

# POLITICKÉ VEDY / POLITICAL SCIENCES

Časopis pre politológiu, najnovšie dejiny, medzinárodné vzťahy, bezpečnostné štúdiá / Journal for Political Sciences, Modern History, International Relations, security studies

URL časopisu / URL of the journal: <http://www.fpvmv.umb.sk/politickevedy>

Autor(i) / Author(s): Polese Abel

Článok / Article: Dichotómia medzi občianstvom a národnosťou: Úvaha o skúsenosti z formovania ukrajinského národa / Dichotomies between Citizenship and Nationality: Reflections from the Ukrainian Nation Building Experience

Vydavateľ / Publisher: Fakulta politických vied a medzinárodných vzťahov – UMB Banská Bystrica / Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations – UMB Banská Bystrica

## Odporúčaná forma citácie článku / Recommended form for quotation of the article:

POLESE, A. 2011. Dichotomies between Citizenship and Nationality: Reflections from the Ukrainian Nation Building Experience. In *Politické vedy*. [online]. Roč. 14, č. 2, 2011. ISSN 1338 – 5623, s. 48 – 63. Dostupné na internete: [http://www.fpvmv.umb.sk/userfiles/file/2\\_2011/POLESE.pdf](http://www.fpvmv.umb.sk/userfiles/file/2_2011/POLESE.pdf).

Poskytnutím svojho príspevku autor(i) súhlasil(i) so zverejnením článku na internetovej stránke časopisu Politické vedy. Vydavateľ získal súhlas autora / autorov s publikovaním a distribúciou príspevku v tlačenej i online verzii. V prípade záujmu publikovať článok alebo jeho časť v online i tlačenej podobe, kontaktujte redakčnú radu časopisu: [politicke.vedy@umb.sk](mailto:politicke.vedy@umb.sk).

By submitting their contribution the author(s) agreed with the publication of the article on the online page of the journal. The publisher was given the author's / authors' permission to publish and distribute the contribution both in printed and online form. Regarding the interest to publish the article or its part in online or printed form, please contact the editorial board of the journal: [politicke.vedy@umb.sk](mailto:politicke.vedy@umb.sk).

# **DICHOTOMIES BETWEEN CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALITY: REFLECTIONS FROM THE UKRAINIAN NATION-BUILDING EXPERIENCE**

**Abel Polese\***

## **RESUME**

Immediately after gaining independence Ukraine started a nation-building project that could be considered fairly inclusive. In the hope to boost a national identity, it granted citizenship to all those living on its soil in 1991 so to positively impact the feeling of belonging to a "people of Ukraine" (as counter-posed to the "Ukrainian people"). With citizenship as a prerequisite, the nation-building project was intended to match the nation with the state in order to make all Ukrainian citizens part of the Ukrainian nation, intended in civic terms. This paper distinguishes itself from the literature on nation-building by two interpretative frameworks. First, it complicates the discourse on nation-building by showing that the effect of nation-building policies on citizens is not as direct as literature suggests. By doing so, it questions the nature of nation-building as an elite-driven process and suggests that people have a major role in the renegotiation of a nation-building project.

**Key words:** Ukraine, citizenship, nation-building, identity policies, national identity

## **Introduction**

Ukraine gained independence in 1991 and, like other former Soviet republics, experienced all of a sudden a number of centrifugal forces. Pressures on regions bordering Russia and attempts of separatism in Crimea were matched by an ethno-linguistic fragmentation that put at risk the country's stability and territorial integrity. This urged the political elites to engage in a project of nation-building for it was hoped that the creation of a political community would prompt the adjustment of the nation, conceived in rather civic or political terms, with the state.

As a result, state and nation-building were given the priority. All political parties and a substantial number of politicians considered nation building as an urgent need of the country (Kuzio, 1998; Shevel, 2002). This article is an

---

\* Dr. Abel Polese is Marie Curie Fellow at University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Great Britain, e-mail: [abelpolese@hotmail.com](mailto:abelpolese@hotmail.com).

attempt to assess the real nature of nation-building in Ukraine.

Literature on nation-building is well developed and much has been written on Ukraine. However, this article distinguishes itself by two interpretative frameworks. First, it complicates the discourse on nation-building by showing that the effect of nation-building policies on citizens is not as direct as literature suggests. By doing so, it questions the nature of nation-building as an elite-driven process and suggests that people have a major role in the renegotiation of a nation-building project. In an attempt to do so, the article shall compare the official narrative on nation-building with the results of my fieldwork. Starting point is that granting people with citizenship does not necessarily mean to adopt a liberal nation-building project but can be the first step towards the imposition of a participative citizenship compelling people to accept certain values. In addition, when the proposed values turn out not being acceptable for all categories and segments of a population, citizens can regain possession of their citizenship through a renegotiation of a national identity that is renegotiated from an official narrative to a pragmatic one based on criteria closer to the citizens.

By illustrating the gap existing between the official discourse, seeing the nation-building as easily changing Ukrainian identities, and the way those changes are lived by the Ukrainians I intend to highlight the contradictions that an apparently successful nation-building project could hide. In particular I shall concentrate on the role of agency in recreating a narrative on national identity that, although in contrast with the official discourse, allows Ukrainian citizens to create their own national identity without questioning the symbolic order of a state. To do this the next section shall discuss the relationship between nation-building and citizenship, the following shall explore the official narrative of nation-building in Ukraine and the following one shall present two case studies, contrasting with this official narrative. By showing this, I will suggest that there are forces other than national elites influencing a nation-building project and its outcome.

This article is based on a combination of multiple research methods. The starting point is a discourse analysis on Ukrainian nation-building that, along with quantitative data, is used to introduce the official narrative of nation-building in Ukraine. The constructed picture is compared with the material resulting from a long participant observation (2003-2006), 49 semi-structured interviews and

informal interviews to show the tensions between the official and the real discourse.

## **Nation-building and citizenship**

The relationship between nation building and citizenship is utmost ambiguous in literature. This is due to an extremely wide usage of the expression "nation-building" that we shall try to illustrate in this section. The nature of nation-building depends on the way nation is conceived by the state. Most definitions of nation vary around two ideal types of ethnic and civic nation. Ethnic is given by blood, history, language or memory, whereas the second is more linked to a set of values that, once accepted, can secure a national (civic) identity (Smith, 1991).

Starting from those premises, the politics of nation-building that have been conceptualised can be classified around four main ideas. The book that started the debate on nation-building has the homonym title *Nation Building* and was edited by **Karl Deutsch** and **William Folz** (Deutsch, Folz, 1963). Using case studies from the developed and developing world the book starts a main currency on nation-building where ethnic belonging is not important and is deemed to be wiped away by modernity (1963, p. 8). The approach of the authors is to use evidence from formed states to suggest that cultural and ethnic issues will become less important thanks to phenomena like urbanisation and economic development. A few years afterwards, the main criticism levelled against the book was the fact that nation was used to mean very diverse things, and alternatively referred to an ethnic nation and a civic nation (Connor, 1972) creating a "terminological chaos" (Connor, 1978) that made nation-building utmost questionable, as approach and as term.

A second generation of scholars studying nation-building emerged in the late seventies, with studies concentrating mainly on the formation of big nation states in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Authors from the fields of History and Sociology tried to explain the patterns that led nations to emerge and why some nations emerged and others remained potential nations (Gellner, 1983). Nation-building was not used as term; national formation and formation of national identity were preferred instead. Authors debated the way it was possible to build a nation and consolidate it to the point we can see it now (Gellner, 1983; Greenfeld, 1992; Hobsbawn, 1989, 1990) and more theoretically what are the origins of a nation (Gellner, 1983; Seton Watson, 1977; Smith, 1985) and when

nations were born.

A follow-up debate was inspired by the dissolution of three main European federations, Czechoslovakia, the USSR and Yugoslavia. Scholars debated the best way to consolidate a national identity on a given administrative territory in order to avoid centrifugal forces, ethnic cleansing and other repressive forces. The two main models of nation-building were constructed around a nationalisation of a state (Brubaker, 1996a; Brubaker, 1996b) and a more value-oriented civic nation-building that was then applied to some Eastern European cases like Ukraine (Kuzio, 1998).

Not relevant for this article but to the debate is the use of nation-building that has emerged in the past years. Since **Fukuyama's** book *Nation Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* there has been increasing attention to the use of nation-building as a way to boost democratisation and political reforms in post-conflict countries. In particular, nation-building has been considered as the efforts of foreign powers to create a civic community tied together by the acceptance of common values.

Depending on whether nation-building aims at creating an ethnic or a civic nation its relationship with citizenship may vary. Access to citizenship may be given to everyone living on a state territory or only to the titular nation. Ukraine fits this first category, as it allowed all residents in 1991 to apply for a Ukrainian passport. In contrast Latvia adopted an extremely restrictive law on citizenship, excluding Russians settled in the country after 1942 from automatically gaining citizenship at independence. There is a third situation, in which citizenship can be granted but is used as starting point to assimilate minorities and convert them into titular nation. In this respect the choice of allowing double citizenship or not may have a major impact. By not allowing double citizenship a state gives people a choice: either become a foreigner in their homeland or renounce the protection of their mother country.

In the rest of the article we will be analysing a nation-building project of a post-USSR country in which citizenship has been granted extensively, at least at independence, and that is granting extensive civic right to the citizens of a state but is also expecting some degree of affection in return. The nation-building project, as it will be shown, seems to be inclusive but demanding acceptance of a series of instructions that citizens are not always comfortable with.

In this respect the article wants to point to the gap between the official narrative of a national identity and the way citizens have come to renegotiate it and make it more acceptable for some categories.

## Nation-building in Ukraine

Several scholars have shown the existence of the Ukrainian nation and a national identity already at independence in 1991 (Kravchenko, 1985; Magocsi, 1998; Subtelny, 1989). The difficulty faced by the Ukrainian elites and the necessity to engage in a nation-building project was due to the fact that the Ukrainian nation did not overlap with the Ukrainian administrative territory. In other words, citizenship and national identity do not necessarily match.

The nation-building project in Ukraine counted on a wide range of policies. However, for this article we shall concentrate on what seems to be the most relevant and, at the same time, contradictory.

## State symbols

Almost immediately after gaining independence the debate on national symbols started. While the Communist Party still endorsed Soviet ones, the majority of the population did not (Kuzio, 1998, p. 221) and the rest of the parties were undecided between historical Ukrainian and Cossack ones (The Cossack one was crimson; some also proposed the black/red flag for Ukraine, representing Ukrainian blood poured in the independence struggle, on rich black Ukrainian soil). There was almost unanimous agreement that the history of Ukraine as a nation had to be reminded, at least to distinguish it from Russia, though it was not clear which symbols should be chosen.

Between 1991 and 1992 it was decided to adopt the blue and yellow flag (representing the rivers and crop field of the country) and the historical trident. However, attempts to rename the president "Hetman" (chief of Cossacks) and to adopt the "*bulava*" (staff) as a symbol of power went not too far. In 1992 old-new stamps were reintroduced, including those commemorating Cossacks, **Khrushhevski** and other historical figures. In 1996 a new currency, reminding that Ukrainians were a nation at least 1000 years old, replaced the karbovanets whose value had been destroyed by hyperinflation. The hryvnia, firstly introduced in Ukraine in 1918 (when it had been printed in Berlin), was reintroduced as national currency. The "*lieux de memoire*" (Nora, 1997) of the

Ukrainian nation included commemorating medals (with historical figures like **Mazepa** and **Khmelnitski**), restoration of historical journals like *Viche* and *Kyivs'ka Starovyna* (both published in Ukrainian), the rising number of museums from 202 in 1991 to 272 in 1995 (Kuzio, 1998, p. 227), restoration of historical places like *Palats Ukraina* and the *Philharmonic Hall* in Kiev and the redrafting of the holiday calendar: the Independence Day (from the Soviet Union) was set on 24<sup>th</sup> of August, and the Day of Europe the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May (adopted more recently, in 2003). However, the victory of the Soviet Union in WWII is still celebrated (9 May) as well as the liberation of Kiev from Nazi troops (7 November).

*Table n° 1: Ethnic composition of Ukraine, results of the 1989 and 2001 census.*

Nationality	2001	1989
Ukrainian	77.8%	72.7%
Russian	17.3%	22.1%
Belorussian	0.6%	0.9%
Moldovan	0.5%	0.6%
Crimean Tatar	0.5%	0.0%
Bulgarian	0.4%	0.5%
Hungarians	0.3%	0.4%
Romanians	0.3%	0.3%
Poles	0.3%	0.4%
Jews	0.2%	0.9%
Armenians	0.2%	0.1%
Greeks	0.2%	0.2%
Tatars	0.2%	0.2%
Gypsies	0.1%	0.1%
Azerbaijanis	0.1%	0.0%
Georgians	0.1%	0.0%
Germans	0.1%	0.1%
Gagauzians	0.1%	0.1%
Others	0.4%	0.4%

Source: <http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua>

The lyrics of the national anthem were taken from a Ukrainian national poem of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and particular attention was given to the construction of new monuments, such as the monument of the Prince the Wise in Kiev. National symbols were legitimized by the 1996 Constitution that sets also further state borders (that Russia ratified only in 1998). The law on citizenship is more liberal when compared to other former USSR countries, (Barrington, 1995) but it was shaped so as not to allow dual citizenship. Citizenship was accessible to all those living in Ukraine in 1991 and those born in Ukraine with no other citizenship (like stateless and those who give up their parents' citizenship).

### **Language policies**

Following a national revival throughout the entire Soviet Union, Ukraine adopted a law on language already in 1989, like many other republics evening up national languages to Russian, that was hitherto the only official language of the Soviet Union. The language law introduced a whole series of provisions intending to curb Russification and make Ukrainian the dominant language in all spheres of public life (Janmaat, 2000, p. 59). In 1993 a law regulating the language for television and radio broadcasting was introduced. Meanwhile, president **Kravchuk**, elected in December 1991, suggested that Ukrainian should be the language of politics in the country, de facto obliging future president **Kuchma** and all new generations of politicians to express themselves in Ukrainian, regardless of their level of knowledge of the language. Election of a president with a more moderate position towards Ukrainization did not modify the substance of the matter. Not only the **Kuchma's** minister of education **Zgurovs'kyi** did not revoke language regulations but **Kuchma** himself committed to the official use of Ukrainian by keeping it as sole state language in the 1996 Constitution.

Linguistic measures had a special focus on education, contributing to phasing out of Russian schools in favour of Ukrainian ones. While in 1991 only 51% of pre-schools provided education in Ukrainian language, the figure rose to 76% in 2000. Primary and secondary schools providing education in Ukrainian amounted to 49% in 1991-92 but rose to 70% in 2000/2001 (Russian ones dropped to 29%) with figures higher than 50% all over the country. The exceptions were Odessa (47%), Zaporizhzhia (45%), Luhansk (17%), Donetsk (14%) and Republic of Crimea (0.8%) (Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies, 2002). In 2002-2003, 74% of Ukrainian students studied in

Ukrainian and 25% in Russian (Kuts, 2004).

Ukrainian publications were encouraged by applying tax cuts for publications in Ukrainian to counterbalance Russian removal of taxes on export of Russian language books (Shulman, 2005, p. 43). Once tax cuts were suspended by the parliament, the number of Ukrainian language newspaper fell from 68% in 1990 to 35% in 2000, with books from 90% to 12% (Shulman, 2005, p. 43).

In 1998 a law on state administration requiring all documents to be written in Ukrainian has been passed, followed in 1999 by a law on education. In 2005 a law on language of interregional and national broadcasting in 2005 has been passed

### **Nation-building and schools**

Boosting of national values has been advocated since early years of independence, with particular attention to the educational and linguistic policies (see, Zhulynsky, 1996). Already since 1997/98 Russian language and literature had de facto disappeared from curricula for state sponsored Ukrainian schools and teaching in Russian had been largely phased out. To assess the impact of nation-building policies in schools analysis of textbooks has revealed extremely useful. Most authors highlight the government's emphasis on Ukrainian and European values and the existence of a Ukrainian nation well rooted in time (see Janmaat, 2005; Kuzio, 2006; Popson, 2001; Wolczuk, 2000). Not only a Ukrainian identity has been put forward by spreading the use of Ukrainian as a language of instruction but also school curricula have been changed accordingly. A first innovation is the introduction of a subject called "*ridna mova*" (native language) suggesting that all Ukrainian citizens have Ukrainian as mother tongue. History is taught as world history (including Russian history) and Ukrainian history. Ukrainian literature is taught as a separate subject from Russian one and Russian classics are translated, when possible, in Ukrainian. This leads to paradoxical situations in which Russian speaking pupils have to read Pushkin translated into Ukrainian.

Civic education has become an increasing concern in Ukrainian schools. (Janmaat & Piattoeva, 2007) Accordingly, curricula have been gradually reformed and a number of new subjects have been introduced. Some of them are taught only one hour per week but it is interesting to remark the existence of subjects like "We, the citizens of Ukraine" or "Ukraine's European Choice"; that

gives an idea on how Ukraine is presented as European and separate from Russia.

## **Ukrainisation and common people**

Despite the fact that the Ukrainisation of several spheres of public life has been relatively strong, there is a work of mediation carried out by the people at several levels. The current section illustrates how citizens construct their own identity regardless of what the state proposes.

### *Case 1: Informal nation-building during the Orange Revolution of 2004*

The choice of the Orange Revolution is due to the symbolic importance Ukrainian language has come to have. November 2004 is a moment of choices and confrontation when the official narrative on national identity has been strongly questioned, while the Ukrainian language itself remained supported. The mechanism that allows re-appropriation of a national language, without complying with the state imposition is very subtle and the use of Ukrainian subject to certain unwritten rules that the state did not contribute to create. Ukrainian was not spoken because citizens had been instructed to do so; it has been used to create a political identity separate from Russia. Ukrainians wanted simply to talk; overcoming of cultural differences and an attitude expressed towards the specific language has become more important than the use of a given language *per se*. They would do it in Russian, Ukrainian or what else language allowed communication, but they were keen to create a facade of Ukraininess that would clearly set the boundaries of a national identity.

On the scene set up at the Independence Square in Kiev, diverse messages were presented through music or other kind of performances. Any artist wishing to be on the stage used Ukrainian language, regardless of its native tongue, thus showing his or her support for the revolution. *“Our partners in the Donetsk region, during the revolution, we wrote emails in Ukrainian. There may be errors ... but they were Ukrainian!”* (Personal communication with a member of the NGO “SVIT”)

The official language of the scene placed in Maidan Square and the language of any musical performance was Ukrainian, although Russian seemed to be used more frequently than Ukrainian at street level. *“During the Revolution, a wave of nationalism has invaded the Ukraine and Odessa ... also*

*hit myself in the morning trying to remember the words of the anthem of Ukraine” (Interview with a businessman of Odessa).*

Some examples can better illustrate the change of attitude and the use of a language not resulting from the state instructions but from a personal choice. Maria and Andrei met shortly before the revolution, when they were students at Kiev. Both are Russian speakers and at the beginning of their relationship they communicated in Russian. In particular, Andrei was very fascinated by Moscow and disdained the language and Ukrainian culture. Today they live together, both work and communicate in Ukrainian. At first it was difficult because they mixed the two languages. They started talking after November 2004.

**Pavel** was my student in 2004. His vision on his country was that everyone could at least understand Ukrainian. As a result he would never speak Russian even with a Russian speaker. He would address his interlocutor in Ukrainian and accept a response in either Russian or Ukrainian, but would not switch to Russian. I met him a few months after November 2004 and he was now ready to speak Russian if talking with a Russian speaker. He said he accepted now the fact that a Ukrainian might not speak, or understand, Ukrainian.

The Ukrainian revolution was bilingual. It is true that the candidate **Viktor Yushchenko** and his entire staff, along with **Yuliya Tymoshenko**, speak only Ukrainian but they do not refuse the Russian language or the Russian role in the country. Before giving any speeches during the election campaign, **Yushchenko** inquired at the hearing in which language he should speak. Even during the revolution, **Yushchenko** appealed to the eastern regions (in Russian) by recognizing them as an integral part of Ukraine and its culture.

### *Case 2: Daily renegotiation of identities*

**Misha** (24) is Ukrainian, but his brother (21) is not. Not hundred percent, at least. They have the same father and mother, **Misha** moved to Kiev last year, got a job and lives there with his wife. The two brothers have a Russian father and a Ukrainian mother who live just outside Odessa. When **Misha** first told his father he felt Ukrainian his father was against, he felt his son was betraying his origins, but now has accepted it. **Misha's** brother, when I inquired on his nationality, seemed confused. He admitted to feel somehow Ukrainian but also Soviet and Russian.

**Pavel** (44) is a Ukrainian, if you ask him. His father was a Moldova-born Russian and his mother is Russian. He was born in Moldova and then moved to Staropol, in Russia, where his brother still lives. When Ukraine became independent he was offered to get a Ukrainian passport because he was studying in Kiev. He married a Ukrainian woman and has two children, who feel Ukrainian. His brother is Russian. They have the same mother, same father, used to eat the same soup, the same childhood friends but his family is now multiethnic.

**Sasha** (20) is Ukrainian but, until sixteen, she was convinced to be Russian. Her brother (26) is also Ukrainian but says that this was his parents' choice at first (when you are born you still have to declare a nationality). When I talked with their parents, the mother, who is Ukrainian, did not seem much concerned. In contrast, their father could not understand why the Soviet Union was over and they could not consider themselves just Soviet citizens.

However, not all transformations are so smooth. **Kolya** (25) escapes the question on nationality declaring he is Polish (he has some Polish blood from some ancestors). His father is Russian and his mother Ukrainian. Later he would admit to feel somehow Ukrainian but, it seems, not to the degree to defend his choice when asked directly. According to his father he is Russian, but citizen of Ukraine. **Nataliya** (19) is Russian, she says, her father is Belarusian and mother is Russian (with both parents Russian) and feels no reason to feel attachment to the Ukrainian soil. **Peter** is Gagauz, both parents are Gagauz and sees no reason to feel Ukrainian.

According to quantitative data the number of Ukrainian citizens declaring a Ukrainian national identity has been growing since independence. The results obtained in my research also prove this tendency. However, the material collected also sheds light on the complexity of an identity that is going where the elites would like it to go but not necessarily the way the elites would like to. Since independence the Ukrainian elites have tended to construct quantitative evidence of a developing Ukrainian identity through surveys, TV programmes, and press. The way this impression has been given has been questioned by several scholars (Khmelko, 2004; Stebelsky, 2009). My research adds to that qualitative data showing the contradictions of a national discourse and the way identities are renegotiated at daily level.

*Table n° 2: Ethnic structure of Ukraine in historical comparison*

Identity	1994-1999	2001-2003
Only Ukrainian	59,8	62,9
Russian and Ukrainian	24,4	22,5
Only Russian	11,3	10,0
Other	4,5	4,6
Total	100	100

*Source: Khmelko, 2004*

“I am Ukrainian because I like this place”, I have heard this sentence many times during my fieldwork and I have seen many emotional connections to the country forming evidence for plausible identities. This was referred also from Russian speakers who would possibly have a different opinion if all linguistic measures were implemented not only de jure but the facto in the country. The loose application of political measures allow, at least in the Ukrainian case, an easier identification between citizenship and national identity that is proper of the Ukrainian nation-building we have been observing since independence.

If having a Ukrainian passport may not push me to feel Ukrainian, a refusal of a Ukrainian passport will certainly be ground not to feel Ukrainian so that the inclusiveness of Ukrainian citizenship laws has turned out to be an important step to ease the convergence of the categories of citizenship and nationality. Not only all residents of 1991 were offered a Ukrainian passport, but also every child born from Ukrainian citizens (whatever their ethnic background) is automatically eligible for citizenship.

This also means that a 'passport competition' is still ongoing in Ukraine. Ukrainian citizenship excludes any other citizenship, a fact that is complicating the life of Romanian or Bulgarian minorities, who now need a visa to visit their relatives. However, the other side of the coin is that the rule has been applied elastically. Despite an official discourse forbidding double nationality, I am aware that many of my informants had more than one passport, just keeping it hidden. For example, if one wants to go to Bulgaria this person can take a train to Chisinau and leave Ukraine on its Ukrainian passport, and then crosses the Moldovan-Romanian border on its Bulgarian passport; there is a strategy for every passport to be used and hidden to the authorities.

## **Concluding remarks**

The dichotomy between nationality and citizenship is a main feature of Ukrainian nation-building. The contradictions of an official narrative, challenged by everyday actions of citizens are remarkable. On the one hand, access to citizenship seems to ease the process of national identity formation but, on the other one, the amount of restrictions and impositions by the elites make a Ukrainian identity difficult to accept in some cases. Ukrainian identity is strongly based, at least from the point of view of the state, upon usage of the national language, single citizenship and acceptance of a common past that has been reconstructed in textbooks and official historiography. According to the state a Ukrainian citizen should always feel Ukrainian, be aware of Ukrainian past and accept the memory of the Ukrainian nation, should use Ukrainian as main language. However, the room exists for renegotiation of such measures. The use of Ukrainian becomes less important than the attitude and the desire to use it as a facade to construct an official image of Ukrainianness allowing people to feel Ukrainian, despite not respecting all the elite-given instructions.

This article has shown the renegotiation of policies at the population level and the complexity of identity formation for Ukrainian citizens. The case studies of the use of the language and of identity transformations have illustrated the complexity of a discourse that has two main features. First, it is based on a loose control and coercion from the state structures, so that minimal requirements (speaking Ukrainian only when having an official role) are needed to officially comply with state instruction. Second, it leaves sufficient room for individual choice; citizens can use tricks like hiding a passport or using Ukrainian only in official communication with state authorities or in "official time" (Polese, 2010) so that they find it easier to accept being part of a Ukrainian community.

Nation-building and the construction of an inclusive citizenship becomes thus a synergy between political actors and those traditionally considered non-political actors, working together to achieve desired results in the sphere of political. It is their synergy, and not only the instructions delivered by the elites, that contribute to the creation of a national identity.

Literature on political change and democratic transition has been increasingly promoting the notion of active citizenship and consolidation of civil society; literature on nation-building also mentions it as an element of national consolidation but then keeps on attributing the main task to political elites

considering people only as secondary actors with their importance resting in the degree of feedback they can give. However, much benefit could be drawn by a theoretical approach considering people a primary agent of nation-building acting parallel, not subordinated, to the state.

#### ANNEX n° 1: Linguistic structure of Ukraine

	2001	1989
Ukrainian speakers	64.8%	67.5%
Russian speakers	32.8%	29.6%
Others	2.4%	2.9%
Total	100%	100%

*Source 2001 census*

#### ANNEX n° 2: Linguistic structure of Ukraine in historical comparison

Linguistic groups	1991-1994	1995-1999	2000-2003
Ukrainian speaking Ukrainians	41.2%	46.3%	45.4%
Russian speaking Ukrainians	32.6%	28.2%	30.9%
Russian speaking Russians	19.7%	17.0%	16.5%
Other	6.5%	8.5%	7.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

*Source Khmelko, 2004*

### References:

- BARRINGTON, L. 1995. « The domestic and international consequences of citizenship in the Soviet successor states » *Europe-Asia Studies* 47.5, 1995, pp. 731-763.
- BRUBAKER, R. 1996a. « Nationalizing States in the Old 'New Europe' - and the New » *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 19 (2), pp. 411-437.
- BRUBAKER, R. 1996b. *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, Cambridge University Press.
- CONNOR, W. 1972. "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?" in: *World Politics*, 24.
- CONNOR, W. 1978. "A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is a..." in: *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1(4), pp. 377-397.
- CONNOR, W. 2004. « The Timeless of Nation » in: *Nations and Nationalism*, 1-2, pp. 35-47.
- DEUTSCH, K. et Foltz, W. J. (eds.). 1963. *Nation-Building*, New York: Atherton Press.
- FUKUYAMA, F. 2006. *Nation Building : Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*, Baltimore, Maryland, John Hopkin University Press.
- GELLNER, E. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*, New York, Cornell University Press.
- GREENFELD, L. 1992. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- HOBSBAWN, E. 1989. *The Age of Empire 1875-1914*, London, Abacus.
- HOBSBAWN, E. 1990. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- JANMAAT & PIATTOEVA. 2007. "Citizenship Education in Ukraine and Russia: Reconciling Nation-Building and Active Citizenship" in: *Comparative Education*, 39 (1), pp. 527-552.
- JANMAAT, J. G. 2000. *Nation Building in Post-Soviet Ukraine. Educational Policy and the Response of the Russian Speaking Population*, Utrecht et Amsterdam, Royal Dutch Geographical Society.
- JANMAAT, J. G. 2005. « Ethnic and Civic Conceptions of the Nation in Ukraine's History Textbooks » in: *European Education*, 37 (3), pp. 20-37.
- KHMELKO, V. 2004. "Lingvo-ethnichna struktura Ukrainy: regionalni osoblivosti ta tendentsii zmin za roki nezalezhnosti", Kiev, Kiev International Institute of Sociology.

- KUTS O. 2004. *Movna polityka v derzhatvochyskykh protsessakh Ukrainy*, Kharkiv: Kharkiv National University.
- KUZIO, T. 1998. *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, London: Routledge.
- KUZIO, T. 2006. "National Identity and History Writing in Ukraine" in: *Nationalities Papers*, 34(4), pp. 407-427.
- POLESE, A. & WYLEGALA A. 2008. "Odessa and Lvov or Odesa and Lviv: How Important is a Letter? Reflections on the 'Other' in Two Ukrainian Cities" in: *Nationalities Papers*, 36(5), pp. 787-814.
- POLESE, A. 2010. *The Formal and the Informal: Exploring Ukrainian Education in Ukraine: Scenes from Odessa*, *Comparative Education*, 46(1), pp. 47-62.
- POPSON, N. 2001. "The Ukrainian History Textbook: Introducing Children to the 'Ukrainian Nation'" in: *Nationalities Papers*, 29(2), pp. 326-350.
- SHEVEL, O. 2002. "Nationality in Ukraine: Some Rules of Engagement", *East European Politics and Society*, 16(2), pp. 363-385.
- SHULMAN, S. 2005. "Ukrainian Nation-Building Under Kuchma" in: *Problems of Post-Communism* 52 (5), pp. 32-47.
- SMITH, A. D. 1991. *National Identity*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.
- SOVIK, M. 2006. "Languages n Ukrainian-Russian Borderland: Talking About History and Identity" in: Madeleine Hurd (ed.), *Border Crossing*, Stockholm, Gondolin.
- STEBELSKY, I. 2005. "Chomu bilshe ukrayintsiv i menshe rosiyan vid 1989 do 2001 perepysu naseleattia Ukrayiny?", *International Ukrainist Congress*, Donetsk, Ukraine.
- STEBELSKY, I. 2009. "Ethnic Self-Identification in Ukraine, 1989-2001: Why More Ukrainians and Fewer Russians?" in: *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 51(1), pp. 77-100.
- UKRAINIAN CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STUDIES. 2002. "the System of Education in Ukraine: Perspects and Development", *National Security and Defence* n° 4 (2002), pp. 5-8, in: <[www.uceps.org/eng/show/582](http://www.uceps.org/eng/show/582)>.
- WOLCZUK, K. 2000. "History, Europe and the 'National Idea': the 'Official' Narrative of National Identity in Ukraine" in: *Nationalities Papers*, 28(4), pp. 672-694.
- ZHULYNSKY, M. 1997. "Cultural, Educational and Linguistic Policy in Ukraine, 1991-1996" in: *Towards a New Ukraine I: Ukraine and the New Wolrd Order 1991-1996*, Proceedings of a Conference held at the University of Ottawa, March 21-22 1997, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa.