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## Self-knowledge as a Path to Self-identification in Ukrainian Society: Aspects of Philological Discourse

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### Abstract

The formation of Ukrainian statehood, with all the attendant problems of unification and consolidation of the citizens of the new state, was marked in Ukrainian sociological science by a particularly close attention to the phenomenon of identity. The article makes an attempt to comprehend peculiarities of Ukrainian philosophy of self-identification and its philological aspects discourse from the standpoint of interdisciplinary approach, employing historical and cultural dimensions and analyzing contemporary landscapes and discourses, in particular within social constructivism viewpoint and features of personalism philosophy. The conclusion is made that Ukrainian philosophy has developed a unique philosophical viewpoint that stresses freedom, dignity, and the moral responsibility of the person by navigating the nation's complicated history of foreign dominance and independence fight. It is a philosophy of pursuing enjoyment in the material world, infused with the concepts of action and struggle while also yearning for liberation. Overall, Ukrainian philosophy thoughts in the field of self-identification through self-knowledge represent impressive phenomenon, which is definitely needed to be further analyzed from multidisciplinary positions.

**Keywords:** Ukrainian philosophy, personalism, God, self-realization, self-identification, philological discourse, language.

### Introduction

The general civilizational paradigm of postmodernism, globalization trends, intensive formation of the information society, on the one hand, and on the other hand – the processes of transformation of the modern Ukrainian society, uncertainty and instability characteristic of the crisis situation, the need to determine the place of independent Ukraine in the European and world community, dynamic changes in a number of values, norms, social structures and institutions – all these factors determine the increased interest in a man and the growth of his role in the system of social relations. The issues of the development of personality, individual needs and spiritual resources of a person, self-knowledge and self-identification, social adaptation and self-realization in a transforming society become central ones.

Namely, the problem of self-knowledge and self-identification has always been in the center of attention of the anthroposphere. The socio-philosophical concept of self-realization is closely connected with the development of humanism as the basis of human existence.

At the same time, by demonstrating how language shapes identity, philology advances the philosophy of self-identification. A thorough comprehension of texts, including their structure and the cultural contexts in which they are produced and interpreted, enables critical introspection on the ways in which discourse and the “other” construct meaning and a sense of belonging. Philology assists people and communities in analyzing and expressing their identities as well as the nature of knowledge itself by studying the ways in which language functions. Thus, inclusion of philological discourse aspects in the investigation of self-identification vision in philosophy seems highly relevant approach.

Meanwhile, in recent two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, discourse of self-knowledge, self-identification, and language in national-philosophic refraction increasingly actively enters media landscape and political rhetoric, in particular, within the canvas of national philosophy. Namely Ukraine represents one of the brightest examples of these processes. Since the onset of hybrid conflict in Donbass in 2014, and especially after 2022, in the conditions of ‘hot war’ after Russian Federation invasion, this discourse in Ukraine is significantly saturated with the notion of trauma, its multiple facets in historical domain and retrospective vision.

The way that media narratives and political discourse filter, modify, and redefine a country's fundamental values is described by the refraction of national philosophy in media and political rhetoric. These fundamental ideas, such as liberty, justice, or national identity, are refracted rather than clearly or directly represented, frequently surfacing in an amplified, distorted, or fragmented form to influence public perception.

This paper represents an attempt of theoretical comprehension of national self-knowledge and self-identity in Ukrainian media, political rhetoric, and language' evolution practices.

## Literature Review

The phenomenon of self-identification finds its reflection not only in philosophical, but also in philological discourse. At the nexus of contemporary philological and philosophical activity is metadisciplinarity. Within metadisciplinary philosophical research, the phenomena of intersubjectivity/interculturality are examined by Komisar et al. (2024), with highlighting the continuous interaction between personal consciousness and interpersonal perception in today's network society.

Matiychak (2021) rightly claims that philosophy is an inseparable component of fiction. Ukrainian fiction is characterized with deep embodiment of self-identification patterns in it, and thus represents a bright example of philology discourse aspects' manifestation within the philosophy of self-knowledge and self-identification.

The self-identity discourse of philosophy in contemporary Ukrainian intellectual culture is examined by Bugrov (2024). The findings show how contemporary Ukrainian intellectual culture and philosophical discourse interact dynamically.

At the same time, researchers note that a shift is currently underway from the classical interpretation of political discourse, in which the central aspect of research is relations of dominance and subordination, to the semiotic, linguistic, and pragmatic aspects of the subject matter. Politics and political relations are treated as constructs created on the basis of people's "tacit consent". "The articulation of power" is understood in discourse theory as its implementation (House & Kadar, 2025). Among the basic characteristics of political language, scholars highlight semantic ambiguity, ideological polysemy, structural and semantic latency, a focus on emotional impact, fideistic, agonistic, and pseudo-dialogic aspects, as well as a pragmatic focus on achieving results related to the struggle for power. Researchers attribute the following fundamental functions of political discourse to the informative, instrumental, normative, legitimizing and predictive functions, while arguing that political discourse is "the main means of manipulation in the political environment" (Beaver & Stanley, 2023).

In recent decades, there are increasingly more attempts to comprehend self-knowledge and self-identity construction in media and political rhetoric from the standpoint of social constructivism. Wilson (2024) emphasizes that Ukrainian social constructivism views identity as a social construct formed through shared cultural, linguistic, historical, and political aspects that distinguish Ukrainians from other groups. It is not a static entity, but a dynamic process based on the perception of oneself as part of the Ukrainian community and its contrast with the outside world.

Overall, studies in this area can be divided into three groups based on their theoretical approaches: 1) those defining the dichotomy of civic/ethnic identity; 2) those analyzing the plurality of identity narratives; 3) those examining Ukrainian national identity as postcolonial. Works proposing alternative methodological approaches to the study of Ukrainian national identity also exist. The studies' findings demonstrate

that language policy and education play a central role in the socialization of Ukrainian national identity.

Before the Russian invasion in 2022, defining a “region” was a problem in Ukrainian identity studies. The relationship between regional cleavages and ethnic group was one of the issues researchers attempted to address by defining regions, their ethnic composition, and political preferences. In particular, Barrington and Herron (2004) identified eight regions based on their historical, economic, and demographic characteristics. Shulman (2005), as well as Fedinec and Csernicsko (2017) identified five regions (west, center, southeast, Kyiv, and Crimea), distinguished by linguistic and ethnic identities. The east-west cleavage has been noted by scholars such as Zhurzhenko (2014) and Pohorila (2016).

The publication of the Ukrainian scholar Dedush (2016) *“Social Constructivism and Sources of Separatist Identity in the Ukrainian Donbas”* is of significant interest. The article attempts to analyze the reasons and prerequisites for the emergence of the ideological basis of separatism in the Donbas. The specifics of the historical development of the region and the formation of the regional mentality of its inhabitants are examined in a new way. Dedush (2016), in particular, claims that the total dominance of the Russian language in all spheres of life in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, oddly enough, caused a feeling of “imposition” of the Ukrainian state language. These conclusions emphasize the critically important place of language in self-knowledge and the construction of self-identity.

After 2022, the construction of Ukrainian national identity is characterized by the significant role of the “image of the Other” in this process, namely - historical narratives, official rhetoric, and memory politics. The construction of Ukrainian identity is examined in the context of postcolonial and post-imperial discourses. Particular attention is paid to the use of the image of empire in shaping perceptions of Ukraine's past (Skvirskaja, 2025). However, this process is not accompanied by an in-depth scholarly discussion of the understanding of empire and colonial policy, but postcolonial rhetoric is actively used in Ukraine's domestic political struggles and foreign policy.

Language policy, characterized in recent years by quite radical “linguistic reforms”, also plays a significant role as a tool for shaping a comprehensive discourse of national identity within Ukrainian society. However, this phenomenon, like understanding the underlying essence of postcolonial narratives, is practically not an object of scholarly discussions. Thus, the ‘scattered’ theoretical landscape of understanding Ukrainian national self-knowledge and self-identification needs systematization and new impetus of development.

## Methodology

The paper represents a theoretical framework. The research is carried out within social constructivism paradigm. In identity studies, social constructivism contends that identities are formed through social interactions and cultural circumstances rather than being fixed. Important ideas include: identities such as gender, race, and nationality are shaped by social and political factors; people and groups use language and social cues to define and redefine who they are in a dynamic, continuous process; and the self is constructed through interactions with others (Schwarz & Williams, 2020).

The methodological basis of the study is determined by the specificity of the object and subject of the study. The work uses both general scientific methods – analysis, analogy, and a historical and philosophical approach to defining the concept of “self-knowledge” and identifying relationships with the concepts of authenticity and self-actualization. Using the method of synthesis, the unity of the transpersonal and personal in posing the question of self-identification was traced. The cultural aspect of the study is also highlighted, in particular, Hofstede’s cultural dimensions.

The core methodological toolkit is narrative review, the sample of literature sources for which was carried out manually in Wiley, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, and ResearchGate libraries databases, as well on Amazon platform (for searching monographic works) and directly in Google search engine. The queries for search were formulated with the use of logical operators AND/OR, connecting philosophical and philological vectors of topic investigation.

## **Results and Discussion**

The problem of self-identification as a real-life problem of an individual’s existence has existed for as long as man has existed as a personality and individuality. Therefore, it is quite natural that as soon as European philosophy in its desire to comprehend the phenomenon of being turned to man, this problem entered the circle of its most important and eternal problems. Socrates’ calls for man to know himself, and for philosophy to help him in this, found a lively response among philosophers of different eras, different trends and schools.

It is worth noting that historians played a prominent role in the social movements of the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Their active participation in the formation of competing historical cultures and national memories became the subject of lively debate. The ‘Ukrainian project’, which developed from the late 19th century onward, was also largely the result of the efforts of historians, among whom the leaders of the national movement, M.S. Hrushevsky and D.I. Doroshenko, occupied a special place. They created a collective biography of a unified Ukrainian people and its historical knowledge based on the nationalization of regional history and historiography (Hrytsak, 2024). Histories of Ukrainian historical scholarship and the construction of national self-knowledge continue to draw on these constructs and present its development as a holistic, continuous, linear process. The system-forming core of these constructs became the emancipation of Ukrainian history and

historiography from “metropolitan” notions of “our” history, the exclusion of the Ukrainian past from the contexts of Russian, Polish, and other histories, and, conversely, the presentation of Ukrainian history and historiography as self-sufficient phenomena whose organic development was impeded from without. Meanwhile, Hrushevskyi presented the Ukrainian past as a complex interweaving of political, legal, socio-economic, and spiritual-cultural processes, as a clash of traditional ways of life and external factors, considered in the context of national confrontation.

Historical narratives, on the other hand, are a social construct. According to social constructivism, the Ukrainian national identity is not intrinsic or unchanging, but rather the result of social and historical events. Through events like the Orange Revolution, the 2014 Euromaidan Revolution, and ongoing conflicts, this theory emphasizes how common concepts, historical memory, and identity are produced and fought, defining Ukraine's national consciousness. Constructivism emphasizes how national identity is constantly constructed and remade by emphasizing the interplay between culture, politics, and social change.

The cumulative identity shift brought about by the Orange Revolution in 2004, the Maidan Revolution or Revolution of Dignity in 2013–2014, and the ongoing conflict can account for Ukrainians' tenacity in the face of Russia's invasion in 2022. The two stages of the conflict, which began in 2014 and ended in 2022, have sped up the social and civic development of Ukrainian identity. Ukraine is currently a unified political and civic nation following the fall of the Soviet Union. However, Wilson (2024) asserts that there is also a growing agreement on classic nationalist mythology, which is characterized by antagonism to Ukraine's hyper-Europeanization and Russia's aggressive reimperialization and autocratic political culture.

The Maidan Revolution (2013–2014) and the Orange Revolution (2004). It was a decade of cumulative transformation and twofold refoundation. Similar to the Gorbachev era and the 1990s for Russians, these were the “impressionable years” for Ukraine (McGlynn, 2023). According to Wilson (2024), the events of 2014 and particularly the years after 2022 seemed to be a time of “paradigm shift”, as evidenced by the phenomena that “ideationally, Ukraine is the anti-Russia”.

It is interesting to note that one of the instruments of new ideological shifts is language reform - “New Ukrainian orthography”. The ideology of language reform in Ukraine after 2014 was focused on strengthening the status of Ukrainian as the only state language, however “New Ukrainian orthography” is really ‘revolutionary’. The ideology of the new Ukrainian spelling is to return to the spelling norms of 1928 (“Kharkiv spelling”) and “eliminate unsystematic, illogical rules that were imposed during the Soviet period”. A well-known Ukrainian linguist, Doctor of Philology, Pavlo Hrytsenko, who was a member of the Ukrainian National Commission on Spelling, describes the feasibility of the new spelling as follows: “its main principle should be a return to Ukrainian-centrism, therefore much of what was once adopted into the Ukrainian language from foreign languages through the mediation of Russian, which has a different phonetics and grammar compared to our language, should be

transferred to the main road of Ukrainianness .... these changes are important, primarily for the preservation of original centuries-old linguistic achievements, the restoration of linguistic originality, and the self-identification of Ukrainians" (Protsiuk, 2018).

In this vein, it is important to focus on the convergence of philosophy and philology in Ukrainian context. While philosophy investigates basic issues of existence, knowledge, and values, Ukrainian philology focuses on the Ukrainian language, literature, and culture. Jacques Derrida stated in 1967 that "there is nothing outside the text" (Bush, 2009). Meanwhile, interpenetration and convergence of philosophical and philological discourses arose much earlier than 20th century, and Ukrainian context is one of the evident examples.

In contemporary Ukrainian philology, the term "linguistic-literary synergies" refers to the cooperative relationship, made possible by an interdisciplinary approach, between the study of Ukrainian literature (literary studies) and the language (linguistics) (Svyachuk et al., 2024). Through the integration of conventional research methods and the examination of the ways in which cultural, historical, and social elements impact both, this approach enables a more thorough investigation, uncovering new patterns and linkages within Ukrainian language and literature. It results in the development of more comprehensive text analysis models as well as a deeper comprehension of texts, cultural settings, and national identity.

In particular, Dyak and Boreychuk (2025) specifically look into how historical myths have shaped Ukrainian identity. The authors contend that the two iconic pillars of positive Ukrainian collective identity are the image of the mother (as the embodiment of cordocentrism, caring, and moral correctness) and the Cossack (as the personification of courage, will, and military heroism). Both archetypes have strong historical, folkloric, and theological origins in Ukraine, and they have taken on new forms in the contemporary cultural sphere during the Russian-Ukrainian War. Positive mythology serves as a tool for spiritual autonomy, truth affirmation, resistance, and dignity. Meanwhile, by analyzing the textual and linguistic structures, symbols, and cultural settings of myths, the "philology of myth" uses the methods of philology, the study of language in historical sources, to comprehend and interpret them. It reveals how myths serve as an essential component of human expression, transmitting shared meaning, identity, and comprehension of the world, particularly in pre-modern civilizations, by fusing literary research with cultural, philosophical, and theological studies. Thus, mythology sphere is one of the core domains of philology discourse in the national self-identification philosophical thought.

In the writings of Hryhorii Skovoroda and Taras Shevchenko, philology is associated with their deep comprehension of language as a means of spiritual growth, national identity, and self-knowledge. Skovoroda's work is essential for studying Ukrainian philological thought and its roots since he uses biblical and classical allegory to convey profound truths in his philosophical and ethical texts. In contrast, Shevchenko

created a contemporary literary language in Ukraine and produced works in it that served as the cornerstone of linguistic culture and national identity.

Shevchenko, in contrast to Skovoroda, deliberately employed and advanced the dynamic vernacular Ukrainian language, producing works in it that influenced Ukrainian literature and national identity. Vernacular vocabulary, which was a significant step in the development of the contemporary literary language and gave it new strength and expressiveness, is infused throughout his poetry and prose. Shevchenko was a writer and a language scholar. His writings are considered the best of the Ukrainian language and provide the basis for later philological and philosophical studies.

An important feature that fundamentally characterizes the entire thought of H.S. Skovoroda is deep anthropologism. Reasoning about man, the philosopher comes to an understanding of the nature of human life. For the first time in the history of Ukrainian and, perhaps, Slavic philosophy in general, he forms the area of reflection on man, his identity in time, the essence of man, the meaning of life, which essentially constitutes a circle of anthropological problems.

In fact, self-knowledge and self-identification in Ukrainian philosophy have a strong, albeit unconscious and undeclared, connection to Protestantism. Ethnic self-identification, external piety and patriotism are the pillars for Ukrainian' personality shaping through self-knowledge and self-reflection.

At the same time, one can trace some echo of African American spiritual inheritance, which was expressed in spirituals and gospels (music that was formed to express the worker's pain and exhaustion during slavery in the US). In the American South, spirituals played a crucial role in fostering a sense of community, disseminating significant concepts, and sharing the pleasures and sorrows of enslavement. These are religiously based American folk songs that were written by and are closely linked to the African-American community. Africans in the American colonies were first exposed to Christianity. These folks first struggled to understand religion. Later on, however, the Bible's stories, which mirrored their own experiences, captured the slaves' attention. They consequently started writing spirituals that portrayed well-known Biblical characters like Daniel and Moses. These spirituals were a means of conveying the joys and sufferings of the slave population as well as their newfound religion as they assimilated into Africanized Christianity (Jones, 2004).

In the works of Taras Shevchenko, the motives of such spiritual poems-songs, with a strong emphasis on "captivity", can be traced quite clearly. In the characters of T. Shevchenko, one can find the artistic embodiment of the religiosity of the people, which acquires an ethical, and therefore, personal-historical dimension. Through the work of the national poet, the tradition of the people is realized as the personification of the living wisdom of the community. This is about the immanent openness of literary characters to God and people: the openness of their profane (ethnic) culture under the influence of religious tradition, in particular the sacredness of hagiographic

facts, which leaves its mark on the daily life of the people and historically forms the community mentality. Therefore, the dialectic of the folk tradition in the works of Shevchenko consists in the dialogue of Christian consciousness and the national-cultural dimension of the Ukrainian people.

An interesting figure in Ukrainian philosophy is Mykhailo Drahomanov, who is characterized as a socialist in most publications. The study of the views of M. Drahomanov is of fundamental importance for understanding the complexity of the processes of formation of national self-consciousness in the period of increasing social contradictions generated by modernization. Assessing his role in the development of political and legal thought, modern authors emphasize the need to understand Drahomanov in two directions: firstly, without freedom of the nation, the realization of individual rights is impossible, and without freedom of the individual, it is impossible to achieve national equality; secondly, the individual develops in the spiritual environment of a specific society or social group, and it is in them (people, nation, national minority) that his formation occurs, since the state is obliged to provide conditions for the civilizational progressive development of the association of individuals, which acquires special significance when asserting the principle of the priority of the individual (Havryliuk, 2021). Drahomanov was the first to substantiate the ethnic and psychological identity and individuality of Ukrainians. In his system, the person is the cornerstone and foundation of the structure of this society, the highest value, the right of which is protected by a free community, not the state (Sinkiewicz et al., 2017).

In essence, the process of self-knowledge as a path to self-identification in Ukrainian philosophy can be depicted schematically in form of the onion diagram (see Fig. 1).

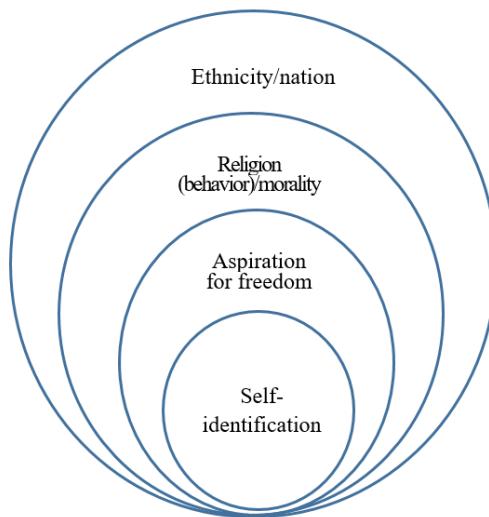


Fig. 1. Process of self-knowledge as a path to self-identification in Ukrainian philosophy. Source: developed by the author

These self-identification landscapes found their bright embodiment in the slogan formulated by the former Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko - "Army - Language - Faith". In fact, many of the above-mentioned layers of Ukrainian philosophy can be seen as foundations of this slogan' essence: army as aspiration for freedom (eternal protection of this freedom), language as the core ethnicity/nation element, and faith as religious morality. It is interesting to note that, according to Poroshenko himself, "Army, language, and faith are not a slogan, but a formula for modern Ukrainian identity". At the same time, however, the emergence of such slogans indicates the intensification of processes of "mediatization of politics", the development of "post-truth politics", and the "emotivization of politics" (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014).

In overall, the paradigms of self-knowledge and self-identification, self-knowledge through self-identification in Ukrainian philosophy acquired very bizarre, "multi-layered" forms, which accordingly manifested themselves in social processes, in particular, in the phenomenon of personalism. It is interesting to note that personalist philosophy views language as a fundamentally social and interpersonal medium that is necessary for the growth and expression of the individual human being. It is a practical, real manifestation of awareness that results from the need to engage with other people rather than just an abstract tool for communication (Gravin, 2023).

Ukrainian political culture is based on principles that have sound and progressive origins, but in the Ukrainian political reality they sometimes cease to meet their original purpose. In this context, one can mention, in particular, personalism. Personalism, originating from liberal Christian circles, became the response to totalitarian ideologies. Its main idea is that the human personality is unique and priceless. It maximally embodies the image of God, is the cornerstone of existence and the most important category of human civilization. The individual should be placed above any social and political mechanisms that limit it (Burgos & Crosby, 2018). Personalism became one of the main philosophical trends in both European and American thought in the 20th century. It is not a school, but a broad movement that has embraced various philosophical schools and gone far beyond them, including into the realm of politics.

The personalist movement, in particular, is the theoretical basis for the idea of the rights and freedoms of each individual. Modern democratic doctrines elevate personalistic values above collective ones. However, politically, personalism "works" well only when there are effective state mechanisms of checks and balances, as well as instruments of control from civil society that do not allow it to go beyond the constitutional framework. Modern constitutions, including the Ukrainian one, while proclaiming personalistic values, at the same time limit their application by the authorities to themselves.

Many representatives of the Ukrainian political class and bureaucracy act in the spirit of intuitive personalism. Moreover, almost every "little Ukrainian" is a personalist deep down. The experience of European democracies clearly shows that this is quite

possible. However, it is also certain that cultural and historical features conditioned by them play a huge role, which can be understood, in particular, by analyzing Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Language, as a manifestation of culture, also reflects these values, but Hofstede's model does not directly measure them (Kravets et al., 2023). Rather, Hofstede's dimensions help us understand why different languages have different norms of communication and expression, as these norms are rooted in deep cultural values. Nevertheless, philological aspects implicitly present in these cultural and, thus, also philosophical discourses.

Interestingly, dimension of power distance in Ukraine is 92, which is extremely high and clearly indicates the presence of risk described above. Individualism dimension for Ukraine is 55. Historically, Ukrainians have been more "if you want something done right, do it yourself" types. They dislike distributing accountability among a large number of people. However, in the periods of social crises, they can quickly unite (two Maidans in 2004 and 2014 are evidence of it). This "average" value of individualism dimension may be a result of strong ethnicity/nation-based self-identification and self-knowledge.

Uncertainty avoidance is also extremely high in Ukraine (95 points). For comparison, in Denmark it is 23, in Norway – 50. However, in neighboring Poland this score is 93 points. If to compare the significance of national idea and patriotism moods in the public discourse of these countries, it becomes evident that uncertainty avoidance score is in direct correlation with the extent of national idea strength.

One should bear in mind that these cultural dimensions are objective reality, and not taking them into account, attempts to consider self-identification of Ukrainians based on any kind of universalist approach would be wrong, lead to wrong findings.

In the conditions of crisis and institutional degradation of structures that were traditionally responsible for the "correctness" of an individual's actions and his adherence to the general interest, the reproduction of the normative side of life has become a matter of his own choice. At the same time, conscience and success often contradict each other (Rozumnyi, 2005).

The concept that helps to reveal the connection between macrosocial shifts and deformations of the personality is the identity crisis. The individual interprets social discomfort according to the parameters that mass communication suggests to him. This is the specificity of the society of information technologies, far from all of which have the utopian progressive character that its apologists speak of. In reality, it looks like this: a confused and disoriented person who has lost his sense of balance and his own adequacy in society is offered simple answers to simple questions. The manipulator appeals to social memory and social imagination – "remember when you were good, imagine how you would like to see the world around you". Then, to this personal myth, which is absolutely predictable due to its direct dependence on dominant social myths and stereotypes, a negative motivation factor is added – fear and the basis for making the necessary decisions is ready.

The most dangerous is the tendency to use the psychological basis of crisis phenomena in the sphere of identity for the purpose of political provocations and ideological sabotage. It is no secret that the basic stereotypes of social organization lie in the plane of identification of "one's own" and "others", as well as – often – the mortal threat posed by the values and interests of "others" to the values and interests of the individual, who at this moment of collective identification loses the ability to objectively assess the reality or, so to speak, the authenticity of the threat. The phenomenon of over-securitization arises, which leads to disintegrative tendencies in society, entropy in different domains of the socio-political life of the country and, accordingly, worsens the security parameters. Self-knowledge of the individual through self-identification is, perhaps, the only possible panacea for these negative phenomena. Reasonable personalism, in turn, can be the foundation of self-identification. The task is to turn personal success into collective, and later national, success.

Ukrainian researchers Stetsenko and Galuyko (2021) consider the topic of Ukrainian personalism and the philosophy of religion of Oleksandr Kulchytsky. The authors argue that it is no coincidence that O. Kulchytsky's concept of "Ukrainian personalism" is organically connected with his concept of "phenomenological philosophy of religion". This necessarily follows from the fact that the most characteristic features of the "Ukrainian person" (with which the scientist, of course, identified himself) are his special, heightened religiosity, determined by the heritage of the worldview mentality of Ukrainians.

This approach to personalistic issues leads the scientist to understand the specifics of the Ukrainian cultural tradition and to foster typical Ukrainian values in the struggle for the preservation of the Ukrainian person and the Ukrainian spiritual community. The last components of O. Kulchytskyi's concept of man actually give grounds to consider his personalism precisely as "Ukrainian personalism". It is no coincidence that Kulchytskyi's concept of "Ukrainian personalism" is organically connected with his concept of "phenomenological philosophy of religion". This necessarily follows from the fact that he attributes his particularly heightened religiosity, due to the specifics of the worldview mentality of Ukrainians, to the most characteristic features of the "Ukrainian person" (Kulchytskyi, 1995).

The Christian religion occupies a significant place in Ukrainian philosophy. However, while the traditional doctrine of Christianity presupposes self-knowledge in the transcendental plane, humility before God the Creator and Redeemer, recognition of the impossibility of achieving perfection by one's own efforts, as well as the desire to serve one's neighbor, Ukrainian Christianity gravitates toward the characteristic features of Jewish theology, that is, a strong national idea and the defining significance of external piety and decorum, as well as the idea of "reward for efforts", that is, salvation is seen in strict adherence to a certain moral code, which, among other things, has a patriotic component, that is very close to the Old Testament commandment "love your neighbor and hate your enemy". Self-knowledge here

follows primarily from self-identification with own ethnic group, and then consists of comparing own feelings and actions with the “standard” one - a certain complex formation, a system of historical and existential narratives, refracted in particular in linguistics domain as crucial ‘environment’ of shaping ‘desired’ national identity discourse through academic ‘establishment’ and education.

## Conclusion

As the research shows, Ukrainian philosophy thoughts in the field of self-identification through self-knowledge represent impressive phenomenon, which is definitely needed to be further analyzed from multidisciplinary positions. Being for quite a long time under the rule of Poland and Austria, as well as the Russian Empire – sharply culturally dissimilar countries, which in principle in itself is a historically unique phenomenon for one country, undoubtedly affected the mentality of the Ukrainian people and its outstanding representatives-philosophers. Superimposition of this influence on the ancient roots of people’ soul gave birth to bizarre shapes of worldview, expressing in self-knowledge and self-identification. Slavic philosophy, in general, explores issues of life, religion, and the universe by referencing Orthodox Christian ideas, folklore, and the rich literary legacy of the Slavic peoples. However, Ukrainian philosophy has successfully negotiated the nation's convoluted history of foreign rule and independence movement, producing a unique philosophical viewpoint that prioritizes human liberty, dignity, and moral accountability. It is philosophy of striving for happiness in earthly life, philosophy, permeated by the ideas of longing for freedom but at the same time action and struggle. Motifs of African American spirituals (which are “poetry and resistance” (Hayes, 2012)) and simultaneously the spirit of Protestantism make Ukrainian philosophical foundations of self-identification a unique and outstanding phenomenon within the landscape of Slavic philosophy.

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