RPTSS 2017

International Conference on Research Paradigms Transformation in Social Sciences

DIALOGUE OF CIVILIZATIONS — NEW MODEL OF WORLD POLITICS

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Abstract

In the article, the authors examine the theoretical implications of the dialogue of the civilizations' concept. Particular attention is being paid to the ways to solve the conflicts between civilizations, causing social tensions and political instability. The article analyzes the famous American concept of S. Huntington "The Clash of Civilizations". This concept is summed up throughout the 20th century, the century of the two World Wars and the Cold War, of the geopolitical and military methods in world politics.

The concept of "civilization" does not figure in any of the theories of international relations - neither positivistic nor postpositive. It is not a state, not a political regime, not a class, not a network, not a community, not an individual or a group of individuals. Civilization is a community united by the participation in the same spiritual, historical, cultural, mental and symbolic tradition (most often religious in its roots, although not necessarily realized in terms of a particular religion), whose members realize their closeness to each other, regardless of national, social, political or ideological affiliation.

The authors suggest that the "dialogue of civilizations" paradigm should replace the "clash of civilizations" paradigm and become the foundation of a multipolar world. In conclusion, it is noted that the interreligious Joint Russian-Iranian Commission for Orthodoxy-Islam Dialogue is a unique platform where representatives of various faiths and civilizations discuss international issues in order to develop a common approach for any given problem.

1. Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi: "I do not want my house walled in on all sides, and that the shutters of my windows were closed. I want the winds of cultures of all countries walked in my house as freely as possible. But I do not want them to blow me down" (Ferrari, 2016)

The new emerging paradigm of scientific knowledge in the field of international relations is not categorical in determining the dominant role of the state in world politics. The end of the Cold War brought about a number of new constructs (images, paradigms, theories) of the world order: "a multipolar world", "single world civil society," "global governance". Such paradigms not only reflect the growing complexity of the world, its emergence beyond the traditional (state-centered) organization, but also make claims for a radical change in the world political agenda (Katzenstein, 2010), for creating a new vision of the key goals of the new world order.

In the new millennium, civilizational "frontiers" between people not only do not disappear, but also tend to strengthen. These differences may occur in the clothing style or the colors of fabrics, the level of women's employment or the specialization in agriculture production, namely, the absence of winemaking or pork production, associated with religious restrictions on pork and alcohol consumption, in Muslim countries. The problem of religion-based and ethnic conflicts over the past decades evolved to be one of the most urgent global issues and crucial topic for researchers from various fields of science.

2. Problem Statement

Theoretical approaches to world politics after the Cold War, based on the principle of unification of civilizational environment on account of superiority of some values over others, the concept of the "clash of civilizations", prevented the formation of a polycentric international system, established upon the cultural and civilizational diversity of the world.

The end of the 20th century was marked by the birth of the famous American concept of S. Huntington "The Clash of Civilization" (Huntington, 1996); the beginning of the 21st generated the necessity for a new paradigm of international relations. The bipolarity of the world became the thing of the past, but unipolarity or globality did not take its place. A completely new form of relations, other contradictions and tensions have emerged in a new world order. In his research, Samuel Huntington poses a question as to who will be destined to become an actor of this new world. The author singles out civilization as the main character.

Samuel Huntington, who belongs to the realism school of thought in international relations, analyzes the possibility of conflict (clash) between civilizations - actors in world politics. Realists, analyzing national interests in international relations, primarily focus on estimating the probability of conflicts and on security and defense. Classical realists identify states as actors of world politics. Samuel Huntington uses the same approach, but with civilizations as the main players.

The number of civilizations in the history of humankind varies according to different authors. For example, Huntington suggests the existence of six indisputable and three potential civilizations. However, scientists more often identify eight civilizations: 1) West European, which includes the North American and Australian-New Zealand; 2) Chinese (or Confucian); 3) Japanese; 4) Islamic; 5) Hindu; 6) Slav-

Orthodox; 7) African (or Negroid-African) and 8) Latin American. Note, that the principles of allocation of the civilizations are controversial. For example, a number of authors have questioned the accuracy of discerning between the Slavic Orthodox, Latin American civilizations and the Western one, or distinguishing the Japanese and Negro-African civilizations. In the era of globalization, mutual relations between people and states from different civilizations are expanding. Sometimes it may cause the strengthening of identity, strengthening the sense of belonging to a particular civilization.

Conflicts between civilizations can replace the political and ideological conflicts of the Cold War period and even lead to violent crisis and wars in the current century, as some scholars believe. One of such lines of the civilizational "fault" is the arc from the Islamic countries of Africa (the African horn) to Central Asia with a whole series of modern conflicts: Muslims - Jews (Palestine - Israel), Muslims - Hindus (India), Buddhist Muslims (Myanmar).

By the UN decision, in 2001 an initiative "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations" was launched. The idea was first presented by Mohammad Khatami (President of the Islamic Republic of Iran) as a development of the concept of the "Silk Road Diplomacy". M. Khatami pointed out the equality and respect for peoples and states as the fundamental principle of inter-civilization dialogue. He called on the Western world to treat the East as an equal partner in the successful implementation of the dialogue. Dialogue is a conversation of equals, so M. Khatami urged the East to achieve an unbiased attitude towards the Western civilization. Dialogue, according to the Iranian leader, is not just a choice, but a necessity for Islamic and European-American civilizations.

3. Research Questions

In the early 21st century, the theoretical concept of the dialogue of civilizations got a practical implication. Its political significance is emphasized by the emergence of a network of international funds, forums, associations: the World Public Forum "Dialogue of Civilizations", the international network of governmental and non-governmental organizations, the "United Nations Alliance of Civilizations", the non-governmental Institute for Interreligious Dialogue (Iran), the Dialogue Center (La Trobe University, Australia) to name a few. In 2016 the Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute (DOC) was established. This institution is based on the 15-year experience of the World Public Forum "Dialogue of Civilizations". The Institute brings together international experts from academia, politics and business. Its main task is to develop recommendations for preventing conflicts and reducing tensions in the world. Such dialogic models that combine state and non-state actors can contribute to the development of institutional mechanisms for civilizational dialogue, for the purpose of reducing tensions, and enhancing the stability of the international system. These dialog models seek to further international and regional cooperation, forming the common worldview, based on common values, for convergence of multinational world community.

Nowadays, the concept of the dialogue of civilizations becomes one of the foundations of the theoretical aspects of world politics, first, expanding its subject and problem field (cultural and civilizational factors of the movement towards multi-polarity, communication policies, global networks, global collaboration and cooperation), and secondly, forming a cultural-political discourse of comparison between Western and non-Western political systems. British scientist F. Petito made a considerable

contribution to the study of international political system and the concept of civilization by analyzing the interconnection of multi-polarity, the emergence of new powers and the ideas of the dialogue of civilizations. In his research, he indicated that «the relationship between the new multipolar trends related to the emerging powers and the idea of dialogue of civilizations implies that the link between dialogue of civilizations and regionalism could represent a critical issue for the future of global peace». (Petito, 2016) In particular, multiculturally constituted processes of regional integration are antidotes to the possible negative politicization of cultural differences on a global scale and can contribute to the emergence of a new cross-cultural *jus gentium*.

4.   Purpose of the Study

Increasing global instability, terrorism, separatism makes it necessary to develop a dialogue between nations in a multipolar world. The dialogue promotes the development of inter-civilizational integration within the framework of international organizations and forums in order to jointly solve the problems of new challenges and threats (WPF Dialogue of Civilizations, SCO, BRICS, APEC). However, political will and interstate cooperation are often not enough to resolve ethnic and religious conflicts. (Pidzhakov et al., 2015) The model of inter-civilizational dialogue should be based on the following general principles: multi-level structure, equality, cooperation, tolerance, recognition of common values, etc. Inter-civilizational dialogue is able to play a positive role in foreign policy and multilateral diplomacy, since the inter-civilizational factor plays a great role in integration processes, and traditional methods of diplomacy are sometimes powerless. Moreover, cultural and humanitarian channels between individuals, groups of people, as well as between religious organizations can play the invaluable role in conflict resolution. They will contribute to achieving mutual understanding between nations, the rapprochement of their positions and the creation of a new world order, based on trust. Religion at present becomes one of the most important factors in international relations, and an interreligious dialogue is one of the most important instruments in the foreign policy of states.

The Joint Russian-Iranian Commission for Orthodoxy-Islam Dialogue was established in 1997. Its goal is to initiate an interreligious dialogue between Russia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Russia and Iran belong to different civilizations, cultural areas, and this undoubtedly, determines the differences in the worldview and mentality of these countries' nations. (Daenekindt, 2017) There are several factors influencing the relationship between the two countries and the communication of the two religious communities:

- common to Shiite Islam and Orthodox Christianity viewpoint on the issue of traditional values, rejection of religious radicalism and intolerance;
- multi-religious societies;
- multi-ethnicity of both countries;
- commitment of Russia and Iran to traditional family values;
- shared understanding of ethical and moral ideals;
- both countries traditionally acting as conveyors of a cultural, civilizational mission;
- common threats;
- the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ayatollah of Iran opposing "Western liberalism".

The Orthodoxy–Islam Dialogue goes beyond the framework of state programs. The Dialogue helps to develop mutual respect, equality between religions, cultures and civilizations, preserving the uniqueness of each religion, without seeking syncretism. Human values become the basis of this dialogue. The Russian Orthodox Church and the Organization of Culture and Islamic Relations of Iran are the main participants in the dialogue. It is noteworthy that the Organization of Culture and Islamic Relations of Iran is a key instrument of Iran's cultural diplomacy (Akbarzadeh, 2017). The dialogue between the two religions takes place at two levels. Theological questions and interreligious topics are discussed at the first one. However, the second level is more productive. It pays particular attention to the problems that concern the society of both countries, and there is a search for solutions to shared social problems. These are such issues as: human rights, the role of women in society, violence, religious education, the strengthening of family values and morals, ways to resolve political and ethnic conflicts, forms and methods of combating extremism and radicalism.

The X session of the Joint Russian-Iranian Commission for the Orthodoxy-Islam Dialogue devoted to the topic of "Interreligious dialogue and cooperation as instruments for achieving a lasting and just peace" was held in Moscow in September 2016. The main discussion issues were the threat of extremism under religious slogans, the genocide of Christians in the Middle East and North Africa, etc.

5. Research Methods

Dialogue is the main way to eliminate global crises and conflicts in world politics. The peaceful coexistence of different cultures and civilizations, the rejection of confrontation and the possibility of solving a number of complex issues is carried out through the dialogue of cultures. The notion of dialogue of cultures acquires a wider meaning today. It is not only a dialogue of cultural values, which were formed by different nations, but also a dialogue as a form of consent and mutual understanding for entire civilizations.

The dialogue of cultures solves the problem of the coexistence of civilizations in a peaceful and tolerant space (Surovtsev, 2016) in a globalizing space where the boundaries of economic, political and cultural interests overlap (Bolgov, 2016). The mutual penetration of the vital foundations and values of various peoples turns gradually from the field of theoretical comprehension into practical.

The concept of "clash of civilizations" of Samuel Huntington formed the theoretical and methodological basis of this research. In particular, the important idea is that in the world after the Cold War, global contradictions will be multi-national and will be based of fundamental cultural differences. This leads us to the understanding of the conflict between civilizations as a megacultural conflict of our time.

The dialectical method of cognition of reality is basic for this study. The method allows gaining a deeper understanding of the main problems and significant trends in the development of the world community at the beginning of the 21st century. Dialectical ambivalence (West and non-West, modernity, traditionalism) of the sociocultural reality of the modern world is considered as an essential feature of the study.

6. Findings

Huntington's theory of the "Clash of Civilizations" is indeed not a planned attempt to materialize the idea of a global inter-civilizational confrontation, but an attempt to fix existing tendencies in reality, which, if not counteracted, in the future can constitute the main content of global development. This is not a conflict-forming concept, but, rather, a necessary diagnosis of the most important problems of the modern world, allowing time to see the danger and to design counteractive mechanisms. The paradigm of the "dialogue of civilizations" really took shape precisely as a response to the emergence of the theory of the "conflict of civilizations". The UNESCO program "Towards a culture of peace" examines key ideas of a new world order based on the dialogue of civilizations. Dialogue emerged as a direct response to S. Huntington, known for his research, indicating the inevitable clash of civilizations, and makes it possible to seek ways to avoid tragedies.

Obviously, the process of globalization (in its ultra-liberal version) is both the fundamental reason and the main catalyst for the conflict of civilizations. It is important to understand that globalization is the only prerequisite for the clash of civilizations, as it eliminates many barriers and partitions between cultural and civilizational systems, forcing them to frequently and closely interact with each other. However, such interaction does not necessarily imply a conflict as something inevitable. Western globalism - the ultra-liberal concept of globalization makes the conflict of civilizations inevitable. Under this concept, the project of enforced unification of the world, involving the universalization of the Western cultural-civilizational worldview paradigm is realized. In this sense, the cause of the conflict of civilizations is not globalization as an objective process associated with the formation of a common information space and the world economic system, but globalization as a "man-made" universalist project of the Western civilization.

During a short period of time the concept of the dialogue of civilizations has evolved from a model of historical self-knowledge oriented toward the opposition of the West and the East to a model of contemporary world politics that claims to reconsider the entire architecture of the world order. Today, the dialogue of civilizations is the semantic field of world politics. (Mohamad, 2016) The authors' understanding is that the paradigm of the "dialogue of civilizations" should replace the paradigm of "clash of civilizations" and become the foundation of a multipolar world.

It can be concluded that viewing the global problem of the modern world as a problem of the "conflict of civilizations" only deals with a certain state of inter-civilizational relations that has already developed or may be formed in the future. It is not appropriate to treat the conflict in general and the conflict of civilizations in particular as purely positive phenomenon. However, the "clash of civilizations", compared to other paradigmatic concepts, possesses, in the authors' opinion, the greatest "permissive" possibilities and, therefore, to the greatest extent meets the needs of the global community in constructing design dialogue forms of interaction.

Dialogue of civilizations has limitations of the subject field, due to its development within the ethical paradigm of global and international relations. Questions of the international law clearly have not entered it yet. States, integration associations, governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals are participants in the dialogue of civilizations. The space of world ethics and standards of behavior arises. (Bettiza, 2014) Different ethical and religious systems can engage in a dialogue based on

conflict, rivalry and partnership. The inter-civilizational dialogue (Khanmurzina, 2016) can become the basis of multilateral diplomacy of states.

7. Conclusion

It is obvious that the success of Russian modernization is possible with the transition from the values of Russian civilization to the values of universal civilization in its current Western-centric version, since identity is considered "monistically", which does not allow for the synthesis of cultures and civilizations. Successful modernization is an absolute upgrade, since historically modernization in Russia is incomplete and fragmentary, and this, in the opinion of the apologists for absolute modernization, is responsible for its failures. In Russian history, attempts at absolute modernization have already been undertaken. The most significant attempt was made during the Soviet period, when the state fought not only against an individual's "past", but against the very idea of tradition. This led to a change of identity, to a significant "erosion" of Russia's cultural and civilizational code, and in the end almost resulted in the end of the millennial existence of Russian civilization in world history.

The inter-religious Russian-Iranian Orthodoxy-Islam Dialogue is a unique platform where representatives of various religions and civilizations discuss international issues and try to work out a common approach for any given problem. Of course, Dialogue is an instrument of people's diplomacy. However, despite the positive aspects of this format, the dialogue has a number of negative aspects. The Russian Orthodox Church and the clergy of Iran represent different values. (Ghorbani, 2016) The Russian clergy does not have such status and such set of instruments in Russia as the Shiite ayatollahs in their homeland.

In Iran, religion is this power itself (Akbarzadeh, 2016). In Russia, religion is the interpreter of the policy of the secular authorities. (Vukic, 2017) Moreover, Orthodoxy in Russia is not the only dominant religion, as in Iran. The Russian Orthodox Church can not express the national interests of the state, which, certainly, limits the scope of interaction on various issues. This makes the dialogue less effective, but still useful both for other countries and for Russia itself, considering its Christian-Muslim development vectors. The cultural traditions of Russia and Iran could form the foundation for the development of a general civilization approach.

Today's world is full of conflicts and contradictions, struggle for resources and cultural axiological dominance. The state can not survive without ideology, without principles, without a clear civilizational position, without mobilization of the entire cultural and spiritual potential of a nation.

Inclusion into the Western project of globalization inevitably means subordination to the West in some form or another. At the same time, Russia has a unique opportunity to realize the synthesis of modernity and tradition, to become a high-tech civilization and at the same time to preserve its fundamental cultural foundations. Thus, individual national states, regions, civilizations, ethnic communities receive a unique opportunity to reconstruct their history and identity, to find a unique and at the same time effective synthesis of tradition and modern universalism.

Russia has a great historical experience of intercultural dialogue (along with the United States, Latin America, Iran, India). This experience can become a valuable geo-cultural, geopolitical and geo-

economic resource of the country. It is able to strengthen its position in a rapidly changing world, to become an alternative to catastrophic forecasts of global development.

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