

ФІЛОСОФІЯ ТА ПОЛІТОЛОГІЯ В КОНТЕКСТІ СУЧАСНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ

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THE ROLE OF UKRAINE'S CIVILIZATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION
OF ITS EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

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Abstract

The article examines the issue of institutionalization in Ukrainian society with special emphasis on the process of European integration and the role played by civilizational choice and civilizational identity in this matter. The research overviews the peculiarities of the institutionalization process of Ukraine as a post-Soviet country, the challenges it faces in the development of European integration and the general perception of Ukraine as a predictable international player. The author briefly reviews the process of institutionalization of European integration in Ukraine and shows that the European civilizational choice and the factor of Russian aggression play a decisive role in revitalizing this process, based on direct public demand for such institutionalization, which is now less dependent from the changes in political leadership. As an example of institutional changes caused by the civilizational choice of the Ukrainian people, there are changes in the practice of diplomacy, in particular regarding the use of civilizational rhetoric, as well as changes in the very functioning of the state system, which now combines the efforts of domestic and foreign policy departments for the development of Ukraine's European integration. Ukrainian diplomats turned out to be the environment that was most sensitive to the public demand for a change in the civilizational direction of Ukraine's development. The article also provides ideas for further development of this topic.

Keywords: *institutionalization, European integration, civilizational choice, European civilizational identity, Russian aggression.*

РОЛЬ ЦИВІЛІЗАЦІЙНОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ УКРАЇНИ В ІНСТИТУЦІОНАЛІЗАЦІЇ ЇЇ
ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОЇ ІНТЕГРАЦІЇ

Анотація

У статті розглянуто питання інституціоналізації в українському суспільстві з особливими акцентом на процес європейської інтеграції та ролі, яку відіграють у цьому питанні цивілізаційний вибір та цивілізаційна ідентичність. Зроблено огляд особливостей інституціоналізаційного процесу України як пострадянської країни та викликів, які постають перед нею у питанні розвитку євроінтеграції та загалом сприйняття України як передбачуваного міжнародного гравця. Здійснено короткий огляд процесу інституціоналізації євроінтеграції в Україні і показано, що європейський цивілізаційний вибір та фактор російської агресії грають вирішальну роль у пошвавленні цього процесу, спираючись на прямий суспільний запит на таку інституціоналізацію, яка тепер менше залежить від змін політичного лідерства. У якості прикладу інституційних змін, спричинених цивілізаційним вибором українського народу наведено зміни у практиці дипломатії, зокрема щодо використання цивілізаційної риторики, а також змін у самому функціонуванні державної системи, яка тепер об'єднує зусилля внутрішньо-і зовнішньополітичних відомств задля розвитку євроінтеграції України. Українські дипломати виявилися середовищем, що було найбільш чутливим до суспільного запиту на зміну цивілізаційного напрямку розвитку України. Також у статті наведено ідеї щодо подальшого розвитку цієї теми.

Ключові слова: інституціоналізація, європейська інтеграція, цивілізаційний вибір, європейська цивілізаційна ідентичність, російська агресія.

Formulation of the problem.

The civilizational affiliation of Ukraine remains the subject of numerous debates within the country and abroad. Although the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine helps see the latter as something separate from Russia, it is important to understand how permanent Ukraine's pro-European course is. In other words, there is a need to study how the civilizational choice of Ukraine affects the institutionalization of its European integration and how Ukraine deals with its post-Soviet institutional heritage. After all, it is the presence of sustainable institutions in society, which are supported by society, that can ensure the stable development of a country in a certain direction.

Analysis of recent research and publications.

The issue of civilizational choice in post-Euromaidan Ukraine as a factor that influences the development of the country and its institutions was studied by S.Pyrozhkov, O.Maiboroda, Y.Shaihorodskiy, et al. [Pyrozhkov et al. 2016]. The subject of the civilizational identity of Ukrainians and the development of European values was also recently raised by O.Rafalskyi, Y.Kalakura, O.Kalakura, M.Yurii [Rafalskyi et al. 2022]. The issue of institutionalization in Ukraine and its hybridity is deeply addressed in the studies of Y.Matsiievkyi [Matsiievkyi 2016]. Finally, the aspect of the institutionalization of European integration of Ukraine is specifically covered by A.Kutsevol [Kutsevol 2018] and Y.Taran [Taran 2020].

We can see that despite the fact that the topic of the connection between Ukraine's civilizational choice and the institutionalization of its European development is mentioned by several Ukrainian researchers, it requires further development and promotion among the wider academic community.

The purpose of the article is to show how the civilizational identity of Ukrainian society affects the institutionalization of its European integration.

Presenting main material.

While S.Huntington's thesis about the clash of civilizations is being actively criticized, the European continent experiences a war that is distinctly civilizational in nature, when we pay attention to the fact that the Russian Federation does not agree with the civilizational choice of Ukrainian society. As the Ukrainian analyst V.Portnikov points out, "[t]he civilizational gulf between Russian and Ukrainian identities promises to be the main – and long-lasting – result of this terrible war" [Portnikov 2023]. After the annexation of Crimea and the start of military operations in Donbas in 2014 and, even more so, after the full-scale invasion of Russia on 24 February 2022, in the public consciousness of Ukrainians, as well as in the international community, the vision of civilizational separation of Ukraine from Russia is increasingly developing [Vitchenko 2023]. Again, according to S.Huntington, if Ukraine and Russia are considered to belong to the same civilization, "the probability of the use of force between Ukrainians and Russians should be minimal" [Huntington 1993: 38]. The war became a manifestation of civilizational differences between these two countries, which previously belonged to the same entity called the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" and were considered one civilization.

Ukraine most clearly proclaimed its civilizational choice during the Euromaidan in November 2013. However, this was not the first manifestation of the European choice. The desire to be a part of the European community of peoples was mentioned in the first documents of independent Ukraine [Pro Osnovni napriamy 1993] and confirmed, albeit with variable success, by appropriate reforms and the creation of appropriate institutions.

Institutions are part of the expression of civilizational identity [Rafalskyi et al. 2022: 30]. Therefore, we need to understand how Ukraine's civilizational identity affects institutionalization processes in Ukrainian society.

The European civilizational choice is

associated with European integration, which is mostly interpreted as the process of joining the European Union. Y.Taran (2020) considers the institutionalization of the European integration of Ukraine while understanding this concept as a process of formation of such institutions that will be able to ensure the effectiveness of its European integration. Accordingly, such institutionalization is associated with the implementation of EU norms and values, that is, the fulfillment of the requirements of the Association Agreement [Official Journal of the European Union 2014], and from 2022, also with an acquisition of membership through the institute of candidacy. Appropriate state policy that is built around such goals has a direct impact on human consciousness, culture, and understanding of the importance of structural changes [Kutsevol 2018].

At the same time, the imperfection of the coordination mechanism of state policy in the field of European integration became the basis for the fact that Ukraine was not considered consistent in its development by the international community [Kutsevol 2018]. In connection with Ukraine's Soviet past, the first period of its independence in the 1990s is considered a transitional period: from authoritarianism to democracy, from a planned to a market economy, from a totalitarian to a pluralistic society. According to Matsiievskiyi (2016), "Ukraine is an example of a country with a hybrid regime, where formal institutions (constitution and laws) are undermined by informal ones (clientelism, nepotism, and corruption)" [Matsiievskiyi 2016: 8]. The scientist calls this state of affairs a "hybridity trap," which is a set of "stable but ineffective institutions that prevent elites from moving toward democracy, but allow them to maintain a monopoly on political power and rents without resorting to outright authoritarianism" [Matsiievskiyi 2016: 8]. In such conditions, the civilizational identity of Ukraine develops: declarations of a pro-European civilizational choice often do not coincide with real processes in the practical realm. However, as noted by Ukrainian researchers, "the realization of Ukraine's civilizational choice cannot be limited to general declarations of belonging to European civilization and the ratification of EU norms. It also requires fundamental changes in

the very social practices and forms of interaction of citizens at all levels – in relations among themselves, with central and local authorities" [Pyrozhhkov 2016: 80].

In the context of the constructivist approach, we consider institutionalization as a manifestation of the development of civilizational identity. It is important for us to see the relationship between civilizational imaginaries and the formation and entrenchment of material structures of world politics such as formal institutions (i.e. international organizations, state bureaucracies) and patterned practices (i.e. diplomacy, aid, military interventions) [Bettiza 2014]. Institutionalization creates social mechanisms designed to harmonize the development of society in a certain direction. On the other hand, institutionalization should lead to an increase in the predictability of society in the eyes of the international community.

The year 1998 is considered to be the beginning of the process of institutionalization of European integration when the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Ukraine and the EU entered into force, the National Agency of Ukraine for Development and European Integration was established, and the Strategy for the Integration of Ukraine into the European Union was approved [Kutsevol 2018]. However, "the imperfection of the institutional mechanism of European integration, which undergoes changes in connection with the change of power" [Kutsevol 2018: 219] became apparent later. A significant strengthening of the institutionalization of the European development vector of Ukraine has been observed after the Revolution of Dignity in 2013-2014. This was manifested in the work of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the re-establishment of the political position of the Vice-Prime Minister of Ukraine for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, amendments to the Constitution in 2019, which established the priority of European and Euro-Atlantic integration, and other institutional changes.

European identity and European civilizational choice have become the impetus for the corresponding institutional changes, and Russia's

full-scale war against Ukraine further contributes to this. Despite the fact, that the attitude towards Russia continues to be “formative for Ukrainian politics” [Lytvynenko 2020: 130], the factor of open aggression now played in favor of the crystallization of views and vectors, making the existing institutionalization even more meaningful. Ukraine’s acquisition of the status of a candidate for membership in 2022 makes full integration into the EU the final goal of the process of creating the relevant institutions.

However, given that social institutions are “relatively stable social formations that include social organizations that support officially or conventionally accepted rules that regulate social behavior in a certain area of social life based on the forced or voluntary agreement of the majority of society members with the availability of given social organizations and rules” [Holovakha Panina 2001: 6], there is a need for further research into the extent to which current institutional changes in Ukraine are inevitable and based not only on the political will of the current government. There is a high level of consensus in Ukrainian society about the priority of European and Euro-Atlantic integration [Reznik 2022]. This poses a strong public request in front of political elites about the rhetoric and policies they make concerning the development of Ukraine. To illustrate this, we can look at the presidential campaign in 2019 when the candidate V.Zelenskyi was the most expected winner of the elections, but his pro-Europeanism was questionable because of the Russian language he spoke and little attention to foreign affairs in his program [Sydorenko 2019].

It is important to emphasize that the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity can rightly be considered a reaction against institutional changes initiated by former president V.Yanukovych and his government that did not correspond to a pro-European civilizational identity of Ukrainians. That is, the request for further institutionalization of the Ukrainian civilizational choice, which comes from society, should be clear and understandable, and therefore be based on a clear civilizational identity. Prohibition of censorship, the establishment of freedom of religion, and radical change of legislation became the basis for new changes in

society. At the same time, the so-called “traditional legitimacy” [Holovakha, Panina 2001: 10] of the old institutions still continued to exert a residual influence on society and weakened the effect of new institutionalization. Even though the old institutions caused Ukrainian Maidans in 2004 and 2014, they, however, also kept society from dramatic cataclysms. The institutionalization of the European civilizational choice is taking place slowly, which provides an opportunity for gradual changes while developing the European civilizational identity. In our opinion, decommunization, de-Sovietization, and de-Russification became manifestations of gradual institutional changes caused by the desire to move away from the Soviet and imperial past and its institutional legacy, which continues to make itself felt in the social life of Ukrainians, and to get closer to the democratic values of Europe. For the further institutionalization of the European civilizational choice, it must continue to be nourished by the corresponding identity.

Another aspect of the institutionalization of Ukraine’s civilizational choice may be seen in the sphere of diplomacy. As mentioned above, diplomatic practices and bureaucracies may be considered expressions of the influence of civilizational notions on world politics. In recent years, we have observed a change in the paradigm of Ukrainian diplomacy, dictated at the same time by the challenge of Russian aggression and the pro-European civilizational choice.

The ‘paradigm’, as we use it here, is a certain set of ideas that underpinned the development of Ukrainian diplomacy since Ukraine gained independence. It is worth noting a number of views that affected Ukrainian foreign affairs in the past: the belief in the effectiveness of the multi-vector policy; non-perception of Russia as an enemy; trading the ability to influence the internal and external policy of Ukraine for dubious economic (especially in a matter of energy supply) preferences from Russia; lack of a consistent position regarding Ukraine’s strategic partnerships and intentions regarding European and Euro-Atlantic integration; lack of a sustainable model of cultural diplomacy for representing Ukraine abroad; as well as the concentration of foreign policy actions more on

opportunities for obtaining economic benefits rather than searching for real partners in building a democratic society. Even after the outburst of Russian military aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the Ukrainian Prizm noted “traditionally low interest of political parties in the formation of a full-fledged foreign policy block of political or pre-election programs and in the formulation of the detailed foreign policy part of the Coalition Agreement” [Ukrainian Prizm 2015: 12].

The civilizational choice of Ukrainian society after 2013 required a revision of the diplomatic paradigm. It was the factor of Russian aggression that helped give pro-European policy more expressiveness. But it is also worth noting that the Ukrainian diplomats were among the first representatives of the Ukrainian state apparatus to support the demonstrators of Euromaidan [Sydorenko 2018]. Despite the fact that this verbal and practical support [Ukrdiplomat 2014] was not massive, it presents the Ukrainian Foreign Office as an institution that was the most sensitive to the social transformations and manifestations of the European choice of Ukrainians.

Later on, the development of mechanisms of implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement deepened the connection between domestic and foreign policy agendas causing more intensified cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Administration of the President, and Verkhovna Rada [Ukrainian Prizm 2015]. This cooperation is another example of the institutionalization of Ukrainian civilizational choice when different bodies of power join their effort to ensure further integration of Ukraine into the European and Euro-Atlantic communities.

The other purpose of diplomacy as an institution was to draw the attention of the international community to the problem of the illegal annexation of Crimea and the military invasion of Russian troops in the East of Ukraine showing that this should be an issue for Europe and the whole civilized world. Civilizational rhetoric that depicts Ukraine as part of Europe is a crucial element of a new institutionalization of diplomatic practices. Both post-Euromaidan Presidents used civilizational notions to emphasize Ukraine's belonging to Europe and the civilized world [UNIAN 2015; Office of the President of

Ukraine 2022]. Of great importance in Ukrainian diplomatic rhetoric is the notion of Ukraine as the “Shield of Europe” [Reznikov 2023], which is now holding the blow of the aggressor and needs support from the rest of the representatives of the European Community and Free World. In this way, Ukrainian politicians and diplomats build the European image of Ukraine on the ground of proclaimed pro-European civilizational choice and the readiness of the Ukrainian people to fight for their European future.

Conclusion.

Therefore, from the beginning of its independent existence, Ukraine has a tendency to develop institutions that reflect its pro-European direction of development. This institutionalization was immature, unpredictable, and highly dependent on the intentions and interests of the respective political leadership. The propensity for “binary institutionalization” and “hybrid regime” created grounds for the international community to doubt Ukraine's pro-Europeanism, particularly before the 2013 Revolution of Dignity. However, the public demand for changes related to the European civilizational identity became an impetus for greater crystallization of the pro-Western direction of development. Russia's armed aggression in 2014 and its escalation in 2022 gave this process even more clarity and focus. Russian President V.Putin's thesis that Ukraine is developing as “Anti-Russia” actually became the leitmotif of constructive transformations in Ukrainian society.

The institutional transformation of Ukraine on its way to integration with the EU is hindered by its post-Soviet heritage. However, this situation prevented Ukrainian society from dramatic upheavals and is being changed by the gradual maturation of its civilizational identity.

On the other hand, difficulties regarding the institutionalization of Ukraine's civilizational choice may lie in the excessive attachment of such institutionalization to EU membership. The supranational entity itself is undergoing certain transformations of its identity, moving away from its initial foundations. This issue should be taken into consideration for further research on this topic.

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