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POST-SOVIET SOCIETIES
AND THE WORLD OF THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE UDIS:
FEATURES OF FORMATION OF NEW IDENTITY

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Abstract. *Introduction.* The radical transformations of recent decades have significantly changed the lives of ethnic groups like the Udis. Due to their small numbers and poor degree of protection, ethnic groups are the first to feel tension, crises, and conflicts in society, the sequelae of political, social, economic, and cultural modernization, and growing risks and threats in the global world. *Methods.* The systematic method made it possible to determine the contradictory and conflicting nature of modernization taking place in post-Soviet societies. The dialectical approach, the principle of unity in diversity, as well as the synergetic approach have revealed ambiguity, dynamism, and conflict in the emergence of both ethnic and general cultural identity. *Analysis.* Studies of the real state of post-Soviet societies have shown the unbalanced and diffuse nature of modernization, the ambiguity of the present, and uncertainty of the future. Considering the Volgograd region, the authors point out relatively stable interethnic and interdenominational relations. Simultaneously, it was revealed that the absence of a national ideology and common objectives and values problematize the issues of the joint existence of nations and ethnic groups, and hamper the search for a common cultural identity. *Results.* The paper reveals the complex nature of the dynamics of heterogeneous Russian society and the inadequacy of calls for unity and integration of peoples while the society continues to be fragmented, polarized, and its citizens being alienated and atomized. The agenda for national minorities and ethnic groups includes issues of determining genuine national interests by the authorities, the formation of an all-Russian identity, and patriotism as the basis of stability and sustainable development of the country. The complex environment of social communication is replete with various multifaceted processes and influences that will allow representatives of ethnic groups to become carriers of common rules, common moral norms, and cultural meanings, values, traditions and customs. *Authors' contribution.* As a representative of the Udis ethnic group, R.A. Danakari considered the socio-political existence of his native ethnic group. The author argues convincingly that modern forms and types of modernization destroy the "life world" and traditions of most Udis, leading to marginalization, i.e., loss of origins and roots, as well as assimilation and acculturation. V.Yu. Podurueva-Miloevich focused on the political dynamics and psychological characteristics of the rapid transformation of the modern world. As a result, the author reveals the inability of most minor ethnic groups to adapt to postmodernity, to make the transition to a new identity, and to achieve self-realization.

Key words: Udis, new identity, information society, globalization, political modernization, interpersonal interaction, immanence.

ПОСТСОВЕТСКИЕ ОБЩЕСТВА И МИР ПОВСЕДНЕВНОСТИ УДИН: СПЕЦИФИКА ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ НОВОЙ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ

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Аннотация. *Введение.* Радикальные трансформации последних десятилетий значительным образом изменили жизнь этнических групп, в том числе таких, как удины. Этнические группы, в силу своей малочисленности и слабой защищенности, первыми ощущают напряженность, кризисы и конфликты в социуме, последствия политических, социальных, экономических и культурных модернизаций, растущих рисков и угроз в глобальном мире. *Методы.* Системный метод позволил определить противоречивую и конфликтную природу происходящих в постсоветских обществах модернизаций. Диалектический метод, принцип единства в многообразии, а также синергетический подход показали неоднозначность, динамизм и конфликтность в формирования как этнической, так и общекультурной идентичности. *Анализ.* В результате исследования реального состояния постсоветских обществ был установлен неравновесный и диффузный характер модернизаций, неоднозначность настоящего и неопределенность будущего. Рассматривая Волгоградскую область, авторы указывают на относительно стабильные межэтнические и межконфессиональные отношения. Одновременно было выявлено, что отсутствие общенациональной идеологии, единой цели и ценностей проблематизирует совместное бытие наций и этносов, поиск общекультурной идентичности. *Результаты.* Выявлен сложный характер динамики гетерогенного российского общества, неадекватность призывов к единству, интеграции народов с продолжающимся расколом и фрагментацией общества, его отчуждением и атомизацией. Для национальных меньшинств и этнических групп на повестке дня остро стоят вопросы определения властью подлинных национальных интересов, формирования общероссийской идентичности и патриотизма как основы стабильности и устойчивого развития страны. Сложная среда социальной коммуникации изобилует различными многогранными процессами и влияниями, позволяющими представителям этнических групп стать носителями общих правил, единых моральных норм и культурных смыслов, ценностей, традиций и обычаев. *Вклад авторов.* Р.А. Данакари, как представитель этнической группы удин, рассмотрел в статье социально-политическое бытие родного этноса. Автор убедительно аргументирует, что современные формы и виды модернизации разрушают «жизненный мир» и традиции большинства удин, ведут к маргинализации, то есть потере истоков и корней, ассимиляции и аккультурации. В.Ю. Подуруева-Милоевич акцентировала внимание на политической динамике и психологических особенностях быстрой трансформации современного мира, выявила сложность для удин как представителей малой этнической группы адаптироваться к постсовременности, осуществлять переход к новой идентичности и самореализацию.

Ключевые слова: удины, новая идентичность, информационное общество, глобализация, политическая модернизация, межсубъектное взаимодействие, имманентность.

Introduction. The relevance of the study of the modern existence of national minorities and ethnic groups, including Udis, as one of the oldest ethnic groups in the world, is largely due to the fact that they are among the first to feel the recurring crises of social systems, increasing risks, tensions, threats, and conflicts in a multinational society.

The purpose of the study is to analyze the world of everyday life of the Udis ethnic group

in the conditions of continuous changes in post-Soviet societies, to reveal the complexity of transformations, the transition from traditionalism to a spontaneous market economy, and the sphere of new intersubjective relations. The novelty of the research lies in the authors' desire to show how the Udis, after the crisis and the collapse of the USSR, living in post-Soviet societies, particularly in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine, strive to preserve their way of life and identity, combining tradition and modernity. The difficulties of overcoming the problem of marginality, adaptation to constantly changing realities, ways of preserving history and language, and observance of traditions and customs are also considered.

Modern civilization is marked by global changes, enormous hazards, and rising unpredictability and nonlinearity in its growth. The collapse of the USSR and the end of the so-called "struggle of ideologies" in the socio-political arena of our planet produced a unipolar world with the hegemony of the United States. It was during this period that the concepts of American political scientists about the "end of history" [6, p. 8], as well as the conflict of ethno-religious values, the "clash of civilizations" have gained popularity [8, p. 25]. Indeed, the ambition of the United States to maintain its hegemony, the developments in Ukraine, and the comprehensive sanctions against Russia since the turn of the century imply both the "end" of the previous stage of human history and a "clash of civilizations." All this demonstrates that the unipolar age is coming to an end, the old era is passing away and the transition to a new world order continues.

Information societies, with their ever-increasing social links and reliance on massive technological flows, strengthen themselves through communications, accelerate their pace, and make humanity's future imbalanced and unclear. The main events take place against a matrix of fluid, fragmented, marginal everyday life where various ethnic and religious groups interact, often having opposite goals, values, interests, and needs.

In various post-Soviet states, the fluidity and "unsupportedness" of existence, new challenges, as well as the fear of losing their native roots, inexorably force national and ethnic minorities, especially dispersed groups, to resort to their natural and biological inherence. It turns out to be deterministic in order to preserve itself and its images via legends, traditions, and ways of life. The virtualization and mythologization of everyday life, especially the subjective world, prompts people to search for new sanctities, ideals, and initiatives that are vital for both the present and the future.

Methods of the study. The multi-paradigm methodology is pertinent in studying national minorities and ethnic groups like Udis in the modern environment. The Udis are the oldest aboriginal ethnic group of the South Caucasus. More than 30 years ago, they emigrated from Azerbaijan to the CIS countries, Europe, and then Israel and the USA. They were among the first to feel the effects of the crisis and collapse of the USSR, economic crises, and the outcomes of political and social modernization. The synergetic approach and comparative analysis allow us to identify the disequilibrium of modern political systems, to determine the nature of the stagnation of power or a succession of regime changes, and to determine the objectivity or spontaneity of changes in the vectors of social evolution.

The hermeneutic approach and the phenomenological method show how changing everyday life "manifests" itself, requiring at various levels a rational and irrational understanding of the processes taking place. It forces people to continuously "master" political existence, socio-economic conditions of activity, reformat their "life world", and adapt to new standards of culture, values, and moral norms.

Considering the life and activities of the Udi ethnic group and their everyday lives in post-Soviet societies, we note the following: currently, there are about twelve thousand Udis in various CIS countries and around the world; during the crisis and collapse of the USSR, a certain part of them had to move to Russia; the main reasons for migration were interethnic tensions and the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, the beginning of aggression and hostilities by Armenia against Azerbaijan.

Today, about three thousand Udis live on their ancestral territory, in the multinational village of Nij in the Qabala district of the Republic of Azerbaijan. There are still Russian schools and other institutions there. Two Albanian-Udi Orthodox churches, whose history dates back more than 1700 years, have been restored and are now

open to believers. The village of Nij is multi-ethnic; it also has two mosques and two secondary schools with instruction in the Azerbaijani language. The policy of tolerance and multiculturalism of Azerbaijan allows all ethnic groups to conduct an equitable dialogue, carry out economic activities, live in interethnic and interfaith harmony, and observe traditions and rituals. All Udis are multilingual and fluent in their contacts and dialogues with representatives of other peoples. In Nij, Udis go to a Russian school. As an international language, Russian helps a lot in multinational communication. It is also in great demand in multinational Azerbaijan, especially when it comes to an equitable dialogue, meeting foreigners, guests, and sometimes even young Udis from the CIS and other countries [3, p. 288].

Analysis. Understanding a new mundanity, analyzing the ever-changing reality, and defining the ways and prospects for ethnic groups' lives are all becoming increasingly important nowadays. It is of scientific interest to know how things are going at the present time: living the Udis, especially after the Second Karabakh War; restoring historical justice; regaining ancestral lands; ensuring the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

We would like to note that the events of the 44 days of 2020, the Victory of Azerbaijan in the Patriotic War, have formed a new space for the socio-cultural, spiritual, and moral existence of the multinational people of Azerbaijan. They drastically altered the situation in the republic, transforming self-awareness and identity, greatly raising the country's spiritual and moral climate, and demonstrating the togetherness and cohesion of all ethnic groups. The leadership of the multinational population recognized the modern territory of Azerbaijan as the historical area of the life of the Udis and the Udis as its indigenous inhabitants, the successors of history, Orthodox Christianity, culture, and traditions of the ancient state of Caucasian Albania. The policy of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev, was enthusiastically endorsed by the Udis in Azerbaijan, the CIS, and worldwide. The younger generation of Udis participated in the operations of the liberation war. The entire population of the village of Nij, after demobilization, met our soldiers as true heroes.

In the autumn of 2020, during the days of the triumphant victory of the Azerbaijani army, a noteworthy event took place in Nij. With the active support of the President of Azerbaijan as well as governmental and public bodies, the Orthodox Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary was restored and reopened. In May 2021, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, and his family paid a visit to Nij and saw its landmarks: the churches, schools, and other places of interest.

It should be noted that our fellow countrymen and communities in Volgograd and Rostov Oblast, Krasnodar, and Stavropol Krai greeted the news of the victory in the Patriotic War with enthusiasm. On November 20, 2020, the Udis, together with representatives of the Azerbaijani Diaspora, held a festive occasion in Volgograd in honor of the liberation of their native lands. It was attended by guests, leaders, and activists of public associations, cultural centers, and communities of the Hero City. These noteworthy events were also the focus of attention of their fellow countrymen "living in Central Russia: Ivanovo, Kaluga, Moscow, Udomlya, and St. Petersburg. Joint meetings and celebrations were held in Udi communities in the Republic of Kazakhstan and Ukraine" [5, p. 85].

For more than 30 years, some Udis have been living in the Volgograd Oblast of the Russian Federation. Over 400 Udis now live in the heroic city of Volgograd and villages and towns of the oblast. The vast majority live in the rural settlement named Dubovy Ovrag of the Svetloyarsky District of the oblast. The continuing transition period and ongoing crises are still creating plenty of problems, but the Udis, for the most part, were able to gradually adapt to new conditions and find a home and a job. All representatives of the younger generation have finished secondary school; many were trained to be professionals and got employed. Some of our young people have graduated from universities, colleges, and vocational schools.

It should also be emphasized that in recent decades, the Udis living in the Volgograd Oblast have actively participated in all activities through public associations. They celebrate state holidays, remarkable dates, and festivals commemorating the history, culture and religion of all peoples, nations, and ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation. These dates include the Day of the

End of the Battle of Stalingrad, May 9, the Great Victory Day, Russia Day, National Unity Day, etc. Religious holidays, such as Christmas, Novruz Bayram, Ramadan, and Easter are also in the spotlight.

A recent event can illustrate this. On April 23, 2022, leaders and activists of national public organizations of the Volgograd Oblast visited the neighboring region, the Republic of Kalmykia. We took part in a grand celebration, the Tulip Festival. For the Kalmyk people, tulips are the memory of their ancestors. Holding such a festival and social activities ensures the continuity of generations, helps each nation popularize its history and culture and tell about its traditions, customs, and lifestyle. All this undoubtedly strengthens the basis for the development and solidification of interethnic and interdenominational communication.

Interethnic and multi-confessional relations in the region are stable, largely due to the active cooperation of regional and local self-government authorities with the leaders and activists of Volgograd Oblast's public associations. Such activities are based on respect for the history, native language, culture, traditions, religion, and national dignity of all residents of the region, regardless of their ethnicity or religion. Experience proves that most national public organizations in the post-Soviet states undertake numerous complex functions. First of all, they preserve and promote their ethnic groups' history, native language, culture, and traditions. Secondly, they "work on integration, the formation of a common identity of the Russian nation" [4, p. 134]. Thirdly, each organization works to promote its homelanders' image and is engaged in educational programs in order to foster peace, harmony, trust, and friendship between people of all nationalities.

The modern world's socio-political dynamics are rapidly transforming the environment, and that includes goals, values, motives, incentives, and people's behavior. The Udis' understanding of the environment, like that of all nations and ethnic groups, is largely "based on the influence of the media and mass culture" [7, p. 13], the trendy freedom of speech, primitive standards, and stereotypes, rather than on actual social existence and specific situations, which would necessarily contribute to personal realization.

Modern Russian society is a complex and heterogeneous community of individuals.

The disequilibrium of development and the uncertainty of the future also present Udis with a difficult choice. The task of spontaneous adaptation to the everyday life of the market and perception of its primitive standards and stereotypes erodes the traditional, basic characteristics of the life of Udis, destroy not only the foundations of collectivism but also individuality and does not allow for genuine self-realization. An analysis of social consciousness from the standpoint of the hermeneutic approach shows that in the conditions of the transitivity of society and the uncertainty of its prospects, the Udis' marginality does not allow them to comprehend the meaning of their existence, to realize the authenticity of being, or to understand a new form of identity.

The development of the information society, the dominance of the Internet and related technology, as well as the nature of socialization and identification, are constantly changing. They accelerate the processes of "digestion" of information, understanding of the environment, the sphere of public relations, links, and meanings. The paradox of Udis' daily life stems from the fact that in its inner world, multiple aspects appear to be at odds: first, the hoary antiquity; second, the current, fast-flowing reality, i.e., modernity. Thirdly, the future is an unknown "tomorrow", which is closed and full of uncertainties. In these circumstances, each ethnic group's representative has to re-master the ever-changing world, cultural standards, and moral values through market mechanisms, cash, communication, and dialogue.

The philosopher A.V. Ryazanov points out the complexity and drama of these processes when he notes that societies in transition are characterized by a constant imbalance between vertical and horizontal communications. In them, adaptation to reality occurs spontaneously and in a specific, individualized way [11, p. 62].

In many countries with a dominant market economy, liberal values prevail, and mass culture sells well. One often perceives social reality in a spontaneous form because an individual is "atomized" and left to his own devices. As a result of new forms of alienation and identity, a person may find himself at various stages of virtual addiction, gaming in particular. Many important aspects of a personality, such as striving for activity and the need for self-realization, are translated into virtual domains. As a result, many

universes and diverse structures are built in the multidimensional realm of human life that do not really exist in society, its spheres, or relationships.

In the actual context of everyday life, according to Volgograd scholars, the solution may be the love for the homeland, i.e., patriotism and ethnicity inextricably linked with it. They consider them non-historical concepts, and their scope is supranational and metaterritorial [13, p. 4].

Therefore, ethnic identity is a deep, ancient feeling imprinted in human genotype and, therefore, unchangeable and dogmatic. Identity, in our perspective, should be viewed dialectically because it tends to change over the historical process, as evidenced by our daily lives.

Modernity destroys the social essence of ethnic groups and undermines their basis, especially their rootedness and the connection of history with the modern era. It alienates, overthrows, and inverts space and time, rendering their objective properties obsolete. As an ethnic group, the Udis aspire to maintain their identity, core characteristics, and immanent underpinnings while also attempting to overcome marginalization and achieve a new social essence. That is where the high cost of education and upbringing and the difficulties of their identification, socialization, and personal development stem.

In the conditions of postmodern politicization, the restoration of relations and the man-society balance necessitates the inclusion of a special educational attitude and behavioral pattern. The special system requires individual orientation and independently implementing, the process of their own social and other identifications into the social and cultural program.

The study of various types and forms of modern identities – political, social, cultural, and national – is significant for us to understand both the general and specific aspects of the Udis' lifestyle, particularly in the context of a crisis of various kinds of identity, comprehension of the local ethnophore's inner world, and identification of their scale. The search for approaches and ethnological investigation of techniques for the inclusion of Udis in a multiethnic and multi-confessional post-Soviet society is very important for "fluid modernity." It is important that everyone comprehend the relationships and connections, consciousness and self-consciousness of a person in a

transitive society, the specifics of the choice of life strategies, and the representation of real events.

As is known, the information society has significantly weakened the previous deep adaptive abilities of man, especially the impact of the historical process on society and the foundations of communal determination and causality. Post-Soviet life has destroyed old forms of communication, transformed many conservative traditions, and replaced the older structures with virtual, network links. As a result, the importance of the present has grown as a new quality, a distinct sort of virtual existence in contemporary circumstances. The basis of social progress has become uncertainty and disorientation in understanding the reality and prospects of the future.

A systematic analysis of modernity testifies to a variety of transformations in the world of everyday life of both functioning communities and hundreds of millions of people. Let us turn to modern sociologist Z. Bauman, who professionally examines the details of post-modern social reality and reveals the common and the special. The focus of his research is the concept of liquid modernity. He relies on it to substantiate the transition from the existing everyday life, i.e., the split and fractured society, to a plastic and fluid social medium that is free from measure, boundaries, barriers, and limits. The scholar demonstrates how the rapidly changing and unpredictable world engenders new and often radical forms and manifestations of individualism. In his book "Liquid Modernity", Bauman writes that "unreliability, instability, vulnerability have become the widespread (and most painfully felt) features of modern life" [2, p. 154].

The new emerging modernity is gaining speed, resulting in constant and substantial changes on the planet: in the state, society and its domains, and people's individual lives. Defining the prospects for development, he points out that "only greater flexibility, greater risk, and greater vulnerability are to come" [1, p. 117]. Back to the formation of Udis' identity, it is worth noting that it is linked to the characteristics of politicization and socialization in post-Soviet societies to a considerable extent. Personality development should be regarded as a rather complex universal process and, at the same time, as the result of individual choice, searching for a balance between

identity and difference, one's place, and one's self in society. For ethnic groups, such a choice is tragic because it alienates an individual from the world, nature, labor, and interpersonal relations in many ways, especially in a multinational society. However, now only such interaction enables socialization – the emergence of new and different things that naturally associated with differences in forms of identification.

Today, there is a new political, social, and cultural space functioning in all post-Soviet societies; in a certain way, a person designs and builds himself, which acts as a special sphere of identity formation. Using his personal initiative, on the basis of semantic and value interactions, he seeks to find and establish a more or less optimal relationship in balance with the social system. A man of today has to constantly complete his identity, bringing it in line with internal attitudes, principles, and moral values. The identification mechanism of Udis can be thought of as a system of interconnected techniques and directions or as a self-realization procedure. It includes the interaction between the objective conditions of everyday life and the subjective world, the attitudes of the person himself.

As previously stated, a person's strategy has to be constantly transformed throughout his life as he progresses down the road of adaptation and the creation of his personality. In the end, for an Udi, an appeal to his ancient history, the experience of previous generations, and social memory are required for genuine living in elusive modernity. It is critical for the development of a new identity, self-identification, and the achievement of their objectives, as well as the identification of future landmarks. The development of various forms of time (past, present, and future) by each ethnic group is more important than ever; they can be considered a prerequisite for rooting in everyday life, ensuring the continuity of social existence and the identification process. In close communication with our homelanders and representatives of other cultures, we gain invaluable experience of interethnic and intercivilizational solidarity, accumulate experience of respect for other beliefs and traditions, and, what is more, get insight into our own identity, which is the basis of internal "civilizational solidarity" [9, p. 11].

In the constantly changing modern world, the paradoxical, "centaurism" of being is an important feature of the formation of identity and a person's adaptation to the environment. However, in the course of socialization, the modern market society creates a "mass man" on the basis of mass culture and consumerism standards, reproducing fears, tensions, and a sense of bewilderment. The public consciousness is demoralized; people often have difficulty comprehending reality. For an individual, the continuously transforming everyday life becomes an external environment with various types of alienation.

All this renders vital one's own activity aimed at identifying with the ever-changing social structures, mastering historical traditions and social qualities, and forming one's own responsibility. The rapidly changing reality presents a person with a tough challenge. He must supplement his everyday experience with active work on socialization, master new realities, and accept values. A person finds himself faced with the need to form his own "life world", determine the purpose and meaning of life, and realize his place and role in society.

The study of modern society and human existence reveals numerous concerns, including a high level of alienation and an existential vacuum. The vast majority of people feel anxiety, loss, abandonment, and loneliness. In many ways, this resulted from the dramatic change in the essential foundations and values made by the information environment and technology, which turned out to be a driver of social development. And this is happening in the context of the continuous growth of information and communication media, development of mass culture, the dominance of consumerism psychology, and the entertainment industry, which bring about open-ended, though primitive, opportunities. Under the current conditions, one feels the need for social, cultural, and existential support and seeks to find ways to integrate into society and its structures and share goals and values of life with a social group.

However, a heterogeneous market society cannot overcome the objective problems because this information-oriented and technologized society is dominated by naturalism, materialism, and consumerism. Despite the primacy of materiality in a developed society, social myths, virtual objects

and situations, simulacra, and phantoms abound as a multifaceted reality. All this negates a person's ability to reveal a true picture of everyday life. There is a continuous process of replacing reality with images, psychological and illusory objects. They render a person extraneous, estranged from both the world and himself; his inner world is frequently incomprehensible or impenetrable to him. It is no coincidence that the consequences include social disorientation, weakening of the impact of social communities, growing virtual addiction, especially gaming, as well as negative identity.

The space of existence of modern society is characterized by a loss of balance and "rootedness" and a high level of fragmentation. The contradiction between individuals and modern society is one of the root causes of the discomfort of the social space, which is prone to social tension and conflicts. The deepening of contradictions results in social splits and individual degradation, growing apathy and further alienation, the formation of false values, deviant behavior, aggressiveness, and nationalism.

The superficial understanding of information and technology builds virtual worlds and game spaces that alienate and atomize people. The vast majority of individuals find themselves beyond the objective paradigm of daily life. Their lives are anomic and ungoverned by humanism and high morality in the context of a precisely forged marginal reality. An individual's activism and need for self-realization are translated into a virtual environment with its numerous amazing worlds and exciting structures.

The current climate of uncertainty triggers compensation mechanisms, and individuals' involvement in social life becomes somewhat imitative. A person's rootedness in society becomes increasingly simulated. History, culture, law, morality, traditions, and the media are used for manipulation; the nature and essence of a person are deformed. The processes of marginalization and deformation of an individual, continuously reproduced in postmodern society, are largely irrational, spontaneous, and adaptive. The goals of intersubjective interaction are changing since social ties in the conditions of the new reality are becoming more technologized and formal. Once information flows become the prime engine of change in modern society, they turn into an objective and independent reality for people.

It is worth pointing out that the existence of social communities, ethnic groups, and individuals ultimately remains a necessary and essential aspect of a society's activities; it is not always regulated and manipulated by information flows. In our opinion, the life of society cannot be completely reduced to communication and information flows. It is important to remember how complex and amazing a person's subjective nature is, how unique and multifaceted his perception of society and its objectives is, and the meaning of his own life.

Modernity significantly changes the conditions of existence and the specifics of economic activity of social and ethnic groups. It affects social links and connections drastically, weakening their impact on external experience and interior state. In the twenty-first century, these groups function on the integration-disintegration principle, which largely determines the risks and instability of being. Despite the continuous atomization of society, joint activity is significant for each individual and for the common existence of people. Probably, for ethnic groups, their internal unity is fundamental as an immanent and genetically embedded feature of their being and a prerequisite for their existence. The principle of unity in diversity, social connection with the native ethnic group, relative autonomy, and internal, spiritual dependence on it are probably the trait that genetically binds each ethnophore.

Globalization and the acceleration of modern society's dynamics do not offer appropriate conditions for personal adaptation and integration, as well as finding true meaning. They only allow a choice of the initially designated way of existence, certain internal connections, which in any case do not contribute to the full realization of a person's essence. As a result, it is no surprise that a person in post-Soviet society seeks only to identify with his ethnic community, adapt to reality based on the circumstances of his existence, and comprehend the meanings of his history as well as the specifics of his native culture, traditions, and attitudes. Hence, it is no accident that representatives of one nationality, ethnos, or confession feel closer to one another while setting themselves off against others, strangers. Today, the ethnophor finds his own self, his identity, and

defines himself only on the basis of "native" history, language, culture, values, beliefs, views, and customs.

Results. Therefore, it should be noted that for the majority of post-Soviet societies, which are largely multinational and multi-confessional (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, etc.), the key factors contributing to integration for members of an ethnic group are national interests, supranational and supra-confessional ethnic goals, and values. These factors are conservative and help to preserve traditional stability in the ever-changing everyday life. However, in many republics of the former USSR, the interests of their titular nations are still a priority. The absence of common ethnic goals and values creates a certain number of problems for members of ethnic groups and preserves their crisis state, marginality, which leads to a confrontation between tradition and the new modernity.

The appeal of the Udis, as representatives of small ethnic groups, to their origins, history, religion, myths and archetypes, and conservative traditions allows them to maintain traditional stability and support in life, in conditions of constantly changing everyday life. They become the basis that permits an individual to build his own internal space, to define and mark the distance with certain national minorities and ethnic groups, and to interact with representatives of other nations in society. In short, in a modern market-based society, thepreservation and development of significant social ties becomes a purely individual matter in many aspects for an ethnophore. There are no effective ways for a person to enter society today. He performs his identification function as an intermediary because, in an intersubjective relationship, he acts as a communicator without really being involved in communication actions.

In the 21st century, at the present development stage of post-Soviet societies, issues of individual and group self-identification hold a special place. The study of the objective foundations of existence and the spiritual and moral principles of the future becomes vital in our transitive civilizations, which have not fully settled on their goals and development strategy. They are significant not only at the present moment but also for understanding one's history, interests, prospects, and problems of the country.

However, many scholars believe that "a group of people cannot be viewed as a kind of homogeneous social body with members inevitably adhering to the same ideas by virtue of their group affiliation. A person processes and rethinks information in many ways under the influence of his own social experience. By sharing certain ideas about the past that are inherent in society, an individual can understand them in his own way and give them his own interpretations" [12, p. 12].

Let us also emphasize that dedication to archaicism, the desire to regain just the ancient ethnic identity, or the indiscriminate acquisition of existing forms and types of globalization are extremes that cannot help post-Soviet societies become advanced and civilized states. The information society, technology, communication, and other standards are only a means of moving towards modernity.

As already noted, the globalizing world has lost its statics and become dynamic long ago. However, it is becoming increasingly chaotic and unsettled. In modern reality, a person has lost order and guaranteed stability; they are no longer present in any sphere of human life or society. Stable identity is replaced by being in a borderline situation – a situation of continuous change and constant choice. The world has become illusory for a person – virtual at different levels. There has come a time when simulation and manipulation are used to hide reality since it no longer exists.

One of the important concepts in a person's choice of his own subjective image of identification is an ethnic group. In a word, group identity is an integral part of identity, which allows an ethnophore to perceive ideological, axiological, and cultural goals. So, ethnic groups are important components of society, which determines the goals and fields of interethnic communication. Subjective manifestations of identification are inclusion of a person in language communication, his involvement in political, economic, and cultural processes, fitness, and sports events, as well as, shaping public opinion and civic position.

The Chairman of the Albanian-Udi Christian Community of Azerbaijan, Robert Mobili, considers studying and promoting his people's history and culture to be the key mission of his public organization. One of the main goals is the revival of the Albanian Church in its historical homeland, based on the Udi Christian community

as the sole successor of the flock of this rich confessional heritage. Preservation of one's culture in the context of globalization and integration is a problem for both small ethnic groups and many national minorities. The Udis represent an example of the solution to this problem. We are not an island tribe or mountain anachorets; we have not mixed with larger ethnic groups; we have not dissolved in "the melting pot of peoples" [10, p. 26].

Today, the Udis, as representatives of a small ethnic group, have been able to adapt to life in most multinational post-Soviet societies in different ways: Azerbaijan, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. It should be noted that in Armenia and Georgia, the Udis are almost completely assimilated and acculturated, both naturally and artificially; the processes of Armenization and Georgization are in full swing. In these states, even representatives of the older generation no longer speak their native language; they do not know and do not observe the traditions and rituals of their ancestors; they all consider themselves to be representatives of the titular ethnic group: Armenians or Georgians.

Today, the Udis live in multinational post-Soviet societies. They strive to self-realize through their interests and needs within the national goals of each state. Their lives and activities proceed in an environment of equitable dialogue and are based on real communications. Customs, traditions, and moral values appear to be steady forms that shape a person's subjectivity, particularly in terms of his existential dimension. Therefore, it is quite natural that the totality of these values simultaneously forms an important channel for the realization of a new human identity.

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