
Intercultural Communication Experience

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Abstract:

The urgency of the problem under study lies in the fact that the problems of intercultural communication of the peoples of Russia, which were on the agenda during the XIXth - early XXth centuries, did not lose their relevance in the 21st century.

The Volga-Ural region with its multinational and multi-confessional population is of special interest in this respect. The article reveals the significance of the cultural and historical experience of Islamic and Christian culture interaction in the Volga region and the Urals as the most important basis for the development of tolerant relations and the confirmation of the dialogue of cultures at the present stage. It is also stressed that intercultural exchange is the best way to harmonize ethnic-confessional relations.

Attention is paid to the theory of intercultural dialogue by N.S. Trubetskoy. The fruitfulness of Trubetskoy's ideas for the development of intercultural dialogue ideas is marked by modern scientists and politicians. The purpose of the article is to show the development of interethnic and interconfessional dialogue of the Volga-Ural region peoples in the process of communication at the household level and in the sphere of education.

Keywords: *History, historical research, traditions, intercultural interaction, historical experience of tolerance, the Volga Region, the Urals.*

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1. Introduction

Nowadays the problem of the peoples of Russia mutual relations is the subject of special attention not only from the researchers, but also from the state, which for the first time declared that culture is one of the most important national priorities (The fundamentals of state cultural policy). In the *"Strategy of the state national policy of Russian Federation for the period until 2025"* the main emphasis is on the solution of preservation and development problem concerning the ethnic-cultural diversity and identity of the peoples of Russia, based on the strengthening of state unity and all-Russian civic consciousness, since "... the fate of Russia was created by the unity of different peoples, traditions and cultures" (Administration of the President of Russia, 2013).

One of the concepts that consider the interaction of the peoples of Russia cultures is the concept of Eurasians, which represented Russian culture as a synthetic one. Russia is the Eurasian civilization, for which cultural integrity is characteristic, on the one hand, and the harmonization of two cultural streams - European and Asian one - on the other. The Eurasianists insisted that the European and Asian origin in the development of Russian culture are equivalent. And it is in Russia, where the West and the East, the Christian and Islamic world meet, the traditions of interethnic and interconfessional interaction have been developed for centuries.

2. Materials and methods

The methodological basis of the research is based on the principles of historicism and objectivity, on dialectical and cultural-civilizational approaches. The main methods of research were the systematization and the generalization of factual material and the comparative method. The article also attempts to reveal the topic of research on the basis of an interdisciplinary approach.

3. Results and discussions

N.S. Trubetskoy (1890-1938) is one of the founders of Eurasianism, who formulated the rules of the intercultural dialogue of Russia-Eurasia: *"A true nationalist is deprived of any national vanity or ambition in his relations to other peoples. Developing his world outlook on self-sufficient self-knowledge, he will always be principally peaceful and tolerant towards any alien identity. He will also neglect an artificial national isolation. Having comprehended the distinctive psyche of his people with great clarity and completeness, he will observe all the features similar to his own in all other people with a particular sensitivity. And if another people managed to give a successful incarnation to one of these traits in the form of one or another cultural value, then a true nationalist does not think to borrow this value, adapting it to the general inventory of his original culture"* (Trubetskoy, 1995). Due to the voluntary observance of intercultural dialogue rules, obtained in the course of deep independent work, the neighboring peoples who are in the process of long-term intercultural

communication will be able to form cultures that are similar in their main features but also have their own specifics. An important moment, from Trubetskoy's (1995) point of view is the fundamental difference of such an organically formed cultural integration from the artificial mixture of cultural traditions as the result of the "enslaving aspirations of one of the peoples cohabiting with each other".

The concept of Eurasianists presupposes the study of culture influence among different peoples who have entered into a long-term interaction throughout their history. The Eurasianists noted the fact of a consistent change in the borrowings of various cultural traditions in Russian history, which led to the development of a specific social and cultural image of Russia. Often, foreign cultural traditions were perceived by the Russian people very organically, which contributed to the intensification of cultural creativity within the framework of this tradition and to its transformation into the phenomenon of Russian culture. For example, with the assimilation of the Byzantine Orthodox tradition in Rus, when, on the one hand, the spiritual life of the people was completely transformed, but on the other hand, it turned out that Orthodoxy itself practically lost Byzantine features, having come in contact with the folk Russian element.

The peculiarities of Russian culture development were associated by Trubetskoy with the ethnographic composition and the character of the Russian people and, accordingly, with his relation to a foreign culture. The Slavic element as the main constituent element of Russian nationality was subjected to the ancient Indo-Iranian and West-European influences. Linguistic analysis allowed Trubetskoy to conclude that the coincidence of the Proto-Slavic and the ancient Indo-Iranian dictionaries is significant and relate primarily to religious experiences. The coincidence of the ancient Slavic language with Western European one concerns mainly economic activity. Trubetskoy (1991) argued, that the Slavs were drawn by the Indo-Iranians spiritually, and within the material aspect and due to geographical and material conditions they belonged to Western Indo-Europeans. Later ethnic changes became the basis of cultural change. The differentiation of Slavs also determined their cultural orientation. The Western Slavs adopted the Romano-Germanic culture, the southern Slavs took part in the creation of the "Balkan" culture. The cultural orientation of the Eastern Slavs was dominated by Byzantine influence. The organic perception of Byzantine culture by the Eastern Slavs corresponded to the "national psyche" and was particularly fruitful in the field of spiritual culture, religion and art. In ethnographic terms, the Russian people, having the core in the Slavic, constituted a special cultural zone together with the Ugofinns and Volga Türks that had the connection with both the Slavs and the Turanian East. Trubetskoy (1991) confirmed this by the proximity of Great-Russian, Finnish and Turkic songs, rhythmic dances, ornamentation (carving, embroidery) and fairy tales creation. In the field of material culture, he noted the proximity to Western, South Slavic and Finnish culture, believing that this aspect of culture requires a serious study.

The Eurasianists created their own theory of the Slavs interaction with the Eastern tribes. The "conjugation" of Eastern Slavs with the Trubetskoy's Turanian tradition was recognized as "the main fact of Russian history". He saw the proof of this in the expansion of Russians to the East, "in the cohabitation with the Turanians and their russification" (Trubetskoy, 1925).

Until now, the special issue in the scientific community is the issue of other people culture assimilation extent. The Eurasianists associated it with specific historical conditions. There will never be a complete identity of culture, the thing is only about a mixed culture. Trubetskoy (1920) acknowledged the differences in the concepts of culture familiarization and mixing. The acquisition is possible only with the anthropological mixing, but this process always accompanies the "incompleteness" of initiation.

In the national character of the Russians, Trubetskoy saw the features of different national traditions. For example, the penchant for contemplation, the adherence to the rite rather connected Russia with the non-Orthodox East than with the West. Trubetskoy (1920) also noted that any differentiated culture includes two obligatory parts: the culture of the "upper classes" and the culture of the "lower classes". The insensitivity of Russian culture to the West one created an even greater gap between the "upper classes" and the "lower classes" of Russian society as Trubetskoy believed. The elements of Western European culture provoked the rejection of the "lower classes" while the "upper classes" adapted to it more easily and willingly. The assimilation of a different culture takes place throughout the life of many generations, each new generation develops its own canon of element synthesis for a national foreign culture, so Trubetskoy (1920) came to the conclusion that the difference between "fathers and children" will always be stronger in the people who borrowed someone else's culture.

Proceeding from theoretical premises and relying on linguistic, culturological, ethnic-geographical, ethnic-psychological studies, the Eurasianists convincingly confirmed the conclusion of the modern science that different peoples, living in a long contact with each other on the Eurasian space, form a certain "multinational" community.

At the state-political level, the relationship between the Tatar and the Russian people (on behalf of its ruling state elite) since the annexation of the Kazan Khanate (with some weakening since the end of the 18th century) was not so much an ethnic, but an ethnic-confessional confrontation in which economic and cultural elements had subordinate character. Undoubtedly, the number of negative factors that influenced the interethnic interaction included both violent Christianization and the attempts of Islamization. At the same time, there is no serious confrontation between ethnic groups at the domestic level in the literature. The absence of antagonism in interethnic relations can be derived from the fact of the unification of Russians and Tatars on the basis of the common interests of various social groups in their opposition to the state (Sagitova, 1998). Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between the attitude of

Tatars and other non-Russian peoples of the region to the imperial policy of the Russian state and the attitude towards the bulk of the Russian population.

The centuries-old interaction of Islam, Christianity and "paganism" in the Volga-Ural region predetermined in many respects the appearance of a "special" model of religious self-awareness among the local population, the formation of tolerant attitude towards the representatives of other religious communities. The confessional confrontation in the ethnic-cultural space of the region had a different degree of severity. The bulk of the population is the peasants of all faiths. Almost all of them were open to a cultural dialogue with each other. Interethnic interaction occurred mainly at the level of peasant folk culture and in the sphere of education. So-called "complex communities" (including the population of several settlements with different nationalities) were found only in the Volga region. The entry of people of different nationalities into one community was the most important factor of interethnic interaction in the region. Complex communities developed common traditions that regulated the processes of joint existence.

Researchers note that the influence of Russian culture on the Muslim peoples of the region in a number of spheres had less impact than on the Finno-Ugric peoples (Kuzeev, 1992). Tatars, despite a considerable cultural and confessional distance, also perceived many cultural elements from their foreign-speaking neighbors. K. Fuchs noted the borrowings by both sides and the similarity of various elements of material and spiritual culture: in the headgears of the Tatars; in the maternity rituals of the Tatars and Russians; in the mastering of the original Tatar gold embroidery by the Russian craftswomen; by the joint participation in the Tatar and Russian holidays and public events (Fuks, 1991). All the peoples of the region are culturally close to each other due to common interests. The Tatar culture absorbed Persian, European and Finnish influence through the culture of the Central Asian Turks, Russians, Mari, Votyaks and Mordvins.

A special role in intercultural communication belonged to the Russian language, which enriched the lexical composition of the Tatar language. The bulk of Russian borrowing refers to the sphere of everyday life. In many ways similar processes occurred with Tatar borrowings in Russian (Yusupova, 2009). Tatars, in their turn, influenced their neighbors. Some groups of the population introduced "Tatarisms" into their native language. In the places of joint living the non-Tatar population was fluent in the Tatar language (Hakimov, 2013). Simultaneously, the language of the Russian population of the Middle Volga region was enriched by a number of words and expressions characteristic of the Volga peoples. The works of local historians of the XIXth century have many references to the fact that Russians living among Tatars, Chuvash, Mordovians speak their language well, and even conclude that the languages of non-Russian peoples penetrate more widely into the Russian environment, and not vice versa. Russians used local terminology to denote the individual parts of settlements, dwellings and estates, garments and utensils. Linguists also noted the influence of foreign language environment in the Russian dialects of Kazan and the

surrounding regions, which was reflected in the availability of separate lexical borrowings from the Tatar language, not peculiar to the Russian language and its dialects outside the Kazan zone (Almukhammedova, 1958).

The problem of interpenetration of Russian and national languages is directly related to the problem of the region russification. At the same time, it is very important to realize that russification projects had serious competitors. In the Volga region and the Urals, such a rival was represented by the Tatar influence. In the XVI-XIX centuries the global historical and cultural process of familiarizing with the Islamic civilization, represented primarily by the Turkic Tatars, continued in the region. And the potential of Russification projects was often evaluated by their activists as a weaker one as compared to competitors, at least in the short term.

For a long time, Russification was interpreted exclusively as a state policy aimed at the assimilation of all ethnic groups inhabiting the empire. Today it is important to avoid such an idea of interaction within the Russification process, in which one of the parties acts as a passive object, and if it shows activity, then only in the form of efforts on the development of alternative culture and language. The motives for Russian language mastering had many options, although the studies often take into account the motives and the forms of resistance to cultural and linguistic Russification. In reality, black and white situations of exclusively violent or exclusively voluntary Russification were only extremes. In most cases the agents of "Russification" aspired to create a positive motivation along with pressure. And those who experienced Russification in the form of assimilation or acculturation, had their own, sometimes quite unexpected motives for "Russifiers" to master the Russian language and certain elements of Russian culture. For example, a peasant might want his son to learn to read in Russian in order to understand laws. Someone was attracted by the career of a teacher or a priest.

In many areas of the empire Westernization and Russification were interconnected, and the modernization strategies of local communities could imply partial, instrumental Russification. Thus, the Muslim intellectuals in the late XIX - early XX century advocated the assimilation of the Russian language precisely as the instrument that facilitates the access to Western European thought and education, where one could draw the ideas and resources for their own nationalistic projects.

The interaction and interpenetration occurred not only between Russian and Tatar languages. The same processes were experienced by the languages of most peoples of the Volga-Kama region. For example, most of the words "mutually intelligible for Tatars and Chuvashes" are borrowed from Tatar in Chuvash, and, conversely, from Chuvash in Tatar (Ahmetyanov, 1978). The interaction of Tatar and Udmurt peoples was reflected in the sphere of education. In the areas where the Udmurt population converted to Islam, parents often gave their children to the mektebe of neighboring Tatar villages. In the same place where new converts created their own mahalla, new schools were opened often after the construction of mosques. As a rule, the program

of these elementary schools was only for teaching reading and writing and the memorizing of prayers. Despite a low educational effect, these schools allowed to achieve a different goal - a full acceptance of Islam and Tatar language by Udmurt children (Sadikov, 2011). Later, some of them, finally "became the Tatars" and continued their education in local madrassas and educational institutions of Bukhara, becoming mullahs (Sadikov, 2011).

The contacts of Tatars and Udmurts took place at an everyday level. Thus, Udmurt women preferred the Tatars to Russian merchants, because the Tatars spoke with them in Udmurt. The knowledge of the Udmurt language by the Tatars first of all provided them with confidence and hospitality (Vereshchagin, 1996). The absence of separation between secular and spiritual principles in Islam formed a positive attitude towards the Muslim clergymen, not only among the Tatars, but also among other non-Russian peoples of the region. Often mullahs were mentors, healers and teachers (Iskhakov, 2009).

When the government and the Synod allowed the organization of the initial training for a number of non-Russian peoples in their native languages, Udmurt children were also among the first students of the Kazan central baptized Tatar school (KCBTS). The education in baptized Tatar schools did not always bring the loss of their ethnic identity by the Udmurts and strengthened them in the bosom of the Orthodox Church. Subsequently, taking into account the experience of the baptized Tatar schools, they started to establish initial educational institutions with Udmurt language as a teaching language.

The predominance of Tatars in comparison with the Chuvash and Finno-Ugric peoples, their activity in commercial operations and relatively high literacy, the favorable attitude of the Tatar clergy to the pagans, and sober way of life developed an attractive image of the social-cultural life of the Tatar population. However, interaction had its limits. The most important "frontiers" were religion and ethnic traditions, stereotypes and mentality, the knowledge of the neighboring people language, and so on. On the ideological level, there was the struggle between the ROC and the Muslims for the spiritual impact on the non-Russian peoples of the region.

After the introduction of the system by Ilminsky (1885, 1888, 2011) the Islamic influence became less intense. This was due to the fact that Ilminsky was among the first ones in the pre-revolutionary Russia who understand that it was necessary to change the system of "foreign" education. He also believed that the Christian education should be adapted to religious concepts, moral beliefs and the course of thinking of non-Russian peoples. The clerical culture created by Ilminsky and the missionaries contributed to the rapprochement of baptized non-Russian peoples (Brodovskaya and Buravleva, 2016).

The complex, interdisciplinary character of the problem determined the features of its historiography. On the one hand, these are the works about the issues of intercultural

communication and on the other, about Eurasianism, and on the third - the works are about the role of the Ilminsky's system in the achievement of rapprochement among the peoples of the region.

Martin Buber (1995) is considered as one of the founders, the classic of the dialogue theory. The central idea of his philosophy is the relationship between God and a man, a man and the world. A person finds his own essence only by the absorption of all-human, correlating himself with other people. Ortega y Gasset (2008) stressed that "the formation of universal values occurs only during a complex, multi-layered interaction of cultures". Besides, the understanding that culture is dialogical was reflected in the works by Levi-Strauss (2000). Only a dialogue is a universal principle that ensures the self-development of culture. Huntington (2003) also shares this point of view. He considers a dialogue as a true form of interethnic communication.

Eurasianism originated in the emigrant environment in the 1920-ies, and after the publication of the first works it turned out to be under attack by the critics both on the "right" and on the "left". The greatest interest was caused by Trubetskoy's works - a universal scientist, he left a notable mark in many areas. His articles on the national, ethnic and social problems of Eurasia provoked the opposite reaction: from admiration to accusations of reactionary behavior. In the late 30's - early 40's of the twentieth century, several major universities of Europe opened the departments that studied phonology "according to Trubetskoy".

Until the mid-80's of the XXth century there was practically no information about Eurasianism in either scientific or reference literature in the USSR for ideological and political reasons. The period of "perestroika" revived the interest in the ideas of "Eurasianists", which, was related to the creativity by L.N. Gumilev not in the least. Nowadays, the scientific heritage by Trubetskoy interests not only linguists, but also philosophers and cultural historians (Kramer, 1994). The researcher Nikitina (1994) finds Trubetskoi's ideas fruitful in the study of spiritual folk culture, and Yartseva (1994) notes the importance of the scholar works on the methodology of comparative-historical linguistics. Vandalkovskaya (2009) asserts in her work that an undoubted achievement of the historical thought of Eurasians is their recognition of the historical process multi-linearity and the recognition of various types of civilizations. In her opinion, the fundamental thesis of the views of Eurasians on the history of Russia is their affirmation of the detrimental nature of Western European influence for Russia, since it is more closely related to the East than to the West and its history is significantly influenced by the geopolitical factors characteristic of Eurasia. Lieberman (1991) emphasizes that Trubetskoy asserted in his works the idea of an individual, even a small people cultural value uniqueness. In ethnography and history Trubetskoy was interested primarily in relations between large and small nations. He believed that linguistic and cultural diversity is an immutable law. The analysis of the works by N.S. Trubetskoy allows us to talk about his contribution to the development of the dialogue theory between cultures and the theory of intercultural communications.

An integral part of the dialogue of cultures is the dialogue that arises in the process of learning activity, in the process of enlightenment. The problems of non-Russian people education of the post-reform period are reflected in the works by Ilminsky (1885, 1888, 2011). In the article by Brodovskaya & Buravleva (2016) they revealed the basic principles of the ethnic-pedagogical system by Ilminsky as a missionary and an educational one in terms of its intentionality and revealed the significance of the Kazan baptized Tatar school as the pattern of Ilminsky's pedagogical practices among other ethnoses of the region. The conclusion about the contradictory nature of Ilminsky's legacy was also substantiated, who solved the incompatible tasks: Christianization and the development of original cultures.

The XXIst century is characterized by an increased interest of scientists in ethnic-confessional relations. Werth (2002), examining the results of Christianization, notes that this process was not confined to missionary work alone. Christianization also implied enlightenment. Geraci (2005) examines the competition of Muslim and Orthodox projects in the Volga region using the example of the school system for foreigners created by Ilminsky.

4. Summary

1. The intercultural communications of the Volga and the Ural peoples have a long and controversial history, when, on the one hand, Russian culture, the Orthodox community of the Volga-Kama region experienced the influence of "foreign confessions", on the other hand, during attempts to assimilate Tatars and to undermine the influence of Islam, the Russians changed their ideas about themselves, about their nation and culture.
2. The ideas of peaceful coexistence and religious tolerance are clearly traced in the creative heritage of Tatar thinkers. Tatar social thought, referring to the theme of "common homeland", showing the common historical destiny of Russians, Tatars, Finno-Ugric peoples, substantiated the thesis of "equal rights in the common Fatherland". Even the idea of the Turkic-Tatar unity was preached, in particular, by Gasprinsky in the context of the search for a Russian-Muslim consensus. The researchers also point to the proximity of the social-political views of a number of democratically minded Russian intellectuals and Muslim modernists, to their mutual influence (Gafarov, 2013).
3. And today, as never before, the ideas of Eurasians in the process of intercultural communication implementation aimed at the consolidation of Eurasia peoples are relevant as never, as no culture can not exist in isolation, and the cultural space of the Volga region and the Urals have been created for centuries on the basis of the Turkic, Finno-Ugric and Eastern-Slavian cultures. The dialogue of cultures arising on the basis of intercultural communications is a lot of dialogues at all levels of society life always and everywhere, aimed at the consolidation of society healthy forces efforts for social and educational problems solution.

5. Conclusions

The dialogue of cultures for Russia is the way of the country survival, the removal of international tension, as well as the way of society consolidation, since only a dialogue of equals is able to ensure the preservation and development of cultural diversity. A dialogue of cultures is necessary in the context of globalization and related problems. But a goodwill is not enough for mutual understanding and a dialogue creation. A cultural literacy is necessary, which includes the understanding of differences in customs and cultural traditions, the ability to look at one's own culture through the eyes of other peoples. And in order to understand a language of another culture, a person should be open to the understanding of his own culture. From the native - to the universal, only in this case a dialogue will be fruitful. Therefore, constant intercultural communications and education for mutual understanding are the way to the development of inter-confessional and interethnic tolerance.

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