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## CURRENT AXIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIC COMPETENCE AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF WAR IN UKRAINE

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**Abstract.** The paper focuses on the relevant axiological features of the development of civic competence among higher education graduates during the current stage of Ukrainian civil society creation in the context of conflict. The analysis of a wide range of scientific and educational sources based on socio-philosophical, socio-psychological, and sociological and interdisciplinary approaches, using general scientific methods, revealed that the development of civic competence of education seekers is implemented in the actualization of the principles of civic cohesion, shared values, and degree of identification with Ukrainian society. It has been demonstrated that the development of educational programs that include the philosophical and ethical aspects of war, as well as the creation of innovative teaching methods aimed at the development of peacemaking skills and strategies that contribute to the cohesion of the Ukrainian community, is relevant for the effective development of civic competence among students of higher education in Ukraine at this time. The justified need for a philosophical understanding of the axiological dimensions of the problem of the development of civic competence of Ukrainian higher education graduates in times of war on the basis of the holistic paradigm of cognition and the implementation of axiological determinants in the educational process of civic education of education seekers in the course systematic scientific support.

**Key words:** civic competence, Ukrainian civil society, axiological determinant, interdisciplinary approach, higher education students, educational strategies.

**Introduction.** Today, civic identity, civic stand, civic ability, and involvement among higher education students are fundamental parts of the Ukrainian community's existence and a predictor of the potential of its national, political, and cultural subjectivity in the future. Given the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, several difficulties concerning the effective development of civic competence among students of Ukrainian higher education institutions have emerged in the sphere of higher education. Today's challenges necessitate not only higher education students' awareness of their civic rights and responsibilities, but also the ability to navigate information sources, form a personal attitude toward the nature of changes in the country's and abroad's social, political, and cultural life, weigh their civic behavior responsibly, and determine civic priorities in the educational space of countries of forced residence, among other things. The concerns of civic education and the formation of students' citizenship are of scientific interest to foreign thinkers and practitioners, and they are addressed in various international educational texts, including the European Framework of Key Competences. Many sectoral studies have found that civic competence is a significant socio-psychological characteristic of a higher education student's personality, and its development is an urgent scientific problem that shall be solved in order for education to carry out these processes in a targeted and controlled manner.

**Literature review.** In the context of the development of civic competence as a component of the general competence of the individual, which determines the effective behavior of the individual to realize his or her role as a citizen, we relied on the conclusions and provisions of the works of scientists and practitioners, which indicate the need to take into account:

- recognition of the leading role of higher education students' orientation to the public good; adequate perception of their own role and the role of others in the functioning of communities and society as a whole (Antonova, 2003);

- a comprehensive structure of students' civic competence, which involves the following factors: civic duty; civic competence and civic skills; social connections and civic participation; consideration of students' civic competence as an integrated construct that includes civic behavior, skills, connections and involvement of students in civic participation (Levine, 2008);

- peculiarities of the relationship between cognitive and behavioral processes of students' personal development and implicit behavior of using the knowledge acquired during education, the expediency of developing a subjective sense of identity and integrity of the individual that meets both personal and social needs; and the development of personal resilience as a system of beliefs about oneself, the world, and relationships with the world (Levine, 2008).

- readiness of the individual to act in conditions of constant lack of information, lack of clear guidelines and previously prepared templates (Hrabovska, 2024);

- understanding of civic competence as the ability to exercise one's rights and freedoms, which is considered as a component of the system of development of civic competence of students, according to which competent civic activity of students should benefit both the individual and the community (Pozniak, 2013);

- civic competence plays a positive role in the successful formation of a higher education student as a citizen in the broad context of axiogenesis of socio-cultural values of students in higher education, which determines the axiological orientation of the educational and cultural environment of higher education as a sphere of development in the value-semantic sense, based on civic values and stimulated by motivation for civic activity (Antonova, 2003; Zaredinova, 2020).

The analysis of domestic and foreign research materials that focus on the civic development of students and the growth of their civic involvement allows us to identify a number of variables that ensure:

- 1) social cohesion;
- 2) civic skills;
- 3) civic involvement or responsibility;
- 4) civic action.

Regarding the structure of the development of students' civic competence, the researchers have identified the following factors: civic responsibilities; civic skills; social connections and civic participation (Bobek, Zaff, Li, Lerner, 2009: 615-627). The above-mentioned exceptionally broad variety of approaches to the problematic field of tasks needs the identification of priority directions in completing these tasks using axiological reasoning.

**Purpose of the article:** to identify the actual areas of social and philosophical scientific thought based on the materials of interdisciplinary research of recent years and to substantiate the feasibility of systematic axiological support for the development and implementation of educational programs for the development of civic competence of higher education students

Since the current specifics of the formation of civic competence of higher education students require a clearer understanding of the ways of its development, the objectives of our interdisciplinary research are:

- to consider the actual areas of axiologically oriented support for the development of civic competence of students by means of philosophical science in Ukrainian higher education institutions;

- to substantiate effective approaches and means of implementing relevant educational practices for the development of students' civic competence based on the value determinants of civil society.

**Research methods.** The study employs socio-philosophical, socio-psychological, and sociological ideas, as well as scientific methods such as classification, abstraction, comparison, formalization,

analogy, deduction, induction, synthesis, and analysis. In the analytical section of the study, we used an interdisciplinary approach to organize and build a comprehensive picture of the research.

**Results and Discussion.** According to the foundations of the axiological paradigm of the philosophical study of social aspects of social evolution, the most visible indicator of an individual's civic status today is the presence of freedom as an attributive quality. A civil community is "the government of the free" and "the ultimate goal of civil society is to achieve a happy life, which is facilitated by both state and personal relations" (T. Aquinas). According to Fromm, "human existence and freedom are inseparable from the very beginning," but mainly dominated by "freedom from" – freedom from instinctive conditioning of actions. Human existence begins when "the development of activities not determined by innate mechanisms reaches a certain limit: adaptation to nature loses its coercive character, and ways of acting are no longer determined by heredity and instincts." It is worth noting that the philosopher also stated in his work "To Have or to Be" that the next level of freedom is the problem of self-determination in the world, or the problem of realizing positive freedom ("freedom for") based on each person's uniqueness and individuality.

Socio-philosophical, socio-psychological, psychological-pedagogical, and sociological approaches amass several meanings that gain universal educational value and are projected into the development of both civil society in general and students' civic competence:

- civic responsibility and civic engagement of the individual;
- subjectively significant civic-oriented knowledge, skills and abilities;
- personal properties of students and their attitude to reality;
- spiritual self-development, self-improvement and self-regulation of civic behavior.

Since it is impossible to consider the whole range of vectors related to the development of social and civic skills of students in the format of the article, given the relevance of axiologically oriented educational support for the development of civic competence by means of higher education, we will focus on several important, in our opinion, areas of effort of scientists and educators.

Consideration of the main definitions of civic competence in the works of various authors has made it possible to state that civic competence is a complex and multifaceted characteristic of the development of the applicant's personality, which implies the result of the development of civic competence:

- the student's knowledge of the necessity for social participation and active manifestations of personality – as types of activity in a social, public direction;
- active study of the fundamental foundations of social development, as well as responsibility for implementing their basic principles in everyday life and activities, such as tolerance of ethnic minorities and public organizations, acknowledgment of individuals' free participation in them, etc.
- the need for public activities and deeds that demonstrate patriotism, ethnic tolerance, human integrity and dignity, and a political culture based on civic ideals;
- gaining experience of socially relevant situations aimed at preserving citizens' rights, internal desire to strive towards a social objective, and manifestation of civic orientation as a stable motivational development in the course of socially significant activities (Boryshevskiy, 2007:5-7);
- devotion to public affairs and civic solidarity as a personality attribute in the active manifestation of a citizen – patriot, professional, or democrat; an individual's internal tendency to construct and develop a humane society in conjunction with the accomplishment of national objectives.

The study of studies demonstrates that methodologists interpret the concept of "social priorities" as a driving force of a complex nonlinear social system, as an equal constant of leading values targeted at societal reproduction and progress (Nadybska, 2011:7). According to O.Ya. Nadybska's concept, the system of priorities is divided into two vectors: the first vector aims to describe the most important values for society (directly indicates the most important priorities that society is attempting to reproduce); the second vector aims to comprehend the space of rejection (indicates those phenomena that society considers inappropriate to realize through reproduction mechanisms) (Nadybska, 2011:18).

O.Ya. Nadybska's works emphasize the multiple-compositional nature of priorities, their multidimensionality and nonlinearity, and, given that a person is a social being and cannot fully develop outside of society, the communicative nature of their creation. As the researcher correctly argues, social goals are rich in content, which makes it feasible not only to envisage but also to establish their aspects at each stage of the society's growth (Nadybska, 2011:24).

Since today K. Popper's open society is turning into an ultra-open one, in which, thanks to virtualization, the usual natural environment is "dissolving" and the educational and social space is simultaneously universalizing and fragmenting (Hlebova, 2013:24), the modern state is largely becoming a threat to Ukraine itself, because state-building processes in Ukraine do not always go hand in hand with signs of civil progress. As a result, governmental institutions may take on a quasi-character, and society will continue to be influenced by marginalizing elements, despite the fact that the establishment of a community's cultural identity coincides with the process of civic growth. As a result, researchers correctly believe that the direction of national-patriotic education in Ukraine should take into account the current requirements for active defense and resistance to large-scale information flows from Russia, a targeted propaganda campaign that degrades the dignity of the entire nation and calls into question our past and future. Ukraine is in a transitional situation of recognizing and protecting Ukrainian identity against imperialism, freedom against conformism, and civil values against authoritarian tendencies (Aleksandrovska, Shyrokykh, 2023:13).

Today, the humanities regard students as a distinct social category, a specific community, organizationally united by their enrollment in a higher education institution, when the value-oriented activities of an individual who attempts to construct his or her behavior on the basis of consciously chosen and learned criteria and norms are significantly activated (Nabokova, 2024:66). In light of this, it is important to introduce qualitatively new approaches, methods, and disciplines to prepare students for life in the new conditions of a democratic society, which would be aimed at shaping the political consciousness of young people based on the ideas of national and spiritual revival of Ukraine, rooting political values, norms, orientations, and patterns of behavior in the minds and behavior of the prevailing system, and ensuring the level of political education necessary for the perception of democratic ideals and norms (Bukrieva, 2013:81).

L. V. Afanasieva and I.V. Bukrieva in their work "Educational Space and Ethical Components of Its Formation" argue that the phenomenon of ethnicity as a socio-cultural feature of a person has not exhausted itself as a means of achieving social harmony, and therefore a philosophical reassessment of the ethnic "parameters" of humanity is extremely important: unity and internal diversity in the formation of educational space (Afanasieva, 2011: 38). The researchers also point out that although the form and nature of youth civic participation in society are quite significant factors that affect the quality of political processes in the country and the intensity of democratic transformations in society, the development of their value consciousness is hampered by a number of subjective and objective obstacles to self-determination in the social, political, and ideological spheres, and entry into the social and ideological spheres and entry into the social and ideological structure of society.

Researchers N. Hlebova, N. Falko, L. Afanasieva, E. Murtaziiev, and M. Semikin collaborated to identify the actual elements of influence and modifications in the dimensions of the socio-cultural identity of Ukrainian students abroad. In particular, the researchers note that today the active processes of self-construction of the image of their own civic identity of students of Ukrainian universities are significantly influenced by the value concepts prevalent in the foreign social environment, which are supported and activated by both internal political and external socio-cultural factors (Hlebova, Falko, Afanasieva, Murtaziiev, Semikin, 2024). First and foremost, we discuss students' sociocultural competence as a value prerequisite for civic competence. We argue this conclusion by examining the structure of intercultural competence. According to researcher L.F. Hlynska, the structure of intercultural competence includes the following elements:

- knowledge competence (understanding of own values, their interdependence and interdependence;
- social competence – the ability to adequately respond to conflict situations and contradictions in the process of intercultural communication, the ability to show empathy for a representative of another culture;
- self-competence (self-esteem) – the ability of applicants to identify cultural values, ideas, phenomena of culture or subculture that contribute to the formation of their personality;
- activity competence – the ability to analyze “own” and “foreign” culture, the ability to consciously model intercultural communication.

According to the researcher, one of the most fruitful forms of intercultural communication is the exchange of "capabilities" between the people involved, i.e., what has already been generated, shaped, and is ready for exchange. Thus, the development of intercultural civic competence is based on the awareness of the differences between "one's" and "other" cultures, and the knowledge that measures "one's" culture and determines the orientation and behaviour of a person should not be anticipatory, but should be constructed in the process of developing intercultural competence (Hlynska, 2017: 23).

The last mentioned point is very important in the context of our study, given the need to predict the consequences of the impact of the stay of Ukrainian students abroad on the development of Ukrainian post-war society. It also emphasizes the need for a philosophical consideration of the value-subjective aspects of the forced emigration of Ukrainian higher education students and its importance for the axiological adjustment of the educational process in higher education institutions (Hlebova, Falko, Afanasieva, Murtaziiev, Semikin, 2024). According to the concepts discussed above, civic competence in today's pupils cannot be envisioned without a component known as personal resilience – a person's willingness to act in the face of persistent lack of information, unclear guidelines, and previously created templates.

According to researcher I. Hrabovska, "the well-being of an ordinary person (Ukrainians are no exception) in times of cataclysms (disasters) is a state of constant stress and total fear, uncertainty and threat." As a result, she believes that "the study of the problem of human experience of cataclysms is one of the basic scientific problems of the world's socio-humanities," given that the world has entered an era of dynamic alterations that are often unanticipated and uncontrollable. But it is also a community's true ability to survive, which is dependent on its citizens' resilience (physical and spiritual); patriotism and ability to resist the enemy when it comes to anthropogenic disasters; a sense of love for the Motherland and the responsibility of the elites; and effective and professional leadership in the extraordinary conditions of the community's existence." That is why, according to the researcher, studying the human experience of cataclysms is one of the basic scientific problems of the world's socio-humanities, "and for Ukrainian scholars it is not only relevant as a security, economic, political, anthropological, etc. issue, but also as a philosophical one, since Ukraine is now at the epicenter of the global world's reorganization" (Hrabovska ,2024:29).

In the framework of the values approach, we observe that, like tolerance for uncertainty, resilience is a set of beliefs about oneself, the world, and one's connections with it. H. Falko correctly points out that this disposition contains three relatively autonomous components: involvement, control, and risk taking, and it is the development of these components that prevents the emergence of internal tension in stressful situations, because a person is open to new experiences and believes that what is happening gives the individual the best chance of finding something more valuable, interesting, and useful. Another key point to remember is that resilience cannot be developed without prior experience; diverse facts about a person's life route are incorporated into life experience only if they become a personally relevant event (Falko and Ostopolets, and Sharapova, 2024:59). In this social setting, all members of the community, particularly higher education students, bear a moral obligation to use their civil liberties in a way that does not violate the human rights of those around them. As a result, in light of modern Ukraine's security issues, the content component of the category of "social cohesion" should be viewed as a "doctrine of ensuring societal sustainability."

Researchers typically use an integral indicator of social cohesion, which combines individual components such as the level of support and mutual assistance; the level of trust in social institutions; the commonality of values; the degree of identification of the population with Ukrainian society, using certain indicators of social cohesion: socio-psychological adaptation, migratory trends, sense of belonging, tolerance, and socially responsible citizenship (Shcho take...).

At the cultural level of the development of students' civic competence, the concept of cohesion includes a combination of several components: identity, trust, accessibility, and interaction, which can objectively indicate the level of social cohesion. The researchers also draw attention to the closeness of the concept of "social cohesion" to the concept of "social solidarity" (Afanasieva, Bukrieva, Hlynska, Hlebova, 2022: 68).

As a result, we believe that the conceptualization and implementation of the axiological determinant in the process of developing students' civic competence should be based on the identification of many value characteristics of the student's personality using philosophy and their combination in several directions:

- philosophical and educational interpretation of the categories of identity, trust, accessibility, and interaction, which are objectified by sociological science and may indicate the relationship between changes in the levels of social cohesion and civic competence of a specific social group, including students (Afanasieva, Bukrieva, Hlynska, Hlebova, 2022: 69).

- the educational program for applicants to philosophical disciplines should be updated to reflect current trends in the specialty, labor market, sectoral and regional contexts, war, temporary occupation of territories, and de-occupation processes using online technologies;

- experience with distance education programs in domestic and foreign contexts will also be utilized;

- use of successful cases and positive experience of higher education institutions that demonstrate the effectiveness of educational, scientific, and cultural support of social processes for the development of social unity of the movement, popularization of the values of the Ukrainian people, strengthening of the national idea and statehood (Afanasieva, Bukrieva, Hlynska, Hlebova, 2022: 69).

When war emerges as a civilizational concept or a key concept of a particular culture's state, the idea of peace is primarily an axiological concept that refers to the idea of positive values, to the realm of the desirable rather than the actual, and at the same time to the idea of "how it should be," that is, to the realm of norms, prescriptions, and appeals. Therefore, these tasks are relevant today, in times of war, when "modern warfare is a war in the minds and for the minds; it is a war for cognitive and communicative control, for power over people's consciousness, emotions, thinking, reason and, accordingly, over their behavior; it is a struggle for the dominance of certain ideas about the world and events in the social and individual environment and the simultaneous destruction of opposing, 'enemy' opinions and thoughts" (Parakhonskyi, Yavorska, 2011:20).

As an example of an effective strategy, consider the conceptual underpinnings for building the subject "Philosophy of War and Peace" to give students with systematized information about the challenges of societal violence, conflict, and peace (philosophical aspect):

- to form a body of knowledge about: the nature and significant features of war and societal violence; concepts about war and peace (from ancient world philosophy to German classical philosophy); ideas about war and peace from a modern worldview; hidden meanings of hybrid warfare and security dangers for Ukraine;

- to form and develop students' understanding of the problems of social violence, war and peace, and modern views on war through the prism of the formation of a multipolar world in which norms, values, and ideals are reassessed, new factors of change are identified, and the most recent phenomenology of war and armed struggle is manifested;

- to develop in students the ability to critical system analysis as a prerequisite for the formation of skills and abilities necessary for the implementation of scientifically based measures to improve its effectiveness in protecting national interests, within their professional competence ( Sytnyk, 2023: 3).

In our opinion, an attempt to summarize modern views on war through the prism of the formation of a multipolar world is quite appropriate in the work by Y. M. Horbal and N. I. Hlebova "Philosophical Dimensions of War: Influence on the Formation of Educational Identities in the Modern World" (Hlebova, Falko, Afanasieva, Murtaziiev, Semikin, 2024),, which systematizes the axiological dimensions of war in their projections on education in the concept of M. Trebin ( Trebin,2016):

a) the philosophical impact of war on education:

– the ethical dimension (the morality of actions, such as just war (jus ad bellum) and ethical norms of warfare (jus in bello) touch upon fundamental principles of law and morality that form the value orientations of educational systems);

– the existential dimension (the desire to reconsider the meaning of life, death, and survival, which produces existential crises that affect the formation of personal and social identities, as represented in the content and methods of education);

– the political dimension (war-related decisions have an impact on educational policy, curricular content, and educational ideological orientation).

b) the social side of conflict, transferred onto educational identities:

- ideological influence (educational systems are frequently utilized to build patriotic and nationalist identities in the setting of war, when ideological control over the content of education is reinforced, influencing young people's worldview creation);

- war changes historical narratives in schools and universities, affecting collective memory and national identity;

c) the globalization factor in the context of educational strategies (wars, in particular terrorism and hybrid conflicts, emphasize the need for a global educational identity, as education should take into account global challenges and contribute to the formation of world citizens capable of critical thinking and intercultural communication) (Trebin, 2016).

We agree with the views of the preceding writers and feel that the axiological determinant of the practical execution of philosophical elements in the development of students' civic competence in today's circumstances should be based primarily on the following components:

- student critical thinking development (educational programs should include courses in ethics, philosophy, and war history that promote the development of critical thinking, which will help students develop worldview competence as a component of civic competence, as well as a deep understanding of the complexity of war and its impact on society and the individual);

- development and content of peace education programs (programs aiming at peaceful conflict resolution and nonviolent communication can serve as an alternative to military ideology while also contributing to the development of competencies in the culture of peace and tolerance).

- development of an axiological interdisciplinary approach (the study of war and its impact on society should be interdisciplinary, combining approaches from philosophy, sociology, history, political science, psychology, law, pedagogy, and other fields of social sciences and humanities, to ensure higher education students' civic competence and successful application of acquired competencies in social practice).

**Conclusions.** Based on the consideration of the theoretical foundations of the axiological determinism of civic education and the practical developments of specialists in various fields of social sciences and humanities in the broad context of the task of developing students' civic competence, at this stage of our work, we state the following:

The supreme values of an open democratic society are life, liberty, tolerance, and civic responsibility for every individual. On this basis, researchers of the problem of developing civic competence

in higher education students in their approaches rely on a wide range of sectoral developments of domestic and foreign philosophy of education, social psychology, sociology, and pedagogy, operating with a number of integral indicators of the development of personal competence in the context of research on the cohesion of Ukrainian society, which is determined by generalizing individual components: the level of support and mutual help; the level of trust in social institutions; the shared values; the degree to which the applicant category identifies with Ukrainian society, etc.

The study of the development of civic competence in students at the cultural level demonstrates the utility of using the concept of civic cohesion as an integrated characteristic of the systemic development of civic identity, social trust, and interaction, which can objectively indicate the relationship between the level of civic competence development in a social group of students and the level of social cohesion. An important point is the need to develop intercultural aspects of students' civic competence, which is carried out by students in the process of acquiring knowledge, educational and civic practices of conscious tolerance of value differences between "their" and "other" cultures, and the knowledge by which "their" culture is measured and determines the orientation and behavior of a person should not be anticipatory, but should be constructed in the process of development. It is worth noting that students' civic resilience does not develop without prior experience, and many information about the life route can be integrated into life experience, but only if they become personally relevant occurrences. In this social framework, all members of the educational and civil communities assume moral responsibility in the exercise of their civil liberties: the practice of justice and reciprocity generates social order and stability.

We state the need for the practical implementation of the considered approaches and the implementation of the axiological dimension in the civic education of higher education students of Ukrainian higher education institutions in the conditions of war. This should combine the development of critical thinking of students (which will create a knowledge base for understanding the complexity of war and its value impact on society); development of the concept of peaceful education aimed at peaceful conflict resolution and non-violent communication (as an alternative to military ideology); development of an interdisciplinary approach based on holistic methodology (to ensure comprehensive understanding and successful application of the acquired competencies in civil life and social practice by higher education students).

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