

Dear readers!

The relevance of the issue "**Ukraine in the European socio-cultural space**" is determined by the necessity of a fundamental rethinking of Ukraine's place in the system of European coordinates at a time when national identity and state security are passing through the crucible of a full-scale war. The authors of the issue focus on proving that the European vector of Ukraine is not only a modern political choice but a deeply rooted historical and cultural given, and the research of Ukrainian history from the ancient colonies of the Northern Black Sea region and medieval connections to modern intellectual discourses affirms a holistic vision of Ukraine as an integral part of European civilization, which today acts as its shield and strategic subject.

The contribution of the presented articles to humanitarian science consists in the development of new conceptual approaches, such as "*shadow actor*" and "*pulsating subjectivity*," which allow for a new interpretation of the role of Ukrainians in key events of world history. The interdisciplinary nature of the research (from archaeology and geopsychology to diplomatic history and media philosophy) ensures a comprehensive protection of the Ukrainian narrative from imperial falsifications. It can be said that thanks to the efforts of the authors of the issue, not only is knowledge about the continuity of Ukrainian statehood systematized, but a kind of intellectual tool is formed for strengthening national security through the affirmation of a self-sufficient and European-oriented identity.

Yurii Figurnyi and **Olha Shakurova** analyze Ukrainian Studies as a strategic factor of national security, which acquires special significance in the conditions of the hybrid aggression of the RF. The authors prove that imperial myths about a "unified people" are used as an instrument of falsification of reality, therefore the strengthening of national identity is a matter of the physical survival of the state. The article substantiates the necessity of creating a legislative base for counteracting Rashist narratives and the actualization of the intellectual potential of the humanitarian elite.

Roman Dodonov researches the genesis of Ukrainian philosophical thought on the example of Olbia, proving its deep rootedness in the general European ancient tradition. Relying on archaeological finds of graffiti and bone plates, the author puts forward a hypothesis about the acquaintance of the inhabitants of the Greek colonies with the natural philosophy of the Milesian school and Orphic-Pythagorean ideas about the immortality of the soul. The conclusion is made that ancient cosmism through Neoplatonism became one of the fundamental sources of later Ukrainian culture and the Christian worldview.

Roman Kuchma focuses on the socio-cultural dimension of the Roman presence in the Northern Black Sea region, applying Michael Mann's concept of the "empire of domination." The research shows that Roman

expansion was based not only on military force but also on a political strategy of integration of local elites through the institution of clientela. This created the basis for a unique cultural syncretism, where the processes of Romanization and Hellenization prepared the region for full integration into the ancient civilizational space.

Valerii Snizhko substantiates the influence of the natural environment on the formation of "agrarian consciousness" as the mental basis of the Ukrainian ethnos. The author uses a geopsychological approach to show how the special biogeographical conditions of Europe were transformed into a specific way of thinking, oriented toward the creation of product and art. In contrast to this, "gathering consciousness" is considered, the evolution of which leads to social parasitism and encroachment on the results of the labor of other communities.

Anna Hedo and **Oleh Ivaniuk** reconstruct the image of 19th-century England through the prism of travel narratives of Ukrainian travelers who sought new knowledge and intellectual experience in Britain. The research proves that staying in the European scientific environment and working with library collections promoted the destruction of ideological stereotypes imposed by the Russian Empire. As a result, the literature of fact became an effective catalyst for national awareness and deeper integration of the Ukrainian elite into the general European context.

Halyna Sagan, on the basis of new archival documents, analyzes the activity of the diplomatic missions of the UNR and WUNR in the Kingdom of SHS during the 1920s. Despite the absence of official recognition and pro-Russian sentiments in Serbian circles, Ukrainian diplomats succeeded in establishing effective cooperation with Croatian and Slovenian representatives. The article highlights the successes of explanatory work regarding the "Ukrainian idea" and the efforts of the missions in supporting interned servicemen and the consolidation of the overseas Ukrainian community.

Mykhailo Mishyn highlights the role of Orest Sikorskyi in the organization of national education in Podillia as an important factor of state-building in 1917–1919. The combination of European philological education with deep moral values of religious upbringing allowed Sikorskyi to become a leader of the Ukrainian movement in Balta. The tragic fate of the pedagogue underscores his self-dedication, and the experience of creating a Ukrainian gymnasium in conditions of social instability demonstrates the inseparable connection between education and the political self-determination of the nation.

Vira Dodonova carries out a comparative analysis of Ukrainian and European values, considering them as a stable foundation of statehood as opposed to changing political interests. The author proposes to supplement the legislative definition of national security with the category of values, distinguishing such common features as

freedom, democracy, and respect for the inner world of the individual. The article demonstrates the kinship of Ukrainian "cordiality" (serdechnist) with European practical rationalism, which confirms the inseparability of Ukraine from the socio-cultural space of Europe.

Yelyzaveta Pietukhova researches the transformation of the European integration course of Ukraine, which after the start of the full-scale war in 2022 acquired the character of a strategy of survival and defensive consolidation. The article analyzes the politico-legal base of cooperation with the EU — from the first declarations of the 1990s to the acquisition of candidate status. Special attention is paid to integration into security initiatives, such as PESCO and EUMAM, as well as the challenges of modernizing state institutions before the future negotiations on membership.

Vitalii Andriiev and **Alisa Lukashenko** verify the innovative "theory of epochs" of Viktor Petrov (Domontovych) on the example of the ancient period in the history of Ukraine. The authors reveal the concept of discreteness of the historical process, where the transition

between epochs occurs through Steinerian "ruptures" (zlamy), such as the collapse of the Roman system and the Hun invasion. The research underscores the self-sufficiency of the Zarubyntsi and Chernyakhiv cultures as local variants of ancient civilization, which confirms the deep roots of Ukrainian culture in general European history.

Serhii Hrabovskyi and **Iryna Hrabovska** propose to rethink the role of Ukraine in the 20th century through the concepts of "shadow actor" and "pulsating subjectivity." The authors prove that the Ukrainian nation was a key factor in the destruction of the Russian Empire, the stopping of the Bolshevik invasion in 1920, and the dismantling of the USSR, although these merits often remained unrecorded in world history. The article calls upon the intellectual elite to "bring Ukraine out of the shadow," showing its true value as a savior of European civilization from totalitarian threats.

Issue Editor