to single out the modified aspects of a less viable cultural system in the more viable one. As a rule, if the transculturation is the process run at the level of the element cultural form, i.e. on the level of a phenomenon, the enculturation processes run at the level of single separate cultural forms as well as at the level of mentality. Thus, not only the separate phenomena, but also the basic values are assimilated (the example is the formation of elements and values of zen-buddhism in Japanese culture). Counterculturation characterizes the processes of cross-cultural interactions when the time-space interaction causes mutual repulsion which is manifested in different prohibitions, entire repulsion movements that are subjectively seen as a conflict.

These types of cross-cultural relationships being the results of inductive methodology represent the empirical regularity. It implies the possibility of transition to the revealing of ontological basis of the interactions among these types of cultures; of moving to the research of factors and reasons that determine the types of cultural relationships. Under what conditions can the transculturation be traced? When does one meet the enculturation – i.e. the merging of one culture by another? Or, on the contrary, where is the process of the counterculturation, i.e. the repulsion or even abhorrence of a culture? What are the bounds of the interactions? What conditions specify the format of cross-cultural interactions? Is the updating of the most tolerant relationships between the cultures possible?

Each culture is a cultural-civilizational unity i.e. the system of values of each culture is the entity of cultural and civilizational values. The cultural values are transcendent; they exist as ideals such as The God, the Beauty and etc. The civilizational values are of a mundane character, for example wellbeing,

justice, family etc. There are two types of cultures: the inharmonious and the harmonious ones. The former are constituted by the cultures which core is constituted either by the cultural or the civilizational values. The latter are the cultures where the mental core is represented by the unity of both the cultural and the civilizational values.

The system of mental dominants provides the viability as the ability to self-development, self-preservation while interacting with other cultures. The viability, the will to live, on the one hand, are aimed to preserve the sameness of the culture; on the other hand, they try to cooperate with other cultures in order to find and single out the means and forms of civilizational and cultural order that are able to assure the creative constructive potential of the culture. This is the way the separate cultures are being involved into the cross-cultural interaction.

The main condition that defines the type of cross-cultural interconnection is the degree of complementarity of the interacting cultures. The complementarity means the absence of contradictions between the cultures on the mental level (Kokarevich, Sizova 2015).

Enculturational processes are possible provided that the complementarity level of the interconnected cultures is very high. The commonality of the mental dominants becomes their ontological basis. The main characteristic of the enculturation processes becomes their correlation with the culture establishment. The assimilation of the cultural civilizational medium – values and forms - is the main content of the enculturational cooperation. This specificity of the enculturational mechanism stipulates its status of the culture genesis law in the existing cultural area and the principle of co-existence.

Mental parallelism is the basis for the transcultural collaboration in search of the primary forms for them to be further filled with one's own mental content. That is why for the catholic Christianity with its clearly seen civilizational subcomponent – the accent is on the temporal affairs, the right of the Catholic church to be the countries and citizens' ruler of destinies – the basis of a temple is the three-aisled basementless, the architectural form known from the epoch of Hellenism. Primarily it was meant for court sessions and civilizational functions provision. Not accidentally for the Eastern Christianity with its clearly traced spiritual focus, the temple basis is the pantheon, specially built for Gods.

That is why the traditional category of aesthetics – "the beauty" (the beauty in the sense of quality is always connected with the paradigm values) - cedes to the concept of "design" as an untangle predetermination of the function, the usefulness and the beauty with the leading role of the first two. This makes a designer's work a relatively appreciated and generally valid element in the cross-cultural interaction. Its aesthetical expression is subjected to the modification and transformation as the embodiment of the law of the qualitative tinge by the mental core.

Thus, the usefulness is clearly seen. Functionality makes the up taking of one cultural-historical type by another civilizational form more natural thus making the civilizational cross-cultural interaction more natural. Alongside with this, the perceptible naturalness of the interperception of civilizational forms is limited. This limitation is proved by the fact of modification and transformation of the phenomena entering the interaction. The possibility to percept and the boundaries of distribution limits are stipulated by the mental dominants of the perceived culture. In the 50-60th years of the XX century there appeared the sociocultural theory of convergence. It traced the synthesising tendency in social development noticing the appearance of the similar forms in economics, social stratification, social

institutes and etc. The very notion of convergence is the comprehension of the existence of cross-cultural (inter-social) dynamics. Though the similarity in forms and elements, namely the civilizational forms and elements, as it is seen while analysing the theories of convergence, does not necessarily mean the rapprochement of sociocultural systems. It is possible to talk about the rapprochement of the civilizational components but not about the rapprochement of the cultural systems as a whole. The rapprochement, the convergence of cultural systems as a whole is, in its basis, the convergence of mental statements. The latter is possible on the condition that they are equal. Then it contradicts the fact of salience, insularity of each culture due to the qualitative peculiarity of its paradigm core; it also contradicts the characteristic of the viability, the will to live in every culture that is manifested in keeping the sameness. Thus the idea of the convergence of cultures or nations seems impracticable.

The cultures complementariness becomes the basis for the formation of transculturational and enculturational interactions of cultures that form the area of tolerance, dialogue and reciprocal exchange. It should be noted that the degree of tolerance depends on how the culture and its representatives acquire the principles of the individuality and the equivalence of cultural systems.

Countercultural interaction of cultures is exposed in the forms subjectively defined as a conflict or something strange. It is often viewed as a theory, a movement that promotes cultures' self-destroying: the self-destroying of the culture that threatens the self-identity of a number of cultures, or one of the cultures in the frame of the cross-cultural dynamics.

It should be noted that the counterculturation is common for all cultures to that extent that the interaction becomes the threat of losing the cultural sameness.

Truly, the processes of counterculturation can coexist with the processes of enculturation and transculturation. In this case, they have an occasional and short character and are manifested in separate people, a group or a person's activities.

Here comes the question: are there any cultural-historical types where the interaction is mostly counterculturational? In other words, is it possible for the counterculturality to be the strategy of relationships between cultures? What are the conditions of the countercultural interaction? The first two questions can have the positive answer that leads to the research of the countercultural factors and conditions.

Yes, the countercultural interaction appears between the non-complementary cultures. The non-complementarity of the cultures is the main reason for the countercultural forms of interactions. The cultures' non-complementarity means the incongruity of these cultures' mental statements, their discrepancy and even opposition. The culture is made to be a non-complementary one due to the completeness of the mental core which may be understood as the inability to be modified or adapted to coexistence with other cultures. Some cultures immanently possess the characteristic of non-complementarity due to the mental dominant of the exclusiveness of their own culture and the claim to be a super-culture. The latter is revealed in intolerance, neglection, aggressiveness i.e. it is actualized in the countercultural relationships.

Islamic and American cultures are potentially non-complementary. It is possible to talk about the existence of the American concept of its exclusiveness and hegemony (Wallerstein, 2004) (having the idea of irreplaceable global power (Brzezinsky, 2007); its responsibility to seed the democratic liberal

values, its being socially attractive and accountably managing its power (Brzezinsky, 2012).) Rather a high grade of non-complementarity which is revealed in the contradiction of the mental dominants (the members of cross-cultural dynamics) pushes the cultures to the countercultural processes making them enter an open conflict. The higher the rate of non-complementarity is, the more bellicose the counterculturality becomes, externalizing in a cultural terrorism (Talibs ruining the Bhudda statues).

It is necessary to point out the paradoxical situation in the modern cultural area. On the one hand, the transcultural interaction of countries grows. It ends up in creating the more and more perfect communicative systems that leads to subjective narrowing of the world and realizing its boundaries and restrains. This sociocultural background becomes the basis for various reflexive ideas of the "narrowness" of the world space. The most natural of these ideas tell us about the necessity of a dialogue and the tolerant character of interactions.

Along with it, there still exists the countercultural interaction of the cultural-historical reality determined by the non-complementarity of the cultures interacted. The confrontation that characterizes the countercultural processes as well as the tolerance is ontologically determined by the type of the mental and value basis of this or that culture. The confrontation is nurtured by its own non-complementarity, the awareness of one's own exclusiveness that does not allow us to accept the principle of cultures equality.

The situational confrontation appears in the situation of a threat to lose the cultural self-identity. This condition is becoming the norm of modern sociocultural reality along with the growth of transcultural processes having the tolerant character. The situational confrontation is overcome in the process of building relationships on the basis of the principles of individuality and cultures equality.

7. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the modern cultural era is, on the one hand, the area of tolerance, ontologically determined by the complementarity of cultures with harmonious mentality, with a balanced synthesis of cultural and civilizational values that make these cultures enter the encultural and transcultural interactions. The tolerant character of the cross-cultural interaction prevails as in the modern cultural area, the cultures with harmonious paradigm core prevail that makes them potentially complementary, able to be modified and interacted without the loss of cultural identity.

On the other hand, the modern cultural era is the area of confrontation that is ontologically conditioned by the non-complementarity of the valuable basis of certain cultures, the inharmonicity of their mental basis, the absolute prevalence of either civilizational or cultural values with the prevalence of the dominant of exception. Such countercultural interactions are typical for the history of the cultural interactions as a whole. For our times, the facts are the phenomena of a world narrowing, a constant cultural interaction at the level of a person, a group, state formations. This leads to the counter reaction of mega synthesis – the growth of cultural identity significance, situational counterculture, whilst the situational counterculture as the answer to the globalisation challenge may not have the pronounced confrontational character as long as the principle of cultural equality is followed.

Acknowledgments

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