Tatiana Korobkina, Natalia Dashenkova, Olha Myttseva,
Hanna Horiachkovska, Olena Bakalenko, Viktoriia Omelchenko

4 CULTURE OF DIGNITY AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE OF INTEGRATION OF NATIONAL ECONOMIES

ABSTRACT

The article examines the concept of a culture of dignity as a new psychological architecture for the integration of national economies in the global world. Unlike traditional approaches that focus on institutional mechanisms or economic indicators, the proposed methodology integrates three dimensions: behavioral economics, philosophy, and psychology.

The authors show that modern integration processes cannot be explained solely through agreements, markets, or transaction costs, as their viability is determined by the level of trust, empathy, moral legitimacy, and cultural memory of societies. The central thesis is that dignity ceases to be an ethical "decor" of economic processes and becomes their foundation, since it is precisely it that allows to neutralize cognitive biases, overcome the consequences of collective trauma, and ensure the sustainability of co-operation.

An interdisciplinary design was used: content analysis of philosophical and economic sources, comparative analysis of integration practices (EU, Brexit, Good Friday Agreement, Erasmus), as well as interpretation of neuroscience and behavioral economics data confirming the role of empathy, affects and oxytocin in the formation of trust. It is shown that the digitalization of management and the growth of the role of algorithms create new risks of the "illusion of technological neutrality", which can level the human dimension of integration. The culture of dignity is proposed as a compass that can ensure a balance between innovation and ethics, technocratic efficiency and humanity.

Special attention is paid to historical and cultural factors that influence the formation of trust between nations. The authors analyze examples of both successful and problematic integration, showing that the absence of a culture of dignity leads to conflicts, distrust and the collapse of alliances. Thus, the article offers a vision of integration processes not as a technocratic construct, but as a "living organism" in which morality and psychology play a key role. This allows for a broader interpretation of economic phenomena through the prism of humanistic methodology.

The paper also outlines practical implications for politics and business. The authors emphasize that a culture of dignity should be integrated into education, public administration, and corporate management systems as a fundamental principle of long-term development. Global challenges — the climate crisis, wars, inequality — require precisely such a cultural foundation in which coexistence, mutual respect, and empathy become resources no less important than financial investments or technological innovations.

The article also touches on the issue of identity and the psychology of communities: it shows how a sense of dignity shapes not only political loyalty, but also the economic behavior of citizens.

Here, dignity is not an abstract ideal, but a daily practice, manifested in choosing cooperation over competition, in the willingness to take responsibility, in the search for a common meaning. This approach opens up a new horizon for research — from business ethics to geopolitics — and demonstrates the universality of the category of "dignity" as an analytical tool. In this context, the proposed study goes beyond academic analysis and acts as a project of civilizational development. It calls for a rethinking of integration processes in the light of humanistic values, where economic unions become a space for coexistence, and not just a tool for survival. The work has both academic and civilizational significance. It demonstrates that global integration in the 21st century is possible only when the person with its dignity is at the center. Thus, the study contributes to the development of public administration ethics, philosophy of dignity and humanistic management, offering a new theoretical and methodological basis for the analysis of integration processes.

KEYWORDS

Culture of dignity, integration of economies, behavioral economics, management psychology, cognitive biases, trust, neuroscience, public administration ethics, digital algorithms, humanistic management, globalization.

The integration of national economies in a globalized environment has long ceased to be exclusively a matter of financial flows and trade agreements. Modern economic science is increasingly aware that integration processes have a multidimensional nature, in which, along with market mechanisms, cognitive biases, affective reactions and ethical guidelines of public administration are decisive [1, 2]. Recognition of this complexity forces economists, social psychologists and political philosophers to search for an integrative methodology that can explain why formally rational institutions often turn out to be fragile without a culture of trust and dignity [3, 4].

In traditional economic approaches, integration appears as a function of rational choice and optimization of benefits. However, modern behavioral economics demonstrates that economic agents are not "rational maximizers", but act within the cognitive distortions formed by cultural narratives and historical memory [5, 6]. These biases, such as the status quo effect or ingroup favoritism, create barriers to economic integration even in situations where formal models predict its feasibility [7]. Thus, the integration of national economies cannot be reduced to the arithmetic of benefits — it is a phenomenon of psychological architecture, where economic rationality coexists with affective and cultural parameters.

It is here that the concept of a "culture of dignity" appears as an analytical category. M. Nussbaum considers dignity as a universal basis for creating "capabilities" that allow societies not only to survive, but also to develop in the direction of justice and equality [6]. P. Ricoeur, analyzing the phenomenon of "self as Other", shows that trust and recognition are necessary prerequisites for interaction that goes beyond instrumental relations [4].

D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson argue that economic institutions function effectively only when they are embedded in a social context where dignity and inclusiveness define the rules of the game [1]. Therefore, the integration of national economies without a culture of dignity risks turning into a technocratic process without social legitimacy.

An important aspect is the role of trust as social capital. F. Fukuyama convincingly proved in the mid-1990s that a high level of public trust is a determining factor in economic development and the stability of institutions [3]. Later, R. Putnam showed using the example of Italy that "social capital" — that is, horizontal networks of trust — directly correlates with the quality of governance and economic progress [9]. These studies have acquired a new meaning in the era of globalization, as trust becomes an intercultural category that determines not only the internal cohesion of societies, but also their ability to integrate with other economies.

At the same time, cognitive biases remain an understudied factor in the macroeconomic analysis of integration processes. D. Kahneman showed that human thinking processes are structurally prone to heuristics and errors that form systematic deviations from rationality [2]. G. Akerlof and R. Shiller, in turn, proved that macroeconomic cycles are often explained not only by "real" economic factors, but also by "animal spirits" — collective emotions and narratives [7]. This opens up the possibility of explaining why formally attractive integration agreements often fail. They ignore the psychological mechanisms of trust, identity and dignity. The modern theory of multilevel integration, which is developed within the framework of social economics and institutional theory, shows that economic agreements should be considered through the prism not only of transaction costs, but also of cognitive costs and the "value of trust" [3, 9]. These costs are no less real than financial, as they determine the legitimacy and viability of integration structures. In this sense, the psychological architecture of integration becomes a key concept that combines behavioral economics, the philosophy of dignity, and the ethics of public administration.

It is not possible to ignore the perspective of integral thinking of K. Wilber, which is supported by a number of modern researchers in the context of global challenges [28]. Integration here appears as a synthesis of different levels — economic, cultural, psychological, ethical. Without taking into account this synthesis, attempts to build unified economic spaces resemble architectural structures without a foundation; they may look strong, but remain vulnerable to the first serious crisis.

Thus, the introduction to our study outlines the central hypothesis. The integration of national economies in the 21st century is possible only if it is designed as a culture of dignity that integrates cognitive, behavioral and ethical dimensions into a holistic psychological architecture. Without this, economic models risk remaining abstract schemes, disconnected from human reality.

In the global economic system, integration increasingly shows signs of "uneven interdependence", when economies are formally connected into a single network, but their internal psychological readiness for interaction differs significantly [14]. This gives rise to new types of asymmetries that are not always explained by traditional macroeconomic models. In countries with a low level of institutional trust, formal agreements often do not turn into real mechanisms of cooperation, since participants perceive partners through the prism of historical images and stereotypes [11]. Thus, the cost of transaction costs in such economies increases not only due to institutional gaps, but also due to cultural and psychological biases.

This requires a new economic methodology that combines institutional analysis and the psychology of trust, considering them as interdependent determinants of integration processes [8]. In this context, it is worth paying attention to the concept of "economy of emotions", which describes how collective affects influence political and economic decision-making [15].

When narratives of fear or humiliation become dominant in society, they shape the behavior of citizens and politicians as strongly as indicators of macroeconomic stability. Integration agreements in such conditions require not only financial incentives, but also cultural programs aimed at overcoming these negative affects. Without this, economic integration risks remaining an "empty form" that does not transform real relations. The issue of legitimation of integration projects becomes particularly important. If legitimacy is considered only as a legal instrument, it is possible to risk underestimating its psychological dimension. Research in the field of political psychology shows that trust in institutions is formed at the intersection of two planes — cognitive (rational assessment of efficiency) and affective (emotional sense of justice) [16]. Successful integration models, as the EU analysis shows, are based precisely on the combination of both dimensions, namely — citizens perceive institutions as effective and at the same time fair. When one of these components is missing, a "trust deficit" arises, which undermines the stability of even formally successful economic unions.

An additional complication is the phenomenon of post-truth, which creates new conditions for the formation of collective perceptions [17]. In an environment of information manipulation, integration processes become especially vulnerable, because rational arguments are often replaced by emotionally colored fake narratives. This imposes new requirements on the ethics of public administration. Managers must not only develop economic strategies, but also actively work with the psychological resources of trust. In such a context, the culture of dignity becomes not only an ethical category, but also a tool for countering information distortions. It provides the basis for critical thinking and collective resilience in the face of information attacks.

An important innovation is the emergence of concepts of "behavioral public administration", which integrate the achievements of cognitive science into the analysis of management decisions [18]. This approach shows that even in the field of public administration, biases and emotions determine the effectiveness of policies as strongly as formal institutions. For integration processes, this means that managers must take into account not only macroeconomic models, but also the psychological constraints on citizens' perception of policies. Here, a culture of dignity acts as a normative framework that allows the design of policies that are not only effective but also legitimate from the perspective of citizens.

Finally, integration as a "psychological architecture" implies a new vision of rationality. It is not about abandoning rational economic models, but about enriching them by taking into account multidimensional factors, from affects to ethics [19]. A. Sen convincingly showed that development and well-being should be assessed not only in the categories of income or productivity, but also in the categories of opportunities and freedoms.

This approach is especially important for integration processes. Economic unions become sustainable only when they expand the space of opportunities for citizens, rather than narrowing it. In this sense, the culture of dignity acts as a methodological compass that determines the direction of integration not only

towards economic growth, but also towards social justice and coexistence. The work uses an interdisciplinary approach that combines content analysis of philosophical and economic sources, comparative analysis of integration practices, and interpretation of neuroscience and behavioral economics data to identify psychological mechanisms of trust and dignity.

4.1 CULTURE OF DIGNITY AS A METHODOLOGY OF INTEGRATION

The idea of integrating national economies has traditionally been viewed through the prism of institutional mechanisms, regulatory regimes, and standard economic policy instruments. However, in the 21st century, it is increasingly evident that formal constructs do not guarantee either the stability or fairness of integration processes. They are able to unite markets, but not consciousness; to agree on rules, but not to recreate trust. Therefore, the methodological dimension of integration requires rethinking — a transition from technocratic logic to the logic of a culture of dignity, which sets a new epistemology of coexistence. Dignity here appears not as an "ethical decoration" of economic integration, but as its architectonics — the foundation that provides stability where institutions are fragile and markets are volatile [6, 18, 20].

The culture of dignity as a methodology of integration proceeds from the postulate that economic interaction is never reduced to the exchange of goods and services. It is always a form of social coexistence, which is determined by the quality of interpersonal relations. That is why cognitive biases, behavioral patterns and affective attitudes become determining factors of integration dynamics. If politics ignores these factors, it produces conflict; if it includes them in the field of dignity, it transforms potential barriers into pillars of dialogue. In this sense, the culture of dignity functions as an anti-cognitive architecture. It does not eliminate the limitations of human thinking, but teaches to integrate them into the space of coexistence [2, 21].

The European Union has become a symbol of the fact that integration can be based not only on economic agreements, but also on the idea of dignity as a common foundation. Its project began with pragmatic cooperation in coal and steel, but gradually turned into a community where the principles of equality, human rights and mutual recognition have become as important as financial incentives [22]. When European integration faced crises, from debt to migration, it was the appeal to dignity, not just contracts, that allowed for minimal consensus and avoided disintegration [23]. The African Union and Mercosur demonstrate another dimension of integration quests: the attempt to build a "long horizon of trust" in an environment where historical trauma and economic asymmetry make stability difficult. In Africa, integration initiatives have repeatedly encountered a lack of institutional trust and post-colonial legacies, but the very existence of the African Union as a platform for solidarity testifies to the search for a new culture of dignity as the basis for political and economic unity [24]. In Latin America, Mercosur is experiencing undulating stages of development, from ambitious integration to crises of legitimacy. However, even in times of dispute, member states have sought to maintain minimal channels of cooperation, appealing to a shared cultural heritage and the symbolic idea of "Latin American unity". Both examples demonstrate that without long-term investment in a culture of dignity, any economic agreements remain fragile constructs, sensitive to political cycles.

The additional value of a culture of dignity lies in the fact that it is formed not as an external coercion, but as an internal logic of the development of institutions and practices. It offers an alternative to both classical utilitarianism (the person as a "rational agent") and the reductions of neoliberalism (the person as a "consumer"). Dignity overcomes these reductions. It takes the individual beyond the roles of agent or client and reminds that integration is primarily about coexistence in a space of mutual recognition and responsibility [25, 26] (**Table 4.1**).

● **Table 4.1** Intellectual portraits-episodes: ideas that shape the methodology of a culture of dignity in integration

Author /intellectual portrait	Key concept / approach	Key principles	Importance for integration
M. Nussbaum [6]	Capabilities approach	Development does not begin with GDP, but with the real possibilities of a person to live with dignity. Emotions — compassion, shame, indignation — are important factors in social dynamics	Integration should be built not only on agreements and tariffs, but on the creation of an "infrastructure of opportunities": access to education, health care, cultural participation
W. Welsch [12]	Transversal thinking	Rejection of the extremes of universalism and relativism. Openness to plurality as a condition for development	Unity is achieved not through unification, but through the interaction of differences; integration becomes a space for dialogue and coexistence
R. Hackman [27]	Team effectiveness and trust	The effectiveness of teams is determined by the quality of interpersonal relationships, trust and the distribution of responsibility, not control	Integration is based on mutual recognition of the parties as equal subjects; it creates an environment of innovation and creativity without coercion
K. Wilber [28]	Integral model of consciousness	Economic systems are woven into cultural, psychological and spiritual contexts. Consciousness is multidimensional and requires an integrated approach	A culture of dignity corresponds to the multidimensionality of reality, combining the material and the immaterial, the local and the global; integration goes beyond the economy
S. Krymskyi [29]	Dignity as the basis of identity	Dignity is the key to cultural resilience and national identity. Without it, peoples are reduced to "functions" of global markets	Dignity allows societies to maintain subjectivity, form their own integration models and remain active creators of global interaction

CONCLUSION

A culture of dignity is not an alternative to rules or markets, but their underlying condition. It reduces the destructive impact of cognitive distortions not through the illusion of "sterility" but through the discipline of reflection; it teaches to live with human limitations so that they do not turn into institutional fragility. A new type of integration emerges as a practice of coexistence — where mutual recognition sets the limits of what is permissible, and trust shapes the long horizon.

4.2 COGNITIVE PREJUDICES AS BARRIERS TO INTEGRATION PROCESSES

The integration of national economies rarely stops at numbers. Its dynamics are determined not only by tariffs or currency regimes, but primarily by cognitive "curbs", imperceptible because they are embedded in the way of thinking. Economic theory has long treated them as "noise" in decision-making, but behavioral economics has shown that it is heuristics, affects and moral intuitions that set the structure of rationality [2, 30].

In negotiations, the loss effect is the first to be triggered. Losses are perceived much more painfully than symmetrical gains. Therefore, any integration agreement is overshadowed by the fear of losing control or sovereignty [13]. It is reinforced by confirmation bias. Elites and voters filter information so that it confirms existing stereotypes about partners [31]. Added to this is the status quo effect — the tendency to overestimate the risks of change and underestimate the risks of stagnation, which opens up space for populism [32].

Ingroup bias is particularly dangerous. Making concessions to the other side is interpreted as a humiliation of one's own dignity, rather than an investment in trust [33]. As a result, integration becomes an "us versus them" moral drama. The culture of dignity in this context becomes a counterframe. It legitimizes differences without transforming them into threats.

No less significant are the anchoring effect and framing. The first number uttered or the way a question is phrased can shift the trajectory of negotiations more than "real" economic parameters [34]. There is also the availability effect. Media images of crises or defaults distort risk assessments, outweighing statistical trends [35]. Finally, the halo effect forms a stereotypical perception of the partner ("good/bad"), which blocks the consideration of nuances [36].

Thus, decisions in negotiations are explained not only by economics, but also by psychology. A culture of dignity in this case is a requirement for cognitive transparency, honest argumentation, and practices of mutual recognition.

Cognitive distortions are even more pronounced in collective structures. The classic syndrome of groupthink describes a situation where the desire for agreement suppresses critical thinking: opponents' ideas are suppressed, and consensus becomes artificial [37].

In the digital age, this effect is amplified by algorithms. "Echo chambers" and personalized feeds create information cocoons where communities read only themselves and confuse repetition with truth [38, 39]. This generates polarization. Groups of like-minded people are radicalized, and institutions of integration are transformed into scenes of mutual moral condemnation.

A culture of dignity does not try to sterilize emotions or eliminate conflict. It proposes transversal thinking (W. Welsh) — dialogue through recognition of differences, not their unification [12]. This creates a communication protocol in which conflict becomes a resource for development, rather than a threat of disintegration.

At the level of integration policy, other distortions operate. Short-termism forces politicians and markets to demand quick results, underfunding institutions of trust [40]. Overconfidence and the illusion of control lead to systematic optimism and underestimation of chance [41]. As studies of large-scale projects show, this leads to chronic cost overruns and broken promises [42].

Here, a culture of dignity teaches institutional modesty. Recognizing risks, backing public promises with verification mechanisms, and creating safe "corridors of error". This allows for the transformation of vulnerability into a resource of trust.

Big data does not eliminate cognitive distortions, it magnifies them. Algorithmic biases are built into the design of systems, turning the "availability effect" and "motivated thinking" into industrial power [43].

"Smart" feeds and targeted messages create attentional operating systems that manipulate risk and shape a "market of fear" [44, 45]. A culture of dignity requires not censorship but human design — transparent explanations, clear labels, the right to correction and mechanisms for counter-criticism. This reduces the asymmetry of power between institutions and citizens.

The institutional level confirms that integration collapses where rules remain "empty forms" without trust [46]. Conversely, it holds together where shared norms are rooted in practices of mutual recognition and collective governance of goods [47].

The EU and ASEAN show two different paths — from the eurozone crisis [23] to the gradual "slow integration" in Southeast Asia [48]. In both cases, cognitive traps either escalate into populism or are discharged through mechanisms of solidarity.

This proves that the stability of integration unions is impossible without a moral infrastructure — this is the function performed by the culture of dignity.

Ukrainian humanitarian thought confirms this thesis. S. Krymskyi emphasized that dignity is the basis of cultural stability. Ye. Holovakha described social illusions that form political errors. V. Paniotto analyzed trust as a scarce social capital. Educational studies have shown that without emotional literacy, integration turns into a simulacrum. All these insights boil down to the main thing: dignity is a way of thinking that turns vulnerability into a resource for co-creation.

When we say "anti-cognitive architecture", we are not declaring war on cognition. We are only rejecting reductionism, which reduces a person to a variable in a utility function. The culture of dignity is a metacognitive regime in which differences are not erased, but carried together; in which mistakes are not hidden, but announced; in which weaknesses are not stigmatized, but become points of growth. It is this architecture that gives integration a chance to survive another cycle of crisis and populism.

CONCLUSION

Cognitive biases are not a disease to be eliminated, but a mirror of our conditioning. Integration without dignity looks into this mirror and sees an enemy. Integration with dignity sees an interlocutor. The first turns politics into a marketplace of fears; the second into a space of coexistence. And if we are destined to build alliances that can withstand the pressure of time, then we will have to do so not only by reforming the rules, but also by cultivating dignity, as an ethic of mutual recognition, as a discipline of transparency, as a pedagogy of trust.

In this sense, the culture of dignity is an anti-cognitive architecture of integration: it does not promise sterility of thinking, but creates conditions in which human weaknesses become the basis of resilience.

4.3 COGNITIVE PREDICTIONS AND PSYCHOLOGY OF MANAGEMENT DECISIONS IN INTEGRATION PROCESSES

Integration processes in the modern world resemble a complex game on the border of rationality and emotionality. A step forward can be determined not by cold calculation, but by sudden fear, prejudice or symbolic gesture. What textbooks call "economic strategies" in reality often turns out to be a combination of cognitive distortions and political compromises. Integration is not only a set of agreements, but also a psychological game with ideas about justice, dignity and control. Classical economics has long ignored this psychological dimension, drawing an abstract homo economicus who chooses optimal solutions like a machine. But research in recent decades proves that the real driver of integration processes is homo sapiens affectivus — a person who reacts to risk through emotions, not through rational formulas [41, 50]. It is these biases — the "status quo effect", the "anchor", the "illusion of control" — that become the "invisible parliament" that votes for or against economic unions.

Take, for example, the "loss effect". In integration negotiations, governments often exaggerate the potential loss of sovereignty and underestimate the benefits of cooperation. This psychological bias explains why even profitable deals encounter resistance: the familiar seems more valuable than the new. In this sense, any integration process is not only an economic but also a therapeutic experiment in overcoming collective anxiety.

Another barrier is "anchor thinking". The first number or fact voiced in negotiations often shapes the perception of the deal regardless of the real data. When one side mentions "inflated expectations" or "catastrophic risks", even the strongest arguments then revolve around this starting point. As a result, compromises are not built on objective calculations, but on psychologically imposed guidelines.

Ukrainian economists and philosophers, in particular V. Kebuladze and O. Gerasymchuk, rightly note that integration in the case of Ukraine is primarily a challenge in overcoming "mental traps", and not only in changing legislation [59]. Indeed, institutional reforms are blocked not so much by a lack of resources as by cognitive inertia — fear of the new, belief in the "eternity" of old practices.

Brexit is a vivid example of how prejudices determine the fate of integration projects. The "loss effect" played a key role here. The British were afraid of losing their imaginary independence, even if the economic benefits from the EU were obvious. Logic said "remain", but the symbols of the red passport, fear of migrants and the illusion of restored control prevailed. This is not economic arithmetic, but the psychology of images, which can outweigh rational calculation [51].

A similar situation occurred with the failure of the EU Constitution in France and the Netherlands in 2005. Citizens who enjoyed the benefits of integration voted against its symbolic consolidation. Here a conservative psychological mechanism manifested itself. People overestimated the risks of change and underestimated the risks of stagnation [23]. In other words, a historical chance was lost not because of economic calculations, but because of psychological discomfort with the unknown.

On an international scale, the "trade wars" between the US and China also show psychological logic. "Groupthink" and the "hostility effect" push the parties to escalate, even when compromise would be more beneficial [53]. Instead of rational dialogue, it is possible to see a theater of symbols, where the stakes are determined by prestige and fears, not economic models.

Modern neuroeconomic research shows that decisions in crisis conditions primarily activate the amygdala of the brain, responsible for fear and anxiety [54]. That is, when it comes to integration, people first feel and only then think. This requires a new approach to communicating reforms. Appeal not only to rational arguments, but also to images of trust, dignity and security.

An additional challenge is the "confirmation bias". Society tends to see confirmation of its distrust in isolated failures and ignore systemic successes. This is especially true of anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine. People are quick to notice scandals but slow to acknowledge gradual institutional changes. Here, a culture of dignity requires transparent communication and honest dialogue.

At the same time, psychology can be a resource for integration. Research shows that the "superordinate goals effect" can reduce intergroup hostility [55]. In the context of integration, this means that it is worth speaking not only in the language of benefits, but also in the language of meanings — of shared identity, values, and the future.

Ukrainian philosophers — S. Krymskyi, M. Popovych — emphasized long before the current reforms that integration makes sense only when it unfolds in the dimension of dignity. Otherwise, any agreement risks turning into a "technocratic contract without a human face" [56]. In this sense, our current economic challenges only confirm their foresight.

Final conclusion. Integration is primarily the psychology of fear management. Successful integration projects have always been those that have found the language of trust and symbols of dignity. And unsuccessful ones have been those that have tried to convince people only with numbers, forgetting that people think in images. This is the challenge of the 21st century. To create an architecture of integration that takes into account cognitive fragility, but at the same time forms a culture of trust as the basis of coexistence.

Management decisions in integration processes are increasingly subject to the logic of neuroeconomics, which proves that in moments of collective choice, the brain of a politician or negotiator functions not as a "rational calculator", but as a complex network of affective and cognitive signals. Functional neuroimaging (fMRI) studies show that even at the level of international negotiations, the amygdala is activated — the center of emotional anxiety, which determines the readiness for trust or resistance [57]. This means that cognitive biases cannot be "excluded" by a technocratic procedure; they are embedded in the very corporeality of thinking.

The emotional intelligence of leaders and negotiators plays a special role in modern integration practices. Research shows that the ability to listen empathetically and regulate one's own emotions is critical for achieving interstate agreements, especially in conditions of distrust [54]. In this sense, a culture of dignity offers not only an institutional framework, but also an emotional and psychological dimension of coexistence. The Ukrainian experience of post-2014 reforms has shown that precisely those management teams that appealed to dignity as a common denominator were able to achieve greater legitimacy for their decisions [59].

No less significant is the phenomenon of "trust in algorithms". Modern economic integrations increasingly rely on digital platforms and algorithmic risk models. At the same time, excessive reliance on algorithms can create a new type of bias — "the illusion of technological neutrality" [60]. The culture of dignity acts as a counterweight here. It reminds that behind every number there is a person, and that integration decisions should remain in the realm of moral responsibility, not statistical fatalism.

An important factor in integration psychology is collective memory. Studies show that countries that have experienced common traumas or victories are more prone to cooperative integration, while the memory of conflicts creates long-lasting barriers [4, 98]. The Ukrainian context is illustrative here.

The national experience of Maidan, war and reforms has become a resource of collective memory, strengthening the desire for integration into the European community. This proves that integration is not only about agreements and economic indicators, but also about the deep psychological work of society with its own past.

4.4 BEHAVIORAL MECHANISMS OF INTEGRATION: FROM COMPETITION TO COEXISTENCE

Economists like to draw graphs, but the integration of nations, cultures and economies takes place not on paper but in hearts. What they call "behavioral mechanisms" is actually a drama of emotions: fear, trust, shame and pride. Classical economics hid this dimension, but behavioral economics has finally brought it into the spotlight [53].

R. Schuman, in proposing to unite the French and German coal industries, thought like a therapist, not an accountant. His gesture was "collective psychotherapy" for a continent still bleeding after the war [50]. Hence began Europe as a community of trust, not just markets.

The African Union shows that where institutions are fragile, integration is possible only as a narrative economy — through the anthem, the flag, the symbols of "Mother Africa" [24, 55]. This is an example of how trust is sometimes more valuable than currency. But the trauma of colonialism makes this capital fragile, and progress resembles a slow dance between hope and disappointment.

Ukraine's European choice is not an arithmetic of GDP, but an act of identity. War and economic upheaval have paradoxically increased trust in the EU. According to Eurobarometer [52], support for integration has doubled since 2014. This shows that disasters can be catalysts for coexistence when dignity is at stake.

During the 2008 debt crisis, the decision to adopt "austerity" was more an affective reaction than a rational calculation. The "lazy South" and the "rational North" are behavioral myths that shaped policy despite the data [61]. In other words, Europe was saved or destroyed not by numbers, but by perceptions.

The Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland was an act of "emotional contract" — an agreement of mutual recognition of pain [56]. Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik was also a politics of empathy. "Change through rapprochement" appealed to responsibility, not fear [54]. All this shows that true integration begins where empathy becomes politics.

The 2016 Brexit proved that "taking back control" was a stronger argument than any statistics [62]. It is a classic example of an affective symbol that mobilized a nation. Against this background, the culture of dignity reminds that true control lies not in isolation but in mutual recognition.

Erasmus or Creative Europe programmes have shown that integration is not born only in Brussels, but also in student dormitories and joint projects of artists [63]. The emotional intelligence of institutions is sometimes more important than their budgets.

The EU has invested billions in the Balkans, but without working with the memory of wars, integration is stalling [48]. Economics does not bridge distrust — integration without therapy for collective traumas turns into imitation.

Social brain research proves that empathy activates the same neural networks as personal experience [64]. In other words, empathy is not a metaphor, but the biology of integration.

In the 21st century, a new paradox has emerged — trust in algorithms. People are more likely to accept decisions made by artificial intelligence than by politicians because they believe in the "neutrality" of code [57]. However, the culture of dignity reminds that algorithms without human warmth risk creating integration without coexistence.

But integration is impossible without shared ideas about time. A. Assmann wrote: alliances hold together only when people form a "memory of the future" [58]. This means that integration is always a strategy of imagination, not just accounting.

The behavioral mechanisms of integration are a symphony of three levels:
– affective (fear, pride, resentment);
– cognitive (stereotypes, representations);
– symbolic (memory, rituals, identities).

Only when they sound together does integration become coexistence, not a technocratic illusion. The culture of dignity is the conductor here. It transforms the chaos of affects into the harmony of coexistence.

4.5 ETHICS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE CONDITIONS OF INTEGRATION

The integration processes of national economies in the 21st century cannot be reduced solely to technical coordination or the achievement of macroeconomic indicators. They manifest themselves as complex socio-cultural constellations, where legal norms, political interests and psychological factors of trust are intertwined. That is why the modern theory and practice of public administration requires a shift in emphasis — from instrumental efficiency and bureaucratic rationality to the ethical architectonics of a culture of dignity, which forms not only the legitimacy of decisions, but also their acceptability for citizens [65, 66]. Trust and trustworthiness are increasingly considered not as psychological variables, but as institutional resources that determine the ability of integration regimes to stability [67, 68]. Procedural fairness and transparency of political processes are more important for public support than the final results of policies [69]. An example is the practice of the European Union on the protection of personal data. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has become not only a legal act, but also a symbol of a new culture of trust [22].

The digitalization of governance has raised the question of "algorithmic reputation" — trust in decisions made by automated systems. In response to the challenges, the concept of "dignified algorithmics" has emerged, where the criteria are explainability, the absence of discriminatory effects and the preservation of user autonomy [70, 71]. The European Guidelines on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (AI HLEG, 2019)

outline the framework for the responsible use of algorithms in the social sphere [10]. Regulatory "sand-boxes" in the Kingdom of Denmark and the Kingdom of the Netherlands have become examples of how innovation and the protection of civil rights can be combined.

Behavioral approaches have proven that people make decisions in ways that are not predicted by classical rational choice models [72]. Choice architectures that use the "nudge" effect are actively used by state institutions. However, in integration processes, the key criterion is not only efficiency, but also dignity — whether the citizen retains freedom of choice, or whether its decision is actually determined by a hidden design [73]. Thus, the concept of dignity impact assessment arises, which involves a mandatory analysis of whether the autonomy of the subject is preserved in the conditions of institutional interventions [74].

Integration processes require adaptability, and here the importance of "experimentalist governance" [75] increases. It assumes that institutions have the right to make mistakes, provided that the mistake becomes a learning resource. Regular policy review cycles, real-time monitoring and public feedback mechanisms form an ethic of transparency and shared responsibility. "Green" standards in global supply chains are a vivid example of how the principles of adaptive governance strengthen integration practices.

Citizens' assemblies, mini-publics, participatory budgets are institutions that give integration processes the character of co-construction [76, 77]. Dignity ethics here manifests itself in recognizing the voice of each participant as legitimate, regardless of its social status. An example is the Irish citizens' assemblies, which have proven that political decisions become sustainable if they go through horizontal practices of co-creation [78].

The uniqueness of the Ukrainian experience lies in the combination of digital solutions and principles of dignity. ProZorro has become a symbol of transparency in public procurement, where algorithms work not for manipulation, but for openness of processes [79, 80]. The platform "Diia" in wartime turned out to be not just a tool for providing services, but a service of subjectivity: it supports the citizen as an active participant in public life, even in crisis conditions [81, 82].

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that crises are the litmus test for public governance [83, 84]. Inequality in access to resources, the complexity of coordination, and different cultural models of trust have determined how successful the policies of individual states have been. Issues of burden sharing and ethical legitimacy of restrictions have gained central importance, turning the pandemic into a laboratory for testing the viability of a culture of dignity.

Governance ethics is impossible without special competencies. A modern manager must master not only analytical but also affective skills: metareflection, the ability to regulate emotions and practice ethical application of behavioral insights [65, 66]. The policy-lab concept in combination with ethics-lab offers a new model of training civil servants, where technical and ethical skills are integrated.

Neuroscience confirms: trust has a biological dimension. Studies of the role of oxytocin in the formation of prosocial strategies prove that emotional patterns directly affect economic cooperativeness [85, 86]. This sets the task for management to create conditions that stimulate empathy and social cooperation, avoiding the reduction of citizens to "biobehavioral objects" [87]. Dignity ethics requires explicability even in the field of neuropolitics.

Integration processes can remain the mechanics of contracts or become practices of coexistence. It is the culture of dignity that determines whether it is possible to overcome the limitations of cognitive biases and transform political and economic structures into spaces of trust. This is not only a survival strategy, but also a chance to build global communities based on mutual respect and the subjectivity of each [88].

4.6 CONCLUSIONS. CULTURE OF DIGNITY AS A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

In the 21st century, integration ceases to be an exclusively economic or political task. It increasingly takes on the character of a deep fusion of consciousnesses, collective perceptions and cultural practices. The culture of dignity, which opposes itself to technocratic and utilitarian models of governance, opens up the possibility of shaping integration processes not as a balance of interests, but as coexistence — a joint deployment of potentials in a space of trust and mutual recognition [53, 89]. In this sense, public administration appears as a laboratory of the future. It either reproduces old algorithms of control and competition, or becomes a field for institutional innovation, where the ethics of dignity sets new architectonics of interaction [90, 91]. Unlike the instrumental approach, which reduces a person to a "rational agent", the culture of dignity brings multidimensional subjectivity back to the center of attention - with its emotions, historical memory, cultural identity.

It is important to emphasize that cognitive biases and affective reactions do not disappear in large integration processes, but it is the culture of dignity that allows to neutralize their destructive effect. It creates an environment where biases are not displaced, but "melted" into common practices of mutual understanding [92, 93]. Such melting is possible only through educational and institutional mechanisms that form managers with developed empathy and the ability to think not in terms of benefit, but in categories of coexistence.

Modern neuroscience confirms this thesis. Studies demonstrate that trust is not only culturally symbolic, but also biologically fixed in nature. In the processes of social interaction, neural networks associated with empathy and social prediction are activated [94]. Neurochemical mechanisms, in particular the role of oxytocin, form a kind of "emotional glue" of coexistence [95]. Moreover, experiments in neuroeconomics show that even in high-level negotiations, brain mechanisms of trust determine readiness for long-term unions [96]. Thus, the culture of dignity receives additional legitimation. It is based not only on philosophical intuition, but also on the biological and psychological foundations of coexistence. For Ukraine, which is at the epicenter of integration processes with Europe, the culture of dignity also has a civilizational dimension. In the works of M. Popovych, it appears as a strategy of modernity, where the memory of identity is combined with openness to global values [56]. And in the works of O. Zabuzhko, another, existential truth is articulated. Culture is the field of memory's struggle with amnesia, and therefore the place where trust in oneself becomes a condition for trust in the world [49]. In this combination — of philosophical reflection and cultural experience — lies a clue on how to move from the logic of survival to the logic of coexistence.

Thus, the conclusion is obvious. The strategy of the future consists in shifting the emphasis from instrumental management to a culture of dignity. It proposes architectonics where ethics becomes not an external regulator, but an internal "muscle" of integration processes. Only then will integration go beyond economic agreements and become a true union of consciousnesses.

The originality of this study lies in the fact that the culture of dignity is understood not only as a normative ideal or ethical imperative, but as a multidimensional strategy of integration, which has philosophical, psychological and neuroscientific foundations.

While previous studies have mostly focused on the economic or political aspects of integration processes [90, 99], the proposed approach combines the analysis of collective memory [98], affective regulation [97] and neural mechanisms of trust [94, 95]. Such an interdisciplinary lens allows to move from the discourse of survival to the discourse of coexistence and to show that integration is primarily a project of cultural and psychological transformation of humanity. In this sense, the work offers not only an academic, but also a civilizational contribution to the understanding of the ethics of public administration and the future of global interaction.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The authors confirm that during the preparation of the manuscript, artificial intelligence tools were used exclusively within the limits of permitted operations that did not affect the scientific novelty or results of the research.

In the process of preparing the manuscript, AI tools were used — ChatGPT, GPT-5-mini, OpenAI.

AI tools were used to support reader convenience, style, text structuring and source search, which were checked and confirmed by the authors.

The authors carried out a full check of all materials obtained with the AI participation by: comparing each fragment with primary sources and current scientific literature; manually clarifying terms, definitions and content in accordance with the research methodology; verifying statistical data, facts, international examples and regulatory references; ensuring compliance with academic standards, research logic and requirements of the target publication.

All citations, references, statistical results and theoretical positions have been checked by the authors, edited and academically supplemented.

The AI use did not affect the scientific argumentation, results and conclusions.

The authors confirm that all scientific data and research results are exclusively original, created by the authors, and AI tools were used as an auxiliary editorial and technical tool.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest regarding this study, including financial, personal, authorship or other nature, which could affect the study and its results presented in this article.

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