

The emergence of closed enclaves of foreign languages and cultures, terrorist attacks in European cities with religious justification – such a palette of events instils anxiety in the hearts and minds of Europe's inhabitants. "What is going on? Why are ethnic and religious conflicts escalating sharply everywhere?" This question is being asked with increasing frequency. The answer is: the great intermingling of civilisations.

#### **The great intermingling of civilisations**

If centuries ago you had to sail across seas, cross deserts and mountain ranges to get acquainted with other customs and cultures, a hundred years ago you had to cross a state border, today it is enough to go out into the courtyard. You used to be able to return from a journey to your familiar, stable, culturally homogeneous world; today its borders are shrinking to the size of your home. It is Europe that has been at the forefront of globalisation since the great geographical discoveries, shrinking distances and overcoming isolating partitions.

The bloody events in Europe, in the Middle East, the resolution of questions of faith and morality through armed violence have brought us back to the problem of the clash of civilisations. Samuel Huntington described the clash of civilisations, using mainly countries as a unit

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<sup>3</sup> The report is based on the article: *Цыпляев С. Коктейль цивилизаций* // Независимая газета. 2015. 25 февр. URL: [https://www.ng.ru/scenar-io/2015-02-25/13\\_cocktail.html?ysclid=lv58y79tlq934197214](https://www.ng.ru/scenar-io/2015-02-25/13_cocktail.html?ysclid=lv58y79tlq934197214).

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#### **EXPLOSIVE COCKTAIL OF CIVILISATIONS<sup>3</sup>**

of consideration, primarily referring to conflicts on the borders of "civilisational plates" – on tectonic faults.

The world is rapidly taking on a new quality before our eyes. The powerful forces and tools of globalisation – the Internet, television, ships and planes – have made the planet small. There is a continuous movement of people, mixing representatives of different races, nationalities, cultures and religions. The difference of potentials – life opportunities – is pulling people from their traditional places and taking them to the centres of development, so far mostly to Western civilisation. No state tricks can stop this process, nor can it be reversed. The mixing is extremely fast by historical standards, mutual adaptation, deep assimilation, which requires several generations, does not have time to take place.

It is like mixing water and oil. Initially, there is a clear boundary between the two liquids, the surface of the boundary is a tectonic fault. Shake the vessel – and many small drops of oil are suspended in the water. There is no homogeneous solution, while the surface area of the boundary, a potential zone of friction and conflict, increases many times over.

If you are born surrounded by a complete international community, you take it for granted. But if a Chinese, an Arab and an African with their families settle in your village, where everyone has been almost relatives for a long time, it is already a shaking of the foundations and the beginning of the battle of nations. They do everything differently from what we are used to, they speak an incomprehensible language, pray to other gods – this is a danger! Russian practice shows that a few natives of the Caucasus are enough.

Of course, much is decided by the cultural level – the degree of mutual sensitivity, curiosity and interest in new and unusual things, mutual readiness to understand and accept. Unfortunately, instincts dictate otherwise, reasons for irritation, offence and conflicts are quickly found and the system of recognising "stranger-stranger" is activated. Minorities, in order to protect themselves, unite into a cohesive ethnic or religious group, which becomes a threat and a problem for the unorganised majority.

The endless series of conflicts and terrorist acts related to issues of faith clearly demonstrates the fundamental change in the role of religion in the modern world. Religion used to play a unifying, stabilising role in the area of its spread, creating a common cultural foundation for coun-

tries and peoples. The history of the formation of European civilisation is inextricably linked to Christianity. Clashes of religions were relatively rare and were mainly of a border character. In a mixed world, religion becomes a divisive, conflicting institution. Europe had its first significant experience of intermingling with the emergence of Protestants, followed by religious wars, endless and merciless. It is possible to compromise in ideological and material matters, but in matters of faith compromise is almost impossible. Europe found an answer to this challenge – secularization of the state, religion becoming an element of private life. But then representatives of other countries, other continents came to Europe.

It becomes clear that the atom of civilization is the human being, the molecule carrying all the features of culture is the family and community. A network cultural community can be preserved and develop for a long time even outside the state framework and without reliance on the state. We have to live in this complex mixed world of “cocktail of civilizations”. This cocktail is thoroughly flavored with weapons of mass destruction – a Molotov cocktail ready for use.

### What to do and what not to do

As usual, first of all, simple and wrong solutions are offered. Their common denominator is “return to the bright past”. For example, to return to mono-states pure in genetic or ideological (including religious) sense.

Realistically, the borders of states rarely corresponded to these features, so within the country there were proper, state-forming “their own” and “strangers” – foreigners, aliens, dissidents. Then began the displacement of peoples and the displacement of borders. Bloody wars, genocide, exiled peoples – centuries of history are full of all this. Today, the mixing of representatives of different ethnicities and religions in the world is so intense that a return to purity of principles is simply impossible without turning the country into a totalitarian society with a fascist-type state.

From the same series of proposals for accelerated forced assimilation of immigrants.

Most people are extremely reluctant to change their identity, even on pain of death. Administrative pressure instead of a conscious personal decision, made even under the pressure of life circumstances, breeds resistance. This is familiar to us from the history of the peoples of the Russian Empire, and from the history of Russian communities that remained outside Russia after the collapse of the USSR.

The arsenal of possibilities to regulate such powerful long-term historical processes that run throughout human history is very small. It lacks “ideological purity” and includes both liberal and illiberal solutions.

*First.* In order for society to have time to adapt to new realities, it is necessary to slow down the speed of migration flows. Visa restrictions, complication of obtaining residence permits, and even more so citizenship – all these filters slow down the inflow of carriers of a different way of life and give people the opportunity to adapt to life in new external conditions.

*Second.* Society will be required to make serious efforts and financial expenditures on education and socialisation of new fellow citizens. We can recall the Soviet difficult experience of mass resettlement of provincial residents to major

cities in the era of industrialisation, which was accompanied by the almost universal planting of young people and children of migrants at the desk, using a wide range of forms of education. Language courses, especially for immigrant children, are a good place to start. Schools and teachers are more effective and cheaper than prisons and police officers in the matter of integration.

*Third.* The enlightened part of society faces the difficult task of developing a common model of life, a picture of the world, oriented towards the search for common values in culture, morality, parallels in everyday life and traditions of different peoples, as opposed to the cultivation of irreconcilable differences. It is not easy to recognise that your understanding of “what is good and what is bad” is not timeless, universal, universal, there are competing value systems and this will have to be reckoned with.

*Fourth.* What follows from the above is the need for an uncompromising and consistent defence of the secular character of the state. In a multi-confessional state, the emphasis on a person’s religious affiliation, cultivated from early childhood, will inevitably lead the country to insoluble internal contradictions fraught with bloody conflicts up to the collapse of the country. It is strategically shortsighted to introduce religious education in schools and public worship by public figures. Religion is the territory of private life. Therefore, excessive state interference in the regulation of religious life is equally unacceptable. Public discussion of the essence of religious teachings is undesirable, but this does not apply to religious norms offered to all members of civil society.

*Fifth.* Perhaps the most important and the most difficult. The host culture will retain its essence if it becomes a “strong solvent” for foreign impurities. It must be attractive, modern, have an efficient economy, present to “the city and the world” an attractive project of the future, and arouse respect among the visitors. An advanced economy gathers energetic, intelligent, creative people who will stand firmly on their own feet. In the event of a crisis, unskilled foreign labour is the first to find itself outside the gates of enterprises, where it is met by ethnic criminals and extremist organisations. Russia is drawn to a “society of memorial culture” that debates endlessly about the past, looks to the past for answers to the challenges of the future, regrets the “lost paradise” and resists any change, seeing evolution as a process of continuous degradation. This is how you can build a reservation, but not a country – a world leader.

*Sixth.* A society that wants to survive in the new conditions must establish and maintain a firm democratic order. Democratic order is established by citizens independently observing the laws they have approved and forcing the authorities to work to maintain this order. The law is seen as a shared value; the people fight for it as for their walls. The democratic order is incomparably stronger and tougher than the authoritarian one; here you cannot buy a work permit, a certificate of language knowledge and further down the list up to the court decision.

*Seventh.* The developed world is faced with the most difficult humanitarian and moral dilemma. Either to isolate itself as much as possible from everything that happens in the third world, to strengthen the walls and stare blankly at external events that are far from our understanding of the standards of humanism, or to try to influence the situation in order to make life “outside the walls” more accept-

able, literally save human lives and thus weaken the generation of the flow of refugees. Each of the strategic lines is fraught with challenges and threats. It is clear that it will not be possible to sit back in Fortress Europe. But it is equally clear that it will not be possible to quickly implant the “right social institutions” into traditional cultures. It will

take the highest political art combined with patience and a sincere commitment to the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”