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**Particular vs. Singular: Re-thinking their Place on the
Cultural Map of Europe. The Case of Ukrainian Immigrants
in the Czech Republic and Hungary**

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Declaration

I, Yuriy Koshulap, hereby declare that this thesis, entitled "Particular vs. Singular: Re-thinking their Place on the Cultural Map of Europe. The Case of Ukrainian Immigrants in the Czech Republic and Hungary", submitted as partial requirement for the MA Programme Euroculture, is my own original work and expressed in my own words. Any use made within it of works of other authors in any form (e.g. ideas, figures, texts, tables, etc.) are properly acknowledged in the text as well as in the List of References.

I hereby also acknowledge that I was informed about the regulations pertaining to the assessment of the MA thesis Euroculture and about the general completion rules for the Master of Arts Programme Euroculture.

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Introduction

The EU enlargement in 2004 brought about dramatic changes in the East-Central Europe's (ECE) border controls, which hitherto has been gradually evolving around the Schengen accords. Rebordering, or re-establishment of the enhanced border policing, was a response to the new challenges of the post-Cold War era, where excessive immigration flows was one of the leading concerns.¹ In this process Ukraine lost its economic and cultural ties with its western neighbors, such as Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia, restored for a brief period after the 1991, and was reduced to the role of the "asylum buffer zone"² between the EU and Russia. The dialog about the "associated membership" between the EU and Ukraine, as its largest eastern neighbor, includes the issues of border control and illegal migration. In this respect, the visa facilitation process that Ukraine embarked on in 2007 was designed to allow its citizens a short-term stay in Schengen countries, re-opening (or, indeed, creating) the European experience for the average Ukrainians. Although due to the internal political obstacles this process has been halted, the recent partial initialing of the agreement of the associated membership on March 30, 2012,³ suggest that Europe has not completely dismissed the idea of becoming more open for the Ukrainian citizens, eventually.

The thesis contextualizes the (re)discovering of 'Europe' by Ukrainians, and vice versa, in their present encounters and aims to give a better understanding of what such encounters may bring to both in the future. It attempts to answer how the experience of border-crossing and permanent migration influences still fluid Ukrainian national identity and changes the preconceptions Ukrainians have about Europe and Europeans. The assumption is that the new social context that immigrants find themselves in, together with the larger scope of interaction with the European politics and culture, makes them revisit the ideas about and attachments to their

¹ Peter Andreas and Timothy Snyder, eds., *The Wall around the West: State Borders and Immigration Controls in North America and Europe* (Lanham, Boulder, New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 1-2.

² Sarah Collinson, "Visa Requirements, Carrier Sanctions, 'Safe Third Countries' and 'Readmission': The Development of an Asylum 'Buffer Zone' in Europe," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 21 (1996): 82.

³ "EU initials Ukraine agreement 'to keep momentum,'" *Euractiv* (Published: 30 March 2012 | Updated: 03 April 2012), <http://www.euractiv.com/europes-east/eu-initials-ukraine-agreement-keep-momentum-news-511882> (accessed 2 May 2012).

national belonging. Since the notion of national identity may be defined as “class of idioms of collective identification – ways of thinking and talking about “identities” of various kinds – class, gender, national, ethnic, religious, or generational,”⁴ the study addresses the development of a self-definition and perception of homeland mediated through the recognition by the ‘other’ – the role that in this case is played by the receiving European societies.

The research part of this thesis combines the results of two case studies conducted in Ukraine and on the territory of the new member-states of the European Union. The interviews with the Ukrainian applicants for Schengen visas and with the members of the Ukrainian migrant communities in the Czech Republic and Hungary allowed examining the changes in self-definition that occur while (prospect) migrants are still in their home country and further transformations after they get in direct contact with the host community. The analysis focuses on a specific marked language used by the interviewees, which Matthew Frye Jacobsen calls a “diasporic imagination” – a concept that conveys both shared and cultural images and individual mindsets of immigrants as they negotiate imagined and physical homelands.⁵ Their own perception of home and of their national bonds are important to counter the perceptions created by the others as well as to find reference points for identification with the new social environment.

Questions raised in the thesis evolve around the notion of migration and the main processes that impact it today: globalization, acceleration and differentiation of migration, and emergence of multi-transcultural identities.⁶ One of the specific aspects here is that the process of identity-formation among Ukrainian migrants goes along with several identity-formation projects developed in Ukraine. Therefore, the task of the research is to trace how the *experience of Europe* modifies the immigrants’ assumptions about the relation of Ukraine to the European space.

In terms of methodology the study combines different approaches to anthropological research. According to Clifford Geertz the anthropological field studies have to be based on “thick (intelligible) description.” He argues that “[t]he aim

⁴ Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 162-163.

⁵ Hans Werner, *Imagined Homes: Soviet German Immigrants in Two Cities* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2007), 5.

⁶ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 10-11.

of anthropology is the enlargement of the universe of human discourse,⁷ which can be viewed as more descriptive methodology in comparison to Brubaker's exclusively theoretical search for a clear analytical category of a "group,"⁸ but which is more appropriate for the purpose of this study. Without an ambition to render a comprehensive snapshot of reality, the attempt was made to provide a general description of the migrant communities and to offer a consistent analysis on the basis of generally acknowledged theories, concepts and notions, which are discussed in the theoretical chapter.

The thesis begins with the introduction of theoretical and empirical framework, key concepts and methodological approach used in the research. *Chapter One* outlines the notions of self- and common identity, the concept of the "other," and how they are discussed within the framework of modern theories of migration and nationalism studies. It is presumed that national and religious belonging are the primary and analogous components of self-definition that get challenged in the context of migration and gets reflected in specific discourse. It has to be noted that the research focuses on Christian denominations, and the theoretical discussion on religion will be limited to Christianity.

Chapter Two sets the empirical framework by giving an overview of the identity projects – in Europe, marked by the introduction of all-European symbols and values, and in Ukraine, where the competing nation-building projects incorporate the idea of Europe as a positive or negative political and cultural reference point for Ukrainian national identity. These politics use specific rhetoric, invent symbols, interpret historic events, and often create the image(s) that become representative for the foreigners rather than for the natives. As the research also analyzes the role of religious life in migrant communities, the chapter ends with an overview of the Greek-Catholic Church, which creates a syncretic fusion of Eastern and Western Christianity.

The research part of the thesis (Chapters 3 and 4) is based on two sets of interviews. The analysis of the interviews with the Ukrainian applicants for Schengen visas (Kyiv, December 2011) in *Chapter Three* aims to show the perception of "Europe" that the Ukrainian applicants have before they enter the EU, their attitude to

⁷ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 14.

⁸ Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," *European Journal of Sociology* 43 (2002): 167.

the EU in light of the formal requirements of the visa application procedure, and finally, their self-identification in the context of this procedure. The central question of these interviews centered around the ways in which the preconception of Europe influences the self-identification of the Ukrainian applicants while they are still “outsiders” with no first-hand experience of European socio-cultural space.

The second case study, discussed in *Chapter Four*, combines the results of two independent sets of interviews with the Ukrainian migrants who lived for some time in the Schengen countries. It analyzes the changes of other- and self-identity that may occur after the Ukrainians leave their homeland and try to integrate into a new society. The comparison as a methodological approach has become desirable in migration studies,⁹ therefore this part of the study includes a comparison of the Ukrainian migrant communities in Budapest (Hungary) and in Olomouc (Czech Republic). This helped to diversify the data and study different adaptation strategies used by the communities to sustain the retention of national identity and resist assimilation processes. The two communities are formed around different affiliations – religious belonging, gathering around the Greek Catholic Church in Olomouc, and predominantly ethnic platform of the cultural center Ukrainian Self-Government of Hungary in Budapest. This difference helps to test various theoretical perspectives on the phenomena of migration and identity.

Recent economic crisis and tensions within the EU showed that ideas still matter, at least as long as they can accommodate national interests and the common European interests together, driven by empirical realism and the historical reason respectively.¹⁰ In this context, this study explores the question of the role the ideas may play in the future encounter between the two worlds that Ukraine and the EU believe to belong to and how these ideas about oneself and each other develop separately and in juxtaposition. In practice, just like for the new member-states in the mid-1990s, for Ukraine the discourse of enlargement and integration at this stage may become an impetus for further development.

⁹ Hans Werner, *Imagined Homes: Soviet German Immigrants in Two Cities*, 4-5.

¹⁰ David Boucher, *Political Theories of International Relations: From Thucydides to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 28-40.

Chapter 1. Theoretical Framework: Points of Reference

This chapter introduces theoretical framework, discusses terminology and methodological approach that are used for further analysis. The primary concern here is to outline the components of self-identity and common identity and their relation with the notion of the ‘other.’ This overview is followed by the discussion on how these key notions are approached within the theories of migration. Without going into the debate on the origin and nature of nationalism, the third part outlines the national and ethnic identity as an imagined concept. The last section discusses the relation between national identity and religious belonging as the primary components of self-definition that get challenged in the process of migration.

1.1 Group Identity and Cultural Memory

The concept of *identity*¹¹ became the subject of different fields of social sciences, from cultural studies to nationalism studies and modern migrant theories. Like many other terms used in social sciences, it does not have a clear definition, however, most scholars agree that it is a person’s knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or a group¹² and as a product of consciousness it is based on the ability to remember and recollect.¹³ One of the main general features of the concept defined this way is the dichotomy between stability and its capacity to change and develop over time. Identity may also refer to self-awareness of an individual (self-identity) and the awareness of a characteristics pertaining to a group of individuals (common identity), and while self-identity and group identity appear to be co-formative, “‘group’ is the core concept for sociology, political science, anthropology and fundamental to the

¹¹ Collins English Thesaurus defines ‘identity’ in two separate synonym rows with ‘distinctiveness,’ ‘individuality,’ ‘oneness,’ and ‘singularity’ on the one hand, and ‘accord,’ ‘rapport,’ ‘sameness,’ and ‘unity’ on the other. “Identity,” *Collins English Thesaurus*, Fifth Edition (HarperCollins Publishers, 2000).

¹² Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke, “Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63 (2000): 225.

¹³ Kerwin Lee Klein, “On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse,” *Representations* (Special Issue: *Grounds for Remembering*) 69 (2000): 135.

study of cultural identity,”¹⁴ consequently self-identity has often taken a back stage as an object of research.

In cultural terms, personal identity consists of a set of relatively constant components (national, religious, political, and professional affiliations, social status, hobbies) that gradually evolve in the course of social interaction and in relation to other members of the given society. Within the social identity theory, two opposite processes that shape identity are distinguished – *self-categorization* and *social comparison*. The former defines the accentuation of the perceived similarities between the ‘self’ and ‘other’ in the group-members, and the accentuation of the perceived differences between the self and out-group members, the latter leads to evaluation of the in-group as a positive dimension and the out-group in more negative terms.¹⁵ Therefore the concept of the ‘other’ “says and reveals far more about the ‘self’ and its conditioned and self-directed possibilities than about the apparently all-determined Other.”¹⁶ These ‘others’ are not just any set of people, rather they are groups who conceive their unity and peculiarity through a common image of their past (families, neighborhood and professional groups).¹⁷

Identities are not to be understood as unified comprehensive entities, “every individual belongs to numerous groups and therefore entertains numerous collective self-images and memories.”¹⁸ Those multiple self-images can have different prominence, depending on the context, however, they do not exist in isolation from each other, both defining the person and offering a resource for broadening those definitions. For instance, when the ethno-national identity is stressed (at a time of a national crisis or in the context of migration), the person’s age, gender, class and education may all be important for defining the particular expectations and norms for this person’s national belonging. Thus a discussion of separate identities that form a personal self-image is often incomplete without a study of the interaction between different parts of these identities which may be coterminous with each other.

If at a certain moment self-identity has a certain set of characteristics, from the

¹⁴ Rogers Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups,” *European Journal of Sociology* 43 (2002): 163.

¹⁵ Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke, “Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63 (2000): 225.

¹⁶ Michael Pickering, *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation* (Palgrave, 2001), 74.

¹⁷ Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity,” *New German Critique (Cultural History/Cultural Studies)* 65 (1995): 127.

¹⁸ Ibid.

diachronic perspective, the components of identity are not static and gradually change over time. If a person finds itself in a new social environment, it may cause dramatic challenges for the integrity of one's identity. It is especially true for migrants because the ways in which host societies perceive newcomers also greatly influence their integration and self-perception.¹⁹ When the 'other' is a whole society, forming communities may be seen as a natural response of the immigrants to the rapid change of cultural environment and should help them to integrate into the new society. Despite the scale of transition, the absence of everyday communication does not hamper a group that is based on consciousness of unity to reproduce their identity.²⁰ In this respect, although in the context of migration the ethno-national belonging tends to subsume other forms of belonging, other popular associations, and affiliations, belonging itself is not, in all its various forms, coterminous with a sense of national membership.²¹ It has a wider reference coterminous with cultural belonging. Therefore it is logically to presume that in the new cultural environment the *cultural belonging* of migrants gets challenged in the first place and the *collective memory* resists the assimilation process.

Although it would be wrong to speak about the rigid group cultural boundaries, *group memory* allows retaining the cultural belonging. This interdependence has been stressed by scholars who like Roth believe that "in modernity memory is the key to personal and collective identity."²² Maurice Halbwachs was one of the first sociologists who tried to analyze collective memory as a specifically social phenomenon and to explain its fluidity.²³ The important contribution of the scholar was the distinction between *communicative* and *cultural* types of memory. Being formed in communication with others and working as a means of self-perception against the 'other' (family, neighborhood, professional groups, political parties), the *communicative memory* extends no more than into the past 80 years and has no fixed points.²⁴ The *cultural memory*, on the other hand, is

¹⁹ Hans Werner, *Imagined Homes: Soviet German Immigrants in Two Cities*, (University of Manitoba Press), p. 8.

²⁰ Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," 127.

²¹ Michael Pickering, *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation*, 79.

²² Michael Roth, *Ironist's Cage: Memory, Trauma, and the Construction of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 8-9, as cited in Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse," 135.

²³ Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse," 127.

²⁴ Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," 127.

more distant from everyday life and it has its fixed points – the important historical events, maintained in the memory through texts, monuments, rites, etc.²⁵

The distinction between the two types of memory allows explaining the difference between a more fluid personal identity and a more stable common identity that lies in the ability of the former to retain a set of customs and socialization practices shared by members of that society. Apart from the depth of memory, the differences between the personal and common identity are very thin. They are both structures of meaning with certain structure. The question is to what extent these notions are ‘real’ or ‘constructed’.

1.2 Ethnicity, migration theories and adaptation strategies

In the introduction it has been stressed that the various aspects of migration studies became the subjects for various branches of humanities and social sciences – sociology, political science, history, economics geography, psychology, cultural studies and law. A variety of theoretical approaches and methods are used within social sciences to describe and explain the phenomenon. It is clear that research based on quantitative analysis of large data-sets asks different questions and gets different results from the qualitative studies of small groups. However, general questions for the majority of scholars focus on the patterns of migration and the processes of migrants’ incorporation into the receiving societies.²⁶

Early theories of migration focused on the economic development as the main factor that triggers migration movements. Following the popular at the beginning of the 20th century concept of modernization, the founding father of migration research Ernest George Ravenstein postulated the laws of migration as an economic phenomenon, holding that “migration increases in volume as industries and commerce develop and transport improves” and “major causes of migration are economic.”²⁷ In 1966 Everett Lee defined the economic factors that forced migrants to leave the areas of origin (push factors) and attracted to the receiving countries (pull factors). The

²⁵ Ibid., 129.

²⁶ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 20-21.

²⁷ Ernst Georg Ravenstein, “The Laws of Migration: Second Paper,” *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, N52 (1889): 288, as cited in Ronald Skeldon, *Migration and Development: A Global Perspective* (Harlow: Longman, 1997), 19.

assumptions that people migrate from depressed regions into highly developed areas found its development in the neo-classical theory of migration that hold that the migrants are well informed about the employment opportunities in the destination regions.²⁸

Although the economic theories give an important insight for analysis and therefore are broadly applied in sociology, they do not explain a number of social and cultural factors, such as historical experience or family and community links that influence migrants' choices. These factors have been taken into account in a more interdisciplinary approach called migration network. One of the phenomena which has been explained by this approach was the continuous migration without explicit economic causes via the family or employer connections called 'chain' or 'quiet' migration.²⁹ The study of such social networks allows to change the focus from the patterns of migration to the effects of settlement on culture and ethnic identity and to predict the further migration flows with greater precision. The migration networks may develop into complex 'meso-structures' – associations, places of worship, umbrella communities – to enhance the links within the new environment and facilitate the adaptation.

Theories of migration distinguish three types of immigrant adaptation – assimilation, ethnic pluralism, and border-crossing expansion of social space. Thomas Faist categorized immigrant adaptation in the economic, political and cultural spheres.³⁰ According to his classification, *assimilation* means that the acculturation is especially prevalent among the second generation but it does not necessarily entails a complete loss of ethnic linguistic and cultural traits. *Ethnic pluralism* is a precursor of contemporary multicultural vision, according to which immigrants transfer unaltered cultural practices and collective identities from one generation to another. "Assimilation and ethnic pluralism are insufficient because they espouse a container concept of space – adaptation of immigrants within nation-states is considered to be a process not significantly influenced by border-crossing transactions. [...]The concept of border-crossing expansion of space enriches our understanding of adaptation."³¹ In

²⁸ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 22.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

³⁰ Thomas Faist, *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 252-258.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 243.

cultural sphere *border-crossing expansion of social space* holds that the social and symbolic ties crystallize in ‘communities without propinquity’ that are durable for at least one lineage generation.³²

Explicitly, or more often implicitly, the concept of border-crossing transactions lies at the core of the studies of transnational communities and practices maintained by immigrants. This definition takes us to the third theoretical framework of modern migration studies which builds on the concept of globalization, improvement of communication and transportation, and argues that migration networks create a patchwork of interconnected transnational communities around the globe. It is currently believed that transnational social communities have the highest potential for syncretic cultural practices and collective identities because while multicultural policies (or their absence) of the host society create certain conditions that enable ethnic and immigrant communities to be incorporated into the social, political, and economic life of the host society without the requirement of full cultural assimilation, transnational ties may allow the immigrants to remain involved in the social, political, and economic life of both their home and host countries. This not only broadens our understanding of migrant networks and communities, but also challenges the established definitions of “identities-borders-orders” as Vertovec puts it.³³

In this context, some social scientists speak about the growth of ‘hybridity,’ namely that “immigrants and their descendants do not have a static, closed and homogeneous ethnic identity, but rather dynamic multiple identities, influenced by a variety of cultural, social and other factors.”³⁴ Neither transnationalism nor hybridity are new as phenomena, however, the current globalization processes made them much more common and thus visible. There is still a certain distinction between the transnational and globalization studies in the ways they approach migration research – having its focus on the processes of homogenization in modern societies, globalization theories tend to be interested not in the creation and reproduction of migrants’ networks and their transnational practices, but in the impact those practices have on the host societies and their role in the growth of global connections and

³² Ibid.

³³ Steven Vertovec, “Migrant Transnationalism and Modes of Transformation,” *International Migration Review* 38 (Fall 2004): 971.

³⁴ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 41.

cultures.³⁵

As noted in the previous sub-chapter, ethno-national and cultural identities do not fully overlap. Despite the fact that the place of origin largely defines a person's cultural belonging and practices, cultural identity is broader and more fluid than the ethno-national one. For migration studies this distinction may not always remain clear, primarily because ethnic identity plays a central role in community formation: ethnic groups tend to cluster together, often establishing their own neighborhoods marked by distinctive use of private and public spaces.³⁶ It is then not surprising that the immigrants' ethnic belonging becomes a marked part of their identity and their cultural, religious and other practices are perceived to be just parts of the all-encompassing ethnic culture.

In this research, I do not adhere to a single theoretical framework, but since the research assesses traditional immigrant communities, the notions of assimilation and integration are widely used to describe the ongoing processes and where they may help to explain formation of perception of oneself in the context of a new environment (consulates, foreign country). Just as any rule has exceptions, certain cases are explained better by the transcultural theories, while the economic factors motivating migration are to be taken for granted here.

When referring to the Ukrainian immigrant communities in Olomouc and Budapest, I use the term diaspora, which has become popular in social sciences as a term that defines a certain type of transnational migrant communities. Historically, the notion for migrant communities first appeared under the name 'diaspora'. In the narrow sense the term means a massive movement of migrants outnumbering those who stayed in the country of origin, however, currently it is often used with a much broader definition of "a movement of any ethnic group to a different part of the world"³⁷ – which can be applied to virtually any type of migration. Nonetheless, it is the conditions of non-voluntary migration, such as asylum and flight from poverty, with the emphasis on roots, exile, and image of home, that distinguish diaspora from other types of migration.

The problem of identity, allegiances, and loyalty is perhaps a perpetual question for the migrant communities since the phenomenon of people living in

³⁵ Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," 164-165.

³⁶ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 40.

³⁷ Ronald Skeldon, *Migration and Development: A Global Perspective* (Harlow: Longman, 1997), 28.

diaspora emerged and it is closely related with the notions of ethnicity which can be defined as a sense of group belonging, based on ideas of common origins, history, culture, experience and values.³⁸ For those groups culture plays a key role as a source of identity and as a focus for resistance to exclusion and discrimination. The culture of origin helps people maintain self-esteem in a situation where their capabilities and experience are undermined.³⁹ “The destination areas may, however, create new ‘cultures of exile’ reproducing neither the culture of origin nor a synthetic common destination culture but an idealized concept of home culture which is a kind of ethereal ‘between’ culture, rootless and rejected by both origin and destination.”⁴⁰

1.3 Nations and Cultures: Real and Imagined

Although the first theoreticians of nationalism have laid basis for nationalism studies as an academic discipline more than a century ago, the notion has been used in different contexts, mixed with other powerful ideologies, until its semantic meaning expanded to include ‘patriotism’ and ‘chauvinism’ as its extremities.⁴¹ This complicates the usage of the terms ‘nation’ and ‘nationalism’ as analytical tools to the point that some scholars even claim that “the terms employed by nations and nationalists are at best of marginal relevance to theories of nations and nationalism.”⁴²

Rogers Brubaker suggests rethinking the notion of ethnicity itself, which has been complicated by the definition casuistry in nationalism studies. “Ethnicity, race and nation,” he argues, “have to be conceptualized not in terms of substantial groups or entities, but in terms of practical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects and contingent events.”⁴³

The difficulty with the definition of the categories employed in social sciences is evident on the example of ‘nationalism.’ One of the reasons is that these terms came into academic use from the political discourse in the second half of the 19th century,

³⁸ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 35.

³⁹ Ibid, 40.

⁴⁰ Ronald Skeldon, *Migration and Development: A Global Perspective*, 39.

⁴¹ Heorgiy Kasianov, *Teorii natsii ta natsionalizmu (Theories of Nation and Nationalism)* (Kyiv: Lybid’, 1999), 142-144. Translation mine.

⁴² Alexander J. Motyl, “The Social Construction of Social Construction: Implications for Theories of Nationalism and Identity Formation,” *Nationalities Papers* 38 (2010): 60.

⁴³ Rogers Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups,” 167.

bearing strong ideological connotations. Multicultural policies in the USA and the USSR put certain limits on multilateral studies of these phenomena in the inter-war period⁴⁴ and only after the WWII nationalism studies received attention in the academic circles. Despite the groundbreaking works by Ernst Gellner, Benedict Anderson, Hugh Setton Watson, Anthony Smith and others, scholars acknowledge that although the phenomenon exists, there is no scientific definition of the terms nation, nationality and nationalism.⁴⁵ The fact that scholars often align themselves with political traditions (Marxist, liberal, conservative) only adds to the chaos of definitions.

Summarizing most of the mainstream views on the issue, Heorhiy Kasianov in his analysis of definitions distinguished three meanings of the term ‘nationalism.’ Firstly, the term can denote a feeling (collective or personal), as social or individual psychological phenomenon. Secondly, it may signify a worldview, a doctrine, or an ideology. Finally, nationalism may denote a political movement or a political program, with the corresponding ideology (doctrine) and a worldview in its basis.⁴⁶ While scholars take into account this complexity, in politics and on the level of popular consciousness nationalism bears strong negative or positive connotation.

Even the sophisticated level of discussion does not make the notion clearer, nor does it free the concept from excessive contexts. Nationalism studies also abound in diversity of approaches, where the initial debate on the origin of nation and nationalism between the ‘premordialist’ on the one hand and ‘modernists instrumentalists’ on the other has now been joined by a number of deconstructivist views that shift the focus from the origins to the content of the contemporary nationalisms altogether.⁴⁷ While the ‘modernist’ school defines nationalism as a product of modernity (from the second half of the 19th century), constructed by elites and popularized and disseminated with the help of developing communication systems and greater mobility, its opponents in the “classic debate”⁴⁸ (i.e. primordialists) argue that nationalism goes deeper into history applying rather

⁴⁴ Mark von Hagen, “Does Ukraine Have a History?” *Slavic Review* 54 (Autumn, 1995): 663.

⁴⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, New York: Verso, 2006), 3.

⁴⁶ Heorgiy Kasianov, *Teorii natsii ta natsionalizmu*, 144-145. Translation mine.

⁴⁷ Anthony D. Smith, “The Shifting Landscapes of ‘Nationalism,’” *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 8 (2008): 317.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

convincing criticism of theory of modernization as a counter argument.⁴⁹

Debate on nation and nationalism often preserves the traits of evaluative ideological discourse about the nature of those phenomena, namely whether they are ‘artificially constructed’ or ‘natural,’ ‘historical,’ ‘imagined’ or ‘real’. These judgmental views resemble the early distinction of Western European *civic* (‘good’) vs. *ethnic* (‘bad’) *nationalism* of the Eastern Europe. Instead, the task of a scholar is not to find out whether ‘nation’ exists in reality, but to describe it accurately and define its features.⁵⁰ Paradoxically, but in this debate the proponents of both schools partly support the opponent’s ideas. Holding that nation and nationalism are ‘natural,’ ‘historical’ and ‘real,’ premordialists emphasize the moral-ethic nature of the notion, which as any sentiment or feeling is subjective and therefore imagined. On the other hand, emphasizing their ‘artificial’ nature modernists and social constructivists have to acknowledge that in order to construct an idea, the elites had to employ some preexisting ‘building blocks.’⁵¹

The variety of failed identity projects, discussed in Chapter 2, confirm that at least part of the building blocks – common origin, religion, national symbols, customs, historical memory, etc. – are required to make the idea of a nation viable.⁵² However, even though the language was the primary marker in the revolutionary idea that all the ethnic (or at least culturally distinct) groups have to constitute a new politic entity, scholars agree that the nations would not happen without special engineering. In John Armstrong’s words:

[...] what is at stake in the evolution of national identity is neither demographic nor linguistic continuity, as historiography or philology may determine them, but the acceptance of mythic versions more or less deliberately manipulated.⁵³

In this respect, a nation is a construct, but it is not created from the thin air, not entirely artificial. One of the best known definitions of the nation was coined by

⁴⁹ For the criticism of modernization theory see Walker Connor, “Nation-building or Nation-destroying?” *World Politics* 14 (1972).

⁵⁰ Georgiy Kasianov, *Teorii natsii ta natsionalizmu*, 24. Translation mine.

⁵¹ Yaroslav Hrytsak, “History of Names: A Case of Constructing National Historical Memory in Galicia, 1830-1930,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 49 (2001), 163.

⁵² John A. Armstrong, “Myth and History in the Evolution of Ukrainian Consciousness,” in *Ukraine and Russia in their Historical Encounter*, edited by Peter J. Potichnyj, Marc Raeff et al. (Edmonton, Alberta: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1992), 130.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

Benedict Anderson, who called it an “imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign,”⁵⁴ i.e. the group that becomes sovereign over a specific territory becomes a nation. When there is no state, nationalism focuses on continuities in culture – in language, literature and religion.⁵⁵ Based on collective cultural ties and sentiments those elements convey a sense of identity and belonging.⁵⁶

What can be taken from this debate is that both schools acknowledge the universality of nationalism as a socio-cultural concept. As Benedict Anderson pointed out in his seminal work *Imagined Communities* “in the modern world everyone can, should, will ‘have’ a nationality, as he or she ‘has’ a gender.”⁵⁷ At least in the Western societies. Scholars who have argued for post-modern and post-national studies, predicting the demise of a nation-state and its supporting ideologies, do not seem to find much empirical support just yet. Back in 1984 Nietzsche claimed:

Commerce and industry, traffic in books and letters, the commonality of all higher culture, quick changes of locality and landscape, the present-day nomadic life of all nonlandowners – these conditions necessarily bring about a weakening and ultimately a destruction of nations, or at least of European nations: so that a mixed-race, that of the European man, has to originate out of all of them, as the result of continual crossbreeding.⁵⁸

Since then many scholars viewed the development of transnational organizations and supra-national associations as the beginning of the end of the nation as we know it. However, almost two decades after the establishment of the European Union, the post-national “European order” and “European man” that intrigued the minds of people since the inception of the ideas about the politically united Europe have not become a part of reality.⁵⁹ As another example from the history of the 20th century shows, the presumably homogeneous political, ideological, economic, and socio-cultural space within the Soviet Union did not lead to the erasure of the national

⁵⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

⁵⁵ Timothy Snyder, “Memory of Sovereignty and Sovereignty over Memory: Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine, 1939-1999,” in *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe*, edited by Jan-Werner Muller, 39-58 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 50.

⁵⁶ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 42.

⁵⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 5. Similar definition in Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (New York, 1977), 21.

⁵⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, translated by Marion Faber (Lincoln-London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), p. 228, as cited in Wolfgang Welsch, “Transculturality – the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today,” in *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*, edited by Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash (London: Sage, 1999), 198.

⁵⁹ See Anthony D. Smith, “The Shifting Landscapes of ‘Nationalism,’” p. 324, and Wolfgang Welsch, “Transculturality – the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today,” p. 198.

and ethnic identities of the people in the Soviet Republics. Theories of globalization that first focused on the homogenization of the economic and cultural spaces and practices across the globe also had to admit that those processes went along with the persisting differentiation along national, religious and cultural lines.

While national identities remain as distinct as they have been, changes in the cultural domain allowed scholars to talk about “transculturality” as a defining feature of modern societies.⁶⁰ In its essence it is a recognition of the internal complexity of modern cultures and the resulting lack of “social homogenization, ethnic consolidation and intercultural delimitation” that are believed to be characteristic of cultures in their traditional expression.⁶¹ This phenomenon is not limited to migrant communities but is said to be true of all modern day societies, where cultures “have [...] assumed a new form, which is to be called *transcultural* insofar that it *passes through* classical cultural boundaries. Cultural conditions today are largely characterized by mixes and permeations.”⁶² As Welsch argues, transculturality does not imply the sameness of all cultures – different locations produce unique cultural mixes, certain subcultures develop at different speed and vary in their influence in different countries; but the boundaries between the ethnic or national cultures are not as strict as we once thought they were, and it may be more appropriate to see cultures in terms of networks of people united by their lifestyle/status/etc. rather than groups defined by shared geographic location.⁶³ This approach helps to highlight that national identity is only one of the elements that defines a person’s cultural affiliation. In today’s world, one’s culture can go beyond the ethnic group and allow relating to groups of people with whom the person shares other interests or characteristics. We have seen that the role of a dominant ethnicity and the idea of a monolithic culture remain highlighted in the political and popular discourses in European countries. Nevertheless, the transcultural nature of the modern societies will help us to explain the ways in which Ukrainian immigrants in Hungary and Czech republic adopt certain elements of the host cultures into their lifestyles, treating them as a continuation of their Ukrainian identity rather than as foreign influences.

Whether one can make a strategic choice and change ethnicity *ad librum* or at

⁶⁰ Wolfgang Welsch, “Transculturality – the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today,” 194-196.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 194.

⁶² Ibid., p. 196.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 199.

least with a similar to cultural assimilation ease is another question. If for Anthony Smith ethnicity is something we are born into and cannot change,⁶⁴ it is quite the opposite for the instrumentalist point of view. In this respect, the notions of *instrumental nationalism* coincides with the post-modernist *situational ethnicity* used in migration studies as both hold that members of a group may chose/create ethnic allegiances when necessary. This aspect will be verified in the current case study on the example of the ‘Ukrainian experience’ which is important and even unique for verification of the modern theories of nation and nationalism.

1.4 Nationalized Religiosity: Universal vs. Particular

The sociology as a discipline emerges in the era of modernity and was influenced by the dominating ideas that predicted the substitution of religion by the modern ideologies, among which nationalism and communism were the most aggressive. Even the founding fathers of sociology Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, who denied the positivist and Enlightenment critique of religion, built their studies on what they saw to be the crisis of religious consciousness.⁶⁵ In the second half of the 20th century sociologists of religion continued a heated debate on the future of religion, expecting a dramatic shift from the religious to secular modes of life which has been called the *secularization* theory. The revision of these views began in the 1960s with the criticism by two sociologists of religion David Martin and Andrew Greeley. They showed the inconsistencies in the ‘ad-hoc’ secularization stance.⁶⁶ Although secularization paradigm has not been rejected altogether, their criticism restored a more objective discourse on religion in the social sciences. Nowadays scholars would rather speak about the change of traditional modes of religiosity than about the disappearance of religion or secularization.⁶⁷

As religion remains a viable social factor, one of the central questions was its

⁶⁴ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 28

⁶⁵ David Martin, *On Secularization : Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 18.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁶⁷ For debates on secularization paradigm see Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford University Press, 2003) (Chapter 6: Secularism, Nation-State, Religion, pp. 181-205) and the reply by Jose Casanova, “Secularization Revisited: A Reply to Talal Asad,” in *Powers of the Secular Modern – Talal Asad and his Interlocutors*, edited by David Scott and Charles Hirschkind (Stanford, 2006), 12-30.

relation with ‘secular’ ethnic and national identities. One of the primary differences between the two is that if nationalist identity (based on ethnic premises) is a uniting idea for a finite group which tends to exclude the outsiders, religious mode of thinking in Christianity is inclusive by definition without the negative definition of the ‘other.’ With the only criterion – faith, it is supposed to unite people on the basis of common values, rather than create borders. In practice, religious affiliations still divide people within Christianity and even provoke open conflicts across religions, but because of the idea of the shared Christian identity and due to the fact that churches often extend their networks and influence beyond state borders, religious community may be more flexible in terms of accepting and incorporating ‘outsiders,’ compared to an ethnic group. Religious boundaries can be as impermeable as the boundaries of a nation, for this research, however, it is most important that the religious and national divides do not overlap, allowing for the alternative spaces where the cultural belonging and affiliations are forged. For immigrants religion and church may help to guard their distinct identity, as well as they may facilitate their assimilation into the majority’s culture.

Nationalism and religion are often seen as alternative and competing ideologies. Benedict Anderson connects the eighteenth century with the dusk of religious modes of thought that were substituted by nationalism.⁶⁸ Even for the critic of modernist approach, Anthony D. Smith, religion is an important element of the consolidation of a nation in the early modern period, but afterwards it was only a supplementary means of legitimization used for the unification of the state through an authorization of nationalistic ideas. In his view, the priestly hierarchies and traditional ruling classes reject the science of the modern state since “religious world-view could not be reconciled with science and rationalism.”⁶⁹

On the other hand, scholars noticed similarities between the nationalism and religion. Some may see nationalist self-sacrifice and devotional elements as a symbolic system that could take a form of religion.⁷⁰ Although it is generally accepted that religion flourishes where church and state were separate and where there was

⁶⁸ Robert E. Alvis, *Religion and the Rise of Nationalism. A Profile of an East-Central European City* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2005), xv.

⁶⁹ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: A Trend Report and Bibliography* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), 93, as cited in Robert E. Alvis, *Religion and the Rise of Nationalism. A Profile of an East-Central European City*, xv.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

religious pluralism and competition, one of the variations of secularization theory is that the religion and the state may cooperate successfully when united together against alien government. This is the case of the Soviet-style dictatorships in the Eastern Europe – Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and the communist regimes in Croatia and Serbia and western Ukraine.⁷¹ During the communist era religion in those countries has been one of the possible individual modes of personal existence and after the fall of the Soviet communism phenomenon of relatively religious (in European terms) CEE countries occurred. In many cases religion became ‘nationalized’ to the point of merging with the national ideology despite the common separation of state and the Church on the official level.

In modern anthropological research religious mode of thinking is mainly seen in terms of exclusion. Religion is seen as a separate part of the people’s identity that defines the group’s boundaries. Discussing the example of African immigrants in Ireland, Abel Ugba argues that their belonging to Pentecostal church was highlighting the distinctiveness of the immigrant community within Irish society, simultaneously facilitating the group’s integration and assimilation.⁷² The most important conclusion in his work, however, is that Pentecostal beliefs were formative for the immigrants’ perception of themselves and of the host society, providing alternative narratives for the African immigrants to counter the identification that the Irish society created for them. In other words, religious belonging may be used in a productive way to shape people’s self-perception in new socio-political settings.

As Brubaker clearly shows, the relationship between religion and nationalism can be studied in different ways and for different purposes. Nationalism and religion, he argues, can be seen as parallel or “analogous” forms of identification and social organization; research on religion may help explain certain aspects of the origins and development of nationalism; religion may be analyzed as a part of nationalism; and finally religion can be treated as a distinctive form of nationalism. None of the approaches is better than others – they are all based on different questions and thus

⁷¹ Peter van der Veer, “The Moral State: Religion, Nation, and Empire in Victorian Britain and British India,” in *Nation and Religion: Perspective on Europe and Asia*, edited by Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 21.

⁷² Abel Ugba, “Beliefs, Boundaries and Belonging: African Pentecostals in Ireland,” in *Ethnicities and Values in a Changing World*, edited by Gargy Bhattacharya, 119-134 (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 120.

address different theoretical problems.⁷³ For my research it is important to stress that while the church and religious identity can be studied as institutions and spaces that define “commonality, connectedness, and groupness”⁷⁴ within a Ukrainian immigrant community, similarly to Ugba I am primarily interested in the *content* of the national and religious discourses (and their interaction) from which the immigrants derive their self-identification and understanding of their socio-cultural location.⁷⁵

⁷³ Rogers Brubaker, “Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches.” *Nations and Nationalism* 18 (2012): 2-20.

⁷⁴ Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, “Beyond ‘Identity,’” *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 20.

⁷⁵ Abel Ugba, “Beliefs, Boundaries and Belonging,” 128-130.

Chapter 2. Ukraine-Europe: Borders of Identity

Ukrainians travel to Europe with a set of ideas and stereotypes about Europe bringing fully shaped identity with them. This view often evolves out of the discourses that originate within Ukraine or “travel” to the country through mass media and personal networks; the knowledge about the EU and Europeans is seldom based on direct encounters with Europe due to the relatively closed Ukrainian borders for the majority of Ukrainians. This chapter presents a discussion that outlines Ukrainian and European imageries and the ways the two sides tend to perceive each other before the encounter. First it addresses the concepts of united Europe, promoted during two identity projects on the continent. Secondly, it turns to the three projects that aimed to forge a Ukrainian identity in the years of the country’s independence and their perspective on Europe. Finally it gives an account of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as an example of the Ukrainian East-West border-case in religious and cultural spheres and as one of the agents discussed in further chapters.

2.1 Self and the ‘Other’: Ukrainian-European Rapport

The recent recession of the world economy reopened the debates around the future of the EU project. The recession also caused dissatisfaction with the migrants and resurgence of extreme nationalist ideology that may be paralleled with the return of nationalist governments and anti-immigrant rhetoric of the European politicians. Similarly to the oil crisis of 1973 and the recession in the early 1990s that questioned the concept of the European unity itself,⁷⁶ the current economic downturn also raises a philosophical question: “How should the EU continue to fulfill the functions it was created for as an economic union?” or in other words “What are the grounds on which the EU functions today?” It seems obvious that the modern unifying idea of Europe is far from being shaped by the religious homogeneity, civilizational proximity or the opposition to the external enemy, which historically have been significant factors

⁷⁶ Joel Colton and Robert R. Palmer, *A History of the Modern World*, Eighth Edition (New York, St Louis, San Francisco: McGraw-Hill, 1995), 1037-1038.

underlying unions as discussed in a number of studies.⁷⁷ If it had not been the case, the accession of Turkey as historically ‘non-European’ culture or predominantly Eastern Orthodox Romania would have not even been considered. At the same time, if the EU was basing its membership on cultural premises, Ukraine would have probably qualified for the entry together with other CEE countries in 2004 or 2007. Despite the fact that the EU was created as an economic union, there is clear evidence that the construct of ‘European unity’ proved to be instrumental in achieving particular goals that were not economic in their essence in the past and may be used to similar ends in the future.

How likely is it for a common identity to evolve in the multicultural and yet nation-minded milieu called Europe? The very idea of national particularity that emerged in Europe seems to contradict any attempts to discover a common European identity, however, several unsuccessful identity projects have been initiated in an attempt to create one. The first project was launched by the European Commission at the Copenhagen summit (1973), declaring common “responsibility towards the rest of the world.” On the one hand, this initiative was to add the European Community (EC) new confidence and to find a new role for the EC in the international order. On the other hand, the introduction of the project and the oil crises were not a mere coincidence, but “a compensation for the eroding political legitimacy at the national level.”⁷⁸

The low turnout in the 1979 European elections brought about a new wave of “cultural policy.” In the attempt to promote social and cultural cohesion, the Commission introduced “symbols of European identity” – the European flag, anthem, standardized European passport and driving license, Europe Day and EU’s Flag Day were assigned for May 9 and September 29 respectively. This search for common European values and creation of symbols have been critically analyzed by Cris Shore, who suggested that the attempt to forge the new identity was yet another way of excluding Europe’s ‘Other’ since it did not make a reference to non-European born residents.⁷⁹ Sociologists of migration hold that modern European identity is

⁷⁷ Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995); Anthony Pagden, ed., *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁷⁸ Bo Stråth, “A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 5 (2002): 389.

⁷⁹ Cris Shore, “Inventing the ‘People’s Europe’: Critical Approach to European Community Cultural

constructed primarily in opposition to the ‘other,’ primarily non-European migrants, and “stigmatizes a group of excluded people in order to mark the difference between Europe and the rest of the world.”⁸⁰

In practice, if the identity projects were designed to create a uniform identity, they obviously did not succeed, and today in Sweden or Norway, Europe may be referred to as “the Continent,” i.e. it is identified as belonging to the Others.⁸¹ The unsuccessful campaign in support of the European constitution showed that national interests were much stronger than the all-European cause. This correlates with the Eurobarometer survey results from January 2010, according to which the overwhelming majority of respondents give priority to national identity over the European one.⁸²

Even though the common identity may have had little prominence in the Western Europe, it does not mean this is the case for other regions, as “[t]here is not one but several contested views of Europe in the various nations and at various times.”⁸³ Since the identity exists not only for self-reflection, the perception of “Europe” by the outsiders matters as well. On the other hand, while the European community has been relying on the “other” for completing its own self-perception, “Europe” could become someone else’s “other” in opposition to whom national identities were defined.

The latest eastern enlargements of 2004 and 2007 showed that for the CEE countries the discourse on the nebulous European values proved to be helpful in attaining practical goals. The primary reason for the popularity of the European values is that during the Cold War the claims to common European identity allowed the East and Central European intellectuals to start a discourse alternative to the official socialist ideology. For the Hungarian social critic and politician János Kis, Yalta Agreement (1945) symbolized the division of Europe and the loss of the connection between the “free Europe” and the countries of the Eastern bloc, which considered

Policy,” *Man* (New Series) 28 (Dec., 1993): 795.

⁸⁰ Étienne Balibar, “Europe, an “Unimagined” Frontier of Democracy,” *Diacritics* 33 (2003): 37.

⁸¹ Bo Stråth, “A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept,” 391.

⁸² “In the near future do you see yourself as...?” *Eurobarometer*, (June 2010) (European Union, 1995-2010)

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showchart_column.cfm?keyID=266&nationID=11,1,27,28,17,2,16,18,13,6,3,4,22,7,8,20,21,9,23,24,12,19,29,26,25,5,14,10,30,15,&startdate=1992.04&enddate=2010.06 (accessed 25April 2012).

⁸³ Bo Stråth, “A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept,” 391.

themselves to be a part of Europe, too.⁸⁴ Therefore in the wake of “1989,” the metaphor “united Europe” became politically tainted and instrumental for attaining political independence.

Interest in the European identity persisted after the fall of the Soviet bloc when governments of the CEE countries conducted consistent memory policies which were aimed at rearranging the national history to agree it with the future EU enlargement. Those policies stressed the “historicity” of “1989” and the causes that brought the fall of the socialist state (oppositional movements and dissidents). Consequently, several official campaigns for the referenda on the EU membership used the slogans “Return to Europe” to emphasize the common European destiny.⁸⁵

If the concept of united Europe was employed as a mobilization and nation-building tool in the 1990s in the CEE region, it continues to have a similar function for Ukrainians, who too view Europe as a homogeneous cultural entity with common values and identity and the space “they aspire to be or something they claim always to have been.”⁸⁶ However, apart from the economic factors that distinguish the CEE countries and Ukraine, there is the so-called “political criteria” that entered the Maastricht Treaty (1992). In practice, just like for the new member-states in the mid-1990s, the discourse of enlargement and integration at this stage may become an impetus for democratization in Ukraine.

Similarly to the national identity, common European identity is an imagined construct that developed over time.

Identity is not merely an individual or social category, but also – crucially – a spatial category, since the ideas of territory, self and ‘us’ all require symbolic, socio-cultural and/or physical dividing lines with the Other. At local contexts solidarity may be based on personal contacts and interaction but larger-scale territories are inevitably ‘imagined communities.’⁸⁷

The “European identity” has different meanings for people in different

⁸⁴ Janos Kis, “The Yalta Problem in the Mid-Eighties,” in *European Unification in the Twentieth Century: a Treasury of Readings*, edited by Frans A. M. Alting von Geusau (Nijmegen: Vidya Publishers, 1998), 122, 126.

⁸⁵ Andreas Pribersky, “Cultural Patterns of the EU: ‘Eastern Enlargement’ – Between Post-Socialism and the ‘Long Durée’ of History,” in *Accession and Migration: Changing Policy, Society, and Culture in and Enlarged Europe*, edited by John Eade and Yordanka Valkanova, 11-20. (Ashgate, 2009), pp. 15-16.

⁸⁶ Alexander J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine after Totalitarianism* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993), 89.

⁸⁷ Anssi Paasi, “Europe as a Social Process and Discourse: Considerations of Place, Boundaries and Identity,” *European Urban and Regional Studies* 8 (2001): 10.

countries and is seen differently from the local and national perspectives. Although the idea of Europe consists of different levels of abstraction, defining what the EU means for them, the Europeans put forward the “freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU” rather than the “economic prosperity.”⁸⁸ Therefore what helps in understanding of the diverse Europe is to see it as a considerable personal experience.

Being an experience, it cannot be constant and/or stable and will change with movement from one place to another. It will be even more contested for Ukrainians who enter Europe for the first time and relate their preconceptions, values and stereotypes to the variety of national, cultural and social circumstances they may find themselves in. What complicates the situation is that in the post-Soviet multicultural Ukraine the idea of Europe has different meanings in different parts of the country and within the ongoing national identity projects. In the following part, I will discuss the question what Ukrainians put into the idea of being European and Ukrainian and what the pragmatics of those discourses are.

As to the Europe’s view on Ukraine, the surveys show that the voices of Europeans in favor and against the Ukraine’s accession to the EU are evenly divided (around 40%). The clear shift in favor of the Ukraine’s accession to the EU took place in 2005 and was triggered by the events of the Orange Revolution. However, the persisting divide of the public opinion as well as the relatively high percentage of people who do not know what to answer to Ukraine’s EU aspirations (around 15%) reflect that Ukraine remains a little known territory for the Europeans.⁸⁹

2.2 Ukraine between East and West: the Identity Quest

Ukraine is not homogeneous in national, linguistic or religious composition and after the meltdown of the Soviet Union there is no uniform idea/identity that would unify the country. Instead, several distinct identity projects that employ different

⁸⁸ “What does the European Union means to you personally?” *Eurobarometer* (May 2011) (European Union, 1995-2010), http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showchart_column.cfm?keyID=2203&nationID=11,1,27,28,17,2,16,18,13,32,6,3,4,22,33,7,8,20,21,9,23,34,24,12,19,29,26,25,5,14,10,30,15.&startdate=2011.05&enddate=2011.05 (accessed 14 April 2012).

⁸⁹ “For each of the following countries, are you in favour or not of it becoming part of the European Union in the future? Ukraine,” *Eurobarometer* (January 1996 – April 2008) (European Union, 1995-2010), http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showchart_line.cfm?keyID=262&nationID=11,1,27,28,17,2,16,18,13,32,6,3,4,22,7,8,20,21,9,23,24,12,19,29,26,25,5,14,10,30,15.&startdate=1996.01&enddate=2008.04 (accessed 14 April 2012).

geopolitical vectors, historical narratives and religious affiliations were launched in the twenty years of independence. This section introduces the discourse of Ukraine's belonging to the broader European culture and democratic tradition which has become one of the core claims of the Ukrainian national(ist) ideology, popularized in the public discussions over the past two decades.

Since its independence Ukraine has proved wrong several predictions about its short- and mid-term perspectives, dispelling the discourses on the imminent internal disintegration because of the ethnic and linguistic regional diversity,⁹⁰ on the bright perspectives for its economic development,⁹¹ and finally, on its quick and relatively easy evolution towards pluralistic market democracy due to Ukraine's inherently European culture and tradition.⁹² Although it is the lack of reforms in the post-Soviet Ukraine that accounts for the low standards in legal, political, and social spheres, one of the primary topics in political debates is the ethnic, linguistic and sometimes religious differences between the Eastern and Western Ukraine. During the independence three distinct identity projects have been undertaken on the governmental level. Central to each of them were the discourse of the past and the questions of geopolitical choice for Ukraine between East and West – whether to join the EU, develop “strategic neighborhood” with Russia, reanimate the USSR or try to become a self-sufficient state. The fact that the politicians have successfully been using ideologically charged rhetoric shows that the belonging and identity in the post-Soviet Ukraine remain to be fragmented.

One of the primary reasons that allows some scholars to speak about the “crisis of identities”⁹³ in Ukraine is that historically a number of different discourses of the Ukrainian national idea have emerged but did not gain prominence if only for a short period or on the limited territory. Ukrainian national idea started in the early 19th century as *risorgimento* of the romantic ideas of the Cossack state and was developed

⁹⁰ The ethnic composition: Ukrainian – 77.8%, Russian – 17.3% Other – 4.9; linguistic composition: Ukrainian (official) – 67%, Russian – 24%, Other – 8. Source: “Ukraine,” in *The World Factbook*, (Central Intelligence Agency), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html> (accessed 26 April 2012).

⁹¹ In 2011 Ukraine ranked 132 in the world GDP per capita with \$7,200. Ibid.

⁹² According to *Democracy Index 2011* Ukraine regressed from “flawed democracies” to “hybrid regimes,” ranking 79 out of 167 states. A Report from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Democracy under Stress: Democracy Index 2011* (The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited, 2011), http://www.sida.se/Global/About%20Sida/S%C3%A5%20arbetar%20vi/EIU_Democracy_Index_Dec2011.pdf (accessed 26 April 2012).

⁹³ Yaroslav Hrytsak, *Strasti za natsionalizmom. Istorychni essei (Passions for Nationalism: Essays on History)* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2004), 321.

by the intellectual elites into the concept of a political restoration as a separate nation. One of its elements was the continuity of Ukrainian culture from the medieval states that existed and thrived on its contemporary lands, which is reflected in the title of the seminal 10-volume *History of Ukraine-Rus'* written by the President of the short-lived Ukrainian People's Republic (1917-1920) Mykhailo Hrushevsky. This view also articulated the historical unity of the Ukrainian lands that were separated for two centuries between the Russian and Hapsburg Empires, and the reunification stance became one of the fundamental goals of the national populists movement. Obtaining independence was adopted onto agendas of ideologically divided groups, from socialists to conservatives. Among more radical thinkers, Dmytro Dontsov, known as the author of the Ukrainian integral nationalism, drew analogies between the Russian tsarism and communism, concluding that they both were inherently hostile to Europe. In this respect, Ukraine's fate, which was defined by its location between the conflicting European and Russian civilizations, lay with Europe rather than with "despotic" Russia.⁹⁴ The ideas and strong will to achieve independence by all means was inherited by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, which during the WWII formed the Ukrainian Insurrection Army, fighting against Nazis, Communists, and taking part in Ukrainian-Polish ethnic cleansings of the time. After the war, the ideas of national independence took roots in the more nationally conscious region – Galicia (or Galychyna), and were revived with the declaration of independence in 1991.

Another reason that accounts for the "confused" identity is the memory politics conducted in the USSR. The cultural and linguistic policy of the Soviet Union aimed at creating a homogeneous Soviet people with a "common [...] socialist in its essence culture" and having "the common goal – building the communism."⁹⁵ For this aim a set of historical myths of the 'proletarian internationalism' and the defense of (quasi-) national patrimony during the Great Patriotic War (WWII) was created. Instead, the Ukrainian nationalist movements were either stigmatized as 'Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism' or silenced upon. In relation to Ukraine, the myth of the common ethnic, linguistic, and religious roots of Russians, Ukrainians and

⁹⁴ Alexander J. Motyl, *The Turn to the Right: The Ideological Origins and Development of Ukrainian Nationalism, 1919-1929* (Boulder: East European quarterly, 1980), 63.

⁹⁵ "Sovetskiy Narod" ("Soviet People"), in Bol'shaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya: V 30 tomakh (*Great Soviet Encyclopedia in 30 Volumes*) (Moscow: Soviet Encyclopedia, 1969-1978), <http://bse.sci-lib.com/article103879.html> (accessed 27 April 2012). Translation mine.

Belarusians from the medieval Kyivan Rus' was promoted and the history of Ukraine was presented as a reunification of the three brotherly peoples. Only a small clandestine group of national dissidents dared to oppose the official discourse and protest against the Russification of Ukrainian culture.⁹⁶ The Soviet Experiment showed that manipulations of collective memory would cause an amnesia found in Orwellian heroes. In the early 1990s historian James Mace noted that the memory about the tragic events of the artificial famine of 1932-1933 (Holodomor), organized by the Soviet leaders against the Ukrainian peasants, took little place in official and collective memory of the Ukrainian people.⁹⁷

The third factor that enables the political speculations around the questions of the national identity is the multi-ethnic composition of Ukraine and the regional differences within the country. In the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine the identification with the Ukrainian national idea is weak, especially if compared with the prominence of the national identity in the west of the country. Therefore the first two governments based their nation-building project on the identification with the central region of Ukraine around the capital city of Kyiv, which in the relationship between the east and west plays a role of "the mediator that buffers the confrontation between the national extremism of the west and national nihilism of the southeast."⁹⁸

The newly established state was built on the civic principle and the discrete measures were taken not to exacerbate the ethnic tensions. The adopted national symbols originated from the ancient past that could unite both regions – flag was said to originate in the period of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, coat of arms – the trident – dated back to Kyivan Rus'. In the international relations the first two Presidents kept the status quo by declaring the strategic aim to enter the EU and North Atlantic Treaty Organization on the one hand, and to pursue a partial membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States, on the other. Finally, several attempts were made to reassess and rewrite the history of Ukraine in line with the world tendencies, revealing the atrocities of the Soviet past without victimization or glorification of the

⁹⁶ Keneth C. Farmer, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the Post-Stalinist Era* (The Hague, Boston, London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1980), 6.

⁹⁷ Yaroslav Hrytsak, *Strasti za natsionalizmom. Istorychni essei*, 127.

⁹⁸ Orest Subtelny, "The Ambiguities of National Identity: The Case of Ukraine," in *Ukraine: The Search for a National Identity*, edited by Sharon L. Wolchik and Volodymyr Zviglyanich (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 6.

national movement.⁹⁹

However, “history, memory and policy are separate realms, and the relationship among them is far from straightforward.”¹⁰⁰ In his study of differences between the Eastern and Western Ukraine, the Ukrainian historian Yaroslav Hrytsak had to conclude that apart from the ancient history of Kyivan Rus’ (10th-13th centuries) the population of the two regions named different landmark events when asked about the history of their country. For Lviv the history of Ukraine went through the Kyivan Rus’ – Ukrainian Cossacks – Ukrainian People’s Republic (1917-1920) – proclamation of independence in 1990. For Donetsk the same question was answered with: Kyivan Rus’ – Pereyaslav Treaty between Ukraine and Russia (1654) – Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (1917-1991). This reflects the effects of the Soviet cultural policy and the elusive connection between the history at the level of academia, school, and the common historical memory.¹⁰¹

The events of the Orange revolution not only promoted a positive image of Ukraine in the world, but also brought about a turn in the cultural policies within the country. In the international relations, Ukraine was never as close to the North Atlantic and European integration before. President Yushchenko resorted to a liberal version of national populist ideology, shifting the identity project from the central Ukrainian to the western version of the Ukrainian nationhood.

The last change of power in the Presidential palace in 2010 reversed the strategic vector to the East – giving preference to the eastern Ukrainian identity as a reference point for the rest of the country and reorienting toward the north-eastern partnership with Russia. President Yanukovych and his supporters rely on the concept of century-long ties with Russia and sentiment of the prosperous past, stability, and order within the Soviet Union, appealing primarily to the older generation. Promotion of Russian language and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate came to complete the new vision of the Ukrainian identity and its closeness to Russian culture. The denial of the Famine-Holodomor of 1932-1933 is one of the examples of

⁹⁹ The first attempts were made by Yaroslav Dashkevych, *Ukraina vchora i nyini. Narysy, vystupy, esse (Ukraine yesterday and today. Collection of essays)* (Kyiv, 1993); Yaroslav Isayevych, *Ukraina davnia i nova: narod, relihiya, kultura (Ukraine – Ancient and Modern: People, Religion, Culture)* (Lviv: Instytut ukrainoznavstva imeni I. Krypiakevycha, 1996).

¹⁰⁰ Timothy Snyder, “Memory of sovereignty and sovereignty over memory,” 40.

¹⁰¹ Yaroslav Hrytsak, *Strasti za natsionalizmom. Istorychni essei*, 17.

the reversal of the cultural policies conducted by Yanukovych's predecessor.¹⁰² In the light of the failure to achieve progress in signing the agreement on associated membership or the visa facilitation agreement with the EU, the European Football Championship 2012 that will be co-hosted by Ukraine and Poland remains one of the few events that remind Ukrainians about the Europe's proximity. In the most recent developments, however, this football tournament may highlight new and deeper divides between Ukraine and Europe, since the EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and Justice Commissioner Viviane Reding have chosen to boycott the Eurocup because of the news of mistreatment of imprisoned opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko, and this boycott may be joined by other European leaders.¹⁰³

In all this discussion of Ukraine being caught between east and west the question is what 'Europe' means for Ukrainians? According to the survey of ENPI info center conducted in November 2010, for 79% of Ukrainians the EU is a good neighbor associated with human rights (56%), economic prosperity (53%), democracy (43%) as top characteristics that best represent the EU.¹⁰⁴ Economic development takes an important place in the perception of Europe among Ukrainians, and is seen as a primary reason that does not allow joining the EU, leaving the question of cultural distinctions insignificant.¹⁰⁵

A Ukrainian historian Jaroslav Hrytsak summed up: "Whether Ukraine belongs to Europe or not depends not so much on the 'objective' historical facts and traditions, as on the number of people, who believe in such affinity."¹⁰⁶ In line with Benedict Anderson's views on nationalism, Hrytsak continues that "the imagined reality is not less real than the 'tangible' reality."¹⁰⁷ There are around 25-30% of such 'staunch believers' in Ukraine's belonging to Europe and around the same number of those who 'doubt' such a connection and remain ambivalent in their preference for the Eastern versus Western affiliations, hence the idea of belonging to European culture in

¹⁰² "Yanukovych reverses Ukraine's position on Holodomor famine," *Ria Novosti*, 27 April 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/exsoviet/20100427/158772431.html> (accessed 27 April 2012).

¹⁰³ "Tymoshenko Case: Europe Pressure on Ukraine Intensifies," BBC News Europe, 30 April 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17892514> (accessed 30 April 2012).

¹⁰⁴ "More and more Ukrainians see EU as good neighbour," *The ENPI Info Centre*, November 2010, http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine/documents/more_and_more_ukrainians_see_eu_as_good_neighbour_en.pdf (accessed 14 April 2012).

¹⁰⁵ "What is the greatest obstacle for Ukraine's accession to the EU?" Razumkov Center, Sociological survey (December 2008), http://www.uceps.org/ukr/poll.php?poll_id=412 (accessed 27 April 2012)

¹⁰⁶ Jaroslav Hrytsak, *Strasti za natsionalizmom. Istorychni essei*, 321.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

many cases is a component of the very thin and fluid national identity in Ukraine.

2.3 Religious Syncretism: the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

One of the historical ways to define the idea of Europe mentioned above was to treat this space in terms of religious belonging. Although Christendom is today a historical concept, one cannot but notice that the majority of the EU member states (apart from Romania and Bulgaria) belong to the traditional Western Christianity. This rather symbolic tendency illustrates the status of Ukraine as a border-case between the East and West in religious sphere as well. This is clearly seen from the example of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), since even its title accommodates seemingly contentious notions of Eastern (Orthodox) and Western (Catholic) Christianity. The syncretism and hybridity of the UGCC puts a number of challenges for the theories of religion and the history of its development and is an example that completes the general picture of the contested Ukrainian national identity.¹⁰⁸

According to the union of 1595-1596, a group of Ruthenian¹⁰⁹ bishops acknowledged the primacy of the Roman Pope but retained the Eastern Orthodox rite, which should have guaranteed the Ruthenian clergy and nobility certain political rights in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and revitalized the religious life in the Orthodox Metropolis of Kyiv.¹¹⁰ Similarity of rites, on the one hand, and the different loyalties, on the other, brought the Uniates (as the Greek Catholics were called until the late 18th century) and the Orthodox Church into perpetual feud. The ambitions of the Russian expansion westward under the motto of protection of Eastern Orthodoxy

¹⁰⁸ Religious composition of Ukrainian society: Ukrainian Orthodox (Kyiv Patriarchate) – 50.4 %, Ukrainian Orthodox (Moscow Patriarchate) – 26 %, Ukrainian Greek Catholics – 8 %, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox – 7.2 %, Roman Catholic – 2.2 %, Protestant – 2.2 %, Other – 3.8 %. Source: “Ukraine” *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html> (accessed 26 April 2012).

¹⁰⁹ Ruthenians - a historic name for Ukrainians corresponding to the Ukrainian *русини* (русини). For centuries thereafter *Rutheni* was used in Latin as the designation of all East Slavs, particularly Ukrainians and Belarusians. Source: “Ruthenians,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine* (Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta/University of Toronto), <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/2display.asp?linkPath=pages\R\U\Ruthenians.htm> (accessed 28 April 2012).

¹¹⁰ Borys Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 426-427.

caused further amalgamation of political loyalties and religious allegiances. After the Partitions of Poland several million Ruthenian peasants were (re)converted into Russian Orthodoxy and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was confined for over a century mainly to the easternmost province of the Hapsburg Empire – Galicia.¹¹¹ Therefore, the identity of the Greek Catholic Church developed mainly in opposition to the Russian Orthodoxy.

Another important feature of the Greek Catholic identity is its close ties with the national movement. During the Revolutions of 1848 the interests of Ruthenians, who were mainly peasants, were represented by the Greek Catholic clergy.¹¹² Of great importance were connections between peasantry and the local priests, who could convey the national ferment into the village. In the same manner, one of the most popular periodicals among peasants between 1900 and 1914 *Missionar*, edited by the Greek Catholic monastic order of St. Basil the Great, was one of the first to use the modern phonetic script, diverting itself from a number of other projects.¹¹³ Therefore the UGCC became the forerunner of the national awakening in Galicia.

Greater fusion between the UGCC and the national movement occurred with the onset of nationalist movement. Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, who headed the UGCC during the tumultuous epoch of 1901-1944, supported the national revival but sharply opposed national extremism or ethnic intolerance. One of his main goals was the unification of Kyiv Church that required ‘purification’ of the UGCC ritual from the Latin elements that were introduced in the previous centuries (Latin pictures, statues, hymns, the use of organs, practices). Introduction of holidays of the “native” Kyivan saints, establishment of the Eastern Orthodox monastic orders was another step to come closer to Eastern Orthodoxy, yet this did not impress the Orthodox critics of the UGCC who still regard it as an agent of Western aggression.

Social and national discourses that were entering the public sphere in the course of the 18th century introduced the alternative to religion ideologies and initiated the process that contemporary theoreticians of secularization define as “a scenario in

¹¹¹ Barbara Skinner, *The Western Front of the Eastern Church: Uniate and Orthodox Conflict in 18th-century Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2009), 219.

¹¹² Kost' Levytskyi, *Istoria politychnoi dumky Halyts'kyh Ukrainsiv, 1848-1914. (The History of the Political Thought of the Galician Ukrainians, 1848-1914)* (Lviv, 1926), 26.

¹¹³ John Paul Himka, *Religion and Nationality in the Western Ukraine* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 161-162.

which mankind shifted from the religious mode to the secular.”¹¹⁴ However, we can say that the processes of formation of the Ukrainian nation that took place in the first half of the 20th century included both modes which worked as complementary and competing all at the same time. This thesis deals with the participation of the religious community in the process of national self-identification and the development of the religious-patriotic ideology in the context of immigration.

The Church’s active participation in the life of Ukrainian immigrants is one of the features of the UGCC that distinguished it from the Eastern Orthodoxy. By 1920s over 700 thousand Galician Ukrainians, predominantly adherents of the UGCC, immigrated to Americas. The pastoral function of the UGCC in diaspora, its connection with the national idea allowed to retain cultural identity in immigration and also played an important role of the guardian of unaltered tradition – the function of religion that Danièle Hervieu-Léger called “chain of memory.”¹¹⁵

The UGCC was banned by the Soviet regime under the pretext of reunification. The pseudo-council of 1946 proclaimed the reunification of the UGCC and the Russian Orthodox Church which outlawed the former denomination in the USSR and started the “catacomb period” of the UGCC.¹¹⁶ The clergy was either to abdicate their confession or to be sent to gulag. Among those who faced the repressions were the bishops and the Sheptytsky’s successor – Metropolitan Joseph Slipy, who spent 18 years in Siberian gulag and in 1963 was amnestied and allowed to return to Rome. The bitter memory of the communist past plays a crucial role in the contemporary life of the Greek Catholic Churches.

The uninterrupted existence of the UGCC as an underground Church for over 50 years not only proves its remarkable adaptability but also enabled it to develop flexible practices in order to continue its pastoral work. After the Church was officially allowed to resume its activities in 1989, it was the Greek Catholic diaspora in North America that enabled its successful revival. Property restitution claims brought the UGCC and the Orthodox communities into an open hostility in the 1990s.

¹¹⁴ David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot, England, Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), 18.

¹¹⁵ Stephanie Mahieu and Vlad Naumescu, eds., *Churches in-between: Greek Catholic Churches in Postsocialist Europe* (Berlin: LIT, 2008), 16.

¹¹⁶ For detailed account of this period see Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State, 1939-1950* (Edmonton : Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1996), Chapter 5: “The Reunion of the Greek Catholics with the Russian Orthodox Church: the Lviv Sobor,” 148-183.

The latest changes in administrative structure that should lead to establishment of more autonomous status of Patriarchate for the Church returns may become a catalyst for further confrontation.

Today there are around 4,269,000 adherents of the UGCC in Ukraine, and although the church ranks third among other Churches in the country in terms of the size of its parishes, it continues to be one of the most active denominations among the Ukrainian migrants abroad. The following chapters address the role of religion and church in the process of formation of Ukrainian migrants' identity in the new member-states of the European Union. This process is a continuation of the quest that has not been completed in Ukraine, though it is influenced by several new factors, with the readiness of Europeans to accept immigrants in general, and Ukrainian immigrants in particular, playing an important role.

Chapter 3. Visa Procedures as a Part of the Intercultural Dialogue

The 14th EU-Ukraine summit, which took place in Brussels on November 22, 2010, was an important landmark for the ongoing visa facilitation process between Ukraine and the European Union. During the summit, Ukraine received the action plan which set out the requirements for establishment of a visa-free regime for a short-stay travel.¹¹⁷ The action plan does not set the concrete dates for achieving the visa-free regime and the question when the Ukrainian citizens will have an opportunity to travel to the countries of the Schengen area without visa remains open and looks somewhat more distant today than back in 2010.

Although the visa facilitation process between the European Union and Ukraine is under way, the visa regime for the Ukrainian citizens remains a reality through which they imagine Europe. Their first encounter with the European Union starts days, weeks, and sometimes months before they actually cross the border. The application procedure as an early stage of border crossing represents a unique field for studies of “[the] ‘frontiers of identity’ where different ‘systems’ meet and can most easily be compared.”¹¹⁸ It is during the visa application – standard and yet different for all the EU member-countries of the Schengen area – that the applicants find out about the expectations and preconceptions “Europe” has about them. This is also the time when a lot of them make their own conclusions about the “United Europe.” Therefore, the primary aim of this chapter is to show how the imagined frontiers influence the perception of the other and how that perception of the other influences the perception of oneself.

The introductory part of this chapter discusses the current situation with the visa issuing process. To create a more comprehensive overall picture of the process, the review of the standard requirements for visa application is complemented with additional factors (virtual queues, distances to consulates, rejection rate). Sources for

¹¹⁷ “14th EU-Ukraine Summit,” Joint Press Statement (Brussels, 22 November 2010), http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/117912.pdf (accessed 3 June 2011).

¹¹⁸ James Anderson, Liam O’Dowd and Thomas M. Wilson, “Why Study Borders Now?” in *New Borders for a Changing Europe. Cross-border Cooperation and Governance*, edited by James Anderson, Liam O’Dowd and Thomas M. Wilson (London, Portland: Frank Cass, 2003), 7.

this part of the paper were the official documents and the information from the websites of the consulates of Schengen countries in Ukraine.

The second part of this chapter presents the findings of my research based on interviews with visa applicants at the exits of consulates in Kyiv in December 2010. Six interviewees represent different regions, age/gender groups. In addition to the assessment of the quality of the visa issuing procedure, the interviews yielded data concerning the role of the consulates and application procedure in creating the perceived image of Europe and Ukraine. How do people relate to their national belonging once it becomes instrumental (or rather a hindrance) for their personal goals? And what preconceptions about the EU and its particular member-states does the visa application process evoke in them? These would become the main questions underlying the discussion in this chapter.

3.1 EU-Ukraine Visa Dialogue

After the breakup of the Soviet bloc and of the bipolar world system, the security agenda for the Western Europe have changed and became more diverse. Among the new issues were the uncontrolled migration and refugee flows, connected with the opening of the Iron Curtain and the enhanced freedom of movement of the former Socialist bloc citizens. To counter the uncontrolled migration into the Western Europe, in 1996 the Schengen accords were implemented into the EU agenda. The implementation of the Schengen Agreement as a multilateral “pooling of sovereignty” initiated two opposite processes – debordering between the EU member-states and rebordering with the states beyond the agreement, which left the immediate neighbors in the “buffer-zone.”¹¹⁹ In this process, Ukraine has lost economic and cultural ties with the East-Central European countries that were restored for a brief period after the 1991 and became a “buffer state” between the EU and Russia.

However, to find possibilities for (re)establishment of the economic and cultural connections, the visa dialog between the EU and Ukraine was opened in 2005 with the cancellation of the short-stay visas for the citizens of the European Union who wanted to visit Ukraine. Another landmark was the EC-Ukraine Visa Facilitation Agreement (VFA), signed on January 1, 2008, which simplified the application

¹¹⁹ Peter Andreas and Timothy Snyder, eds., *The Wall around the West*, 2-3.

procedure for certain categories of Ukrainian citizens, set the number of days for processing visa applications, specified the list of supporting documents necessary for the trip.¹²⁰

Like in the case with Ukraine today, the slow progress in the EU enlargement back in the late 1990s was attributed to the prospects of open frontiers and resulting security concerns that were quite vague at that time.¹²¹ However, as the border became an established reality, it is not only the illegal migration, but also labor migration that may be perceived as a threat posed by Ukraine. Although one of the main reasons for adopting the transitional arrangements for the new member states was a fear of mass migration, current researches predict that only between 2 and 7 percent of new member states' population will move to the West European countries.¹²²

Visa facilitation process is not a new question, but Ukrainian governments tend to pay more attention to the economic relations, forgetting the importance of the social mobility and demographic shifts for the long-term economic perspective. Although Ukraine set on the visa facilitation process together with Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia, unlike those latter countries, it has not succeeded in introducing a visa-free travel that could positively influence life and mobility of its citizens and of the country's development. Therefore with this research I try to emphasize the long-term benefits from the 'soft' and less pragmatic cultural aspects of the EU-Ukraine cooperation.

3.2 Obtaining a Visa

Visa-issuing procedure is a complicated process that requires a number of actions to be completed before one may receive a Schengen visa. Applicants need to select the visa type, fill out of the application form and gather supporting documents, submit the documents to the consulate, and pay the visa fee.

¹²⁰ "Agreement between the European Community and Ukraine on the facilitation of the issuance of visa," *Official Journal of the European Union*, (18.12.2007), Article 7, http://www.mfa.gov.hu/NR/rdonlyres/FC386AC8-923F-4064-872A-790F2266C2B8/0/EU_Ukraine_en.pdf (accessed 23 May 2011).

¹²¹ Malcolm Anderson and Eberhard Bort, *The Frontiers of the European Union* (Palgrave, 2001), 144.

¹²² Martin Kahanec and Klaus F. Zimmermann, "Migration in an Enlarged EU: A Challenging Solution?" Economic Paper of the European Commission No. 363, March 2009, p. 67. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication14287_en.pdf (accessed 3 June 2011).

Currently there are two types of Schengen visas for Ukrainian citizens, but it is the short-term visa (type C), which allows entering a Schengen country with the intention to stay there for up to 90 days for tourism, business, family reunion and other purposes, that is requested most often by the Ukrainian applicants.¹²³ A visa application form can be obtained at any consulate or via internet. With small exceptions, the application form can be filled out in Ukrainian (in Latin script) or in the language of the country of destination. Different agencies offer to inexperienced applicants to fill out the application for them for a certain fee.

The standard supporting documents listed in Article 4 of the VFA include international passport, filled application, two color passport-size photographs, travel insurance valid in the county of entry, the document that proves the purpose of the entry (invitation or a request from a hosting person, etc.).¹²⁴ Currently, consulates request also a proof of economic means to cover the stay, a proof of accommodation, which additionally complicates the application procedure.

It is difficult to estimate the cost of the visa application, as it is an aggregate value that consists of different expenses. The VFA waives official visa fees for certain categories of people (for example, students),¹²⁵ while the regular citizens pay the fixed non-reimbursable fee in the amount of 35 EUR. The cost of the health insurance usually ranges from 20 EUR to 35 EUR. The international ID/passport, issued by the Ukrainian authorities, has to be valid for a minimum of three months after the intended date of return to Ukraine and costs from 60 EUR. Therefore, the minimal price of the visa application (including the international passport and excluding travel expenses) is over 100 EUR.

Apart from the list of required documents and the visa fee, a number of additional factors may contribute to the negative attitude to the standards, requirements, and organization of the visa issuing procedure. These include live and virtual queues of the applicants, unfriendly attitude of the embassy/consulate staff, low network of consular offices, lengthy waiting times that account for an impression

¹²³ Iryna Sushko, Olexiy Vradiy et al., *Schengen Consulates in Assessments and Ratings Visa Practices of the EU Member States in Ukraine 2010. Monitoring Paper* (Kyiv: Vistka, 2010), 16.

¹²⁴ “Agreement between the European Community and Ukraine on the facilitation of the issuance of visa,” *Official Journal of the European Union*, (18.12.2007), Article 4, http://www.mfa.gov.hu/NR/rdonlyres/FC386AC8-923F-4064-872A-790F2266C2B8/0/EU_Ukraine_en.pdf. (accessed 23 May 2011).

¹²⁵ Ibid.

about the Schengen as “a cumbersome requirement or even an intentional barrier to entry for lawful travelers.”¹²⁶

The scholars were trying to explain the decrease in traffic between the new EU member-states and their eastern neighbors not only with the economic, but also psychological reasons. While the former included the cost of a single-entry visa and the need to travel long distances to obtain it, the latter considered “the feelings of frustration and humiliation which accompany the burdensome application process and inconsiderate treatment from border guards.”¹²⁷

Most of the consulates accept applications after the prior internet or telephone registration, and although the live queues near the consulates mainly disappeared, the online virtual lines increase the actual time of visa waiting period. The problem of real queues and issuing period remains a difficulty in the consulates with a high number of applicants or without the preliminary registration (mainly CEE); in those circumstances, people in the live queue tend to create stressful situations when trying to cut in front of others or simply voicing their frustration from the several hour wait. Although today the situation has improved, around 10% of the applicants spend more than 3 hours in the queues.¹²⁸ Another factor is the quantity of consulates in different regions of Ukraine. In case of Sweden, its only consulate in Ukraine is located in the capital and the applicants from other regions may have to travel considerable distance or stay in Kyiv for several days for the visa application. The EU countries that issue the greatest number of visas constantly extend the network of visa centers to cope with this issue.

The general tendency is that since the VFA came into power, the situation has been constantly improving. The refusal rates fell to a relatively low level of 5 percent in 2010, from 14 percent in 2007 (the norm is considered to be 3%). At the same time, there is no significant change regarding the required supplementing documents.¹²⁹

3.3 Application Procedure

This part of the study represents the analysis of the interviews with visa applicants

¹²⁶ Piotr Kazmierkiewicz, *Turning Threats into Opportunities. Impact of the Expansion of Schengen Acquis on the New Borderlands* (Warsaw, 2003), 29.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 15.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Iryna Sushko, Olexiy Vradiy et al., *Schengen Consulates*, 14.

taken in December 2010 in Kyiv. The object of the research was the perception of Europe and Ukraine in the context of visa relations. The questions included the attitude of the applicants to the visa procedure, quality of consulate services, and overall opinion on the visa issuing process.

The interviews showed a discrepancy between the applicants' generally positive or neutral evaluation of the application procedure and their own negative experience from the procedure. Positive assessment of the application process given by Idris¹³⁰ does not correlate with the effort it took him to meet the additional requirements in order to obtain a visa:

The officer in the consulate said that my apartment in Ukraine was too small. And all I had to do was to rent a new, bigger apartment and then they issued me the visa. It was that easy, I showed them the ownership documents and got it. They have to see that something keeps you [in Ukraine] and you have a substantial income.

He concludes that it is not difficult to obtain the second visa, "Generally, consulates were very nice especially when they saw that I had already had a Schengen visa issued before," which is supposed to mean that the applicant will not stay illegally in Schengen countries because he has had an opportunity to do so earlier.

Similar example comes from Pavlo, who had to bring additional documents not listed among the requirements for the application:

The officer told me to bring a document that would prove that my sister is, actually, my sister. I did not have other way out but call her and ask to send the copy of her birth certificate via fax, and then run through the unknown city to some post office and back. It was tough, but in the end I even managed to get on my bus on time.

These examples of the process' challenges do not change the overall neutral (or positive, if the problem was solved) attitude to the application procedure requirements. The applicants consider them as a reality and the positive outcome dominates in the overall impression.

Even more compelling are the description of the ways to bypass the requirements. Idris recalls inflating his bank statement: "[Applicants] ask some of their relatives, someone they trust, to lend them money, temporarily, to make a more impressive bank account." In this case, the flaws of the system, the requirements and

¹³⁰ All personal names of the interviewees in Chapter 3 and 4 have been changed.

the ways to bypass them are not presented as something abnormal, but as a pure reality that helps to cope with the application process.

What is not mentioned by the interviewees is also very important. Although the issues with money occurred in several cases,¹³¹ the applicants did not complain about the high visa fees. It supports the assumption that if the traveler is resolved to undertake an expensive travel, the visa fee will not be regarded as an impossible obstacle.¹³²

Another aspect of the visa application process is the amount of documents that are not mentioned directly. In addition to Pavel's successful experience, Oleh evaluates the application process as "very fast and efficient. They even allowed me to add [missing] documents afterwards." The flexibility of the process in these two cases is regarded as something extraordinarily positive. Therefore, the aspect of time and amount of the required documents are perceived as more important by the applicants, than the direct and indirect visa fees and costs.

Generally neutral attitude comes along with negative anecdotes about the application procedure. The most important attitude, common for all the interviewees, is that despite the described difficulties, the application procedure is perceived with its positive and negative sides as a reality set from above.

3.4 Consulates as Autonomous Spaces

If, despite the reality, the procedure was assessed as a neutral experience, the consulates received different characteristics. The views varied depending on which consulate is discussed. For the Hungarian consulate Irdis mentions:

Generally, consulates were very nice especially when they saw that I have already had the Schengen visa issued before, and that my documents were alright. I did not have the clear confirmation for a place of stay reserved in Hungary for my internship, but the Consul himself contacted my University and settled the matter.

A totally opposite assessment comes from Taras:

¹³¹ Taras from Kyiv, "Back in 1998, I was trying to prove that I received the money on credit card. It was unusual at that time and I showed them bank statement, but they required extraction from the accountant office from my workplace."

¹³² Piotr Kazmierkiewicz, *Turning Threats into Opportunities. Impact of the Expansion of Schengen Acquis on the New Borderlands* (Warsaw, 2003), 27-28.

In Czech embassy the light may go off, and queues are unorganized. Different swindlers are making money on ignorant people. Everybody, including Ukrainian police and embassy staff, knows that, but they say, ‘What can we do about that?’

The different characteristics may signify the differences between the consulates, which correlates with the main object of the researches by independent NGOs, such as *Europe without Barriers* (Ukraine) and *Stefan Batory Foundation* (Poland), which aims to monitor the current situation with the problematic aspects of the visa issuing procedure, comparing the work of different consulates and suggesting amendments to their work.¹³³ However, this shows that the consulate work is seen to be divided in two spheres – Ukrainian and European; the police and the staff represent the Ukrainian side, while the consul and high-rank officers stand for Europe. The positive attitude is connected with the latter rather than with the former. This double nature suggests that the consulates are independent entities between Europe and Ukraine that do not fully represent either of them but rather stand for the universal bureaucracy.

The positive characteristics of the consulates show, instead, the aspects that are the most important for the applicants. In the case of Oksana, the Austrian embassy is good because of the polite and prepared personnel, and orderly arranged queues; efficient, as implied by Sergey, and fast and flexible for Oleh. Consulates may represent the image of orderly and efficient Europe if they meet the expectations of the applicants. Nonetheless, even in the best cases, the fact that the staff of the consulate is mainly composed of Ukrainian employees will not allow to fully associate Europe with this institution.

At the same time, the criticism of consulates is not connected with the embassy personnel exclusively. For Taras, the negative sides of the embassy are imposed by the impersonal “system” rather than the staff.

3.5 The image of Europe

One of the primary questions in my research was whether the image of Europe is

¹³³ See, for example, Iryna Sushko, Olexiy Vradny and Oleksandr Sushko, *Public Monitoring of the EU Member States' Visa Issuance Policies and Practices in Ukraine*, translated by Liliya Levandovska and Nataliya Parkhomenko (Kyiv: Vistka, 2009); Iryna Sushko, Olexiy Vradiy et al., *Schengen Consulates in Assessments and Ratings Visa Practices of the EU Member States in Ukraine 2010. Monitoring Paper* (Kyiv: Vistka, 2010).

rendered through the embassies and whether it is a positive or negative one. As it has been suggested above, the consulates themselves do not form the image of the European countries. For this reason, it may be more productive to ask what image of Europe the people who intend to travel there have. The interviews show that Europe is characterized positively as tolerant (Idris) and high-cultured/well-mannered (Oleh), affluent, dynamic (Sergey), tranquil (Pavlo).

In case of Oksana the most important were affluence and positive attitude of Europeans. Oksana calls her first impressions from Europe a ‘euphoria,’ which means that the fascination has eventually passed. She says that gradually she “realized that it [Europe] is very similar [to Ukraine], it’s the same people and the same problems, just different decorations.” In her view, it is the security and the feeling of protection which distinguishes Europe and Ukraine the most:

You see, when I came to Austria for the first time [1998] people were not afraid to leave their belongings and bicycles in the streets without supervision. But today it changed much, because of the migrants from Asia. And today Ukraine and Europe are going closer in this sense [of (in)security].

It follows that in Oksana’s view Europe tries to make itself safer introducing visa regime. Neither the embassies nor the visa requirements can shatter the generally positive image of Europe for her. Although Taras noted several cases when the German consulate followed the rules too closely, for example, denying entrance to a blind boy who could not be present at the interview, he philosophically concludes, “It is nobody’s fault, the system is like that. All they try to do is to prevent the illegal migration.” In this case “they” clearly stands not for consulates but rather for Europe, associated with rules and requirements.

3.6 ‘Applicants’ or ‘Ukrainians’? Search for Identity

List of documents for the application may give Ukrainians a reference for imagining themselves through these norms and standards. Probably the most unexpected statement that came from the majority of interviewees was the general attitude to the institution of visa for Ukrainians. Some of the interviewees believe that visa requirements should not be lifted for Ukrainians (Sergey). In his view Europe makes legitimate steps trying to protect itself from the Ukrainian labor migrants. The same

idea, that Ukrainians would flood Europe, was expressed by Oleh, who said that “the higher living standards and also the [high] level of culture” would attract Ukrainians to the more affluent Europe. Taras tries to challenge the perceived threat of Ukrainian labor force, “The same was said about Poland, before it joined the EU, but nothing of the sort happened.”

The view that Europe tries to shield itself from the threat of Ukrainians creates the double identity among the Ukrainians, who tend to talk about their compatriots *en masse* as about somebody else, while not regarding themselves “true Europeans” either. This may be seen as a transitional “applicant identity.” At the same time, interviewees emphasized the positive qualities of Ukrainians in general, and their own ties with Ukraine. Oksana recalls the first months when she was trying to learn German from the scratch. Idris, despite his cosmopolitanism, continuously returns to his family in Ukraine. The appropriate question asked by Taras makes one wonder about the actual efficiency of the visa regime: “How many ways are there to get necessary documents or go across the border illegally? And those who really wanted to go there are already there.”

What distinguished Taras is that he did not see the procedure as a given reality that could not be changed, not agreeing with the very idea of suspicion and mistrust. “Everybody would win, seasonal workers and the economy of the EU countries as they would pay taxes. Illegal migration, this is negative for Europe. They are fighting against the wrong enemy.”

On the other hand, applicants often stated that their sense of national belonging changed when they found themselves in a foreign country. The idea that the national identity actualizes with the increased mobility is inherent in the modernist approach to the nationalism studies. As it has been mentioned in the first two chapters, in Ukraine, the crisis of national identity and the rudiments of the Soviet identity are more likely to increase as one goes from the western border of the country eastward. It was very interesting to find both approaches to the national idea among the interviewees that were coming from different regions of Ukraine.

Oksana from Luhansk, Eastern Ukraine, says that she discovered her national identity after living in other countries. “I felt myself Ukrainian for the first time abroad. I mean I feel proud to be a Ukrainian.” The national identity for her means first of all an appreciation of Ukrainian traditions and culture. Her patriotic feelings

are connected with her children: “I would not leave the country [change the citizenship] depriving my children of Ukraine. I want them to become mature and feel themselves Ukrainians.”

The stay abroad did not evoke the same reaction in other interviewees. Taras, who originates from Western Ukraine rejects national patriotism: “This is all nonsense. All I’ve learned is that national consciousness is not about singing folk songs or walking around in an embroidered shirt, it’s about practical things.”

On the other hand, many other factors like the person’s age and actual experience abroad can account for the answers. Pavel said that his feelings of national identity did become stronger when being abroad, despite the fact that he represents Western Ukraine and his national identity could have been clearly defined even before the trip. The issue requires further research, but even this limited data shows different modes and levels of national identity and the influence that the mobility has on this on-going process.

To conclude, it can be said that the visa application procedure can give information not only about the application procedure itself. It creates the situation, when the travelers meet the list of requirements and form their own image of Ukrainians (i.e., themselves). In this respect, the interviews with visa applicants yielded contradictory data.

The review of the standard requirements for the visa application shows that it is a challenging, expensive, and time-consuming procedure that may form negative view about Europe and its expectations towards Ukrainians. However, the impression Ukrainians receive about the European countries from visiting the consulates does not always coincide with the experience they have with the application procedure. One of the possible reasons is that the applicants do not associate the consulates with Europe. As the consulates do not represent European countries they may be perceived as autonomous (bureaucratic) spaces. While the difficulties the applicants meet in the consulates are attributed to the Ukrainian staff, the image of Europe may be perceived as a set of impersonal requirements for the visa application procedure, which are respected, incorporated in reality, and receive neutral attitude.

Secondly, the positive attitude to Europe and the strict set of requirements are synthesized and interposed back on the image of Ukrainians. Interviewees tend to treat visa as a positive institution, considering the interests of Europe as primary to

those of Ukraine and Ukrainians. Moreover, the threat of Ukrainian labour migration, rather than illegal migration via Ukraine, is perceived as the reason to keep the visa regime.

Finally, the question of the influence of mobility on the national identity, which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, can get certain answers already at the stage of visa application. The formation of national identity can be more active in the Eastern Ukraine, where the dominant Soviet identity gradually disappears, opening space for emerging national consciousness. The study reveals, however, that the crisis of identity can be found in all regions of Ukraine, and travel abroad can trigger ethno-national feelings when they were vague or strengthen the civic national identity if the traveller had a strong ethnic national feelings before.

Chapter 4. Olomour-Budapest: Identity Meeting Points

After Ukrainians cross the Ukraine-EU border, their preconceptions and stereotypes about Europe are tested and modified. The experience of Europe and the perception of the other also make them reconsider their self- and collective identity. In this respect, the immigrant groups and communities become crucial for social accommodation, providing certain stable points of reference for one's self-identification, which reduce the anxiety that may be caused by continuous questioning and exclusion. In this chapter I compare two Ukrainian communities in central Europe – Olomouc (Czech Republic) and Budapest (Hungary). Such multi-locale fieldwork allowed asking how the differences in organizational structure of the two communities influence cultural accommodation and the migrants' definition of belonging.

In Chapter 3, visa centers and consulates played the role of the mediating institution between the Ukrainian applicants and the 'Europe,' serving as special spaces of encounter with Europe. In this analysis the function of the mediating spaces, now between Europe and Ukraine, is fulfilled by the immigrant organizations/groups. People who choose to stay outside of their ethnic community, relying on their personal networks that are based on shared interests rather than nationality, are not necessarily more likely to assimilate; nor can they escape the revision of their cultural belonging, triggered by the binary opposition of Ukrainian *versus* European.

4.1 Ukrainian Communities in Budapest and Olomouc: Setting the Scene

Olomouc, a city of approximately one hundred thousand inhabitants, an administrative center in Moravia region of Czech Republic, attracts Ukrainians from different regions both for work and studies. If the former possibility exists due to relatively liberal migration policies of the Czech Republic, the draw for the Ukrainian students is the well-established Palacký University of Olomouc and for the theologians – the Archbishop's Seminary of Olomouc. Ukrainian cultural life in Olomouc is connected with several organizations. The section of Ukrainian studies at

the Philosophical Faculty of Palacký University and the Olomouc Archdiocesan Caritas revitalize cultural life, organizing celebrations of the Ukrainian national and religious holidays and marking the day of the Ukrainian culture. However, on more regular basis, Ukrainians in Olomouc gather for Sunday services at the Greek Catholic Church.

The Apostolic Exarchate¹³⁴ for the Catholics of byzantine rite in the Czech Republic aims to “establish parishes and pastoral centers for the Greek Catholics from the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Slovakia and other countries.”¹³⁵ The Greek Catholic parish in Olomouc is one of the parishes that can be called an epitome of multiculturalism as it includes Ukrainians, Slovaks, Czechs, Rusyns and other nationalities and ethnicities. On average 25 parishioners attend Sunday services on a regular basis. They represent different age/social groups – from students and workers to pensioners. Seasonal workers and one- or two-year students account for the continuous rotation of the composition of the parish.

In the case of the Greek Catholic parish in Olomouc, the combination of the traditions of Eastern and Western Christianity, discussed in Chapter 2, is particularly vivid. Since the parish does not have their own church building, the services are conducted in the building of the Roman Catholic Church. The syncretism is especially noticeable in the language of liturgy. In accordance with the Eastern Christian tradition, it is conducted in Church Slavonic, which makes it accessible for the different nationals. On the other hand, the Czech language is used for the sermon and in some prayers, while chants and recitals are usually read in Ukrainian. In addition, the church follows the Gregorian calendar, which is the same as the Roman Catholic church uses and which differs by 14 days from the Julian calendar, followed by the Christian denominations in Ukraine. These features make the parish in Olomouc a multinational community, united by a single Greek Catholic confession, rather than a typical Ukrainian diasporic community based on exclusionary ethno-national idea.

¹³⁴ In the Eastern Catholic church tradition, an Apostolic Exarchate is usually created in the areas, outside of the home territories of the particular Church, where the number of the faithful is yet too small to be granted the status of eparchy. To oversee the exarchate, the Pope appoints an Exarch – a Bishop who is directly subordinated to the Rome rather than to the Patriarch, archbishop or metropolitan of the given Church.

¹³⁵ “Basic Information” Apostolic Exarchate of the Greek Catholic Church in the Czech Republic <http://reckokat.cz/exarchat/eng/230.html> (accessed 29 April 2012).

The current composition of the Ukrainian diaspora in Hungary was formed gradually and over a long period of time. The indigenous settlers of Slavic origin compose the majority in many villages in the east of Hungary and nowadays associate themselves with Ukrainian and Rusyn ethnicities. The Ukrainian-Hungarian intermarriages formed during the Soviet period compose the second layer of immigration that drew people from different parts of Ukraine. The most recent immigrants came as a part of the latest wave of labor migration in the early 1990s; seasonal workers and the exchange students also join the community for shorter time spans.¹³⁶

Being one of the most active in the EEC region, well organized and structured, the Ukrainian immigrant community in Budapest may be called a classic diaspora. While the Greek Catholic church is the center for the community in Olomouc, the cultural life of the Ukrainian migrants in Budapest revolves around the secular institution of the Ukrainian Self-Government in Hungary (USGH). The organization unites 12 local branches, cooperates with Ukrainian diasporas in the Western Europe, and is a staunch supporter of the Ukrainian nationalist ideas. In particular, the members of USGH established a Ukrainian Sunday school for young children, regularly celebrate national and religious holidays, initiate and sponsor installation of monuments and plaques in memory of the Ukrainian writers, organize cultural and national activities, conferences in Ukrainian studies, run broadcasting on radio and TV, and issue a monthly magazine.

Both cities – Budapest and Olomouc – are located relatively close to the Ukrainian border, with daily bus and/or train routes that take around 15 hours to get to the largest city of Western Ukraine Lviv.¹³⁷ Apart from the size and administrative

¹³⁶ Historically, the westernmost region of Ukraine – Zakarpattia – was under the Hungarian rule for six centuries. Cultural and linguistic ties between this region and Hungary remain relatively strong and 12.1% of the region's population considers themselves ethnic Hungarians. It should be not surprising, then, that Zakarpattia provides the most steady flow of immigrants from Ukraine to Hungary; however, not all of them will seek connections with the established Ukrainian community in Hungary, often having a different from the “mainstream Ukrainian” relation to Ukraine and Hungary and their national identity in general. This group of immigrants remains outside of the scope of this study, presenting an interesting case for a separate research.

Source for the statistical data: State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, *All-Ukrainian Population Census 2001: Zakarpatska Oblast*, http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/regions/reg_zakar (in Ukrainian) (accessed 30 April 2012).

¹³⁷ Between one fourth and one third of the travel time goes for the usually lengthy border crossing and customs control that the train and bus schedules account for in advance. On a less busy day, it is possible to cover the same distance in less than 10 hours.

status of the city, what distinguishes the situation of the Ukrainian immigrant community in Budapest is the absence of any Ukrainian church, be it of Orthodox or Greek Catholic denomination. The immigrants also face very different linguistic challenges: if Czech is quite similar to Ukrainian due to the common Slavic origin of the two languages and usually can be mastered within one year, Hungarian is much more distant and cannot be easily “picked up” by immigrants from the neighboring countries, which is one of the primary circumstances that may hinder the integration into a new society.

For this study, I conducted seven interviews in Olomouc and eight in Budapest with immigrants who identified themselves as Ukrainians. In addition, I used participant-observation in case of the Ukrainian community in Olomouc by attending the community events and activities to get familiar with the given group of people and their practices. Having previously lived in Budapest for almost a year, I also had a first-hand background knowledge of some aspects of the socio-cultural environment there, however, I had a limited contact with the Ukrainian organizations there at that time.

The interviews in Olomouc and Budapest were carried out in March-May 2011 and in September-November 2011 respectively. The study is based on standardized, open-ended interviews with the snowball sampling technique. The interviewees represent different age/gender/social groups, belonging to a single Ukrainian ethnicity. In interviewing the immigrants, I touched upon the questions of their national, cultural and religious belonging as the areas that are most persistently perceived as marked by one’s culture while also marking the level of the social integration and boundaries of the immigrant communities. In most cases the interviewees have relations to the organizations described above. All interviews were conducted in Ukrainian and selected quotations for this paper were later translated by me.

4.2 The First Encounter

The first border-crossing is an exciting event for the people who enter a new and foreign environment for the first time. It is accompanied by the process of active comparison of the two environments, the other- and self-assessment, and tests

preconceptions about ‘us’ and ‘them’. Similarly to what we heard in Chapter 3, one of the common answers about the first impressions from the personal European experience were the accounts connected with economic well-being. In several cases interviewees not only define the economic differences, but also try to explain them through particular cultural traits that define work ethics, like in the case of Alexander, 24, who studies in Budapest and travels abroad regularly since early age:

When I came to Germany, they have consistent approach to the mundane work: what they are going to start the day with, how they are going to do that, how they finish. For instance, they were preparing for breakfast in the evening. And it really impressed me greatly because it really differs from our mentality.

Rostyslav, 40, who works in Budapest for 15 years now, says that a real “cultural shock” during his first trip abroad in the early 1990s were the attitude and the level of service:

When everyone says ‘thank you,’ smiles, even if it is an unnatural smile, and all the delivery, and you are always [addressed as] a ‘sir’ – all these things are for the post-Soviet space were shocking.

And definitely there were some bad districts. But this ‘yes sir, here’s your coffee’ – and if you are in the bank or on a bus or in the street, you are a ‘sir’ and everybody respect you as a client.

However, after the first impression, one faces a number of concrete challenges, and the language barrier is one of the primary hindrances to becoming a member of society. For Inna, 26, who has just started her work in one of the NGOs in Budapest, where she uses English and German, the reasons to study Hungarian is that “it’s impolite to live in the country without learning its language.”

After several attempts to study Hungarian, Rostyslav realized that in his situation there is no necessity to speak fluent Hungarian:

I speak Russian at home, English at work. So the use of Hungarian is very limited, to social life, which does not exist for a man with kids and family. [It means that] you don’t go to parties, don’t socialize, so there’s [only] work-family-family-work. My exposure to Hungarian limited to public transportation and catering services, restaurants, etc.

On the other hand, his social networking is limited to relatively few people – family, English-speaking colleagues, and several friends:

I mean I have my own space which may be a vacuum, but I filled it with private and professional life and there is no vacuum anymore. So I don't feel any cultural separation, isolation, because the Hungarian friends I have, who speak English, they are my antenna to the local information.

Example of Rostyslav shows that language barrier is a crucial factor in integration/accommodation process, but the modern communication technologies and the trans-national companies create cases where the integration may become optional. He concludes, "I picked some fragments of the culture that are close to me and I do not have complexes concerning those. I am a *global citizen*."

Interviewees in Olomouc did not mention the language, among the primary difficulties, probably due to linguistic proximity of Ukrainian and Czech languages. On the other hand, in their accounts about the first impression they also singled out economic and cultural/mental differences between their home and host countries that sounded very similar to what the Ukrainian immigrants to Hungary had to say.

4.3 Resisting Assimilation: in-groups vs. out-groups

The two communities in Olomouc and Budapest are grouped around religious and national premises respectively, which gives the members different tools to resist assimilation. However, not all the immigrants choose to belong to the communities, providing different explanations. The reasons behind those choices are not as important as the actual reasoning that people provide for their decision to stay out of the Ukrainian organizations/groups, the members of those groups also have their opinion on the choice of others to remain out-group.

Yaroslav, 38, who is one of the earliest members of the Greek-Catholic parish in Olomouc, regards religion to be the foundation for cultural development in the West and believes that the spiritual values play an important role in the intellectual development of the people. He holds that "[t]hose Ukrainians who do not attend the church eventually assimilate."

On the other hand, Bohdan, 32, and Zoriana, 33, named cross-marriages as the primary trigger of assimilation. In this way they explain why they are one of the very few couples that attend the services on a regular basis. They both come from the Western region of Ukraine where they attended the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), but "[w]hen we came here, at first we attended the Roman Catholic Church.

Only later did we hear there was a Greek Catholic Church here.” Thus in their choice of the church, they followed the canon which allows Greek Catholics participate in the Roman Catholic service – a flexibility of the Greek Catholic Church mentioned before. On the other hand, Bohdan and Zoriana said they did not expect to meet other Ukrainians or follow the Eastern Rite among the Roman Catholics, which means that before they found the local Greek Catholic church, the church they attended was meeting their religious needs but it was almost completely devoid of the national component. The Greek Catholic church served as a place where they could practice their religion and their culture.

Members of the Ukrainian community in Budapest explain their belonging to the Ukrainian organizations and groups in a different way. Hrustyna, a member of the Ukrainian Self-Government in Hungary, is more emotional in defining the average members of the community and their needs:

[they come to the Ukrainian Self-Government] to communicate with others. They do not shun their native roots, after all it is normal to feel nostalgic about one’s homeland. They want their children to speak their native language.

In her definition she avoided religious component, which may “break the community” as it includes both Greek-Catholics and Orthodox Ukrainians. Her understanding of the causes of assimilation also differs, taking a more historical dimension:

[...] the Soviet period developed the inferiority complex in Ukrainians. When those Ukrainians arrive abroad, instead of integrating, they assimilate. Many don’t even mention they are Ukrainians, s/he wants to be Hungarian from the very start. I know some people are boasting because their children no longer speak Ukrainian. Who will respect you?

Inna, who has just graduated from the university, does not attend events by the Ukrainian Self-Government, instead it is friends and personal connections that take an important place in her personal space. She notes that life abroad has changed her scale of perception of other nationalities:

At first I believed that I would mingle with Ukrainians. But now the people for me fall into two categories – more ‘native’ post-Soviets (Ukrainians, Russians, Armenians, etc.), and the rest – the real foreigners.

Coming from the western region of Ukraine, which is relatively close to home, Inna nevertheless feels home-sickness. Because she has lived in Europe for quite a long time, “had enough impressions,” and did not hope to “discover anything new” for herself, she goes home rather often, once every three months. Home-sickness is even more evident in the interview with Katia, 32, who yearns to return back home. Married and financially secure, she acknowledges that in two years in the Czech Republic she cannot get used to the new environment and calls herself “a bird in a cage.” She is an active member of the Olomouc community, but apparently in her case the participation does not feel sufficient for successful integration.

Rostyslav defines himself as a “family man” who does not have enough time to participate in the Ukrainian Self-Government. In the same manner, to the question whether he has friends from Ukraine Rostyslav replied that the circle of his acquaintances is not based on ethnicity, but defined by professional and “geographic factors,” i.e. proximity to his neighborhood:

Where I live, there are three or four friends, one from Ukraine, the other from Russia, the third one from Kazakhstan. We communicate in Russian. Several other friends at work, but the ethnicity does not matter, not necessarily from Ukraine, they could be from Russia, Kazakhstan, Moldova.

Therefore an out-group person still develops connections with people of their own nationality on a personal basis (it may be family, friends, sport, hobbies), preferring networks to communities and formalized groups. Inna and Rostyslav widened the circle of their communication by including the nationals from the former USSR, whom they may identify by their particular nationalities but still consider as belonging to the same broader group if compared to Europeans. On the one hand, they may insist that they form their personal circles of friends and acquaintances based on shared interests rather than paying attention to national or religious background; on the other, the common national background plays an important role in shaping personal values and preferences and thus serves as a good predictor of certain “shared interests,” making it hard to claim that people who join ethno-national groups are not motivated by the same search for common interests among other things.

In Olomouc, the parishioners from Ukraine continued their religious practices in the Czech Republic, which helped to soften the transition phase of moving into a

new place. Still, the reasoning behind the church attendance for Bohdan and Zoriana were their religious affiliation rather than a search for ethnic groups or networks. In view of the hybrid type of liturgy and multicultural composition of the parish, the Greek Catholic Church in Olomouc should enhance accommodation instead of stressing the uniqueness of the Ukrainian culture; at the same time, being a minority denomination, the Greek Catholic Church already stands alone in the Czech Republic, creating a marked connection with a particular religious tradition. Instead of widening their definition of “in-group” to post-Soviet nationals, Ukrainians in Olomouc can open it for the people of the same religious background, also imagining themselves somewhat different within the Catholic tradition (being marked by the Eastern Rite), but still belonging to the broader European Christianity. In other words, while personal networks or religious affiliations do not stress the ethnic identity as such, they still allow people to retain the feeling of particularity within the host society and define their own identity in opposition to what they consider a European majority.

4.4 Re-constructing Ukraine via Perception of Europeans

The immediate experience abroad allows migrants to learn the opinion about the space they came from and reassess their own perception of it. Therefore “how others perceive you” modifies one’s attitude to oneself as much as to the others.

Alexander regards Ukraine as not a “scandalous nation enough” to raise any serious stereotypes among Hungarians:

It does not stand out in any way to raise some stereotypes. Unless about Ukrainian criminals of the early 90s. I don’t encounter stereotypes about Ukrainians, not often.

Hrystyna from the Ukrainian Self-Government approached this question in a rather political key. She holds that the image varies over time. If at the beginning of the 1990s the image of Ukraine was obviously tightly connected with Russia and the Soviet Union:

everything changed in 2004 after the Orange Revolution, because in one month we showed to Europe that we are peaceful people, waving banners, smiling, ‘come and take us.’ It changed everything, you could walk here with your head held high. [...] On the personal level Hungarians perceive

the others depending on your achievements and social standing. There can be some minor unpleasant ‘nudges,’ in the shop or in the street. But we [Ukrainians] do not integrate in the society as a group, everything is individual and depends on personality.

Inna, on the other hand, is frustrated because of the little knowledge about Ukraine her colleagues display. In the following quotation you can hear a slight reproach for the ignorance about Ukraine. Apparently this perception came to Inna as something unexpected:

They know about such a country but their knowledge runs out when I mention the largest Ukrainian cities. I noticed that being in the EU, Hungarians make mistakes and do not know what the other member-states are. But it is completely frustrating when they ask if Kyiv is in the far north and whether there are polar nights there.

Maryna’s (27 y.o.) first trip to Poland left her with an impression that the countries were not that different, especially comparing Poland with Western Ukraine. Moreover, “[t]he Polish drivers told us, ‘you look like an average Polish youth, we’d never think you were foreigners.’” However, she saw greater differences when she went to West Germany. Living in Hungary she made a conclusion that “Hungarians perceive Ukrainians just like Ukrainians perceive Hungarians – as a sort of people from a post-Soviet space. We all have a common past.” The same reason explains why Russians and Russian speakers like Berlin and the territory of the former GDR:

Because these people understand us very well. Many people still know Russian [...]. They still know something about us. As soon as you go to West Germany, or Austria, people don’t have the slightest idea what Ukraine or Russia is.

She concludes, somewhat lightheartedly, that “even Hungarians” are closer to Ukrainians than Western Germans are, because “Hungarians understand what the USSR was like, in their childhood they ate the same cheese spread ‘Druzhba’.” Here she weighs the geographic proximity and shared past experience that Ukraine and Hungary had *versus* the linguistic differences and probably her own limited knowledge of Hungarian culture (compared to German, at least) to suggest Hungarians are more distant and different from Ukrainians than Germans can be expected to be (“even Hungarians”); but the shared history is believed to have created certain shared culture and understanding that may be more important than the ease of

communication.

Most of the interviewees noted the limited knowledge that the Hungarians and Czechs had about Ukraine – this did not allow creating negative stereotypes about the country, or at least made most of the stereotypes look irrelevant and easy to dismiss. The ignorance about and the lack of interest in Ukraine was obviously an unexpected discovery for Ukrainians, and probably an unpleasant one. It did not create a negative attitude toward the host societies, but rather made people realize the actual geopolitical insignificance of the largest (in square kilometers) country in Europe. Since people, and in particular immigrants, depend on their country's international standing and get defined by their national belonging whether they think it is important for them personally or not, a lack of recognition of Ukraine is one of the important reality checks for immigrants in their definition of the region and culture they belong to.

An example of how collective self-perception changes through the opinion of the other is found in the discussion with Zoriana and Bohdan. Answering the question if there is anything they cannot get used to in the Czech Republic they start comparing Ukrainians and Czechs:

Zoriana: I have to get up early for my new job. [*laughing*] Well, they [Czechs] are not religious, they work on Sundays... *Bohdan:* No, but Ukrainians also work on Sundays. I would say they are better cultured. Nobody is pushing you in the queues, nobody is in a hurry. People know that the train will arrive on time.

The comparison between Czech non-religiosity and the Ukrainian religiosity comes up rather often in the interviews taken in Olomouc. Interviewees from Olomouc also resort to the categories from the Catholic social teachings in their assessments. For example, in view of Fedir and Mykola abortion laws and excessive sexual freedom in Europe set Ukraine in positive light, even if in reality Ukraine has not only one of the most liberal abortion laws in Europe, but also among the highest abortion rates in this part of the world.

Another example of comparison Ukraine-Europe-Ukraine may be found in the narrative by Maryna. Concluding her account about ignorance of Western Europeans about Ukraine, who “would rather go to New Zealand than ‘that area,’” Maryna asks “[w]hat can I think about Ukraine after all this this?”

In some cases positive personal beliefs about Ukraine were modified after a longer stay abroad. While Fedir and Mykola express a received idea about the industrious nature of Ukrainians, in words of Alexander, who was living in Slovakia, Romania, the USA and Hungary, “on average, Americans and Europeans work much more than Ukrainians do.”

One of the unifying features of the interviews was that the Ukrainian immigrants tried to explain the reasons of the negative trends in politics, economy or relations in their homeland and to provide ideas for solutions that could bring positive improvements. If for Inna it was unexpected that the outsiders knew little about Ukraine, Alexander and Fedir want Ukrainians to learn from European experience, since as the former noted “[t]he more communication there is between Ukrainians and the representatives of the EU, the more chances they will have to enrich themselves and their culture.”

Connection between the images of Europe and reconstructed image of Ukraine is evident when the immigrants characterize both of them using corresponding positive-negative oppositions (i.e. religious-not religious, generous-not generous, polite-impolite). However, what distinguishes this set of interviews from the previous case study (Chapter 3) is that a number of interviewees (Inna, Alexander, Rostyslav) avoided generalizations in their characteristics of the two spaces. Due to the actual stay in Europe, they operate with more reliable and nuanced data about the continent, which in its turn requires a more nuanced re-construction of the image of Ukraine if one wants to draw any parallels, looking for commonalities and differences between the places.

Conclusion

This thesis is written in the context of an ongoing dialog on visa facilitation between the EU and Ukraine and the possibility of an encounter between the two spaces in the near future. As long as the visa regime for Ukrainian citizens remains a reality, through which they imagine Europe, the ideas about those who live on the other side of the border develop on the basis of stereotypes. The shift from the recognition *of* the “other” to the recognition *by* the “other” occurs in the process of border-crossing, from the moment the applicants make the first step to travel westward, applying for visa, and until they join the immigrant communities in the receiving countries. Therefore this thesis tries to explain the dynamics of the changes in the self-definition, perception of the “other” and perception of one’s homeland on the example of the Ukrainian travelers and immigrants who are “experiencing Europe” first hand.

Being a part of a broader cultural identity, national belonging is the first one to become contested in the process of migration. What makes the Ukrainian case more specific is that migration occurs in the context of the post-Soviet crisis of identity and the incomplete and ongoing identity projects. The multiple versions of the Ukrainian identities, based on diverse interpretations of history, system of symbols, and political discourse, may incorporate the concept of Europe differently, nonetheless many Ukrainians tend to believe that by virtue of their historic ties and location they belong to the cultural and geographic map of Europe. This variety and fragmented nature of the national identity in Ukraine complicated the research, since the contested identities do not fit into a single theory of migration, nationalism or religious studies.

While the question of the post-national European identity, predicted and anticipated by great thinkers and politicians of the 20th century, has not been a focus of this research, it is probably safe to assume that at this stage it does not compete with the national identities, standing for a loyalty and connection to a larger region, outside of one’s country. This can account for the fact that for many Ukrainians abroad Europe/European finds its conceptual opposition in comparison to post-Soviet and post-socialist region in terms of broader cultural belonging. Hungary and the Czech Republic take an interesting place on this map, sharing with Ukraine its socialist past but having achieved the aspired European future. These examples of

dual belonging make it possible to imagine European membership in terms of economic achievements and opportunities rather than particular cultural cohesion. If there is no overarching European values and culture to measure themselves against, Ukrainians are left with the realization they may need to go back to their own history and society in search of their national identity.

The first part of the study assesses the Schengen visa application process as an initial step in the border crossing. It is during the visa application that the citizens of Ukraine make their own conclusions about the “United Europe” and also learn about some of the expectations and preconceptions “Europe” has about them. Interviews with visa applicants allow making several conclusions. Firstly, the strict visa requirements do not change positive attitude migrants have about the Europe, since the consulates as mediating entities perceived as an autonomous (bureaucratic) spaces that does not represent only Ukraine or Europe. Instead, due to the high opinion applicants have about the economy and culture of Europe, they tend to reflect negative stereotypes they believe Europeans have of them, back on the Ukrainians. Secondly, despite the drawbacks in the visa-issuing procedure, the positive image of Europe makes the applicants explain visa regime between Ukraine and Europe as being rationally motivated and necessary to protect Europe. Finally, this part of research demonstrated that greater mobility may actualize or weaken national sentiment, depending on the level of national consciousness before border-crossing.

If the first part of the research discusses how Ukrainians imagine Europe from outside, when they are still in Ukraine, the second part addresses the same question, but from the opposite standpoint, namely how they mirror the image of Ukraine after becoming insiders in the European society and joining the local Ukrainian immigrant communities. Since there is a tendency to see nationalism and religion as parallel or “analogous” forms of identification and social form of organization, the comparison of two Ukrainian communities in Olomouc and Budapest, based on religious and national premises respectively, allowed to ask how the two different modes of migrants’ accommodation function in practice. Therefore, the twofold task was to see the self- and other-definition dynamics in the context of migration, and the peculiarities of the integration process for the immigrants who joined the groups and those who opted to stay outside of the ethnically marked groups.

A group which has some degree of collective consciousness based on a belief

in shared language, traditions, religion, history and experiences is seen by scholars as a product of “other-definition” and “self-definition.”¹³⁸ While other-definition means ascription of undesirable characteristics and assignment to the inferior social position by dominant groups, self-definition refers to the consciousness of group members of belonging together on the basis of shared cultural and social characteristics.¹³⁹ In response to the negative and demeaning “other-definition,” groups may develop different strategies to discredit, dismiss or neutralize this “othering.” Their self-definition may include a strong component of superiority of their own culture over all others. The interviewees in this research noted that the receiving communities did not have negative preconceptions towards them, and in general had a low level of knowledge about Ukraine. The latter may account for the absence of strong negative stereotypes about Ukraine and the respective reflected stereotypes about the receiving communities.

On the other hand, striving for positive recognition, the immigrants may try to embrace elements of the culture of the other or try to insert themselves into the dominant group, relying on shared religion, history or other socio-cultural elements. In the case with Ukrainian immigrants, the community in Olomouc came closer to this model, being established on a basis of the Greek Catholic Church that accommodates spirituality and traditions of the Eastern and Western Christianity, but unlike many Christian communities does not require a change of ethnic and/or cultural conformity. It accounts for the multi-national composition of the religious community, which both enhances integration and prevents complete assimilation. The community in Budapes, deliberately excludes the religious component from their cultural practices in order to avoid possible confessional divisions, since immigrants from Ukraine may belong to several different religious traditions. Primarily, this community helps the Ukrainian immigrants to resist assimilation, fostering the nationalist sentiments towards homeland, however, in case of Hungary, the linguistic gap also plays a similar role.

If in the first case study, visa applicants characterized Europe from the economic perspective, in the second one, the Ukrainians who already spent considerable time in the EU member countries tend to discuss the reasons for the negative processes that take place in Ukraine. Apart from the economic component,

¹³⁸ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 35.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

their narrations are marked with “cultural” aspect that distinguishes, and sometimes explains, differences between Ukraine and Europe. On the other hand, the experience in Schengen area allows them to operate with more accurate data and avoid stereotypical thinking, such as imminent threat of the mass exodus of Ukrainians to Europe in case of visa-free regime, mentioned only by one of the interviewees.

The immigrants who did not join national communities, nonetheless have to fill their own personal space with some social interaction, which may lead to a faster integration/assimilation into the host society, but does not appear to be such a straightforward pass to assimilation. The out-groups better fit into the categories of the post-modernist theories of transcultural migration, and require further research. It was peculiar for these cases that the experience of immigration may change the definition of the “other,” widening the circle of communication from nationals to the members of the post-Soviet space. This is also reflected in distinction of “two Europes” that include the representatives of Western Europe, who know little about Ukraine, and the East Europeans, who have the common post-socialist memories.

The research proved to be multidisciplinary, covering topics of political sciences, history, national and religious studies, and based on a considerable fieldwork. This varied background induced the use of generally acknowledged analytical terms and tools rather than any field-specific definitions. The case of Ukrainian migrants denies several discourses on secularization, transculturality, and nationalisms in the globalized world, however, what is more important it turns the discourse about boundaries of Europe from geographical to imagined spaces.

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