

THE “FOREIGN” PROBLEM OF CULTURE AND ETHNOCENTRISM

Valeriya NAM

Student of International Journalism faculty, UzSWLU

Supervisor: Oltinoy DAVLATOVA

Abstract. *The process of interaction of cultures, leading to their unification, arouses in some nations the desire for cultural self-affirmation and the desire to preserve their own cultural values. A number of states and cultures demonstrate their categorical rejection of the ongoing cultural changes. To the process of opening cultural borders, they oppose the impenetrability of their own and an exaggerated sense of pride in their national identity.*

Key words: *Anthropology, Multiculturalism, Community, Culture, Ethnocentrism, intercultural, communication.*

Relevance of the chosen topic. At the turn of the second and third millennia, it becomes more and more obvious that humanity is developing along the path of expanding the interconnection and interdependence of various countries, peoples and their cultures. This process covered various spheres of public life in all countries of the world. Today it is impossible to find ethnic communities that would not be influenced both by the cultures of other peoples and by the wider social environment that exists in individual regions and in the world as a whole. This was expressed in the rapid growth of cultural exchanges and direct contacts between state institutions, social groups, social movements and individuals from different countries and cultures. The expansion of interaction between cultures and peoples makes the issue of cultural identity and cultural differences particularly relevant. The cultural diversity of modern mankind is increasing, and the peoples that make it up are finding more and more means to preserve and develop their integrity and cultural appearance. This trend towards the preservation of cultural identity confirms the general pattern that humanity, becoming more interconnected and united, does not lose its cultural diversity. In the context of these trends in social development, it becomes extremely important to be able to determine the cultural characteristics of peoples in order to understand each other and achieve mutual recognition.

The nature and essence of the concepts of “one's own” and “foreign”. In intercultural communication, the concept of “foreign” acquires a key meaning. But the problem is that the scientific definition of this concept has not yet been formulated. In

all variants of use, it is understood at the ordinary level, that is, by highlighting and describing the most characteristic features and properties of this term. With this approach, the concept of “foreign” has several meanings and meanings:

- foreign as foreign, foreign, located outside the borders of native culture;
- foreign as strange, unusual, contrasting with the usual and familiar environment;
- foreign as unfamiliar, unknown and inaccessible to knowledge;
- foreign as supernatural, omnipotent, before which man is powerless;
- foreign as sinister, threatening to life.

The essence of ethnocentrism and its role in intercultural communication.

The ethnocentric vision of the world has deep roots in human history. Even in antiquity, the Greeks rigidly divided all peoples into Hellenes and barbarians. Already in the writings of Herodotus, the barbarian was described as foreign and repulsive, uneducated, clumsy, stupid, unsociable. He is servile, cowardly, full of unbridled passions, wayward, terrible, cruel, unfaithful, greedy. Ethnocentric reassessment of one's own culture is found in many peoples in different regions of the world.

The significance of ethnocentrism for the process of intercultural communication is ambiguously assessed by scientists. A fairly large group of researchers believe that ethnocentrism as a whole is a negative phenomenon, equivalent to nationalism and even racism. This assessment of ethnocentrism is manifested in the tendency to reject all foreign ethnic groups, combined with an overestimation of one's own group. But like any socio-psychological phenomenon, it cannot be viewed only negatively. Although ethnocentrism often creates obstacles for intercultural communication, at the same time it performs a useful function for the group to maintain identity and even preserve the integrity and specificity of the group.

The concept of “cultural identity”. The cultural consequences of expanding contacts between representatives of different countries and cultures are expressed, among other things, in the gradual erasure of cultural identity. This is especially evident for the youth culture, which wears the same jeans, listens to the same music, worships the same “stars” of sports, cinema, pop. However, on the part of older generations, a natural reaction to this process was the desire to preserve the existing features and

differences of their culture. Therefore, today in intercultural communication, the problem of cultural identity, that is, a person's belonging to a particular culture, is of particular relevance.

Ethnicity. The intensive development of intercultural contacts makes the problem of not only cultural, but also ethnic identity relevant. This is due to a number of reasons. First, in modern conditions, as before, cultural forms of life necessarily imply that a person belongs not only to any sociocultural group, but also to an ethnic community. Among the numerous socio-cultural groups, the most stable are ethnic groups that are stable over time. Thanks to this, the ethnos is the most reliable group for a person, which can provide him with the necessary security and support in life.

Secondly, the result of stormy and versatile cultural contacts is a feeling of instability in the surrounding world. When the surrounding world ceases to be intelligible, the search begins for something that would help restore its integrity and order, protect it from difficulties. In these circumstances, more and more people (even young ones) begin to seek support in the time-tested values of their ethnic group, which in the given circumstances turn out to be the most reliable and understandable.

Personal identity. Considering communicative processes as a dynamic socio-cultural environment, favorable for the generation and dissemination of various kinds of patterns of behavior, types of interaction, it should be remembered that the main subjects of culture are people who are in one way or another with each other. In the content of these relations, a significant place is occupied by people's ideas about themselves, and these ideas often differ quite significantly from culture to culture.

Conclusion. Thus, the use of the classical ethnological concept of “culture” in the academic discourse of contemporary studies of pluralism and multiculturalism must begin with an awareness of differences in its goals and procedures. The discussion of the problems of interpreting the concept of culture as “practice” and as “discourse” should not be confused with discussions about the significance of the political or cultural perspectives of social movements.

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