

ORTHODOXY AS A FACTOR OF UKRAINIAN CIVILIZATIONAL IDENTITY

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Abstract. *The article examines the role of religious identity, particularly Orthodox, in the context of shaping Ukrainian cultural and civilizational self-awareness. Emphasis is placed on the significance of the religious factor as an integrative element influencing the formation of the identification matrix of Ukrainians in a multiethnic and multiconfessional society. The study analyzes the relevance of researching religious identity in the context of the religious renaissance, globalization processes, and ongoing hybrid aggression from Russia. The importance of an interdisciplinary approach to studying civilizational identity is highlighted, as it is a complex, dynamic, and multifaceted phenomenon encompassing the interrelations between the individual, society, culture, religion, and the state. Particular attention is paid to the role of the Ukrainian diaspora as a bearer and transmitter of Ukrainian values in the world. The material aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of identity as a key factor in national development and state-building in contemporary Ukraine.*

Keywords: *religious identity, Orthodoxy, civilizational identity, cultural identity, Ukrainian statehood, national self-awareness, religious renaissance, Ukrainian diaspora, interdisciplinary research, spiritual values.*

Introduction

Taking into account the multiethnic nature of the Ukrainian state, the religious factor, particularly Orthodoxy, plays a fundamental role in shaping the civilizational foundations of modern Ukraine. The religious identity of Ukrainians, as a component of the broader civilizational dimension, is an important source of spiritual meaning and cultural code that defines ways of understanding the world, social interactions, and self-awareness on both individual and collective levels. In this context, the cultural aspect cannot be ignored, as it extends beyond merely ethnocultural identity and manifests as a space of meanings, values, and significance that shape a person's psychology, lifestyle, and relationships within society and with the state. It is culture, including religious tradition, that forms the identification matrix of any civilization, setting its fundamental coordinates.

Within the real diversity of self-awareness strategies, the religious tradition—

primarily Orthodox—appears as an actualized or newly constructed semantic reference point that gives new meaning to the collective past and directs the view toward the future. This process is intensified amid the so-called "religious renaissance"—the contemporary revival of various forms of religiosity, including Orthodox and para-Orthodox. These often form subcultural religious communities that seek to contribute their own meanings not only to individual but also to collective identity formation. All this calls for a deeper understanding of the role of the Orthodox factor as an active catalyst of constructive state-building processes in Ukraine, as an integrative principle for creating Ukrainian cultural-civilizational identity.

Main text

The civilizational identity of Ukrainians is a complex, multidimensional, and transitional phenomenon. It has been formed over millennia by many generations of Ukrainians—both those living within the territory of Ukraine and members of the Ukrainian diaspora, who together create the Ukrainian world and a shared national space. This identity is based on universal human values such as unity, integrity, democracy, integration, and modernization, which define the priorities of Ukrainian regional civilization. At the same time, it is not static but continuously evolves and changes under the influence of new historical conditions, remaining the foundation of social life and requiring ongoing research and renewed scholarly reflection.

At the core of this identity is the Ukrainian person as the bearer of uniqueness, national culture, mentality, and spiritual world. Their personal characteristics, value orientations, and self-awareness are revealed precisely through identity, which gains particular importance in the context of the anthropological turn in the humanities. Ivan Dziuba emphasized this point, highlighting the necessity of searching for a new identity. Identity is the space where the relationships between the individual, society, culture, and civilization are most vividly expressed, as well as their interaction with the global world. Ukraine is an organic part of the European space, and the viability of its internal and external civilizational structure is inextricably linked to Ukrainians abroad, whose numbers continue to grow. The diaspora acts as a transmitter of Ukrainian values, traditions, and achievements, actively contributing to the creation of a unified

Ukrainian world.

Effective development of integration processes is unimaginable without understanding the mechanisms of interaction between Ukraine and the global Ukrainian community, especially under conditions of globalization and the information society. Civilizational identity belongs to the interdisciplinary field of research, attracting the attention of scholars from various disciplines—historians, philosophers, sociologists, religious studies specialists, cultural scholars, and others. Its study requires the integration of knowledge and the application of interdisciplinary methods, including synergetic and systemic approaches. Experience shows that the most promising research arises at the intersection of different scientific disciplines, allowing for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of Ukrainian identity.

Today, however, Ukraine's civilizational identity faces a serious threat due to the aggression of Putin's Russia—a hybrid occupation war, massive cultural and informational attacks, and anti-Ukrainian propaganda. Internal factors also contribute to this threat—manifestations of the syndrome of communization and attempts to discredit national, historical, and cultural values. All these are part of a large-scale ideological campaign to impose a Russian neo-imperial narrative. For this reason, the religious, cultural, and civilizational identity of Ukrainians must be the subject of deep study and awareness, as they determine not only national self-preservation but also the future development trajectory of the state as a spiritually integral, modern, and democratic society.

Conclusion

Religious, cultural, and civilizational identities play a key role in shaping the Ukrainian national space and statehood. Orthodoxy, as one of the defining religious traditions, serves not only as a spiritual guide but also as an important factor of identification that helps Ukrainians understand themselves in the context of history, the present, and the future. In the face of globalization challenges, information warfare, and attempts at both external and internal destabilization of the Ukrainian identity field, a conscious return to one's own cultural, spiritual, and religious roots gains special significance.

The formation of a holistic Ukrainian civilizational identity is impossible without the integration of efforts from both the academic community and the broader society, including the diaspora. In this context, religious identity is not only an object of study but also an active element of socio-cultural construction that can promote national cohesion, the affirmation of spiritual values, and guide Ukraine on the path of modernization, unity, and democratic development. The study and understanding of the religious factor, especially Orthodoxy, in the context of cultural and civilizational identity, have not only scientific but also strategic state-building importance.

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