

Dialogue Between Ukrainian and European Cultural Values as a Prerequisite for Ukraine's Sustainable Development: Faith and Fear Versus Stability and Chaos

By Vira Dodonova¹, Olena Aleksandrova², Kristina Binkivska³, Danylo Dodonov⁴,
Liudmyla Voinarovska⁵, Volodymyr Zabolotniuk⁶, Oksana Patlaichuk⁷,
Ronny Klose⁸

ABSTRACT:

This article presents a comparative analysis of European and Ukrainian cultural values in the context of Ukraine's sustainable development. The aim is to identify both the similarities and the differences between the cultural value systems of Ukraine and Europe. The concept of value is explored through a multidisciplinary lens, incorporating definitions from dictionaries and monographs, and further supported by the analytical capabilities of artificial intelligence. The study outlines a complex system of values, including existential (meaning-of-life), vital, interactional, and socialization-oriented dimensions. In addition to commonly recognized European values such as freedom, democracy, and equality, other important concepts are highlighted: inner world, profound respect for ordinary life, self-realization, acceptable difference, and pragmatic rationalism as mastery over the world. The analysis of Ukrainian values emphasizes concepts such as aspiration for harmony, warm-heartedness and emotional openness, love of freedom, deep connection with the environment, a sense of shared responsibility for others, and resilience in overcoming geopolitical traumas. Special attention is given to the opposition between secularism and religion as two distinct frameworks for organizing cultural space. Secular culture is examined as a worldview grounded in rationality and the public sphere, in contrast to the sacred and faith-based dimensions of traditional religiosity. Faith and fear are interpreted as both internal emotional drivers and societal forces that shape the perception of chaos and order. Ukrainian cultural values are presented as an open and evolving system, capable of integrating new elements while preserving national identity. The article concludes, through a

[¹Doctor of Philosophy, Professor, Professor of the Department of Philosophy and international communication of National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine. ORCID: orcid.org/0000-0002-4282-5495

[²Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor, Vice-Rector for Research and International Cooperation, I. K. Karpenko-Karyi Kyiv National University of Theatre, Cinema and Television. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0030-1367>

[³Employee of the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Researcher of philosophical issues at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3444-2570>

[⁴Candidate of political sciences, assistant of the department of healthcare management, Institute of Postgraduate Education Bogomolets National Medical University. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6487-8248>

[⁵PhD in Philosophy, Associate Professor at Sociology Department, Faculty of Personnel Management, Sociology and Psychology, Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5440-5682>

[⁶Head of the Department of Tactics, Faculty of Combat Application, Hetman Petro Sahaidachnyi National Ground Forces Academy. ORCID: 0000-0001-8195-9974

[⁷Candidate of Philosophical Sciences (PhD in Philosophy), Associate Professor of the Department of Psychology, Philosophy and Social-Humanitarian Disciplines, Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1448-3360>

[⁸PhD student, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-5504-9972>

comparative table of core values, that Ukrainian and European cultural systems share fundamental affinities, affirming Ukraine's integral place within the European community.

Keywords: intercultural communication, sustainable development, value system, Europe, European cultural values, Ukraine, Ukrainian cultural values, value dialogue, secularism, religion, faith, fear.

1. Introduction

Today, the world is in a state of turbulence, fluidity, and uncertainty — but also of development, renewal, and improvement. The global community is responding to contemporary challenges, attempting to steer development in a constructive direction. In 2015, the UN Summit introduced the document "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and defined 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which were endorsed by the leaders of nearly 200 countries, including Ukraine. Sustainable development has become a shared goal for countries that seek to improve the organization of societal life, enabling long-term, productive existence.

Ukraine's orientation toward intercultural cooperation and integration into the global and European community highlights the relevance of studying not only its own political, economic, and cultural condition, but also the social and political structures of other nations. It is essential to continually compare the traditions and values of different cultures in order to harmonize intercultural communication and foster mutual understanding during integration processes. A key aspect of interaction among nations is the recognition of the uniqueness of other peoples, tolerance for differing value orientations, and the ability to engage in constructive dialogue.

Today, particular attention must be paid to the distinction between two foundational worldviews — religious and secular. The secular format, which dominates in contemporary European society, is based on rationality, individual autonomy, and the primacy of the public sphere. It contrasts with a religious or sacred worldview, in which faith, moral authority derived from higher powers, and tradition occupy central positions in shaping the value system. In this context, "the secular" emerges as an alternative to "the sacred", with far-reaching implications for cultural models, social organization, and the interpretation of key concepts such as good, fear, justice and freedom.

The concepts of "faith" and "fear" play a crucial role in both religious and secular systems of values. Faith may serve as a spiritual foundation or as rational confidence in the meaningfulness of human action, while fear can function as a motivator for restraint or transformation of behavior. In contemporary Ukraine, which navigates between its sacred heritage and secular modernization, these concepts serve as vital indicators of the society's evolving value orientations.

Ukraine, like Europe, is currently undergoing a time of crisis that will affect the future configuration of global power. The value of Ukraine as a state asserting its independence and subjectivity is questioned by some global actors. That is why Ukraine must demonstrate, despite the full-scale and exhausting war, a firm commitment to the goals of sustainable development in order to remain among the ranks of progressive nations and remain attractive to the global community. Sustainable development aims to achieve social and economic justice, preserve the environment, and restore depleted

natural resources. In many respects, these goals align with the value orientations of both European and Ukrainian societies.

The purpose of this article is to identify the commonalities and differences in the cultural values of Ukraine and Europe, and to determine their role in shaping sustainable development.

2. Materials and Methods

At the core of our study on the dialogue between Ukrainian and European values in the context of intercultural communication were students from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, the National Academy of Internal Affairs and the National Pedagogical Drahomanov University. In total, 105 participants were involved, ranging in age from 19 to 29, with an average age of 24. Prior to their involvement, participants were thoroughly informed about the aims of the study, provided with anonymity guarantees and gave informed consent to participate.

The study was conducted in early 2025 and focused on exploring the degree to which Ukrainian youth identify with shared European values and how these values are interpreted through the lens of national cultural identity.

A limitation of the study was its demographic focus on university students, who may possess a more European-oriented worldview compared to other segments of Ukrainian society. This constrained sampling limits the generalizability of our findings and risks overlooking critical value perceptions among broader demographic groups. Future research should expand to include rural populations, adult learners, and older generations to better assess how perceptions of value convergence evolve across age, geography, and socio-economic status. Incorporating broader demographic inclusion is essential to capture diverse value orientations across Ukraine's population and to provide more inclusive insights for sustainable development strategies. Such an expanded perspective could offer deeper insights into how intercultural communication operates as a mechanism for national and continental cohesion.

3. Results

3.1 The Essence and Classification of Values

To correctly and adequately address a theoretical issue, it is often necessary to conduct a linguistic and semantic analysis of the key concepts under investigation. For this purpose, we will refer to authoritative Ukrainian language dictionaries that offer explanations of the term "value".

The Etymological Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language presents a linguistic series of cognate words: "tsina" (price), "tsinytel" (connoisseur), "tsinnyk" (pricelist), "tsinovnyk" (pricing agent), "tsinuvalnyk" (appraiser), "tsinnota" (value), "tsinnist" (value, worth), "tsinovyi" (price-related), "tsinny" (valuable), "tsinuvaty" (to value)... along with derivatives such as "otsinka" (evaluation), "otsinnyk" (evaluator), and "otsinyuvalnyi" (evaluative) (H. Pivtorak, 2012).

Ukrainian linguists A. Buryachok, O. Yeroshenko, I. Zabiaka, L. Vashchenko, and O. Yefimov define "value" as:

1. "the monetary worth of something; price";
2. "something that has a particular material or spiritual significance" (P. Movchan, V. Nimchuk & V. Klichak, 2009).

In the Comprehensive Explanatory Dictionary of Modern Ukrainian Language, O. Yeroshenko emphasizes the notion of importance when interpreting "value": "the importance or significance of something" (O. Yeroshenko, 2012). In the Dictionary of Synonyms of the Ukrainian Language, L. Poliuga lists "worth" as a synonym for "price" and "value" and associates the following synonyms with cognate terms: "tsinytel/tsinuvalnyk" — admirer, connoisseur; "tsinny" — precious, dear; "tsinuvaty" — to respect, to appreciate (L. Poliuga, 2007).

In philosophical discourse, the term "value" is defined as:

1. A holistic and organic human reaction involving acceptance or rejection of phenomena, which then serves as a motive for human behavior;
2. The significance of certain things or phenomena to a person;
3. The properties of things or phenomena in relation to the individual, shaped or fixed through social relationships (V. Petroshenko, 2009).

Artificial intelligence is increasingly integrated into the social practices of modern individuals and offers useful perspectives on contemporary issues. It can now be consulted on a wide range of topics. For example, ChatGPT suggests that "from a philosophical standpoint, a value is a fundamental characteristic of being, expressing the significance of objects, phenomena, or ideas for an individual or society". DeepSeek AI explains: "From a philosophical perspective, a value is the significance of an object, phenomenon, or idea, defined by its ability to satisfy needs, achieve goals, or reflect ideals". Gemini AI describes value as: "a fundamental concept that determines the importance and meaningfulness of something for an individual or society. It refers to what we consider important, worthy of respect, and worth preserving".

However, these AI-generated definitions should be critically compared against classical philosophical interpretations to uncover potential epistemological limitations and algorithmic biases inherent in large language models. Future research must assess how training data selection, model architecture, and opaque reasoning processes influence AI's framing of foundational concepts, thereby validating — or qualifying — its use as a credible analytical tool in cultural value analysis.

To avoid terminological confusion when addressing the issue of values, Hans Joas proposes a distinction between values, norms, and desires. He considers the main theoretical issue to be the criteria for identifying cultural values. According to Joas, "The difference between values and norms lies in the attractiveness of the former and the restrictive character of the latter. Norms exclude certain means or ends of actions as morally unacceptable or unlawful. Values, by contrast, do not limit our scope of action but rather expand it" (H. Joas & K. Wiegandt, 2014).

Indeed, contemporary philosophical thought often oscillates between norms and desires when it comes to defining values. Quite often, when we speak of values, we are in fact articulating our desires — but these are not synonymous concepts.

Additionally, psychology identifies four primary types of personal value systems:

1. Existential-meaning system — encompasses values that define life goals and human essence, such as freedom, truth, beauty — universal human values.
2. Vital system — focuses on the preservation and maintenance of daily life, including health, safety, and comfort.
3. Interactional system — includes values and judgments that are crucial in interpersonal and group communication (e.g., good relationships, a clear conscience, power, mutual assistance).
4. Socialization system — comprises values that shape the process of personality formation.

The author of this classification, I. Filipova, associates these value systems specifically with the individual, particularly with the altruistic personality. At the same time, this classification has a more universal character, allowing it to be extrapolated to the social and societal levels. It thus serves as a useful methodological framework for structuring and comparing European and Ukrainian values (I. Filipova, 2018).

3.2 The Concept of "European Values" in Philosophical Discourse

Since the subject of this theoretical inquiry is European values, it is appropriate to turn to an analysis of the discourse surrounding the study of this concept. When we speak of the values of Europe, a few stereotypical ideas typically come to mind. Firstly, Europe is often perceived as a cohesive and homogeneous subject of socio-political action. Secondly, its core values are readily visualized — namely democracy, freedom, and rationality. Let us attempt to unpack these axiological issues.

According to A. Yermolenko, "the core values that crystallized during the modern European process were freedom, equality, and fraternity — values initiated by the ideas of the Enlightenment as a crucial component of modernization. These values have since undergone a transformation in contemporary democratic society, emerging in the form of so-called fundamental values (Grundwerte), namely: freedom, justice, and solidarity. The unifying factor among these values is the value of responsibility. These core values formed the foundation of the value-normative system of the European Union, crystallizing in the process of its development" (A. Yermolenko, 2021).

Returning to the first thesis mentioned above, we refer to the collection of articles by German authors titled *Cultural Values of Europe*, which analyzes the socio-philosophical discourse surrounding Europe's value orientations. In this work, Wolfgang Schluchter, in his article *Rationality — A Specific Feature of Europe?*, emphasizes that "Europe — and this must be acknowledged — was not, and is not, a fixed and permanently established entity, but rather a historical construct continuously reinvented and implemented by participants and observers alike" (W. Schluchter, 2014).

Thus, when we use the term "Europe" today, we refer to the 28 member states of the European Union, united by the principles of European integration — principles

clearly outlined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, adopted on December 7, 2000, in Nice.

It is important to note that the system of "European values" has undergone several significant historical stages, each introducing certain adjustments. These include the Greco-Roman period, the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the eventual establishment of liberalism, the turbulent period between the two world wars, and the contemporary phase of the European Union's formation. Historically, the category of "European values" became directly associated with the category of "European identity" on December 14, 1973. It was on that date in Copenhagen that nine member states of the European Communities signed the Declaration on European Identity. "Within the framework of this declaration, it was emphasized that the participating states shared a common outlook on life, rooted in the belief that society must fulfill the needs of each individual, uphold the principles of representative democracy and the rule of law, and recognize social justice as the primary goal of economic progress, alongside respect for human rights — identified as fundamental pillars of European identity".

European values serve as standards for specific patterns of activity across various spheres of society and the state. The core European values upon which the European community is built include respect for human dignity; fundamental rights, including the rights of communities and families; freedom (freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of the media); democracy; equality of all members of society, including minorities and regardless of gender; rule of law; pluralism; non-discrimination; tolerance; justice; responsibility; gender equality, among others (M. Piren, 2016).

With the emergence of the European Union as a political institution, European values have been "enriched with a new element, which functions both as a representation of perfection and as a principle of existence: the free movement of goods, services, labor, and capital — something that has long symbolized the European Union and in which its member states take great pride". Today, "European values" can be seen not only as an axiological tool for influencing social groups, but also as an exclusive brand that functions as an instrument of foreign policy and shapes the image of the EU.

Hans Joas emphasizes that the value complexes of Europe include "the inner world", "deep respect for ordinary life" and "self-realization" as well as "freedom", "acceptable difference" and "practical rationalism in mastering the world" — concepts that originated at specific points in European history and have since become self-evident elements of its culture (H. Joas & K. Wiegandt, 2014).

"Deep respect for ordinary life" traces back to the Enlightenment's elevation of the quotidian and Rousseau's valorization of natural simplicity, later reinforced by 19th-century Romanticism's focus on individual experience and the dignity of everyday existence. In post-industrial Europe, this respect has underpinned social welfare models and community resilience practices.

"Self-realization" finds its roots in humanistic and existentialist thought — especially in the works of Kant, who framed autonomy as the cornerstone of moral agency, and in 20th-century existentialists like Sartre, who emphasized authentic self-creation. Today, this value informs educational reforms, labor policies, and civic movements that prioritize personal development within a collective framework.

In a post-conflict society such as Ukraine — where communities are rebuilding social fabric and national identity — these values resonate deeply. "Deep respect for ordinary life" supports grassroots recovery efforts, valuing the restoration of daily routines and local traditions as acts of resilience. "Self-realization" empowers individuals to redefine their roles in a changing society, fostering innovation and civic engagement crucial for sustainable peace and cohesion.

Let us examine in greater detail the justification of these value positions as the "axiological coordinates" of Europe.

The "idea of the inner world of the human being" traces back to the philosophies of Socrates and Plato, specifically the understanding of thought as the decisive factor in one's orientation toward the world, as well as to the Christian conception of the inner world, especially in the contemplative traditions of Augustine and Eckhart. As Kurt Flasch notes, "this discovery of the value of the inner world became an element of European identity and has often been presented as such" (K. Flasch, 2014). Today, the inner world of the individual is under threat, making reflection on this matter particularly timely. We face an ambivalent situation: on one hand, individuals retreat into their inner world in response to an external environment perceived as threatening; on the other hand, the modern inner world often manifests in distorted forms — brief moments of meditation, lyrical aphorisms, or musings generated by artificial intelligence.

The second cultural value highlighted by the authors of the monograph is "deep respect for ordinary life". The elevation of everyday life to the level of value should be attributed to Judeo-Christian norms rather than to Greek tradition — just as the focus on the individual is likewise rooted in Christian values. An illustrative example of this value is the early modern Dutch still life, which depicted not saints, kings, or mythological figures, but ham, grapes, and a wine glass (W. Reingard, 2014). Wolfgang Reingard emphasizes that the primary components of European everyday life were "labor, commerce, usury, and sexuality". He demonstrates how daily economic life, sexual relations, and love — as a form of spiritual activity — became legitimized in European history. Reingard underscores that values always correspond to the needs of social groups, though this does not necessarily imply that they are mere elements of group ideology.

The third European cultural value, "self-realization" emerged at the end of the 18th century as a consequence of the weakening of estate-based structures, the outcome of the French Revolution, and the practical realization of Enlightenment ideas. The value of self-realization is linked to the problems of human freedom and authenticity, defined as a free and dignified life that is truly "one's own".

"Self-realization" and "authenticity" as terms representing the ideals of a radically individualized way of life entered usage only a few decades ago. They were formulated in connection with the youth and student movements of the 1960s, and during the 1970s, as these movements became depoliticized, the terms quickly became part of the mass vocabulary of individualistic hedonistic culture.

In addition to the three value complexes mentioned above, the basic cultural values of Europe also include "freedom", "acceptable difference" and "practical rationalism in mastering the world".

In social and humanitarian thought, freedom is traditionally considered the core European value. Orlando Patterson, in his article "Freedom, Slavery, and the Modern

Construction of Rights", stresses that "freedom is a triune concept that emerged with the birth of the West". He draws attention to the fact that from the mid-5th century BC, freedom appeared as a "cultural triad of personal freedom, civic freedom, and sovereign freedom. Personal freedom is the absence of constraints on our desire to do as we please; civic freedom is the ability to participate in the affairs of the community; sovereign freedom is the capacity to do as we wish, both for ourselves and in relation to others (although the latter is now more debated, it was long defended throughout the history of Western freedom)" (O. Patterson, 2014).

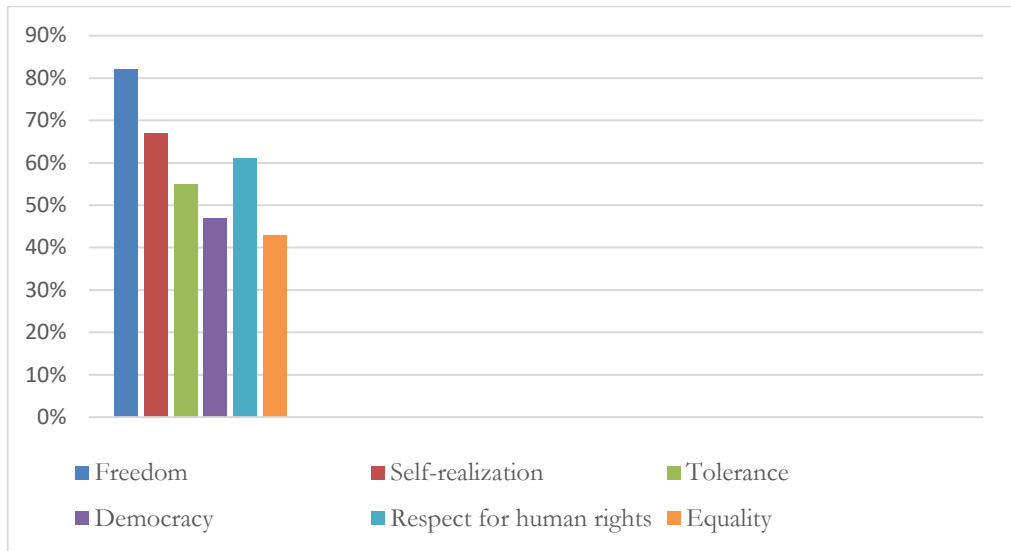
Early reflections on freedom are associated with antiquity and the medieval era. For the idea of freedom to emerge as a value, its opposite — unfreedom, or slavery — had to exist. Thus, the institution of slavery necessarily gave rise to the institution of freedom as its antithesis. Freedom is a European value and characteristic, but the internalization of this value and the universalization of the language of freedom are largely indebted to the United States.

The next European cultural value is "acceptable difference". According to Hans Joas, this concept is not synonymous with tolerance in the sense of protecting the other's freedom. That kind of tolerance begins only after the end of the Middle Ages. Historians must accept the fact that European unity was never complete. It is believed that medieval Europe often contemplated the plurality of languages and peoples through the lens of the Tower of Babel narrative. "Europe's identity in modern history lies in its non-identity. All European countries... differ from one another — even among Western countries, difference prevails. Europe, originally merely an Enlightenment-born idea, has never been fully realized. Without political unity, one of the most stable traits has always been diversity". Europe should be understood not as unity in diversity but as a structure of unities with countless distinctions.

The final European value is considered to be "practical rationalism in mastering the world". The process of rationalization has always been present in human history, but the emergence of a new quality and intensity is associated with the Modern Age and the rise of bourgeois relations. Through rationalization, Western culture fragmented into autonomous value spheres: religion, science, law, morality, economy, politics, and art. Max Weber observed many meaningful bridges between antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the early Modern period — both institutionally and spiritually. Though ascetic Protestantism is regarded as particularly original, it made a significant contribution to the development of modern European cultural life. Wolfgang Schluchter questions instrumental rationality as the defining feature of Europe's axiological framework, which was largely shaped during the Modern era. Thus, instrumental rational orientations are always inherently linked with value-rational ones.

To explore how European values are perceived by Ukrainian youth today, we conducted a student survey with the following question:

Which of the following European values do you feel are most closely aligned with your personal worldview? (*Multiple answers could be selected*)



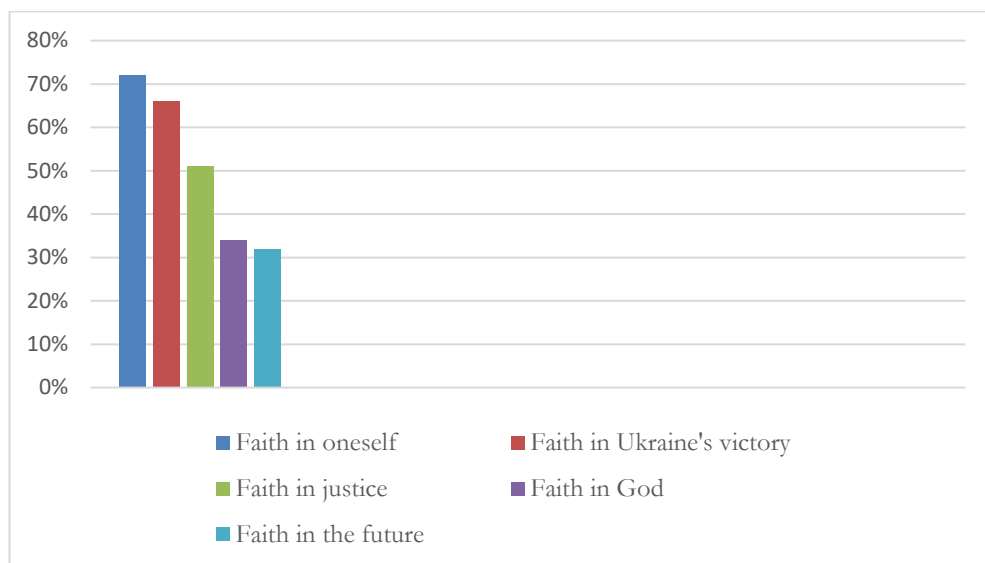
The results reveal that students most strongly identify with the values of freedom and self-realization, indicating an internalization of liberal democratic principles often considered fundamental to European identity. A significant share also resonates with respect for human rights and tolerance, suggesting a broader acceptance of pluralistic ideals. These findings support the argument that European values are not merely external standards but are actively shaping the moral and civic consciousness of the younger generation in Ukraine.

3.3 Cultural Values of Ukrainians as Europeans

In the collective monograph "Spiritual Values of the Ukrainian People", published in 1999 and edited by V.I. Kononenko, the core values are described as "national statehood, Christian faith, and native language". These values have been historically shaped in response to prolonged periods of statelessness, religious repression, and language prohibition. Thus, the affirmation of Ukrainian identity often arises from negation — freedom as a response to oppression, faith as a counter to persecution, and language as a symbol of cultural resistance. While this approach clarifies the historical roots of these values, it may also introduce bias through politicization. It is therefore necessary to distinguish between national values and broader ethnic or civic-cultural ones.

To explore contemporary perceptions of one such central value — faith — students were asked an open-ended question:

How do you understand the concept of "faith"? (*Open-ended question, categorized post hoc*)



These responses indicate that modern interpretations of faith among young Ukrainians extend well beyond the religious sphere. Personal strength, national resilience, and belief in justice dominate over doctrinal or institutional religiosity. The prevalence of answers such as "faith in oneself" and "faith in Ukraine's victory" reflects a deeply internalized sense of personal and collective agency, shaped by the current sociopolitical context. In this sense, faith functions not only as a spiritual category but also as a cultural and motivational one — closely linked with national identity and future-oriented optimism.

This shift signals a redefinition of faith as a source of psychological resilience and patriotic commitment, rather than solely religious belief. It reflects broader processes of cultural transformation where traditional symbols take on new meanings in response to conflict and national trauma. Future research should examine how this evolving notion of faith contributes to postwar identity formation, collective memory, and the moral foundations of civic unity.

As in the case of freedom/slavery, the core values of Ukrainians are a response to prohibition and persecution that accompanied the national development over a prolonged historical period. The value of statehood emerged from statelessness, the value of faith from religious persecution, and the value of language from its prohibition. On one hand, this approach highlights the historical causes of these values' emergence in modern Ukrainian society, but on the other, it suffers from bias and excessive politicization. It is important to distinguish between national and ethnic values in this context.

N.V. Turpak provides a systemic overview of Ukrainian cultural values in the section of the monograph "Geopolitical Agency of Ukraine in the Context of Global Challenges". She identifies the following values:

"Striving for Order" — a value of structure, harmony, and living by rules and laws. The archetypal source of this is the phenomenon of sophianism. According to S. Krymsky, sophian harmony revealed itself in the idea that "Ukraine has always been a safety frontier for peoples against the chaos of the Great Steppe, with the rational

oecumene of Kyivan Rus' serving as an alternative" (S. Krymsky, 2010). Ukrainian national culture offers vivid examples of organizing harmonious human life in everyday routines, economic activities, and social relations. This is reflected in the Magdeburg Law, Cossack law, Lithuanian legal statutes, Pylyp Orlyk's "Constitution of the Hetmanate", the works of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood, M. Drahomanov's writings, and others (N. Turpak *et al.*, 2024).

"Warmheartedness and Soulfulness" — defining values of Ukrainians connected to the significance of moral and ethical dimensions in the spirituality and way of being and acting of both the individual and the nation. Their archetypal root lies in cordocentrism as a "philosophy of the heart". The emergence of this phenomenon in Ukrainian culture led to the development of a cordocentric tradition in Ukrainian humanist philosophy, as expressed in the works of prominent Ukrainian thinkers like H. Skovoroda, P. Yurkevych, T. Shevchenko, P. Kulish, and M. Gogol, and helped shape the unique features of the Ukrainian mentality.

"Love of Freedom and Aspiration for Liberty" — a value tied to the significance of moral and volitional principles in the existence and behavior of both individuals and the nation. The archetypal origins of this value began with the formation of personal freedom principles and heroic moral ideals in the folk culture of the epic tales from the Kyivan cycle. During the Baroque era, the aspiration for freedom became equated with a desire for absolute good, peace, pacifism, and independence, reflected in numerous baroque authors, including H. Skovoroda. During the Cossack era, the principles of freedom were evident in legal consciousness, especially in the democratic nature of Cossack life, urban corporate self-governance, and the rural mentality and lifestyle. Thanks to the Cossacks, a comprehensive understanding of freedom emerged in Ukrainian value systems as a fusion of its inner ethical essence with volitional principles.

"A Sense of Deep Connection with the Environment (anteism)" — a fundamental value of Ukrainians that signifies the special importance of the natural environment, native land, and home. It entails a profound respect for the locale that serves as the historical arena for the emergence and development of the people. The archetype of this connection is symbolized by Mother Earth, closely tied to the agrarian nature of Ukrainian civilization and the calendar-based rituals of rural life. The Earth archetype contributed to the national consciousness symbol of the human home in all its meanings: as sacred surroundings, as the source of family values, and as a space of familial safety.

"The Ability to Overcome Geopolitical Trauma (resilience)" — a value that historically formed due to Ukraine's need to face and overcome civilizational challenges during key developmental stages. In his seminal work "History of Ukraine-Rus", M. Hrushevsky emphasized that the historical life of the Ukrainian people unfolded within unique, harmonious geographical features. However, he also showed that this favorable territory failed to guarantee its residents a happy life, as it constantly provoked envy from its eastern neighbor. Historical resilience refers to Ukrainians' capacity to "withstand blows", recovering after each historical trauma.

"A Sense of Involvement in the Affairs of Others (solidarity)" — this involves expanding community and mutual assistance to a wide circle of people, generating a sense of involvement in others' lives. This, too, has archetypal roots. The formation of the Ukrainian ethnos within a specific territory, with a shared language, faith, and traditions,

along with the need to overcome natural challenges and resist hostile neighbors, fostered the need for collective action, mutual support, and solidarity communication. M. Popovych noted that this sense of involvement lays the groundwork for various forms of solidarity, including national solidarity. Through the concept of solidarity, aspects such as shared responsibility, freedom, social justice, and human rights are revealed (M. Popovych, 2013). Solidarity is also tied to the political and economic priorities of Western European society, which is oriented toward democratic principles, market economy, and national statehood.

The value system in modern Ukraine is changing rapidly. Attitudes that were relevant just a few years ago now seem outdated. For example, Ukrainian researcher M.I. Pyren, analyzing the state of Ukrainian society in 2016, recorded the following prevailing attitudes: "orientation toward material needs; continuous narrowing of social interest; mental flexibility of the Ukrainian population with an ongoing ability to adapt to any changes; subordination of mass consciousness to media influence, which is not always responsible; the absence of structured functions in mass consciousness due to a lack of ideological and educational work; part of the population tolerating 'ineffective governance' even with a relative freedom of choice; low cultural demands and a readiness to fund cultural substitutes; growing religiosity as a positive value, though not always effective in moral action; a gradual rise in ethnocentrism and identification as Ukrainians; extreme unpopularity of violence, especially due to terrorism and the war in Eastern Ukraine" (M. Piren, 2016). By 2025, some elements of this value scale seem baffling.

According to more recent sociological studies conducted during the full-scale war, Ukrainians have reaffirmed their commitment to democratic values. A Razumkov Center survey from June 2024 showed that most Ukrainian citizens share democratic values associated with European and Western norms. Specifically, "61% of respondents stated that democracy is the most desirable form of government for Ukraine. 50.5% agreed that 'people's power is more important for our country than strict order,' while only 21% believed that 'strict order is more important than people's power.' When choosing between freedom and material well-being, 47% preferred freedom (only 24% prioritized material well-being). Support for democratic values is higher than it was in 2021, before the full-scale invasion".

As the Center's website notes, "support for democratic values is more typical among respondents who identify with Ukraine (71.5% of them said democracy is the most desirable state structure), compared to 52% who associate with their locality, and 46% with their region. Those who value people's power over strict order make up 58.5%, 43%, and 41%, respectively. Those who prioritize freedom over material comfort constitute 53%, 41%, and 41%, respectively" (Razumkov Center, 2024).

3.4 Dialogue Between Ukrainian and European Values

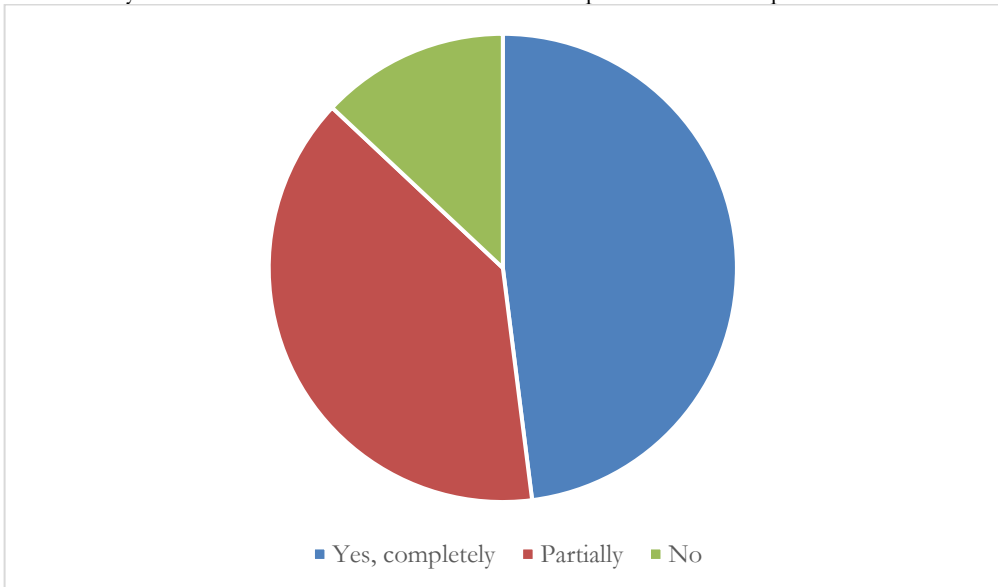
When comparing Ukrainian and European values, it is important to remember that the concept of "European values" is more general. Although it "bears the imprint of the continent's name", this does not mean that it "concerns the values of all the countries located from the Cape of Gibraltar to the Ural Mountains, and the ethnic groups inhabiting them". In this context, it is essential to distinguish between Europe as a geographical entity and as a sociocultural concept. This is clearly seen in the example of

Ukraine. Geographically, our country is already located in Europe, but culturally and especially in terms of economic development, it is still striving to join it. In other words, when European values are discussed, the reference is primarily to the shared values of the economically and culturally developed countries of Western Europe, and since the eastward expansion of the EU and NATO, also of Central and Eastern European countries that have joined the European community (K. Hrabchak, 2024).

This dual position — geographically European but still in transition culturally and economically — creates a unique identity dynamic. It raises important questions about how this transitional status shapes domestic policymaking, education reform, and diplomatic strategy. Future research should explore how Ukraine negotiates these perceived gaps, and how aligning European values with local realities could accelerate integrative and sustainable development.

To better understand how this dialogue is perceived by the younger generation, we surveyed students and asked:

Do you think that Ukrainian values and European values complement each other?



These results suggest a high degree of perceived compatibility between Ukrainian and European values, with nearly half of respondents affirming full complementarity, and a significant portion acknowledging at least partial overlap. Only a small minority — 13% — view the value systems as incompatible.

If we return to the abovementioned core European and Ukrainian values and attempt to categorize them according to value systems (based on the classification by I. Filipova), we find that there are indeed correlations in both cases. Values independently identified by German and Ukrainian philosophers resonate with each other (Table 1).

Table 1. Correspondence between Ukrainian and European values

Value system	European values	Ukrainian values
Meaning-of-life	"freedom", "practical rationalism in mastering the world"	"striving for Harmony", "warmheartedness and emotionality", "love of freedom (desire for liberty)"
Vital	"deep respect for ordinary life"	"a special sense of connection with the environment (anteism)"
Interactional	"inner world", "acceptance of difference"	"sense of involvement in others' affairs (solidarity)"
Socialization	"self-realization"	"ability to overcome geopolitical traumas (resilience)"

At first glance, the presence of analogous values in the pan-European and Ukrainian humanitarian space, values that have developed over centuries and have archetypal origins, allows us to conclude the "Europeanness" of Ukrainians. However, this is still not a matter of dialogue. Dialogue implies not just mechanical comparison, but mutual penetration and enrichment of values, which is achieved through intercultural communication. In academic discourse, intercultural communication is defined as a "symbolic exchange process, through which individuals or social groups from two or more different cultural systems discuss shared meanings in an interactive situation" (H. Kysla, 2022). That is why, in intercultural communication, the issues of empathy and understanding among people with different social and cultural backgrounds come to the forefront.

According to H.O. Kysla, intercultural communication includes: "1. Interaction, that is, joint creation of dialogue, collaborative creative action, and the production of a new intellectual or material product. 2. Exchange of information, socio-cultural experience, and also communication experience". In this regard, cultural diversity influences the content of communication, enabling creative use of another culture's achievements, encouraging dialogue between cultures, and fostering interest in the Other. A fundamental basis of communication can be considered solidarity between the subjects of communication. This value is one of the core values of both the European Union and Ukraine.

Another foundation of value-oriented communication is tolerance. It is traditionally understood as forbearance, as a behavioral imperative — "not to impose" one's uniqueness, as meaningful complementarity, and as plurality in diversity. "Tolerance in the context of intercultural communication is, above all, a respectful attitude toward the various cultures of the world, toward the cultural characteristics of the communication partner, and toward norms of behavior and expression of opinions that differ from one's own. Tolerance presupposes the communicators' ability to accept certain facts from

another culture, especially when they differ from the norms and customs of their own culture" (T. Suliatytska, 2013).

Intercultural communication, as a two-way process, presupposes tolerant attitudes and a desire for mutual understanding among all participants in intercultural dialogue. In reflecting on the role and significance of intercultural communication in resolving conflict situations, one must acknowledge the fact that scholars tend to overestimate its potential. This situation should be described using the philosophical categories of "actual" and "ideal", where the principles of intercultural communication act as a categorical imperative, as a factor of the ideal. If intercultural communication were a panacea for all ills, humanity would likely be living a happy life. Based on the current tragic experience of Ukraine, it must be noted that states must communicate in a single language: either the language of dialogue, if such is possible, or the language of arms, if there is no other choice.

4. Conclusions

Summarizing the results of the philosophical reflection on the issue of value dialogue, it should be noted that:

In philosophical discourse, European values are typically framed around respect for human dignity, fundamental rights (including the rights of communities and families), freedom (freedom of choice, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press), democracy, equality of all members of society (including minorities and regardless of gender), rule of law, pluralism of thought, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, responsibility, and gender equality. However, there is another set of cultural European values, not often discussed in academic literature, such as "inner world", "deep respect for ordinary life", "self-realization", "freedom", "acceptable difference" and "pragmatic rationalism in mastering the world". These values emerged at various stages of European history and have become self-evident parts of European culture today.

Cultural and spiritual values of an ethnic group reflect its character, ideals, and traditions. They carry encoded historical memory, mental peculiarities, and the twists of historical development. The Ukrainian value system has evolved depending on the historical and socio-cultural context. For instance, in the early years of independence, the value spectrum of Ukrainians included three core values: national statehood, religion, and the Ukrainian language. Over time, these values have not been displaced, but rather complemented, including the "aspiration for order", "warmth and kindness", "freedom-loving spirit", "a sense of unity with the environment", "solidarity" and "resilience in overcoming geopolitical trauma". The Ukrainian cultural values remain an open system, constantly updated and enriched by new influences.

Discussions about sustainable development in Ukraine are usually confined to economic indicators, with insufficient attention paid to social and environmental components. A comprehensive approach to understanding the goals of sustainable development is crucial for the productive evolution of the country. The value dimension of sustainable development cannot be overlooked, as values represent the meaningful intersection between society and the individual. The unique features of European civilization are manifested in the value system, which has undergone a complex

transformation and now dominates the civilized world. The affinity of Ukrainian and European values highlights the commonality of ideals and cultures, positioning Ukraine as an integral part of European society, fostering its progressive and evolutionary development.

At the same time, Ukraine's alignment with European values does not erase internal tensions between tradition and modernity. The struggle to harmonize inherited cultural narratives with forward-looking ideals reveals a deeper philosophical dualism. Can sustainable development truly take root in a society shaped by both internalized historical fear and external normative pressures? This question demands ongoing reflection. Policymakers must recognize that resilience is not only about survival, but also about cultivating trust, creativity, and long-term vision.

Faith plays an essential role in this context. Ukrainian cultural values are deeply influenced by faith in national identity, freedom, and resilience in the face of adversity. In contrast, fear, shaped by historical experiences of occupation and oppression, also exists in the collective consciousness, sometimes leading to hesitation in embracing change. However, the positive role of faith — whether in oneself, in the future, or in the nation's victory — offers hope and stability, helping to guide Ukraine towards its sustainable development within the European community. This dialogue between faith and fear, stability and chaos, will continue to shape Ukraine's journey toward integration with Europe, ensuring both cultural and economic prosperity.

References

- Chechel, O. Yu. (2016). Formuvannia imidzh derzhavy na mizhnarodnii areni [Formation of the state's image on the international arena]. *Investytsii: praktyka ta dosvid*, (10), 82–86.
- Chekaluk, V. V. (2016). *Formuvannia imidzh Ukrainy u ZMI* [Formation of Ukraine's image in the media] (Monograph, p. 25). Kyiv: Center of Free Press.
- Document on the European Identity. (1973, December 14). Published by the Nine Foreign Ministers in Copenhagen. https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/02798dc9-9c69-4b7d-b2c9-f03a8db7da32/publishable_en.pdf
- Dodonova, V. I. (2011). *Postneklasychnyi dyskurs sotsialnoi ratsionalnosti* [Post-nonclassical discourse of social rationality]. Donetsk: DonNU Publishing.
- Dodonova, V. I., Dodonov, R. O., & Maidaniuk, I. Z. (2024). Hierarchy of identities in contemporary humanitarian discourse. *Humanitarian Studies: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 15(2), 252–261. <https://humstudios.com.ua/uk/journals/tom-12-2-2024/iyerarkhiya-identichnostey-v-suchasnomu-gumanitarnomu-diskursi>
- Dukhovni tsinnosti ukrainskoho narodu* [Spiritual values of the Ukrainian people]. (1999). Kyiv–Ivano-Frankivsk: Plai.
- European Cultural and Historical Values: Retrospective and Perspective. (2018). O. V. Zernetska (Ed.). Kyiv: Institute of World History, NAS of Ukraine.
- Filipova, I. Yu. (2018). Tsinnisno-smyslova sfera altruistichnoi osobystosti [The value-semantic sphere of an altruistic personality]. In *Psychology. Values. Spirituality: Monograph* (p. 140). Lutsk.
- Flasch, K. (2014). Tsinnist' vnutrishnoho svitu [The value of the inner world]. In H. Joas & K. Wiegandt (Eds.), *Kulturni tsinnosti Yevropy* (p. 228). Kyiv: Dukh i Litera.
- Grabchak, K. (2024). Ukrainian ethnic values and the values of Western civilization. *Ukrainoznavstvo*, 4(93). <http://journal.ndiu.org.ua/article/view/317564>
- Grabovska, I., Grabovskiy, S., Dodonov, R., Kagamlyk, S., Marutian, R., Nastoishcha, K., Turpak, N., & Chuprii, L. (2024). *Heopolitychna subiektivist Ukrainy v konteksti globalnykh vyklykiv* [Geopolitical subjectivity of Ukraine in the context of global challenges]. Kyiv: Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Taras Shevchenko National University.

- Hrushevskiy, M. (1991). *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy* [History of Ukraine-Rus'] (Vol. 1, p. 2). Kyiv.
- Ishchenko, M., & Pietsukh, O. (2008). The image of Ukraine in the context of global transformation processes. *Politychnyi Menedzhment*, 4. https://ipiend.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ishchenko_imidzh.pdf
- Kisla, H. O. (2022). Mizhkulturna komunikatsiia yak ob'ekt naukovoho dyskursu [Intercultural communication as an object of academic discourse]. *Intercultural communication in the context of globalization dialogue: Development strategies* (pp. 369). Lviv–Toruń: Liha-Pres.
- Kosheleva, O. B. (2021). Mizhnarodnyi imidzh Ukrainy yak instrument kulturnoi paradyhmy [Ukraine's international image as an instrument of cultural paradigm]. *Hraal nauky*, 5, 405.
- Krymskyi, S. (2010). *Pro sofiiunist, pravdu, smysly liudskoho buttia* [On wisdom, truth, and meanings of human existence]. Kyiv.
- Kulturni tsinnosti v umovakh vedenia boiovykh dii ta na tymchasovo-okupovanykh terytoriakh: mizhnarodnyi dosvid y Ukraina [Cultural values in the context of warfare and occupied territories: International experience and Ukraine]. (2017). Kyiv.
- Joas H. & Wiegandt K. (2014). *Kulturni tsinnosti Yevropy* [Cultural values of Europe]. Duh i litera (Trans.). Kyiv: Duh i Litera.
- Mishchenko, M. O. (2021). Cultural values in the system of symbolic forms of modern culture. In *Liudyna. Dialob. Tsyfrova kultura* (Vol. 3, pp. 44–46). Kyiv.
- Movchan, P. M., Nimchuk, V. V., & Klichak, V. Y. (Eds.). (2009). *Velykyi tлумachnyi slovnyk suchasnoi ukrainskoi mory* [Comprehensive explanatory dictionary of modern Ukrainian language]. Kyiv: Dnipro.
- Movchan, P. M. (Ed.). (2012). *Velykyi tлумachnyi slovnyk suchasnoi ukrainskoi mory* [Comprehensive explanatory dictionary of modern Ukrainian language]. Donetsk: Gloria Trade.
- Petroshenko, V. (2009). *Tлумachnyi slovnyk osnovnykh filozofskykh terminiv* [Explanatory dictionary of key philosophical terms]. Lviv: Lviv Polytechnic.
- Piren, M. I. (2016). *Yevropeiskii tsinnosti – determinanty zmin v suchasni Ukraini* [European values as determinants of change in modern Ukraine]. Kyiv: Druk. Art.
- Pivtorak, H. P., & others. (2012). *Etymolobichnyi slovnyk ukrainskoi mory* [Etymological dictionary of the Ukrainian language] (Vol. 6: Y–Я). Kyiv: [Publisher].
- Poliuga, L. M. (2007). *Slovnyk synonimiv ukrainskoi mory* [Dictionary of Ukrainian synonyms] (3rd ed.). Kyiv: Dovira.
- Popovych, M. (2013). *Buty liudynoiu* [To be human]. Kyiv.
- Popovych, M. V., Kysliakovska, I. V., & Viatkina, N. B. (2006). *Problemy teorii mentalnosti* [Problems of mentality theory]. Kyiv.
- Razumkov Center. (2024). *Identychnist bromadian Ukrainy: tendentsii zmin (Cherven 2024 r.)* [Ukrainian citizens' identity: Change trends, June 2024]. <https://razumkov.org.ua/napiamky/sotsiologichni-doslidzhennia/identychnist-gromadian-ukrainy-tendentsii-zmin-cherven-2024r>
- Schluchter, W. (2014). *Ratsionalnist – spetsyfika? Yevropy?* [Rationality – A Specific Feature of Europe?] In H. Joas & K. Wiegandt (Eds.), *European Cultural Values*. Kyiv: Duh i Litera.
- State Statistics Service of Ukraine. (2020). *Tsiili staloho rozvytku Ukraina 2020. Monitorynboryi zvit* [Sustainable Development Goals Ukraine 2020. Monitoring Report]. http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/csr_prezent/ukr/st_rozv/publ/SDGs%20Ukraine%202020%20Monitoring_12.2020ukr.pdf
- Suliatytska, T. V. (2013). *Mizhkulturna vzaiemodiia v informatsiinomu suspilstvi: Komunikatyvnyi aspekt* [Intercultural interaction in the information society: Communicative aspect]. Kamianets-Podilskyi: Medobory-2006.
- Vaida, T. S. (2022). Yevropeiskii tsinnosti yak pravova osnova mizhkulturnoi komunikatsii ukrainskoho narodu v seredovyshchi multynatsionalnoho naselennia YeS [European values as the legal foundation for intercultural communication of the Ukrainian people in the EU]. In *Mizhkulturna komunikatsiia v konteksti globalizatsiinoho dialobu: Stratehii rozvytku* (pp. 349). Lviv–Toruń: Liha-Pres.
- Vodotyka, T., & Mahda, Y. (2016). *Ihry vidobrazhen: Yakoiu bachyt Ukrainu svit* [Games of reflection: How the world sees Ukraine]. Kharkiv: Vivat.
- Yermolenko, A. M., Bauman, Y. A., & Shamray, V. V. (2021). *Sotsialno-filozofski problemy modernizatsii ukrainskoho suspilstva z perspektyvy yevropeiskykh tsinnosti* [Socio-philosophical problems of modernizing Ukrainian society from the perspective of European values]. Kyiv: Naukova Dumka.

Yeroshenko, O. (Ed.). (2012). *Tlumachnyi slovnyk suchasnoi ukrainskoi mory* [Explanatory dictionary of modern Ukrainian language]. Donetsk: Gloria Trade.