

## ЦЕНТРАЛЬНО-СХІДНА ЄВРОПА: РЕГІОНАЛЬНИЙ ВИМІР ТА МІЖНАРОДНІ ВИКЛИКИ

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### Проблема етнополітичної стабільності в Центрально-Східній Європі та концептуальні засади неоінституціоналізму

Сучасна Європа потерпає від політичної нестабільності, викликаній, перш за все, російською зовнішньою політикою. Дедалі очевидним стає комплексний характер дій Російської Федерації, направлений на інструменталізацію принципу *divide et impera*. Вбивання клину між європейськими державами є запорукою відсутності консенсусу в прийнятті рішень щодо реагування на агресивну та небезпечну поведінку Москви в глобальному вимірі (анексія Криму, агресія на Сході України, підтримка Б. Асада в Сирії та утворення неконтрольованих хвиль міграції, втручання у виборчий процес в США, хімічна атака в Солсбері, перманентне блокування роботи Ради Безпеки ООН і т.д.). На жаль, на рівні двосторонніх відносин теж присутні спроби розсварити сусідні держави, зокрема на етнонаціональному ґрунті (частими стали провокації за участі російських спецслужб у прикордонних населених пунктах України, Польщі, Угорщини). В зв'язку із цим, проблема забезпечення етнонаціональної стабільності в регіоні стає надзвичайно актуальною, та навіть більше – життєво необхідною.

Варто відмітити, що Україна може запропонувати не тільки дослідження власного досвіду для вироблення спільної політики держав Центрально-Східної Європи з його врахуванням. Українськими вченими здійснюються комплексні концептуальні дослідження щодо етнополітичної стабільності, способів її забезпечення, їх напрацювання можуть стати в нагоді для європейського співтовариства.

Проблема етнополітичної стабільності має велике практичне значення не тільки для України, але й для Молдови. Сусідня держава з 1992 р. потерпає від цілеспрямованих дій Російської Федерації, яка використовує особливості етнонаціонального складу Молдови, її історію та мовне питання для продукування зони етнополітичної дестабілізації на кордоні з Україною. Очевидно, що Молдова (як і Україна) зустрічають (і будуть зустрічати) на своєму шляху безліч труднощів, в тому числі етнополітичного характеру. Проте чітка кристалізація національних інтересів, розуміння цих національних інтересів широкою громадськістю стане надійним запобіжником у інспіруванні етнополітичної нестабільності як в Молдові, так і в Україні.

**Ключові слова:** етнічність, етнополітична стабільність, неоінституціоналізм, інструменталізація, Центрально-Східна Європа.

### The Problem of Ethnopolitical Stability in Central and Eastern Europe and Theoretical Framework for the New Institutionalism

Modern Europe suffers from political instability which is caused by Russian foreign policy above all. The complex nature of the Russian Federation's efforts in order to instrumentalize the *divide*

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*et impera* principle is becoming increasingly apparent. Killing the wedge between the European powers is a guarantee of the lack of consensus in the decision making in response to the aggressive and dangerous behavior of Moscow in the global dimension (Crimea annexation, aggression in the East of Ukraine, support of B. Assad in Syria and the formation of uncontrolled waves of migration, interference with the electoral process in the USA, chemical attack in Salisbury, UK, a permanent blockage of the work of the UN Security Council etc.). Unfortunately, at the level of bilateral relations, there are also attempts to disperse neighboring states, in particular on ethnonational grounds (frequent provocations involving Russian special services in the border towns of Ukraine, Poland, and Hungary). In this regard, the problem of ensuring ethno-political stability in the region becomes extremely relevant, and even more vital.

It is worth noting that Ukraine not only offers the study of its own experience for the development of a common policy in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe; Ukrainian scientists carry out comprehensive conceptual studies on ethno-political stability and the ways to ensure it, making their work useful for the European community.

The problem of ethno-political stability is of great practical importance not only for Ukraine but also for Moldova. The neighbouring state has been suffering from the targeted actions of the Russian Federation since 1992, which uses the peculiarities of the ethnic composition of Moldova, its history and the language issue for producing an ethno-political destabilization's zone on the border with Ukraine. Obviously, Moldova (as well as Ukraine) faces (and will face) a lot of difficulties, including ethno-political in its path towards EU. However, the clear crystallization of national interests, the understanding of these national interests by the general public will be a reliable fence in the inspiration of ethno-political instability, both in Moldova and in Ukraine.

**Keywords:** ethnicity, ethno-political stability, new institutionalism, instrumentalization, Central and Eastern Europe.

**Introduction.** Ethno-political stability seems to be a promising direction of research in political sciences in Ukraine and in the European Union. Numerous conflicts over immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and illegal migrant workers occur from time to time in every corner of the continent. The growth of right-wing populism as a political and value orientation for voters in Europe has led to negative reflections on the ethno-political stability of the region of Central and Eastern Europe. Ukraine offers not only a study of its own experience for the development of a common policy within the states of Central and Eastern Europe; Ukrainian scholars carry out comprehensive conceptual studies on ethno-political stability and the ways of ensuring it, so their work can be useful for the European community. Works such as the monograph by S. Aslanov «The Political and Legal Principles of Ethno-political Stability of the State in the Context of Global Challenges»<sup>3</sup> is a vivid example of the contribution made by domestic scholars to develop the concept and its further scientific application.

In the historical context, stability is one of the inherent characteristics of society's development within the framework of state self-organization. According to Ukrainian ethnic policy scholars Y. Rymarenko, S. Rymarenko, and L. Shklyar, the existence of any organic system is based on self-organization principles. Self-organization is a way for any organism to function – both natural and social, it has an antientropic character. In an effort towards self-preservation and development, the body reacts actively to everything that threatens its existence. Researchers emphasize that in society, in particular in its ethnonational sphere, where antientropic principles also operate, self-preservation takes place through the complication of the internal system of ethnonational life. Proceeding from this, we agree with S. Aslanov that the transition to a more complex structure can more effectively counteract entropy and stabilize the ethno-political system. In order to ensure self-preservation and development, the ethno-political system should be characterized by such a sign as ethno-political stability<sup>4</sup>.

**Research and discussion.** S. Aslanov defines stability as the ability of the system to function without changing its own structure, to be in equilibrium, which should not change over time. The term comes from the Latin *stabilis* (permanent, persistent). It is also possible to define stability as 1) stabil-

<sup>3</sup> Асланов, С. (2016). *Політико-правові засади етнополітичної стабільності держави в умовах глобальних викликів*. НАН України, Ін-т держави і права ім. В. М. Корецького, текст.дис. ... д. політ. наук, Київ.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem. P. 48.

ity, immutability; 2) the ability of the system to function, maintaining its structure unchanged and maintaining equilibrium. Synonyms for stability, which also indicate the content of the phenomenon and reveal its essence, are continuity, immutability, stability, continuity, and equilibrium. We can agree with M. Yavorsky, who emphasizes that in socio-humanitarian disciplines, stability is usually viewed not as an abstract concept but as an attachment to a particular sphere of society: economic, political, social, cultural, etc. Encyclopedias describe political stability as a system of connections between different political actors, who possess a certain integrity and ability to effectively implement the functions assigned to it. Ethnopolitical stability can be defined as a feature of the ethnopolitical system, the result of the ethnonational policy of the state, an integral part of the ethnopolitical security of the state and even political technology. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the multifaceted nature, the variability of the phenomenon and the insufficient level of its development in ethnopolitical science. In connection with this, we have to rely on understanding stability in related political science disciplines.

S. Aslanov stipulates that despite the transformation of the state and its functions and roles in the modern world, political analysts are convinced that ensuring socio-political, political, and ethnopolitical stability is its prerogative. Other Ukrainian scholars, V. Kremen and M. Gorlach, emphasize in this process the leading role of the state, which is intended to regulate the entire system of socio-political life in order to preserve the current system and equilibrium. Researchers argue that the mechanism of adaptation of the political system to changes in the conditions of functioning operates in this way. The state introduces or institutionalizes a set of certain institutions, processes, and relationships through which the most optimal conditions for normal functioning are provided – in the case under study, an ethnopolitical system adapted to a changing environment. Thus, the ability to counteract anarchy and destabilize ethnopolitical processes is formed, and it is effectively used to strengthen the ethnopolitical system of new mechanisms. In some cases, the stabilizing role of the state can only manifest itself in institutionalizing the mechanisms of political stabilization proposed by society<sup>5</sup>.

However, one should not exaggerate the role of the state and its institutions in achieving political stability. After all, the state in a simplified sense can be both a consequence of political stability and a means of its maintenance. The state is an element of the political system and undergoes changes along with it. C. Ake argues that any attempt to determine political stability must begin with the conceptualization of politics and the political system. Ake determines the political structure of society as a network of political roles in a particular society. Under the political roles falls the category of *standardized representations*, based on the predicted political behavior in political interaction. That is, the category of expectations makes it possible to predict the behavior of political actors in a particular situation. Since political roles are a kind of mechanism for controlling the activities of political actors, they form a political structure as a system of political interaction<sup>6</sup>.

By incorporating the work of S. Aslanov, we propose a state-centered neo-institutional approach that can be useful in theoretical work during the conceptualization of ethnopolitical stability, the role of the state, other institutions and institutions in the ethnopolitical processes of the region. Previous studies categorize different scientific approaches to new institutionalism (obviously it depends on the criteria chosen by the scientist), but we are prone to the classification of B. G. Peters<sup>7</sup>. In many respects the classification of the «Oxford Manual on Political Institutions»<sup>8</sup> coincides with the classification by the abovementioned professor from the University of Pittsburgh, however, we consider modifying it slightly:

1. Normative new institutionalism. It was in this direction that research began as part of a neo-institutional approach in Western political thought. J. March and J. Olsen's «The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life»<sup>9</sup>, published in 1984 in the United States for the first time, was the starting point in the formulation of normative new institutionalism. The authors have not emphasize mostly on the norms of the institutions as a means to understanding the functioning of the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, P. 58.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, P. 58.

<sup>7</sup> Peters, B. G. (2005). *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The 'New Institutionalism'*, Continuum.

<sup>8</sup> Rhodes, R. A. W., Binder, S. A., & Rockman, B. A. (Eds.). (2006). *The Oxford handbook of political institutions*, Oxford; New York, Oxford University Press, P. 23-109.

<sup>9</sup> March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1989). *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*, Free Press.

latter, but how the institutions affect the behavior of individuals. The priority in using the logic of appropriateness<sup>10</sup> is important for adherents of normative new institutionalism, which manages the behavior of the members (participants) of the institute, and the latter adopt and comply with the rules of the institute. An example may be the performance of ceremonial duties by the head of the state (even when he/she does not really want to perform this precise duty) because it is included in the list of his functions (the rules that he must perform). In our opinion, the research will suffer only if the direction of normative new institutionalism is used to construct its concepts and working hypotheses. In the post-truth era, especially in such sensitive areas as the problems of interethnic interaction, it would be naive to rely on the strict observance of all institutions' rules and logic of expediency by all participants. We believe that the logic of consequences (for example, the prospect of re-appointment) is decisive in decision-making by the individual participants in the institution.

2. New institutionalism of rational choice. It is the logic of consequences and the aforementioned direction that are the greatest conceptual contrast to the previous, normative new institutionalism<sup>11</sup>. For the supporters of this concept, institutions are the system of rules and incentives, under the influence of which individuals who clearly define their preferences try to maximize their own benefits<sup>12</sup>.

Of particular interest to this study will be the flow of new institutionalism of a limited rational choice, whose application in political science is mentioned by A. Kolodiy in the article «Neoinstitutionalism ta yohopiznavalnimozhlyvosti v politychnykh doslidzhenniakh» («New institutionalism and its cognitive capabilities in political research» in Ukrainian)<sup>13</sup>. Kolodiy notes that this flow combines the theory of rational choice (which came to political science through economics) and normative new institutionalism. That is, rational choice serves as the basis for the behavior of actors, but only to a certain limit. It is important that institutions do not form preferences of individuals, as individuals tend to maximize benefits. Institutions influence the choice of the individual with the fact that they structure the situation in which the individual is located, creating his or her idea of the possible (rational) behavior of other actors. Fundamental for us are those provisions which consider institutions as instrumental structures, the purpose of which is the solution to problems that arise in the process of interaction between individuals or their groups<sup>14</sup>. We believe that these methodological settings will allow us to re-analyze interethnic interactions, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe, in a new way, in order to explore the policies that are implemented in the institutions (both formal and informal) in these states and compare their effectiveness.

The author of this scientific direction is the Nobel laureate D. North, who outlined his main position in the work «Institutions, institutional change, and economic performance»<sup>15</sup>. North agrees that institutions are the «rules of the game», created by the person-restrictive framework that organizes the relationship between individuals. Institutional changes determine the existing frameworks within which an individual can make choices. Similarly, these changes determine the nature of the dependence of reality from the path of previous development (path dependent). That is, institutions define and limit the set of alternatives that each individual possesses. It is important here that institutions can be as formal (rules invented by people that are expressed in concrete form and content) and informal, such as conventional conventions and codes of conduct. Institutional restrictions include both a ban on certain actions and directives and a list of conditions under which certain actions may be committed<sup>16</sup>. In our opinion, such restrictions in the field of interethnic interactions can be regulated by the state of immigration, the definition of a range of problems, and the establishment of the «rules of the game» (formal legal acts regulating the actual implementation of migration processes). An important element of the functioning of institutions is that the establishment of a violation does not require special efforts

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<sup>10</sup> Hague, R., & Harrop, M. (2004). *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, P. 76.

<sup>11</sup> Peters, B.G. (2005). *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The 'New Institutionalism'*, Continuum. P. 19.

<sup>12</sup> Weingast, B.R. (1998). Political Institutions: Rational Choice Perspectives, in R.E. Goodin & Klingemann, Hans-Dieter (Eds.), *A New Handbook of Political Science*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, P. 169.

<sup>13</sup> Колодій, А. (2011). «Неоінституціоналізм та його пізнавальні можливості в політичних дослідженнях», *Вісник Львівського університету. Серія філософсько-політологічні студії*, № 1, С. 133-134.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem. P. 133.

<sup>15</sup> North, D.C. (1990). *Institutions, institutional change, and economic performance*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem. P. 3-4.

to punish the offender. Such an example might be illegal immigration and appropriate state regulation of identifying and deporting illegal immigrants. This problem is acutely facing all the European states without exception and deserves detailed analysis in the future.

Without going into the philosophical or legal aspect of the content of this problem (violation of the rules, as such), we believe that, to understand the problems of interethnic interaction, it is important (similar to D. North's sports competition) to clearly distinguish the rules of the game from the players. The rules (institutions) that are formed and performed by actors determine the course and the order of the game of the political process. The goal of the player (subject, actor) is to win the game by their own forces or a combination of efforts with other players (actors). However, the tactics that the latter can apply may be fair (within the institutions), but may also be unfair. The example of immigration, both legal and illegal, of interethnic interactions generated by these processes, in our opinion, is indicative of the institutional mechanisms of interaction in a multinational society.

3. Historical new institutionalism. S. Krasner, S. Steinmo, K. Thelen, and F. Longstreth argued that it is important to analyze the historical consequences activities for the analysis of institutions; without this, it is impossible to investigate how the institutions formed and structured the political process<sup>17</sup>. It is equally important what alternatives to choosing one or another policy (a political solution) were available and what cause-effect relationships arose after their implementation or adoption of one of them. In the course of historical new institutionalism, there is a statement that we believe cannot be overlooked because it is important for our study: politics in the implementation of institutions are consistently dependent (the above-mentioned principle of *path dependent*). They initiate and receive a programmed algorithm for performance and results are obtained, and they should act in the future as they did in the past<sup>18</sup>. This is, according to our assumption, the true duration of fundamental institutional changes (both formal and informal). In his work «Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy»<sup>19</sup>, R. Putnam and colleagues explain the reasons behind the backwardness of the South of Italy by «slipping» into formal institutional changes as a result of the powerful resistance of informal institutions. Putnam noted that two centuries of written constitutions in the world should have been accustomed to realizing that often writing them is «a process of writing with forks on the water», and institutional reforms do not always change politics; «Old wine in new bottles» as R. Putnam characterized the institutional changes in Italy and, accordingly, the lack of changes in real political life<sup>20</sup>. Though we consider other trends of new institutionalism to be less tangent to our study, we need to briefly mention them.

4. Sociological new institutionalism is closely linked to normative new institutionalism, but organizations as the basis of institutions, and understanding culture and norms as the basis of institutions make this flow somewhat distinctive. J. March and J. Olsen<sup>21</sup>, P. DiMaggio and W. Powell<sup>22</sup> emphasize the «ways of the people», «behavioral patterns» and «cognitive maps» as social institutions critical to understanding social, political and economic interactions<sup>23</sup>.

5. Societal new institutionalism (sometimes defined as «network institutionalism»)<sup>24</sup> is mainly focused on structuring the interaction of state and society. Given that state institutions themselves can sometimes form a complex network of interactions, the subject of attention is also the nature of the interaction between the actual institutions of the state.

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<sup>17</sup> Steinmo, S., Thelen, K., & Longstreth, F. (Eds.). (1992). *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>18</sup> Krasner, S.D. (1984). «Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics», *Comparative Politics*, № 16(2), P. 223-246.

<sup>19</sup> Putnam, R.D., Leonardi, R., & Nanetti, R.Y. (1994). *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem. P. 17-18.

<sup>21</sup> March, J.G., & Olsen, J.P. (1989). *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*, Free Press.

<sup>22</sup> Powell, W.W., & DiMaggio, P.J. (1991). *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, University of Chicago Press.

<sup>23</sup> Smelser, N.J., & Baltes, P.B. (Eds.). (2001). *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences*, 1st ed, Vols. 1–26. Amsterdam; New York: Elsevier.

<sup>24</sup> Ansell, C. (2006). Network Institutionalism, in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, P. 75–89.

6. Empirical new institutionalists, according to B. G. Peters, are closest to the «old institutionalism». Supporters of the current trend (such as E. Immergut<sup>25</sup>) distinguish the decisive influence of government policies and variations of these decisions (policies and choices) on the structure of the government as an institution<sup>26</sup>.

The problem of ethnopolitical stability is of great practical importance not only for Ukraine but also for Moldova. The neighbouring state has been suffering from the targeted actions of the Russian Federation since 1992, which uses the peculiarities of the ethnic composition of Moldova, its history and the language issue for producing an ethnopolitical destabilization's zone on the border with Ukraine. It is known that Moscow (and not recognized Transnistria as well) is extremely sceptical of the European integration aspirations of the political elite and citizens of Moldova. The Russian Federation skillfully uses nostalgia for the Soviet Union in the older generation, phantom pains from the breakdown of economic ties, a large number of migrant workers from Moldova in Russian Federation, failures in cooperation with the European Union for the permanent inspiration of ethnopolitical destabilization in the region. It should be noted that from time to time Moscow uses the Gagauz issue to diversify approaches in the aforementioned process of ethnopolitical destabilization in Moldova. Such Moscow's approaches are hard to friendly both to Moldova and to the European Union. It is important that the political elites of Moldova (and its citizens) understand that the Russian Federation is a skilful manipulator, a state headed by a former KGB / FSB employee who does not resist any methods to achieve their goals. Obviously, Moldova (as well as Ukraine) faces (and will face) a lot of difficulties, including ethnopolitical in its path towards EU. However, the clear crystallization of national interests, the understanding of these national interests by the general public will be a reliable fence in the inspiration of ethnopolitical instability, both in Moldova and in Ukraine.

**Conclusion.** The above-mentioned ethnopolitical stability and the trends of new institutionalism are worthy of attention and interesting from a scientific and practical point of view. Nevertheless, we emphasize the importance of new institutionalism, in particular its characteristic of limited rational choice as a promising approach in the study of interethnic interactions, an approach that will explain why certain decisions were made by actors (rational choice), why others were not adopted (limitation in the form of norms and institutions) and why it is so difficult to carry out institutional and organizational transformations (consistent dependence and influence of informal institutions).

However, aware of the variability of approaches and methods for solving a scientific problem, we believe that state-centered new institutionalism might be introduced. The use of this approach does not mean a conceptually new understanding of the use of new institutionalism in political science, but will allow us "to shift" the emphasis of research towards the state as one of the most important institutions in interethnic relations. Absolutely all social relations, all levels of interaction, even informal or illegal, are formed in one way or another and under the influence of the "institutional gravity" of the state affect decision-making by individuals and institutions, processes, ethnopolitical relations, and problems in interethnic interactions. It is the role and activities of the state that can help solve and resolve the problems of interethnic interaction in Central and Eastern Europe.

The problem of scientifically understanding ethnopolitical stability, which is associated with complicated, contradictory democratization processes, state building, and nation-building, is now acute in Ukraine. Ethnopolitical stability can be seen as a component of political stability or one of its varieties. By analyzing the theories of political stability of Western and domestic researchers, as well as studying ethnopolitical processes in Ukraine, it has been proved that most of the characteristics of political stability are representative of ethnopolitical stability, while the political stability is a wider phenomenon, since, in addition to political (including foreign policy), it contains an ethnic component, which has a significant stabilizing/destabilizing effect on the ethnopolitical system.

We agree with S. Aslanov that the state should become the driver of real institutional changes, to transform institutions into efficiently functioning institutions to solve interethnic interactions and ensure ethnic and political stability. Ethnopolitical stability is an inherent feature of the ethnopolitical system, which has a complex structure and performs a number of functions, in particular, organiza-

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<sup>25</sup> Immergut, E.M. (1992). *Health Politics: Interests and Institutions in Western Europe*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>26</sup> Peters, B.G. (2005). *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The 'New Institutionalism'*, Continuum. P. 19-20.

tional and institutional. Therefore, it is important to understand that such acts of the state in ensuring ethno-political stability require legitimacy in the eyes of individuals (and this supposed to be performed with the state's informational resources) and substantial time limits.

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