

# The Civilizational Choice of Ukraine: Questioning the Conceptual Roadmap

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*Modern Ukraine is a post-colonial, post-totalitarian state in which decolonization, de-communization, and de-russification have not yet been fully implemented. This article sets itself the goal of reviewing the agenda of the processes of civilizational transit of Ukraine and developing theoretically grounded vectors of the said process. The important fact that the current stage of development of the “worldview gravity” of Ukrainian society is characterized by an eclectic system of stereotypes is also of significant importance: here coexist both old stereotypes of consciousness and behavior, which have largely ceased to fulfill their functions, and new ones that are unstable and ambiguous. The series of ideas regarding the Ukrainian civilizational choice was already discovered in a monograph, “Civilizational crossroads of modern society,” and presented for Ukrainian readers a few years ago. The current article offers a revision of the previously presented ideas for the international audience of the journal readers, taking into account the current Ukrainian socio-cultural situation, at the center of which are the challenges produced by the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The policy of new realism can become an effective tool for social modernization. The given word combination is not accidental: the realism of this type of politics insists on the need for the adequate perception of reality in all its essential aspects, and the novelty emphasizes the need to operate not with the laws and features of the socio-political status quo “in general,” but taking into account the latest dynamics, trends, threats, and problematic challenges. The people and the country need not only (and sometimes not so much) a thorough understanding of their cultural-civilizational, geopolitical, and economic-economic prospects but an indomitable character that guarantees the realization of their potential in spite of anything and against anything. On the difficult path of establishing a civilizational choice, Ukrainians will need not only the awareness of the incomplete state of political modernization, the limited, post-totalitarian (post-colonial, etc.) status, but also to work at the individual level to accelerate evolutionary processes. These processes can catalyze political decisions, not at the declarative level but at the practical level, to fill the steps for the approval of the civilizational choice with content. Step-by-step changes in favor of a new worldview horizon will require significant changes at the personal level through the rejection of destructive post-colonial (post-totalitarian, etc.) narratives in*

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*social practice in favor of the development of Ukrainian national identity, which will be preceded by the rational assimilation of the perspectives of civilizational choice, which is a fruitful combination of the European civilizational project and heritage of Ukrainian culture.*

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## Introduction

Open military aggression by the Russian Federation in 2022 became a real challenge for Ukraine. This event, in addition to the violence never seen in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, catalyzed the existing discourse of Ukrainian and foreign intellectuals regarding the deep civilizational contradictions that make up the ontology of military aggression directed towards Ukraine, its state, and civilizational subjectivity. The issues of researching the causes of the civilization gap between Russia and the world and finding mechanisms to prevent or at least minimize the risks of repeating the tragic experience for Ukraine appeared on the agenda with even greater urgency. Civilizational studies, problems of Ukrainian identity, challenges to state building, and other issues have intensified the need to rationalize views on the Ukrainian past, present, and future.

To have a realistic view of the prospects for the future, it is necessary to give maximum realism to the vision of the past. As Friedrich Nietzsche insisted, it is essential to settle accounts with the past so that its burden does not become an obstacle to the movement towards the goal. However, such “reconciliation” should not be carried out in a subjectivist or voluntarist way, but *sine ira et studio* – that is, without anger and prejudice, objectively, impartially, taking into account the interaction of all significant elements of the systemic unity of the historical process. However, social praxis has many examples of how difficult it is to move in the fairway of even obvious requirements and recommendations. Many factors stand in the way of such a goal, ranging from fruitless resentments and euphoria to pharisaism in the form of formalistic pettiness. After all, even “phantom pain” due to historical mistakes is a rather insidious indulgence because if there is phantom pain, then there can be phantom happiness, phantom success, and so on.

We need a reliable worldview and methodological guide that will clarify the perception of reality and give social realities the signs of an essential hierarchical structure. It is necessary to create criterion filters for understanding society and adjust the optics of consideration of problem areas. However, the simplicity of the formulation of the task does not mean the symmetrical simplicity of its implementation because, for example, sensitivity to problems is primarily determined by the level of worldview culture. If this level is low, realizing the outlined need is under a big question mark. A country can be sovereign in a political sense but subordinate in a social and cultural sense. Modern Ukraine is a post-colonial, post-totalitarian state in which decolonization, de-communization, and de-Russification have not yet been fully implemented. In general, we have to admit that the current state of affairs does not require prescription-methodical but theoretical-methodological efforts of a wide range of action – at least at the initial stage of understanding the multifaceted civilizational issues in the specific conditions of modern Ukraine.

Conceptual constructs of the Ukrainian civilizational archetype, civilizational identity, civilizational potential, strategic and tactical civilizational interests, the perspectives of the

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violent and non-violent civilizational influence, civilizational risks, threats, and dangers should receive deep theoretical conceptualization. Investigating the problems of post-coloniality in terms of post-socialism, W. Partlett and H. Küpper emphasize that the success of post-colonial transit requires a significant activation of state-building processes, the development of systemic ethnopolitics: “When the colonial power withdraws, the formerly subordinate territory faces a number of problems of becoming a full-fledged state... This may involve intensive nation-building and, as the case may be, overcoming or reacting to the legacy of colonial ethnopolitics, which sometimes are based on the principle of divide and conquer. Especially in situations where the colonial power had exercised direct rule and reduced the colonial populations to mere wards of a paternalist colonial ruler, this population needs to learn how to deal with its own affairs without being led by an external agent” (Partlett & Küpper, 2022: 9). Therefore, the attempts to outline the roadmap of Ukrainian civilizational choice should deal with the post-colonial heritage of Ukraine and keep focused on the nation-building, state-building, and ethnopolitics issues.

The important fact that the current stage of development of the “worldview gravity” of Ukrainian society is characterized by an eclectic system of stereotypes is also of significant importance: here coexist both old stereotypes of consciousness and behavior, which have largely ceased to fulfill their functions, and new ones that are unstable and ambiguous. This feature creates prerequisites for conceptual alternatives and, at the same time, is an obstacle to an adequate perception of a dynamically changing reality. A number of heuristic social theories recognized in the world act as a methodological framework for clarifying the problems of civilizational choice for Ukraine: post-colonialism theory (Mälksoo, 2022; Yermolenko, 2021), approaches of the post-totalitarian modernization theory (Kloubert, 2020), theories of the hybridity of the political systems and military conflicts (Jackson & Albrecht, 2018; Magda, 2015; Muradov, 2022), theory of limitrophe states (Kalinichenko, 2018), etc. Each of these theories offers specific heuristic provisions regarding the Ukrainian case, the general complicating background of which is the complex processes of globalization, the further establishment of postmodern ideology, etc. This article sets itself the goal of reviewing the agenda of the processes of civilizational transit of Ukraine and developing theoretically grounded vectors of the said process.

The need for accelerated worldview and political modernization, increasing the efficiency of all spheres of public life in Ukraine, cannot be doubted. In this context, the specifics of the cultural and civilizational choices that our country has to make in a short period of time become extremely important. In addition to time constraints, such a choice contains another significant problematic aspect – its practical effectiveness depends on the way in which it will be carried out. It is possible to achieve social solidarity, which is extremely necessary for modern Ukraine, only in the case of a consensual adoption of such a fateful decision as a cultural and civilizational choice. The series of ideas regarding the Ukrainian civilizational choice was already discovered in a monograph, “Civilizational crossroads of modern society,” and presented for Ukrainian readers a few years ago (Rafaskyi & Samchuk, 2018). The current article offers a revision of the previously presented ideas for the international audience of the journal readers, taking into account the current Ukrainian socio-cultural situation, at the center of which are the challenges produced by the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

## **European civilizational perspective for Ukraine: in search of the rational models of transition**

In Ukraine, the mass and, to a large extent, specialized “consciousness” in the field of social sciences is still in the grip of a simplistic and uncritical picture of the world, according to which the reference point worthy of the status of a model of national development has the generalized name “Europe,” “the West,” “the civilized world,” “developed democratic countries,” etc. All these names in many narratives and discourses have related and identical content, performing a purely synonymous function as a means by which tautology can be avoided.

In fact, the semantic ranges of these concepts, firstly, do not coincide, and secondly, they have many significant differences. In addition, there is no consensus in modern social science regarding the substantive and ontological parameters of each concept. Take at least the most frequently used in the Ukrainian information field in the past few years, the generalized conceptual reference point called “Europe”: if it is not a mythologized conjunctural abstract but a real sample endowed with concrete content, then why is it so difficult to find a convincing answer to the question about significant differences in the cultural and civilizational terrain of various countries and peoples, which are united by this term? And if the mentioned differences still exist, then isn’t unification under the auspices of the common term “Europe” a tendentious formalism and populism, a desire to pass off wishful thinking?

If the apologetics of the European civilizational trend has recently acquired an almost non-alternative character in Ukraine, then within the borders of Europe itself and beyond its borders, it is necessary to state the predominance of analytically balanced and balanced and argumentatively weighted approaches. A respectable status within this wide range of interpretation has been acquired even by the conceptual approach, shocking for modern Ukrainian stereotyping. The Eurocentrism thesis is, first and foremost, an ideological echo of Europe’s colonial past and not some “historically proven cultural and civilizational advantages.” In this sense, the methodological remark of E. Evink is essential: “What can we say of the idea of Europe, today? Today we cannot ask this question without referring to the fragile and challenging situation of Europe’s political and cultural institutions. It has become part of the European philosophical tradition, at least since the Enlightenment, that philosophical questions need to be related to the situation in which they are articulated. Through the centuries of modernity, man has become aware of his historical disposition and of the historical nature of philosophy. The question of the idea of Europe, therefore, cannot be separated from its current historical situation” (Evink, 2020: 2011).

In the current Ukrainian situation, it is difficult not to agree with S. Pyrozhkov and N. Khamitov: “When answering the question, “which choice should Ukraine make – European, Euro-Atlantic or Western in general?”, one should answer – both the first, and the second, and the third. Ukraine makes a European choice as a part of the European culture and civilizational community. Choosing development in the civilizational context of an open democratic society makes a Euro-Atlantic choice. Accepting the individual, one’s rights, dignity, and freedom as the highest values, Ukraine chooses the Western world, Western civilization in general” (Pyrozhkov & Khamitov, 2016). However, this thesis will not be hindered by clarification: which stylistic branch (and why exactly) of the Euro-Atlantic choice and Western civilization should Ukraine give priority to civilizational borrowing? The fact is that in the given abstract format, we reduce the multifaceted reality of the modern world to schemes that are convenient in the sense of clarity, but a priori problematic from the point of view of practical application,

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because the worldview, axiological and ethical gulf in many aspects exists not only between the two main whales, on which modern Western civilization (Europe and the USA) stands. Each of these whales is a common vector of many almost incompatible trends. If this status quo has always been obvious for Europe and will remain so for at least a long time, then in the USA, it acquired distinct signs after various excesses and civil unrest during and after the previous presidential elections.

For this study, the recognition of the fact that the European civilizational project is generally the basis for the development of a modern civilizational project for Ukraine, in which the synthesis of Ukrainian cultural traditions with the achievements of the European cultural project would take place on a theoretically balanced, rational basis, is unambiguous. Undoubtedly, the bloody Russian regime once again proved its unsuitability for involving the civilizational project of the “Russian world” in the “optics” of the search for ways of developing Ukraine in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The content of this project was and remains a simulacrum of the uniqueness and excellence of the Russian civilizational project. When the critical mass of the incompatibility of Russian and European civilizational factors acquires obvious signs, the Russian mass and even scientific consciousness begin to challenge it with various profiles. And since reinforced concrete arguments in the form of financial, financial, and economic power are absent in the majority of cases, we have to resort to self-suggestion: we are the best.

In fact, Russia’s non-compliance with the fundamental canons of European civilization is due to “genetic” civilizational reasons that give authoritarianism, despotism, and totalitarianism a normative status. Behind the screen of the “Russian measure” hides a complex socio-cultural mechanism to ensure the existence of which there are no boundaries, among which civilized countries consider war: “Russia’s 2022 full-fledged invasion of Ukraine is many things at once: a war of aggression; an attempt at yet another territorial conquest after the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the eight-year-long struggle for Donbas; a parading of an ontologically anxious state whose leadership appears obsessed with being a great power through consolidating the idea of a *Russkii Mir* by ruthless violence and lies outperforming George Orwell’s dystopic imagination. Most importantly, it is an imperial war in the world of nation-states, underpinned by Russia’s open denial of Ukraine’s political sovereignty and the Ukrainians’ right to exist as an independent nation. The incompatible logics of sovereignty (Ukraine’s) and imperialism (Russia’s) are at loggerheads in this conflict” (Mälksoo, 2022).

As a result of civilizational development, the status of imperative features of Russian civilizational specificity acquired some value-mental features. First of all, there is a lack of political culture, where there is a demarcation of citizens from participation in political decisions, a dubious electoral system, and paternalistic attitudes of the population. This mentality does not lose its importance even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In addition to the political dimension, at the level of individual consciousness, this civilizational paradigm works both at the level of political legitimation and at the level of everyday socio-cultural practices – relations with superiors, trust in institutions, etc. In this civilizational project, there is not enough “space” for public trust in institutions, rationalization of social relations, support of rights and freedoms, etc., inherent in the European civilizational project. Such a civilizational project, taking into account the realities of today, cannot serve as any guidepost for the civilizational choice of our state.

## **From civilization choice to the generation of the national identity**

In the previous part of the study, we demonstrated that Ukraine should perceive the European civilizational project as a heuristic metaphor, a horizon of changes, the center of which are opposite to the Russian (Soviet) civilizational projects, the values of rational thinking, respect for the priority of individual rights and freedoms, etc. It is clear that step-by-step changes in favor of a new worldview horizon will require significant changes at the personal level due to the rejection of destructive post-colonial (post-totalitarian, etc.) narratives in social practice in favor of the development of Ukrainian national identity. Accelerated worldview modernization in the face of challenges of military aggression from Russia, which will act as an “immune response” to attempts to consolidate the Russian civilizational project on the territory of Ukraine: “Russia’s fervour speaks of the denial of genuineness of the Ukrainian nation, culture, history and the state, on the one hand, and reveals the ontological void of the Russian nation, the fact that any politically meaningful Russian state identity is perceived to be viable only when linked to the empire, on the other. The political fate of Ukraine hence appears as the ultimate test of Russia’s brand of imperial nationalism: that the Russian state and nation have been conceived as imperial, and need to be continuously policed, defended and substantiated as such” (Mälksoo, 2022).

It is possible to adequately understand the prospects for the generation of Ukrainian national identity only if we consider the determining factors that serve as integrals and differentials of the cultural and civilizational sphere of modern Ukrainian society, forming a kind of identification crossroads. As for the lines of unification in Ukrainian society, they are traced “...in common dissatisfaction with the current situation in the country, that is, there is unification on the negative side; instead, there is no consensus on the pressing issues of the past and development prospects. Ukrainian society is at the point of bifurcation, when several possible paths (European, Eurasian) of further development are generated” (Mykhailich, 2008: 149). After all, modern Ukrainian society is characterized not only by lines of unification but also by differentiation (socio-cultural, political, ideological, ethnonational, linguistic, regional, confessional), which are the basis of various identities. In particular, “...if the factor of identity is language/region, then a sense of commonality without significant internal differentiation by speakers of this language/residents of the region and separation from speakers of other languages/residents of other regions is assumed. On this basis, Ukrainian voters’ political self-identification is often formed: awareness of the difference between “own” and “others” simplifies their positioning concerning the objects of electoral choice. This contributes to the actualization of linguistic and regional factors of electoral orientations. However, the results of sociological studies give grounds for asserting that in all regions of the people are most concerned about socio-economic rather than national-political problems” (Mykhailich, 2008: 140).

In general, modern Ukraine resembles a patchwork quilt in the sense of cultural and civilizational identity. Such a feature of it contains many threats and dangers to the prospects of development. Therefore, it requires urgent efforts to form an effective strategy to counteract centrifugal tendencies. The question arises: how to overcome alienation, with the help of which threads can be reliably stitched together significantly different worldviews and axiological priorities and preferences of other parts of society? It should be recognized that the vision of the hierarchy of cultural and civilizational markers and problematic factors in the professional environment of Ukraine fluctuates in a wide range. Quite popular is the

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thesis that “instead of showing the natural Europeanness of the Ukrainian world, there has been a tendency to emphasize the borders of Ukrainian lands: they say, Ukraine is not the eastern gate of Europe, but only a buffer zone between East and West, with an uncertain civilizational perspective and questionable internal integrity. And from this point of view, the three-hundred-year-old aspirations of Muscovy-Russia to absorb the Ukrainian world and various projects of its dismemberment (such as “federalization”) are seen as fully motivated as a result of the alleged blurring of Ukrainian identity” (Rozdobudko, 2013).

The tragic experience of the war in 2022 has its catalytic potential for revising the foundations of Ukrainian identity at the individual level. The mosaic Ukrainian identity does not serve as an indulgence for Russia’s expansionist encroachments. By and large, any status and actual shortcomings of the civilizational progress of modern Ukraine are, to a large extent, the result of the purposeful influence of Russia itself. Therefore, there should be no illusions about this: “One of the most noteworthy consequences of the recent events in Ukraine is a dramatic change in Ukrainian national identity. In various media one can regularly encounter assertions of individuals’ increased self-identification as Ukrainian, greater pride in being a citizen of the Ukrainian state, stronger attachment to symbols of nationhood, enhanced solidarity with compatriots, increased readiness to defend Ukraine or work for Ukraine, and increased confidence in the people’s power to change the country for the better. Most speak of their own experiences or those of people around them, while some generalise individual changes and assert a greater consolidation of the Ukrainian nation or even the ‘birth’ of a nation out of people supposedly lacking in the national consciousness. The reverse side of this consolidation of Ukrainianness is a sense of alienation from or even enmity towards Russia, which is targeted primarily at the state but sometimes also at the people, who, it is believed, overwhelmingly support the state’s aggressive policy towards Ukraine” (Kulyk, 2016: 588).

For example, in contrast to “classical” colonial projects, when the dominion never tried to make the population of its colonies “representatives” of the dominion (for example, British used India as a raw material appendage and did not seek to make the Indians British), Russia always sought to legitimize the cultural kinship with Ukraine, even more, to prove the Russian origin of Ukrainians and to “reunite” under the Russian flags, solving the historically determined tasks of preserving and developing the colonial logic. The uniqueness (in a negative sense) of the Russian civilizational project is also emphasized by W. Partlett and H. Küpper: “Russian colonialism was therefore distinct from West European colonialism: Russia used its colonies neither as a reservoir of commodities and a market for its products nor as a catch basin for its own surplus population. Russia’s colonialism was less economic and more ‘political’ than its Western counterpart, its motive was ideological and security-based. The economic interdependence of the various colonies was a tool to achieve this political goal but not an economic goal to enrich the centre” (Partlett & Küpper, 2022).

The hard edge of modern Ukrainian society also lies in the three archetypally rooted ethno-social components (Ukrainian, Russian, and “Soviet people”), functioning at a subconscious level, absolutely do not tolerate each other, and all together, the state. Some researchers insist on the priority of harmonious balancing of these three components of modern Ukrainian society. The term “balancing” causes a caveat – particularly in that, there are phenomena for which compromise is either impossible or fatal.

## **On the language issues of Ukrainian civilizational choice**

It is challenging to deny W. Humboldt: “Language is the united spiritual energy of the people, which is miraculously fixed in the corresponding sounds and in this manifestation and through the interrelationship of its sounds is understood by all speakers, arousing a similar energy in them” (Humboldt, 1985: 348). The language transforms it into an ideal sphere, feeds human mental activity with information, and transmits the experience of generations, encoding and decoding knowledge and spiritual essences. Language belongs to the list of classic causes of ideological confrontations because it is an integral attribute and a creative factor of national identity. Its generative and structuring potential is determined mainly by essential dialectics: with permanent dynamics of evolution, and on the other hand, with a certain normative constancy, which serves as a decisive criterion feature of the identity of the speaker of the language.

It is in the language that the essence of ethnonational specificity, peculiarities of world perception, and goal-setting are concentrated. It is no accident that denationalization is always carried out primarily to separate the younger generation from their native language. The discussion on the “language issue” is successfully clarified by the traditional desire of external subjugators to make the most of the opportunities for internal disintegration, as written in the classics of the study of post-Soviet countries through the prism of post-colonial theory: “Colonial rulers often strive to divide the population of a colony into various groups and to ground their dominance in these antagonisms. They actively try to prevent the colonial population from becoming a force that may endanger the colonial rule. In such a situation, the newly independent state faces the challenge to overcome old antagonisms, to create a platform which allows the various groups and factions within a population to merge into a nation that both accepts the state and is the basis for mutual solidarity of its members. The differences the colonial masters instrumentalised – and sometimes introduced by ethnic engineering – to divide society must be converted into factors of cohesion. One constitutional means to achieve this cohesion is the use of constitutions to tell stories of national history and collective memory” (Partlett & Küpper, 2022: 14).

History ordered that at least the previous 400 years of the formation of the Ukrainian language took place under the influence of the Russian language and the pressure (political, administrative, institutional) of the Russian cultural and civilizational factor. Russia has always realized that language is not only a means of communication between people but also a mechanism for national consolidation: without this mechanism, it is difficult to count on consolidation. It is no accident that the diagnosis of leading social scientists is imbued with genuine anxiety: not only relapses of language deafness and renunciation of the native culture are deepening, but also a general spiritual crisis aimed at further destabilizing the life of the nation. The linguistic consciousness of the people is a clear criterion of its national self-determination, self-identification, and maturity as a cultural and historical subject. In transitional and young states, it largely depends on the responsibility of the authorities and the formal elite.

The fact is that “... the Russian language is not so much a tool of ethno-socio-cultural identification as a catalyst of common historical memory, as a result turning into a problem of the rights and freedoms of Russians in Ukraine. In such a context, the Russian language and culture are identified with Russian statehood. Therefore, the very fact of being Russian-speaking puts a person in front of a dilemma: strive with all his might for the reunification of Ukraine and Russia or the introduction of dual citizenship in Ukraine. At the same time,

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everything is done to form a negative attitude towards Ukrainian independence in the minds of Ukrainian citizens” (Lanovenko & Shevchenko, 1998: 164–165). And in recent years, the Russian language as a tool for promoting Russian identity has turned from the status of a tool into a weapon in the literal sense.

Events after 2014 in Ukraine once again prove that the language issue and individual revision of views on it play an important role in forming preventive socio-cultural mechanisms of delegitimizing Ukrainian culture. Clearly, the state’s development and consistent implementation of a language policy is the starting point. The fact is that the so-called “natural, non-repressive formation of linguistic materiality” from the point of view of social reality has all the signs of nonsense, and virtuality. In other words, the linguistic environment is doomed to undergo significant motivational, teleological, axiological and other influences from social reality. If the state ignores the linguistic element of its systemic functioning, then it automatically gives this sphere “for ransom” to non-state (in the case of Ukraine, foreign) influences or street elements. It is clear that in such cases, it is not worth counting on compliance with the state’s interests: if a coincidence with the state’s interests does occur, it will only be situational, accidental, and short-lived.

## Conclusions

The ideas presented in the article were formulated based on a clear understanding that the ambitious task of analyzing Ukraine’s civilizational choice agenda cannot be fully resolved within its scope. At the same time, without pretending to the completeness of the presentation and the corresponding analysis, it was possible to summarize the priority directions of a successful civilizational and political transit as of the end of 2022, the result of which should be Ukrainian statehood, which would be based on a rationally designed project of Ukrainian identity commensurate with geopolitical challenges. One of the main tasks is to determine possible and necessary conditions for social cooperation. Theoretically, this can manifest itself in different ways – as a search for ways of harmonizing personal and public interest, creating schemes for the effective and fair distribution of material and non-material resources, or the optimal configuration of social institutions. Ukraine of the modern format should not take this aspect lightly: the priority of national interests should become its key message and development priority. It is not about an empty slogan – the abstraction of the general public and national interests must be intensively filled with real content, consistent and progressive actions to ensure an acceptable form with adequate content and a practical dimension.

It is worth admitting that coming to specific consensus decisions in this format is difficult. Ukraine will need it most in the foreseeable future. The identified problem requires not so many particular measures and not their specific number, but focused, symmetrical efforts of the authorities, civil society, and a particular individual – an agent of change. The policy of new realism can become an effective tool for social modernization. The given word combination is not accidental: the realism of this type of politics insists on the need for the adequate perception of reality in all its essential aspects, and the novelty emphasizes the need to operate not with the laws and features of the socio-political status quo “in general”, but taking into account the latest dynamics, trends, threats, and problematic challenges. Only by complying with such requirements can one count on creating an effective preventive policy and not its counterproductive version in a permanent crisis, “fire mode.”

The people and the country need not only (and sometimes not so much) a thorough understanding of their cultural-civilizational, geopolitical, and economic-economic prospects but an indomitable character that guarantees the realization of their potential in

spite of anything and against anything. On the difficult path of establishing a civilizational choice, Ukrainians will need not only the awareness of the incomplete state of political modernization, the limited, post-totalitarian (post-colonial, etc.) status, but also to work at the individual level to accelerate evolutionary processes. These processes can catalyze political decisions, not at the declarative level but at the practical level, to fill the steps for the approval of the civilizational choice with content.

The study managed to emphasize the existence of complex poles of worldview gravity of Ukrainians, among which archetypal rooted ethnosocial components (Ukrainian, Russian, and “Soviet people”) are dominant. Dismantling the destructive ethnosocial parts for the successful implementation of the civilizational choice is a complex socio-cultural mechanism that will require both the presence of active political instruments and the individual efforts of citizens, who should appear as direct “agents of change” in the conditions of civilizational transit. Step-by-step changes in favor of a new worldview horizon will require significant changes at the personal level through the rejection of destructive post-colonial (post-totalitarian, etc.) narratives in social practice in favor of the development of Ukrainian national identity, which will be preceded by the rational assimilation of the perspectives of civilizational choice, which is a fruitful combination of the European civilizational project and heritage of Ukrainian culture.

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