

The Background of Ethnic Conflicts in the European Union based on the example of Great Britain, Spain and France.

The article concerns the issue of ethnic conflicts in the selected countries of the European Union. The origin of the conflicts is explained by conflicts among different groups pursuing various interests. Cultural and religious identity, the idea of being socially recognized, freedom from discrimination, freedom of religion often have a further negative impact on conflicting relationships. The absence of dialogue between actors of the conflicts brings about the ongoing increase of different acts of violence.

The Great Britain, Spain and France are the examples of the multicultural countries with multi-faceted origin of ethnic conflicts. Searching for the roots of the ethnic conflicts reference should be made to interethnic relationships with their beginning in distant historical epochs. It will enable understand, among others, the Irish's reluctance to the British or the front pages news.

Keywords: ethnic conflict, national minority, ethnic group

PREFACE

Ethnic conflicts have been built permanently into the history of nations due to existing numerous ethnic groups with their distinct differences pursue different objectives that may generate conflicts. Initially it was the fight for territory to gain influence on more areas, develop their culture and civilization. Over time, some groups transformed into nations and manager to set up strong states, still with groups with no majority status, though having a distinct national identity. Taking these into account it shall be said that ethical conflict may become an argument about identity of peripheral group or take a form of inequality, economic marginalization or social and political discrimination.¹

Ethnic conflict by Krzysztof Kwaśniewski is defined as „*a conflict where two or more groups remain in opposition to one another, and when their main reason to act is national identity not power or possession struggle.*”²

Janusz Mucha describes ethical conflict from social conflict point, as: „*one of the types of relationships among more or less consistent social groups within a broader cultural composition.*”³

¹ M. Kalandyk, *Etniczny konflikt o tożsamość a zmiana identyfikacji językowej Tybetańczyków w Tybetańskim Regionie Autonomicznym*, ZN TD UJ – Nauki Humanistyczne, No. 1/2010, p. 37.

² K. Kwaśniewski, *Konflikt etniczny. Sprawy Narodowościowe 1994*, Vol. III, Notebook I (4), p. 52.

³ J. Mucha, *Oblicza etniczności. Studia teoretyczne i empiryczne*, Nomos, Kraków 2005, p. 95.

Today we can observe the change of the character of military conflicts. It has been foreseen by Samuel Huntington in his „Clash of Civilizations?“. The scientist claims that the factor determining the post-Cold War era will become cultural differences as the fundamentals of internal conflicts based upon religious differences. Such an approach will appear self-evident bearing in mind culture as the strongest element of a human being self-consciousness. Hence, it shall not be surprising that the culture distinctness leads to the strongest conflicts. Besides the post-Cold War era it has been the period when the self-consciousness of social groups increases and strongly emphasises the right of the nations to self-determination, thereby the rise of conflicts and acts of violence.⁴ Thus the objective of utmost importance, ensuring peace in Europe is solving the problems on the grounds of nationality. The importance of the issue proves a serious involvement of the Catholic Church.⁵ Pope John Paul II himself recognized the issue of minorities as an important facilitator influencing peace when in 1989 dedicated the 22nd International Day of Peace to respecting minorities.⁶

HISTORICAL BACKGRUNDS OF CONTEMPORARY ETHNIC CONFLICTS.

Ethnic conflicts in Europe have their roots in previous epochs. To reach present form they developed upon numerous historical and political events over the centuries.

The issues of national minorities and related conflicts appeared in 1648, after the Thirty Years' War. It was then when the rule „*cuius regio eius religio*“ („whose rule, his religion“) was softened and some ethnic groups were allowed to profess their faith. To some extent it protected those of other beliefs.⁸

The 18th century brought other problems for minority issues. It was the time when Poland was divided between three partitioning powers which governments left the Poles only freedom of religion. The laws of the invaders dictated and implemented their own policy of assimilation and denationalizing what, in turn brought about uprising of Poles against Russification and Germanization. The Congress of Vienna, in 1815 authorized only treaty protection of religious minorities, the Polish majority issue remained without any solution. Only in the Berlin Treaty of 1878 the rules concerning protection of Turkish, Romanian and Greek minorities in Bulgaria were formulated.⁹

⁴ The situation is exacerbated by the number of nations – more than 80 – in 36 countries. That means that the number of states is as a half of less than the nations, and most of them are not ethnically homogenous but are multicultural with minorities. The subject literature it is given the number of 100 of the minority groups in Europe. As it is seen, the problem occurs in almost each of the European country. Similarly – all over the world.

⁵ N. Wons, *Autonomia mniejszości narodowych w Europie. W świetle nauczania społecznego kościoła*, Redakcja Wydawnictw Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole 2005, p. 129-130.

⁶ See more: The Message of John Paul II for the 22nd International Day Of Peace of January, 1st 1989, „To Built Peace, Respect Minorities“.

⁷ J. Byczkowski, *Mniejszości narodowe w Europie 1945 – 1974*, Opole 1976, p. 32.

⁸ The rule was implemented on the bases of the Augsburg's Religious Peace in 1555r, allowed the „Lords of Reich“ among them – electors imposing their faith on others. The decisions concerning peace did not finish conflicts in Reich, but only reduced religious tensions.

⁹ J. Byczkowski, op. cit., p. 34.

In other European countries it was only the end of the First World War changed the position of national minorities as the Treaty Versailles did not solve the „*roots of national tensions*”. Apart from that the rise of national or racist ideologies over the inter-war period led to strong emphasising of anti-Semitic slogans, chauvinism and animosity towards other minority groups escalating mutual prejudices. We witnessed it often during the big, the 20th century conflicts.

The circumstances in Europe changed radically over the Cold War.¹⁰ The term – separatism was used for the first time. The term was tightly connected to acting political groups struggling for independence. Viktor Grotowicz defined separatism as: „*political tendency to separate a part of the territory from a state and setting up a separate state's structure or joining the territory to a neighbour country.*”¹¹ Józef Byczkowski sees the rise of separatist tendency as „*expressing tendency to embody the right to self-determination by the national groups who (...) had not been able to achieve it for various reasons.*” Especially strong need to solve the accumulated national problems could have been observed in the United Kingdom, Spain and France.¹²

The United Kingdom

Ethnically motivated conflicts have lasted in the UK since the 17th century. The Kingdom of England conquered Wales and Ireland and signed the Personal Union with Scotland, the territory was included into the United Kingdom. The English hegemony provided added economical values for the rest of population through: making active use of strong economy and achievements of the colonial British Empire by representatives of these groups in the British Parliament. Additionally, it boosted the attractiveness of English culture and adopting English as a mother tongue, the language of both, politics and the enlightenment revolution. Regardless the above mentioned benefits in the United Kingdom the Welsh, Irish and Scottish national movements demanded equality for their national identities.¹³

In the United Kingdom the national issue was connected to migrant minorities, and according to Józef Byczkowski the immigrants with their roots in former British colonies.¹⁴

Ireland

Today exist two Irish countries: Ireland – fully independent and the Northern Ireland, often termed Ulster – a part of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.¹⁵

In Ireland the anti-English movement has been strong since the very beginning of the British imperial conception. The British for the first time conquered Ireland in the 12th century as a result of their colonial policy they imposed their law and language on the Irish. In the 16th

¹⁰ J. Byczkowski, op. cit., p. 112 – 114.

¹¹ V. Grotowicz, *Terroryzm w Europie Zachodniej w imię narodu i lepszej sprawy*, PWN, Warszawa-Wrocław 2000, p. 310 – 311.

¹² J. Byczkowski, op. cit., p. 114.

¹³ M. Hroch, *Małe narody Europy. Perspektywa historyczna*, Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 2003, p. 52.

¹⁴ J. Byczkowski, op. cit., p. 124.

¹⁵ V. Grotowicz, op. cit., p. 316.

century, Anglicanism as the official religion in the United Kingdom was introduced, and both supporters of the union with the United Kingdom and the Irish opposed any connections with the protestant London. As a result the Catholics were deprived their civil and economic rights. Since then the conflict has taken the form of national and religious grounds bringing about numerous conflicts and thousands of cost thousands of people of their lives. The most difficult situation was in Ulster where fertile land caused further conflicts. Olivier Cromwell brought about bloodshed among the Irish Catholics in the middle of the 16th century. In 1783 it was established parliament where might sit only Irish protestants who at the end of the 18th century organized a secret unit "United Irish" . as a primary goal set: democratization, wider autonomy for Ireland and equality for Catholics. Unfortunately, the unit was broken down and Ireland was 'punished' by dissolution of parliament and incorporated by the United Kingdom in 1801. After almost 40 years since then, the Irish again struggled for their autonomy under the leader, Daniel O'Connell. In 1840 it was set up the unit „Repeal” with the main focus – abolition of the union. However, because of the wave of hunger over 1845-49, the movement broke down.¹⁶

The 19th century it is the time of two political movements with the main objective to regain independence. One of them, *Home Rule*, which supporters timed at autonomy in internal issues, and in British parliament they agitated for self-government in Ireland within federation, with their government and parliament. Another movement, *The Irish Republican Brotherhood* with the political party *Sinn Fein* (We ourselves).¹⁷

Another outbreak took place after nearly half a century's hiatus – till the outbreak of the First World War. Though, without waiting until the war has been finished, in April 1916, a group of Irish nationalists proclaimed in Dublin the Irish Republic. It is called The Easter Rising. Unfortunately, again brutally suppressed by the British.¹⁸ After the bloody fight the Irish turned towards the radical groups, and it resulted in setting up in 1919 The Irish Republic Army (IRA), additionally supported by the oldest national Irish political party – Sinn Fein. The Irish Republic Army fought against British administration and demanded withdrawal of the British.

In 1920 the London government divided Ireland into two parts, one with the capital in Dublin, and another in Belfast. Both the capitals gained the right to establish regional parliaments, however with restricted competences. In 1921 Ireland as the Irish Free State – with its capital in Dublin, gained dominium status.¹⁹ Six counties of Ulster, home to protestants who moved away from power and discriminated Catholics from power²⁰ were incorporated by the UK. In 1922, the lost by the Republicans parliamentary elections were followed by civil war, won by the supporters of the division of the country into two parts. Nearly after the quarter of

¹⁶ M. Hroch, op. cit., p. 53 – 54.

¹⁷ V. Grotowicz, op. cit., p. 317.

¹⁸ M. Hroch, op. cit., s. 53 – 54.

¹⁹ British dominium was an ex ample of systemic form within the framework if British Empire and it was a transitional form between self-governmental colony and an independent country.

²⁰ S. Parzymies, *Stosunki międzynarodowe w Europie. 1945-2004*, Dialog, Warszawa 2004, p. 385.

the century Ireland gained new status and „(...) *It is hereby recognized and declared that the part of Ireland heretofore known as Eire ceased, as from the eighteenth day of April, nineteen hundred and forty-nine, to be part of His Majesty's dominion.*”²¹

The sharpest wave of conflict occurred in the 60s of the 20th century. Data presented by Krzysztof Kubiak demonstrate, „that since 1969 in the Irish conflict about 3.5 thousand people died, and more than 25 thousand were injured.”²²

Wales

Wales lost its independence in 1536 being incorporated by Henry VIII, the king of England. The full integration with the United Kingdom took place after five centuries, in the 18th century.²³ The Welsh accepted the British hegemony by peaceful means, did not oppose to limited autonomy of their country and accepted English as an official language. Only the 30s of the 19th century revealed the first symptoms of dissatisfaction from the Welsh, what was caused by deterioration of people's material status, in particular Welsh workers, worse-paid than the English ones. A specifically called and sent commission explain the problem by low education of Welsh workers who were no English-skilled, and therefore could not improve their social status. The solution was to be English language introduced to education. The order did not obliged the private educational institutions ran by Catholics (nonconformists), which over the time stayed Celtic.²⁴ The changes activated nationalists who much stronger fought for protection of Welsh language as well as the culture, and as a result for strengthening the national identity.²⁵ Despite such utmost efforts the Anglicization has not been stopped. The national movement in Wales turned into two directions: political and cultural, it was a peaceful process to gain autonomous rights, these were speeches at political rallies and meetings.²⁶ Moreover the nationalistic tendencies calmed down, after 300 years Welsh National Assembly for Wales was established in May 1999.²⁷

Scotland

Until the beginning of the 17th century Scotland existed as an autonomous kingdom, thereby its stronger historical traditions. In the personal union with the United Kingdom in 1603, Scotland took the position of the weaker partner. More than hundred years later Scotland became a part of a real union as component of the Great Britain. Acting against the English

²¹ *The Public General Acts of 1949*, London 1949, p. 364.

²² K. Kubiak, *Wojny konfliktów zbrojnych i punkty zapalne na świecie*, Trio, Warszawa 2007, p. 71.

²³ L. Kulińska, *Konflikty i punkty zapalne w Europie*, w: *Konflikty współczesnego świata*, pod red R. Borkowskiego, Uczelniane Wydawnictwo Naukowe – Dydaktyczne, Kraków 2001, p. 58.

²⁴ M. Hroch, op. cit., p. 54 – 55.

²⁵ Although the Welsh language disappears it cannot be claimed the national identity of Welsh weakens and they are fully assimilated. The national pride and patriotism are the features of the Gaelic North and southern counties. Each Welshman residing and Cardiff visits the monument of the Sons of Wales, annual ethnographic festival in Eisteddfod, and begins with singing the Welsh “Land of my Fathers”.

²⁶ No counting vandalism attacks as bomb blasting a water filter pumps in the Northern Wales to attract attention of public.

²⁷ K. Kubiak, op. cit., p. 73.

hegemony in 1715 and 1745 did not bring successes to the Scottish people but breakdown of the family system and confiscation of the land. These resulted in waves of emigration towards the richer South. This contributed to the division of the state into two groups:

- „highlanders” – Catholic families from the north, supporting full autonomy of Scotland,
- „lowlanders” – Presbyterians from the south supporting the real union.

The Union brought about the loss of identity and the state's issues were decided in London. On the other hand, however, it gave some real material benefits to the Scottish people.

The modern national movement of Scotland begun in 1853 when the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights was set up. The demands of Scottish nationalists concerns administrative disagreements not cultural or linguistic ones. It has no reference to cultural heritage of the Celtic tradition, however the ethnic features of Scottish cultural traditions are still maintained in the form of characteristic outfits, dances or folk orchestras.²⁸

The 70s of the 20th century was the time of rebirth of Scottish nationalism contributing to obtain representation in the British parliament, and after 300 years, similarly to Wales, parliamentary elections were held in 1999.

Spain

The marriage of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella of Castile contributed to constitute, in the 15th century Spanish state. Ferdinand II of Aragon was a Catalan Prince and Isabella of Castile ruled the Basque provinces. In the initio period both of these areas kept their autonomies and separation. After three centuries the monarchy's power was centralised and integrated under the reign of Philip V. Only in the Basque country the pace of change slowed down.

National movements in Spain started to develop in the middle the 19th century. Initially these occurred locally and escalated into an a mass with time. Severely repressed are compared by researchers to mass murder of Kurds by the Turkish.²⁹

In Spain the strongest sense of differentiation occurs can be seen in Catalans, Basques and Galicians. These are three main ethnical groups constantly aim to their self-definition. The Catalans are the strongest group in contemporary Spain. Since the 12th century, Catalonia has been dependent upon Aragon despite their own legislation or strong national culture. Until 18th century Catalanian used to be the official language in administration, literature, science and art. However, Catalonia was relatively very quickly influenced and within half of a century was incorporated by Spain, losing any privileges: own educational system and state freedom in favour of Spanish governor. Influenced by the Spaniards, Catalonians gained economic growth.³⁰ Since

²⁸ J. Byczkowski, op. cit., p. 119.

²⁹ M. Hroch., op. cit., p. 59.

³⁰ An ex ample can be observed since the 18th century economic growth of Barcelona due to free trade with the Spaniards.

the second half of the 19th century it has been published the first Catalan national journal. In 1882 the first congress convened and under which it was sought the strengthening the role of Catalan language, weakening the centralized in Madrid power and rebirth of traditional system of law. Unfortunately, the aspirations were not strongly supported by the Catalonians and yet in the 20th century the attitude changed when nationalists gained their ground and support among the Catalonians.³¹

The tendencies to regain autonomy by Catalonia blighted by the triumph of general Francisco Franco in the civil war in the 20th century. Franco was against any national movements, national symbols and languages of minorities were banned. Repressions of society led to weakening the Catalan movement on its way to freedom at the moment of prosperity.³² The Catalonians, however, as a national group were strong enough to stay oppose the assimilation under the Francoist regime and protect traditional Catalan language. Catalan separatists were seeking to gain autonomy, not to separate from Spain, and expressed it in their political motto: *“Free Catalonia in free Spain”*.³³

The Basque provinces since the Middle Ages has kept a strong position, they were under the king of Castile, though never a part of the Castilian kingdom. The Castilians were allowed to use their dialects. The first conflict occurred when the king, Philip V, intended to incorporate the Basque provinces into the centralized Spanish state. The Basque were not enslaved, managed to maintain their status, though the idea of autonomy was delayed. Some uprisings against the influence of the king of Spain did not bring about expected by the Basques results. The final of the Basque issue was the resolution, so called the 2nd Carlist War in 1876, the Basques lost their legal separation and were incorporated by the Spanish Kingdom. These events resulted in a deep national identity crisis, exacerbated by the ban on the Basque dialects.³⁴ The official language of administration and cultural life became Spanish. In 1895 the circumstances changed after activity of the Basque national movement similar to the Catalan movement and it was established the Basque Nationalist Party, and very soon met social expectations. Next parliamentary elections showed high percentage of ‘yes’-votes for the party. Unexpected death of the founder of the party, Sabino de Arana, divided the movement into a group of radicals and moderate activists. Radicals tended to regain independence for the Basque Country, and the others: autonomy with economical benefits from belonging to Spain. The national movement was supported until fascists with general Franco, mentioned above, seized power in Spain. Similarly to Catalonia, the movement came to an end. The leaders were made leave the country. Then nationalists became more radical and besides agitation occurred terrorist attacks against gen. Franco’s regime.³⁵ In 1958 on the political stage occurs The Basque Home and Liberty r.

³¹ M. Hroch, op. cit., p. 60 – 61.

³² Tamżc, p. 61.

³³ J. Byczkowski, op. cit., s. 127.

³⁴ Dialect was used only by the Basque fishermen and peasants.

³⁵ M. Hroch, op. cit., p. 61 – 63.

(ETA)³⁶ with very strong independence aspirations. They were the major resistance against general Franco's regime.³⁷ ETA had no opportunity to share demands in a democratic way but only through terroristic attacks. Another minority group in Spain, besides Catalonians and Basques, are the Galicians. Until the founding of the Spanish kingdom, Galician had been the official language of judiciary and administration, then was replaced by Spanish. In 1931 was set up the Galician National Party aimed at regaining autonomy, reestablishment of Galician as an official language, nationalisation of the economy. Unfortunately, Francoist regime did not support the demands, and the national movement in Galicia lost its influence, mainly due to low national consciousness. National movement in Galicia rather supports regional than national consciousness, what may be a sort of paradox in turn to being Galician language skilled by more than 90% of population.³⁸

France

In France it is hard pressed to find historical ethnical movements, although the French revolution was an incentive for some national movements in Europe. In France, next to Iparretarrak (IK)³⁹ acted separatist movements in Corsica and in Brittany. The National Liberation Front of Corsica (FLNC) used to be very active in the 80s and 90s of the 20th century, and their major aim was to separate Corsica from France. The movement organised terroristic attacks against French administration or security forces, and became known for so called "blue nights" when they blew at the same time up a few villas belonging to the French from continent, after earlier informing the owners about their planned action. Separatists were fully equipped, wore masks and usually uniforms. They held night meetings and briefings with journalists brought by them to the places with instructions concerning further plans and demands of the organisation to inform society. In 2014 it was announced demilitarisation and the end of separatist activity of the National Liberation Front of Corsica (FLNC).⁴⁰

In Brittany, since the 60s of the previous century has been acting The Breton Liberation Front (FLB), aimed at separation Brittany from France, preserving their own Breton rich tradition and customs. Members of the organisation organised blew up in the air buildings belonging to government, industrial networks or transformer stations. In 1971 the name of the organisation was changed into the Breton Revolutionary Army (ARB).⁴¹

³⁶ S. Parzymies, *Stosunki międzynarodowe w Europie 1945 – 2004*, Dialog, Warszawa 2004, p. 394.

³⁷ Here shall be mention the role of the Basque Church in cultivating language and the Basque national traditions but also about inglorious role of some priests with far right views supporting ETA. In 1969 military tribunal in Burgos convicted of supporting the escape one of the ETA members, Miguel Echeverri Iztueta, were condemned for long jail.

³⁸ M. Hroch, *op. cit.*, . 64.

³⁹ In the French Basque Country acted an organisation Iparretarrak, counterpart of Spanish ETA. One of their most known actions was in 1984 at the airport of Biarritz before the arrival of French president F. Mitterand who was opposed the rebirth „the Basque culture”.

⁴⁰ L. Kulińska, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

⁴¹ L. Kulińska, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

At present the major issue in France is the ethnic and cultural conflict among the Muslim minorities, flow from former French colonies. They do not eradicate their cultural patterns, often live in absolute poverty, on the boundary of law, in anger and frustration, inequality mostly of the younger generation, amplifying the effect of rebellion against the system, violence or terrorist attacks. All these factors contribute in public discussion about the further direction of the modern Republic of France. Whether assimilate Muslims, even by enforcement or create multicultural state with ethnic groups freely cultivating their traditions, customs and religious. If the first way would be chosen it could lead towards fascism, close to beliefs of the National Front of Le Pen⁴² lighting against radical Islam and flowing waves of immigrants or any other appear of Islamicisation, explaining: “*cultural heritage of Islam does not match French society*,”⁴³ and makes a significant contribution to the level of unemployment in France.

ENHANCEMENT OF ETHNICAL MOVEMENTS AND CONFLICTS AFTER THE II WORLD WAR.

Regina Artymiak describes the 20th century as „*the century of mega-death*.” It is difficult not to agree with such an attitude taking into account two World Wars and the post-wars times were not fully peaceful.⁴⁴ The day of 9th May 1945 did not guarantee stabilisation either in Europe and all over the world. Nation-building processes became active and new problems occurred. The end of the II World War brought political break down of Europe into two blocs – the Western and Eastern ones. The Eastern remained under the strong influence of Soviet Union, and the Western tender to found the United State of Europe. This period is called the Cold War with the characteristic an arms race between west and east and ideological war: capitalism against communism. Within this work more important will be presenting facts with direct impact on events in Great Britain, Spain or France.

The end of the II World War was also the end of colonization by European Empires such as Great Britain, Belgium, Holland or France. Despite the desire of the imperialists neither manage nor reconstruct their empires. Even Winston Churchill did not succeeded in such efforts, though noted: – „*I have not become the King’s First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire*.”⁴⁵ Norman Davies claims one of the reasons to preserve the old scheme of the Empire was the level of education of some of the colonial elites educated in Europe and were conscious enough to their desire: „*a new breed of colonial elites, many of them educated in Europe, had learned the language of nationalism and democracy and were pressing their demands of independence*.” Besides: „*connections between colonies and Metropolis over the II World*

⁴² K. Kubiak, op. cit., p. 44.

⁴³ M. Nowicki, *Klub przyjaciół Krenla*, Newsweek Polska No. 20/2014, 12-18 May 2014.

⁴⁴ R. Artymiak, *Wojny i konflikty w XX wieku*, w: *Konflikty współczesnego świata*, Ed. Robert Borkowski, Uczelniane Wydawnictwa Naukowo-Dydaktyczne, Kraków 2001, p. 38.

⁴⁵ www.https://www.jstor.org/journal/jworldhistory

*Was loosened. There were no military forces to bring back the old order; there was no will to prolong the superiority of one race of another.*⁴⁶

Decolonisation is a process of replacing colonial system by independent countries that used to be former depended territories.⁴⁷ It is not a homogenous process and was conducted in accordance of imperial state.⁴⁸ The process of decolonisation in the Commonwealth was a peaceful process with the agreement of Metropolis. Over the initial phases the rights of the inhabitants were broaden by amending constitutions, status of autonomies were given, and finally recognising independence of the British colonies. All of these post-colonial countries were incorporated by the British Commonwealth of Nations in 1947, and since 1949 – to Commonwealth⁴⁹ and recognised the queen Elisabeth II the Head of the Commonwealth of Nations.⁵⁰

The process of decolonisation in France confronted the military movements for independence because the Metropolis took the hard line. Most significant in the process of regaining independence by the French colonies was the war in Algeria in Indochina. The process of decolonisation is divided in the source literature into a few phases (easy dating in the peaceful breakup of colonies, more complicated in the cases of military actions):⁵¹

- The first phase: over 1945 – 1955:
 - a. Wars of independence in the French Indochina (Vietnam – 1945, Cambodia – 1953) and in Dutch Eastern India (where the Dutch colonies after the Japanese occupation did not control the territory and in 1949 was founded the Republic of Indonesia),
 - b. International agreements concerning the occupied territories (Korea – 1945),
 - c. Decolonisation based on voluntary decision of Metropolis (India, Pakistan – 1947).
- Second phase: 1956 – 1975, regaining independence of African countries⁵² means the end of the colonial epoch of Great Britain, Portugal and France in Africa. Concurrently, in Asia the British colonies were decomposed. The major political loss for the Great Britain were Cyprus and Malta, strategic points to control in the Mediterranean basin. Gibraltar stayed still under the British jurisdiction. In the second phase of decolonisation the French Empire much more often peacefully accepted the independence of autonomous territories. In 1968 Spain lost its influence in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

⁴⁶ N. Davies, *Europa – rozprawa historyka z historią*, Znak, Kraków 1998, p. 1137 – 1145.

⁴⁷ Colonialism created different forms of dependence between metropolis and overseas countries: colony, protectorate, dominium, condominium, dependent territories, concessions. The dependent territories were managed by local self-governments of white settlers or local state or tribe structures combining the old structures of power with the European methods of managing; it was the form typical for the British Empire.

⁴⁸ P. Ostaszewski, *Międzynarodowe stosunki polityczne. Zarys wykładów*, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 2008, p. 145 – 146.

⁴⁹ In the Commonwealth the power was transferred in elections

⁵⁰ www.tomaszewska.com.pl/oprac.dekolonizacja.pdf, (access: 19.04.2017)

⁵¹ P. Ostaszewski, op. cit. p.153 – 168.

⁵² „The Year of Africa” it is called the 1960, when their independence regained 17 countries in Africa.

- 1976 – 2002 – period of substantive solution in Rhodesia – the last British colony, the Republic of South Africa and Namibia and final Spanish withdrawal from Africa. The Western Sahara as the former Spanish colony became free from Spanish influences 1976.

Decolonisation has changed the structure of economy either in Metropolis and colonies. The Empires lost their access to cheap labour and primary resources. There were founded many countries called as countries of the Third World and unfortunately, till these days they have been struggling with poverty. Additionally, the lack of democratic tradition in many of these countries results in authoritarian or totalitarian governments, where still ethnical wars break out. One of such examples can be the Congolese crisis (Katangese succession), the civil war in Ruanda, Burundi or Sierra Leone.⁵³

The breakdown of the colonial system led to mass migrations from the former colonies to Metropolis, therefore the biggest ways of immigrations from third countries reached Great Britain and France. It resulted in ethnic and racial problems reflecting conservative and racist attitudes. Anthony Giddens rightly noted: *„some may enjoy the new culture and ethnic mix seeing in it an important aspect of cosmopolitan society. Others find it as a dangerous phenomenon Those who look at the world from a fundamentalist position, seek refuge in established traditions reject dialogue with anyone who differs from them. Many of today’s ethnic conflicts around the world express of such fundamentalist attitudes..”*⁵⁴

Mass migrations after the II World War influenced the economic, social and demographic and political situations. Initially welcomed warmly, immigrants from the poorer countries in the 70s of the 20th century – when the time of prosperity came to an end, occurred to become treat to the indigenous people, expressing their dissatisfaction towards minorities that led to conflicts. The flow of minorities resulted in a significant broaden of culture and mentality different than the native, and it also brought about new tensions. Therefore Elżbieta Michalik-Muciek is right saying: *„The presence of the new minorities is for (...) states if not a problem then it is a challenge indicating the need of creating new mechanisms of adaptation that will allow to avoid conflicts on either side of those integrating and integrated.”*⁵⁵

Bartosz Bolechów claims that problems that occurred in Great Britain after the post-war period were directly related to the Empire and colonial heritage. The attacks were not carried out in Metropolis but aimed at security power and British seats of administration in the colonies.⁵⁶

⁵³ P. Ostaszewski, op. cit. p. 171 – 172.

⁵⁴ A. Giddens, op. cit., p. 301.

⁵⁵ E. Michalik – Muciek, *Polityka państw europejskich wobec nowych mniejszości*, w: *Mniejszości narodowe i etniczne w procesach transformacji oraz integracji*, po red. E. Michalik i H. Chalupczak, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2006, p. 130.

⁵⁶ B. Bolechów, *Terroryzm w świecie podwubiegumowym*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2002, p. 205.

The departs of the rule:

- Assassination attempt of the president of Marks & Spencer retail company in 1973 (by Carlos)⁵⁷,
- Killing a policewoman in front of Libyan embassy in London in 1984,
- Attack perpetrated over Lockerbie in Scotland in 1988,⁵⁸
- Bombing attack of Arabian newspaper Al – Hayet in 1997.

All of these incidents, according to Bartosz Bolechów⁵⁹, were of exogenous character, that means they were not aimed at Great Britain. He also notices that the British state, similarly to other European countries, meets the problems of extremism and violence among the immigrants.

In France, similarly to other former Empires, acts of violence occurred as a result of colonial history. It differed in its character and sources to compare to Great Britain. The major problems exacerbating violence towards the French state, according to the above cited B. Bolechów was: „*the Algerian problem, leftist terrorism, fighting Islam, (...) internal ethnic separatisms*”⁶⁰ as well as the terrorist activity of the Carlos the Jackal known for his spectacular terrorist attack in France.⁶¹

Attacks associated with the Algerian issue were the most severe for France two decades the was in Alger ended and took place in 1991, after the legislative elections won by Islamists, and cancelled for that reason. The fact was widely reported in France and was a strong signal of a threat of losing influence in Algeria. For fear of refugees and migrants, after the political destabilisation in Algeria, France supported Algerian government and this, in turn, resulted in a sharp increase of absolute terror, and France continues to struggle with the refugees until today. The Algerian issue still brings problems, the biggest problem for the French is the Muslim minority, unfortunately, economically inefficient. This is the group supporting Islam, as Dawid Warszawski says in his article: „*despite widespread secularisation in France, Islam – contrary to Catholicism, Protestantism or Judaism – is still a strange religion, religion of illegal immigrants, terrorists or enemies of equality of women’s rights*”.⁶² Modern France struggles for increasing extremisms and influence of chauvinistic and radical ideas trotted out by such organisations as the National Front, which incites to violence.⁶³

In addition, in France occur regional separatisms, mainly conflicts within three national groups – Corsican, Bretons and Basques.

⁵⁷ His name by birth: Ilich Ramirez Sanchez in the 70s and 80s of the 20th century, hiding behind the pseudonym Carlos, by news paper called Jackal, was the most dangerous terrorist.

⁵⁸ PanAm jet exploded after terrorist attack – flight from London to New York – killed 259 people on board (of 21 countries) and 11 on ground. Next to crash of Air India jet and 9/11 attacks it was the largest in its scale terrorist attack.

⁵⁹ B. Bolechów, op. cit., p. 205 – 206.

⁶⁰ B. Bolechów, *dz. cyt.*, p. 187.

⁶¹ Today, Ilich Ramirez Sanchez is imprisoned for the third life sentence requested by prosecutors (there is no death penalty in the French law). Sanchez is responsible for death of almost 2000 people. He was arrested in 1994.

⁶² D. Warszawski, *Najmłodsza córka meczetu*, „Magazyn Gazety Wyborczej” November, 8 1996, p. 12 – 13

⁶³ B. Bolechów, op. cit., p. 192 – 194.

The major problem in Spain was the Basque separatism. The roots of the violence can be found at the time of general Franco regime and strong national identity of the Basques. Beginning of the terrorist activity of the Basque Home and Freedom (ETA) were very close to the regional policy of general Franco. Due to revocation of privileges arising from the status of being autonomy, extension of state apparatus led to rising nationalist attitudes. The primary reason of the Basque conflict was suppression of national aspirations of the Basques and Catalonians by general Franco. The Basque terrorism actively influence Spanish policy as a strong habitat of terrorism. It is not an easy issue to be solved because based upon regional aspirations versus government. Additionally, economical crisis it getting deeper what is scrupulously exploiting by separatists to manipulate, especially the young unemployed people.⁶⁴

RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AS THE MAJOR CONTEMPORARY CAUSE OF THE ETHNIC CONFLICTS.

Large inflow of Arabic migrants seeking for better place to live resulted in undermining of safety of the native residents, in particular because the relationships between Islamic countries and the West have been always marked by conflicts. The division into „ours” and „strangers” despite strong tendency towards European integration and full globalization are very clear. Lack of perspectives for the young, unemployment, limited access to social goods to the members of different cultures leads to frustration and attempts to oppose such a situation through violent conflicts. Cultural distinctiveness of the Arabic immigrants is clearly seen in particular on the religious level.

Religion undoubtedly is the sphere that cultivated through centuries integrates and unities communities. As the bearers of cultural values allows to retain national identity of a group in a narrower, and nation – in a wider meaning. Religion, on the other hand, is also the way to discrimination of the minorities on this ground. In this context we have the words of John Paul II who said about discrimination: „(...)one must not deprive the poor of this world their last wealth, their faith and practicing their religious, as it is the fullest way of expressing Man's freedom.”⁶⁵ However, watching the events in Europe and all over the world we can see religion or deep faith brings solace to the poor and in need. Respect for all religions shall give us belief of reciprocity. Unfortunately, more and more often we can witness of using religion as the tool for military solution of conflicts, in particular those on ethnic ground⁶⁶ as well as with religious fundamentalism.

Fundamentalism is a way of thinking that supporters in an uncompromising way share the idea based upon belief of superiority of some aims over all other, overriding some aims over others. Fundamentalism is identified with religion and then we can say it is religious

⁶⁴ B. Bolechów, op. cit. p. 240 – 246.

⁶⁵ John Paul II Speech of April, 27th 2001 to the participants of the 7th Plenary Session of the Pope Social Academy, "Globalisation and the Ethics". www.opoka.org.pl/biblioteka/W/WP/jan_pawel_ii/przemowienia/globalizacja_27042001.html

⁶⁶ The example of religious wars can be crusades (1096-1272), the Hussites wars (1419-1434), the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), the Huguenots War (1626-1629).

fundamentalism which relates to movements aiming at religious revival of social life based on God's commandments.⁶⁷

Anthony Giddens defines religious fundamentalism as follows: „*unconditional subordination to defined rules or the concept of rigid opinions. (...) it is the attitude taken by the religious group that the fundamental texts shall be understood literally, and as a result – the doctrine shall refer to each aspect of social, economic and political lives.*” The phenomena is relatively new, excessively displayed on media, even abused and raises concerns and prejudices with regard to people of other religions. Fundamentalism is a kind of defensive reaction to be stripped of one's own national identity and directly against globalization.⁶⁸

Fundamentalism shall not be treated as one, homogenous ideology, as Barbara Kobzarska-Bar claims: „*some fundamentalists place the „truths” propagated by them above the written on the pages of major monotheistic religious prohibition of taking lives and calls for „saint” crusade against dissenters.*” Such action of fundamentalism shows religious and political background of Muslim criminal groups and gives religious background of terrorist attacks. It is crucial not to interpret or confuse with fundamentalism, in particular of its radical shape, however, it seems to be the Islamists expectation.⁶⁹ Therefore, it is really important to recognise the differences between fundamentalism, religious fundamentalism and Islamic terrorism, not to discriminate Muslims and not to use violence against them.⁷⁰

Religious fundamentalists politicize Islam, and their main goal is catching social life back to the system based upon Allah's orders and treating religion as a foundation of ultimate values.⁷¹ More often we can face more radical acting fostered by unemployment of young Muslims, living conditions and inability of any changes of functioning in Arab states. Such behaviours bring about the popularity of radical Islam enables young people to get rid out of difficult economical and social situations. The religious community teaches new values that to be protected makes the people fight against oppressors. Therefore the radicals make use of the fact that Islam does not belong to pacifistic religions and military attacks are explained by orders in Quran.⁷²

On the territory of the European Union Muslim fundamentalism is strong in France, Great Britain where exist strong Muslim communities. The only presence of the „strangers” brings about different types of special tensions that, unfortunately, are getting stronger because they

⁶⁷ B. Kobzarska-Bar, *Fundamentalizm religijny muzułmańskich organizacji terrorystycznych a stan zagrożenia w Europie*, „Rocznik Bezpieczeństwa Międzynarodowego”, 2014, vol. 8, No. 1, p. 167.

⁶⁸ A. Giddens, *Socjologia*, PWN, Warszawa 2006, p. 582.

⁶⁹ Islamist is described a person who back supporters of a political form of Islam. The term does not mean jihadist. Jihadist through violence, suicide and terrorist attacks expresses acts of martyr's death and heroic fight for faith and Muslims. Islamism means pollicised Islam.

⁷⁰ B. Kozarska-Bar, op. cit., p. 168.

⁷¹ Radical Islam takes a form of fighting extremism, it comes from Islam. It origins are in Muslims who wanted to bring back their native culture and religion through military way acting on the ground of jihad, as the only way of fight the West. The radicals strongly emphasis flagrant historical injustice caused by the activity of the West towards the Arab countries through public opinion manipulation aimed at discrediting Islam. Thus, in the terrorist attacks occurs the issue of the terrifying threat propagated by some of imams. A point of concern is recruitment of volunteers from the European countries to fight on the side of Muslims. The presence of the volunteers is explained as the clear advantage of Islam over Christianity.

⁷² B. Kobzarska-Bar, op. cit., p. 172 – 179.

insubordinate the relevant rules and obligation in the country. This seems to be obvious that minorities excessively display their religious rituals and own customs presenting their arrogant attitude towards natives these will bring about ethnically and religious motivated violence and riots. Such situations relatively often occur in France. France as a secular state⁷³, besides the freedom of conscience and belief, and religion is a solely the matter of individual. Therefore ostentatious outfits and religious symbols in schools and other public places to manifest one's own belonging to Islam was seemed a disregard of the constitution of the Fifth Republic and legally banned by amendment of the educational code of March, the 15th 2004, and in 2010 the ban was extended on all the public places. The ban, on the one hand was to stop visualisation of the religious preferences and cultural identity in the secular France, and on the other – as an instrument of the French government against Islam.⁷⁴

On the ground of Christianity we meet fundamentalism in the North Ireland between two branches – Catholics and Protestants. Despite the major reason of the conflict is politically motivated, it is evident the religious difference intensified the mutual hostility. It is worth memorising the events of 1972 known as „Bloody Sunday”. On Sunday, the 30th January 1972, in Londonderry, British paratroopers open fire at demonstrating Catholics and kill 13 of them. The Irish, in retaliation to the death of innocent people, burn British embassy in Dublin. The „Bloody Sunday” shows how absurd and silly it was the fight between protestants and Catholics, where Catholics destroy in their own independent country (the Irish Republic) valuable architectonic monument. Against the background of these events were written patriotic songs and a film showing the events from over a half of a century.⁷⁵

SUMMARY

Multiculturalism is one of the major challenges of the modern Europe under the influence of globalisation is being shaped into multicultural continent. We shall discuss multiculturalism when over a limited area reside two or more groups of different traditions, culture or languages. The large number of ethnic groups lead to frequent conflicts. Seeking for sources of such phenomenon we shall look at interethnic relationships and problems left over the previous times as the core are: colonization and migrations. Ethnical conflict may become a conflict referring the identity of a minority group or fight against inequality or social, economical and political discrimination. 19th

Additionally, Europe of the turn of the 20 and 21st centuries shall meet a new problem, that means mass immigration, in particular Muslims. The phenomenon considerably influenced the increase local nationalist societies, separatisms and the activeness of terrorist organisations.

⁷³ Formal-legal separation of the state and Church in France has existed since December, the 9th 1905 on the bases of Constitution, subjected to many amendments, removing Concordat and indicating France as a secular state.

⁷⁴ M. Madej, Z. Pasek, *Kulturowe i prawne aspekty kontrowersji wokół chusty muzulmańskiej we Francji*, Studia Prawa Wyznaniowego, Vol. 15-2012, p. 193 – 200.

⁷⁵ V. Grotowicz, op. cit. p. 324.

With the benefit of hindsight the idea of segregating the immigrants in camps and ghettos was wrong and brought about strengthening their identity with “Umma” – communities within the framework of the so-called Umma (followers of Islam define themselves as ‘Umma’ – community of true believers) , and additionally sharpen their radicalism.

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