

PEACE IS THE HIGHEST GOOD

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Abstract

This article examines the concept of peace as the highest good in the context of philosophy, ethics, and contemporary societal challenges. Using an interdisciplinary approach, the author shows that a stable world is necessary for the realization of human potential, economic development, and cultural prosperity. The key philosophical foundations of the idea of peace are presented, cultural and legal aspects are considered, and possible directions for strengthening peace initiatives are proposed.

Keywords. Peace, stability, human potential, culture, civil society.

Introduction

The idea of peace as the main condition for the harmonious existence of humanity occupies a special place in the history of thought. Even in antiquity, philosophers emphasized the importance of harmony as a foundation for a stable society. Aristotle viewed the state system as a means of achieving order from which the inner and outer world depends [1]. In the modern era, I. Kant developed the idea of international guarantees of peace through republicanism, respect for rights, and international law [3].

In the 21st century, despite the existence of international institutions and treaties, humanity still faces threats of violence and destruction. Military conflicts, information manipulation, social inequality, and ecological crises make the world vulnerable and unstable [2]. In this context, it is important not only to discuss the value of peace but also to seek practical ways to affirm it as the highest good.

Methods

In this study, a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach is used, which is due to the multidimensional nature of the world phenomenon. The basis of analysis is the philosophical method, which allows us to trace the evolution of worldview in the history of thought - from antiquity to the present day. In this context, the views of thinkers such as Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, Leo Tolstoy, as well as the ideas of modern philosophers who comprehend the world in the categories of ethics, freedom, and global responsibility were studied [1]. The cultural approach allows us to examine how various spiritual and religious traditions - in particular, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism - shape their own images of peace, peaceful coexistence, and non-violence. These representations are analyzed as important cultural codes influencing daily practice, upbringing, and interethnic relations [4].

Legal analysis is aimed at studying international regulatory documents, such as the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrine the basic principles of peaceful coexistence and respect for individual rights [5]. These documents are viewed as the foundation of the modern international security system and as a reflection of universally recognized legal norms supporting peace. Content analysis of relevant sources also plays an important role: reports from international organizations such as UNDP and UNESCO, as well as official statements by political leaders aimed at maintaining global peace and security, have been studied [6]. This allows us to trace how peaceful ideas are implemented in contemporary political and humanitarian practice.

The use of various research approaches has made it possible to identify both the universal foundations of the concept of peace, enshrined in culture, ethics, and law, and the specific, historically and socially determined forms of its manifestation in the modern world. Such an approach ensures a holistic perception of the problem and allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of world culture formation in the context of global challenges.

Results

The analysis showed that the concept of the world as a holistic and desirable state permeates different eras and cultures. In Christianity, the concept of peace is closely linked to spiritual harmony and love for one's neighbor, in Islam to submission to God's will, and in Buddhism to inner peace and rejection of violence [4]. These approaches form universal moral guidelines capable of forming the basis of global world culture. Data from international reports indicate a positive correlation between the level of peace and social, economic, and environmental indicators. In countries with a low level of violence, there is stable economic growth, a higher level of education, trust in institutions, and interethnic tolerance [7].

It has also been established that peace is impossible without institutional support - through fair courts, free media, education systems, and open civic forms of participation [6]. These elements serve as "support points" in ensuring sustainable non-violent development.

Discussion

Although the concept of peace is widely recognized at the level of declarations and values, its real implementation remains difficult. One of the main obstacles is ideological fragmentation, which intensifies polarization in society and hinders constructive dialogue [2]. There is a deficit of trust between peoples, between the state and society, between cultures. In today's conditions, where information has become a weapon, information conflicts can be no less destructive than military ones. Manipulation of public consciousness, incitement of hostility, and dissemination of misinformation contribute to the escalation of tensions [5]. This requires the development of media literacy as a foundation for sustainable and conscious civic behavior.

The underestimation of the role of education in shaping world culture is also a key problem. Educational programs are generally oriented towards functional knowledge, while competencies in intercultural dialogue, non-violent communication, tolerance, and empathy are overlooked [8]. Meanwhile, it is they who form a stable attitude towards peace and cooperation. The issue of socio-economic justice is also important. Peace is impossible in conditions of

structural violence: poverty, unequal access to resources, discrimination. In countries with a high level of social support and equal opportunities, conflicts are resolved less aggressively than in societies with deep stratification [7].

Finally, we cannot ignore the role of civil society. Peace is not just the task of politicians and diplomats. This is the result of daily practices of cooperation, participation, and mutual assistance. Supporting initiatives from below, creating a space for dialogue, involving youth and local communities - all of this makes the world tangible and sustainable [9]. Thus, the strengthening of peace is possible only under the following conditions: transformation of education and upbringing; cultural support for the ideas of dialogue and tolerance; participation of institutions guaranteeing justice; conscious involvement of citizens in peacekeeping [8].

Conclusion

Peace is not only a political task, but also a fundamental moral, cultural, and existential value. Its preservation and affirmation require continuous and purposeful activity both by individuals and at the level of national and international institutions. In modern conditions, the recognition of peace as the highest social and humanitarian good should be expressed not only in declarations, but also in concrete actions aimed at eliminating the structural causes of violence, social inequality, and fear. The future of humanity is largely determined by our ability to maintain and develop world culture in all its aspects - political, legal, educational, informational, and intercultural [9].

The formation of a global peacekeeping consciousness based on the values of humanism, non-violence, tolerance, and dialogue is gaining particular relevance. In these conditions, education as a tool for shaping a peaceful worldview and developing critical thinking capable of resisting aggression and xenophobia ideologies is gaining particular importance. Maintaining sustainable peace requires not only eliminating current conflicts but also creating sustainable mechanisms for preventing violence, as well as strengthening social justice and international solidarity. Thus, ensuring peace becomes a multidimensional task, the solution of which is possible only through the unification of the efforts of various actors - from civil society to global political structures.

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