

The History of the *Acculturation* Concept

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Abstract: The historical concept of *acculturation* proposed by American researchers in the early 19th Century is important nowadays. The object of contemporary scientific knowledge is intercultural interaction not so much between individual ethnic groups or nationalities but between prominent cultural systems or civilizations. The idea of analyzing the concept of *acculturation* in the historical aspect seems quite timely: migration processes that have swept the world, and Europe in particular, are closely connected with the multidimensional process of acculturation of migrants. The various approaches to understanding what acculturation is and what makes it different from enculturation make it necessary to dig to the roots of the concept and study its further development. That testifies to the relevance of the paper. In this article, based on the methods of analysis and synthesis, diachronic and synchronic comparison, we have made a historical investigation into the insight history of the *acculturation* concept's development and traced the transformation of acculturation in foreign and domestic science. Studying the history and development of the *acculturation* concept, the authors draw the conclusion that its content changes with the development of scientific ideas and social processes, gaining a new meaning and acquiring new features and characteristics.

Keywords: culture, acculturation, intercultural communication, interaction of cultures, dialogue of cultures, integration, globalization, civilization.

1. Introduction

One of the most significant challenges science faces is the problem of defining concepts and categories. Society development brings about changes in the concept. It acquires a new meaning and new features and characteristics. Nowadays, research of concepts' history is becoming more and more promising in various fields of humanitarian science in Russian historiography and around the world.

The aim of our research is to make an attempt to trace the connection between the history of concepts and the history of acculturation and to analyze the modern definition of "acculturation", which seems rather contradictory. Methods of analysis and synthesis, diachronic and synchronic comparison, are used to trace the history of the *acculturation* concept's development and the transformation of acculturation in foreign and domestic science.

The article has practical significance. It can be used by teachers developing courses on the history of intercultural communications.

The term "concept" is considered to have been introduced by the French 12th Century philosopher Pierre Abélard (*Dialectica*), one of the founders of medieval conceptualism, and further developed by the 13th Century scholars Thomas Aquinas and Johannes Duns Scotus, among others. The idea of concept was revived by Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, and other philosophers and then linguists. The term can be found in the lectures on the history of Hegel's philosophy. Hegel (2001:69-109) believed that the history of concepts is a reflection of history itself and the way the history of art, law and religion transforms into the history of philosophy.

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The history of concepts (from the German word *Begriffsgeschichte*) appeared in German historiography only at the end of the last century and quickly became interdisciplinary. A huge contribution to the formation and development of this science was made by historians Reinhart Koselleck (2006) and Carsten Dutt (2011) and political scientists Mark Bevir (2002) Terence Ball (1988). In the case of German history of science, the direct subject of concepts' history is the development of terminology for sociopolitical theories. That said, the field claims to extend much further, because it is based on the assumption that the study of basic historical concepts is the shortest way to comprehend history. The term "basic historical concepts" (*geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*) comes from the German *Begriffsgeschichte* ("history of concepts"). The approach is imposed by the meaning of the word *Begriff*, which contains the idea of intuitively grasping the meaning of a phenomenon, directly expressed by concepts. As Russian scholar N.E. Kuposov (1998: 31-32) rightly noticed, the evolution of concepts' content in history is undoubtedly connected with the structures of language itself, the experience of their use, and even the focus on "the horizon of expectations" of the community. "Now history is not just conceptualized in terms of a new type – it is becoming different and new in itself. It does not create the language but it is created by the language of basic historical concepts rushing into the future and shaping the future..." (Kuposov 1998: 31-32).

The main historical concepts include the concept of *acculturation*, which in its meaning is universal and neutral at the same time. It differs from "simple words" (Reinhart Koselleck's term – L.S.) as it is fundamentally indefinable, internally conflicted, open to mutually exclusive interpretations, filled with ideologies, and eludes any attempt to fix its indisputable, universally recognized content (Koselleck 1979: 85-88).

Scientific interest in the study of acculturation as a form of intercultural interaction/communication is understandable: intercultural communication is becoming not only a social reality that can no longer be ignored but a phenomenon that has a direct impact on the development of many social institutions. The establishment of the true nature and role of acculturation in the surrounding world is of scientific interest to scientists worldwide.

To have an idea of acculturation as a form of intercultural communication (Hall 1959), it is necessary to turn to the history of this concept's formation and development, to find out how and why its content has changed and what place it occupies in scientific and even political discourse.

2. The history of the *acculturation* concept in American ethnology and anthropology in the late 19th - early 20th centuries

The term "acculturation" is an English neologism (acculturation: cultivation, education, development) proposed for the first time in 1880 by American ethnologist John Powell, who treated it as cultural similarity arising from cultural contacts of different ethnic groups. American anthropologist Franz Boas (1920: 311-322) and Austrian scientist Richard Turnwald (1932) were the first who tried to give theoretical proof to this phenomenon. At first, Boas (1895) investigated acculturation and scattering as historical methods; he acknowledged that the influence of acculturation of the Spanish on the indigenous culture of the Zunyi tribe caused concomitant changes. Ethnologist E. Parsons (1933) devoted his work to acculturation: in particular, what Native American culture borrowed from Spanish culture. She treated acculturation as cases of syncretization and obvious borrowings from the Spaniards.

In general, the historical school of Boas focused on the reconstruction of native cultures. It failed to explain the problems occurring on the Native American reservations in the '30s. The economic crisis that broke out in the United States in the early '30s brought about the

need for reviewing all traditional values, beliefs and images in the cultures of Native American.

Richard Turnwald proposed to interpret the concept of *acculturation* as a process of adaptation to new conditions of life with various stages of development, where “the shape of society is determined by its people rather than by their racial (hereditary) peculiarities, by human interaction rather than their wealth” (Klein 2005). The scientist focuses on the psychological aspects of acculturation.

An ethno-psychological approach to the concept of *acculturation* was developed by Ralph Beals (1932) while studying the intercultural communications of developing countries. He defines acculturation as the whole complex of processes that occur while borrowing or rejecting new cultural elements in the reorganization of the old culture. Sometimes he does not distinguish between acculturation and diffusion; he believes that both concepts represent cultural changes that occur as a result of culture transfer from one group to another.

Ethnographic expeditions of the 19th – 20th centuries contributed to increasing interest in the analysis of acculturation. Contact with the life and culture of other peoples enabled American ethnologists to identify stable deep and surface characteristics of intercultural communication. The period witnessed numerous scientific studies on acculturation that explained the causes of many problems created by the interaction between ethnic groups during the colonial era. The results were of practical value for colonial and national policy.

The data accumulated during expeditions enabled American scientists Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton and Melville Herskovits (1936) to formulate a unified definition of “acculturation” that formed the basis for most subsequent definitions. They also developed a model for its study. They treat acculturation as “the combination of phenomena arising from the fact that groups of individuals belonging to different cultures keep a permanent direct contact, thereby changing the original cultural models of one or both groups” (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936: 150).

According to ethnologists, the initial cultural model of the recipient group changes as a result of the donor group influence. The recipient responds differently to social and cultural contact. It can fully adsorb the culture of the donor by abandoning its original cultural model (acceptance). It can partly change its culture, maintaining traditions and customs (adaptation) or completely reject the cultural model of the donor, keeping its original model unchanged (negative reaction).

As a result of intercultural interaction, fundamentally new cultural models may emerge. For example, in the study of syncretism among African American religious cults, Herskovits (1937) notes the emergence of new syncretic religious cults. Such an interpretation of acculturation does not provide an exact definition and requires further scientific development. Herskovits (1938) went on to outline his main theoretical positions on the problem of acculturation.

Linton (1940) researched two types of acculturation: free mutual borrowings of cultural elements by contacting cultures, occurring in conditions free of military and political domination of one group over another; and direct cultural change, in which the dominant military or political group holds the policy of violent cultural assimilation of the subordinate group. Linton referred to these types of acculturation as voluntary and violent.

In 1948, this idea was followed up on by Alfred Louis Kroeber, an American anthropologist who assumed that acculturation is a gradual, mutual process resulting in the cultural absorption of one nation by another, especially if the cultural impact is accompanied by economic or political pressure. For Kroeber, the mechanism of acculturation is diffusion: i.e., a spontaneous, mutual penetration of cultures of two ethnic groups. It is diffusion that provides the explanation of what has happened with the original elements; acculturation explains what process the culture as a whole has undergone (Kroeber 1948: 425).

However, the diffusion model of culture was soon rejected. Anthropologist Octave Mannoni (1950: 22-23) wrote: "it would be obviously easy to think of two cultures as of two vessels filled in an unequal levels, and to believe that if they are interacted, their contents will come to the same level. We are surprised to discover that some elements of our civilization were more or less easily accepted by the native population of the colonies, while the others are strongly rejected. To sum up, the population of the colonies obtained only certain details of our civilization, but rejected it as a whole."

Until the 1950s, the study of acculturation was mostly carried out by American anthropologists in connection with the investigation of changes among the North American aboriginals and African Americans cultures. The result of this research was a second "Memorandum on the study of acculturation", in which the definition of acculturation was updated and corrected. Acculturation referred to changes occurring during the contact of two or more autonomous cultural systems. Multilateral, bilateral and unilateral models of acculturation were developed. The claim was that direct contact is not necessary: the impact can be realized indirectly; the contact may not be continuous and not necessarily in-group.

In the 1930s, within the framework of the study of personality problems at the turn of cultures, Robert Park, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Everett Verner Stonekvisst began to study the acculturation of an individual, by which they understood the change in cultural patterns of a person caused by contact with another culture. In the preface to Stonekvisst (1937: 4), Park wrote: "A personality at the turn of cultures... is destined for life in two societies and in two not just different, but antagonistic cultures". He justifies his thesis on the claim that, since the main carrier of culture is an individual, so contacts among people become the key reason for cultural changes. Herskovits (1952) emphasizes the importance of the ethno-historical aspect of group-acculturation study. The scientist recognizes that culture is only a series of patterned reactions characterizing the behavior of individuals in a particular group. Theodore D. Graves (1967) proposes to distinguish between acculturation in the collective (changing the culture of society) and the individual aspect (accompanied by a change in human psychology, transformation of values, behavioral models, individual social attitudes, etc.). The transformation of the *acculturation* concept was caused by the spread of the psychoanalytic concept of culture. It led to the study of acculturation within a psychoanalytic approach as primarily individualistic trends in the development of culture. Acculturation was seen as a result of changes in values, role behavior, and personal social attitudes (Acculturation 1954).

If culture is the object of influence during acculturation, the interpretation of this concept depends on what the researcher understands by such phenomena as culture. The concept of *culture* is characterized by polysemy and uncertainty. Methodologically, it is customary to distinguish between philosophical, anthropological, sociological, and symbolic schools, each of which has brought something new to the comprehension of culture and social processes.

The authors of the present article do not aim at detailed analysis of the existing approaches to culture studies. Within any one philosophical school, there are many concepts (anthropological, axiological, symbolic, synergetic, psychoanalytic) that are significant for researchers at a given time. For example, the spread of the psychoanalytic concept of culture led to the treatment of acculturation not only with an ethno-historical approach but also an ethno-psychological one. More detailed analysis of the relationships between the concepts of culture and acculturation may become the subject of further research.

The '50-'60s witnessed the expansion of acculturation research. Works devoted to the interaction of sociocultural systems were published: e.g., the influence of Japanese, Chinese, and Spanish cultures on the culture of other societies. More and more attention was paid to the reverse influence of the recipient society culture on the donor society (Foster 1960). The term

“acculturation” was widely used in scientific discussions; it appeared in the titles of numerous works (e.g., Herskovits 1938; Linton 1940; Johnson 1943; Lee 1943; Hallowell 1945, 1949; Beals 1951). It became a buzzword used by sociologists, ethnopsychologists, and linguists. In 1955, a thematic collection of works called “Acculturation” came out. It reviewed 39 books and 55 scientific articles devoted to the problem. Acculturation began to be differentiated from such forms of exchange as cultural diffusion, assimilation, and enculturation. Nevertheless, Ralph Bealshas (1997) claims that the existing “...definition of the term ‘acculturation’ and its use is varied and unsatisfactory”.

A comparative analysis of the *acculturation* concept in works by foreign scientists of the late 19th – mid-20th centuries allows one to draw preliminary conclusions about features of contemporary acculturation content and treatment of the term by scientific schools of the time. The term “acculturation” was introduced by American ethnologists, who treated it as ethnic cultures’ interaction, during which change, assimilation of new elements, and education take place, as a result of mixing different cultural traditions into a fundamentally new cultural synthesis. Ethno-historical and ethno-psychological approaches were dominant.

3. Transformation of the *acculturation* concept in the second half of the Twentieth Century

In the mid-Twentieth century, European researchers began to study acculturation in connection with the disintegration of the colonial systems of France, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. The former colonies became sovereign states and tried to emphasize their independence from the colonial culture.

In the '60-'70s, acculturation became an object of research for German scientists Wolfgang Rudolph and Wilhelm Emil Mühlmann. The former explored the problems of European cultural influence on the Third World. Rudolph (1968) stresses that acculturation is always associated with difficulties of mutual understanding among the ethnic groups involved in cultural contacts. Mühlmann explored ethnic groups’ subordination in the process of acculturation: in particular, the way the culture of a smaller group is absorbed by the culture of a more developed and larger society.

In the same period, there was a school for the study of acculturation in Mexico. Interest in acculturation research was driven by political motives: the problem of the intercultural interaction of native and Mexican populations in the Twentieth Century was considered at the state level. Due to the ethnographic features of the region, there was a need for practical recommendations to prevent ethnic conflicts. Well-known Mexican ethnologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran, director of the National Institute for Indian Affairs, investigated (1957) the problem of intercultural communication. Aguirre Beltran proposes to study the following types of acculturation: voluntary and violent, group and individual, past and present, continuous and episodic, motivated and spontaneous (see also Khoroshaeva 1963: 234-236).

This approach was supported by the founder of the French legal anthropology school Norbert Roulan (1988), who studied the interaction between traditional African and European legal systems. He concluded that, under conditions of colonization, acculturation may be violent, ideological and assimilative.

In various ways, the development of historical knowledge, ethnography, cultural anthropology, and archeology extended the idea of acculturation as a form of intercultural interaction.

The Soviet school contributed to the study of acculturation, researching the processes of cultural exchange, cultural-ethnic assimilation and consolidation. Soviet scientists turned to the works of foreign ethnologists. Several monographs analyzing the concepts of American, British and West German researchers were published in the USSR. So Vladimir Maryanovich Bakhta (1963: 188) emphasizes acculturation as a process of direct contact between representatives of two ethnic groups different in culture. As a result of this interaction, the

material, spiritual and cultural values of each are selectively assimilated by the other. In general, the cultures of ethnic groups in contact undergo changes. The level of these changes depends on demographic, geographical, economic, historical, political, psychological, and other factors.

In the late '70s, Soviet scientist Sergei Tokarev (1978: 16), who analyzed the work of American ethnologists, clarified their definition of acculturation, referring to it as the process of changing the culture of one nation because of the influence of another: usually a neighboring one. According to Tokarev, this is a reciprocal process, as both nations influence each other: borrowing something, losing something, or otherwise changing their cultural heritage. Sergey Arutyunov (1978: 3-14) believed that acculturation is only the first stage of integration processes in society. The final stage is cultural assimilation: i.e., complete or near complete loss of the original culture by the recipient society and equally complete assimilation by the donor society. One can agree with this point of view if one treats acculturation, assimilation, integration, expansion, and convergence, as different forms of intercultural communication.

Despite the positive contribution of Soviet scientists to the study of acculturation, we must admit that research into acculturation was not carried out properly, given that the idea of borrowing foreign institutions was totally denied in the Soviet Union; there was no practical need for understanding acculturation, except as an idea of academic interest.

From the beginning through the middle of the 20th Century ethnographers, anthropologists, and philosophers considered acculturation to be the result of long-term contact between different cultures, resulting in change of the initial cultural models of the contact groups. Acculturation processes were believed to occur automatically, cultures mixing and so achieving a level of cultural and ethnic homogeneity. Obviously, the less-developed culture changes more dramatically than the more-developed one. The results of acculturation were likewise seen to depend on the number of people in the interacting groups.

These discussions gave birth to the concept of the United States of America as a melting pot of cultures, whereby the cultures of all the peoples coming to the US are mixed and, as a result of the process, a new homogeneous American culture formed. Something similar can be observed in the USSR, where a long tradition of cultural exchange and the Soviet education system led to the appearance of a new cultural-historical community: the Soviet people. A considerable amount of pseudoscientific work of the Soviet period dealt with this. That work attempted to prove that, in the Soviet period, more than 120 ethnic groups living in the territory of the USSR became a united Soviet people as a carrier of Soviet culture. History has proven the opposite: after the fall of the Soviet political regime, the pseudo-ethno-cultural system ceased to exist.

4. Interpretation of the *acculturation* concept at present

In the late 20th – early 21st centuries, research on acculturation received new impetus in connection with the processes of global economic, political and cultural integration, the expansion of cultural contacts with all their consequences, and the aggravation of intercultural conflict between migrants and natives. Earlier, acculturation was treated only as cultural communication between highly developed Western culture and the supposedly primitive cultures of developing nations.

Since the middle of the '90s, however, the traditional approach to acculturation has been gradually revised. More and more, scientists are inclined to think that acculturation as primarily the interaction of two or more previously equal and autonomous cultures or subcultures. This interpretation of acculturation appeared in united Germany, where representatives of the German scientific school faced the problem of interaction between communities whose views and values were formed in absolutely divergent political systems:

Soviet and West European. "...Two generations of Germans, brought up in different socio-cultural environments, and having very little opportunity to communicate with each other, after the unification of Germany had to face problems of acculturation" (Ushanova 2001: 4-5).

Such political processes can now be observed in various regions of the world: e.g., in the post-Soviet space. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the amount of intercultural communication between citizens of the former Soviet state and Western Europe increased dramatically. In contemporary Russia, the great interest in migration research, including acculturation, is caused by a sharp increase in the number of migrants and cultural contacts. Refugees and migrants from neighboring countries are actively involved in intercultural communication. Therefore, scientific research on the acculturation of these groups is vitally important for the country. What one is witnessing is the birth of a new Russian scientific school for the study of theoretical and practical aspects of acculturation.

Given contemporary social conditions, problems of intercultural interaction in Russia have become the subject of almost all social sciences: anthropologists, ethnographers, ethnologists, psychologists, philosophers, linguists, teachers, historians, political scientists, sociologists, economists, lawyers are interested in research into acculturation. Despite disagreement on certain issues, in all these fields the term "acculturation" is used to reveal the process and result of mutual cultural influence between societies as between individuals, in which all or part of the representatives of one culture (the recipients) adopt the norms, values, and traditions of another (the donor culture).

In studying acculturation, Russian researchers face a number of problems. The first is that works by Russian-speaking scientists contain some confusion of concepts due to the insufficient scientific/theoretical development of the *acculturation* concept and the peculiarities of using concepts belonging to the same semantic field – acculturation, inculturation, enculturation, etc. – or scientists' neologisms.

Sometimes different phenomena are understood as acculturation. J.B. Berry (2001), a Canadian psychologist studying a hypothetical Italian family in Canadian society, and Vladislav Georgievich Sobolev (2003), a Russian historian, investigating the emergence and activity of Muslim communities in Western Europe, distinguish four models of acculturation: *assimilation*, *separation*, *marginalization* and *integration*. We find it difficult to agree with these researchers that separation (whereby cultures exist in isolation from each other, not coming into any contact) and marginalization (rejection of both cultures, leading to a search for a third culture or the loss of personal identity) can act as models of acculturation.

Along similar lines to Berry and Sobolev, Natalia Vladislavovna Yankina (2006: 84), examines the problem of tolerance in intercultural communication. Yankina defines acculturation as "the process and result of the mutual influence of different cultures in which all or a part of the representatives of one culture (the recipient) adopt the norms, values and traditions of the other (donor)". Acculturation is indeed very important for preserving cultural identity while being (or becoming) engaged in another culture.

However, we believe it would be wrong to include separation and marginalization as acculturation "strategies" alongside assimilation and integration. In doing so, Yankina seems to contradict herself. By separation, she means denying another culture while maintaining identification with one's own culture, in isolation from the dominant culture. Marginalization is seen, on the one hand, as loss of identification with one's own culture; on the other, as absence of identification with the culture of the majority. In both cases, possibilities for contact and mutual influence are denied. Interaction – one of the essential features of acculturation – is missing.

Further, it is contestable whether *accommodation* (adaptation of people to life in a new cultural environment or adjustment of this environment to mutual coexistence and interaction)

can be seen as the result of acculturation processes. This term – “accommodation” – borrowed from biology, has been applied successfully in psychology and sociology to indicate achievement of psychological satisfaction within the new culture. We prefer a more traditional term: “adaptation” (assimilation of elements of the donor culture).

Another problem with treatment of the *acculturation* concept – at least in Russia – is connected to semantics. In English, there are several terms that are translated into Russian the same way: “inculturation”, “acculturation”, and “enculturation”. We agree with Olga Alexandrovna Yanutsh (2014) that these concepts must be differentiated. She emphasizes that inculturation is a constant process of development and self-development of an individual as a subject of culture; acculturation is the conventional recognition and use of the norms and traditions of a culture by an individual or group.

It is likewise necessary to distinguish between such concepts as reception and acculturation. We disagree with Sergey Vitalievich Tkachenko (2018: 38), who believes that “acculturation” is used in theory of law as a synonym to the reception of law. One of the many arguments against this point of view is seen in the most important feature of acculturation: synchronicity. Unlike legal reception, which can be diachronic (interaction between cultures of the past and present: e.g., reception of Roman law in medieval Europe), legal acculturation can only be realized between cultures existing in the same time. The term “reception” is used in Tkachenko’s sense only within theory of law, whereas “acculturation” is used in many social sciences, including law.

We conclude that the term “acculturation” is formally and nominally neutral. This can be seen as being to its advantage and disadvantage. The advantage is that this generally recognized term is neutral in its meaning, allowing one to define the subject of research in a form equally acceptable to the representatives of various social sciences. The disadvantage is that the term does not fully reflect the achieved level of subject knowledge of any specific historical period. Therefore, when discussing acculturation, it is advisable to use a more precise term, the scientific merits of which are the term’s temporary historical/cultural characteristics. In this spirit, researchers are studying various types of acculturation:

- Linguistic acculturation: processes occurring in language involving direct, long-term interaction and causing both linguistic and cultural changes. As a result of language acculturation, a person masters a new language, forms an attitude towards the need (if any) to use her mother tongue, or simply switches from using her mother tongue to that of the dominant group (Ushanova 2003, Perez 2011).
- Legal acculturation: interaction between legal cultures of different societies (Rulan 1988, Sokolsky 2014).
- Religious acculturation: interaction between religious cultures (Sobolev 2003, Awad 2010).
- Ethnic acculturation: interaction between ethnicities (Avdeeva & Bolotin 2016, Mashau 2012).
- Online acculturation: intercultural interaction through an online environment, involving not only the cultural transformation of an individual or group, but also the formation of a new culture in the global space: Internet culture. The online environment becomes a space of intercultural dialogue with unlimited possibilities. Online acculturation implies not only intercultural interaction between individuals of different cultures but also their adaptation to use of the information resources of various states (Kosik 2015).
- Psychological acculturation: interaction of an individual with another sociocultural environment (Graves 1967, Bochner 1982).

- Political acculturation: changes in the political beliefs and values of an individual or group, influencing the form of participation in the activities of political institutions and level of assimilation of the normative system of a new society. A person acquiring new political experience faces the need to preserve her own prior political culture (Berry & Annis 1988, Iovan 2015).

What this means is that contemporary researchers apply the concept of *acculturation* with more exact definitions, thereby emphasizing types of cultural interaction: legal, ethnic, religious, political, etc.

A third problem with study of acculturation lies in the fact, that in most cases, acculturation research arises not only from development of different scientific trends or schools but also in response to the practical needs of society. The contemporary migration boom led to the study of acculturation from a psychological point of view, but only in relation to migrants and immigrants. Changes in the 19th Century in the sociopolitical life of many European states including Russia resulted in the *acculturation* concept acquiring new connotations associated with the politicization of migration. Obviously, political policy has always had an impact (direct or indirect) on acculturation processes. Contemporary political elites are looking for answers to many questions: in particular, what encourages the increase of acculturation stress among migrants and refugees. John Berry (2001) believes that, although the main cause of stress depends on how large the gap is between cultures, the policies of the host country also have an impact on the psychological state of newcomers.

In connection with the processes of global integration, the *acculturation* concept goes beyond any ethno-national framework to become an objective reality of worldwide scale. German researchers Rainer Silberaizen and Eva Schmitt-Rodermund (1999) study acculturation influenced by changes in the ethnic composition not only of Germany but the whole of Europe. The European community faces problems of cultural competition, with the influence of Eastern cultures increasing significantly, as a result of rapid migrant growth. The high degree of adaptability to the European lifestyle while maintaining commitment to their own culture, to the disappointment of the Europeans holding “traditional” Christian values uncomfortable with the ideas of postmodernism and policies of multiculturalism. Young people of European descent are often in search of new ideas, even including radical forms of Islam. Inevitable changes in the ethnic composition of European states result not only in changes in the physical appearance of the populace but cultural change as well. The future of Europe and Russia depend to large extent on how well intercultural differences – between host populations and new migrants – are settled. Only the interaction of equal partners will put an end to disputes and outright conflicts. “It is important to remember that to have a common culture, one way or another, means to forget one’s own. However, a culture of every country, every nation, big or small, is of a great value and losing it means doing harm to the mankind” (Avdeeva & Bolotina 2016: 258).

It is no surprise that a great number of books on the study of acculturation in the era of globalization have been published recently. Sergey Nikolaevich Artanovsky writes (1994) that the shortcoming of most acculturation studies in the era of globalization is “the desire to isolate themselves from the broad picture of the mankind historical development”. Intercultural communication under the conditions of globalization is becoming more urgent. Studies of acculturation focusing on its global axiological aspects are of increasing practical importance. Researchers are witnessing the ethno-national content of the *acculturation* concept gradually transforming into a larger content of interaction between super systems (or *super-cultural systems*: Pitirim Sorokina’s term). Increasingly, the objects of research are not ethnic or national cultures but entire cultural systems: e.g., Western (individualist) vs. Eastern (collectivist) cultures. These cultures differ in their basic values and their attitudes to their history, literature, traditions and customs. “Representatives of Eastern, Central Asian, Arab

countries (countries with the largest outflow of population) appreciate, honor and protect their own culture much more than the representatives of Western Europe (countries with the largest number of migrants). Immigrants from the East are very religious, even if they reside in one of the European countries. It is extremely difficult to encounter an Arab atheist even today” (Avdeeva & Bolotina, 2016: 259).

The axiological aspect is of great importance for study of changes in super-cultural systems caused by acculturation processes. Nowadays it is necessary to analyze the value bases (archetypes) of each super system. Changes in the core values of culture cause the most significant changes in people’s outlooks. G.P. Vyzhletsov (1996) writes that changes in basic values will determine the future direction of acculturation: which new elements of culture will be adopted or rejected, by society or individual. An axiological approach to the study of acculturation enables clarifying the nature of acculturation, extending acculturation theory significantly and opening up opportunities for its further development.

5. Conclusion

Scientific research into acculturation helps one understand the broad picture of human development, in all its diversity. In the process of community development, the content of the concept changes. In particular:

1. The *acculturation* concept is interdisciplinary. Many definitions of “acculturation” both scientific and descriptive contribute to the development of acculturation theory: either as confirmation of previously expressed hypotheses or as new theoretical and practical developments.
2. According to almost all scientific schools, acculturation and understanding of the reality described by the concept are directly determined either through culture or through its individual features or types. Various modifications to approaches are possible; but, in any case, acculturation is the interaction of two or more subjects (social individuals) of different cultures, leading to cultural, psychological, social, political or other changes in one of the interacting parties.
3. The most important features of acculturation recognized today are duration, continuity, poly-subjectivity and equality as the result of interaction between cultures. Other subjects of acculturation study today are macro-and micro-*socii* and individuals. If, previously, acculturation was studied only as subject/object relations: contact of donor and recipient society); the modern form of legal acculturation involves a dialogue – subject-subject relation – that is only possible between equal participants in a cultural exchange between cultures and partner *socii*.
4. Contemporary acculturation research goes beyond the ethno-national framework of cultures’ interaction. In the era of globalization, it crosses the boundaries of previous acculturation study on a worldwide scale.
5. As a theoretical scientific category, acculturation research goes beyond academic discourse and is increasingly taken into account in political debates. Acculturation is becoming a reality that needs consideration in many political decisions. The present global social space is a world of worlds, where each component has its own cultural, ethnic, religious, and political peculiarities. Analysis of any specific form or model of acculturation involves further, specialized research.

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