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THE PHENOMENON OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE POLITICAL SCIENCE

The aim of the article is identifying and political analysis of system characteristics and main components of national identity.

In the modern political science the dominant approach is the one, considering formation of national identity of a society as a domestic for multi-ethnic community of socio-political process. National identity is therefore seen as the result of activities of a state and national elites, including, in particular, exploration and development of a national idea. National identity is understood primarily as a result of the impact of a political system on country's population with the aim to develop in individuals a sense of belonging to society and a state.

Selecting of the identities should lead not to their "clash" and not to a "clash of civilizations", but to interaction of different national identities, based on recognition of the cultural diversity of a global and interdependent world in which people, nations feel themselves a part of not only their local communities, but of the whole mankind. A variety of ways to achievement and manifestation of national identity makes its exact definition's determination much more difficult. During its construction matter both the primordial factors or symbols (historical, territorial, cultural, linguistic), as well as constructivist approaches, according to which national identity is presented as a social construct, "the imaginary essence": what we think about ourselves, what we strive for.

However, in practice there is no clearly indicated set of definitions for national identity. The situation is complicated by the fact that there is no not only a single algorithm of appearance and functioning of national movements, modern nations and national states, but also the rules that exist, were set in motion and do not "work" any more in the context of globalization. Global transformations led to the situation when respective dominant "nation-forming" groups initiate formation of a collective identity. Apparently, exactly here, in the forms and methods of functioning of identification mechanisms, linked in the current conditions with contradictory processes of globalization, lies the phenomenon of national identity.

Key words: nation, national identity, paradigm, national character, national images, national traditions.

The turn of the 20th-21st centuries is characterized by the increase of globalization and, as a consequence, of cultural standardization, on the one hand, and disintegration, separatist aspirations and fragmentation within the nation on the other. Formation of the supranational communities oppose the processes of awareness of national identity, stored in the deep structures of the collective unconscious complex set of strongly held beliefs about the national community itself.

In the era of global changes the division along the ethnic lines becomes an attribute of social identity, national identity becomes one of the few stable reference points in a changing world. The concept of the nation becomes the determining factor in international relations and modern political practice is based on the concepts of national sovereignty and the right of nations to self-determination: that the nation is a fundamental concept in the work of the UN principles.

The aim of the article is identifying and political analysis of system characteristics and main components of the national identity.

In the modern political science the dominant approach is the one, considering formation of national identity of a society as a domestic for the multi-ethnic community of socio-political process. National identity is therefore seen as the result of activities of a state and national elites, including, in particular, exploration and development of the national idea. National identity is understood primarily as a result of the impact of a political system on a country's population with the aim to develop in individuals a sense of

belonging to a society and a state. In addition, national identity is formed by the interaction of ethnic groups those make up the multi-ethnic community of a society.

During long time, such an understanding of national identity and the approach to its discovering has been dominant in the literature on the problems of the nation and nationalism. However, over time there was revealed the failure of this approach to the study of national identity. Theorists and practitioners have come to the conclusion that national identity is not determined solely by internal socio-political processes in a society. In its formation an important role also play the external for the state processes, i.e. the processes of interaction of a state with other states in the system of international relations.

The need to consider identity through the prism of political science is undeniable and caused by a complex of factors. Firstly, national identity is the pillar for a nation-state, its distinctive feature among others. Secondly, identity is such a set of ideas, attitudes and behaviors, which are guided by a single individual, group of individuals, society, state or group of states in implementation of various actions and the choice of political preferences. Thirdly, national identity as an organic education is a synthesis of history and spirituality, a part of political culture of a society. Fourthly, a mass of constructive and destructive processes in the world, encouraging the multiple identities, are associated with this category. Fifthly, ethnic policy covers many areas of a state activity and is one of the most delicate areas, requiring a constant monitoring, the ability to act quickly and take smart and consistent steps. Also important is such fact that national identity is a condition for internal integration of any society.

According to Z. Bauman, the problem of identity is the problem of choice and the ability to “timely make a different choice if the previously chosen identity loses its value or its tempting features”. In the face of the new social ties, lining up in the global information and communication networks, identity is characterized by dynamism and instability. Therefore, there is a strengthening of the primary identity, i.e. of those stable elements of cultural models, which are usually described as traditionalists (national culture, religious values, and others.). Moreover, if the earlier appeal to traditionalist values was considered as an opposition to modernization, today the primary identity has qualitatively different characteristics. Traditional approaches are reinterpreted and adapted to the new social reality, which is characterized by openness and development of non-linearity. In this “new situation, a person has to find the new ways to adapt to the world, to learn to live in the space of instability, uncertainty, suspense, reducing this uncertainty, instability and the suspense by its organizing, ordering activity”¹.

National identity is characterized by a structural-functional approach (T. Parsons, R. Merton), which is the interpretation of the process of social communities’ integration into a national state. The terms of identity formation are social modernization, formation of democratic institutions and development of civilian population in a form of political life. T. Tedzhfell, A. Schyutz, J. Mead analyze the cognitive and socio-orientation identity model based on the existence of the identification matrix as a model of social activity.

In the post-classical science (E. Giddens, Z. Bauman, E. Smith, U. Beck) the constructivist nature of national identity is substantiated, which, in the context of globalization, is the result of internalization of “external structures” for the national renaissance’s goals realization, the competition with the “others” and to develop the consolidating values.

The main components of identity are:

1. objective (group needs, norms and values),
2. subjective (perceived by a member of the general image features of interest and so on).

In a case of applying these components in relation to national identity, the objective component acts as the image of a nation: character, traditions, diversity of cultural expressions specificity; and the subjective incorporates the breadth of perception of the world (worldview). Both components may change for various reasons, but the most “labile” is the subjective identity side, prone to changes and additions.

Language, religious direction, preservation of cultural heritage and honoring of traditions is one of those important pillars which characterize national identity, form the mentality, as well as contribute to strengthening of the system; stability is also provided by members of the nation through the awareness, adoption and application of efforts for development of their community.

The stability of national identity as the system is ensured through adhering by the members of the group the formed norms, functions, requirements, as well as through development, contributing to transformation of society and prosperity in the future. Unfortunately, in recent years philosophical

¹ Bauman, Z. (2002). *Individualized Society*. Moscow, 185.

foundations are destroyed: language is clogging, the distortion of collective memory take place, as well as degradation in a society.

The preserving of the usefulness of national identity requires efforts, due to that a well-established in the past system may not be sufficiently effective. Emphasis should be placed on national interests and factors contributing development and prosperity; there should come the awareness of the need to improve the life of a nation in a whole.

The human is a multi-faceted creature including both the biological (natural), and the spiritual (the sublime) lives. And, of course, the conditions created for the development and preservation of his existence as well as his national identity should be established with taking into account the specificity of the human essence. Consequently, for a full existence and stability of the nation it is important to create favorable conditions not only for the society as a whole, but for each of its representatives in particular.

To determine national identity it is expedient to appeal to the concept of nation. In this case, as the conceptual analysis of the theoretical disputes shows, existing traditional approaches (primordialism, constructivism, instrumentalism, liberalism, etc.) do not reflect the complexity of the multifaceted social phenomenon. This is primarily due to uncertainty, instability of contemporary social landscape, the contradictory and opposite tendencies of the modern civilization's development (national unity and multiculturalism, globalization and localization, international migration, and others). These processes make its adjustments to the previous interpretations of the concept of nation. In this situation, for the adequate to calls of rapidly changing social reality, describing of the phenomenon of nation the promising one is the appeal to the category of national identity. Category of national identity in the context of globalization can complement the semantic content of the more familiar for the traditional approaches the concepts of national identity, national character, and others. Identity forms on the basis of the relevant national paradigm, at the intersection of national-historical, social-psychological, socio-cultural, political-cultural and other spheres. Its content includes the established features of national culture, ethnic characteristics, customs, beliefs, myths, moral imperatives, etc. It is closely connected with the concept of "national character". Here the speech is about people's perceptions of themselves, their place in the world. National identity integrates the internal and external components. It is especially important for it to match the external and internal, form and content, appearance and essence. The inner sense of identity involves essential identity, kinship, a common framework, a single start. This reality is very clearly felt the Czech writer M. Kundera, who survived the experience of exile from Czechoslovakia to France, "Being in a foreign country, - he wrote - is to go on a stretched in the empty space rope without protective grid, which the person's domestic country provides to him, where he has his family, friends, colleagues, where he can easily negotiate with the language familiar from his childhood"¹. If the internal components are defined by the vision of some or other nation itself, as it were from within, so to speak, a look from the inside, and to the inside, so the external components are formed, firstly through the way how the outside world looks on it, secondly as the people themselves rate their place and role in the world community. As A. Toynbee noted, "Any nation or a national state of Europe cannot demonstrate the history, which can be explained from its own inside"². In this context, identity relies to a geopolitical status of a national state in the world and, from this point of view, it can be talked about the geopolitical identity of a state, which acts as a kind of indicator giving possibility to judge how this or that nation sees itself in the relations to the rest of the world. It gives the importance of the foreign policy orientations of the state, the idea of national sovereignty, national interests, national security and development strategy, etc.

Obviously, an extremely important factor of identity preservation is the memory about the past, since it is largely fed by the consciousness of the human individual, collective, society. Due to the fact that the personal self of a man is formed in the process of socio-cultural and politico-cultural socialization, the forgetting about the past difficulties an understanding of their own identity with the corresponding community. Vision and evaluation of themselves and the outer world is largely a product of national history and culture, passing on from generation to generation. They are formed as a result of the synthesis of the views, attitudes, positions of the various segments of population, political and intellectual elite, research, and education, expert communities, creative intelligence, and society in a whole. Accordingly, the community's identity of the community, people, state constitutes by the historical traditions those have developed over many generations, centuries, or even millenniums, with the help of national myths,

¹ Кундера, М. (2005). *Невыносимая легкость бытия*. Санкт-Петербург: Питер, 85.

² Тойнби, А.Дж. (2009). *Изучение истории*. Москва, 40.

symbols, stereotypes of behavior, etc. About the validity of this thesis tells in particular the example of the Baltic and Eastern European, as well as a number of post-Soviet countries, which cannot get rid of the so-called post-imperial syndrome.

An important component of the national identity formation strategy is the territorialization. In the conditions of the transnationalization, as well as the collapse of the political units the relationship between individual, society and the state as a political alliance and a territorial formation is disrupted. Territoriality serves as a social structure that is closely related to modernization, which lets to create a concentric multi-layered identity combining identification of such forms as "Basque" and "Spanish", etc.

The sense of territorial identity with the absence of appropriate motivational situation can exist in a latent state. Its significance is indicated by the fact that in the world there are countries with several official languages and numerous dialects, as well as the fact that more than 90% of the countries are poly-ethnic, but they are united by political-territorial community. Attachment to a state is carried out by the political institutions. As an example there used to be often lead the consocial model of democracy by A. Lijphart. The proportional electoral systems can contribute to politicization of ethnicity, as well as preservation of segregation of a society. Such techniques are usually not advisable to apply on a permanent basis, more preferably is to create a competition of parties and political figures for the votes of all voters. Another option can be imperative democracy envisages the construction of a national identity, where the civil component is gradually replaced by of statist (the most striking example is Singapore)¹.

Another important dimension is ideological support which contains the socio-political value orientations of formation of national identity. In the absence of previous guidance and deformation values beliefs ideology allows to develop a common strategy to consolidate the society.

Mainstreaming of political consolidation issues becomes an apparent when it is necessary to reintegrate, as well as in the case of poly-ethnic states, as it is linked to political identity, which, according to Western analysts, is almost equivalent to national identity. Partly, political identity is a form of manifestation of national identity in the political plane. At the same time, each individual has the right to preserve culture, traditions, customs, ethnicity.

As it is known, a state is the main form of political society self-organization on a strictly limited geographical area dependent to a specific type of political domination. From this point of view, the distinguishing feature of a state is that it is a collective, rigidly tied to a specific territory. Or, other words, the most important feature is the so-called territorial imperative. The question of a state is from the very beginning and above all is a question of the boundaries separating the territory of some states from territories of other states. The territory, the most important parameters of which, in its turn, are determined by its geography and location, has a great importance for historical fates and prospects of any state or nation. Moreover, there were times when the nature and location have been literally dictating the living arrangement and form of economic organization to people, the geographical factor played a crucial role in the lives of people and nations.

Geography and location have many aspects, such as the size and extent of the territory of a particular state, its location, topography, climate, conditions for agricultural production, the availability of natural resources, access to the seas and oceans, etc. These aspects define a number of parameters which indicate the potential and real possibilities of a state, defining its place in the global community of nations. As A. Duchecik wrote, people become rational and unconsciously committed to the territory of residence, its lifestyle, its institutions and culture during the complex process, which can be called the territorial socialization. A case in this point is in the geographical aspect of general process of political socialization². Since early ages people learn about the values and goals of political power and political culture, folk culture, the existence of rewards and punishments system, as well as the existence of geographic boundaries between their own territory and the outside world. There are many regional symbols - flags, flowers, trees, birds, logos, slogans, hymns, etc., able to bring up the pride and sense of belonging to the territory, be it the state, province or city.

All these and other factors associated with them have crucial importance while the implementation of state's domestic and foreign policy issues. It is not surprising that throughout the all history states saw their aim to protect and, if it was possible, to expand their territories. States, particularly the great or the world,

¹ Лейпхарт, А. (1997). Демократия в многосоставных обществах: Сравнительное исследование. Москва: Аспект Пресс, 67.

² Duchacek, I.D. (1987). *Comparative federalism. The territorial dimension of politics*. Lanham MD: University press of America, 87.

during all times were guided by the imperative of expanding their control over the neighboring countries and peoples and, if it was possible, over the entire international system.

National identity plays a role of a guide for politicians in their activities by providing them legitimacy. National identity itself is that much universal, that its components can be brought to implement a variety of strategies. Although the ethnical derivation and recorded legally citizenship have the objective reasons, the self-identity is subjective and is the result of various preferences of individual choice.

Formation of national identity requires a uniform and systematic development of two dimensions: the very essence of identity and a coherent with it position. As the content side there stand certain norms, goals, cognitive constructs those determine the status and a procedure of membership. The second component is the degree of agreement; it is also important, because of the need for consensus on the wording of the priorities and ways of their achieving among the citizens, political actors, as well as between the public sector and civil society.

Thus, national identity is a complex multi-dimensional, multi-faceted phenomenon, discovering of which includes social, psychological, cultural, and ethnic aspects. As a social phenomenon, it is characterized by the dynamism and poly-quality. The identity in the era of globalization is characterized by its flexibility, mobility, multiplicity, incompleteness and context. However, the context does not relate the identity core and the “choice” of one or another identity model is not absolutely clear, as it is done in a specific social context, which defines not only the range of alternatives, but also a set of different social practices. Identity possess both social groups and separate individuals. At the same time they have multiple identities (territorial, ethnic, cultural, religious, etc.), some aspects of which are mutually reinforcing. Selecting of identities should lead not to their “clash” and not to a “clash of civilizations”, but to the interaction of different national identities, based on the recognition of the cultural diversity of a global and interdependent world in which people, nations feel themselves a part of not only their local communities, but of the whole mankind. A variety of ways to achievement and manifestation of national identity makes its exact definition’s determination much more difficult. During its construction there matter both the primordial factors or symbols (historical, territorial, cultural, linguistic), as well as constructivist approaches, according to which the national identity is presented as a social construct, “the imaginary essence”: what we think about ourselves, what we strive for.

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