

**Indira Dzagania**

***Cultural Merging and National Identity***

Every era has its own challenges. The main challenges of our era are two interconnected problems those of globalization and identity. It can be easily noted that in a globalized world the balance between tradition and innovation has been lost. There is a tendency towards rapid change in all aspects of human life. In such situation people and countries experiencing spiritual (and national) crises are trying to ascertain their identity: "who am I?" or "who are you?"

S. Hangtington defined this global crisis of national identity. In his opinion, the debates on national identity long ago became an inalienable feature of our times. Almost everywhere people have the same question about what they have in common with their fellow citizens, what their differences are, they reconsider their attitude towards the issue and change their viewpoint. Who are we? Where do we belong? Hangtington connects national crisis with globalization.

One should think that the identity crisis may be due to different reasons. In our country the problem of identity has been actualized since the collapse of the Soviet Union and under the changes occurring in the world. It can be easily noted that evident changes took place in "the intellectual climate" of Russia and the Russian region. Z. Bauman was absolutely right to say that "identity" becomes a prism through which many important features of modern life are considered, assessed and studied. Such "popularization" of identity is observed on different levels of human life.

Within the frame of globalization, identity is in the process of transformation and proliferation. Globalization creates new forms of associations and interactions between countries and people which is related with the reconsideration of set ideas about cultural identity.

What is the definition of globalization in modern science? We will try to answer the question citing the American professor U. McBride: "Globalization is the word with several different meanings, and was always difficult to define. We discussed before the available conceptions on globalization, and in this connection we'll try not to be repeated but rather continue to discuss the subject broadening the understanding of the sense of globalization."

Note that from the very beginning globalization is characterized as a financial-economic phenomenon. "But this is an error," - exclaimed the westerner sociologist Anthony Giddens. Then we say in response that globalization affects all the aspects of human life and leads to the creation of a new reality, helps to understand the unity of the interrelated and interdependent world. Globalization affects all aspects of our life. As a whole, globalization is ambivalent in respect to life, some things get better, others - worse; some people are more affected by globalization, others - less. It is indisputable that it has become our way of life and we are embracing it.

Globalization is a contradictory process. On the one hand, globalization opened all boundaries and borders to people and states, connects them by sharing knowledge, information, technology, but on the other hand, it causes tensions and conflicts connected with the increased role of highly industrial countries that make the greatest contributions to support global world order. It follows from this, and it is in-

licated by specialists that globalization itself is a global problem comprising great perspectives and danger, especially in the sphere of culture.

Modern global situation in the world is quite contradictory and uncertain: at the present stage of globalization we feel a sense of Americanization, its influence obviously, openly and often sensitively on spiritual life and culture.

Note that the disputes on globalization are mainly concentrated on its consequences on states. "And, what is more important, today when the former geopolitical forms become outdated, the states have to reconsider their identity on the whole. It is difficult not to agree with Giddens who thinks that after the end of "Cold War" most of the countries involved have no more animas. Today, many states are threatened by risks and dangers. Though the first part of the thesis is still a disputable point of view, we have to agree with the second part.

Meanwhile, these risks and dangers are manifested not only with regard to a state but also to the institutions not being able to fully cope with their duties; they also concern our way of life, our spiritual life and culture within which our individuality is formed.

Cultural globalization should be considered as a complex process, contributing to the appearance of specific cultural models and cultural samples. They may be revealed in everyday life, in individual behaviors, activities and so on. In short, a great deal is formed under the challenges of globalization. At least two points of view should be noted here. First - from the cultural viewpoint globalization provides access to pluralism, that is, the possibilities to choose how to develop are many. Second – cultural globalization influences identity giving way to multiple identities in the global world.

We should note that "free choice" of one's own identity, and more precisely, the search for one's own "self" or "selves" is made under the conditions of the unstable, changing and developing world. It is just the culture of the human mind that is responsible for the "fluctuations initiation" which may either contribute to retaining the diversity of cultures and identities or destroying this diversity.

As a result of this activated globalization a replacement of identification markers takes place. In the world of socio-humanitarian science there is a great number of assessments, schemes and models of development of humankind. As it is noted in scientific discussions on globalization, it is undeniable that globalization gives new horizons to comprehend the sense of one's own existence and coexistence with "others".

Talking about cultural globalization we emphasize once more that it gives a great possibility of choice, since it introduces pluralism of values, of way of life, of identities, faith etc. There is no alternative: it is either the global or the local. In these conditions they appear to be consistent. The process is called globalization. It seems that natural globalization, a new global society formed must not destroy cultural traditions, unify them on the basis of a sociocultural paradigm. Under globalization, the formation of an individual will continue within the frames of culture, ethnos, nation, civilization. In this context, traditional issues are raised again on the relationships of tradition and innovation, of the general and the nationally peculiar.

Meanwhile, cultural globalization brings about deep and complex changes, "threatening the modern civilization by new sociocultural risks". As a rule, the risks are related with the changes of informational-communicational systems and technolo-

gies and also with what is particular and universal in the culture. The following risks may be regarded as sociocultural:

- "retardations" of the cultural development that pertain to informational and communicational inequality;

- exceeding the amount and role of the data flow;

- diminishing the base characteristics of the ethnic cultures, the result of which is the transformation of the models of ethnocultural identity which is being aggravated and transformed. At the same time, the identification models of ethnocultural identity are being complicated, and this is very likely as the crisis of subjective identity is reflected in the area of ethnic culture.

The globalization of ethnocultural identity sets a task to all advanced societies: what is the perspective of developing cultural uniqueness and ethnocultural identity?

Global free market cannot replace national and ethnic self-consciousness. The roots of ethnic self-consciousness are changing slowly, especially the standards of cultural uniqueness. They are historically formed within every ethnos, and according to these standards ethnocultural identity is defined. Ethnocultural values originally form men's social outlook. But the conceptual difference in the outlooks of the Caucasian and the westerner individuals is not accidental. Therefore it is important not to lose ethnocultural values, not to admit their disappearance. Hence there arises a problem how to retain the cultural and ethnic diversities, the diversity of ethnocultural identities under globalization. Nevertheless, it should be admitted that the globalized world/civilization has two opposite but equal tendencies: interactions between cultures and retention of ethnic cultures.

Globalization considerably influences cultural self-consciousness, more precisely, it destroys it in many aspects. It is no more by chance that there are various publications on the future of national identity. All countries are concerned with their identity.

Here it is important to remember that in modern humanitarian science there are different attitudes toward the national identity on the basis of its values. In this sense a postmodernist discourse of the discussed problem is a good example. A permanently debated problem in this sphere is to substitute free supranational or global identities for national identities in the "postmodernism" era.

What will the supranational identity be like? What will be the mentality of the people identifying themselves with a supranational community?

Indeed, under globalization supranational communities and identities are emerging. So, referring to the processes of the European association which started in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> and in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century it can be stated that the European community is experiencing such crisis. According to his statements, an ardent supporter and theorist of European integration, J. Habermas acutely puts forward the problem on "European identity" and all European values. Not going into the analysis of inner contradictions of the united countries we just consider the state of mind of people involved in these integration and globalization processes. Based on survey, only a small part of population of the integrating states accepts "cosmopolitan values", whereas the great majority (over 85%) identify themselves with local – regional national values and guidelines.

Taking into consideration the possibility of creation and the existence of supranational identities, there are hopes that they cannot be replaced by cosmopolitan culture.

Considering multi-complex and multispectral identity as a complex open system, it is important to note that:

-at present to talk about the process of identification is thought to be reasonable, since under the conditions of a global culture identity is modernized and new types of identities are formed;

-retaining multiple cultures and multiple cultural identities is the diversity of humankind, therefore it is necessary to search for ways of retaining this wealth.

### **Literature:**

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