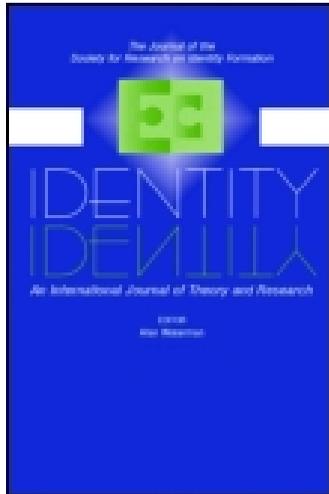


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Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/hidn20>

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Published online: 30 Jul 2015.



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To cite this article: Karina Korostelina (2015) Reproduction of Conflict in History Teaching in Ukraine: A Social Identity Theory Analysis, *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 15:3, 221-240, DOI: [10.1080/15283488.2015.1057283](https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2015.1057283)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2015.1057283>

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Reproduction of Conflict in History Teaching in Ukraine: A Social Identity Theory Analysis

Karina Korostelina

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Based on 60 semistructured interviews with history teachers in Ukraine, the ways in which social identity impacts reproduction of intergroup prejudice and conflict on the level of secondary education are explored. This involves an analysis regarding how salience and meaning of social identity of the teachers affect how they present the in-group and other groups to school pupils. The analysis reveals how teachers create conflict narratives in their classrooms by altering the teaching program and textbooks to promote their vision of a nation and the rights of specific groups to participate in nation-building processes and to define enemies and allies. The major channels of this influence are specific concepts of national identity (ethnic, multicultural, and civic), social boundaries, and collective axiology.

Social identity theory posits meaning and salience of identity as the major factors that impact intergroup relations, biases, and prejudice. Research shows how intergroup prejudice is produced and transformed to in-group members on different levels from leadership to everyday integration. My aim in this article is to explore how social identity impacts reproduction of intergroup prejudice and conflict on the level of secondary education. More specifically, I analyze how the salience and meaning of social identity of history teachers affect how they present the in-group and other groups to pupils and how they use textbooks in their teaching.

Social Identity Theory Perspectives on the Development of Intergroup Negativities

Many theories of social identity explain intergroup prejudice as resulting from a need for self-esteem and social status in prestigious groups (Brown, 2000; Huddy & Virtanen, 1995; Jackson et al., 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Taylor, Racino, Knoll, & Lutfiyya, 1987; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Social identity theory suggests that the need for positive social identity is often linked to constructions of out-group negativities (Brown, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). This process involves two forms: favoring the in-group (in-group favoritism) and disparaging the out-group (out-group derogation) (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). In-group favoritism entails the positive estimation and support of group members with people achieving positive social identity through group comparisons and in-group overestimation. Studies have shown that

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membership in a specific social group can lead to negative treatment of others based on racial (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Gibson & Gouwa, 1998; Grant & Brown, 1995) and ethnic identity (Zick, Pettigrew, & Wagner, 2008), religious beliefs (Altemeyer, 2003), political affiliation (Kaplan, Freedman, & Iacoboni, 2007), and sports team allegiance (Crisp, Heuston, Farr, & Turner, 2007).

Although studies have suggested that there are no universal relationships between in-group identification and negative perceptions of out-groups, recent research has shown that predominantly negative intergroup norms are the major factor leading to in-group favoritism and out-group bias (Cairns, Kenworthy, Campbell, & Hewstone, 2006). People with a salient identity of a group with tolerant and benevolent norms show less prejudiced behavior toward out-groups. For example, in societies with prevailing strong antiracism norms, the majority of the population shows less bias and prejudice (Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000) and most adults are motivated to control their prejudice (Dunton & Fazio, 1997; Plant & Devine, 1998).

Negative perception of out-groups can also derive from a threat to intergroup boundaries. When people are concerned about the future of their in-group, they are ready to defend the distinctiveness of their group (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Wohl, Branscombe, & Klar, 2006) and provide emotional responses in the form of collective angst (Wohl & Branscombe, 2009). In-group members are afraid that similarity to the out-group can lead to the loss of in-group essence (Branscombe et al., 1999) and emphasize available dimensions of comparison (Brewer, 2001; Jetten, Spears, & Postmes, 2004). This effect of potential distinctiveness loss is more prominent among people with a salient in-group identity (Jetten et al., 2004).

A threat to the positive image of an in-group also leads to discrimination against out-groups (Branscombe & Wann, 1994). Discrimination of the in-group by the out-group is perceived as a devaluation of in-group identity (Branscombe et al., 1999), resulting in increasing relative positivity of the in-group by derogating out-groups (Hornsey, 2008). A perceived social identity threat can lead to negative perception and evaluation of the out-group even if the out-group is nonthreatening and has low status (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Cadinu & Reggiori, 2002).

Another source of negative assessment of an out-group is a feeling of dissatisfaction that derives from comparisons of the in-group situation involving the use of subjective standards that do not reflect objective reality (Crosby, 1976; Runciman, 1968). Relative deprivation definitions range from a feeling of an offense arising from the perception of a position based on comparisons between actual status and expectations (Davis, 1959; Runciman, 1972), 'actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities' (Tanter & Gurr, 1970, p. 24), to a perception that the in-group has less than what it believes it deserves in comparison to others.

Studies on social identity also have revealed that minority groups express more bias than majority groups, whether the groups are real or artificial (Hewstone et al., 2002; Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992). Since membership in a group with minority status leads to low levels of satisfaction, insecurity, and a negative social identity (Blanz, Mummendey, & Otten, 1995; Leonardelli & Brewer, 2001), the minority group members experience anxiety in their relations to the majority, with the in-group identity thus becoming more salient (Kinket & Verkuyten, 1997; Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1998; Perreault & Bourhis, 1999; Verkuyten & Masson, 1995).

Differences in value systems among different cultural, ethnic, gender, and religious groups also can lead to antipathy directed toward the out-group and intergroup hostility (Schwartz, Fukuoka, & Takita-Ishii, 2005). The perceived duality of basic values raises the possibility of a protracted conflict (Schwartz, 1990). Such a duality is manifested in the dichotomy of dominance versus tolerance regarding relationships with others. Value systems can also vary regarding the sense of humanitarian relations to outsiders, from “prosocial” values that promote the welfare of others (e.g., equality, helpfulness, and forgiveness) to “hedonism values” that reflect selfish interests (e.g., pleasure and a comfortable life) (Schwartz, 1990).

In summary, social identity theory stresses the following as sources of negativities: (a) a positive assessment of in-group and negative perceptions of out-group, (b) threats to group distinctiveness and positive social identity, and (c) relative deprivation. The theory also highlights stronger prejudice among members of minority groups who experience insecurity and discrimination. In addition, some scholars have emphasized values as a determinant of intergroup behavior, showing that differences and contradictions in value systems among racial, ethnic, religious, and gender groups can lead to negative attitudes and conflict among groups.

Use of Historical Narratives in the Study of Intergroup Negativities

One means for studying intergroup negativities is through the analysis of the ways in which history narratives created for the purpose of nation building are employed in educational settings. Apart from providing information about the collective past, history narratives define the meaning of current situations and affairs and can be used to establish a vision of a shared future. This is achieved through the development of the specific meanings of national identity where history narratives are central for the nation’s “self-contained process of coming-to-consciousness” (Hill, 2008, p. ix). Through the development of national identity, history narratives facilitate social cohesion and a compelling moral framework (Cajani & Ross, 2007; Cole, 2007; Davis, 2005; Hein & Selden, 1998; Meyer, Ramirez, & Soysal, 1992; Nicholls, 2006; Schissler & Soysal, 2005; Seixas, 2000; Smith, 2005; Vickers & Jones, 2005). This study rests on the view of discourses as practices of production of knowledge through language, as seen by Foucault (1981), Fairclough (1993), and Hall (1996). The theory emphasizes agency of individuals and groups.

History textbooks are one of the major vehicles that provide officially constructed history narratives to schoolchildren. “Textbooks tell us what communication and academic elites believe about the past; they do not necessarily tell us what ordinary people believe, or how they feel about what they believe” (Schwartz et al., 2005, p. 267). Thus, methodologically this research contributes to the understanding of dynamic interactive processes of meaning making that take place in the classroom during the study of history narratives.

The role of history as an important factor of identity formation has been stressed in several theories of social psychology, sociology, and political science. Although social identity is connected with social categorizations of “us” and “others” (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986), the historical relationship between groups can reshape this duality. History narratives are central for the nation’s “self-contained process of coming-to-consciousness” through the development of the specific meanings of national identity (Hill, 2008, p. ix). The history of conflicts between groups contributes to the salience of social identity. Social categorization theory also describes

processes of defining the role of prototype (historic or political personality) in the formation of social identity (Hogg, 1992). According to social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), people develop psychological representations of social groups in the form of prototypes. Prototypes are not checklists of attributes or ideal types; instead, they are actual historic figures who represent the most important attributes of a particular in-group, including its values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Hogg, 1992). In the process of national identity formation, teachers serve as instructional mediators who influence understanding of a nation and formation of the meaning of national identity among students (Brophy & Van Sledright, 1997; Hamer, 2000; Hilferty, 2007; Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). However, only a few studies have shed light on the impact of political orientations and social identity of history teachers on the teaching process and reproduction of conflict and intergroup prejudice (Anderson, 2008, 2011; Epstein & Shiller, 2005; Faas, 2008; Makkawi, 2002; Sherwood, 1999; Sung & Yang, 2009; Worchel & Coutant, 2008). Such research has described how teachers can use various cues to express their own views that deviate from those of the official textbooks, how they can bring additional materials that contradict the textbook, and how they can openly criticize the textbook.

Context of this Research

Ukraine represents a clear case regarding conflicts around national identity, with such conflicts having been continuous since it achieved independence in 1991. Independent Ukraine inherited an unfinished process of nation building complicated by historic, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic differences between regions. Regional loyalties continue to dominate over loyalty to a single national identity. In 2010, only half of the population stated that national identity was important for them (Vorona & Shulga, 2010). The absence of a concept of nationhood and a shared national idea accepted by the whole population has led to a controversial and often ambivalent process of national identity formation. This has left the Ukrainian people without clear internal and external social boundaries and a shared meaning of the nation. During collection of this data in 2013, the question of exactly which national model Ukraine should embrace remained an open question because of a high level of social and cultural polarization, negative perceptions between regions, the growing fragmentation of Ukrainian society, and the rise of extremist organizations. Currently, the conflicting interpretations of history in Ukraine and in Russia, as well as within the Ukrainian population, are part of the very foundation of the ongoing violence and war that started in 2014 and has taken thousands of lives.

METHODS

Data Collection

This study was conducted in three regions of Ukraine: Simferopol on the Crimean Peninsula (in the South-East); L'viv and Uzgorod (in the West); and Kiev, the capital of Ukraine (in the Central region). Data for the study were collected during the winter and spring of 2013, using teacher interviews and class observations.

Semistructural interviews were conducted with 60 history teachers across the three regions of Ukraine. Each interview lasted between 1.0 and 2.5 hours. Schools were randomly chosen from

a list of institutions that use the history textbooks involved in the study. Each selected school had one or two history teachers, and all of them were interviewed for the study. Sixty-five percent of interviewees were women and 35% were men. The age of participants varied from 25 to 68 years old, with the largest group being about 40 years old. The interviews were conducted in the Russian and Ukrainian languages (based on the choice of the teacher) and recorded on a Livescribe 3 digital pen. Some portions of the interviews were translated into English by the author who is fluent in Ukrainian and Russian.

Observations of history lessons in the schools were conducted for the purpose of microethnographic analysis. Microethnographic analysis builds on sociolinguistic ethnography, which attempts to explain the ways in which people engage in interactive processes and the construction of meaning; in this instance, the meanings of history (Bloom, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2005; Gee, 2000; Gergen, 1999). Eight lessons were observed, the focus of which were the 20 years of the referenda on Ukrainian independence. During these classes, the teachers (all of whom I interviewed) discussed the aftermath of independence and the then current situation in Ukraine. Observations were also conducted in seven classes on twentieth-century Ukrainian history.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the interview data. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to manage large data clusters without losing the deep meaning of received information or the focus on the research questions (Boyatzis, 1998; Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010). Specific clusters were formed by merging similar or related themes and making a summary table of the structured themes. The thematic analysis made on each individual interview contributed to the generation of common general themes for all or most of the interviews (Willig, 2008; Saldana, 2009).

The classroom observations were coded in relation to the major themes: presentation of ethnic groups, description of the boundary and differences between groups, notion of Ukrainian national identity, and relationship with other countries.

RESULTS

Teachers' Impact

The study of the impact of teachers' social identity on the process of teaching first required an examination of how teachers see their role in the classroom. The analysis of interviews revealed four major themes discussed by the teachers: (a) the mission of a history teacher, (b) subjectivity, (c) the interpretation of textbooks, and (d) teachers' impact on students' opinions.

Almost all of the teachers interviewed acknowledged that the teaching of history is a primary instrument for the formation of students' perception of the nation and their understanding of the current political and social situation. The teachers fully realized the important role that they play in the formation of loyalty, patriotism, and respect for the nation. According to one of the teachers, "Everything depends on a teacher: She should develop among children a loyalty to the nation. History teachers should be patriots; unpatriotic teachers should not work in schools." The teachers described different ways that they can influence the perceptions of children. One

phrased it this way: “Teachers have a great impact on students’ views: They interpret the textbook and promote critical thinking among children.”

Approximately half of the teachers admitted that teaching history is subjective. Children can learn different histories and develop opposite positions and beliefs depending on their teacher. As one teacher stressed, “Each history teacher has his own interpretation of history. Graduates of different schools have diverse assessments and opposite views on the past and current events.” Another teacher went further, emphasizing the conniving character of history teaching: “Every teacher is a manipulator. A teacher can form any opinion she wants among children. Even if a teacher stresses differences in approaches to a specific event or figure, she nevertheless emphasizes her opinion.”

All of the teachers in the study agreed that history textbooks are secondary to history teaching or may even be insignificant. Many teachers criticized textbooks as ineffective and useless for teaching purposes. Some teachers openly admitted that they do not use textbooks in class if they do not like them. Instead, they may develop a specific set of materials for each class, including notes, handouts for students, films, documentaries, and copies of historic documents. As one teacher stated, “I am ignoring the textbook and give my own notes to students.” Another teacher said that use of textbooks in class is not audited by the school administrator or other educational authorities: “Each teacher has his own vision of history, set of materials and specific documents. Nobody is controlling how teachers use textbooks.” Other teachers described how they alter the descriptions presented in the textbooks by criticizing them, emphasizing their limitations, and even pointing out errors in them.

Finally, most of the teachers did not conceal that they purposely influence students’ views, attitudes, and opinions and indicated that their influence can be effective. Examples of teachers’ statements include: “If I do not agree with a student, I openly state that my view is different and explain why”; “I openly state my opinion and explain why the textbook is wrong”; “My opinion has a strong effect on students. I always honestly state my opinion and my attitude is visible through my emotions.” Some participants said that teachers should initiate discussion and support different views; nevertheless, they admitted that they influence students’ opinions on particular issues. Other teachers admitted that they judge students who agree with them more positively and that this may impact how their pupils think and see the nation.

Thus, this research reveals the defining role history teachers play in the formation of students’ views on their nation. The teachers not only admitted the subjectivity of interpretations that they bring to the class, but also presented their influence on students’ attitudes and beliefs as their primary goal and responsibility. Almost all of the teachers criticized the history textbooks and altered the narrative represented in them; many completely ignored the textbooks and replaced them with a specially developed set of materials. Teachers did not avoid the expression of their own opinions, and moreover, they used a variety of methods to increase the impact of their views on students’ perceptions and value systems. Taking into account this high level of teachers’ impact on students, it is important to analyze how specific connotations of national identity held by teachers influence their teaching process.

Influence of Teachers’ Identity on the Production of Intergroup Prejudice

The analysis of interviews regarding the impact of teachers’ social identity meaning on their teaching of history revealed three major themes: (a) the role of majority and minorities in nation

building, (b) divisions between the in-group and out-group, and (c) in-group favoritism and moral judgments. To analyze these three major themes, I employed three corresponding theoretical concepts that derive from social identity and social categorization theories: concepts of national identity, social boundary, and collective axiology. In each of the following sections, I provide a short theoretical overview, analyze how the concept is represented in the social identity of teachers, and discuss how the concept is related to the methods teachers use to promote particular meanings of identity and intergroup prejudice among their students.

National Identity

The core issue with respect to the concept of national identity is the position of ethnic minorities within the nation; that is, whether minorities are oppressed by the majority or have opportunities for maintaining their ethnic culture. Based on this issue, people may hold three different concepts or meanings of national identity: ethnic, multicultural, and civic (Korostelina, 2007). The *ethnic* concept posits the nation as monoethnic and monolingual, built around a core ethnic community into which ethnic minorities should assimilate. The *multicultural* concept rests on the vision of the nation as multicultural, with equal rights for all ethnic groups to maintain their ethnic culture and communities. The *civic* concept posits citizenship as a contract between the people and the state concerning rights and obligations, with the nation perceived as built on a distinctive nonethnic civic culture into which all citizens should be integrated.

In this research, 35% of participants expressed an ethnic concept of national identity. Seventy-three percent of them lived in Western Ukraine and 27% resided in Kiev. All of these teachers chose Ukrainian as the language for their interview.

They believed that ethnic Ukrainians have more rights than any other group to define the meaning of national identity. They presented Ukrainians as being more educated and culturally developed than Russians. For example, one teacher stated, “The culture of the Ukrainian ethnic group is very rich; it has long history of the fight for independence. Western Ukraine is more connected to Europe, people there have a higher morality and values than people in the East.”

The importance of Ukrainian culture as a basis of the developing national identity is connected with the denial of the rights of minorities. Examples of the perception of the role of Ukrainian and other ethnic groups in the nation-building process include: “It is very important for the Ukrainian ethnic group to be a cementing foundation for our nation. Minorities should accept this fact”; “The Ukrainian ethnic group should create a basis for national identity. Ethnic nationalism and monolithic culture form the state. Ethnic minorities are not important”; and “We do not need to study the culture of minorities, instead it is important to develop respect for Ukrainian culture and motivation to learn Ukrainian language.”

The ethnic concept of national identity led to a negative assessment of history textbooks that, in these teachers’ opinions, lack a strong emphasis on Ukrainian ethnic culture as a foundation for the nation. Many of them discussed how they alter this lack of a core ethnic national idea by presenting Ukrainian history as a consistent fight for Ukrainian independence. For example, one teacher explained, “I am trying to stress Ukrainian ethnic identity in teaching every topic or event in history. The Ukrainian nation is based on the culture and spirituality of ethnic Ukrainians.” Thus, this group of teachers promoted ethnic concepts of national identity by stressing the moral and cultural superiority of the Ukrainian ethnic group, positing ethnic nationalism as the best source of nation building, emphasizing the importance of the monoethnic nature of

the nation as uniting language and culture, and denying the right of minorities to contribute to nation-building efforts. In their teaching, they promoted this ethnic concept by concentrating on the history and culture of the Ukrainian ethnic group and by presenting the history of Ukraine as a constant fight for independence.

Half of the teachers expressed a multicultural concept of national identity. Sixty-eight percent of them lived in Crimea, 27% in Kiev, and 5% in Western Ukraine. The majority of these participants chose the Russian language for their interview.

These teachers emphasized that it is wrong to develop the ethnic meaning of national identity in a multicultural state. The words of one teacher represent the opinion of these participants: “The national idea is created on the ideal of nationalism and Ukrainian ethnic culture and history: Cossacks, Shevchenko,¹ fight for independence.” Many teachers stressed that the cultures and history of other ethnic groups are not represented in the national historic narrative. As one teacher described, “Interests of small peoples should be integrated into the vision of nation. You could not create a patriotic feeling through the promotion of one culture: Ukrainian, Russian, Hungarian, Jewish and Crimean Tatars cultures are different.” These participants saw the forced imposition of the Ukrainian language and culture as producing resistance among people like themselves. They stressed that people should be motivated to speak the Ukrainian language, but that no policies should be created to form this motivation.

According to these teachers, many people in Ukraine do not have national pride, do not accept the Ukrainian ethnic tradition and culture, and do not support the Ukrainian nationalistic idea. The multicultural concept of national identity leads to a negative assessment of the textbooks because even the new textbook continues to promote Ukrainian nationalistic values. As one participant stated, “The textbook still represents the history of the Ukrainian ethnic group as well ethnic Ukrainian culture: Ukraine for ethnic Ukrainians. Russians are excluded. All prototypes are Ukrainians. The textbooks do not represent Ukraine as multi-ethnic state and culture of other ethnic groups is not taught.” Another teacher echoed this view: “Textbooks impose Ukrainian ethnic nationalism. The Ukrainian population is presented as homogeneously Ukrainian . . . , the presence of Russians, Jews, Hungarians, Crimean Tatars is ignored.”

To alter the development of an ethnic concept of national identity, these teachers created distance between their students and Ukrainian history. As one participant described, “It is hard to teach about Ukrainian culture and history if you do not belong to it, it is not interesting for teachers and children. Children do not study Ukrainian history as their own history but as the history of the state.” These teachers also promoted the multicultural nature of Ukraine by emphasizing the presence of different ethnic groups, their accomplishments, and their prominent figures. For example, a teacher explained, “I am trying to present the rights of all ethnic groups and tell about the achievements of Russians, Jews, and other ethnic groups. I always stress the ethnic identity of historic figures if I know about them. Children bring a lot of biases and prejudices to the class and I always start the discussion to combat them.” Thus, this group of teachers endorsed a multicultural concept of national identity by condemning ethnic nationalism and a homogenous concept of national identity and by emphasizing the multicultural nature of Ukraine and equal rights of all ethnic groups. In their teaching, they emphasized the narrowness and inadequacy of an ethnic national narrative and its exclusive and alien nature for many

¹Taras Hryhorovich Shevchenko, 19th century Ukrainian poet, artist, and thinker.

students and they promoted a vision of Ukraine as being comprised of different ethnic groups that contribute to the prosperity of the nation.

Approximately 15% of the teachers interviewed supported a civic concept of national identity. Of these teachers, 76% of them lived in Kiev, 18% in Crimea, and 6% in Western Ukraine. The majority of these participants chose the Ukrainian language for their interview.

These teachers expressed the idea that if Ukraine is longing for Europe it should accept the definition of a nation that is built on citizenship rather than ethnic culture. As one teacher stated, "Ukraine should be a modern democratic state, not 'Ukraine for Ukrainians.' The state should be independent from ethnic identity." Another participant echoed this view: "Our nation should be political rather than ethnic; it should include everyone who lives in Ukraine." These teachers emphasized the equality of all people of Ukraine independent of their ethnic or religious belonging.

Thus, history teachers in Ukraine hold different concepts of national identity and actively promote them in their teaching. Teachers who support an ethnic concept of national identity see a Ukrainian nation built on the foundation of Ukrainian ethnic culture and history, and they deny rights of other ethnic groups to be equal participants in the nation-building process. They teach the history of Ukraine as the history of the Ukrainian ethnic group and its continuous fight for independence and, as such, evade discussions on other ethnic groups or cultures. Teachers who support a multicultural concept of national identity envision Ukraine as comprised of different ethnic groups and condemn ethnic nationalism as a basis for national identity. They promote history and cultures of different ethnic groups and distance themselves and their students from a monoethnic vision of Ukraine. Teachers who support a civic concept of national identity believe that Ukraine should be a modern democratic state built around a political rather than an ethnic idea. They criticize ethnic nationalism and endorse democratic values. The teachers' assessment and use of textbooks also depend on how they perceive national identity: all three groups criticize the textbooks for inadequate presentation of the nation and deficiencies in the approach to the formation of their personal concept of national identity.

Social Boundary

According to Tilly (2005), the three key elements of a social boundary include distinctive social relations on either side of an intermediate zone, distinctive relations across this zone, and shared representations of the zone itself. The existence of this intergroup boundary as well as relationships within the in-groups and across the boundary are reflected in the narratives of both groups and create the basis for collective identities. Barth (1981) posited that social identity forms along a social boundary defined by positioning in the relationship between "them" and "us." Similarly, Tilly stressed that social identities "center on boundaries separating us from them" (p. 7). On each side of the boundary, people sustain ongoing relations within their in-group; in addition, they develop interrelations between their groups across the boundary line. Boundary change is linked to the development of conflicts and strongly impacts the forms and intensity of collective violence. Cohen (1985, 1986) showed that communities recognize clear boundaries representing distinctive ways of life and can be easily mobilized when they perceive these boundaries as endangered, that is, under threat from the outside. Kriesberg (2003) also stressed the importance of the clarity of group boundaries in mobilization for conflict. Clear

recognition of intergroup differences and socially defined categories reinforces the willingness of group members to fight against others for power and resources.

Three major social boundaries were prominent in the teachers' interviews: (a) the boundary between Ukraine and Russia (and, in some cases, Russians in Ukraine); (b) an internal boundary between South-Eastern and Western Ukraine; and (c) a temporal boundary between Soviet Ukraine and Ukraine as an independent state. Two groups of teachers had opposite views on the boundary between Ukraine and Russia: one group strengthens this boundary, the other contributes to its dissolution. There were also two groups with opposite views in relation to the internal boundary: both of them acknowledged its existence, but had differing interpretations of its meaning. Similar to the perception of the boundary between Ukraine and Russia, teachers either reinforced or denied the boundary between the Soviet and modern eras in Ukrainian history. Teachers who strengthen the boundary between Ukraine and Russia often also posit the Western region as authentically Ukrainian and reinforce a boundary with the Soviet era.

The first major social boundary was the geographical boundary between Ukraine and Russia. Approximately half of the teachers strengthen this boundary—63% of them are from Western Ukraine and 37% are from Kiev. All of these participants used the Ukrainian language during their interviews.

These teachers depicted negative relations between a victimized and peaceful Ukraine and an aggressive Russia, thereby positing a constant threat to Ukraine. As one participant noted, "We need to be as far from Russia as possible. Russia and Russians are impudent and rude. There is no brotherhood or common support. They promote their own interest." Another teacher echoed this sentiment: "I do not tell bad things about Russia, I just bring into classroom the facts that show its aggressive and imperialist nature. Russia betrayed us and started the fight during the time of Bogdan Khmelnytsky." These teachers also emphasized the social boundary between ethnic Ukrainians and Russians. One teacher related that "relationships between Russia and Ukraine are very negative and conflictual. Russia turned it back to Ukraine. Ukraine needs to show state pride and suppress Russification. If Russians do not like their life in Ukraine they can leave."

Teachers in this group stressed the social boundary with Russia in their teaching by putting emphasis on aggressive or unfavorable actions by Russia toward Ukraine and on differences in culture, political orientation, and values. As one teacher explained, "I do not have a positive view on Russia. I am trying to show that Russia and Ukraine have different interests. Russia constantly betrayed Ukraine and imposed its power. Russia had negative impact on Ukraine; for example, the reforms of Peter I were harmful for Ukraine." This group depicted Ukraine as homogeneously ethnic Ukrainian with the strongest representation of culture in central and rural areas. As one participant stressed, "I see Ukraine as a common space, as unity of Ukrainian people." Although participants discussed the cultural, historic, and ideological differences between Western and Eastern Ukraine, they believed that these could be overcome through the creation of common Ukraine. As one teacher stated, "Each territory has its own history. But we could be united because we all are Ukrainians."

The remaining half of teachers sought to dissolve the social boundary between Russia and Ukraine—72% of them are from Crimea and 28% are from Kiev. All participants in this group chose to speak the Russian language during their interviews.

These teachers generally provided a positive assessment of the new history textbooks because the books negatively assess the actions of Mikhail Gorbachev that led to the dissolution of the

Soviet Union. Moreover, in these textbooks, the description of the Orange Revolution is removed for the most part and pro-Ukrainian ideology is significantly reduced. Nevertheless, according to these participants, some problems remain: The role of the Russian ethnic group in Ukraine is not represented in the textbook and Russia is depicted as an alien country. As one teacher stated, “I am against the presentation of Ukraine as a colony of Russia. In the USSR, Ukrainians and Russians were living together. [The] Soviet government took care about its population.” To alter this presentation of the boundary between Russia and Ukraine, these teachers use their own materials and notes, provoke discussions, and supplement the history of Ukraine with the history of the Soviet Union. As one teacher described, “I do not like the textbooks: They promote nationalistic ideas and develop Russo-phobic attitudes. To combat anti-Russian stereotypes I often ask provocative questions and bring photographs.” Another teacher echoed this view: “Textbooks present Russia as oppressor and tyrant that dominated over colonial Ukraine. This is foundation myth about eternal oppression. I show the history of twentieth century Ukraine as a part of Soviet history and strong interconnections between Russia and Ukraine.” Many participants confirmed that they teach the history of Russia not as the history of a foreign state, but in a wider perspective which includes many events that have impacted Ukraine.

To summarize, half of the teachers strengthen the social boundary between Russia and Ukraine through the depiction of a history of negative relations, highlighting Russian aggression and emphasizing differences with Russia and homogeneity within Ukraine. The other half of the teachers are determined to dissolve the boundary presented in the textbook by teaching the common history of the two states, showing similarities between two nations and condemning Ukrainian ethnic nationalism.

The internal social boundary between South-Eastern and Western Ukraine involves two opposite interpretations developed by two groups. The first group, comprising around 60% of teachers, described South-East and Central Ukraine as multicultural regions and depicted West Ukraine as homogeneously ethnic Ukrainian—64% of these teachers live in Crimea and 36% in Kiev. The majority of these teachers chose the Russian language for their interviews.

According to these teachers, the population of the South-East and Center is tolerant and lives in peace with all ethnic groups but could not accept the aggressive nationalism of Western Ukrainians. The cultural, historic, and ideological differences between the two regions are seen as being so deep that it is impossible to create a common Ukraine. As one teacher stated, “There is a tremendous difference between Western and Eastern Ukraine. We have opposing values and perceptions: We cherish different cultures and accept different views while Western Ukrainians respect only themselves and want to be independent from the rest of Ukraine.” Other teachers stressed differences in history between the two regions, describing significant Polish and Hungarian influences on Western Ukraine.

In contrast, the second group of approximately 40% of teachers described Western Ukraine as authentically Ukrainian and emphasized its difference with Russified South-East of Ukraine—56% of these teachers live in Western Ukraine and 44% in Kiev. All teachers in this group chose the Ukrainian language for their interviews.

One teacher in this group stated, “The East of Ukraine had undergone complete Russification. They support Stalin and totalitarianism. Crimea is a preserve of communism. The West of Ukraine is the only genuinely Ukrainian region with deep Ukrainian culture and European traditions.” Another teacher echoed this view: “Ukraine is historically divided into two parts: Western and Eastern. In the West, there are deep cultural traditions, developed spirituality

and religion, patriotism and love to Ukraine while in the East, Russian influence is very strong and national identity is not developed.”

Thus, although all teachers emphasized the social boundary between Eastern and Western Ukraine, they each presented a different region as essential for the formation of a Ukrainian national identity and excluded the other region from this process. One group stressed differences between regions based on tolerance of the South-East and nationalism of the West, whereas the other emphasized divergence between an authentically Ukrainian West and a Russified East.

The third boundary is the temporal social boundary between the Soviet past and independent Ukraine, reinforced by around 75% of teachers, who believe this boundary is diminished in the new textbook—52% of these teachers live in Western Ukraine, 36% in Kiev, and 12% in Crimea. Teachers in this group chose to use both the Russian and Ukrainian languages in their interviews.

These teachers had a negative view of the new history textbooks because the textbooks positively assess the Soviet era. As one participant said, “The new textbook emphasizes Soviet history instead of Ukrainian one. Even if textbooks have documents supporting Soviet ideas, I explain that there are different points of view.” To support their view, these teachers use specific documents from the textbooks. One teacher reported, “The approach to history in the Soviet Union was not true. Everyone has their own opinion, but to find the truth we need to use documents.” This social boundary is also strengthened through the constant emphasis on the greatness of the current Ukraine. As one participant stressed, “Ukrainian people [are] the strongest, most beautiful and hardworking people in the former Soviet Union.” Teachers in this group also used negative judgments about the Soviet past and expressed support for Ukrainian independence. In their discussion of Soviet history, they repeatedly stressed the totalitarian and aggressive nature of the Soviet Union. Some examples of these teachers’ statements about Soviet power are: “People did not have any rights”; “Soviet Union was as a family where 15 children did not have any voice and freedom”; “Ukraine gave everything to Moscow but did not receive anything back”; and “Moscow took all the money and resources from Ukraine and Ukraine did not have an opportunity for development.”

The rest of the teachers (around 25%) tended to dismiss this social boundary—84% of these teachers live in Crimea and 16% in Kiev. All teachers in this group chose the Russian language for their interviews. According to these teachers, the territory of Ukraine was put together by the Communist Party and Ukraine became prosperous because of the Bolsheviks and the Soviet Union. These participants stressed that Soviet power was both positive and negative and that it is the foundation of the Ukrainian state and a critical component of Ukrainian history. As one teacher stated, “The Soviet past is considered negative but in reality we were living in a tolerant country with positive relations between all ethnic groups. There was internationalism and friendship among people.” To dissolve this boundary, this group of teachers employs a positive assessment of Soviet power and its achievement in the creation of a prosperous Ukraine and accuses Western Ukraine of responsibility for the current economic and social crisis.

Thus, the temporal social boundary between Soviet Ukraine and the current independent country is strengthened by one group of teachers through criticism of Soviet ideology and power, its totalitarian and cruel character, and its alien nature to Ukraine, and through glorification of the achievements of an independent Ukraine and its people. The other group of teachers is endeavoring to dissolve this boundary by promoting connections between the Soviet

and current Ukraine, presenting the Soviet past as a foundation for current development in Ukraine, and glorifying some features of the Soviet past.

Collective Axiology

A *collective axiology* is a system of value commitments that offers moral guidance to maintain relations with those within, and outside of, a group (Rothbart & Korostelina, 2006). It provides a sense of life and world, serves as a criterion for understanding actions and events, and regulates in-group behaviors. A collective axiology defines boundaries and relations among groups and establishes criteria for in-group/out-group membership. It is a set of constructions that are used to validate, vindicate, rationalize, or legitimize actions, decisions, and policies. Such constructions function as instruments for making sense of episodes of conflict and serve to solidify groups. Two variables characterize the dynamics of collective axiology: the degree of collective generality and the degree of axiological balance.

The *degree of collective generality* refers to the ways in which in-group members categorize the Other, and how they simplify, or not, their defining (essential) character. The collective generality includes four main characteristics: (a) homogeneity of perceptions and behaviors of out-group members; (b) long-term stability of their beliefs, attitudes, and actions; (c) resistance to change; and (d) scope or range of the out-group category. A high level of collective generality is connected with viewing an out-group as consistent and homogeneous, demonstrating fixed patterns of behaviors, committed to durable rigid beliefs and values, and widespread in a region or the whole world. A low degree of collective generality reflects the perception of the out-group as differentiated, ready for transformation, exhibiting various kinds of behaviors, and relatively limited in scope.

Axiological balance refers to a kind of parallelism of virtues and vices attributed to groups. When applied to stories about the Other, a balanced axiology embeds positive and negative characteristics in group identities. A high degree of axiological balance reflects recognition of one's own moral faults and failings whereas a low degree of axiological balance is connected with the perception of an in-group as morally pure and superior and an out-group as evil and vicious.

The analysis of teacher interviews revealed three types of collective axiology: (a) pro-Russian and pro-Soviet, (b) anti-Soviet and anti-Russian, and (c) antinationalistic. The first two axiologies have a low level of balance and a high level of generality. The third axiology concentrates on criticizing the out-group without glorification of the in-group.

Around 25% of the teachers had pro-Russian and pro-Soviet collective axiology. Of these, 84% of the teachers live in Crimea and 16% in Kiev. All teachers in this group chose the Russian language for their interviews.

These teachers stressed that Ukrainian nationalists have tunnel vision: They are afraid of Russia, but not afraid to get under the influence of Western states. Nationalists deny the achievements of Soviet Ukraine. According to one participant, a teacher from Western Ukraine stated the following to a seminar for teachers: "How could the Red Army be a winner in World War II? They were almost naked with bare feet." The participant explained that, when he tried to object, he was accused of supporting communism and totalitarianism. Several other participants stressed that they would never accept the Western Ukrainian perception of World War II because in their view Western Ukrainians collaborated with the Nazis and thus are stained forever. They could not be perceived as equal to the veterans of the Red Army because they were

shooting Red Army soldiers in the back. As one teacher described, “I explain to children that the Red Army saved Ukraine and that OUN/UPA [Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Ukrainian Insurgent Arm] collaborated with Nazis, killing thousands of innocent victims. I use the history of pogroms, Holocaust, mass killing of Poles to show crimes of OUN/UPA.” These teachers approved of the presentation of the Soviet Union and Vladimir Lenin in the new textbooks. As one teacher mentioned, “Soviet leaders are now perceived ambivalently, in the same way as Mazepa and Bandera.” Another participant said, “From the textbooks, students learn that Ukraine was a colony of Russia. I tell them that it is not true. There were a lot of positive things during the Soviet time.” Thus, this collective axiology is characterized by a low level of balance: Teachers glorified Red Army veterans as moral winners of the just war and perceived the population of Western Ukraine as vicious traitors, collaborators with the Nazis, and belligerent killers of women and children. The level of collective generality is high: All Western Ukrainians are perceived as nationalistic, imposing their culture, language, and vision of World War II on the entire Ukrainian population.

The teachers in the second group, approximately 30% of those interviewed, held a collective axiology that was anti-Soviet and anti-Russian—62% of these teachers live in Western Ukraine and 38% in Kiev. All teachers in this group chose the Ukrainian language for their interviews.

These teachers positively presented Ukrainian nationalists and posited Russian people in Ukraine and Russia as pro-communist and anti-Ukrainian, with totalitarian values and imperial ambitions. As one participant stated, “There are a lot of Russian children with militant negative attitudes toward Ukraine.” Another teacher echoed, “Russian parents teach their children negative attitude toward Ukraine. They do not want to be citizens of Ukraine, a poor country.” Ukraine was presented as a target of Russian oppression: “Ukraine is a victim of several Russifications, many Russians were brought here by Russian governments to take control over Ukraine. Those who tried to defend Ukrainian culture became victims of repressions and Holodomor.”² These teachers also connected Russia and Russification with communism and Sovietization of Ukraine. As one teacher stated, “Sovietization of Ukraine could not be forgiven. It is not right to enforce alien ideas and values. Communists have their own ideals that they are still trying to impose on Ukrainian population.” Russian people in Ukraine and Russia are associated with communists and the Red Army, totalitarianism, and imperial ambitions. As another participant stated, “The red flag law had a very negative effect on the society. Russians have nostalgia for the Soviet Union, they distance themselves from Ukraine.” Yet another emphasized, “The Soviet Army is an army of occupants. In reality they defended the Soviet regime, not independence of Ukraine. People who were brought to work in Germany lived in much better conditions than people evacuated to Russia.” Comparing and opposing themselves to communists and Russia, this group of teachers praised Ukrainian ethnic culture and nationalism as a foundation for the Ukrainian nation. One participant even said that “Ukraine was a motherland of Europe.” Another teacher explained, “The national idea is very important and should be brought from Western Ukraine to the rest of the country. The future is with Ukrainian nationalism and Europe. I am enraged with Russia and Russians in Ukraine who want to bring us back to totalitarianism.” To substantiate this position, teachers vigorously defended ethnic nationalism and justified violence committed in the past. One participant stated, “People blame

²The term Holodomor refers specifically to the brutal artificial famine imposed by Stalin’s regime on Soviet Ukraine in 1932–33.

Ukrainian ethnic nationalism and call it terrorism. But in reality Ukrainian nationalism is the same as all other nationalisms. Ukraine was occupied by Russia and Poland for centuries. Both these nations are cruel and oppressive and Ukrainians had to defend themselves by any means.” The justification of violence is also based on the equation of Nazism and communism and the presentation of Ukraine as a victim of them. Another teacher described, “Ukrainian nationalists were fighting with both Nazi and communists. These aggressive and cruel regimes were trying to dominate over Ukraine, and Ukrainians bravely defended their Motherland.” Thus, this collective axiology is characterized by a low level of balance and a high level of collective generality: Ukrainian nationalists are glorified and their violent actions are justified as a reaction to victimization. Russian people in Ukraine and Russia are associated with communism, totalitarianism, and imperial ambitions. They are also described as disloyal and anti-Ukrainian.

Approximately 40% of participants revealed a third collective axiology condemning imposition of nationalism but not expressing praise for the Soviet era. Of these, 32% live in Crimea and 68% in Kiev. Teachers in this group chose both Russian and Ukrainian languages for their interviews.

These teachers supported equality of all ethnic groups in the nation. According to them, Western Ukrainians are afraid to lose national independence, thereby contributing to the growth of nationalism that impedes the process of nation building. As one teacher stated, “The aggressive Ukrainian nationalism dominates the national narrative. They promote a myth that Western Ukraine has a monopoly to define Ukrainian national identity. I have specific methods to denounce this myth. For example, I ask students what city best represents Ukrainian identity. They usually name L’viv. And I show them documents describing L’viv as multicultural city with significant Jewish and Polish populations.” This collective axiology mainly criticizes nationalism, but does not concentrate on a positive description of the in-group. Thus, it is characterized by a high level of balance and a low level of collective generality: both Ukrainian nationalism and Soviet totalitarianism are criticized, but no group is particularly glorified. Instead, this group promotes inclusive multicultural identity and equality for all groups.

Conclusions

The study shows that history teachers play an essential role in the formation of the meaning of a national identity and the reproduction of intergroup prejudice. The teachers in the study acknowledged the subjectivity of their narratives and saw themselves as having responsibility for forming students’ attitudes and beliefs. Almost all of them modified the narratives presented in the textbooks they used or completely ignored the textbooks and substituted their own materials. Their unwillingness to use textbooks that did not reflect their views is well captured in the statement of one participant: “The severity of the laws is compensated by the lack of obligation to implement them. Thanks to democracy we can follow our own line.” Teachers purposely expressed their own opinions, especially in connection to topics essential for the nation-building process.

In history teaching, intergroup prejudice is reproduced through presentations of the rights of minorities and majorities to participate in the nation-building process (concepts pertaining to national identity), distinctions between the in-group and out-group (social boundary), and in-group favoritism with moral judgments (collective axiology). Teachers who promote an

ethnic concept of national identity see the culture of one group as a basis for national identity, teaching ethnic history as history of the nation, denying rights of other ethnic groups equal participation in the nation-building process, and evading descriptions of their cultures. Teachers who support a multicultural concept of national identity see a nation comprised of different ethnic groups, promote their history and cultures, and condemn ethnic nationalism and a monoethnic vision of national identity. Teachers who support a civic concept promote national building processes based on political rather than ethnic ideas and condemn ethnic nationalism.

History teachers strengthen or dissolve three types of social boundaries: geographic/national (between two nations), internal (between major regions or groups within the nation), and temporal (between the past and current nation). Teachers who strengthen the national boundary emphasize negative features of another nation (e.g., aggression, treason) and differences in culture, political orientation, and values, and overestimate national homogeneity. Teachers who dissolve this boundary emphasize common history and show strong interconnections and similarities between the two nations. Teachers with a focus on the internal social boundary have opposite interpretations about the role of different regions or groups in nation-building processes. Finally, teachers strengthen the temporal boundary by criticizing the past and describing values and beliefs connected with this past as alien to the current nation. Teachers who dissolve this boundary emphasize connections between the past and present, glorifying past achievements and legacy.

The collective axiology of history teachers varies in the level of balance and generality. The most unbalanced collective axiologies are promoted through extremely negative depictions of the out-group, connecting the out-group with universal negative concepts and values such as cruelty, violence, and treason; showing connections or similarities of the out-group with other aggressive and vicious groups; and glorifying the in-group and its actions. All negative actions of the in-group are justified as a response to victimization by the out-group. Teachers with a high level of collective generality depict the out-group as homogenous, having common vicious attitudes toward the in-group, and as collectively committed to destructive and violent actions against it.

Thus, history teachers reproduce conflict in their classrooms by altering the teaching program and textbook narratives to promote their vision of a nation and the rights of specific groups to participate in nation-building processes and by defining enemies and allies. The major channels of this influence are specific concepts of national identity (ethnic, multicultural, and civic), social boundaries, and collective axiology.

To reduce conflict and decrease reproduction of negative attitudes, it is important to promote multicultural and civic meaning of national identity in history education. The promotion of multicultural concepts can be based on two approaches. The first approach—descriptive—should depict a society as comprised of different ethnic groups with diverse cultures and histories that contribute to national development. The second approach—normative—should develop empathy and appreciation of different cultures and promote tolerance and equal rights for all ethnic groups. Similarly, the descriptive approach to the promotion of a civic concept of national identity should describe the civic nature of the society (institutions and law) and the role of an individual in society. The normative approach should posit the idea of citizenship as central for the society and promote respect for human rights, freedoms, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence between all citizens.

To decrease conflict, history teachers should present internal boundaries as more permeable, shared, and based on positive experiences. History teachers should shift perspectives from

in-group histories to a common approach to history; describe in-group and out-group perspectives; and promote a history of positive interrelations, common experiences, and collaborations.

History teachers also can reduce conflict through the development of balanced collective axiology with a low level of generality. To increase the axiological balance in the presentation of both groups, history teachers must present not only positive but also negative actions of the in-group using critical analysis of political and social foundations and consequences of negative events. Such discussions will create strong civic accountability and motivations to contribute to the development of the nation. History teachers can increase axiological balance by reducing the presentation of intergroup relations in terms of in-group victimization and out-group aggression. Instead, they can emphasize mutual responsibilities of both sides for committed offenses by stressing how aggressive actions of each side derived from histories of intergroup relations, reciprocal wrongdoings, and misinterpretations. The level of axiological balance can be further increased through the reduction of negative and biased representations of out-groups. The level of collective generality can be decreased through descriptions of the differences within the in-group and out-group, the diversity of opinions and views on conflict and intergroup relations, and the variety of extreme positions and voices for tolerance. The collective generality can be reduced if history teachers avoid presentations of the permanence of out-group aggression through history and emphasize collaboration and positive relations with the out-group.

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