

THE CHALLENGE OF INTERETHNIC COEXISTING IN EUROPE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE XXI CENTURY: THE POLITICAL DIMENSION

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Abstract. *This article is dedicated to the problems of interethnic coexistence in contemporary European space. The author makes an attempt to analyze the scientific approaches to the defining the essence of the term „identity”, „national identity”, analyze the main peculiarities of social-political development of Ukraine in 2013-2014, Scottish and Catalan referendums and their influence on European stability.*

The special attention is payed to the Russian influence on political development of Ukraine; Russia's interference into domestic affairs of the EU member states.

Keywords: *identity, national identity, revolution, ethnic coexistence, referendum*

Introduction

Changes in geopolitics which has been started after the collapse of the Soviet Union and socialist system seemed natural and inevitable. So, national confrontation in a number of former socialistic states needed special attention from politicians, scientists, journalists, civic activists etc. National question was expressed through various forms: from peaceful divorce in former Czechoslovakia to bloody events in former Yugoslavia. The level of involvement of different states and institutions into its solution in Central and Eastern European countries was different. And the problem was that no one actor could predict the further development of events. In two decades a number of Central and Eastern European states became members of the European Union (EU). It looked like national confrontation was something like misunderstanding of young democracies. All new EU member states adopted new rules and legal principles of the EU. Their development went by completely different direction than in previous decades. But a number of states couldn't decide on the vector of further political development. There were both objective and subjective reasons. On author's opinion, the double or even triple standards of former socialistic being transformed into so-called pseudo-democracy, where traditional democratic values were intertwined with the post-Soviet way of thinking and being. For author, the bordering states with the EU like Republic of Moldova and Ukraine are the best examples of such strategy. If Moldova faced with challenges to territorial integrity and national identity at the end of previous century, Ukraine clearly experienced the similar or even worse problems at the beginning of the XXI century.

The events of 2004 and 2013 played a huge role in political and national identity building of Ukrainians. Also, they influenced a lot the political preferences of the EU, especially Revolution of Dignity (2013) events. "Ukraine", as American historian

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Timothy Snyder wrote, “matters today as it has mattered for a century: as a signal of coming political trends” (Шур, 2020). From the beginning of XX century till nowadays Ukraine was and still is in the center of political confrontation of West and East attitudes of state building process. The attempts to transform Ukraine into Russia’s own sphere of influence have been started in medieval times. But as far as we could see the deep understanding of Ukraine’s role both in contemporary geopolitics and internal affairs of the EU member states came just in the turn of XX – XXI centuries. 2013 demonstrated the whole world that “Ukrainian question” is more than just Ukraine and Ukrainians. It’s also a question concerning contemporaneity and future of the EU and its member states.

The main aim of the article is to analyze the problem of interethnic coexisting in the EU on the example of such states as Great Britain and Spain through the prism of current geopolitical interests of leading political players, in particular, Russian Federation. To reach this aim it is necessary to give the explanation to such terms as “identity”, “ethnic identity”, “ethnic nation”, and “political nation”; to describe the essence of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict and its implications for the world, particularly for the EU; to analyse the attempts to gain independence by Scots and Catalonians and to make conclusion on their importance for preserving the existing political system and borders within the EU.

The issue of the EU development is actual for contemporary studies. A great number of scientists and scholars from different countries are working on various aspects of the EU internal and foreign policy, cyber security and informational intervention into the EU member states internal life, and, of course, on interethnic tensions and relations within the EU etc. We can also find special researches dedicated to the media and information policy both Russia and the EU in light of the events in Ukraine as the catalyser of further changes. The common work of Ukrainian scholars Volodymyr Horbulin, Oleksandr Vlasiuk, Ella Libanova and Oleksandra Liashenko is dedicated to the contemporary vision of the world order in the light of the military conflict in Ukraine (Горбулін, Власюк, Лібанова, Ляшенко). Instead the work of Margarita Jaitner is dedicated to the changes and meanings of Russian information policy after the beginning its aggression in Ukraine (Jaitner, 2015: 87-94).

The beginning of XXI century proved that contemporary world is interdependent and events which occur in one dot of the world are inevitable influencing the rest political players. But the medieval ideas of state still can be used in nowadays Eurasia (by definite political players) which will be discussed further in our research.

1. Identity: Theoretical Foundations of Contemporary Political Processes

Interference in internal affairs of the state is often provided under the slogan of protecting the rights of national communities, certain-language speaking communities etc. The question is: is it possible to clearly define the members of such communities, especially in a language case? And why political players have so wide range of activity in this direction? As far as we could see during last decade a number of different events directly or indirectly related to the political stability issues in the EU have happened. And a number of them were aimed at provoking ethno-political instability within the EU.

But how is affiliation with a particular national community determined? Philosophers, scientists, journalists, politicians are working on this question for centuries. We can find a number of various attitudes to answer this question. And identity is the basis for all of them. The term “identity” is of Latin origin. It has roots in Latin word “idem” which meaning is “the same”. This term denotes sameness. Probably that’s why

the famous scientist S. Freud considered identification as assimilation of one “I” by another. The result is that individual is construction her/his own ideal image (in fact, identity) consciously choosing certain patterns and behaviours. And what is the most important for us, individual identity becomes the basis for group formation as the result of perception the other through own “I” (Гальченко, 2011: 110).

Identity was put in the centre of scientific researches by E. Erikson (Côté, Levine, 1987: 273-325). His works were dedicated to the different aspects of individual identity, identity crises etc. He viewed identity as the “ego-identity” (or as we named it individual / “I”-identity) and “social identity”. The first consists of organic and individual (or self-perception) components. Every individual has a given physical appearance and natural makings of man which seems unchangeable (NB: in previous century the special clinics of plastic surgery appeared and individuals got the possibility to change their appearance. So, the influence of such changes on identity can be the topic of other researches). Another important component is the awareness of a person’s own uniqueness, his/her desire to develop and realize his/her abilities and interests. Simultaneously, the social identity consists of group (personal involvement in different communities, feeling of inner unity with one’s social environment) and psychosocial (a sense of importance of being within certain society).

Every human is a bearer of a whole set of different identities – cultural, professional, gender, political, confession, and ethnic etc. The Webster’s New Encyclopedic Dictionary gives several explanations to the term “identity”. Between them: “the fact or condition of being exactly alike”; “distinguishing character or personality” (Webster’s New Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1994: 493). So, in individual identity formation the self-personal attitude and vision plays defining role. The person feels her/himself as distinctive or similar with other individuals because of a number of different subjective and objective reasons. Here are the place and circumstances of birth, life conditions, studying and working places etc. But: it’s hard to find two identical individuals in one place even if they were born in the same conditions, went to the same school and got the job in the same place. They can speak the same language, celebrate the same holidays, and feel themselves as the part of one community but individually they are different. The factor which is uniting them is to the large extent, irrational perception of the ethnic or national roots of their origin. This thesis is controversial; can and should be discussed.

Nowadays the term “identity” is using in different context: in psychology, social and political sciences, philosophy, ethnology etc. The identity formation is going through confrontation of positive and negative elements of identity structure. There are people with positive identity, those who are aware of community with positively significant others (“we”) and without rigid opposition of “we” – so called “they”. People with negative identity are consolidating around total opposition to “they”. And in this case community “we” is existing thanks to the tough confrontation with the community “they”. The last type of identity (negative) is using by politicians in their political struggle more often, and especially when national feelings are involved.

The experience of socialistic system collapse demonstrated the crucial role of national factor. And national feelings found expression not only in independent national state-building process, but also (and in some cases, first of all) destructive ones. Thereby we came to the question of ethnic identity and national belonging. The ethnic identity is more than complicated question in contemporary world. Every person has to answer the question what does ethnic identity mean for me? Are the interests of the ethnic (or national) group more important than mine? Ethnic identity is given from birth, native language, and cultural circumstance and so on. So, for many people this is a rhetoric

question. They just “know who they are”. But the historical development of last several centuries opened a new page in this topic. There are people who can't answer this question, because their parents or somebody of ancestors are of different national origin (so, they probably have double or multiple identities). Also, there are those who are carriers of a marginal ethnic identity, those who have weak connection with any ethnic identity. And that influences not only on personal life of concrete people, but also the political development of some states and even regions. For example, in some post-Soviet states where Russian element was really strong presented in all spheres of life (like Belarus, Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine).

Ethnic identity is forming during centuries. Mainly it inherited. People's awareness of their ethnicity depends a lot on a character of place they live: has it mono-ethnic or multi-ethnic environment? Differentiation signs are stronger in multi-ethnic environment. The differences between representatives of ethnic groups promote awareness of themselves as a member of particular group featuring certain culture, language, history etc. So, ethnic identity is based on awareness of yourself as a member of group differs from other by culture, language, territory, traditions, and everyday life. The ethnic feeling could be both eternal and situational. And understanding of that is the strong political weapon.

National identity has a lot in common with the ethnic one. That allowed developing the ethnic theory of nation which has deep historical roots. Investigations of J.Herder, J.Fichte and G.Hegel were followed up by contemporary scientists between whom the most famous is A.Smith. He defined the basic features of national identity: a homeland or historical territory; common historical memory and myths; common mass culture; common legal rights and duties for all; common economy with the territorial mobility (Smith, 1991: 4-8). In this case it seems possible to put a sign equal between ethnos and nation. But it is necessary to keep in mind that nation (even the ethnic one) is the community of people who realized their willingness to state building, already built national state or on their way to build it.

Another theory of nation which is noteworthy is political one. The first ideas on it appeared in ancient times. One of the first founders of it was H.Grotius, Dutch scholar. In his “The Right of War and Peace” he presented some ideas of political theory of nation (Grotius, 2005). After that they've spread all over Europe. And at the beginning of previous century the scientific discussions on the nature of nation were provided in different states with different political consequences. According to political theory, nation is the political community which is uniting all citizens of a certain state regardless of ethnic and social origin. This theory gives the understanding of the nature of contemporary citizenship and opens the possibilities for uniting people of different nationalities into one community. But since modern states have a national nature, the ethno-political relations can be strained by different factors from time to time. For last decade they are escalated in different parts of the EU because of different reasons, between which the external is almost decisive.

Nowadays there are a number of different attitudes toward the understanding the nation's nature. We can state that it has to be analysed comprehensively. And contemporary political processes open the possibility to trace the connection between theory and practice, especially in the ethno-political plane.

2. On the way to Democracy: the Ukrainian Case

Where should we move: West or East? Due to the data of Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, 64,2% of Ukrainian respondents have chosen the EU. For 12,7% entering the Custom Union of Russia, Belorussia and Kazakhstan should be in priority of foreign policy of Ukraine. And more than 23% couldn't answer this question (Європейський або Митний союз, 2020). So, even after several years of violation of territorial integrity of our state, permanent military actions on Eastern border, the deaths of hundreds of Ukrainian soldiers, social, economic, ecological disaster a certain percentage of population is still thinking that the best way is to "keep" or "restore" "good relations" with Russian Federation. The roots of such attitude are in the history. It's not necessary to analyse the development of Russian-Ukrainian relations from medieval times but to remind how they influenced on national self-perception of Ukrainians, primarily Soviet times.

From mid-XVII century Ukrainian lands partly became the sphere of Moscow (later – Russian) influence. Firstly, slowly, almost unnoticed, then more aggressively and open the process of the incorporation of Ukrainian lands into Russian space has begun. 1917 opened a new page in the world's modern history. It promised appearing of first social state which will care on working people, and a number of national states appeared on the ruins of Russian empire (probably with the same principles of state building). But the leaders of Russian (famous in post-Soviet space October) revolution were not ready to allow national communities to build their own states. Further military actions, war on post-Russian empire space allowed gathering most of the former imperial lands in one Soviet state. Of course, that's a schematic vision of history, but the fact is that the most part of Ukrainian lands became the part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). They got a ghostly statehood in the form of Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR).

Ukrainian SSR in fact was the phantom state. Formally it had government, territory, other attributive features of the state, but it couldn't provide the independent policy either internal, or foreign. All decisions were adopted by Moscow. And the main one was to create a state of so-called new type – with completely new type of citizen who has first of all the social identity which has to become the basis for a Soviet identity of every citizen of the USSR. For next decades the policy of denationalization was provided in Ukraine. The Soviet authorities used "whip and gingerbread method". Repressions, holocaust of 1932-1933, from one side, so-called "rooting policy" or the policy of Ukrainization demonstrated multilateralism and power of new regime. It worked for the destruction of even potential opposition and the "education" of loyal to regime citizens. Very soon all citizens were involved in building socialism through the different institutions and "thanks" to leading role of the Communist party. The individual identity was formed from kindergartens through school, universities and other education institutions. But becoming adult didn't protect against the interference in private life of local Communist party structures. Special child and youth organization of Communist party were organized to manage the education process on all levels and on all stages of identity formation. Not everybody become the member of the Communist party but the Soviet ideas, myths, principles were familiar to everybody. The path to the formation of Soviet identity was paved. It seemed that in several decades the Soviet identity will prevail on 1/6 of world space. But deformation of socio-economic development has led to the impetus for national awakening and further disintegration of the USSR.

The end of 1980-s was the starting point for further EU-Ukraine relations. The first agreement on trade and economy collaboration was signed in 1989 between the

European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Agreement..., 1989). In August, 1991 the protocol on technical, law and administrative assistance in the frame of TACIS was added to the agreement. The collapse of the USSR at the same year brought the changes to TACIS in 1992. And Ukraine became the second (in order of importance) recipient of TACIS loans on post-Soviet space. However for next several years Ukraine didn't signed any additional agreements with the European institutions. Only in 1994 bilateral Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, and Ukraine was signed (Partnership and Cooperation Agreement..., 1994). Next year the first meeting of the EU – Ukraine Joint Committee was held.

In 1996 the Council of Europe adopted the Action plan for Ukraine, the main objectives of which were: “giving the Ukrainian authorities a political signal of the stepping-up of EU support and exploring ways to improve the development of existing aid and possibilities for strengthening EU and Member State cooperation in this area” (European Union Action Plan..., 1996). After that two parties agreed on strengthening collaboration. In 1998 the Decree of the President of Ukraine approved the Strategy of integration of Ukraine into the EU (Про затвердження Стратегії..., 1998). That Strategy defined the main directions of executive authorities work in order to achieve the status of associate and in the future – the full member of the EU. Next year the European Council adopted the Common Strategy on Ukraine (European Council Common Strategy..., 1999) were the main directions of further collaboration have been identified. On our opinion, most of them left actual for settling effective collaboration till now despite the fact that they are partly implemented.

So, as far as we could see the 1990-s gave the start for bilateral EU – Ukraine relations. Both sides declared the willingness for deepening cooperation. But the uncertainty of Ukraine on main vector of development both in internal and foreign policy complicated that process. The desire to sit on two chairs at once – deepened cooperation with the EU and Russian Federation – has led to a radical turn in internal policy of Ukraine and its relations with the EU.

The more than close cooperation with Russian Federation led to the internal rebellion which got unusual form. During Presidential elections in Ukraine in 2004 incumbent President L.Kuchma tried to impose pro-Russian V.Yanukovich as a new one. The reaction of people on announced results was unpredictable. The bigger part of Ukraine supported pro-European candidate V.Yushchenko. The readiness to defend their candidate has grown into a mass gathering and rally on the central square of the State (Maidan in Kyiv). The demonstration was peaceful, but people demonstrated their readiness to stay till the victory. The decision of Constitutional Court was to provide III tour of Presidential elections on December 26, 2004. The winner was V.Yushchenko (Якубова, 2017).

The events of Orange Revolution of 2004 attracted attention to Ukraine from the whole world and the EU was no exception. It congratulated Ukraine with the democratic choice. After that the European Community demonstrated that that choice can positively influence on EU-Ukraine relationship. Next year (2005) the new Action Plan which had to witness the strengthening of Ukraine – EU relations (EU – Ukraine Action Plan, 2005). The possibilities which were opened by the EU have not been used by Ukraine. The policy of V.Yushchenko wasn't successful, especially in socio-economic sphere. The proclamations of EU orientation were not supported by effective reforms inside the state. People were disappointed by their choice in 2004. The rating of V.Yushchenko and his

party “Our Ukraine” fell dramatically. The results of Presidential elections of 2010 were the “step back”: V. Yanukovich earned the position of President. After 2010 Ukraine moved to closer relation with Russian Federation and reduced interaction with the EU.

At that moment of time for European Community became obvious that Ukraine again found itself in the sphere of influence of the Russian Federation. The loyalty of Ukrainian authorities to Russian presence in business, energy, military, cultural, media sectors confirmed that Ukraine made 180 degree turn toward the Russian Federation.

In 2013 Ukraine was suggested by the European Union to sign the Association Agreement. The preparations to that were conducted during several months. All over Ukraine were gathered pro-authority demonstrations in favour of signing the Agreement. For example, in Chernivtsi the traditional Bykovinian Viche of November, 3 was dedicated to the necessity of signing it. It was initialized by regional authority. Its participants supported the European integration of Ukraine (Дідух, 2013). But that was unrespectable for many representatives of Ukrainian opposition who couldn't believe the authorities initiated such actions. And further events confirmed that there should not be any trust to so-called pro-European position of Ukrainian central and regional authorities.

A refusal to sign and Association Agreement has triggered the wave of discontent with V. Yanukovich policy. It transformed into open protest and demonstrations against the policy of President. Firstly, it looked like the Orange Revolution. People were sure that peaceful demonstrations would lead to positive result. But circumstances have been changed. The new regime was not ready for any compromise. It used military power against demonstrators. As a result, bloody events in the centre of Ukraine, in its capital, fast escaping of V. Yanukovich out of Ukraine, new elections and new challenges to national security and territorial integrity of Ukraine and not only to it. 2013-2014 became a turn-point for Ukrainian society. It changed not only the political regime, the vector of political development of Ukraine, but first of all the self-identification of a number of Ukrainians. The ideas like “I'm Ukrainian and I proud of it”, “Ukraine is not Russia” etc. became slogans of the Revolution and early post-Revolution period in Ukraine.

The next military aggression of Russian Federation, its annexation of Ukrainian Crimea demonstrated violation of all international agreements and main principles of international law. During and after the events in Ukraine in 2013-2014 Russia has shown its desire to establish world domination. Violation of ethno-political stability in the EU became the part of its' political strategy; ethnic and national identity was and still is used as a tool of achieving political goals.

3. Challenges for Ethno-Political Stability in Europe After 2014

The geopolitical situation at the beginning of second decade of the XXI century was complicated with the number events in different regions of the world. And, on author's point of view, the events in Ukraine were not only between them, but were ahead of the list. The confrontation in Ukraine in 2013-2014 on the vector of further political development led to the changes of political regime in Ukraine. The Russian aggression in Ukraine can be calculated as the continuation of the struggle for keeping Ukraine in Russian sphere of influence, as it was before the Revolution of Dignity. In winter 2014 Russian Federation brought so-called “green men” in Autonomous Republic of Crimea of Ukraine. On February 27, 2014 the Russian military troops occupied the buildings of the Council of Ministers and Supreme Council of Crimea. The population of the Autonomous Republic was mostly Russian-speaking. The situation was critical and neither local authorities, nor national government had a clear and effective strategy to counteract that

military aggression. The Parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea voted for including Crimea into the Russian Federation on March 6, 2014 (Парламент Криму проголосував..., 2014). Till mid-March the whole peninsula was under the control of Russian troops. The local power passed to the self-proclaimed puppet government. The last started the preparations for the referendum on the status of the peninsula. The peaceful coexisting of different nations whose representatives lived here for decades or even for centuries was interrupted by the military intervention and the next information company for entering the Russian Federation. During the agitation (it is difficult to find other words for characteristic of that company) the well-known for post-Soviet space images were used. The most popular were the images of the World War II, where the possibility to live in Russia was opposed to the Nazi Germany. On images below we can find some examples of them:



“On March 16 we choose...” *Source:*
<http://www.ostro.org/general/politics/articles/440058/>



“Fascism will not pass. Everyone is on referendum” *Source:*
<https://www.ostro.org/general/politics/articles/440058/>

The result of March, 16 referendum was predictable. It was announced by organizers that 96% of voters supported integration with Russia. By independent data those results were falsified. Soon after that the Crimea peninsula was included into the Russian Federation. On March 18, 2014 such decision was accepted by Russian authorities. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine was violated. As it was told by Boris Johnson, the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain, “Russia broke so many international agreements that listing them all is a challenge”, probably meaning not only the Ukrainian case, but also the situation in Georgia in 2008 etc. Taking into account that “the security of every nation depends on the essential principle that countries should not borders or acquire territory by force” (Johnson, 2018), the situation in 2014 punished the EU states to make some principle decisions.

After such “returning to practise of interwar period” by Russia, the European Union agreed the first diplomatic measures to Russian aggression in Ukraine in March, 2014. European Council agreed the first diplomatic measures to Russian aggression in Ukraine (EU sanctions...). Russia was condemned by the EU for aggression over Ukraine. The EU introduced a wide range of economic sanctions, asset freezes, visa bans etc. For next years the world witnessed the joint forces of European leaders in their attempt to stop Russian aggression through sanction mechanism. This question is still actual. And almost every year after 2014 it is discussed both by politicians and scientists during common conferences, seminars, meetings etc. And contemporary media is constantly drawing attention to this problem.

In September, 2014 in frame of North Atlantic Council in Wales the Heads of State and Government signed the Wales Summit Declaration. It was stressed there that

“Russia’s aggressive actions against Ukraine have fundamentally challenged our vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace” (Wales Summit Declaration, 2014). That was the turning point in relationship NATO – Russian Federation.

All these steps didn’t stop Russian authorities in their attempt to maintain Russia’s influence in Ukraine and strengthen its positions in worlds’ politics. After 2014 the attempts to intervene in the internal affairs of European states have become systematic. One of the first was done in Great Britain in September, 2014. It is possible to suppose that Scottish independence referendum was aimed to answer the question not only on perspectives of the United Kingdom as separate state, union of different nations and states. Its results could influence on further relations between the United Kingdom and the other world. Ben Nimmo, an analyst for the US think-tank the Atlantic Council, stressed, “pro-Russian propagandists used Twitter, fake news on YouTube and Facebook accounts to make and then spread false allegations that votes were interfered with to ensure victory for pro-UK campaigners”. The main purpose of such activity was to destabilize social and political situation in particular in the UK and in the EU in general. The attempt to influence or at least to discredit the results of the Scottish referendum was done. And the small difference (just 2%) between numbers of those who were in favour of independence and against could be used as a base for further activities in provoking interethnic instability inside Scottish and British societies. The political consequences of that could be different and the appearance of a new national state on the political map of the Europe looks possible.

Spain is the European state with the complicated history, especially in the interethnic sphere. Basks, Catalonians have strong visions concerning their place and role in the state. In 2017 the situation in Catalonia became threatening for the Spain national authorities. In autumn, 2017 the Parliament of Catalonia passed the Law on the Referendum of Self-Determination of Catalonia. It was declared unconstitutional by central authorities. But the Catalan parliament approved it holding. The only question was “Do You want Catalonia to become an independent state in the form of Republic?” More than 92% of voters supported that idea. Around 8% were against it (Catalonia referendum..., 2017). The situation was aggravated by external interference. By the words of Spain defence and foreign ministers, there is evidence “that state and private private-sector Russian groups, as well as groups in Venezuela, used Twitter, Facebook and other Internet sites to massively publicize the separatist cause and swing public opinion behind it in the run-up to the Oct. 1 referendum” (Robin, 2017). The relations between Madrid and Barcelona are still uncertain and need additional efforts for peaceful solution. This challenge to interethnic peace in the centre of Europe is like a time bomb that must be neutralized.

Those suggested several examples of interethnic coexistence in contemporary Europe are demonstrating the destroying the peace development of European states. The question of interethnic interaction is extremely sensitive. And manipulation by it of political powers can lead to the instability in all spheres of human life.

Conclusions

After 2013 the political development went otherwise, specially, in the sphere of international relations and geopolitical preferences. The geopolitical construction of the world, made in recent decades, has undergone significant changes. These changes demonstrated the weaknesses of the geopolitical construction and the significance of common efforts on keeping democracy.

During last decades the question of national identity and state belonging has been becoming more actual in worlds’ politics. Every human has not only to decide who he/she

is but also to make a political choice on the future of his/her own national community and state. This choice can be controversial and it is really difficult to predict the consequences of it both to the individual and to the community. In all cases it is made because of the wish of better life. But the last rarely happens. Only if interethnic interaction is provided in peace channel, through negotiation it is possible to hope for keeping the level of life on the same or even higher level. But if the interethnic problems are moving into the plane of warfare, the devastating consequences come immediately. The last we can see on the example of Ukraine.

The new challenges to interethnic stability demonstrate that the double or even triple standards in political behavior are the weakest sides of democracy. And the main problem of contemporary democracy is developing a common vision of the future, common standards in politics that will be followed by all political players.

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