

Conceptual definition and principles of regionalism and ethnopolitical and territorial nature of its verification in Ukraine

The article is dedicated to analyzing the theoretical, methodological and empirical features of the phenomenon of regionalism. The researcher offered a conceptual definition and principles of regionalism in its European determination and outlined territorial and ethnopolitical nature of regionalism in Ukraine, argued that Ukraine is ethnically and politically complex country, because of its determination by the diverse regional structure. The author confirmed that Ukraine is recently characterized with the spreading understanding of regionalism as an option or a way of solving ethnic and regional issues within individual states and international organizations, and, due to the epistemological aspect, a scientific approach to knowledge and solving such problems. The research noticed that the Ukrainian interpretation of regionalism is different from the European one.

Key words: region, regionalism, ethnicity, politicization of ethnicity, political process, Ukraine.

Концептуальне визначення і принципи регіоналізму й етнополітична та територіальна природа його верифікації в Україні

У статті розглянуто теоретико-методологічні та емпіричні особливості феномену регіоналізму. Запропоновано концептуальне визначення та принципи регіоналізму у європейській детермінації та описано його етнополітичну та територіальну природу в Україні. Аргументовано, що Україна – це складна в етнополітичному контексті країна, адже вона детермінована різномірною регіональною структурою. Підтверджено, що в Україні останнім часом поширюється розуміння регіоналізму як варіанту/способу розв'язання етнонаціональних та регіональних проблем у межах окремих держав і їхніх міжнародних об'єднань, а в гносеологічному аспекті – як наукового підходу в пізнанні та розв'язанні таких проблем. Помічено, що українська інтерпретація регіоналізму відрізняється від європейської та має іншу природу.

Ключові слова: регіон, регіоналізм, етнічність, політизація етнічності, політичний процес, Україна.

Regionalization of political space (political regionalization) is one of the most widely spread phenomena in the modern world. Thus, in the course of the last decade, as the European example shows, political regionalism has proved to be more or less effective answer to the current challenges, what allowed to interpret political regionalization as a counterbalance to political and integration processes. But despite this, the conceptual definition and interpretation of the principles of regionalism are not unified, and therefore, require specification, generalization, as well as verification. Consequently, the research is composed of two parts: in the first one, the essence and principles of such phenomena as region, regionalism and regionalization from the theoretical and methodological perspective have been determined, while in the second part reasonability and peculiarity of political (ethno-political and political-territorial) regionalism in Ukraine have been verified. Thus, the connection between political and territorial factors, as well as factors of cross-ethnic correlation within the construction of the essence of regionalism has been determined. It became possible due to the studies conducted by the following scientists: M. Koter¹, A. Hurrel², E. Tompson³, T. Viurtenberher and R. Kolysko⁴, S. Huntington⁵, J. O'Loughlin⁶, S. Taran⁷, M. Riabchuk⁸, A. Muradian⁹, A. Makarychev¹⁰, I. Kuras¹¹, O. Kryvytska¹², O. Stehni and M. Churylov¹³, I. Busyhyna¹⁴, I. Zvarych¹⁵, R. Turovskiy¹⁶, V. Ustyomenko¹⁷ and others.

On the basis of the abovementioned scholars' studies it is possible to consolidate a scientific position, according to which processes of political regionalization take place in several dimensions. The first one is nominally national regional policy, implementation of which is predetermined by the necessity to overcome structural divergences in the course of social and economic development of the country's

¹ M. Koter, *Region polityczny – geneza, ewolucja i morfologia*, [w:] K. Handke (ed.), *Region, regionalizm – pojęcia i rzeczywistość*, Wyd. SOW 1993.

² A. Hurrel, *Expanding in Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics*, „Review of International Studies” 1995, vol 21, nr. 4, s. 331–358.

³ E. Tompson, *Rebiony, rebionalizatsiia ta rebionalizm u suchasniy Yevropi*, [w:] *Hlobalizatsiia. Rebionalizatsiia. Rebionalna polityka*, Wyd. Alma-mater 2002, s. 95–110.

⁴ T. Viurtenberher, R. Kolysko, *Deiaki kontseptualni polozhennia reformuvannia orhanizatsii derzhavnoi vlady: rebionalnyi aspekt*, Wyd. Prohrama Tacis Yevropeiskoho Soiuzu 2001.

⁵ S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Wyd. Simon & Schuster 1997.

⁶ J. O'Loughlin, *The Regional Factor in Contemporary Ukrainian Politics: Scale, Place, Space or Bogus Effect?*, „Post-Soviet Geography and Economics” 2001, vol 42, nr. 1, s. 1–33.

⁷ S. Taran, *Pidkbody do vryuchennia rebionalizmu ta etnichnykh hrup u zakbidniy politolohii: bipotezy dlia Ukrainy*, „Nezalezhnyi kulturolohichnyi chasopys „Yr” 2013.

⁸ M. Riabchuk, *Dvi Ukrainy: realni mezhi, virtualni ibry*, Wyd. Krytyka 2003.

⁹ A. Muradian, *Rebionalizm kak problema polytolohyy*, „Vestnyk Moskovskoho hosudarstvennogo unyversyteta” – „Seryia 18: „Sotsyolohiya y polytolohiya” 1995, vol 3, s. 83–89.

¹⁰ A. Makarychev, *Federalizm y rebionalizm: evropeiskye tradytsyy, rossiyskiye perspektivy*, „Polytycheskyye yssledovaniya” 1994, vol 5, s. 152–155.

¹¹ I. Kuras, *Etnopolitohiia. Pershi kroky stanovlennia*, Wyd. Geneza 2004.

¹² O. Kryvytska, *Rebionalni modyfikatsii polikulturnykh vidnimmostei Ukrainy*, „Naukovi zapysky”: „Kurasivski chytannia – 2005” 2006, vol 30, nr. 1, s. 248–264.

¹³ O. Stehni, M. Churylov, *Rebionalizm v Ukraini yak ob'ekti sotsiolohichnogo doslidzhennia*, Kiev 1998.

¹⁴ I. Busyhyna, *Nastoiashchee y budushchee „Evropy rebionov”*, „Myrovaia ekonomika i mezhnunarodnye otnosheniya” 1993, vol 9, s. 78–86.

¹⁵ I. Zvarych, *Vplyv rebionalizmu na polityzatsiiu etnichnosti*, „Suchasna ukrainska polityka. Polityky i politolohy pro nei”: Spetsvyпуск: Politychni tekhnolohii” 2008, s. 119–135.

¹⁶ R. Turovskiy, *Balans otnosheniya „tsentr-rebiony” kak osnova terytorialno-hosudarstvennogo stroitelstva*, „Myrovaia ekonomika i mezhnunarodnye otnosheniya” 2003, vol 12, s. 54–65.

¹⁷ V. Ustyomenko, *Etnopolitychni protsesy: stan ta osoblyvosti yikh proiavu v rebionalnomu rozryzi*, „Naukovi zapysky”: Ser. „Politolohiia i etnolohiia” 2002, vol 19, s. 73–117.

territories. Motivation is presupposed by a potential threat on the side of economically backward areas for the country's national security, as such territories do not give an opportunity to provide stability, and therefore social predictability. This level is mostly connected with such notion of traditional society as national interest. The second dimension means regional policy of any international organization or any other country as to the territories of the analyzed state (motives are the same, as adjusted for the whole political region in all its globalization manifestations). And finally, the third dimension is closely related to the reasons of politicalization, what means, that there are countries which draw other territories all over the region and unite them on the grounds of similarity of structural ideas, and there are states which "allow" themselves to be united. This problem is usually interpreted along with the notions of regional leadership, system of regional security, geopolitics.

But such consolidated position as to defining levels and dimensions of regionalization does not mean the unity of scientific views on the essence of regionalism and definition of the notion "region". To determine and solve the problem let us focus on various theoretical and methodological aspects of interpreting the key notions and analyzed phenomena, in particular on their juridical, historical, economical, geopolitical, cultural and other attributes. Each of them is concentrated only on one aspect, neglecting the rest of important characteristics. Therefore, first of all it is necessary to determine what has been lying in the essence of regionalism in the course of the whole period, since the notion became the object of political science, to systematize received knowledge, and then to verify it on the examples of ethno-political and territorial reality of Ukraine.

Thus, it is known, that in early 20th century regionalism was understood as philosophic and historical conception, which only presupposed an alternative for integration processes within the region, whereas the latter was interpreted as a certain group of countries, joined by neighboring geographical position and common cultural features, as well as the status of political actor in a historical-political process obtained by a group of certain countries. In the history of political thought the abovementioned theory was named as an "old regionalism"¹⁸. Since the middle of the 20th century, especially in Western European countries, interest in the research of regionalism has grown, what was stipulated by the integration processes within the European Union. This direction of study was characterized by interpretation of the region as a sub-national link in the mechanism of state power, actualized between the national and local levels. Similar interpretation of regionalism was introduced within the conception of "Europe of regions" (or the so-called "Nice school" of regional investigation) that worked out the position, due to which optimal units of sub-European level are – regions with equal number of population. Besides, the main principles of the "Europe of regions" model, elaborated by scholars headed by A. Mark, are as follows: regions' autonomy within the borders of current states and within the frames of the EU; cross-border cooperation between the neighboring regions of different countries; subsidiary principle – delegation to the center those residuary powers, which

¹⁸ A. Muradian, *Rehyonalyzm kak problema polytolohyy*, „Vestnyk Moskovskoho gosudarstvennogo unyversyteta“ – „Seryia 18: „Sotsyolohyia y polytolohyia““ 1995, vol 3, s. 83–89.

concern a limited circle of issues and cannot be solved at the regional level; maximum participation in the process of political decision-taking by means of approaching power to voters¹⁹.

American researcher L. Snyder interprets regionalism in the same way and combines the usage of the terms “regionalism” and “regionalization” with “determination of the state and process of dividing the country into separate parts and forming combination of several countries which act as one unity”²⁰. Another famous American scholar J. Rosenau explains regionalization as a “contradictory process of fragmentation and integration”. The term “fragmentation” is believed to be the synonym to the notion (its etymology signifies unification of fragmentation and integration). Being more distinctive as to regionalism Polish scholar M. Koter²¹ interprets it as a form of the state system, which is an intermediate type between federalism and unitarianism. The author equates the notion of “regionalism” with “unitary decentralized government system”, as the countries characterized by this political system are defined as “regional countries”.

Approximately at the same time (starting with the 30s of the 20th century) some scholars, especially American ones, started interpreting regionalism as a methodology of research and planning of social and political processes. According to V. Bernsdorf’s definition “regionalism is a notion, used to describe a wider sense of people’s exchange relation, which are referred to the geographical places and compose a part of something bigger”²². From the point of view of G. Theodorson and A. Theodorson regionalism is “such an approach as to the person’s activity, which is focused on the geographical region as a unity of analysis, underlying interdependence between people and their direct natural state”²³. Namely, as a result of this scientific position and due to activation of disintegration processes within the countries, which managed to assimilate ethnic groups (for example in Great Britain, France or Italy), since the middle of the 20th century regionalism has been interpreted as a mass political movement for self-administration within certain territories, which in accordance with their particularities of political and historical development and cultural heritage differ from the rest of the country’s areas.

Within this theoretical and methodological direction, the notion of regionalism, proposed by a British historian E. Tompson, is worth mentioning. He supposes, that regionalism “belongs to the way, which is used by some political parties and other organizations to promote the idea of their specificity and unilateralism of the region”²⁴. The scientist states that “regionalism, at the same time, is both an ideology and a strategy, applied with the aim of providing benefits for the region”. Quite close to this is the Russian political scientist A. Smyrnov, who mentions that regionalism is “a unity of social and cultural, political movements, which opposes unification and other centrist tendencies

¹⁹ A. Makarychev, *Federalizm y rehyonalizm: evropeiskye tradytsyy, rassyiskye perspektivy*, „Polytycheskye yssledovaniya” 1994, vol 5, s. 152–155.

²⁰ O. Kartunov, *Vstup do etnopolitologii: Naukovo-nauch. Posibnyk*, Wyd. In-t ekonomichnoho upravlinnia ta hospodarskoho prava 1999.

²¹ M. Koter, *Region polityczny – geneza, ewolucja i morfologia*, [w:] K. Handke (ed.), *Region, regionalizm – pojęcia i rzeczywistość*, Wyd. SOW 1993, s. 73.

²² M. Koter, *Region polityczny – geneza, ewolucja i morfologia*, [w:] K. Handke (ed.), *Region, regionalizm – pojęcia i rzeczywistość*, Wyd. SOW 1993, s. 49–74.

²³ M. Koter, *Region polityczny – geneza, ewolucja i morfologia*, [w:] K. Handke (ed.), *Region, regionalizm – pojęcia i rzeczywistość*, Wyd. SOW 1993, s. 49–74.

²⁴ E. Tompson, *Rebiony, rebionalizatsiia ta rebionalizm u suchasni Yevropi*, [w:] *Hlobalizatsiia. Rebionalizatsiia. Rebionalna polityka*, Wyd. Alma-mater 2002, s. 95–110.

in many spheres of people's and countries' lives, which are not predetermined by objective necessity, as well as a corresponding system of views"²⁵. Consequently, the object for criticism on the side of regionalism in such interpretation is hypertrophy of the state regulation of spatially organized or historically established communities (regions), which are culturally, ethnically, religiously, economically and geographically etc. specified, and thus can strive for their political self-determination. It even makes one famous Finnish political scientist P. Jukarainen²⁶ assume that the term "regionalism" may cover various kinds of processes, in particular movement for ethnic rights, separatism, decentralization of the state system, transnational cooperation between administrative and territorial units, regional network integration. Correspondingly, regionalism is a natural and organic principle of territorial organization of social, political, economic and cultural processes, on the basis of which D. Lerner singles out such main peculiarities of the former, such as: social unity of ethnic, racial and language etc. groups, which in fact live together; complementarity of economic and industrial units, which work within the frame of certain areas; mutual recognition of common values, concerning culture, historical traditions and religion; political solidarity²⁷. In his turn, E. Tufte notes, that regionalism is aimed at practical usage of possibilities, which are based on the natural territorial division of modern communities, and as a result it creates conditions for rational division of powers and resources between different groups of people. Thus, regionalism is internally inherent to all types of modern society, despite their sizes, levels of development and peculiarities of political institutions²⁸. At the same time, it is obvious that regionalism is constantly peculiar of the internal system of common relations in society, but not always finds its representation in political manifestations. Due to this, researchers share one and the same opinion that if it is ignored at the official level, regionalism exists in its passive (oppressed) form and reveals itself in different customs, traditions, mentality types, public activity, cultural peculiarities and so on. In this context, regionalism is determined by mutual identity, culture, history, geography. Being "encouraged", regionalism leads to conscious supporting for various centers of regional importance and to powers decentralization or even separatism/federalization. From its practical perspective, as A. Hurrel and M. Bolik say "splitting" of modern countries-nations will cause the appearance of mainly regional forms of political systems, which will be more socially homogeneous, and will become stronger and more integrated. The point is, as the researchers state, that regionalism allows to shorten the distance between political elite and average people, and, in this way, creates stimuli for deeper participation of the latter in political life of the country²⁹.

In regards to Ukraine-oriented interpretation of political regionalism (as the Ukrainian dimension of political regionalization will be touched upon in the second part of the research), the position of O. Stohnii and M. Churylov³⁰ is quite obvious, as from the social science's point of view, they prove that

²⁵ A. Smyrnov, *Rehyonalyzm*, [w:] H. Semyhyn (ed.), *Polytycheskaia entsyklopedyia*, Wyd. Mysl 2000, vol 2, s. 333.

²⁶ P. Jukarainen, *Any Space for the Postmodern Identity?*, International Conference „Border Regions in Transition“ 14–18 June 1997.

²⁷ A. Hurrel, *Expanding in Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics*, „Review of International Studies“ 1995, vol 21, nr. 4, s. 331–358.

²⁸ D. Lerner, *Some Comments on Center – Periphery Relations*, [w:] R. Merrit, S. Rokkan (eds.), *Comparing Nations. The use of Quantitative Data in Cross-National Research*, Wyd. Yale University Press 1966.

²⁹ R. Dahl, E. Tufte, *Size and Democracy*, Wyd. Stanford University press 1973, s. 72–93.

³⁰ O. Stehni, M. Churylov, *Rehionalizm v Ukraini yak ob'ekt sotsiolohichmoho doslidzhennia*, Kiew 1998.

regionalism is a difference between the regions as to the type of social relations, the result of which is expansion of certain orientations and models of behavior over the territories and their regional identity. Due to the political science analysis, political regionalism is conventionally interpreted either as a total of regional political movements or the principle of government system formation and system of government administration. Therefore, what is traditionally believed by Ukrainian social scientists is that regionalism in Ukrainian political science is interpreted rather as a complex of pre-conditions to regionalism establishment. From this perspective, O. Kartunov and O. Marukhovska characterize regionalism as: taking to account national, economic and other peculiarities, inherent to a certain region in any country; policy, aimed at unifying states in the region, which are dependable on each other in economic, political or military aspects. It means that the notion of “regionalism” has its internal and external dimensions: within the former one it is the principle of the state policy, and within the latter the notions “regionalism” and “regionalization” are identified.

As well from the perspective of theoretical and methodological determination of regionalism it is of great importance to assume, that there is a distinctive specificity in studying separate aspects of regionalism by European/western and Russian/eastern scholars. European scientists study regionalism as sub-ethnic groups’ manifestation of a kind of opposition to the unification policy of national states (K. Kwasniewski, H. Lubbe, Z. Stashchak). On the contrary, Russian scholars, representatives of the “elite school” in Russian political regionalistics (V. Alekseev, S. Barzilov, O. Haman-Holutvina, H. Marchenko, A. Filippov, O. Chernyshov) pay crucial attention to the role of regional political elites within the course of regionalism elaboration. Such differences represent distinctive nature of regionalism in European countries and some of the former Soviet-republics, in particular in Ukraine, what was especially seen over 2004-2015. Thus, it is clear that among the peculiarities of a large number of regionalism observations in Ukraine, first of all one can name their excessive political involvement, which is represented in providing definitely negative appraisal of the researched phenomenon (T. Darenska, M. Riabchuk) and in their strive for justifying current political initiatives, namely regional elites on the bases of scholarly armament. This leads to the methodological distinction, as in its narrow sense some scholars interpret region as a managerial and economic unity (for example, Donbas in Ukraine, the Ruhr in Germany, Midwest in the USA, Volga-Vyatka region in Russia etc.), others define it as a geographical and administrative unit (oblast in Ukraine, land in Germany, state in the USA, krai in Russia etc.), and other colleagues describe it as a cultural and historical territory (Slobozhanshchyna in Ukraine, New England in the USA etc.). However, in the global context, as Ukrainian researchers³¹ suppose, region can be defined as a group of adjoining countries, which constitute a separate economic and geographical territory of the world, which has much in common as to the national composition and culture and to its social and political system. There is an extremely specialized interpretation of the term “region”. For instance, region in the aspect of foreign economic relations is a structural part or subsystem of international economic relations, where the process of

³¹ V. Melnyk, L. Skochyliias, *Politychna rehionalistyka: predmetne pole i teoretyko-metodolohichni osnovy*, „Visnyk Lvivskoho universytetu“: „Filosofski nauky“ 2002, vol 4, 352 s.

internationalization has exclusively regional basis, sometimes actualized by means of political/administrative and territorial borders³².

Drawing a conclusion, Russian scholar O. Dehtiarov argues that “regionalism as a valuable-rational orientation on regional (social, social-economic, economic, political etc.) priorities traditionally exists in unitary and federative countries. It occupies social-cultural and ideological niches, being a result of two tendencies: etatisation of regional priorities and localization of national interests”³³. In the context of ethnic component regionalism in any of its aspects is revealed through the system of procedural and accomplished factors of political influence. At the time, its principal category is politization of ethnicity and institutionalization of ethnic minorities. On the contrary, within a territorial (administrative-territorial) dimension regionalism is represented by means of (conventionally) social and economic factors and influence, including their impact on various regions.

When we focus on the definition of the term region, then the most rational one, as K. Domorenok states, is the approach of professor L. Roemheld from Dortmund University. He defines region as a “superterm”, which includes a number of main characteristics – certain territory and population, mutuality of history, climate conditions and problem solutions. The rest depends on the tasks, set up by researchers. If they are more interested in studying economic aspects, then they will prefer to examine region in the light of managerial ties. If they pay more attention to the ethnic and cultural dimensions, then a region will be studied from the point of view of the territory, where one or other ethnic group lives. There is a possibility of combining different types of criteria, if the task itself is of a complex nature³⁴.

If regionalism is verified on the example of Ukraine, then appealing to phenomena of regional identity, politization and institutionalization of ethnicity, in particular its components as Russian and Ukrainian ones are of considerable importance. As it is known, almost all current theories and concepts of ethnicity, which are currently applied in ethnic and political discipline, can be consciously reduced to general methodological approaches, among which one can single out primordialism³⁵, instrumentalism³⁶, and constructivism³⁷. Great majority of Ukrainian scholars while interpreting ethnicity are following a primordialist paradigm, where two approaches can be named: social-biological and historical-genetic. Mainly, it is predetermined by the influence of the soviet research, dedicated to the process of ethnogenesis, in particular by P. Kushner’s studies³⁸. In his

³² T. Vertynskaia, *Poniatiye rehyonov v sisteme MEO*, „Humanitarnyia i satsyialnyia navuki na zykhdodze XX stahoddzia (Zb. navuk. art.)“ 1998, s. 315–321.

³³ A. Dehtiarov, *Don: folklor y biurokratyzm v rehyonalytskoi skheme*, „Polys“ 1999, vol 5, s. 137.

³⁴ I. Busyhina, *Nastoiashchee y budushchee „Evropy rehyonov“*, „Myrovaia ekonomyka i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya“ 1993, vol 9, s. 78–86.

³⁵ Primordialism is one of the scientific approaches in ethnical studies, which interprets ethnos as a primary and unchangeable unity of people “by descent”, which is, subsequently, characterized by unchangeable features.

³⁶ Instrumentalism is one of the scientific approaches in ethnic studies, the adherents of which focus their attention not on studying the objective grounds for ethnos existence, but only on the latter’s role in culture. Within this approach ethnicity is determined as an instrument, by means of which people achieve their goals.

³⁷ Constructivism is one of the scientific approaches in ethnical studies, which determines ethnos as a construction, created with the help of intellectual influence of some individuals (cultural elites). Constructivists’ arguments are based on the wide spectrum of facts of artificial creation and introduction of ethnic traditions.

³⁸ P. Kushner, *Etnycheskiye terrytoryy i etnycheskiye branytsy*, Moskva 1951.

research the scholar was concentrating on: territorial interrelation within ethnic communities; their influence on the processes of ethnos formation and development; objective elements of culture and subjective ethnic self-consciousness are largely dependable on specific conditions of time and place of their functioning and developing³⁹.

However, it is very relevant in case of Ukraine, as in academic literature there are various interpretations of ethnicity politization. At the same time majority of scholars consider that: it determines the third, final stage of ethnic processes, namely genesis of an ethnic conflict. At this stage, ethnic groups set up political claims, training to influence distribution of power and take part in control over distribution of social welfare and economic resources; there is activation of ethnic groups' activity and their transference from exclusively social and cultural claims to political demands. Politization of ethnicity (entrance of ethnic communities into political scene and their transformation into actors in politics) usually happens in the form of support, provided to political parties or political figures, who show their readiness to stand up for their interests. In some cases, ethnic groups create their own political parties or organizations. As an example one can name the Islam Party of Ukraine, the "Russian Bloc", the Hungarian Party in Ukraine, the Democratic party of the Magyars in Ukraine etc. (none of them had and still does not have a status of the regional one, as this is not regulated by the Ukrainian legislation). Besides, politization of ethnicity means: 1) to provide people with an opportunity to realize the role of politics in preserving their ethnic and cultural values and vice versa; 2) to concentrate their attention on this interrelation; 3) to mobilize them to form ethnic groups, which are characterized by similar self-consciousness; 4) to direct their activity into the sphere of politics, relying on this comprehension and group self-consciousness⁴⁰.

Detailed mechanism of politization of ethnicity is represented by O. Maiboroda in his studies in ethnical politics. He supposes that politization of ethnicity is the final stage of ethnic consolidation, which passes three phases. At the first stage, spontaneously appear different communities of national character: societies, clubs, associations; representatives of ethnicity, being heterogeneous before, start feeling themselves an ethnic group, realizing their ethnic community. At the second stage, there is "mobilization of an ethnic group", when representatives of ethnic elite articulate the significance of national problems and define ways of their solution, and thereby draw together on a mutual goal. As the experience, in particular Ukrainian one (in 2013-2015), shows that group solidarity usually starts with humanitarian issues, namely: language, cultural, religious problems and latter covers the issues of social and economic status of an ethnic group; its members ingrain an indissoluble connection between the problem of preserving their ethnical identity and the level of material welfare. At the third stage we observe politization of ethnicity – transference of the already perceived problems into political slogans and programs (it cannot be satisfied with exclusively cultural and educational activity, but requires participation in division of powers)⁴¹.

³⁹ O. Antoniuk, V. Volobuiev, M. Holovatyi, *Malyyi etnopolitologichnyi slovnyk*, Wyd. MAUP 2005, s. 113.

⁴⁰ M. Skvortsov, *Etnychnost v protsesse sotsyalnykh yzmeneniy*, „Sotsyalno-polytycheskyi zhurnal” 1996, vol 1, s. 29–43.

⁴¹ O. Maiboroda, *Debiutnie etnopolityka*, „Viche” 1992, vol 5, s. 122–134.

The preconditions to ethnic conflicts across the post-Soviet area, as well as potential in their appearance within the theory of regional development and regionalism were elaborated during the Soviet times. These conflicts can be divided according to the types: social-economic conflicts connected with the struggle for the increase in living standards/quality of life and control over natural resources; language and cultural conflicts, which are connected with a desire to achieve cultural autonomy and defend own language rights; territorial and status conflicts, the participants of which call for changes of frontiers, creation of new national and state and administrative units and rise in their juridical status. The example of the latter was the change of the status of the Crimea region into the Autonomous Republic of the Crimea, and in 2014 annexation of the Crimea by Russia, and the conflict over Eastern Donbas, since 2014. Of course, it makes us support the scientific position, according to which conflictogeneity within some regions must be classified as follows: 1) areas of acute crisis conflicts; 2) potentially crisis situations; 3) areas of strong regional separatism; 4) areas of moderate regional separatism; 5) areas of inert separatism⁴². That is why, politicized ethnicity to a different extent is the object and actor in various ethnic and political conflicts, as its representatives in different ways and to different degrees struggle for preserving or changing the status, controlling over territory, natural resources, against certain political regime or on the contrary for its preservation and participation in division of powers. One point which is absolutely obvious is that politization of ethnicity can create sufficient preconditions for subsequent regional ethnical conflicts, and consequently is one of the factors of political regionalism.

From the theoretical and methodological perspective and appealing to I. Zvarych's comments, it becomes clear that there is a kind of connection between regionalism and politization of ethnicity⁴³. Influence of regionalism on the process of politization of ethnicity and interrelation of the two processes, in particular, can be explained by the fact, that: practical implementation of the idea of regionalism presupposes balance between the political center and regions of the country, territorial and national interests, state and local authorities. At the same time, the concept of regionalism predetermines enhancement of the region's role, its determination in accordance with cultural and language characteristics, what is supported by creation of a managerial body in case of autonomy and represents realization of common interests, as well as the desire of local communities to satisfy them. That is the way how administrative-state management appear in the region, as well as regional departments, which as to their essence have different goals. In particular, regional management presupposes formation and realization of own strategy and social-economic politics.

From the theoretical perspective of great importance is the fact, that till the middle of the 20th century there had not existed the regional level itself, as the system of national administration was based on two elements, namely state bureaucracy of the central apparatus and bodies of local authorities. Just the appearance of the intermediate level (region), which as to its main

⁴² I. Zvarych, *Vplyv rebionalizmu na polityzatsiiu etnichnosti*, "Suchasna ukrainska polityka. Polityky i politolohy pro nei": Spetsvypusk: Politychni tekhnolohii» 2008, s. 119–135.

⁴³ I. Zvarych, *Vplyv rebionalizmu na polityzatsiiu etnichnosti*, "Suchasna ukrainska polityka. Polityky i politolohy pro nei": Spetsvypusk: Politychni tekhnolohii» 2008, s. 119–135.

characteristics approaches the subject of federation, in other way influences the construction of the whole political system in various countries. In the second half of the 20th century the most important tendency in the world development became decentralization of power authorities within a country. This tendency concerns not only federal states, which are already characterized by the decentralized system. It is referred to regional structures, which stay above local bodies of authority and are the most widespread intermediate links. Speaking about the European experience, it is necessary to mention, that the term regional structures very often covers different juridical units, from the federal state (lands in Germany) up to the centralized territorial community in the unitary state (region in France). On the other hand, the reason for underdevelopment of some regions is quite understandable, as the result of the centralized management is national result, i.e. conventionally average index of development indicator across the country in general, which is not of great interest for an average person.

From such theoretical perspective, it is quite clear, that the concept of centralized management is justified on the condition of implementing a comprehensive concept of state and social development. The result is to ensure over-regional interests, their over-regional leveling. However, despite such tasks, the centralized state management at the local and regional levels is not effective. This is supported by comparison of economic effectiveness in the centralized-decentralized countries: economic prosperity of various countries is the result of the fact, that a large share of state expenditures is carried out by means of autonomous local and regional levels. High level of local and regional autonomy, in its turn, is a sign of optimization of economic development⁴⁴. Interpreting regional politics from the point of view of economic effectiveness, we come to a conclusion that local and regional autonomy optimize decisions as to division of public funds. Service recipients and service payers may expect that they can be regulated and calculated more clearly at the local/regional levels, what creates opportunities for maximal democratic nature in the context of decision making while dividing public funds. Together with that, local and regional autonomy leads to economic competitiveness between local and regional levels, what is a great stimulus for economic development of the country in general. At the local and regional levels there is an important stimulus to enhance attractiveness for development of industry, tourism etc., due to improvement of infrastructure and living conditions. In particular, if we rely on the economic theory of federalism, it is quite clear, that regions enter in competition while searching the best variant of economic development. And here it is not enough to provide "areas" for industry, elements of infrastructure, tourism etc., as well as to improve them. To achieve this, there must be corresponding environment, which makes a city or region quite attractive for population. As a result, economic competitiveness can, at the same time, lead to cultural competitiveness, establishing the variety of its forms.

Correspondingly in Ukraine, politically motivated regionalism appears as an answer upon the demand of certain groups of population, which are described by clear regional identity and strive

⁴⁴ ²⁷T. Viurtenberher, R. Kolysko, *Deiaki kontseptualni polozbennia reformuvannia orhanizatsii derzhavnoi vlady: rehionalnyi aspekt*, Wyd. Prohrama Tacis Yevropeiskoho Soiuzu 2001.

for autonomy. In this case, effectiveness of decentralization is determined by the formula “less etatism – less separatism”. Regions refocus their attention from general issues of rebuilding the country and reconsidering borders on solving problems, intrinsic to their own territories, which are no less serious⁴⁵. In their turn, when separate parts of the country gain autonomy it gives them an opportunity to lessen tension as to ethnic issues. For example, in Italy, three of five regions with special status have their own ethnic particular characteristics, namely South Tyrol, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia and the Aosta Valley. Due to the specific status of the territories the problems of inter-ethnic problems within them and in Italy went to the background. It is quite notable, that the United Kingdom to lessen its national and separatist disposition, follows the way of granting autonomy to the so-called “Celt Belt”, as in 1998 a number of laws, which introduced self-administration in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, were adopted. In Finland, wide autonomy is inherent to the Aland Islands, inhabited by the Swedes. Specific culture of these groups is quite closely connected with this territory, which has its own history. Sometimes these territories are characterized by considerable language differences, the example of which is Belgium (division of territorial communities into the Flemish, French and German communities) and the north of Italy (South Tyrol, where population speak French and German). Though, at the same time, regionalization should not be confused with federalization of the state system, as the subjects of federation are granted limited sovereignty (the right to adopt laws and to come out of federation), and regions in unitary decentralized countries as a rule do not possess such rights, but perform exclusively administrative functions of effective government.

It can help us explain, in the contextual perspective, why till the mid of the 20th century, regionalism had been referred only to federative states, as due to this type of political system, the powers of the region are perceptible. Only, in the course of time, appearance of regions considerably changed political life, as it introduced some “new quality” in the political system. According to some scholars, political power must be born at the level of regions (it presupposes the existence of the legislative body, possibility to take independent economic decisions, elaboration of development programs in education and culture). In fact, this scheme functions in Germany, where representatives of federal lands have their own delegates in the upper house of the parliament – Bundesrat. Of crucial importance is the fact that local self-administration is formed according to the “from bottom to top” principle, uniting local communities into regions, delegating regional state governments rights to execute political functions of representation in the central bodies of government. In accordance with this principle the reform of government in European countries has been implemented, and regional and local self-administration are declared one of the main priorities in development of the European Union, where local and regional self-administration is based on three main principles: subsidiary, solidarity and complementability. The essence of subsidiary lies in the fact, that the state’s competence is divided in the way that problems must be solved at the level where they appear. Under other circumstances, the advantage is given to lower levels, but not higher public authority. The

⁴⁵ R. Turovskiy, *Balans otnosheniya „tsentr-rebyony” kak osnovaya territoriyabno-bosudarstvennogo stroitelstva*, „Myrovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya” 2003, vol 12, s. 54–65.; Z. Ziler, *Polityko-administrativni systemy krain YS: Porivniabnyi analiz*, Wyd. Osnovy 1996.

priorities are given to the institution, which is the “closest” to an average citizen, thus it is the easiest way to control it. The principle of solidarity requires, that the richest regions respect the interests of the “less well-off” countries, in terms of their finances and resources. Central public authority and even over-national structures play quite an important role in actualization of this principle. The principle of complementability is oriented on execution of common competence of the state and regions, predominantly in the sphere of economic development. As a result, regional communities can embody special mechanisms of horizontal cooperation between regional units and special mechanisms of vertical cooperation between regional units and national state. Thus, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany, adopted in 1969, set “common tasks”, which cannot be performed by lands in isolation. In other countries, indeed, the state is represented at the regional level. In Spain, the Constitution presupposes the existence of a government representative in any autonomous unit. In Italy, the Constitution determines that a government commissioner governs administrative activity: approves regional legislations, passes cases to the government when there are any problems in division of authorities. Finally, in France a prefect of the region is a representative of the state and due to its powers must coordinate functions of state local institutions in every specific region.

In general theoretical and methodological, as well as practical and empirical analysis, proves that regionalization (in particular political regionalization) of the state is a question with no certain answer, especially when we speak about Ukraine, where regionalization is to a large extent determined ethnically and territorially. The point is, that for European countries regionalization is a different process than for Ukraine. In case of the European Union we may consider one geopolitical unity, which has a long history of cultural and economic ties. Theoretically speaking, regionalism of the European countries does not threaten their territorial integrity. Consequently, European regionalism is one of the integration components, as very often parts of different countries unite into one region. The European Charter of 1988 even determined the notion of Euroregion as a specific region, which goes beyond the scope of national borders. Among the biggest Euroregions one can name “Adriatic”, “Dobrava”, “Elbe-Labe”, “Meuse-Rhine”, “Silesia”, “Pomerania”, “Bavarian”, “Tatras”, “Carpathian”, “Bug” and others. That is why, regionalism on the contrary to regionalization and due to the European democratic traditions, is carried out “from bottom to top”, being initiated, as a rule, by the bodies of local authorities or regional elites, which strive for wider autonomy and freedom in decision making processes, and in control over resources.

However, and unfortunately, when it is referred to Ukraine, in practical terms, interests of regionalization are represented as protection of rights of territories and territorial communities or ethnic-language groups, what is not always factually accurate. It is extremely dangerous, as any regionalization leads to fragmentation of political and legal spaces. Let’s recall protest actions in the Crimea, organized by representatives of unknown civil communities with the assistance of local bodies of government as to landing of the NATO armed forces, which were to participate in military training exercises, stipulated by the corresponding agreements between Ukraine and the alliance. This testified the attempts of local elites, which hiding behind the front of civil support,

divided single political and legal space of the country into separate autonomous zones, according to which some of the country's territories would acknowledge corresponding laws and international agreement, and others would not. Moreover, let's turn to the act of the Crimea annexation by the Russian Federation in 2014. To our mind, it was nothing else, but aggression upon the constitutional principle of the state sovereignty. Therefore, it is clear that regionalization, which leads to fragmentation of the political and legal space of the country is aggression upon the constitutional foundations of the state sovereignty. In this respect, such bodies of public authorities as the constitutional court, security service, law-enforcement services must act much stricter as they are intended to secure territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state.

In Ukraine, especially after 2013-2015, in particular since the annexation of the Crimea, occupation of Eastern Donbas and the process of European integration, another aspect of regionalization is of great interest, namely decentralization of authoritative powers without sacrificing the unitary system of the country. Introduction of this type of relations predetermines redistribution of competence, authoritative pressure and system of budget and inter-budget financing. However, in Ukraine there are no active regional identities, based on ethnic divergences, which require special autonomy. This entails only enhancement of effectiveness of the state management and local self-administration. Adequate division of powers between the center and regions, correspondingly, must contribute to the development of the state in general. Besides, just the extension of ethical and political processes predetermines deconcentration of state-managerial functions. Relations between ethnic communities and state-managerial structures are characterized by multidimensional correlation between national elite and multinational electorate of national movements or parties; competition for political domination or satisfaction of own interests – conscious national reconciliation or ethnic conflicts in society⁴⁶. At the same time, real ethnic diversification of society cannot be institutionally implemented in the system of government and is not fully represented by the main participants of the political process⁴⁷.

Turning back to ethnical and political nature of regionalization in Ukraine we appeal to V. Ustymenko's remarks, that ethnic and political process is "nothing more but synthesis of two phenomena, derived from ethnicity and politics, which of them can at the same time be the cause and effect". Thus, ethnic and political process first of all must be interpreted as political aspects of functioning of various ethnic and political communities in Ukraine, taking into consideration their possible political organization and interests, requirements to the country, especially concerning participation in political life of society and peculiarities of political behavior, and secondly, regulation of this functioning, and issues concerning ethnics' problems on the side of the country, official political institutions, realizing it as the existence of official politics in questions of direct and indirect ethnic character⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ O. Kuts, Y. Kuts, *Einopolitychni aspekty rozbudovy Ukrainiskoi derzhavy*, Wyd.Berezil 1999, s. 11.

⁴⁷ A. Lahutyin, *Einrycheskye aspekty ynstytutsyabyzatsyy politycheskoho protsessu na Ukrainy*, „Polys“ 2001, vol 4, s. 100–107.

⁴⁸ V. Ustymenko, *Einopolitychni protsesy: stan ta osoblyvosti yikh proiavu v rehionalnomu rozrizi*, „Naukovi zapysky“: Ser. „Politolohiia i etnologiiia“ 2002, vol 19, s. 73–117.

In Ukraine exists a reverse range of problems, which lies in the fact that politization of ethnic communities is to a large extent predetermined by modern challenges of particular regionalism, which is especially represented in the frames of Russian minority in Ukraine and its configuration by the neighboring country as a state forming element within Ukraine. The most important aspects of this phenomena are: danger of interregional transfer of territory as a result of political regionalization and differences in geopolitical orientations of population in various regions; violation of effective cooperation in the line of “center-region” and interregional relations; large differentiation between social indices and living standards; imperfection of management at regional and local levels. Politization of Russian ethnic community in Ukraine and its partial reflection in 2014-2015 have been also stipulated by the existence of a certain level of political consciousness. Besides, the process of ethnicity politization has been characterized by such parameters as: mobilization of efforts for achieving certain political goals, struggle for the right to participate in political decision-making processes due to legitimate and illegitimate ways; development in accordance with the “chain reaction” principle, as well as the rule of “communicating vessels”⁴⁹.

Among other major factors, which contribute to politization of ethnicity are relative political equality, economical, social and cultural problems in development of peripheral groups of national minorities; intense propaganda of the idea of national state (nation-state); influence of ethnical and regional movements in the neighboring countries and so on. In due time, taking this into consideration I. Kuras stated that “we do not have grounds to close our eyes to the fact that these problems exist and can easily become a trigger for other, more conflictogenic issues”. Besides, in a number of cases sociological research recorded displays of particularism⁵⁰.

In due time the same point of view was represented by scholar G. Makarov, who studied impact of regionalism on the process of political structuring of the Ukrainian society, and who mentioned that disproportion in balance between the interests of elites and other layers of society in the process of articulation of the region’s interests is connected with “the cliental frame of cooperation between the bodies of public authority” and actors of economic activity⁵¹. Correspondingly, negative tendencies in regional development of Ukraine are mainly presupposed by the policy of regional political and administrative groups, when powerful regional administrative and economic groups are formed around the heads of different regional state structures on the ground of identity of political and economic interests and around different commercial structures⁵². Defining the essence of Ukrainian administrative and economic clans namely as elements of political systems, it is apparent that these clans, and not parties or non-governmental organizations form and protect interests of certain social

⁴⁹ I. Zvarych, *Vplyv rehionalizmu na polityzatsiiu etnichnosti*, “Suchasna ukrainska polityka. Polityky i politolohy pro nei”: Spetsvypusk: Politychni tekhnolohii» 2008, s. 119–135.

⁵⁰ I. Kuras, *Einopolitobilia. Pershi kroky stanovlennia*, Wyd. Geneza 2004, s. 278.

⁵¹ G. Makarov, *Rehionalizm yak chynnyk politychnoho protsesu u suchasnomu ukrainskomu suspilstvi: Avtoref. dys... kand. polit. Nauk*, Wyd. Kyiv. nats. un-t im. Tarasa Shevchenka 2005.

⁵² O. Dolzhenkov, *Timovi aspekti politychnoho protsesu v Ukraini: fenomen administratyvno-ekonomichnykh klaniv*, „Liudyna i polityka“ 2000, vol 2, s. 2–6.

groups. At the same time, administrative-economic clans, directly or indirectly, due to parties' dependency, possess a number of political functions.

All this, together with the achieved findings of ethnic and political as well as political reality in Ukraine, especially in 2013-2015, let us arrive at conclusions that major danger for Ukrainian nationhood is represented by confrontation between Russian-speaking and Ukrainian-speaking groups of Ukrainian ethnos – south-eastern and western – which belong to different cultures, what can cause break up of a country. According to A. Manevych's conclusion the main danger for the split of the country is confrontation and disintegration, the main goal and tasks for the government are to provide internal peace and concordance⁵³. On the other hand, it is of great importance that Russian ethnic community in Ukraine is rather differentiated as to its inner structure with a notable difference as in levels of ethnic competence and as in integrity into Ukrainian ethnic and ethnic and political organism, what can explain consolidated but fruitless attempts of political forces and the Russian Federation to politicize Ukrainian Russians, provoking them to stand up for the idea of "fraternal alliance of Slavic nations" and the concept of "Novorossia".

However, political fact for Ukraine, as in due time I. Kuras argued, is the presence of regions with specific interests and historical peculiarities. Among them there are six key regions, namely: central, which is considerably urbanized; industrial, which is roughly called eastern (represented by two centers – Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv and powerful industrial complex); Donbas, where problems caused by its unidirectionality are rather specific; southern, which is unique due to its ethnic variability; the Crimea, where there is a number of historical problems, mainly political ones (as a result of complex entanglement of displays of regional separatism and unsolved political and legal status of the Crimean Tatars); western, where there are obvious differences between Halychyna, Volyn, Bukovyna and Zakarpattia⁵⁴. At the same time, studying polyethnicity (basic medium of regionalization) T. Kucherenko names several classifications of regions, emphasizing on some regions, where political forces under the guise of separatism and irredentism are permanently activated or at least were activated: the Crimea, Zakarpattia and Chernivtsi (Bukovyna) regions, as well as a part of Odesa region (South Bessarabia). However, another fact is of great specificity, namely that the leading language characteristic of regionalism in Ukraine does not coincide with the ethnic one⁵⁵. Thus, in the words of O. Kryvytska, regional polyethnicity in Ukraine is traditionally represented in two ways: 1) formally, there are territories with groups of compact settlement of ethnic minorities, which dominate over the rest of population (the Russians in the Crimea, the Romanians and Hungarians in some parts of Bukovyna and Zakarpattia) or does not dominate over the rest (the Crimean Tatars in the Crimea); 2) polyethnicity is the leading characteristic of the majority of regions. The most mosaic one is the South and the East of Ukraine: formally the Crimea, Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, Luhansk and Donetsk regions⁵⁶.

⁵³ A. Manevych, *Aksyomy ukraynskoj polityky, yly Kto ubrozhaet bezopasnosty Ukrayny*, „2000. Ezhenedelnyk“ 2008, vol 13, nr. 408, s. 3.

⁵⁴ I. Kuras, *Etnopolitoloģiia. Pershi kroky stanovlennia*, Wyd. Geneza 2004, s. 204–206.

⁵⁵ T. Kucherenko, *Rehionabnyi faktor u politychnomu protsesi Ukrayny: [Dys... kand. polit. nauk]* /Wyd. Kharkiv nats. un-t im. VN. Karazina 2001.

⁵⁶ O. Kryvytska, *Rehionabni modyfikatsii politykurnykh vidnimmostei Ukrayny*, „Naukovi zapysky“: „Kurasivski chytannia – 2005“ 2006, vol 30, nr. 1, s. 248–264.

All in all, in the context of ethnical, political and territorial factors of regionalism in Ukraine and phenomenon of politization of the Russians in Ukraine one should conventionally single out two regions, i.e. South-Eastern Ukraine and the Crimea. Their distinction is historical and exhaustive as of 2015, as well as relevant (approved and verified). South-Eastern Ukraine has its own regional peculiarities, as it was considerably affected by the policy of assimilation, language question is quite acute, and “Russian factor” has great influence upon consciousness and orienting points of population. As a result we can see large heterogeneity of ethnic and cultural identification of the region. Such phenomenon as total urbanization of the region also has great impact. In respect to Donbas (especially its Eastern part), then one can note the desire of some political forces to get advantage of the Russian-language factor, and the Crimea, which has always been characterized by the movement for independence from Ukraine, thus these regions were formed (and separated from Ukraine) on the basis of political interests of certain local power structures and political forces (political and administrative elites). Consequently, as some Ukrainian scholars believe, proneness to conflict of ethnicity identification of Eastern Donbas and the Crimea lies in the fact, that Ukrainian national idea in mass consciousness of the region’s population has not managed to become the leading one; there is an abrupt difference in status characteristics of the Ukrainians and Russians, when the latter could not psychologically put up with the status of national minority; historical, economic and cultural orientation towards Russia proved to be rather distinctive. Just the amalgamation of these and other factors, within the frame of the “Russian problem”, which as it seemed, resolved itself to the use of the language map and slogans for protection of fellow citizens and “violation of the Russians’ rights”, is the reason for the political events, which took place in Ukraine in 2013-2015. Senior quintessence of the problem aggravation around Russian, or rather Russian-language issue, were two congresses, which took place in Severodonetsk. The first one was conducted at the end of November 2004 and represented ideas of federalization of Ukraine and establishing the autonomous Southern-Eastern Republic; the second one was held in March 2008, when on the agenda was the question of humanitarian policy, and in fact it was ultimatum to the government, concerning protection of the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine⁵⁷. The peak was reached with the annexation of the Crimea and occupation of Eastern Donbas, as well as the attempt (though a fruitless one) to approve the concept of “Novorosiiia”, which considerably destabilizes cross-ethnic situation in South-Eastern region and in general in Ukraine.

Drawing conclusions, we comprehend, that regionalism is perceived, sometimes even by scholars, as a negative phenomenon, connected with separatism, desire of political forces, which represent interests of separate territorial components of the country in economic and political split-off or separation. At the same time, interpretation of regionalism as a way/variant of ethnic and national and regional problems solving within certain countries and their international communities, has been more and more extended especially in Ukraine, in epistemological aspect it is viewed as a scientific approach in perception and solution of such problems. For instance, N. Nagorna states, that polysemantic term of regionalism “usually denotes the approach towards the problems of the world formation and national

⁵⁷ V. Holenko, V. Tykhonov, *Severodonetsk: tochbly ne budet*, Wyd. PTs „Maksym” 2008.

development from the perspective of the regions' interests and needs⁵⁸. And this, especially in the context of political, ethnic and political reality in Ukraine testifies the appropriateness of appealing to the phenomenon of region and political regionalism as an effective and "beneficial" one from the worldview, social and economic, ethnic and political perspective.

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