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# The Identity Issues at the Perspectives of Chinese Geopolitical Strategies

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### Introduction

European identity is a controversial concept in its essence. On the one hand, its content embodies the aspiration of the teleological association, and on the other, exacerbates the problem of the historical-political and national preconditions of such unity. There are some approaches to understanding the phenomenon of identity:

- 1. Identity as attributive, immanent characteristic of subjectivity, substantiality of individuality in the context of dynamic socio-cultural changes. Identity accumulates personal ratings and representations in the background of the continuity of the dynamics of the historical process.
- 2. Identity as the basis of national-state unity and co-operation. It is based on a common model of identity that sociality prevails on individuality, and the social structure can carry out coordinated and purposeful activities.

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- 3. Identity as a kind of collective consciousness, objectified ideal, disclosed in the commonality of ideological ideals, solidarity goals and ways to achieve them.
- 4. Identity as a construct of social dialogue and interaction, a common field of collective narrative that unifies originality. In this context, identity is the key to the existence of a semiotic field that unites society and realizes the dynamics of its life in the most optimal forms of interaction.

The European identity as such should serve to form a common European state, a common destiny of countries and peoples of the European space. This union is based on common values and ideals produced by the cultural tradition of Christianity and classical Western philosophy, namely the principles of humanism, tolerance, civil rights and responsibilities (Bazaluk O., 2018). Identity as an example is legitimized by the intellectuals of the era, but in order for the conceptual framework to be realized, it is necessary to internalize its postulates broadly. And in this contradiction, it is probably the biggest flaw and the greatest strength of European identity. Indeed, contemporary Europe is a unity in the diversity of ethnic groups, states, cultural and religious traditions (Nazaretyan A.P., 2015). But in democracy, the key to sustainability at the challenges of modernity is plasticity in interaction. Plasticity is achieved at the expense of subsidiarity of public life: decision-making are made in the broadest circle of involved persons, which operatively coordinates the course of social transformations.

The unity of purpose and motivation of European identity is complex at various levels of self-identification of communities from ethno-national to pan-European (Iskhakova N., 2018). How consistent and coherent is the process of individual self-identification in the dynamic complex of pluralist tendencies of the modern information society? What are the prerequisites for updating this problem at the present stage? What are the essential components of this phenomenon and strategies for its interpretation?

### **Prerequisites for The Formation of European Identity**

Given the socio-cultural and ideological context of the formation of a European identity, it is appropriate to note the following contemporary determinants, which actualize the problem field of the study.

1. Change in the international political order of the world. The collapse of the USSR, the policy of ending the Cold War, the formation of the European Union as a political conglomerate and its further expansion.

- 2. Processes of globalization, internationalization and informatization of modern society, unification of civilization space and corresponding daily activities. This unified space produces qualitatively new threats to the civilized world (terrorism, climate change, production and distribution of material goods, the problem of migration, etc.).
- 3. Transformation of the political and social system, strengthening the foundations of civil society, denationalizing the economy and expanding the network communication.

In connection with the foregoing, at the present stage, identity is difficult to verify as a constant or ontological phenomenon. A more effective way of understanding identity is the prolongability, procedurality of self-determination practices as the dynamics of explicit subjectivity procedures. Therefore, the idea that the European identity is institutionalized is justified is a project for the future rather than an ontological phenomenon.

Identity is an important component of human selfhood, its subjectivity and self-determination. But its content varies depending on geographical space and historical time, socially stereotypical forms of manifestation, attribution of a particular community as an autochthonous and universal. All these aspects are identity markers that formulate a particular model and specification which are vital for the solving of contemporary civilizational contradictions at the local (national) and global development (Ursul A., Ursul T., 2017).

It is clear that all identified aspects are problematic in tangent to European identity. Therefore, European identity is characterized by inclusiveness, acceptance of diversity as equal and useful, multi-ethnicity, and democracy as a fundamental value. Given this specificity, European identity is institutionally, politically motivated. Its implementation in the horizon of social life and internalization into the individual space of human subjectivity is carried out, first of all, by means of symbolization and semiotic representation. Recognized symbols of the united Europe (the anthem of the European Union, the day of Europe, the motto "Unity in Diversity", monetary unit, network domain, etc.) serve as markers for the formation and explication of European identity.

## European Identity at Contemporary Philosophical Discourse

Note that these markers capture and extrapolate the meanings that take place in Western culture. Thus, Western culture is distinguished by its rationality, which characterizes the operational level of social adapta-

tion. It is appropriate to mention Sanja Ivic and Dragan D. Lakicevic (2011) that representatives of the Enlightenment equate human nature with rationality, and define human beings as "endowed with reason" (Ivic S., Lakievic D.D., 2011, p. 396). This point of view is the basis of the modernist notion of political equality. Rights are perceived as the same for all and applied to all in the same way. In this way the uniqueness of every human being is denied. The idea of the primacy of reason rejects different narratives and experiences that are culturally and socially produced. The Enlightenment's philosophy ascribed unity, coherence and homogeneity to the concept of identity and, in this way, it ignored the hetoregeneity and disparities of a number of social groups and individuals" (Ivic S., Lakievic D.D., 2011, p. 397). But, on the other hand, rationality is subjected to devastating criticism in discussions about contemporary philosophical discourse. Is it advisable to build a European identity on the ground of a legitimized rationality?

The authors argue (Ivic & Lakicevic, 2011, p. 397): "Representatives of postmodern and poststructuralist thought are attempting to reconceptualize the rational tradition on which the Enlightenment is founded. They argue that this rational tradition has produced physical and political oppression. Women, workers, immigrants and other social groups are marginalized and excluded in the name of 'sameness' and universal principles based on reason (Kyvliuk O., Svyrydenko D., 2017; Savenkova L., Svyrydenko D., 2018). Those social groups are excluded because they are considered different from rational, universal principles of law and human nature".

Accordingly, the identity itself acquires the signs of discursiveness, procedural definition in the specification of incarnations. Discourse is a politically engaging concept, regardless of the subject area of incarnation. Therefore, there are grounds for accentuating politically motivated components of European identity. Evert van der Zweerde (2009) argues the need for further European integration, especially in terms of its politicization. The urgency of the situation is substantiated by the following (van der Zweerde E., 2009, p. 6): "If 'we' are to judge by printed and televised media, citizens of many European countries have become more 'euro-sceptic' and perhaps even 'euro-phobic' over the last couple of years".

According to the author, modern Europe is already united by economic, social and environmental ties, but the political sphere needs further integration from the standpoint of democratic society and citizenship. So, the emergence of European identity is an organic continuation of the corresponding socio-cultural transformations. The question is not whether "identity" can or should be "fixed" or "fluid". The question has to do with

the nature of what should be fixed or fluid. A possible paradigm from which this issue can be addressed, and which avoids both an essentialism that suggests a pre-existing core in every individual as well as a radical constructivism that fails to do justice to the attachment of people to "who they are" (van der Zweerde E., 2009, p. 14). Pluralism of identities, the problem of the boundaries of civilization development, or the "unity of diversity" is what distinguishes Europe from other state associations. Accordingly, the necessary prerequisite for integration is not unification and mimicry, but a conscious civil position, based on a set of matrices of perception, preferences and ideals.

The rejection of totalitarianism and monologism is a fundamental feature of European identity. And if its origins are prominent intellectuals, then at the present stage of its formation it is necessary to introduce a strategy of polyphony. Indicative in this regard are the work of Bret W. Davis (Davis B.W., 2017). The classical philosophical discourse of Western Europe leaves beyond the philosophical discourse the "non-Western" style, rhetoric, and philosophy of philosophy. The author calls this restriction authoritative (his apologists are considered by Georg Hegel, Edmund Husserl, Emmanuelle Levinas and others), but not legitimate (Davis B.W., 2017, p. 123): "How can one even begin to have this conversation unless one listens to other voices and reads other texts, at least as they have been translated into a European idiom and transplanted into a Western academic setting? How can one assert the uniqueness and superiority of something without critically comparing it to other things?".

Such cognitive motivation makes dialogue impossible, which is a prerequisite for breaking crisis of modern philosophy and society as a whole. However, modern Europe is not a monolithic entity. Therefore, there is a problem of communication and identification not only with the external area of the European space, but also in the context of Western, Central and Eastern Europe. Natalia Waechter (2016) explains that European identity studies are traditionally limited to Western Europe, and ignore the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as ethnic minorities, which have a significant impact on the socio-political life of the European space (Waechter N., 2016). The author gives an essential empirical basis for studying the specificity of the formation of the identity of five ethnic minority groups in four Central and Eastern European countries, divided into three age groups of respondents (Waechter N., 2016, p. 15). The results of the study prove the validity of the instrumental approach to identity formation: the younger generation demonstrates the positive experience of European integration, the positive perception of European ideals and values.

Consequently, the interpretation of identity on national grounds is unjustified reductionism. Marco Antonsich (2012) substantiates the shortcomings of the theoretical and methodological research of European identity as a projection of nationalism (Antonsich M., 2012). Referring to empirical data collected in four European regions, the author strengthens the position of a functional and utilitarian approach to substantiating European identity (Antonsich M., 2012, p. 485). Undoubtedly, such motivations are not able to level out cultural and civil determinants of identity. But functional and pragmatic factors are important in the formation of political institutions, which subsequently nurture the mechanisms of identity.

Camelia Cmeciu and Mădălina Manolache (2018) advocate the same position (Cmeciu C., Manolache M., 2018). They argue that an exclusively instrumental approach to identity formation is inadequate. That is why identity is not a political program, but an understanding of the sense of belonging citizens to a particular community. Therefore, the question of the components of the European identity naturally arises, in contrast to the national one, the content and algorithm of which are defined to some extent (Cmeciu C., Manolache M., 2018, p. 417). The authors point out that the formation of super-national identity is facilitated by an over-national way of communication and public administration. Thus, online subsidiarity, electronic platforms for the adoption of socially important decisions, social networks and the media produce an information field whose members acquire common identity features. Drawing on narrative and discursive approaches, the authors point out three main (legitimate) clusters of the formation of a European identity: "the EU as a loss", "inclusive gain" and "exceptional winnings" (Cmeciu C., Manolache M., 2018, p. 422). It is on such discursive structures that the idea of a European identity is formed, and, accordingly, a policy of consolidation and further European integration.

Russell Keat (2009) focuses on the problem of ethical (and not moral) thinking in politics, which was argued by Jurgen Habermas (Keat R., 2009). Such an approach is appropriate for modern forms of political unions, identification mechanisms of their citizens, for solving the threats of globalization and neo-liberalism (Keat R., 2009: 539): "For whereas individuals are (at least implicitly) conceived by Habermas as having a single, determinate identity, he insists that this is not the case for the collective 'identity' of members of a political community. Rather, in modern, pluralistic societies there will be a variety of different answers that can legitimately be given when citizens ask themselves who they are, what their formative history and traditions consist in, and so on".

However, the practical implementation of these theoretical principles is ambiguous: it is impossible to draw a line of demarcation between ethics and morality, which is inseparable from identity. In addition, to find out the place of ethics in political decisions and debates, the importance of perfectionism in liberal theory, the principles of governance in supranational citizenship is a potentially significant task, and not a theoretical constant. If the undeniable bases of European identity are shared values, ethics and morality in the institutionalization of the practice of identification of subjectivity is the cornerstone in the study of this problem field.

There are other productive approaches to the study of the phenomenon of European identity. Thus, Valeria Camia (2010) explores three basic normative approaches to the phenomenon of European identity (Camia V., 2010). According to the author, European identity is an equation with many unknowns; another paradigm of understanding the essence of European identity is focused on cosmopolitanism; the third version of the research practice of studying European identity is based on communication (Camia V., 2010, p. 113). Consequently, there are different ideas about the final form of European identity, but there is a general idea of the transition from a priori axioms that combine identity with integration into strategic projections and programs. The common disadvantage of normative approaches to the study of European identity is the sophistic substitution of the real phenomenon in a desirable way, so the phenomenon of reality differs significantly from all its conceptual forms.

The problem of migration is important both for the formation and for the understanding of the phenomenon of European identity. So, Jan Logemann (2013) analyzes the problem of European identity in the context of modern transatlantic and intra-European migration (Logemann J., 2013). The main purpose of the study is to ascertain the formation of a European identity based on the experience of migration: based on numerous and well-considered historical and sociological studies, the author proves the plasticity and dynamism of European identity (Logemann J., 2013, p. 2).

## Identity Clash Possibilities at the Perspectives of Chinese Geopolitical Strategies

The Chinese state at the present stage is a powerful participant of civilization development. Global processes of globalization raise new challenges for the implementation of ambitious projects by the Chinese government. The main factor that determines the success of intergovernmental

interaction is the idea and conviction of the common values on the basis of which the identity of the person and society is formed. Men Honghu analyzes the impact of modern globalization on the national Chinese identity, which is based on the millennial cultural tradition (Honghu M., 2014, p. 194): "Contemporary China's national identity is based on the perception of its 5,000 years of civilization, a century's humiliation and its rise in the global era. This is manifest in its clear pursuit of the status of a major power. With the increase of its national power, China has established the path of peaceful development and increasingly clarified its national identity".

The entire spectrum of the specifics of China's national identity is consistent with the concept of internal consensus, which seeks to strengthen international recognition. With the help of soft power technology, China seeks civil consciousness in its own state and integrates with the world community. But these efforts are met by resistance from other national states of the world (Honghu M., 2014, p. 200).

These requirements for the difference in ideological principles, internalized values and expectations are not substantiated. According to The World Values Survey, the belief in the indisputable need for democratic rights and freedoms among Chinese citizens is closely correlated with the indicators of the leading countries of the West (The World Values Survey, 2019). However, speaking about the fundamental similarity of European and Chinese identity will not be justified. Chinese identity has its own specificity, the original identification factors. So, Tiejun Zhang defines the following factors in the formation of the consciousness of the modern Chinese state: the socialist ideology of the state, the autonomy and sovereignty of the Chinese state, the developing and influential state in the international arena (Zhang T., 2004, p. 282). The author argues that such a complex of factors for the identification of national consciousness leads to an emphasis on security strategy, provocative and defensive in nature. This circumstance significantly impedes the integration of national consciousness into the global international context.

Such an orientation of the foreign policy of the Chinese state is due to the desire to protect national interests, confirming the positions of economic development and influence. A widespread resonance among the global community was caused by the ambitious strategy of the Chinese government "One Belt, One Road". A renowned researcher of this phenomenon, Rumi Aoyama (2016), is convinced that the "One Belt, One Road" initiative is a global strategy for achieving the "Chinese dream" whose implementation is not capable of creating a large area of influence, but which has a significant impact on global politics (Aoyama R., 2016, p. 4).

It is believed that such an experience of China to integrate into the global world community, while preserving its own identity and national traditions, may also be beneficial to other states. It is this approach that meets the principles of tolerance and unity of diversity. This position is advocated by James D. Sidaway & Chih Yuan Woon (2017), noting that the "One Belt, One Road" initiative is based on a large array of historical experiences that can be useful in understanding geopolitical patterns and issues of interaction and mutual understanding between states (Sidaway J. D., Woon C. Y., 2017, p. 3).

The question of the expediency of the Chinese government's foreign policy towards the world community is indeed debatable. Its implementation and realization have the potential to solve a significant number of problems and contradictions in the aspect of the interaction of states, and to provoke the emergence of a number of conflict situations of conflict of interest. So, some researchers see the threat of deepening Sino-Russian cooperation. They are convinced that the imperial ambitions of Russia and economic expansion of China complicate the integration of the Chinese state into the world space. But how justified is the position of one-sided orientation powerful for all indicators of development of the state, oriented only to the European Union? Such authors express the following opinion (Kaczmarski M., 2017, p. 1041): "China has avoided defining boundaries for OBOR and declares that it is open to participants from Europe, Asia, and Africa, emphasising the economic nature of its interests. The idea behind the OBOR initiative is to keep markets open to all participants, favouring China as the world's biggest exporter".

It is known that the integration of national states into the world market is greatly enhanced under the condition of a single monetary policy. The single currency makes business easier on an international level. For example, the introduction of EuroCurrency significantly optimizes and strengthens cooperation in the euro area. Jin Sun and Jack W. Hou (2019) analyze the specifics of the monetary policy of the countries of Central, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and the Near East and argue that these aspects of interaction do not have the necessary conditions for implementation and the potential for beneficial cooperation. National currencies are an obstacle to globalization. But the example of the Chinese state on the world scene shows the ambiguity of such a thesis. So, Emily T. Yeh and Elizabeth Wharton (2016) proves the effectiveness and relevance of Chinese development and foreign policy practice, which may be useful as an indicative precedent (Yeh E. T., Wharton E., 2016, p. 23). Therefore, we will conclude, that the orientation of the Chinese state in determining the identity and strengthening the positions of foreign policy

activities on the basis of pluralism and multi-vectority is justified. According to The World Values Survey, the idea of the goals of its country to the citizens of China, the European Union and the United States are close to their significance (The World Values Survey, 2019).

Accordingly, the identity of modern China is oriented on leading models of contemporary world culture, but is based on historical experience and traditions, pluralism of the directions of interaction and definition, the socialist system of the state. In addition, publicity and the influence of public opinion are becoming more and more important in the self-determination of China's state strategy. The Chinese public diplomacy, as a part of strategic partnership with other countries, is an important tool for promoting the Chinese political community in the international arena. This view is also confirmed by Astrid Pepermans (2018), which gives a positive assessment of the economic and political influence of the OBOR Chinese initiative to assert China's position in the world. The introduction of effective economic projects, a program of cultural exchange and a high-level diplomatic dialogue promote the integration of China into the world community. Jerry Harris (2018) argues that China is initiating a non-Western type of globalization development. The success of this campaign confirms economic success in China, even in the face of negative political rhetoric: the business of capitalism will proceed with its transnational integration, hitting a number of nationalist speed bumps along the way (Harris J., 2018, p. 13).

Probably, the very successful integration of the Chinese state into the world context, especially on the basis of the principles of European identity, but with the preservation of its own originality and national identity of self-consciousness. Thus, the self-identification of citizens according to the national, European or cosmopolitan vector according to sociological surveys The World Values Survey shows approximately the same level of quantitative values (The World Values Survey, 2019).

### **Conclusions**

Consequently, European identity involves both a national aspect of self-determination and a civil one. Historical and cultural heritage in its content is egalitarian, and reorienting to more promising variants of social interaction. The leading thinkers, ideologues of European identity, Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida offer such an ethical and axiological construct: internalization of religious faith and tolerance, optimization of ties between politics and capital, development of critical thinking

and understanding of the contradictions of progressive development, the legitimization of struggle for social justice, aspects of psychological health of the person, justification of the principle of force of law, not strong in international politics and ethical imperatives in political activity. Consequently, we observe the movement and understanding of identity from the national component to the civil ("constitutional patriotism"), the strengthening of the positions of cosmopolitanism against the background of the weakening of the role of national states and economies, the growth of the influence of the public sphere on the course of socio-political life. We observe the movement and understanding of identity from the national component to the civil ("constitutional patriotism"), the strengthening of the positions of cosmopolitanism against the background of weakening the national states and economies, the growth of the influence of the public sphere on the course of social-political life.

Publicity, incidentally, is also an ambiguous phenomenon in terms of the substantiality of ontological status. Publicity consists of a network of communication channels: the media, the Internet, education, art, which produce discourses and attract various audiences to their influence. Therefore, such extraordinary values are endowed with freedom of speech and tolerance in the paradigm of European thinking. This fact is explained by the expediency of introducing the principle of differential integration (the Ulrich Beck's term) to the policy of consolidation of the European public space. Note that the meaning of the concept of identity is transformed from its substantive-national method of comprehension into a discourse-constructivist model, in which identity is interpreted in terms of pluralism, fluidity, hybridity and contextuality. Therefore, European identity is a project of a desired future, rather than a fact of ontological validity.

Consequently, in the process of integrating into the world community, the Chinese state produces an innovative experience. First of all, China is showing significant economic growth, provided that it is a socialist system of the state. At the same time, the data of sociological surveys testify to the high level of civic consciousness and the adoption of democratic values, which is the cornerstone of European identity. Secondly, the success of China on the world stage provides grounds for confirming the presence of non-Western type of globalization. It is these indicators that underlie a certain resistance from the leading countries of the world to expand the sphere of influence of modern China on the international scene. Therefore, special attention is paid to publicity and public opinion, which clearly testifies to the substantial proximity of the value component of the worldview of representatives of different nationalities.

### ZAGADNIENIE TOŻSAMOŚCI W PERSPEKTYWIE GEOPOLITYCZNEJ STRATEGII CHIN

(STRESZCZENIE)

W artykule przedstawiono teoretyczne i metodologiczne projekty analizy zjawiska tożsamości, a także zmodernizowanych społeczno-kulturowych determinantów składających się na pojęcie tożsamości europejskiej. Zaprezentowano również logikę transformacji tożsamości od narodowo-etnicznej, przez historyczno-kulturową aż po współcześnie umotywowaną politycznie. W tekście w badaniach nad europejską tożsamością wykorzystano też współczesne osiągnięcia filozoficzne. W kontekście procesów globalizacyjnych (w wymiarze azjatycko-europejskim) wskazano zjawisko antagonizmu tożsamości, które odnosi się do chińskiej strategii geopolitycznej (inicjatywa jeden pas, jedna droga). Ponadto wykorzystano i zinterpretowano także dane upubliczniane przez instytucję badawczą World Values Survey.

### THE IDENTITY ISSUES AT THE PERSPECTIVES OF CHINESE GEOPOLITICAL STRATEGIES

= (SUMMARY) ==

The article presents theoretical and methodological constructions of the analytics of the phenomenon of identity, modernized socio-cultural determinants of the content of European identity, updated the logic of transformation from the national-ethnic, historical and cultural principles of the interpretation of identity to modern politically motivated conceptualizations. The specificity of the discursive procedures of European identity in contemporary philosophical inventions is explored. The globalization context (one's Asian-European dimension) was discovered on the problem of identity clash at the perspectives of Chinese geopolitical strategies (One Belt, One Road Initiative). The results of World Values Survey were interpreted for substantiation of conclusions.

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