
TOLERANCE IN CONTEMPORARY KAZAKHSTAN SOCIOCULTURAL SPACE

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Abstract

The given article considers the issue of tolerance as the element of culture. The authors consider tolerance as spiritual-life principle of each person, as spiritual-moral quality that is significant for keeping stability in Kazakhstan society. Spirituality as a system-forming base of human existence is the source of confirming culture as a form and way of country's people self-realization. The authors pay attention to the fact that an educational process in this direction must develop on the basis of those main values which reflect historical-cultural and spiritual-moral traditions of Kazakhstan population.

Keywords: personality, gobalisation, upbringing, interethnic relationships, morality

1. Introduction

Modern world is a complex system in which various nations are interrelated, interconnect with each other and differ with their unique culture, outlook and social behaviour. World of culture is one of the difficult nature manifestation. World of culture is the world of people in which its inhabitants are simultaneously both the citizens of concrete state and residents of concrete country and representatives of definite ethnic community, religious confession, political party and labour collective.

The issue of tolerance formation is one of the key issues in modern world. The issue is especially acute and solved at different levels in many countries. The concept of 'tolerance' was formed for many centuries and still goes on. Betty A. Reardon wrote that "tolerance is the value which is necessary and fundamental to realize human rights and achieve the peace" [1].

Modern world is characterized by the expansion of sociocultural space, the increase in cultural diversity, the intensification of intercultural communication between representatives of different cultures. The presence of social and cultural heterogeneity of society is the basis of interethnic,

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interpersonal conflicts, accompanied by the clash of interests, patterns of social behaviour and system of values. The formation of a strategy of tolerance and solidarity is one of the urgent tasks of today's diverse world in the context of social and cultural diversity, ethnic-cultural and social heterogeneity of society. Therefore the determination of tolerance as a spiritual-moral element of culture and spiritual value has both spiritual-moral significance and the strategic nature in solving both political and social and economic and cultural issues.

In different languages, depending on the historical experience of nations, the total content of the concept of tolerance has different connotations:

- in English language 'tolerance' is 'willingness and ability to accept the person or thing without protest';
- in French – 'respect the freedom of another, his way of thinking, behaviour, political and religious views';
- in Chinese to be tolerant means 'to allow to show generosity to others';
- in Arab 'tolerance' is 'forgiveness, leniency, gentleness, forbearance, compassion, benevolence, patience ... favour to another';
- in Persian – 'patience, tolerance, endurance' [2].

The phenomenon of tolerance is complex and has its own structure. Based on the standard list of social-demographic variables, M. Matskovsky identifies the following components, or the scope of tolerance: gender, age, race, religion, interclass, political, marginal, etc. [3].

It should be noted that in each definition a variety of accents are made, differences in cultures and historical experience are found. At the same time, they confirm the existence of a diversity, to which in the modern world context an essential significance is assigned.

2. Discussion

Modern personality acts in a rather difficult social situation. Every day social life is accelerating; the world is becoming more and more dynamic, diverse and unpredictable, creating a global uncertainty of human existence. Post-industrial society comes into its own right. On the one hand, it provides us with great opportunities, and on the other hand, it gives back us the responsibility for quality of our life. To be competitive today, you need to quickly and confidently handle the huge flow of information, which you have to gain. Society requires us to take difficult and fateful decisions, the outcome of which is difficult to predict. In search of success a modern man is constantly changing, learning, developing. Today a personality is an active subject of labour and therefore the requirements for professional and personal qualities of the individual inevitably increases. Increasingly, we have to make a difficult choice: to keep our 'status' or to risk in the hope to achieve more. In this connection there is the problem of studying the phenomenon of tolerance.

Tolerance is patience, indulgence to anyone; attitude to a liberal, respect and acceptance of behaviour, beliefs, traditions and values of other people that are different from our own. Formed tolerance allows a human easily to engage in

communicative connection with other people, ethically competent position in communication makes a human tolerant. Tolerance in communication contributes to the experiencing (understanding, developing) position, the views of another person. According to S. Budner, “tolerance of ambiguity is the tendency to perceive ambiguous situations as desirable. A person can succeed as a subject only on the condition that he is ready to respond to non-adaptive consequences of own actions; in other words, if he is free to take on the responsibility for the possibility of a mismatch of goals and the results of his activity.” [4]

The concept of ‘tolerance’ is interdependent and associated with such concepts as ‘ethics’, ‘morality’, ‘empathy’, ‘dialogue’, ‘interpersonal communication’, ‘intercultural communication’. It is no secret that issues of ethics and morality are often ‘turned off’ from the object scope of a closer look at different areas of human activity. The focus is very often falls on the problems caused by a variety of economic and political dominants, in one way or another connected with the purely material part of life. The issues, facing toward spiritual origin, in the spiritual plane, are often driven out of society subjects’ consciousness with more global issues. At the same time, the roots, the origins of these global issues come from the imperfection of man’s inner world. And the questions of ethics and morality are fundamentally forming in the context of creating a harmony of the microcosm of each individual, each subject of society; determine the direction of his personality. “Morality is not a superstructure on the economy, politics or religion, but rather the basis for the normal functioning of society. The foundation of good human feelings and actions is laid out in the natural sense of solidarity. At every level of development of the human spirit ethics indicates a possible way of gaining humanity. It determines not only the prospects of the future, but also the inner circle of human relations ...” [5]

The issue of tolerance in Kazakhstan is wide and has many aspects due to its ambiguity. Studying the phenomenon of tolerance is interdisciplinary in nature as the sociocultural dynamics of our society provides us with the problems that can be solved only with the full analysis of the current sociocultural tasks. There is especially much importance of the applied aspect of studying the phenomenon of tolerance, not at the level of ideological slogans, speeches, but with practice-oriented concrete realities of people’s daily activities in different areas, whether it is a family or education, manufacture, health care. We can outline the problem field in terms of the instrumentalization of the phenomena of tolerance, as well as the ways to implement yourself as personality in tolerance that means to define objects for a tolerant attitude, tolerance levels for individual, group and society.

The issue of tolerance is one of the important issues that is widely discussed in the Russian and Kazakh scientists’ scientific literature. At the same time a philosophical and cultural-philosophical definition of the issue of tolerance is significant.

The scientific interpretation of the term ‘tolerance’ has significant differences. If one group of scientists makes emphasis on recognition of the dignity of one personality, on the dialogue with ‘another’, the other group makes emphasis on the tolerant attitude to the ‘other’ and psychological protection from him. Other points of view on the issue of ‘tolerance’ also became widespread. For example, Russian philosopher L.M. Drobizheva means by tolerance: first, the way of the outlook, first of all, ‘respect the others’ rights’; second, the value system that recognizes the diversity of the world; third, the willingness to cooperate with it in its appearance; fourth, the ethical category [6].

According to Russian scientist G.M. Soldatova’s research, tolerance is “an integral characteristic of the individual that determines the ability in problem and crisis situations actively to interact his neuro-psychic equilibrium, successful adaptation, to avoid confrontation and to develop a positive relationship with oneself and the world” [7].

Kazakh philosopher A.N. Nyssanbayev believes that: “Tolerance is one of the most important philosophical categories, the premise of mutual understanding and agreement. ... It’s not just ... mutual concessions or rejection of their own position. Rather, the ability to resolve conflicts and disputes, to maintain the balance of power, developing the points of view within the general horizon of communication.” [8]

At one time in the ‘Lectures on Ethics’ famous German philosopher I. Kant wrote: “Tolerance from a religious point of view is that one can tolerate without hate the other’s religion imperfections and misbelieves, while at the same time he experiences some displeasure. The one for whom true religion is that a misbelief in my religion, in any case should not be an object of hatred.” [9] In the days of Kant even achievements of religious tolerance, which were set by him, were quite tricky.

In modern western scientific discourses we can determine differences in opinions on this issue. For example, it is well illustrated in a paper devoted to the analysis of the issue of religious tolerance by the researcher P. Zagorin [10]. He highlighted the distinction between religious tolerance and religious freedom, arguing that they do not necessarily correlate in the historical process. He understands religious tolerance as patience and permission of adherents of the dominant religion to exist in the same space with it with other religions representatives.

Another group of researchers studies religious tolerance in broad terms. For example, R.B. Miller, in his work ‘The terror, religion and liberal thought’, provides an understanding of religious tolerance as self-respect, i.e., respect for one’s own faith and respect for the faith [11].

Among the international documents on human rights, democracy and legitimacy, special emphasis is paid to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, signed on November 16, 1995 in Paris, by 185 countries – members of UNESCO. Article 1 of the Declaration defines ‘tolerance’ as “respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world’s cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human; the virtue that makes peace

possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture war by a culture of peace; not concession, condescension or indulgence”, and “active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others”. It emphasizes that “it is not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement” [12].

History has shown deep interest in the issue of tolerance in the sphere of freedom of conscience as a cornerstone of civil society. As a philosophical issue the concept of ‘tolerance’ was formulated in connection with the comprehension of the results of the Thirty Years’ War. In this respect, the most famous thought belongs to G. Locke, who reflected on religious tolerance. In his ‘Letters on Tolerance’, he wrote, that respect for the religious beliefs of all citizens benefit the state and society. He thinks that “not inevitable difference of opinion, but the unwillingness to respect the views of others led to riots and wars that took place in a Christian society based on religion”. Official religious tolerance does not create division; on the contrary, it helps to defuse the tense situation created by intolerance of other people’s views. [13]

The social structure of society, its cultural differences specifies a certain vector of formation of the image of the person world as a sustainable model, which describes the general features and vision of the world.

Considering multicultural tolerance policy through the prism of sociological analysis, most researchers overlooked communicative component of the concept that allows us to see why in the long term tolerant initiatives lead to diametrically opposite effect, and instead of the peaceful coexistence of different peoples and different confessions generates greatly divided society.

However, in the history the category of ‘tolerance’ in fact underwent some changes, but it has never been separated from the concept of ‘tolerance’, and all later semantic-ideological layers worn shallow effect. Originally ‘tolerance’ in Latin language meant ‘patience’, then in all languages that adopted the term, it was a politically correct analogue of ‘patience’, and in the public consciousness it was not separated from it. Thus, establishing the programs on tolerance, the authorities agree to offer different social and ethnic groups to establish *tolerant attitude* towards each other [14].

Thus, the concept of ‘tolerance’ is often identified in most of the works with the concept of ‘patience’, but it has more vivid active orientation. Tolerance is not a strategy of passive acceptance of position, opinion, outlook, behaviour and actions of other people, nation. Tolerance is not a submissive patience, but rather an active moral position and psychological readiness for tolerance in relation to other ethnic groups. It is a desire for mutual understanding between ethnic groups, social groups, the positive interaction with people from other cultures, religious or social environment.

In the context of globalization society faces different challenges as a spiritual-moral detachment and disunity of people, extreme individualism, selfish tendencies, pragmatism, the absence of broad cultural component in the outlook, narrow interests and outlook, reticence on domestic issues, antihumanism and egocentrism. In recent years, more and more there is a

tendency to ethnocentrism, absolutisation of unique ethnic origin. All this can be reflected in human relationships, the nature of the intercultural communication, which is accompanied with a regression in the culture of communication. Sociologists point out that the external and internal conflicts in people's lives have become a constant negative factor affecting the spiritual aspect of the individual and society as a whole.

In modern conditions for Kazakhstan's society it is becoming more and more important not only to preserve strategies of tolerance in intercultural communications, interethnic, interreligious relationships, but also to cultivate tolerance as an essential spiritual value. Formation of tolerance as a fundamental principle in intercultural communication is very important in interethnic and interreligious relationships. Respect, acceptance and an adequate appreciation of the rich diversity of the cultures of the civilized world is a condition for self-expression and ways of manifestation of human identity, personal culture. And the brighter it appears in the context of the diversity of cultures of the human world, where there is an increase in intolerance and even some hostility to the other, 'not their forms of expression and manifestation of the human personality'.

'Te hominem esso memento!' (Remember that you are a man) is one of the most important principles of every person's life, regardless of social status, ethnicity, nationality, his religion or rational outlook, his system of values and upbringing. He should follow this principle in his daily communication and social behaviour, admitting the rights of another person to his place in the world, society, the right to freedom, to the own opinion, position, lifestyle. This principle implies the right not to be violent against another, not to interfere in his world of culture, in his living space, not to enslave him morally, physically. No one has an absolute right to rule the other, to subordinate his to own interests, to use him in own selfish purposes. Tolerance as a spiritual-moral quality of a person becomes more and more necessary for modern man, it is becoming the very vitally important spiritual principle that should guide every person, every nation and society.

In this aspect, the development of tolerance in subjects of society is one of the main ways to overcome the problem of antagonistic contradictions and conflict sentiments. Adoption of the strategy of tolerance is important for Kazakhstan society, for Kazakhstan people, and formation of tolerance as a spiritual-life principle of human, as a necessary life value is especially significant for the young and middle-aged generation of our society, for whom preserving unique Kazakh culture is one of the most important sociocultural strategies.

It is a well-known fact that Kazakhstan is a country with a catching economics that in the long term of economic development follow the countries of the Asian region, 'Asian dragons'. Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong are for us an example of successful economic modernization, overcome the crisis, current promising proposals of economic development, political stability. While conducting historical digression, it should be noted that at one time the above-

mentioned countries also faced some complex issues of internal political development; there were interethnic, language problems, difficulties and contradictions in the relationship between ethnic groups of multi-ethnic society where tolerance issue was becoming ever more urgent. For example, the result of a balanced, coherent policy, unwavering confidence in the future potential of solving interethnic problems was that a Singapore leader, ‘the author of the economic miracle’, Lee Kuan Yew, managed to overcome many difficulties: “Singapore ruler very attentively treated the issues of interethnic relations. This problem in those years was of much importance for the island nation, home to Chinese, Malay, Tamil and many other people from different country regions. The signs of potential conflicts appeared from time to time in Singaporean society. In the context of coming interethnic conflict overflowing energy was exuded by Lee Kuan Yew. He used all the power of persuasion to bend Singaporeans to a peaceful existence. He urged fellow countrymen that they were one nation, one people, and that the existence of different nationalities and different languages is not a fault, but the great merit of Singaporean society. Not all people understood and accepted his arguments. The term ‘Singapore people’ sounded strange and weird. And the thesis of internal stability as a top priority was like a voice crying in the wilderness.” [15]

As you know, Singapore managed to overcome internal contradictions, at the present stage no one can challenge the real achievements of the state in all spheres of life.

Kazakhstan has all prerequisites for the conversion of ethnic and cultural diversity of the country in a positive factor of spiritual social development. The main priorities of the state and Kazakhstan citizens is the further development and strengthening of Kazakh society and national unity, which core values are traditional culture, language, concern about national values and domain, educating the young generation to mutual respect, patriotism, honest service to the motherland and its people [16].

The most important achievement of Kazakhstan is to preserve peace and harmony between people of different ethnic groups and religions. The basis of this stability is peaceful and rationalized policies; developed tradition of good-neighbourhood, mainly Turkic-Slavic world: Islam and Christianity, steppes and forests, Asia and Europe; peaceful character and mentality of nation-forming Kazakh ethnic group. It is in relation to it, in the cultural policy of the state there is the emphasis on the idea of tolerance, patience, and cultural strategy of mutual understanding between ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of our country. Over the centuries, in the historical land of the Kazakhs destinies of many nations crossed – the bearers of different cultures, religions and traditions. The result was a unique situation, when the representatives of many ethnic groups and religions live peacefully together with the Kazakhs. And this long cohabitation of different ethnic groups formed a strong tradition of tolerance in the society. A significant part of the Slavic population was in Kazakhstan during the mass migration of peasants from the European part of Russia. Often, this process was accompanied by a violent seizure of land from indigenous

populations in favour of immigrants. But Kazakhs and peasant settlers had peaceful and good-neighbourly relations that in the history obtained the name of the custom 'tamyrstvo'. Gradually economic, sociocultural, interethnic contacts between two civilizations: nomadic and settled were intensifying.

The Head of state N.A. Nazarbayev pointed correctly that "the unity of the national culture of our country is the basis of origin of a new cultural phenomenon in the space of middle Asia, as well as an original and substantial part of the contemporary culture of Eurasian continent. It is the enormous wealth that we must preserve and pass on to our descendants." [17]

3. Conclusions

1. The meaning of the category of 'tolerance' in history underwent some changes, but it has never been separated from the concept of 'tolerance'. Originally 'tolerance' in Latin language meant 'patience', then in all languages that adopted the term, it was a politically correct analogue of 'patience'.

As a philosophical problem the concept of 'tolerance' was formulated in connection with the comprehension of the results of many years' wars that many world nations experienced. Formation of religious tolerance, respect for the religious beliefs of all citizens benefit the state and society, helps to defuse a tense situation created by intolerance to others' views.

2. In the modern context of the globalized world the scientific interpretation of the term 'tolerance' has a number of differences. One group of scientists makes emphasis on recognition of the dignity of another person, on dialogue with the 'other', the other – on the patience to the 'other' and psychological protection from him. There is a point of view that tolerance is the way of the outlook, first of all, 'respect the rights of others'; system of values that recognizes the diversity of the world; readiness to cooperate with it in its appearance; ethical category. From the perspective of Social psychology by 'tolerance' we understand the integral characteristic of the individual, his ability in problem and crisis situations to find a balance, adapt actively and successfully, develop positive relationships with each other and the outside world.

3. Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, successfully solving the problems of economic modernization, overcome the crisis, however, drew attention to the solution of complex problems of political development, ethnic, linguistic difficulties and contradictions in the relationship between ethnic groups of multinational society. The leader of Singapore attentively treated the issues of interethnic relationships. In the context of the coming interethnic conflict between Thais, Malays, Tamils and others Singapore managed to overcome internal contradictions, at the present stage, no one can deny the real achievements of the state in all spheres of life.

4. The most important and undeniable achievements of Kazakhstan is to preserve peace and harmony between people of different ethnic groups and religions. The basis of this stability is peaceful and rationalized policies; developed tradition of good-neighborhood, mainly Turkic-Slavic world.

The result was a unique situation, when the representatives of many ethnic groups and religions live peacefully together with the Kazakhs. And this long cohabitation of different ethnic groups formed a strong tradition of tolerance in the society.

5. In the modern world we are talking about the need for the formation of not just tolerance, but *raising* tolerance (including religious and ethnic) in the young generation of our society. It is necessary to note that the maintenance of social-political, economic integration and social cohesion in society requires the development of new, adequate to modern requirements of social development, model of public institutions, primarily education based on the principles of *humanity and tolerance*.

It should be noted that the concept of tolerance has a brighter active orientation, although it is identified with the concept of patience by the majority of the sources. Tolerance is an active moral position and psychological readiness for patience in the name of mutual understanding between ethnic communities, social groups, in the name of positive interaction with people of different cultural, ethnic, religious or social environment [15, p. 327].

Thus, today, we are talking about the need for the formation of not just tolerance, but raising tolerance (including religious and ethnic) in the young generation of our society. The world community defines tolerance as respect, acceptance and right understanding of rich diversity of the modern world cultures, forms of self-expression and ways of manifesting human identity. Tolerance is a harmony in diversity.

Historical experience and the current situation in the world are updated by the need of humanistic, spiritual-practical transformation of social reality in the field of interethnic relations. We all admit that the humanization of all spheres of public integrity becomes a necessary social need, and it should be based on the principles of dialogue and tolerance.

We should note that in order to maintain the social-political, economic integration and social harmony in the society, firstly it is necessary to develop a new, adequate to modern requirements of social development, model of the public institutions, primarily education based on the principles of humanity and tolerance. It is through the educational system it is possible to affect the formation of life choices of young people. The education system serves as a mechanism of humanization of social relations, as it is the youth who acts as a capital of social development. Moral state of young people is a sensitive indicator of the progressive and human society.

The way out of spiritual and sociocultural crisis is seen in the search for new moral guidelines that can consolidate the society.

A qualitative uniqueness of Kazakh society is to form a stable social life, primarily based on the universal connection of individuals in the field of material and spiritual relationships. In other words, determining significance belongs to spiritual forms of social relationships that are uniquely realized in various forms of activity. For Kazakhstan's society economic and interethnic, interpersonal relationships, based on spiritual and moral values, are determinative. Many scientists and public figures emphasize the preservation of value-spiritual principles, spiritual values, which are developed by people who originally synthesized knowledge and morality, sense and will, beauty and humanity.

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