

UDC 324

Christianity and the right turn in Europe

Genri T. Sardaryan

PhD in Politology, Acting Dean,
Faculty of public administration,
Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University)
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation,
119454, 76 Vernadskogo av., Moscow, Russian Federation;
e-mail: henrysardaryan@gmail.com

Dzerassa V. Eleeva

Lecturer,
Department of English language,
Faculty of public administration,
Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University)
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation,
119454, 76 Vernadskogo av., Moscow, Russian Federation;
e-mail: dz.eleeva@gmail.com

Abstract

The subject of this article is the influence of civilizational and religious factor on a series of political events and processes that took place in Western countries in recent years: Brexit, the victory of the National front in France and The United Kingdom Independence Party in European Parliament elections, the victory of Donald Trump. These events and processes constitute a form of social protest on the current global situation, destroying national borders, traditional culture and values. The authors pay special attention on the influence of Christian factor on a right turn in the West. The authors widely use such methods as dialectical, local, comparative, systemic, and others. The authors conclude that the conservative trend in the modern world is becoming increasingly popular, largely due to the inability of existing elites to respond to the main problems of security: illegal migration, terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, etc. It is obvious that in the modern world the concept of sovereignty of a classical type, taken IMF, the EU activities, big supranational associations, dependence of the world economy on dollar and other factors, actually doesn't exist. However, the picture in which the states are deprived of their national interests in cultural and civilization heritage, in the conditions of mass inflow of the migrants who aren't assimilating with local inhabitants leads to potential large-scale colli-

sion of civilizations which, however, will be described already not just in works of scientists, but will take place in reality on the territory of modern Europe.

For citation

Sardaryan G.T., Dzerassa V.E. (2016) Khristianstvo i pravyy povorot v Evrope [Christianity and the right turn in Europe]. *Teorii i problemy politicheskikh issledovaniy* [Theories and Problems of Political Studies], 5 (6A), pp. 286-294.

Keywords

Christianity, politics, religion, Trump, Brexit, conservatism.

Introduction

The 20th century passed under the sign of world's ideological separation on capitalistic and communistic camp. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the crash of the Soviet Union, the scientific idea that any form of global opposition in the future would come to the end and there would be some transition to the unified political model became popular. This factor should have become one of security guarantees in the new, post-bipolar world. However, within that still bipolar world the factors conducting to the civilization conflict, which temporarily ceased against the background of total opposition of capitalism and communism as ideological, political and economic models, were smoothened.

Liberal euphoria has lasted for not a relatively long period and soon, after the collapse of the USSR, there was obviously new division of the modern world – on civilization and religious curves, that refers to the work of the American political scientist and sociologist Samuel Ph. Huntington, considering world political system in the context of civilizations collision which we can also witness nowadays [Yengibaryan, 2016].

The sincerity of the plans of administration of B. Obama may be questioned when they connected their hopes with democratization of the countries of the Middle East in the "the Arab spring" period which was openly supported by the US government, however it is obvious that despite a different context of protests, no liberal democrats as those of the Great French revolution came to power, but the organizations similar to Muslim Brotherhood, forbidden in many countries of the world did.

For example, after the murder of Muammar Gaddafi by rebels, Obama declared that "the Libyan people closed, at last, long and painful chapter of their history. Today we can confidently say that Gaddafi's regime ceased to exist and that one of the oldest dictators of the world is dead. The heavy heel of tyranny is liquidated and this suggests to the people of Libya not only huge prospects, but also important liabilities to construct all-embracing, tolerant and democratic Libya which will become a decisive reproach to the dictatorship of Gaddafi". It is well known what lesson

provided further events in Libya and in what condition the country is at the moment [Sadowski, Carvacho, Zick, 2017].

It may be noted with confidence that political systems and the principles of the western countries (democracy, the constitutional state, separation of powers, recognition of the rights and freedoms of the person) are not only the Christian values heritage, but the result of its existence, as there has never been anything similar to modern democracy in any other part of the world. Christian perception of democracy [Gill, 2017], in the spirit of Thomas Aquinas, assumes consideration of tyranny as the worst of the possible forms of government, as the tyrant exercised all power in own purposes instead of using it for common welfare and justice, for freedom and a welfare of each and every person, he uses it for own pleasure and benefit, holds the people enslaved and oppressed.

Historically short aspiration to replace Christianity in the western world with the idea of secular humanism fails when compared with the increasing popularity of the political forces which are standing up for return to traditional values and conservative trends of development today. Brexit, Donald Trump's victory at the elections in the USA, as well as preceding victory of the National Front of France and the Independence Party of Great Britain at the elections to European Parliament – all these events, despite their various level and status, eventually are a protest against the comprehensive globalization destroying national borders, traditional culture and values. A number of experts believes that with Donald Trump at power in the country there can be a Christian democratic movement of the European sample. In particular, Professor Howard Baker notes that «the new situation seems to shift the landscape of American politics and raises the possibility of new alternatives. Christian Democracy emerged in response to aggressive secularism in Europe's past that may only be reaching similar levels in the U.S. today. Therefore, a new political movement with similarities to Christian Democracy might make sense in the American context» [Baker, 2016].

Donald Trump repeatedly declared that he would not allow oppression of Christians in his country, and the wall, which he promised to construct on border with Mexico, is quite a symbol of a protest to open borders and it became one of the agitation campaign symbols. In this case, it is not so important, if he will construct it or not – the population voted for the wall and supported him [Mead, 2017].

Arguments of the supporters of Hillary Clinton claiming that one should not overestimate moods of voters as Trump won a victory only due to the electoral vote look extremely unconvincing. This thesis is sufficiently defective as the initial logic of the election campaign was constructed on the condition that the candidate who gained the majority of electors' votes would win. On the contrary, Trump's campaign could be built in other way and highlight other questions [Ahmadian, Azarshahi, Paulhus, 2017]. Eventually, the given position of democrats can be compared to the claim of the mini-football team complaining about the rival's gate's small size, despite having the same one behind their own backs.

Certainly, there is a powerful system of controls and counterbalances based on functioning of political institutes, which works rather successfully and even if some separately taken candidate wishes it very much, it does not allow distortions in this or that party. As the honored scholar of the Russian Federation, professor Robert Engibaryan notes: "it was on the periphery of the western civilization where there was a first hand-written Constitution which personified all advanced political doctrines of the European educators Voltaire, Montesquieu, Locke, Hobbes, Russo, etc. On the American soil, the emigrants-protestants who united Anglo-Saxons, Dutches, Germans and Scandinavians found that model of the organization of the state, which has been effectively functioning without revolutions and cataclysms until the present moment. Perhaps, the reason is in what nobody prevented the group of people who thought in a new way to create and build independently from the influence and inertia of the past?"

In the history of the USA, unlike the Western European political culture, there were no examples of opposition of the congress and the president, the long periods of government crises and resignations, multi-party parliamentary debates and oppositions. During the difficult periods of the American history the position of the president was always held by outstanding people, such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt [Engibaryan, 2016]. As it becomes obvious, within this system Trump manages to reach a compromise both with the majority in the Congress, and with his own supporters, not disappointing his voters at the same time [Lieven, 2017].

Unfortunately, for the left liberals, there are no shadow governments, secret plots and other conspiracy theories engaged in Brexit, elections of Trump, Le Pen, Farage and other right political processes and forces. It is quite natural process and sooner or later the world was supposed to come to a similar right turn both in the USA, and in Europe. Now the question is rather about in what waterway this turn will pass. Whether it will be far right direction, like Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, or more conservative, as in Great Britain [Owen, 2017].

Particular interest in these conditions is attracted by transformation, which the European Union is supposed to overcome. In a number of the European states, it becomes some kind of a rule to disorient the public of the country, pointing out the decisions and rulings accepted at the European-wide level. The similar position is familiar to the Russian Federation concerning the matter of sanctions when representatives of political elite of traditionally friendly towards Russia states express their personal disagreement with the mode set by the consensus decision of the EU.

There can appear some kind of a cognitive dissonance when ministers as a part of the EU Council vote for decision-making, and then they lament that national interests of member countries contradict the position of the European Union. Most likely, similar practice gives to the European politicians the chance of maneuver, adoption far from popular decisions, without essential risks and damage to their political rating.

Nevertheless, changes, which we witness, are not just appearance of new political players, like Movement of five stars in Italy, Donald Trump in the USA, etc. The matter deals with destruction

of the traditional party systems, which were developing in the European countries for decades: in Italy, the main competitive forces were left and right-centrists – now to the first roles there comes a party, which is at a loss with determination of its place in the range of political ideologies. In France the traditional scheme of the choice between de Gaullists and socialists is incapacitated today and we are in expectation of almost guaranteed second round between the right Fillon and even more right Le Pen. If in Great Britain elections to the European Parliament are won by the UK Independence Party, then it heads movement for secession of the EU which wins a victory on a referendum, and its leader Nigel Farage [Zavos 2017] accompanies Donald Trump on pre-election meetings - this actions show essential changes in the policy of western countries [Tritt, Peterson, Page-Gould, Inzlicht, 2016].

A number of critics claims that it is difficult to refer changes in the modern world to a common "conservative turn", considering all their variety and ambiguity. It is offered to apprehend value and its origin, nevertheless, more distinctly. Conservatism is the policy based on values, traditional for this specific country. It is quite natural that it will be different for each separately taken state, as well as values of these countries differ from each other, being, nevertheless, based on Christian cultural religious heritage [Cassese, Holman, 2016].

After the French revolution of 1789, the conservative trend began to develop widely. In spite of the fact that the conservative ideology appeared not in France, ideological need to oppose the liberal idealism of essentially other paradigm of policy and society development arose at the end of the 18th century.

Today conservatism assumes globalization opposition, and, of note, not the globalization, which we consider to be a process of development of general supranational, culture which unites universal values and which doesn't exist today. Globalization in its current form is an implementation of interests of a very narrow elite group, which cannot be carried to one state, as the main objective of this process is destruction of any borders, traditions and values [Nagel, Ehrkamp, 2017].

The left liberals worldwide who adopted Antonio Gramsci's concept — the founder and the head of the Italian Communist Party, theorist of Marxism-assuming consideration of church, local communities and traditions as barriers to distribution of the left ideology, become the engine of this paradigm of globalization today.

In particular, he claimed that the strength of religions and of the Catholic Church in particular, has lain, and still lies, in the fact that they feel very strongly the need for the doctrinal unity of the whole mass of the faithful and strive to ensure that the higher intellectual stratum does not get separated from the lower. The Roman church has always been the most vigorous in the struggle to prevent the "official" formation of two religions, one for the "intellectuals" and the other for the simple souls. The struggle has not been without serious disadvantages for the Church itself, but these disadvantages are connected with the historical process which is transforming the whole of civil society and which contains overall a corrosive critique of all religion, and they only serve to emphasize the organizational capacity of the clergy in the cultural sphere [Wortham, 2016] and

the abstractly rational and just relationship which the Church has been able to establish in its own sphere between the intellectuals and the simple. The Jesuits have undoubtedly been the major architects of this equilibrium, and in order to preserve it they have given the Church a progressive forward movement, which has tended to allow the demands of science and philosophy to be to a certain extent satisfied. But the rhythm of the movement has been so slow and methodical that the changes have been unobserved by the mass of the simple.

Besides, Italy became one more example of a similar policy failure: on December 4, the local population rejected the concept of the constitutional reform at the referendum. Despite the official agenda assuming only changes in political system of the country, actually the main objective of reform can be considered as simplification of carrying out the reforms necessary for bigger globalization of the Italian economy, subordination of its interests to euro-bureaucracy and implementation in the future of financial and economic changes, not demanded by neither regional elite, nor local population.

Conclusion

It is obvious that in the modern world the concept of sovereignty of a classical type, taken IMF, the EU activities, big supranational associations, dependence of the world economy on dollar and other factors, actually doesn't exist. However, the picture in which the states are deprived of their national interests in cultural and civilization heritage, in the conditions of mass inflow of the migrants who aren't assimilating with local inhabitants leads to potential large-scale collision of civilizations which, however, will be described already not just in works of scientists, but will take place in reality on the territory of modern Europe.

References

1. Ahmadian S., Azarshahi S., Paulhus D.L. (2017) Explaining Donald Trump via communication style: Grandiosity, informality, and dynamism. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 107, pp. 49-53.
2. Baker H. (2016) Can Christian Democracy Be America's Next European Import? *Perspectives on Political Science*, pp. 1-5.
3. Cassese E.C., Holman M.R. (2016) Religion, Gendered Authority, and Identity in American Politics. *Politics and Religion*, pp. 1-26.
4. Engibaryan R.V. (2016) Model', vyderzhavshaya ispytanie [Model that has stood the test]. *Nezavisimaya gazeta* [Independent newspaper].
5. Gill A. (2017) Christian Democracy without Romance: The Perils of Religious Politics from a Public Choice Perspective. *Perspectives on Political Science*, pp. 1-8.
6. Lieven A. (2017) How the president-elect can Trump foreign policy idealism. *National Interest*.

7. Mead L.M. (2017) Trump's Impact: The End of Sameness. *Society*, pp. 1-4.
8. Nagel C., Ehrkamp P. (2017) Immigration, Christian faith communities, and the practice of multiculturalism in the U.S. South. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40 (1), pp. 190-208.
9. Owen D. (2017) Machiavelli's il principe and the politics of glory. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 16 (1), pp. 41-60.
10. Sadowski F., Carvacho H., Zick A. (2017) The Impact of the Ouster of President Morsi on the Political-Religious Attitudes of Egyptian Citizens. *Peace and Conflict*.
11. Tritt S.M., Peterson J.B., Page-Gould E., Inzlicht M. (2016) Ideological reactivity: Political conservatism and brain responsivity to emotional and neutral stimuli. *Emotion*, 16 (8), pp. 1172-1185.
12. Wortham R.A. (2016) Religious pluralism, cultural continuity and the expansion of early Christianity: Stark revisited. *Social Science Journal*, 53 (4), pp. 573-580.
13. Yengibaryan R.V. (2016) *Islamic Challenge*. Moscow: Norma Publ.
14. Zavos J. (2017) Religion and social action in a city of posts. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 32 (1), pp. 67-82.

Христианство и правый поворот в Европе

Сардарян Генри Тигранович

Кандидат политических наук, и.о. декана,
факультет государственного управления,
Московский государственный институт международных отношений
(университет) Министерства иностранных дел Российской Федерации,
119454, Российская Федерация, Москва, пр. Вернадского, 76;
e-mail: henrysardaryan@gmail.com

Елеева Дзерасса Валерьевна

Преподаватель,
кафедра английского языка,
факультет государственного управления,
Московский государственный институт международных отношений
(университет) Министерства иностранных дел Российской Федерации,
119454, Российская Федерация, Москва, пр. Вернадского, 76;
e-mail: dz.eleeva@gmail.com

Аннотация

Предметом исследования является влияние цивилизационно-религиозного фактора на череду политических событий и процессов, произошедших в западных странах в последние годы: Брекзит, победа Национального фронта от Франции и Партии независимости Великобритании на выборах в Европарламент, победа Д. Трампа, вместе составляющие форму общественного протеста против всеобъемлющей глобализации, уничтожающей национальные границы, традиционную культуру и ценности. Отдельное внимание авторами уделено влиянию христианского фактора на правый разворот в странах Запада. В статье широко использованы такие методы, как диалектический, логический, сравнительный, системный, а также ряд других. Авторы приходят к выводу, что консервативный тренд в современном мире становится все более востребованным, во многом из-за неспособности существующих элит реагировать на наиболее актуальные проблемы безопасности: нелегальную миграцию, терроризм, исламский фундаментализм и др.

Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

Сардарян Г.Т., Елеева Д.В. Христианство и правый поворот в Европе // Теории и проблемы политических исследований. 2016. Том 5. № 6А. С. 286-294.

Ключевые слова

Христианство, политика, религия, Трамп, Брекзит, консерватизм.

Библиография

1. Енгибарян Р.В. Модель, выдержавшая испытание // Независимая Газета. 2016.
2. Ahmadian S., Azarshahi S., Paulhus D.L. Explaining Donald Trump via communication style: Grandiosity, informality, and dynamism // *Personality and Individual Differences*. 2017. No. 107. P. 49-53.
3. Baker H. Can Christian Democracy Be America's Next European Import? // *Perspectives on Political Science*. 2016. P. 1-5.
4. Cassese E.C., Holman M.R. Religion, Gendered Authority, and Identity in American Politics // *Politics and Religion*. 2016. P. 1-26.
5. Gill A. Christian Democracy without Romance: The Perils of Religious Politics from a Public Choice Perspective // *Perspectives on Political Science*. 2017. P. 1-8.
6. Lieven A. How the president-elect can Trump foreign policy idealism // *National Interest*. 2017.
7. Mead L.M. Trump's Impact: The End of Sameness // *Society*. 2017. P. 1-4.
8. Nagel C., Ehrkamp P. Immigration, Christian faith communities, and the practice of multiculturalism in the U.S. South // *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 2017. Vol. 40. No. 1. P. 190-208.

9. Owen D. Machiavelli's il principe and the politics of glory // *European Journal of Political Theory*. 2017. Vol. 16. No. 1. P. 41-60.
10. Sadowski F., Carvacho H., Zick A. The Impact of the Ouster of President Morsi on the Political-Religious Attitudes of Egyptian Citizens // *Peace and Conflict*. 2017.
11. Tritt S.M., Peterson J.B., Page-Gould E., Inzlicht M. Ideological reactivity: Political conservatism and brain responsivity to emotional and neutral stimuli // *Emotion*. 2016. Vol. 16. No. 8. P. 1172-1185.
12. Wortham R.A. Religious pluralism, cultural continuity and the expansion of early Christianity: Stark revisited // *Social Science Journal*. 2016. Vol. 53. No. 4. P. 573-580.
13. Yengibaryan R.V. *Islamic Challenge*. Moscow: Norma, 2016.
14. Zavos J. Religion and social action in a city of posts // *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. 2017. Vol. 32. No. 1. P. 67-82.