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Studying the History of the Cross-Border Region as a Factor of Intercultural Harmonization

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The existence of different cultures in the world inevitably pushes people to communicate and generates a desire to understand and learn the history and culture of their neighbours: through language, culture, tourism, business, etc.

The theory of intercultural communication, as a theoretical discipline, emerged in the middle of the twentieth century. Knowledge of the fundamentals of the theory of intercultural communication is an integral part of the preparation of a linguist, interpreter, teacher of foreign languages, as well as of any specialist who somehow has to interact with foreigners, participate in international negotiations, conversations, and give lectures to a foreign-speaking (and therefore foreign-cultural) audience [1]. The course and direction of communication is determined by the communicants themselves, being carriers of different cultures.

Intercultural communication is based on a number of grounds that do not exist without one another - moral, legal and psychological. Moreover, successful communication involves adherence to the principles of international cultural cooperation. The presence of these principles indicates the desire of the world community to consciously regulate intercultural communication [2]. These principles are kept in the 14th session of the UNESCO General Conference in Paris (November 1966), where the “Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Cooperation” was proclaimed. The principles imply the simultaneous development of all branches of culture (Art. 2); respect for the identity of each culture (art. 6); the mutual benefit of all peoples participating in cultural cooperation (Article 8); equality, respect for each culture, development by each nation of its own culture, recognition of the diversity of cultures as the property of all mankind (Art. 1).

The globalization process of the modern world, the creation of transnational corporations, the strengthening of migration processes, widespread integration and interpenetration contribute to the leveling of the ethno-historical and cultural features of different peoples. However, on the other hand, the same processes cause active opposition among representatives of certain ethnic groups, who are struggling to maintain their identity, up to the clarification of relations at the level of intercultural conflicts. The threat of assimilation and loss of the national traits strengthens nationalist sentiments: the peoples begin to value their culture, history, traditions; are going to protect the distinctive features from the unifying impact of globalization.

There have been many cases in history when state power tried to eradicate the national spirit of the peoples who were part of the empire. One such example is the national policy of the Soviet totalitarian state. At the legislative level, every nation in the USSR had the right to independent development within the state, but in fact any, even the most minimal manifestations of national specificity or loyalty to national traditions, were brutally persecuted. Forced russification, the creation of the ephemeral community “Soviet people”, deliberate “correction” of history, deportation, and forcible resettlement of representatives of various ethnic groups - this

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is not an exhaustive list of steps taken by the Soviet government to create a single state. And we all know how these experiments ended.

Knowledge of the principles of intercultural communication, of its mechanisms and characteristics, is important not only at the interstate level, but also for personal development, because understanding the differences between cultures, the history of peoples, and external manifestations significantly expands the horizons of an individual, his idea of the world and himself, as a carrier of a certain culture. The combination in solving these problems - on the one hand, the intensification of globalization processes, on the other - the preservation of unique cultural values and norms inevitably leads to the conclusion that it is important and necessary for modern man to know the principles and strategies of intercultural communication.

In the science of recent decades, the concept of multiculturalism has firmly strengthened. Its theory focuses on the moral and political conditions of mutual conflict-free coexistence in a multicultural environment. Multiculturalism is a set of ideas and actions of various social actors (state and other organizations) aimed at the equal development of different cultures, overcoming discrimination of various groups of the population in all spheres of public life, ensuring equal chances for employment and education, the cancellation of hidden and obvious obstacles to administrative career, etc. Multiculturalism of the postmodern era is not only ethnic diversity, but also a variety of lifestyles, orientations, and cultural trends. Moreover, the fragmentation and diversity of the modern world is an expression of the cultural kaleidoscope of European civilization [3].

In the harmonization of intercultural communication, in addition to Linguistics, Psychology and Pedagogics, History also plays an important role. Studying and knowing the history and culture of other ethnic and national groups allows us to understand the features of their modern relations better, it helps to create and strengthen the dialogue of cultures, makes forecasts of the development of two or multilateral relations more justified. These aspects become especially relevant for cross-border regions, as they allow “to remove the pain points” of a joint history in the plane of assessments of various events of a common history, mutual territorial claims, etc. Writing a joint history, publishing general textbooks on the history of individual neighbouring countries and regions will contribute to the harmonization of intercultural communication.

What are the main directions that can be identified today in the field of harmonization of intercultural communication, in the implementation of which history plays an important role?

1. Historical and collective memory, as a component of national consciousness and a platform for intercultural communication.

National culture and language, historical and collective memory, decisively enhance the strength and cohesion of the ethnic group, unite, and legitimize it. The phenomenon of internal cohesion of the nation remains unclear in cultural science and political science. Among the factors of national identification, a special role belongs to historical memory.

Historical memory, as part of the collective memory, is not just one of the components of national consciousness, but also acts as an external expression of society’s perception of its past. In historical memory, a generalized stereotype of the relationship to close and distant historical events and the participants in historical processes is developed.

It is important to stress that there are no grievances and complaints in historical memory, especially when it comes to neighbouring peoples and states. It is important to find common ground, common positive events, and common heroes.

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As part of the implementation of an interstate scientific project between the universities of Moldova («Ion Creangă» Pedagogical State University) and Ukraine (Izmail State University of Humanities), the encyclopedic dictionary “They Changed the History: 125 Born in Bessarabia” was prepared and published, with the participation of scientists from three countries - Ukraine, Moldova, and Bulgaria. The book includes information about 125 famous people, originally from Southern Bessarabia, who throughout their lives had significant contributions to various professional fields. And this is especially true for the modern Ukrainian Podunavje (Southern Bessarabia), the territory of which remains ethnically, culturally, and religiously heterogeneous. In our opinion, it is precisely this cultural and historical diversity that characterizes the specifics of the zone, and over the centuries it ensures peaceful coexistence and tolerance of different ethnic groups [4].

The most important fact is that, despite the different political and religious views, ethnicity and sphere of activity, these people are real heroes both for their peoples and for those who now live in our region. Among them are Generals A. Averescu and A. Veitoyanu; P. Ivanov-Mumzhiev and G. Agur; S. Timoshenko and N. Milonas; historians M. Agbunov and B. Dyakovich, D. Agur and E. Rusev, K. Aldea-Cutarov and V. Kozhokaru; biologists M. Babak, F. Kogan, R. Plowaru; physicists E. Bedereu and F. Shvedov; astronomers A. Deich and I. Cortazzi; philologists Theodorov-Balan, A. Dovatur, E. Shulman, and many others. Acquaintance with the biographies of prominent people of their small homeland is especially useful for the younger generation. This helps to increase the self-esteem of the individual, forms a tolerant and careful attitude to the past of his people and their neighbors.

2. The next direction of harmonization of intercultural communication is **the preparation of a platform for writing a common story**. In this case, only a scientific, argumentative dialogue, the use of proved historical sources will allow us to approach common denominators in assessing the historical events of neighboring states.

A common history - different approaches. This aspect is more characteristic of the border regions, especially for those that, due to the specific historical development, were under the power of the neighbouring states. In this aspect, like nowhere else, one needs endurance, the ability to hear and understand the other side, and respectful attitude to a neighbour. The fulfillment of this task is a very complex and laborious process, requiring the highest degree of tolerance towards the opinions of others, and finding formulations and interpretations acceptable to all parties.

Modern history knows a lot of such “slippery” problems on which various political forces periodically try to speculate. There are such “pitfalls” in relations between Romania and Ukraine, Hungary and Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria, or Ukraine and Moldova. And they need to be solved. Not by the cavalry attack method, but gradually, thoughtfully, taking into account the opinions of all interested parties. Scientific conferences, round tables and dialogues, publication of archival documents and memoirs of participants in events are the initial steps in this direction, a promising basis for creating conflict-free cross-border zones.

3. Prevention of intercultural conflicts, as a condition for the successful harmonization of intercultural communication.

The main cause of intercultural conflicts is represented by cultural (axiological, normative, behavioral, religious, etc.) differences.

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It should immediately be noted that, for example, an interethnic conflict based on different views on a common history (for example, Russians and Poles) or over a territorial dispute (for example, Israelis and Palestinians) is not in the strict sense intercultural, as it is based on non-cultural installation of these peoples, and other circumstances.

However, it must be understood that if the relevant conflictogenic factors are not removed for a long time, their presence begins to participate in the formation of the group identity of the peoples concerned, it becomes a cultural factor itself (for example, the mutual claims of the Israelis and Palestinians have already become part of their cultural identity: these two peoples have long been thinking themselves as nations in a state of constant war with a neighbor, which directly affects the entire system of social and cultural structure Islands company).

In cultural anthropology, several types of intercultural conflicts are distinguished:

- conflicts between different ethnic groups and their cultures (Armenians and Azerbaijanis, Georgians and Ossetians, Israelis and Palestinians, etc.).
- conflicts between religious groups, representatives of different religions (between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, or Sunnis and Shiites in Islam).
- conflicts between generations and carriers of different subcultures.
- conflicts between traditions and innovations in culture.
- conflicts between various linguistic and cultural communities and their individual representatives arising from language errors.

Thus, the range of causes of intercultural conflicts is very wide, therefore one of the tasks in organizing intercultural communication is to find out the causes of the conflict and develop a strategy to overcome them.

4. The use of intercultural communications as a resource of cultural identity of a person in a multicultural environment.

The recognition of multiculturalism as a principle of organization of society encourages rethinking of the cultural integrity of society and requires a rejection of the idea of the dominance of stronger or more ancient culture.

Accordingly, here we should already talk about tolerance, and a kind of departure from the concept of “alien” and the adoption of the concept of “other”. In this sense “Alien” means a stranger, unfamiliar, moreover, inaccessible to knowledge, and therefore hostile, dangerous, and perhaps harmful. And in the image of the “other” a priori the dominant of the hostile and potentially harmful is lost. The “other” is closer to the “friend” than the “alien” [5]. Therefore, intercultural communication can contribute to a better understanding of the world in general and its individual representatives in particular. In fact, we can talk about expanding the possibilities of the formation and preservation of cultural identity by increasing the tolerance of the individual.

Only having gone beyond the limits of one’s culture, that is, having met with other worldviews, worldview, methods of behaviour and actions, one can understand the specifics of one’s own consciousness, see the difference between cultures. Help along this path may come through such intercultural phenomena as the media, the Internet, holding general events, transnational business, and tourism.

Various festivals can be one of the modern forms of intercultural communication. The activation of the festival movement is due to the fact that it has wide capabilities in creating conditions for mass communication. Acting as a necessary component of the country’s overall

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cultural panorama, festivals shape its cultural identity, popularize national culture, and are a form of cultural integration and international cultural exchange.

The festival provides a unique opportunity not only to join the art, to gather a wide audience in a single cultural space, but also to create conditions for direct participation in the creative process. Being an integral part of modern culture, the festival opens unique opportunities for intercultural communication, as a result of which understanding between representatives of different cultures increases significantly [6].

The concept of a single world cultural space has been approved in international political practice at the end of the twentieth century. Within the framework of which each country, while preserving its national-cultural identity, simultaneously acts as a part of a larger cultural space. The integrating role in this process belongs to international festivals, the number of which is increasing annually. Their development and an ever-increasing volume of activity are associated not only with the renewal of spectacular communication in the structure of modern urban culture, but also with global political changes.

The status of each festival in other cultural events of the city, region, country is determined by temporal characteristics, among which: interaction with the cultural infrastructure, local and regional economies, sources of funding, number of directorates, and administration issues. The geography of festivals is constantly expanding due to the diversity and originality of the approach. To list all the festivals existing today is provided with a rather difficult task, because their number is increasing every year: film festivals, music, theater, gastronomic, literary, dance, book, religious, folk art, etc. Being an integral part of the cultural life of society, they actualized the formation of new models and forms of their conduct, which contributes to the preservation of a single cultural state space [7].

If one refers to the regional level, the city authorities of Izmail have a good experience in holding festivals. “Bessarabian Tantara” is a new ethnic festival, which first shone on the Danube land in 2015. Over the years, the festival has become a real show of ethnos, folklore and traditionally Budzhak traditions. City national-cultural societies prepare their national courtyards, within which they introduce the residents and visitors of the city with the history, traditions, culture and cuisine of their people. Among the active participants of the festival traditionally are representatives of urban communities of Greeks, Poles, Bulgarians, Romanians, Albanians, etc. In addition, art groups of the city and regions of the region present their programs, usually in ethnic style, at the festival.

Modern Izmail, according to the mayor A. Abramchenko, is a dynamically developing Ukrainian city, a major Danube port, a working city with huge economic potential, the cultural and spiritual center of the Danube. Izmail is famous for its residents - hardworking and hospitable people of different nationalities. May this holiday, common for all of us, give everyone happiness and success in all endeavors, and bring prosperity and prosperity to our beautiful city. [8]

Much attention is paid to issues of intercultural communication and ethnic tolerance by the leadership of the Izmail State University of Humanities (rector is Professor Y. Kichuk). Over the years, the University hosts the “Parade of the Danube Ethnic Groups”, the French Bessarabia festival, etc. The preparation for events and the active participation in them help students better understand the characteristics of culture, traditions, and folklore of other nations, and contribute to the development of a tolerant attitude towards representatives of other peoples and cultures.

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The global tasks of today, set by world development, can only be solved by highly educated and cultural personalities, as a person in the modern sociocultural situation is at the boundary of cultures, it, in its turn, requires dialogue, understanding, respect for the cultural identity of other people. An important role in mutual understanding the culture of other peoples is played by education, which is a mechanism for transmitting cultural values, norms, ideals, forms of reproduction of the national-cultural world, and influences not only the formation of a person's value consciousness, but also his ability to participate in intercultural dialogue successfully [9].

In working with students, more attention should be paid to the development of value-semantic argumentation in the process of studying the disciplines of the humanitarian cycle such as history, psychology, psycholinguistics, culturology, and ethics. It is through these disciplines that the value-semantic guidelines of conscious appropriation and interpretation by students of life experience are laid [10]. The study of the disciplines of the humanitarian cycle in the education system is organized in such a way that “the goals, content, methods, forms of work, relations between teachers and students are structured in such a way as to ensure the development of the personal components of the human mental world - values, motives, attitudes, preferences” [11]. Humanitarian disciplines play an important role in the formation of a conscious attitude of a person to the processes of self-education and self-improvement [12].

A humanist educator, who influences the personality both through the subject taught by him and through his personal qualities, must have a clearly formed worldview, positive spiritual ideals, observe moral principles, so that when interacting with students, they should be oriented towards achieving high moral and humanistic values. Its influence on the personality of students should help them develop the ability to form their own life goals that give meaningfulness to life, determine the life perspective.

In modern conditions, the solution of many social problems is determined by the qualities of a person, his personal potential, which determines the cultural process. E.I. Passov proves that not knowledge, skills should be the content of education, namely culture, but the main educational paradigm should not be centric, but cultural-like. He identifies “education” with “high fashion laboratory” [13].

The problem of creating a positive image of the country occupies a special place in issues of intercultural communication. Each state today, in the context of globalization, has its own stable image, which is a universally recognized brand. And it is very important that this brand helps to increase the credibility of a particular state or people. So that, for example, when mentioning Ukraine, foreigners would not only have associations such as “sharovary” or “borsch”, but people should know about aircraft designer Igor Sikorsky, hero Vasily Virastyuk, actress Maria Zankovetskaya, actor Bogdan Stupka and others.

One of the means of harmonizing cross-cultural cross-border cooperation is the creation of cultural information centres (both abroad and in the country). Among the tasks of cultural centres is the popularization of knowledge about the history and culture of the peoples represented by this centre; the deactivation of stereotypes, the formation in the region's inhabitants of the image of a new country - a country of modern art, science, culture.

The dialogue of cultures through tourism is an alternative way to the disconnecting forces of economic globalization. Combining relaxation with the knowledge of the life, history and culture of another people is one of the tasks that tourism can fully solve. Acquaintance with the culture and customs of another country enriches the spiritual world of man.

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Tourism implements important sociocultural functions in the life of society: self-determination of individuals in the social space, restoration of the psychophysiological resources of society; increasing the ability to work of a person and increasing his income; rational use of free time; awareness of the value, originality, and the need to preserve each culture; determines the activity of recreation of the natural and man-made space of the region.

The diversity of cultures of the modern world is the key to the development of tourism. Cultural differences become a factor in the individual desire to become acquainted with various ethnocultural communities in the context of cultural self-identification of a person.

The development of culture through interaction with other cultures, awareness of the deep interconnection of education and culture, strengthening dialogue, mutual influence and borrowing is connected with the issues of popularization of languages of neighboring states, the development of cultural and historical ties, the manifestation of new forms of cooperation. And the future of our children and our peoples depends on how successfully we will develop these areas.

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