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**PRINCIPLE OF TOLERANCE AS THE LEGITIMIZING BASIS OF
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROJECT**

N. A. Medushevsky (a)*, M. A. Gordeeva (b), N. A. Filin (c), I. P. Azernikova (d)

*Corresponding author

(a) Russian state university for the humanities, Miusskaya sq. 6, Moscow, Russia,

(b) Russian state university for the humanities, Miusskaya sq. 6, Moscow, Russia,

(c) Russian state university for the humanities, Miusskaya sq. 6, Moscow, Russia,

(d) Russian state university for the humanities, Miusskaya sq. 6, Moscow, Russia,

Abstract

Nowadays the European Union as an integrational geopolitical project is experiencing a period of transformation, the emergence of which is reasoned by the conflict of two positions - the position of the supporters of European integration and the position of anti-EU representatives. The formation of these approaches is reasoned by the system of values of their supporters, who interpret in different ways liberal ideology and the need to affirm neoliberal values in society. In the context of the mentioned opposition, tolerance, which is considered to be a liberal value, becomes a very important indicator demonstrating the preservation or destruction of liberal-democratic culture in separate societies incorporated into unified European space. The dominance of liberal and neoliberal principles in the political sphere of EU gradually leads to their absolutization and transforms the culture of tolerance, turning it into an element of new neoliberal ideology with the character of a paradigm aimed at the definition of further development of society. The inclusion of the principles of tolerance in the system of ideological values leads to the politicization of this phenomenon and integrates the very principle of tolerance into the system of opposition between supporters of European integration and anti-EU representatives.

The perspective development of the European Union as a single integration project is inextricably associated with the restoration of the status of tolerance as a value, uniting European society through the overcoming of social conflict on the most relevant issues, including economic and financial instability, migration, and changing of social practices.

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Keywords: Tolerance, integration, EU-scepticism, neoliberalism, social frustration.



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1. Introduction

The political development of modern states of the European Union is historically realized in unified space of values. It emerged from the ideas of humanism and enlightenment, associated with the principle of anthropocentrism, recognition of the dominant of natural rights of man and the principle of pluralism. The unity of the European geopolitical space (Kumar, 2008) primarily forms the solidarity of values, including individualism, the principle of individual liberty and the principle of equality, the idea of tolerance, the principle of public consent and consensus, and the principle of the supremacy of law.

In European political conversation the values mentioned above remain universal in liberal mindset, however, in the context of the integration process development in the European space, many of them receive new interpretation and sometimes have several multidirectional interpretations (Rovisco, 2010), which leads to the dysfunction of the integration process in its common-European version.

The situation of a "split" in unified European space (Orenstein, 2015) arose in the context of the realization of the last three waves of integration, and it was triggered by a complex of crisis phenomena in economy (crisis of 2008-2012), financial sector (European debt crisis of 2010-2015) and in the field of migration policy (2013-2017) (Erisen & Kentmen-Cin, 2016).

A series of crises revealed a number of dysfunctions in the development of the European integration process and led to the presentation of the integration process not as a single evolutionary trend of all European countries towards a common federal future, but as the "two speeds" Europe (Mironova, 2017), which has engines represented by the "old Europe" countries and lagging states of the "New Europe". British exit from the EU can be considered as the culmination of the crisis of the European integration project as it marked the precedent of a separate country's exit from a unified integration process. On the issue of status, it is necessary to note a certain geopolitical dissatisfaction of the "New Europe" countries with their lagging status in relation to the core countries (Tesser, 2003; Ballinger, 2017).

At this stage, in order to overcome the designated challenge of "split", the European Union should turn to the development of a new approach to dialogue with the countries of the "periphery of integration", which inevitably actualizes the practice of reconciliation and dialogue, appealing to common liberal values and the principle of tolerance as a tool for the de-escalation of conflict.

2. Problem Statement

Tolerance as a principle (Doom, 2014) correlates with the practices of pluralism, which makes it a connecting element uniting fragments of common European identity in the form in which they are presented and positioned by all European institutions. However, being one of the key categories of modern liberal ideological discourse, tolerance itself is gradually transforming, moving from the moral and ethical principle to the category of political value uniting the complex of ideological liberal and neoliberal attitudes. Within this framework it is possible to talk about the formation of tolerance paradigm, which itself becomes the subject of political speculation and opposes conservative political approach (Weiler, 2007).

In this regard, the research problem can be defined as a conflict of neoliberal and conservative (traditional) values in the European Union space, taking place during the course of the struggle for a certain status of tolerance as a political value that influences the formation of the modern development paradigm of European societies and the European integration process.

3. Research Questions

As part of our study, the authors represent tolerance as a value construct that underlies the realization of social practices in the EU space. At the same time tolerance acquires the features of politicized paradigm of modern European social and political mindset in the context of integration process development, the transformation of European political institutions and the evolution of the mentality of Europeans.

In this regard, the research hypothesis is presented by the assumption that politicization of the principles of tolerance within the framework of neoliberal ideology leads to their deformation and forms the opposite effect in a number of European states. Feeling threatened the states reduce the degree of participation in the integration process and make an attempt to have autonomous policy of a conservative orientation in order to save traditional values and social order.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to interpret tolerance as a political value, the recognition of which affects social and political transformation of European societies and can cause dysfunction of the European integration process. In this regard it was necessary to solve a set of tasks for the implementation of the study. The key tasks were as follows:

- The interpretation of the concept of tolerance as the key to understanding modern common-European social and political practices and revealing the essence of the "culture of tolerance" as one of the methodological approaches to the study of political and social processes of the EU development.
- The representation of tolerance as new political value, which was formed in the context of the development of neoliberalism, and opposes traditional liberal and conservative interpretations of this concept and the paradigm of social mindset.
- The evidence that new paradigm approach to the realization of tolerant practices is comparable to the general trends in the development of the European space, which is historically disunited in cultural and political ways.

The identification of mechanisms for overcoming the negative effect of the introduction of new paradigm approach to the realization of tolerant practices in modern political practice in the EU countries.

5. Research Methods

The study is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach. It is based on a combination of political-philosophical, sociological and political scientific concepts. The most complex one is the theory and methodology of cognitive history. This cognitive approach is used in order to clarify the meaning of concepts, their evolution in history, the influence of the existing cognitive picture of the world on the formation of fundamental ideas of a certain society era about space, time and the meaning of existence (Medushevskaya, 2008).

The adoption of the theory and methodology of cognitive history as a methodological basis for the study involves the use of an integrative approach and the use of a group of methods and approaches of political science, among which a special place is occupied by the systemic-structural approach, which defines the scope of tolerant behavior as a wide set of political potential.

Political science theories that form the methodology for the analysis of tolerance are represented by *a sociological approach* that considers tolerant behavior as an effect of individuals belonging to particular social groups.

The theoretical basis of the study also incorporates the concept of local (internal) geopolitics of Y. Lacoste and the concept of analysis of the ideology of S. Zizek.

The concept of Y. Lacoste is important for the definition of the "research space", i.e. the set of territories that are the subject of dissertation research.

The approach of S. Zizek, based on the model of L. Althusser, is focused mainly on the social and psychological interpretation of the ideological construct, the part of which is presented by tolerance. (West, 2015).

Social and cultural approach to the analysis of social practices of tolerance pays special attention to the approach of civilization, within which a dialogue with the work "Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence" conducted by Inglehart, and Welzel (2011).

A special place in the study is occupied by methodological sets of Boolean algebra, logic and mathematical statistics. These approaches are designed to interpret tolerance as a social phenomenon with a certain degree of entrenchment in society and the area of distribution in the EU.

The adaptation of mathematical and statistical methods to the problems of analysis of the level of tolerance in the European Union formed the basis of the specific methodology proposed by the authors for the identification and analysis of tolerant interaction practices. The qualitative comparative analysis, presented in the works of C. Ragin (Ragin, 1987) goes above all others formalized methods. The method consists in the study of the correlation of conditions at the level of a particular case using the tools of mathematical logic.

A special technique is presented by the analysis of social frustration. It is based on a concept developed in 2004 at Psychoneurological Research Institute named after V.M. Bekhterev by L.I. Wasserman, B.V. Iovlev and M.A. Berebin (Vasserman, Iovlev & Berebin, 2004). The technique is aimed at analyzing the level of satisfaction of individual social groups and it was adapted by the authors to a broader perspective of the study - the satisfaction of the population in individual regions.

The implementation of the qualitative comparative analysis method in our work as well as the implementation of the social frustration analysis method is associated with the use of data from the Legatum Institute (The Legatum Prosperity Index), which is reasoned by the completeness of the collected data and the principle of comparability and correlation of the results.

6. Findings

The development of theoretical principles and methodology for the analysis of sociopolitical phenomenon of tolerance, as well as tolerant practices with the implementation at the level of applied, mathematical and sociological research apparatus, gives a number of innovative results.

Firstly, during the course of the study the key cognitive advantages of the concept of tolerance in political science were defined, specifying it in comparison with other approaches. They are related to the determination of the position of objects (generally separate social groups) relative to a certain coordinate system and the measurement of the relations between them. Tolerance, therefore, is defined as a set of

practices with a given value orientation, understood as the arrangement of spatial relationships between typical objects in a fixed system of measurements. In the modern political discourse of the European Union tolerance is no longer perceived as a moral and ethical principle and is expressed in the form of a new political value (Romeyn, 2016), which can influence the transformation of social order in favor of integration practices. Tolerance appears as a key phenomenon, the understanding of which is necessary for the analysis of modern common-European social and political practices.

Secondly, in the framework of the study, it was proved that at the modern stage of the development of liberal ideology, tolerance acquires a character of a paradigm. The manifestation of paradigm is expressed in the ongoing structuring and systematization of tolerant values and tolerant practices at the legal, quasi-legal, institutional and social levels, implemented by the institutions of the European Union.

Thirdly, the study, including statistical data, demonstrated that structuring and systematization of tolerant values and tolerant practices at legal, quasi-legal, institutional and social levels becomes the basis for the split of European society on the “acceptance-rejection” direction of certain elements of tolerance paradigm. The split exists in both social and regional dimensions.

The authors state that the split is reasoned by historical social and cultural prerequisites that prevent the implementation of universal integration practices oriented towards the perception of common European values in unified geopolitical space (Hutchison, 2013). The basic principles for the determination of the structure of tolerant interaction are associated with the practices of Boolean algebra, superposed on the principles of localization of the European social and political space.

Fourthly, on the basis of this study, the authors show the possibility of overcoming the crisis of the culture of tolerance in the EU by solving the key social and economic problems of the confederation. In addition, the amendment of the dominant and officially approved paradigm of tolerance is required in favor of inclusion the authentic liberal tradition of tolerant mindset and the complex of traditional values of individual national communities, both within Europe and beyond its boundaries.

7. Conclusion

To conclude with it is necessary to note that tolerance appears to be a complex multifaceted phenomenon, the content of which evolved in the process of the development of society and the culture of social interaction. The phenomenon of tolerance is characterized by the process of accumulation of content and territorial attachment, which determines the presence of certain features in relation to various territorial entities. To a large extent this approach is connected with geopolitics and such factors as permeability (conventionality) of boundaries and the binding of the principle of statehood to a nation, as a key unit of geopolitics (Hinckley, 2009).

In this regard the European policy in the field of tolerance appears as an attempt to create a new nation, united by the culture of tolerance, or rather by a set of tolerant values and principles, as a paradigm concept that rose above liberal-democratic ideology and became one of the foundations of the ideology of neoliberalism at the end of XX century.

We can speak about tolerance as about a paradigm only in reference with current political and legal context, when the principle of tolerance became the value basis of European integration and a form of its political legitimation (Wilson, 2014).

The modern interpretation of tolerance as an ideology is also presented and is based on the concept of Louis Althusser, according to which ideology can exist only in ritualized practices that take shape within management system. Such an approach gives the opportunity to use the model of analysis of ideological system formulated, where special attention is paid to the third element of the system ("spontaneous ideology") because it stimulates the formation of a general model of neoliberalism. It is "spontaneous ideology" that is responsible for the entrenchment and reproduction of the principles of tolerance in social environment.

It should be stated that the legitimizing function of the principle of tolerance has recently faltered on the following parameters: firstly, from the ethical principle (which it was before), it becomes ideological and political-legal (which leads to its routinization and bureaucratization); secondly, when it was adopted and promoted, the difference in regional cultural traditions was not taken into account, and, consequently, the specific difficulties of performing the legitimizing function (as confirmed by observations about the geolocation of cultural traditions); thirdly, the global external challenges (the most important of which was the migration crisis – the mass relocation of people from North Africa, which became a long-term problem) influenced the situation in Europe – these answers turned out to be mutually exclusive, and often based on denial of the principle of tolerance (e.g., Austria, Hungary, Poland, etc.).

Despite the intensive development of tolerance, the prospects for its formation as the basis of a new ideology uniting Europe are conditional, as Europe itself is not unified culturally, or especially socially, which ensures the formation of two powerful political groupings of common-European level. Conventionally, these groups can be named as "for ideological (ritualized) tolerance" and "against it".

The exacerbation of relations between Europe and Russia in recent years has led to a new wave of absolutization of tolerant values in Europe, which could not but provoke a split between the countries of the "old" and "new" integration processes. At the same time, the split was marked, first of all, in the sphere of social well-being of population and the ability of states to create conditions for the spread of the culture of tolerance. In this regard the introduction to the political discourse of the phrase "Europe of two speeds" plays the role of indicator.

The study showed that there is a conflict a) between the interpretation of tolerance as a principle (ethical value) and political ideology; b) the system of EU institutions and national institutions (refusing to follow in the wake of Brussels' policy); c) different attitude to the principle in regional dimension; d) institutions and practices (the principle is not officially rejected, but it is actually revised). From this point of view, it is clear d) that the principle of tolerance lost paradigm value and the legitimizing function in the justification of the European integration project. The result is a general erosion of EU legitimacy.

Thus, the only way to develop the culture of tolerance in modern Europe is the establishment of balance aimed at the maintenance of high levels in all principal areas: economy, state management, education, health, social freedom, social environment (this list of areas was formulated during the study). Otherwise, the ideology of tolerance cannot be realized as a common-European project, and its promotion will have the opposite effect – a negative disintegration effect, which can lead to a split of Europe and the exit from union of both states with a low level of stability and the engines of integration project development, which confirms the example of the UK, which, as a result of the 2016 referendum, announced its withdrawal from the EU.

General recommendations based on the results of the study could help to preserve the designated balance, to imply the restoration of the interpretation of the principle of tolerance as an ethical value, its liberation from rigid ideological load and the implementation of purely administrative methods. In addition, it is necessary to take into account regional cultural specifics, to abandon a number of controversial ideas that undermine the project's legitimacy, intending not only substantive revision of the principle, but changes in promotion technologies (through the network structures of civil society, rather than vertical administrative establishments).

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