

Intercultural dialogue between antagonists: Is it possible?

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The use of knowledge on intergroup relations, accumulated in cross-cultural psychology for conflict resolution purposes, is very limited. Within these limits, the present symposium discusses the relations between Russians and Ukrainians and their intercultural dialogue in the current conditions of antagonistic international conflict.

The integrative sociocultural-interdeterminist dialogical metaperspective is offered as a theoretical framework for conceptualization of antagonistic relationships. Intercultural dialogue presupposing formation of inter-subjectivity and inter-existentiality is considered as the basic mechanism of mutual understanding between antagonists.

Our research data were obtained on a sample of over 300 Russians and Ukrainians. Results showed the special role of existential episodes experienced by participants of this ethnic conflict. Interpretative phenomenological analysis demonstrated antagonistic nature of their current relations at personal and at group levels.

In 22 focus group discussions held in 2015 in Ukraine and Russia by I. Brunova-Kalisetska and

C. Schwab the key concepts were „conflict" and „others". This approach allowed the authors to create ideas of an intersubjectivity formation between antagonists. These results will be useful: for future reconciliation, preventing potential clashes between different views and concepts of the conflict.

In his study of over 300 informants from both sides of the conflict, V. Khotinets reports inefficiency of general coping-strategies; the author proposes culture specific approaches instead. The empirical research on attitudes towards Crimea annexation to Russia conducted by O. Deyneka on samples of the Crimea and Russian residents, showed polarization corresponding to preferred mass media channels of different political orientations. Channels broadcasting multi-sided political orientations, demonstrating ethical responsibility by restraining incitement of ethnic strife led to significantly smaller polarization.

V. Lefterov argues that bridging the gap between Ukrainians and Russians could be facilitated through an all Ukrainian consensus for dialogue and compromise.

A. Bulgakov introduces the concept of intergroup adaptation as a possible platform for Russian – Ukrainian normalization.