

# National Identity: Social Nature and Role in the System of Current Public Relations

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**Abstract** – The article deals with the concept of "national identity". In modern social and philosophical science, there are two main approaches. Supporters of one of them believe that it is meaningless to consider national identity in the context of globalization. Globalization violates traditional concepts of national identity, forms of social and ethnic identification. The subjective roots of self-identity whose feeling formed a person within the pre-globalization traditions are neglected. At the same time, the modern world demonstrates a picture in which the basis for rapid and even radical social changes is identification with other people and self-identification, which has a functional orientation and a desire to isolate oneself from others. Supporters of the second approach believe that identity implies similarity. *National* acts as an indicator of a critical attitude to the old tradition and a required condition for socio-cultural and socio-political development of social relations and foundations of modernity. In modern conditions, the basis for the national identity is identification with an ethnic or religious group. Strengthening the ties of the identification plan depends on the changes taking place in the emotional and cognitive sphere of modern society. The article studies the problem of formation (or destruction) of the national identity, its place in the system of modern social relations and its future.

**Key words** – national identity, modern world, social relations, sociocultural reality, person, social reality, ethno-national community.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The modern world is colorful and diverse. The modern era is a turning point characterized by the incredible renewal of all social spheres. A special place belongs to identification processes. According to some researchers, the modern world experiences a systemic crisis reflected in the fractures of individual and collective identities. Their attitude to the problem of an identity crisis is correlated with the destruction of many familiar norms that underlie the nature of both man and society. That is why the problem of identity crisis is discussed in modern philosophy, sociology, and psychology. This is due to the "ephemeral nature of social processes, the difficulty of integrating the past and the future, different communication flows and different systems of social interactions at the individual level. There are more and more individuals characterized by poly-identity or "blurred identity", whose consciousness is fragmented and who cannot answer who they are ("who am I?)" [13].

Attempts to abandon nationality and the independent existence of an ethnosocial and socio-political community as a nation break sociocultural attitudes that give people confidence in their collective security. Disintegration processes strengthen ties that claim to be scrap-forming in terms of social and political content. Identification ties with small groups (ethnic, religious, cultural) play an important role.

## II. MATERIALS AND RESEARCH METHODS

The research methodology is based on the sociocultural approach. The article uses elements of dialectic and systemic approaches which allowed us to consider the complex mechanism of formation of national identity. The social content of national identity, its place in the formation of a new social structure is examined through the prism of the theories of "social reality" by P. Berger and T. Luckman [4], civil self-organization by E. Arato [1], E. Gellner's ideas about state-citizen relations [5], and Giddens' ideas about structuring [6]. Analysis of the sociocultural processes influencing the formation of national identity, is based on the ideas and approaches developed by such authors as E. Toffler [16], K. Hübner [18], G. Elmer and E. Elmer [20], Yu.V. Harutyunyan [3], L.M. Drobizheva [7], S.E. Rybakov [14], N.Z. Yaroshchuk [21].

The unifying method used in this research is scientific principles that are required for a comprehensive and complete analysis of the formation of national identity: objectivity, historicity, and systematicity.

## III. RESEARCH RESULTS

Due to the intensification of various types of migration flows, there is a mixture of peoples occurs. The result is a change in ethno-national characteristics modifying identification features. E. Toffler's says that "... millions of people are searching for their identity or a magic tool that would help them regain their identity, give a feeling of closeness or ecstasy, lead them to a "higher" state of consciousness".

Despite the predictions of some researchers believing that there will be no ethnic and national characteristics, we observe their rebirth, and the importance of the categorical basis of the concept "national identity". In the twentieth century, the concept "national identity" began to be widely used in social and humanitarian studies in the conceptual and terminological

hierarchy. It began to be used by philosophers, sociologists, political scientists, etc. For a long time, ethnicity was the main object of national identification. The ethnic aspect served as one of the sources of renewal and progress, the rapprochement of people of different cultures and religions. If ethnic foundations allow people to feel their natural relevance to a social organism, form ideas that joint life activity and a common spiritual goal determine social relations, and a common sociocultural interest determines a certain type of relations and behavior [11], they have serious potential power which can fulfill an identifying mission and act as a unifying principle.

The same applies to another socio-ethnic community – a nation, which is also undergoing significant changes. Accordingly, the identification characteristics also change under the influence of general properties. National identity performs a complex sociocultural function, reflecting important aspects of the socio-political unity of people. A nation as a source of national identity expresses the being of people. A nation assumes a commonality of specific signs. As a social entity, it is characterized by appropriate parameters, determined by the general factors of social life. A particular nation is characterized by common features, but in a specific form. The social content of the nation, its functions and place in the system of social relations express its nature. It is inherent in all the nations. The specific properties that are inherent in each nation are common to all people. A nation is characterized by something that unites people into a nation. As a certain degree of community, a nation is contradictory. On the one hand, it exists as a specific element of the system of social relations, performs specific functions and occupies a specific place. The place and functions of the nation in the integrated system of social organization are its nature. Accordingly, defining the concept “national identity”, we can take off from these common features and apply the characteristics of identity as a whole that were proposed by O.M. Zotova: “shared memory of the past, consciousness of continuity, shared fate of this unity and its culture, as well as subjective perception and understanding of the shared past by each generation, is ethnohistory of this national group ...” [8. P. 156]. But the very fact that a nation exists in unity with all the factors of social life determines that there are qualitatively different nations. Within the same nation as a socio-ethnic phenomenon, there are qualitatively different nations. Features of the nation are its specific phenomena. The categories of essence and phenomenon characterize various moments of the existence of a nation in the social system. In the context of the correlation of qualitatively different nations, these two points are general and unitary.

The existence of each nation is characterized by both essence and phenomenon, as well as community, and the moment of singularity. The sphere of the individual is expressed in the specific features of each nation. These specific features are common features inherent in any nation, which include: common economic life, territory, language and spiritual life. It is necessary to take into account the fact that the formation of a nation, the consolidation of its identification codes, through the distribution of specific features, is one and the same process. Moreover, the formation of national identity

is not predetermined by the initial historical point from which the formation of a nation begins. It is also important to consider that the characteristics of sociocultural life per se do not relate to the specific identity of a nation, but affect the degree of national identity. This happens as a result of the fact that these features become the object of a special relationship of the nation. Of course, the nation is a natural stage in the development of human society. That is why there are special sociocultural relations between the nation and public life. They find expression in various sources of identification: ascriptive, cultural, territorial, political, economic, and social. At the same time, modern researchers are trying to abandon such categories as “nation” and “national identity” [15]. This happens against the backdrop of the spread of the postmodern approach – the existence of society is a heap of various fragments. And if this is true, no organized sociocultural, socio-ethnic, socio-political system can exist, since no identity can be correlated with these fragments. Therefore, in modern philosophical culture, through the efforts of representatives of post-non-classical thought (T. Adorno, J. Deleuze, J. Derrida, E. Levinas, M. Foucault, M. Heidegger, G. Marcuse), identity is denied. This happens along with the denial of identity over differences. But there is another position: in the modern world, identity becomes the main discourse in science and everyday life [1]. J. Baudrillard, E. Toffler, Yu. Habermas, and P. Ricoeur study communicative, spatio-temporal, sign-symbolic aspects of identity and its structures.

A person cannot live without “internal consistency”, which is ensured by various sources of identification. The destruction of one identification type must be compensated by the identification of another one [17]. The abandonment of a nation destroys identification ties which are immediately replaced by radical fundamentalist mechanisms for identifying oneself with someone or something. Their initial levels are associated with traditional culture, a religion whose stability leads to a confrontation with modern updates of the era. V.M. Lukin said: “Technologically backward local civilizations are responding to the challenges of the post-industrial globalizing world with a surge of cultural and religious identity, often rejecting innovations of developed countries” [12].

This reinforces the idea that one should not abandon a nation. A nation and its special characteristics change during social development. But this development means that the attitude towards them is changing. The dialectic of national identity manifests itself in the behavior of one individual and a group. The modern world is a real test for national identity. This happens as a result of the fact that the signs that determined the characteristics of the nation – territory, language, etc., cease to be preserved but develop. They lose their special significance for a given nation; their special attitude disappears, i.e. they cease to be objects of a specific relationship of the nation. There is no special national essence that would predetermine natural characteristics of national identity. For national identity, only the need for particulars is important, while for a given nation it is socially significant and meaningful which particular phenomena are fixed as special ones. Therefore, there are no features and signs that would be stable. The term “national features” is valid in the case when a nation determines these features, and “national identity” forms

signs of higher forms of association. This is due to social processes.

Having arisen on the basis of social development, national identity acquires relative independence and can have a certain impact on the development of an ethnosocial organism. This happens as a result of the formation of a continuity mechanism that affects the forms of identification. If this mechanism is absent, the person is immersed in a state of internal discomfort and social anxiety. There is a rupture of forms of community that influence social development. The forms of communication are weakening, which are adequate to the existing relations of people within the nation. The result of the destruction of the traditional way of life is strengthening isolationist tendencies. This is a dangerous trend which isolates culture. The main means of overcoming it are a dialogue and continuity of cultures. To strengthen identification braces, it is important for a person to be understood by others. A person enters the complex world of dialogue culture, breaking the chains of isolationism through understanding. For culture and traditions, it is an extremely important aspect. In this regard, it is difficult to disagree with the opinion expressed by K.R. Popper: "Some of the traditions of great importance are local and not easy to transplant to other soil." To maintain the foundations of national identity for a person living in a multinational, multicultural world, it is important to understand that his values, traditions and cultural terms are not ontological; they are given by the identification foundations and culture, thanks to which a person becomes a person. Therefore, to realize one's own integrity, it is necessary to understand and accept the experience of another, to make it useful and significant [9].

An essential feature of human identity is the initial synthetic unity [1]. Within its framework, a relationship between the nature of communication with representatives of other cultures, ethno-social and socio-political organisms surrounding them, the intensity of its essential formation in a positive or negative direction is observed. Identity is the main discourse in both science and everyday life. If the perception of the "other" is difficult, integration into a social group is complicated. As a rule, this is due to the crisis of identity, its rapid change. In this case, the identification code turns out to be aimed at the perception of the "other" as a representative of an extraneous community, another sociocultural reality, alien to national content. The relationship with this "other" becomes controversial. The Other is perceived as an enemy. On the other hand, this "Other" is a bearer of something new that can make changes in your familiar world [10]. Representatives of young people give preference to this "other", as they want changes [18]. Today, when humanity has come to its critical point of the growth of universal human problems in their interethnic manifestation, the research interest has become actualized. Therefore, without comprehending the identity crisis, without studying the problem of identity, it is difficult to understand the modern world [1].

#### IV. FINDINGS

The study of national identity in the conditions of transformations of modern social relations faces a number of problems. This is due to the need to clarify certain concepts,

and take into account changes in the essential characteristics of communities. There is a constant change in the semantic characteristics of emotional and cognitive identification of a person with himself as a similar subject of social relations, with a socio-cultural organism. These are concepts "nation" and "national identity".

The existence of a nation and a national identity cannot be indifferent to social transformations. A nation as a community expresses the integrity of the social system, its existence and development are determined by the totality of the laws of social development. K. Hubner defined the nation as a systemic whole, highlighting such components as values, morals, culture, language, political ideas and goals [18]. The development of a nation, the growth of its consolidation, the enrichment of content, social functions, signs and the formation of a shared are one and the same process. The national organization of public life leaves its mark on the essential aspects of national identity. But national identity is not absolutely dependent on the nature of nation. National identity is determined by the essence of nation and socio-cultural factors. Being one of the mechanisms of socialization, it contributes to the awareness of its social interests and essence. Belonging to a nation and the social essence of a person are not divided. National identity implies a certain attitude to national values and national feelings.

Thus, national identity is an essential characteristic and universal content of human socio-ethnic, ethno-national and socio-political being, a basis for the development of social relations. Judging by the socio-cultural situation in the modern world, we can conclude that studies on national identity will continue in the foreseeable future.

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