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DIALOGUE OF CULTURES: CONCEPT AND ESSENCE

In modern philosophy the dialogue of cultures is interpreted as the interpenetration of meanings of different cultures – not just communication of different people with different values and different languages, but communication with an attempt to translate the transformation of meanings, concepts, images, symbols). The dialogue of cultures combines awareness of the cultural alternative, fascination with it, revealing its absolute difference from one's own culture, misunderstanding, fear and at the same time interest, which gradually grows into a tolerant attitude, passive reconciliation with the existence of the Other, with a simultaneous active desire to learn more about his «Soul» and to establish friendly relations that mutually enrich the participants of the interaction. Indicative in this sense are the feature film «Difficulties of Translation» (USA) about the simultaneous meeting and «non-meeting» of Japanese and Western cultures, cinematographic masterpieces of A. Kurosawa and devoted to the problems of the West and East R. Akutagawa's essays (Japan).

Culture exists on the border with another culture, so it is always in a state of comparison of «own» and «foreign», the attitude to «foreign» (from crawling – to hatred, from the branch – to phobia and vice versa). Russian semiotician (expert in the theory of signs) Yu. Lotman believes that the opposition of internal mechanisms of cultural development and external «influences» on it is the result of scientific speculation: in historical reality, these two principles are a dynamic unity that provides dialectical development of cultural tradition (self-development as an internally contradictory process) [1]. The idea of the absence of absolutely «pure», «original» cultures was inherent in the Ukrainian socio-historical tradition (D. Antonovich,

E. Malanyuk, I. Dzyuba, P. Tolochko). A culture that closes in on itself is doomed to exhaustion of its own inner strength, to spiritual degeneration and, ultimately, complete destruction.

Therefore, external influences not only do not weaken, but also strengthen the national culture, enrich its spiritual potential, encourage active creative search. According to Ts. Todorov, culture is not a purely national indicator, but is a product of the interaction of many cultures (even if it, based on ethnocentric complexes, wants to hide its polyphony) [2]. Moreover, such polyphony is anthropologically «justified» because it is the result of the universal ability of man to constantly switch from one cultural code to another (even on a daily basis, because one I carries many subcultures – gender, age, work, class, lifestyle, level of wealth, religion, aesthetic taste, etc.). Communicating during the day with different people within the same cultural environment, we are constantly changing manners. That is, on a micro scale we encounter numerous cultural others. This makes it easier to reach the level of civilized dialogue with the great Other. And even if this dialogue takes the form of a collision, quarrel, conflict, it is better to achieve understanding than a complete lack of communication (L. Wittgenstein) [3].

One of the organic properties of interculturality is conflict. Intercultural dialogue cannot be painless. This is always a certain borderline situation, which brings cultural systems out of the state of inert equilibrium (or in the language of synergetics, «bifurcation point»). Since long-term equilibrium is dangerous for any system and provokes its stagnation, such a frontier is a positive «challenge» to unleash the inner creative potential of culture. Any act of cultural creativity is a «response» to the «challenge» of a crisis, «border» situation, which is formed as a result of dialogue-conflict of one culture with another (A. Toynbee) [4]. This allows us to combine the concept of «dialogue» with the concept of «crisis of culture» – the reappraisal of values and changes in the value paradigm of culture due to long and deep contact with another culture. Therefore, intercultural dialogue is a phenomenon that is not identical to either military-

political harmony or friendship between cooperating nations.

Modern culturologists define three main characteristics of the dialogue of cultures: structure, levels and principles. The structure of the dialogue is understood as those meaningful directions and specific forms of mutual exchange through which it is carried out (economic, political, artistic, religious, household, mixed). Among the levels of dialogue of cultures are: ethnic (relations between local ethnic groups, historical and ethnographic, ethno-confessional and other communities); national (relations between state structures, political organizations), civilizational (spontaneous-historical relations for long periods, during which the most significant results of the exchange of achievements are possible).

The principles of dialogue are the most complex category because they fix the leading patterns and mechanisms of implementation that distinguish the true dialogue of cultures from its various pseudo-forms or from the simple contacts of cultures with each other. The basic is the semantic principle, which involves bringing the dialogue to the level of interpenetration of semantic structures in culture. Dialogue exists where archetypal semantic levels of culture are introduced into the space of intercultural contacts, where deep mental and ideological layers of cultural activity are activated. The semantic nature of intercultural dialogue presupposes the existence of an original semantic basis of local culture (recipient), as well as its ability to creatively rethink impulses from outside (donor) in accordance with this basis. The very term «dialogue of cultures» captures not an equivalent «contractual exchange» under the «you to me – I to you» scheme, not a moment of obligatory return in response to borrowing, but a moment of critical processing of the borrowed.

But interacting cultures are much easier to perceive external forms (social institutions, aesthetic characteristics, established behaviours, script-decorative aspects of rituals, rules of etiquette, fashion, etc.) than their deep ideological and symbolic load. Interaction of cultures of the West and the East in the XX century is a clear example of more external than internal penetration (fascination

with the arts of yoga or judo in the West was not accompanied by a deep understanding of Indian classical darshan or Zen worldview). The semantics of dialogue give it conflict: through the connection of meanings with the beliefs of the subject, which is characterized by orthodoxy, intolerance of the beliefs of the Other, aggression. Hence the double requirement of saturation of the dialogical process with value-semantic content and exclusion of the latter from the discourse of communication. Such a deviation from beliefs does not mean the final rejection of them or their «betrayal», but is a temporary conditional abstraction, keeping them «in parentheses» for the common good. According to A. Huseynov, «dialogue of cultures can cover all topics, except the worldview and values of these cultures themselves» [5]. The ban on the inclusion in the space of dialogue of deep worldview levels of the subjects of interaction, each of which claims a monopoly on the truth, really deprives the space of communication of images, symbols, motives, cultural standards that carry an orthodox, emotionally obscured, stereotypical attitude as the exclusive bearers of truth, and to others as its «perverters».

To preserve the value of semantic dialogue, it is necessary to keep active the balance of circulation of mutually open meanings, the subjects of which are individuals who, due to their flexibility and propensity to «borderline» patterns of behaviour, promote («marginals») or hinder through their own intolerance communication between cultures («basic personalities»). A self-contained culture is a system in a state of equilibrium (entropy), which, lasting a long time, can lead to a gradual degradation of the system. Instead, the meeting of culture with another culture creates a border crisis situation of «challenge» («bifurcation point»), which leads either to creative processing of foreign traditions, or to the development of their own cultural product under the influence of the Other (or contrary to the latter). In any case, the intensification of cultural creativity in the context of the dialogue process is obvious.

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