Specifics of Cultural-Civilization Identity Development in the Frontier Regions of Russia and Ukraine: Diagnostic Problems

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Abstract

This study analyzes the process of cultural and civilizational identity development in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine. The definition of a cultural-civilizational identity as a kind of macrosocial supra-ethnic identity is presented. A cultural-civilizational identity is a structure of self-consciousness that connects subjectively realized and experienced values, state and cultural symbols, attitudes, relations, assessments and norms of a supra-ethnic community. They prove that in order to understand the content of cultural and civilizational identity development in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine, the concept of political and cultural delimitation has a heuristic potential according to which the process of definition and delineation of adjacent geopolitical entity. This process consists in the development and distribution of stable notions about the specifics of their political and cultural systems among population. According to the materials of empirical study conducted in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine, (n = 1000, 2015), it is argued that the identification processes in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine do not primarily stimulate the restoration of the former high level of social space homogeneity. They separate more than unite the people of the borderland close by their cultural characteristics. The concept of identification process monitoring is proposed in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine.

Keywords: Cultural and civilizational identity, Monitoring, Border region.

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1. Introduction

One of the consequences of globalization processes in the modern world is the closest contact of various subcultures, which made available to almost everyone the values, meanings and norms that were developed within other civilizations. But at the same time, there was no mutual cultural adaptation and integration in most cases expected by some supporters of multiculturalism. Moreover, intercultural contacts intensified competition, and, in some cases, the aggressiveness of counterparts. Thus, the problem of finding their own cultural and civilizational identity search was actualized without the solution of which a person feels insecure inevitably from numerous dangers and threats of the modern world.

In the current situation, the border regions act as peculiar social-cultural frontiers that are specific to the rest of a state territory and often oppose the central authorities because of the social-economic, foreign policy and spiritual reasons in which they found themselves due to the instability of the world development.

The emergence and the development of the identification concept is associated with the following names: A. Adler, H. Sullivan, E. Fromm, K. Horney, E. Erikson, C. Jung [1-6], who studied the relationship between personality traits and individual identification. In the works by S. Freud, A. Freud and D. Rapaport [7-9], identification acted as the central mechanism for the development of "I" ability.

Certain identification aspects were considered within the framework of cognitive psychology by M. Bilig, R. Brown, S. Moscovici, J. Turner and H. Tajfel [10-14]. They defined identification by the means of a logical comparison by a number of significant parameters of a particular person with external groups, relying chiefly on M. Hogg's cognitive concept [15], as well as on the basic statements of P. Sorokin's works [16].

Nowadays, identification becomes the object of study by many sociologists. For example, Ju.L. Kachanov and N.A. Shmatko [17] drew attention to the structural aspects of social identification. Meshcherkina, V.B. Golofast and S.A. Sidorenko studied the so-called "narrative social identification" [18-19]; L.E. Bljaher analyzed the semiotics of identification [20]. Domestic authors (V.P. Babintseb, V.A. Sapryka, H.I. Babintseva, A.V. Pastyuk and others) considered a cross-border identity from the position of a social chronotype [21].

2. Research methodology

Any general form of civilizational identity consists of three main components: the mentality of civilization, its locality and globalism, which form a triad. These three different, but interconnected modes of the same (local) mentality are formed depending on a value-semantic

context in which they reside historically - primarily in interlocal, intralocal and global one [22].

The diagnosis of cultural and civilizational identity development processes in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine is based on two basic models of identity development: structural and dynamic one.

The structural model assumes the definition of cultural and civilizational identity key components. Among them we distinguish the following ones:

1) Objects of identity - social phenomena that have an identity appeal;

2) The carriers of identity - individuals, small groups, social communities, subnational, national and transnational entities, carrying out the search and the ascertainment of one's own identity with certain objects in the process of their life activities;

3) Generators of identity - social subjects (including leaders, elites, institutions, etc.) that regulate identification processes. The most important of these institutions are represented by political leadership, education, church, etc. Let's note that in some cases an object of identity is identical to its generator.

The dynamic model emphasizes the process and the factor aspect of an identity development. Proceeding from it, it is important to trace the changes in identity in the process of research depending on external factors and conditions (political, social-cultural, economic and other transformations) and internal ones (inherent to identity carriers and adaptation strategies).

The dynamic model of cultural and civilizational identity development also implies the emphasis of research practices on the intensity of this process, as well as on its key trends.

3. Discussion

The modern transforming world is characterized by the process of new cultural and civilizational identity development, especially relevant for the territories on which new state associations have emerged in recent years. Political processes are supplemented here by deep, yet contradictory and internally unstable social-cultural changes that influence all aspects of social life.

Such social spaces include the border regions of Russia and Ukraine, which represented a relatively stable continuum for a long time. However, the social-political processes in Russia and Ukraine, which were separate states for more than twenty years, changed the situation significantly. Traditional cultural and civilizational unity was significantly undermined, new

social-cultural phenomena arose, including the ones which characterize the cultural and civilizational identification of population.

The empirical basis which allows to verify the theoretical positions was represented by the results of the expert poll "Conditions and factors of cultural and civilizational identity development in an unstable social-cultural environment" (N = 42) and the sociological survey "The specificity of cultural and civilizational identity development in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine" (N = 1000).

The experts were the residents of the border regions of Russia (22 people) and Ukraine (20 people) who had the experience of cross-border cooperation or publication on this topic. The comparison of expert answers on the basis of the calculation of cultural and civilizational identity unity indices, allows to state that the Russian society is characterized more by the idea about cultural and civilizational unity of both countries than the Ukrainian one.

With regard to the Ukrainian border regions, all experts agree that the process the identity change here is much weaker than in the central regions. The positions of Russian and Ukrainian experts concerning the factors that influence the development of a cultural and civilizational identity in the border regions of Russia vary considerably. The most important factor that influences the formation of cultural and civilizational identity in the border regions of Russia nowadays is represented by interregional ties according to Russian experts, as 45.5% of the polled ones speak about it as compared to 25.0% of Ukrainian experts. Russian experts appreciate highly the importance of a state border proximity (31.8% against 25.0% responses of Ukrainian experts) and migration importance (22.7% against 5.0%).

The sociological research "The specificity of cultural and civilizational identity development in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine" showed: in the context of the devaluation policy concerning the common past of the states under study conducted by the Ukrainian authorities, the absence of its negative mass perception by Ukrainians is an important prerequisite for the development of common features in cultural and civilizational identities of border region population.

The conducted empirical research gave grounds to formulate a number of conclusions that allow us to determine some general tendencies of cultural and civilizational identity development in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine.

The influence of Ukraine on the cultural and civilizational identity of the Russian borderland population is doubted.

Firstly, this is explained by the "watchful indifference" among the population of the border regions of Russia to Ukraine, which characterizes the current state of these relations. 44.4% of

Russian respondents demonstrate anxiety toward Ukrainians. 16.8% out of 44.4% do not trust Ukrainians after the events of so-called EuroMaidan, 12.4% began to fear them, 8.6% ceased to respect them, and another 6.6% began to consider them as enemies. Compare: about 5.0% of Russians reported that they understand and respect Ukrainians better after EuroMeidan (Table 1).

Table 1. What's your attitude to Ukrainians after the events of EuroMaidan?

What's your attitude to Ukrainians after the events of EuroMaidan?	abs	%
I ceased to trust them	84	16.8%
I began to fear them	62	12.4%
I began to understand them better	14	2.8%
I consider them as enemies now	33	6.6%
I stopped talking to them	9	1.8%
I ceased to respect them	43	8.6%
I began to respect them more	11	2.2%
I find it difficult to answer	86	17.2%
No data	158	31.6%
Total	500	100.0%

Secondly, due to the low demand of the border regions of Russia population they are in an active cultural and civilizational identification that presupposes a constant conscious choice in favor of certain social institutions, social-cultural patterns, political and ideological landmarks, etc., which is much stronger for the population of the border regions of Ukraine now.

Both have some consensus with respect to the items of national pride (Victory in the Great Patriotic War, which was noted by 50.4% of Russians and 33.8% of Ukrainians, the historical heritage which is significant for 46.8% of Russian and 28.4% of Ukrainian respondents), reflecting a common socialist history of both countries (Table 2). These symbols act as the

factor of cultural and civilizational identification to a greater extent for the representatives of the bordering Russian than Ukrainian regions, because of their higher adequacy as an authentic symbol of the country noted above, and because of their higher unifying power for Russians.

Table 2. If you are proud by your country what is the item of your pride?

If you are proud by your country what is the item of your pride?	Russia		Ukraine	
	abs	%	abs	%
Historical heritage	234	46.8%	142	28.4%
High level of culture	62	12.4%	58	11.6%
Scientific and technological achievements	103	20.6%	45	9.0%
Moral qualities of its inhabitants	102	20.4%	93	18.6%
Famous people	102	20.4%	38	7.6%
Victory in the Great Patriotic War	252	50.4%	169	33.8%
I do not see any items of pride	27	5.4%	124	24.8%
It is difficult to answer	85	17.0%	51	10.2%
No data	16	3.2%	25	5%
Total	500	100.0%	500	100.0%

The greatest similarity in the responses of Ukrainians and Russians, as well as the greatest consensus within these groups, is noted in their political and economic orientations, reflecting, in particular, a rare unanimity in the form of dominant paternalism and a socialist choice in political self-determination. The absolute majority of the respondents chose the following answer in equal shares (56.2% and 56.6% respectively): "a state should take care of all its citizens, providing them with a decent standard of living", characterizing a pronounced socialist choice in political self-determination, etatism with the primacy of political culture. The difference in answers is in the somewhat higher importance of political and personal

rights and freedoms for Ukrainians with a slightly higher focus on state influence increase in respect of economy (Table 3.).

Table 3. In your opinion, how should the relations between a state and citizens develop?

In your opinion, how should the relations between a state and citizens develop?	Russia		Ukraine	
	abs	%	abs	%
A state should interfere as little as possible in the life of citizens and in their economic activities	67	13.4%	66	13.2%
A state should establish unified "game rules" and ensure that they are not violated	123	24.6%	131	26.2%
A state should take care of all its citizens, providing them with a decent standard of living	281	56.2%	283	56.6%
The question is difficult to answer	29	5.8%	20	4.0%
Total	500	100.0%	500	100.0%

Obviously, further studies of the problem require the establishment of a monitoring system concerning the process of cultural and civilizational identity development in the border regions. It is a system for the collection, processing and interpretation of information on the dispositions of actors in cultural and civilizational identities for the evaluation and the prediction of identification representation states from various population groups, which include the series of attitudes and orientations in order to develop and enhance the effectiveness of cross-border interaction.

The introduction of monitoring technologies reveals a number of problems which are associated with technical, program, methodical, and personnel support. The theoretical analysis of the problem concerning the organization and the conduct of monitoring studies allows us to identify the following discrepancies and contradictions:

- Between the increase of information importance as the most important factor of social development and its use mainly as an auxiliary tool for cultural and civilizational identity development;

- Between the openness and the variability of information processes in the environment of cross-border interaction and their research on the basis of strictly determined structural and functional approaches;

- Between the main theoretical provisions of monitoring, representing the information obtained in its course as a primary condition for the development of cultural and civilizational identities, and the need for a theoretical justification of monitoring principle system for the development of cultural and civilizational identities in the border regions, the implementation of which will provide information that is an objective factor of cross border relationship development.

At the same time, a well-built internal monitoring system will allow to provide of a wide range of information and data in time to take managerial decisions.

In summary, the identification processes in the border regions of Russia and Ukraine, do not stimulate at least the restoration of the former high level of social space homogeneity. They, rather, divide, than connect borderland population close by their cultural characteristics.

Apparently, the identification representations dominating in the environment of Russian and Ukrainian population, deconstruct essentially the traditional model of cross-border interaction. In one way or another, they rely on its audit in historical context and are characterized by uncertainty about the present and the future. Thus, the chaos of social space is intensified. In these conditions it is extremely difficult to make a correct prediction about the prospects of identification changes.

4. Conclusion

Cultural-civilizational identity, reflecting the correlation of a person or a group with a historically formed system of values, social codes, forms of consciousness and structures, behavioral styles, the group forms of cultural standards and specific products of spiritual production is an important element of society functioning. The collapse of the USSR and the development of new post-Soviet states led to the crisis of traditional identities on the territory of modern Eurasian space. One consequence of this is the assertion of a specific type of social anomie, acting in the form of uncertainties.

The study allows to state that the bordering Russian and Ukrainian regions have the changes in cultural and civilizational identities over the past two decades. At that, the processes of cultural and civilizational identity development in Russia and Ukraine have significantly different dynamics and the vector of changes.

Firstly, in Russian border regions it is rather a matter of some kind of identity modification, and in Ukrainian ones it is about radical changes in the course of its formation on the basis of the conflicting opposition of state and people positions.

Secondly, the cultural and civilizational identity of the Russian regions extends to the border regions of Ukraine, while in Russian regions adjacent to Ukraine it tends to differentiate from Russia and maintains a high orientation on it at the same time.

Thirdly, the cultural and civilizational identity of Russian regions has more established features, and in Ukraine it is characterized by some diffusion, instability and mosaicism.

At the moment, the relations between Russia and Ukraine are at the point of bifurcation. The most significant factors contributing to the separation of the population in Russian and Ukrainian border regions are the following ones: superficial actions of politicians, the subversive activities of external forces, the opposite vectors of foreign policy and internal state policy. In the current situation, the historical and cultural traditions, kinship ties and the common Soviet past can contribute to the unification of the population living in Russian and Ukrainian border regions.

Footnotes

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