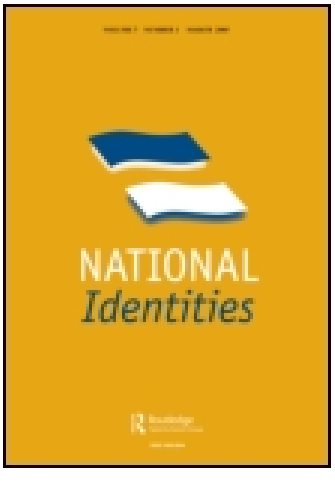

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Shaping unpredictable past: National identity and history education in Ukraine

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Shaping unpredictable past: National identity and history education in Ukraine

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State-controlled history education is used as a major tool in the development and strengthening of national identity, especially in newly independent states undergoing nation-building processes. The analysis of history education in Ukraine shows how it is employed to establish and transform modes and forms of national identity and to influences the formation of borders between nations. The research reveals that history education in Ukraine emphasises the idea of victimhood as the core of national identity and posits Russia as an oppressive and aggressive enemy. This article provides a basis for an early warning and resolution of identity-based conflicts.

Keywords: national identity; history education; Ukraine; border; conflict

History education is one of the most important mechanisms in the continuing process of the establishment of the modern nation-state. Hill (2008, p. ix) shows that historical narratives reflect a nation's 'self-contained process of coming-to-consciousness'. Many scholars stress that teaching about a group's shared past plays a major role in the formation of national, ethnic, religious and regional identities (Anderson, 1991; Hein & Selden, 2000; Meyer et al., 1992; Nicholls, 2006; Schissler & Soysal, 2005; Smith, 2005; Vickers & Jones, 2005). Seixas (2000) defines the main function of history education as developing social identity, cohesion and purpose. Apart from providing information about the collective past, history education also defines the meaning of current situations and affairs and establishes a vision of a shared future. Through the development of group identity, history education facilitates social cohesion and leads to the institution of a compelling moral framework. It presents the culture, heritage and traditions of a given national group, its glories and calamities, thus defining the meaning and content of 'Us'. 'History education places the national evolution into a neat historical time frame, which dates from time immemorial and continues into the present day, and locates that nation in an internationally recognized geographical space' (Antoniou & Soysal, 2005, pp. 105–6).

Since social identity is connected not only with the perception of similarities within an in-group (common history, attitudes, values, etc.) but also with the perception of differences between this group and the members of other groups, history education also helps identify and define out-groups and to describe the state of relationships with these 'Others'. It portrays other nations as allies or enemies, and outlines the contradictions between 'Us' and 'Them'. History textbooks help to

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articulate the state's positions *vis-à-vis* other countries and to justify current policies toward them. Therefore, history education plays a crucial role in the formation of the concept of the nation, especially in societies with a history of conflict, violence and mistrust among national, ethnic and religious groups.

While an overwhelming majority of authors emphasise that the formation and re-establishment of national identity is a major function of history education, this article does not intend to analyse the impact of history textbooks on students' beliefs and attitudes or the process of developing historical knowledge among students. Students' perceptions of national history and national identity form under the influence of many factors, including popular literature, the mass media, the Internet, movies and documentaries, memorials and museums, and conversations with family members and friends. Even within a school system that exerts strong control over history textbooks, teachers can use additional materials and lead discussions based on their own beliefs and values. This article instead analyses history as a legitimated text created under state supervision, as a 'practice' of nation-building (Hill, 2008, p. xi). It aims to study how a state uses the content of history education in order to generate desired connotations of national identity. Such analysis of distorted state representations of national history in Ukraine can develop a basis for correcting the narratives in future textbooks.

This article concentrates on the mechanisms employed by state-controlled history textbooks to shape several aspects of national identity, including boundaries, forms and modes of identity. I posit that history textbooks intend not only to create loyalties and increase the salience of a particular national or ethnic identity, but also to develop specific forms and modes of identity meaning, as well as establish borders with other nations. The analysis is conducted utilising several concepts related to established theories of social identity, as well as those developed by the author. The relevant concepts include '*border*' – a central idea in Tilly's theory of social identity (Tilly, 2005) – and '*modes and forms of social identity*', developed by the author (Korostelina, 2007).

History education in Ukraine was chosen as the subject for this study for two reasons. First, Ukraine is a newly sovereign state formed after the breakup of the Soviet Union, and history education there intentionally concentrates on the complex processes of state-building: the dissolution of previous identities (including the Soviet identity) and the formation of a new national identity that promotes Ukrainian independence. Second, as further discussed below, the content of history education in Ukraine is controlled directly by the state and all history textbooks have to be officially approved for use in secondary schools. Thus, the analysis of history curricula and school textbooks in Ukraine can help identify the mechanisms that history education employs to impact national identity development.

The present study is based on the analysis of history textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education of Ukraine for use in secondary schools from 1991 till 2009. The selection of the textbooks was based on their popularity in different regions of the country (Western Ukraine, Central Ukraine and Crimea) as well as their prevalence in schools with instruction in the Ukrainian language and schools for ethnic minorities with instruction in native languages. In addition, this study includes analysis of methodological recommendations given to teachers and materials used for examination of students.

State control over history education in Ukraine

After the establishment of Ukraine's independence in 1991, history education in public schools was completely revised: instead of the history of the Soviet Union, the history of Ukraine itself became the dominant historical subject (whereas in the Soviet era it was only taught for one year). World history as it was taught during the Soviet period remained on the syllabus. In 1993 a new strategic national programme entitled 'Education: Ukraine of the Twenty-first Century' was adopted. It called on education to espouse 'a national orientation which proceeds from the integrity of education based on national foundations, the organic unity with national history and ethnic traditions, and the preservation and enrichment of the culture of the Ukrainian people' (Government of Ukraine, 1994, p. 7). On 22 May 1996, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education approved new state standards of secondary education which put Ukrainian studies at the core of the school curriculum. Since then, the history of Ukraine has received priority over world history.

After Ukraine gained independence, the Ministry of Education nevertheless decided to continue the centralised Soviet approach to history education. Detailed curricula approved at the national level are required for use in all schools; the adoption, production and dissemination of textbooks are closely supervised. Any new textbook has to be considered through annual competitions supervised by the Ministry of Education, the National Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. The textbooks that are approved during this stage must then be tested in schools and revised before receiving the official stamp of approval. Schools are obliged to use these officially approved textbooks, but are free to use any kind of additional materials. Table 1 presents the number of textbooks on Ukrainian history and world history approved for use in each grade of secondary school.

On 31 May 2006, the Ukrainian government established the Ukrainian Institute of National History. The Institute is charged with studying and publicising the Ukrainian path to independence, with specific attention given to the national liberation movement, the Famine of 1932–33 (Golodomor) and political repression suffered during the twentieth century. It also aims to facilitate the development of youth, patriotic, historical and legal organisations in Ukraine that will promote patriotism among the national population. The budget of the institute for 2009 is 38 million *griven* – twelve times higher than in 2008. This amount exceeds the budgets for all national scientific institutes in the system of the National Academy of Science combined. The director of the Institute, Igor Uhnovsky (2007, p. 40), states that 'its main aim is the development of actions aimed at the consolidation and growth of

Table 1 Number of approved textbooks and hours per week in classroom for each grade of secondary school (based on a list published by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education for 2008–2009)

Grade	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Number of textbooks on Ukrainian history	2	–	3	4	1	4	3
Number of hours	1	–	1	1.5	1.5	1	1(2)
Number of textbooks on world history	–	3	4	4	1	4	4
Number of hours	–	1	1	1	1	1	1

patriotism of the people of Ukraine, which creates the state'. Among the most important mechanisms for the formation of patriotism, Uhnovsky argues for placing emphasis on the victimhood of the Ukrainian people: '[T]he evocation of memories of victims and of the oppression that the Ukrainian nation has experienced must persuade the current generation that our compatriots paid enough for independence and that its (the current generation's – KK) moral, economic, political and everyday life can be guaranteed only in an independent Ukrainian state' (Uhnovskiy, 2007, p. 40). He further develops the idea of Ukrainian victimhood pointing out that 'the Ukrainian fight for independence has taken different forms during different periods of time. The destiny of the participants in this struggle was always tragic' (Uhnovskiy, 2007, p. 40).

Another principal task of the Ukrainian Institute of National History is the development of and control over history textbooks. Uhnovsky points out the importance of history textbooks for the formation of national identity and patriotism. At the same time, he also acknowledges a responsibility to present to schoolchildren the objective facts of historical events. Nevertheless, he stresses the importance of controlling the content of history textbooks, saying 'Ukrainian state history textbook must be filled purposefully by the historical information useful for the development of state' (Uhnovsky, 2007, p. 40). Thus, the Institute is charged with examining school history textbooks and assessing their content based on the extent to which they contribute to the task of inculcating national patriotism.

The representation of national identity in history education in Ukraine

Boundary

Social identity has been described by many scholars as a product of the process of intergroup boundary formation. Barth (1981) has shown that social identity forms along the boundary between groups and is therefore defined by the relationship between 'them' and 'us'. 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 in-groups and across the boundary, is reflected in the narratives of both groups and creates the basis for collective identities. Horowitz (1975) stresses the role that cultural and political elites play in the process of boundary enlargement or contraction by making the group boundary more or less inclusive. Cultural sociologists also study the contextual factors that shape boundaries, including the cultural repertoires, traditions and narratives to which individuals have access in a given group (Lamont, 2000; Somers & Gibson, 1994; Swidler, 2001). On the basis of a large number of historical case studies, McAdam et al. (2001) analyse the constitution of social actors through boundaries and show that the invention and borrowing of boundaries, as well as encounters between previously distinct and competing networks, ultimately lead to the formation of social groups.

The evolution of history education in Ukraine provides a vivid example of the strengthening of an intergroup border with a neighbouring country – in this case Russia. After the fall of the Soviet Union and the proclamation of independence in 1991, Ukraine began to develop strong boundaries with Russia. These boundaries

were essential to the new nation's identity-building project, which aimed to create a new national identity different from both the Russian and Soviet ones. According to many scholars and writers, to establish its own national self-concept, Ukraine has actively employed the contradictions and differences between Russia and itself. During the Soviet era, the histories of Russia and Ukraine were presented as interconnected and sometimes even identical. The newly independent state of Ukraine needed to develop its own history, one that would demonstrate that the Ukrainian people have specific historical roots different from those of Russians. In this context, history education became a tool for the creation and strengthening of an intergroup border between the two countries which would, in turn, help define the new Ukrainian identity.

The first attempts to posit such a boundary between Russia and Ukraine were put forward in Western Ukraine, most of which became part of the Soviet Union in 1939. After the independence of Ukraine, history curricula in Western Ukraine were transformed into 'regional programmes' different from the established programme of the state. Instead of state textbooks, these programmes were based on books published in Galicia in 1939. In addition, the scientific society named after T. Shevchenko in Lviv published a textbook on the history of Ukraine, which was recommended by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education in 1993. The history of Russia in these books is presented as foreign history, similar to the history of Asia. This new textbook also avoided discussion of the Great Patriotic War of 1941–45 and described the fighting of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army with Russian Bolsheviks (Konstantinov & Ushakov, 1999). Ukraine was depicted as being in opposition to the Soviet regime and actively engaged in a national liberation movement.

At the end of the 1990s, the development of the identity border between Ukraine and Russia was reflected in the majority of state history textbooks. The regional programmes were transformed and combined into state programme. One of the most interesting examples of the strengthening of this boundary is the conception of 'Kievan Rus'. Russian history education, following Soviet history education, presents Kievan Rus as the first incarnation of the Russian state, which later moved to Moscow together with the ruling dynasty. Thus, the Grand Duchy of Moscow and then Russia are considered successors of Kievan Rus. According to this approach, the Russian ethnic group was the founder that established both Kievan Rus and later Russia. The succession of and connection between Kievan Rus and Russia are emphasised in Soviet textbooks and the Russian ethnic group is presented as the 'older brother' of two other Eastern Slavic groups: the Ukrainians and the Belarusians. These latter groups are described simply as 'branches' or 'younger brothers' of the Russians.

History education in the independent Ukraine, in contrast, completely altered this conception. History textbooks state that Kievan Rus was a successor to kingdoms established by Ukrainians between the second and seventh centuries and demolished by the Avar invasion. The remains of this kingdom were consolidated into Kievan Rus, which became the first official state of Ukraine. As the result of state expansion, Russians and Belarusians were later included in this state as additional ethnic groups. The Grand Duchy of Pin, established on the territory of present-day Belarus in the eleventh century, and the Grand Duchy of Suzdal, established on lands currently part of Russia in the twelfth century, had each developed a basis for the statehood of Belarus and Russia. Thus, Ukrainian history textbooks reverse the Russian formula, characterising the Ukrainian ethnic group as

an 'older brother' who provided an example of good governance to other Slavic groups. To stress the difference between Kievan Rus and Russia, people who lived in Rus are called 'Rusians' with one 's' (in comparison with 'Russians' who live in Russia).

In another important contrast presented in modern Ukrainian history education, the country is depicted as a historically European state in comparison with the 'Eastern barbarism of Russian Orthodoxy' (Birulev, 2002, p. 32). For 'Asian' Russia, Ukraine is the bridge, or window, to the civilized world (Birulev, 2002, p. 169). The textbook depicts the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as more developed and enlightened than its Russian counterpart: the Ukrainain church is 'proud of its Orthodoxy and cultural superiority in comparison with Moscow clergy' (Birulev, 2002, p. 76). The textbook also states that Ukrainian culture and science have typically been more developed and progressive than those of Russia: 'Ukrainian culture became that airway through which Moscow society learned about the cultural achievements of West European civilization ... culture in Russia was developed by Ukrainian books' (Birulev, 2002, p. 77). Thus, Russia is depicted as a backward, uncivilized country, which should be thankful to Ukraine for its cultural development.

The idea of Russia as a violent state of terror and low cultural achievement is repeated in several Ukrainian history textbooks. 'From the presentation of facts concerning the history of Russia, pupils will have a perception that, despite all actions of Ukrainian missionaries, these missionaries could not overcome the century-old backwardness of Russia and the terrible cruelty of its leaders' (Moiseenkova & Martsinovsky, 2004). Russia began to be presented as an oppressive state responsible for repressive policies toward Ukrainian nationals. History textbooks now described opposition to Russia as an essential force for the development of Ukrainian national identity. They showed that Ukrainian artists, writers and poets had to resist Russian influence in order to preserve Ukrainian culture and identity.

The idea of 'russification' as the imposition of an alien culture and language became central to many textbooks. This concept was previously used in Soviet textbooks to describe the discriminatory policies of tsarist Russia toward ethnic minorities. The new Ukrainian history textbooks, however, employed it to describe Soviet national, cultural and linguistic policies toward Ukraine. Furthermore, history examination questions directly posit contradictions between Russia and Ukraine – for example, 'totalitarian state's advance of russification on the spirituality of the Ukrainian people in 1970s–beginning of 1980s' (Gusenkova, 1999, p. 127). The process of russification was presented as a national tragedy and spiritual catastrophe for the Ukrainian people.

The emphasis on spirituality of Ukrainian people (based on developed culture and non-violent traditions) in opposition to brutality of the Russian state further contributes to the boundary construction. The impact of russification was characterised as a 'spiritual Chernobyl' imposed by Russians on Ukrainians (Smiliy, 1997). Instead of blaming Communism, Stalinism and totalitarianism, the new history textbooks began to hold the Russian ethnic group responsible for all the offences and crimes of the Soviet state. History textbooks stress that forced and meticulously planned migrations of Russians to Ukraine and Ukrainians to Siberia

and the Russian north were organised by Russia to change the ethnic balance in Ukraine (Sviders'ka et al., 1997).

The methodological recommendations for history teachers issued in 1996 also reflect an emphasis on differences between the two countries:

> As in imperial, as well in Soviet and current Russia, the traditional imperial thought still exists among those representatives of the intelligentsia who support the development of good neighboring relations with Ukraine: Ukraine is a part of Russia as a part of the Russian Empire and sooner or later this historic episode of independence will come to its 'logical' end and Ukraine will return to its older sister following Lukashenka's Belorussia. This is the power of inertia, the power of historic reaction on pseudoscientific great-power scheme of unity of history and continuity of interests of three Slavic people- Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusians. (Trubaichyuk, 1999, p. 4)

Thus, facing this form of imperialistic thinking, Ukrainian history teachers must promote the ideas of independence and encourage perceptions of Ukraine as a sovereign European state. 'The enormous number of books and publications that cement this image are united by the persuasive aspiration on the part of the political and intellectual elite to create the new image of Ukraine not only as a part of Europe, but also as a great European state, the development of which was disrupted and still is disrupted by Russia' (Konstantinov & Ushakov, 1999, p. 84). The Ukrainian ethnic group is presented as purely Slavic, while the Russian ethnic group is depicted as a mix of Ugro- Finns, Tatars and Slavs.

Forms of identity

Social identity can take three forms: cultural, reflected and mobilised (Korostelina, 2007). The *cultural form of identity* is based on characteristics of the everyday life of a group that include: cuisine and diet; clothes; typical daily routine; songs, music and dance; traditions and customs; and even holidays and ways of celebrating or mourning. Values, beliefs, attitudes and norms are also integrated within this identity. These come to be perceived as essential or given, and are therefore never questioned. Individuals live 'within' their cultural identity, following all in-group 'recommendations and instructions', but never think deeply about the goals and intentions of their in-group, or its status and position within society at large. The *reflected form of identity*, on the other hand, is associated with an advanced understanding of the history of the in-group and its relationship to out-groups; an awareness of the current status and position of the in-group; and recognition of its perspectives and future goals. Such an identity also reflects an appreciation of the values and beliefs of the group, an understanding of its roots, as well as an acknowledgement of the role of the group in society. Finally, the *mobilised form of identity* rests on an understanding of in-group identity within the framework of intergroup relations, emphasising intergroup comparisons of position, power and status. In this case, the estimation of both in-group and out-group alike is based on the positions and goals of each group; traditions, customs and cultural characteristics do not play an important role in this intergroup comparison. Such ideologisation of identity results in the perception of competition and incompatibility of goals between the two groups. Cultural and reflected forms of identity generate less conflict behaviour than the mobilised form. This is because the main

content and meaning of the mobilised form of identity are contradiction and competition between groups. The core in-group aim in this case becomes increasing the status or power of the in-group, which leads to hostile intentions and a readiness to fight against the out-group.

In Ukraine, national identity as presented in history textbooks during the last three decades has taken all three forms: cultural, reflected and mobilised. During the Soviet era, Ukrainian national identity was taught almost exclusively in its cultural form: history textbooks described customs and traditions and focused attention on artists, poets and writers. The notion of a Ukrainian national character was completely denied and Ukrainian culture was depicted as a local variation of Russian culture. History curricula rejected the existence of an independent Ukrainian history and presented it, instead, as an indispensable part of Russian history. After the fall of the Soviet Union and the establishment of an independent Ukraine, history curricula began to emphasise the uniqueness and specificity of Ukrainian historical and cultural roots. Authors of a new textbook, published in 1999, stressed that the Ukrainian people still do not genuinely know their own past; this included a previous totalitarian regime implicated in total deception, fabrications and the falsification of twentieth-century history. The authors pointed out that the history of Ukraine has been under profound ideological control and only now have scholars been granted the opportunity to analyse and describe the real history of the Ukrainian people (Gusenkova, 1999, p. 125). The understanding of historical roots was essential for the formation of a new national identity and the reinforcement of national independence. However, by the end of the 1990s, negative comparisons with Russia and the positioning of Russia as an enemy of Ukraine began to dominate in history curricula. Such an opposition was important for the further establishment of an independent state as well as an independent national history. This new tendency in history education led to the formation of a mobilised form of Ukrainian national identity.

To strengthen this mobilised form, Ukrainian history education began to encourage strong negative images of Russia. This negative depiction is especially evident in the presentation of historical events that involved conflict with Russia (e.g., the rule of Catherine the Great at the end of the eighteenth century, the consolidation of Bolshevik power in Ukraine between 1917 and 1921, and the collectivisation of agriculture in the 1930s) (Janmaat, 2007). The rule of Catherine the Great is perceived as an unjust and oppressive regime, which imposed Russian power over the Ukrainian ethnic group and subjugated the latter's culture and language. Moreover, this regime is said to have destroyed the prosperous Cossack communities by imposition of taxes, labour duties and regulations tying peasants to the land. Textbooks authored by Serhienko and Smolyi (1995) and Shvyd'ko (2003) made evident strong resentment for the exploitation of the 'innocent' Ukrainian peasantry by vindictive Russians, and gave the impression that 'the attitude of the Russian government toward the Ukrainian peasantry was one of complete indifference at best and of open hostility at worst' (Janmaat, 2007, p. 313). The introductory history textbook for the fifth grade states that, as a result of cruel Russian policies toward the Cossacks, 'all Ukrainian life was destroyed' (Vlasov & Danilevs'ka, 2002, p. 168).

More negative images of Russians are developed in depictions of the fall of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the establishment of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Bolsheviks are presented as foreigners, Russians, who systematically destroyed Ukrainian nationhood and imposed their rule over the Ukrainian people.

Although the textbooks briefly mention that Bolsheviks had significant support among Ukrainian workers and miners, they emphasise that Ukrainian peasants were opposed to Bolshevik expansion. Furthermore, history textbooks authored by Turchenko (1995, 2001) replaced Ukrainian peasants with Ukrainians as a whole, and describe these events simply as a fight between Ukrainians on the one side and Russian Bolsheviks on the other: 'The establishment of Bolshevik power in Ukraine, by means of deceit, violence and direct interference from abroad, inevitably had to become and became the object of nationwide opposition' (Turchenko, 1995, p. 58; 2002, p. 97). The introductory textbook for the fifth grade authored by Vlasov and Danilevs'ka (2002, p. 216) also presents the events of 1917–20 as a war between Russia and Ukraine: 'Beginning in 1918, Bolshevik Russia started the war against Ukraine. Even the first battles showed the unprecedented cruelty of the new Russian power. Ukraine had been covered with blood, and thus, at the end of 1920, the Bolsheviks' power was established in Ukraine'. In another history textbook, authored by Kul'chyts'kyi and Shapoval (2003, p. 69), the description of the Bolsheviks taking over Kiev in 1918 describes terror and mass killing the likes of which 'the Ukrainian capital had not seen since the raids of Khan Batia'.

The presentation of the famine in the 1930s in Ukrainian textbooks likewise helps to shape the mobilised form of national identity. History textbooks emphasise 'the "cruel crimes" of Stalinism … "cruel aggressors", the "monstrous" scale of the Famine in Ukraine, victims of the "genocide" of 1932–33 and … a totalitarian regime "terrorising" the countryside' (Janmaat, 2007, p. 315). Some history textbooks describe the famine as a component of the agricultural policies of Stalin's regime in opposition to those peasants who did not want to join collective farms (e.g., Kul'chyts'kyi & Shapoval, 2003). History textbooks authored by Turchenko (1995, 2001), and by Vlasov and Danilevs'ka (2002), employ an ethnic-based interpretation and describe Bolshevik policies as crimes against the whole Ukrainian nation. The textbooks fail to mention that Ukrainians also were involved in grain requisition and supported Bolshevik action: 'The textbook narratives do leave the overall impression that ethnic Ukrainians were only *victims* of and not *collaborator*s in the food confiscation campaigns' (Janmaat, 2007, p. 316). Moreover, the idea of the famine as a Russian policy meant to annihilate Ukrainians was extended from peasants to all levels of the population: 'Together with extermination of the Ukrainian peasantry, the Bolshevik power began the fight against Ukrainian education, science, art. Statesmen, cultural figures, scientists, teachers, doctors who were disagreeing with the actions of the Bolsheviks had been arrested, deported to Siberia, imprisoned and murdered' (Vlasov & Danilevs'ka, 2002, p. 217). Textbooks fail to mention that these examples of Stalin's totalitarian policies were common in all republics of the Soviet Union and, instead, present them again as a focused Russian plot directed against Ukraine.

More than anything, however, the description of the Second World War in Ukrainian history textbooks completely cements the image of Russia as an enemy. The introductory textbook for the fifth grade states:

> On September 1, 1939, World War II began. It was preceded by the secret agreement between leaders of Nazi Germany and the Bolshevik Soviet Union – Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin – each of whom craved world power. Bloody leaders on their own had decided on the fate of each European nation. On June 22, 1941, Germany began the war

> with the Soviet Union. This war is called Soviet-Nazi. The enemy occupied the whole territory of Ukraine. The bloody battles that constantly occurred in Ukraine led to terrible destruction. ... But the biggest disaster for Ukraine was the devastation of its people. Millions of Ukrainians died on the frontline, millions in Nazi concentration camps, from fires and bombings, from starvation and diseases. (Vlasov & Danilevs'ka, 2002, p. 223)

From this paragraph it is hard to understand who, precisely, invaded Ukraine: Nazi Germany or joint forces under the leadership of both Stalin and Hitler. In addition, the textbook also fails to mention the Holocaust, the extermination of Gypsies and the fact that among Ukrainian freedom fighters were representatives of other ethnic groups, including Russians.

The answer as to who the ambiguous enemies of the Ukraine were during Second World War comes on the next page:

> For our land, World War II was the most unjust among all wars because both the Soviet Union and Germany were not concerned about the liberation of Ukraine and the establishment of an independent state. Enlightened Ukrainians understood that they could not rely on any help and had to determine the fate of Ukraine by themselves. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), which was created in 1929 among Ukrainian emigrants, took the lead among such enlightened Ukrainians. Under the supervision of OUN, the Ukrainian government was established and, from the beginning of the Soviet-Nazi war, a Ukrainian army began to form. From the first days of the war, troops of partisans, or rebels, were organised. At the end of 1942, these troops amalgamated into the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). The UPA troops liberated Ukrainian towns and villages and defended civilians, but Soviet power did not want Ukraine to have its own army. Thus, in 1943, when the Nazi invaders were chased away from Ukrainian lands, Bolsheviks began to fight with the UPA. This hateful war against our own people went on until 1953; it led to new victims and became more evidence of Bolshevik terror. (Vlasov & Danilevs'ka, 2002, pp. 224–5)

This paragraph clearly posits Russians as the enemies of the Ukrainian state and Ukrainians both during and after the Second World War. Russians are presented not as allies who fought along with the Ukrainians against Nazi Germany, but rather as a group that brought devastation and terror to Ukraine.

Thus, contemporary Ukrainian history textbooks develop negative perceptions of Russia as represented in narratives of the cruel policies of tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union. 'The tsarist authorities and the Soviet regime are attributed malicious intentions, irrespective of their policies and the consequences for Ukraine. Never are the rulers in St Petersburg or Moscow perceived as being genuinely committed to the improvement of the living conditions and civic rights of Ukrainians' (Janmaat, 2007, p. 310). The relationship between Russia and Ukraine is described as one of permanent opposition, antagonism and, during many historic periods, strong Russian hostility toward Ukraine.

Modes of identity meaning

The meaning of social identity develops along the border that separates groups, and is constituted by both the content of group membership and the nature of interrelations with out-groups. Usually, the meaning of a given social identity is multimodal and contains several components (for a more in-depth description, see

Korostelina, 2007). These components include in-group traditions and values (culture), in-group language, characteristics of in-group members, the history of the in-group, their ideology, their interrelations with out-groups, as well as reverberated identity (identity developed in opposition to another identity), and out-group images. The relative prevalence of each of these components in a larger or smaller amount leads to different *modes of identity meaning*.

For instance, if components such as in-group traditions and values, characteristics of in-group members and reverberated identity dominate, this can be defined as a *depictive mode* of identity meaning. (One example of an identity group operating in this mode is the Amish.) *Ideological modes* of identity meaning are characterised by a focus on the ideology of the in-group and its interrelations with out-groups (political parties or religious groups). If the history of the in-group and its interrelations with out-groups become the most important components, then we can say that identity meaning is in an *historical mode*. Finally, the dominance of a reverberated identity, out-group images and interrelations with out-groups defines a *relative mode* of identity meaning. A depictive mode of identity meaning has minor implications for conflict, while the other three modes of identity meaning can provoke violence, albeit based on different motives. Ideological modes of identity meaning can lead to conflict based on ideological differences; historical modes can provoke conflicts based on chosen traumas and a history of intergroup violence; and relative modes can cause conflicts based on intergroup prejudice and biases.

The transformation of history education in Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union and the transition to independence in 1991 provides an example of how modes of identity can go through several stages over time. The Soviet *ideological mode* was gradually altered and replaced by a new *ideological mode* and, subsequently, by a nationalistic *relative mode* of Ukrainian identity.

During the first years of independence, changes in history textbooks were connected to changes in ideological depictions of the periods of Stalin's rule and late socialism from the 1960s to the 1980s. The first symptoms of the demise of Soviet ideology are reflected in phrases such as 'command-administrative system', 'low quality of life', 'deformations in socio-political life' and 'dominance of bureaucratic power' (Gusenkova, 1999, p. 122). History textbooks openly criticised communist bureaucracy and the stagnant economy of the last two decades of Soviet power. Nevertheless, many ideological interpretations of the Soviet era remained unchanged. For instance, the following ideas could be found in near identical forms in both Soviet textbooks and the new textbooks of the early 1990s:

1. a socialist interpretation of the revolutionary movement, the Great October revolution of 1917, and the establishment of Soviet power and civil war in Ukraine;
2. an assessment of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian rebellion army in the Great Patriotic war (1941–1945) as militant terrorist organisations whose activity contradicted the interests of Soviet Ukraine;
3. an assessment of the development of Ukraine during the Soviet period as progressive despite some 'deformations' and 'crises';

4. a positive evaluation of *perestroika* as 'positive changes in the socio-political sphere, including development of political parties and acceptance of human values. (Gusenkova, 1999, p. 123)

Nonetheless, the development of a new independent Ukrainian state required the establishment of a new history free from Russian influence and Soviet ideology. From the very beginning, the Ukrainian government recognised that history curricula were important tools in the development of the Ukrainian national idea. Nevertheless, this new identity was, ironically, formed using old Soviet methods of ideologisation. The concept of the development of Ukrainian statehood over the course of many centuries became the central idea of history education.

Historical events that were essential for the establishment of Soviet ideology and which were considered central in history education during the Soviet era have received alternative interpretations in new Ukrainian history textbooks. For example, the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 that was glorified during the Soviet period as a victory for the deprived working class is now presented instead as the successful result of German foreign policy during the First World War:

> The situation that was developed in Russia – a struggle between different political groups – was very useful for the German General Headquarters. . . . Its main goal was to take out Russia from the war as soon as possible. For this goal, German officers needed to find in Russia a force that would fulfill the function of ally passively and actively. . . . Bolsheviks were this force. That is why the German government in every way possible helped transport Bolshevik leader Vladimir Ulyanov-Lenin and his comrades from Switzerland through Germany to neutral Sweden in a 'filled' railway car. (Anon, 1996, p. 18)

Thus, Russian Bolsheviks are essentially depicted as traitors who destroyed their own country and used Marxist ideology to gain power with German support. Such descriptions help to destroy the old ideology and strengthen arguments for the importance of Ukrainian independence.

At the end of the 1990s, the ideological mode began to be replaced by a growing nationalistic *relative mode*. Some Ukrainian scholars have proposed to replace scientific Communism with a new course, 'scientific nationalism': in 2003 the Ministry of Education of Ukraine recommended it as a component of the history syllabus. The idea of the course on 'scientific nationalism' was based on national Ukrainian sentiments as 'scientific objectivity' (Vittkovsky, 1998). The content of the proposed course completely reflected the old ideologically constructed thinking and Marxist–Leninist historical determinism. Fortunately, this course was never approved.

History textbooks in the Ukraine began to describe the Soviet socialist regime as alien to the Ukrainian state, as an idea that was forcibly imposed by a strong and aggressive power – Soviet Russia. Emphasis was made on a short period of independence enjoyed by Ukraine in 1918 and on the movement toward independence prior to 1991. In one telling example, a paragraph heading that previously read 'Ukraine and the Formation of the USSR' was transformed into 'Liquidation of the Statehood of National Republics' (Gusenkova, 1999, p. 125).

In the middle of the 1990s, Ukrainian history education began to concentrate on the idea of nationhood for ethnic Ukrainians. The history of the different states and

ethnic groups who had resided on the current territory of Ukraine is presented as a series of stages in the development of the Ukrainian state. In the introductory textbook on Ukrainian history for the fifth grade (Vlasov & Danilevs'ka, 2002), the authors show that ethnicity is strongly connected to territory, and belonging to a specific ethnic group defines the rights for this territory. Different kingdoms and empires that formerly resided on the territory of present-day Ukraine are described as foreigners destroying Ukrainian statehood:

> Perfidious neighbours constantly tried to appropriate native Ukrainian lands. The Cossacks had fought for a long time, defending themselves against the Moscow Kingdom, Poland and Turkey, but every year they were losing more of their rights. Finally, the Russian tsar abolished the Cossack order. Ukrainian lands – once again – were put under the control of several foreign powers. (Vlasov & Danilevs'ka, 2002, p. 15)

Some textbooks present other ethnic groups that resided on the territory of Ukraine as alien to the state and unsupportive of authentic Ukrainians. Thus, one textbook interprets the economic and social troubles that Ukrainians faced at the end of the nineteenth century as a result of the actions of representatives of other ethnic groups:

> The majority of the landed nobility, and most of all those of Russian or Polish descent, displayed a hostile attitude towards the Ukrainian national idea . . . The trade sector fell almost completely into the hands of Russians, Jews, Armenians and Greeks, who often did not operate as civilised merchants but as barbaric-predatory wholesale buyers and sellers. (Sarbei, 1996, pp. 105–8)

All events, beginning from the establishment of the Kievan Rus, are depicted and interpreted in these texts based on their importance for the state of Ukraine: the loss or achievement of its statehood. According to R. D. Lyah (1998), the chair of Ukrainian history at Donetsk State University, history education presents the following stages of the development of Ukrainian statehood: Kievan Rus as the first state of Ukrainian people, the Kazak state in the seventeenth century as a result of the people's fight for independence, the Ukrainian revolution and establishment of the independent Ukrainian People's Republic in 1917–20 later abolished by Bolsheviks during their expansion in Ukraine (these events were described in Soviet textbooks as a Civic War of Russian and Ukrainian workers and farmers against supporters of tsarism and capitalism). The independence of Ukraine in 1991 is portrayed as a major result of the process by which the Ukrainian ethnic group accomplished its predestination. School textbooks describe the achievement of independence as an event that has great spiritual meaning and that leads 'to sovereignty and happy life' (Bushin, 1999, p. 159).

Conclusion

State-controlled history education is used as a major tool in the development and strengthening of national identity, especially in newly independent states undergoing nation-building processes. Historical narratives presented in textbooks aim to create the impression that the history depicted in the book is, in fact, the only truthful

version of events. History narratives are based on explicit judgments about the importance of specific events in the history of a particular nation or ethnic group, and the causality of events also reflects established social norms and ideas.

The examples presented in this article show how history education is employed to establish and transform modes and forms of national identity and to influence the formation of borders between nations. The analysis of history education in Ukraine reveals the main mechanisms of border formation, including denial of common history and shared historical events and figures; emphasis on opposition between nations throughout history; descriptions of nations as belonging to separate historical paths, different civilisations and super-categories (like European or Asian); emphasis on differences in value systems; and presentations of common culture or language as a result of foreign expansion and dominance. Russia is presented as a country with a different culture and different traditions, and all shared historical events receive alternative interpretations.

History education that emphasises the *cultural form* of national identity concentrates on traditions and customs, cultural holidays, values, beliefs and attitudes. The national culture is depicted as culture of majority with some local variations. The *reflected form* of identity is forged through an awareness of history, roots and sources of national identity, and the relationship between the nation and its current status, position and perspectives. The *mobilized form* of social identity is developed by emphasising the in-group's dominant values and ideas; creating a negative presentation of another nation, stressing violence, cruel policies and destruction it has been responsible for throughout history; highlighting conflicts between nations; emphasising chosen traumas and victimhood; and accentuating the necessity to unite against an evil and vicious enemy. Thus, history education in Ukraine presents Russia as an historic enemy of Ukraine that seeks suppression, control and dominance. The idea of Ukraine as a victim has become central to the definition of national identity.

This analysis also shows which mechanisms history education uses to facilitate the development of different modes of national identity. The ideological mode is created by replacing the history and culture of a people with the ideology of the ruling regime and an emphasis on ideological war; political ideas form the basis of historical interpretations. The relative mode is formed by concentrating on the idea of nationhood, focusing on suffering and fighting with enemies, and stressing ethnicity as a quality and a right strongly connected with territory. Thus, all historic events are described and interpreted based on their connection to the idea of Ukrainian nationhood and their importance for the state of Ukraine.

Although historic narratives presented in textbooks do not directly cause or initiate conflict, they can become powerful tools for social mobilisation. Depending on the dominant 'official' interpretation of history, a nation can perceive itself as a forceful, dynamic and rising state; as a cooperative and tolerant neighbour; or as a victim of aggressive foreign invasions. It can also position other nations or peoples in negative ways (e.g., as aggressive, uncivilised, belligerent) that help justify its own policies and actions. Historical narratives can contain unassailable memories of past sufferings and glories that come to be immortalised in the in-group identity. Such memories constitute central grievances and enmities; they are also the source of chauvinistic sentiments and the justification for actions taken against other groups

(such as retribution and revenge). These history narratives are considered vital for identity preservation and, thus, are completely entrenched.

As we have seen, history education in Ukraine during 1991–2009 posited Russia as an oppressive and aggressive enemy and emphasized the idea of victimhood as the core of national identity. This official interpretation of historic relations between two countries can develop negative attitudes toward Russia and perceptions of Russian people as an enemy for Ukrainians. These perceptions can complicate the international relations between Russia and Ukraine and contribute to ethnic tensions between them within the state of Ukraine. Moreover, the mechanisms used in history textbooks can be employed by other mass media, Internet and other sources of public discourse to increase ethnic mobilisation. Thus, thorough analysis of the mechanisms that state-controlled history education employs to define social identities, in this and many other cases, can provide a basis for an early warning system alerting us to potential problems, as well as the resolution of identity-based conflicts – both those that have long histories and those that have emerged in the process of nation-building.

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