THE DYNAMICS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE LEFT-BANK UKRAINE AND NEIGHBORING REGIONS OF RUSSIA

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Abstract. During the XX century historically formatted cultural transition between Russia (Moscow state) and Ukraine (Hetmanate) was under considerable transformations. After 1991, the goal-directed impact on the natural processes of ethno-cultural dynamics took place in the territory of Ukraine, while numerous elements of Ukrainian ethnic culture remained in Russian territory of the former Slobodsa Ukraine, becoming a part of the regional identity. Based on collected during the field researches in 2008 – 2009 and 2012 authors developed a model of Russian-Ukrainian ethno gradient observed within eight neighboring regions of Russia and Ukraine. Within of Russia the historical boundaries of former Hetmanate and, in particular, Slobodsa Ukraine largely preserved not only as a historical relict, but as a significant trait of the living culture. At the same time in Ukraine configuration of Russian-Ukrainian gradient only partly coincides with the historical boundaries, reflecting the complex interference of sustainable inherited and variable constructed features of identity.

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Assumptions and Methodology. The report of the authors is devoted to the understanding and generalization of the observed phenomena in the consciousness of the population of the historically border regions at the junction of the Left-bank Ukraine and Russia. In the historical literature, these regions are known as the Hetmanate and Sloboda Ukraine. In different historical periods, Hetmanate and Sloboda Ukraine presented themselves, in turn, the parts of Russia or its western neighbors — that are the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and later — an independent Ukrainian state. Since the end of XVIII century, and within a half centuries the territory under consideration, was an interior region of the Russian Empire. XX century was marked by contradictory trends related to the appearance (or revival) of the independent Ukrainian state and its subsequent relegating to the level of one of the republics of the USSR, as well as the interchange of the cultural policy: Ukrainization, Indigenization (“korenizatsia”) and Sovietization. Since 1991, the area under the study finally lost its former "unity", and acquired its own vectors of the cultural development.

Left-bank Ukraine and the neighboring territories of Russia have always been a focus of contacts between the different political systems and cultural interpenetration of similar peoples - Ukrainians and Russians. This made it possible to form the long-term cultural dualism, constantly bringing to life the oscillatory processes in identity, and the tension in the dynamics of the internal components of identity, such as local historical memory, spatial images or ethno-cultural preferences.

The components of identity often find themselves under the purposeful political and cultural pressure that can transform them in the direction of the "necessary" (reasonable) adjustments. In such cases, the most of researchers prefer to talk about "identity construction" (political identity, ethnic identity or civil identity), highlighting its specific forms — first of all that are the policy of memory, the symbolic policy, and the identity policy.

Such pressure becomes specific challenge for the regional identity that produce a lot of response reactions that show the features of the local identity, which are largely unique in each place. Therefore, the policy of identity and overall socio-political situation in the country can present the background for analyzing of the communities reactions while exploring the local and regional identity. In this regard, the authors decided to include a variety of controversial questions that haven’t a quite clear answer, in their interviews. Such questions are the following, for example:
- the relationship to the different historical persons or periods of history;
- the relationship to Russia (in Ukraine) or to Ukraine (in Russia);
- the problem of Slavic unity;
- the emergence of the new state border and the division of the Russian Orthodox church, etc.

On the other hand one should remember that the regional identity lies in the sphere of a different historical and cultural context in which the community is submerged and that is a definite barrier for studying of the identity, because it
doesn’t allow to the researcher to abandon the position of an external observer, and to become one of the local (native) people in his thinking.

Regional identity expresses the attitude of people to their “small homeland”. In contrast to the choice of "nationality" in the official census of population, the regional identity as a kind of non-official thing presents an impartial and non-political phenomenon. In addition, regional identity often compensates the weakness (or uncertainty) of ethnic identity among the people [Gritsenko, 2011]. For example, the existence of the phenomenon of "local by conviction," and not only "local by birth" shows a possible way to preserve the historical memory and maintain various features of ethnicity and ethnic identity [Krylov, 2009].

Our understanding of ethnic and ethno-cultural factors, and the factors of regional identity associated with the recognition of their very considerable autonomy and even independence of regional identity in society. Regional identity, being the result of interaction between mobility and rootedness allows us to understand the existence of the historical and cultural inertia as a normal and natural phenomenon in the Russian-Ukrainian borderland.

As one of the tools for the study of regional identity we use the model of ethnocultural gradient.

**Ethnocultural Gradient.** Since 2008, the authors began the field research in Russian part of the Russian-Ukrainian borderland. During the expedition within the Russia (2008 – 2010, Belgorod, Bryansk, Kursk, Voronezh regions) 400 questionnaires were obtained and 75 in-depth interviews were received. At the same time the last expedition (2012, Chernigov, Kharkov, Poltava and Sumy regions of Ukraine, Poltava) made it possible to collect more than 500 questionnaires with the support of Ukrainian geographers and historians.

According to the results of field research, the authors managed to make the ethnic and cultural map (Figure 1), which puts together the situation on the Russian side and the Ukrainian side. The ethnic and cultural map is a model proposed by the authors that reflects the historical and ethno-cultural interference, the degree of presence of modern Ukrainian and Russian culture in the consciousness of the population of the Russian-Ukrainian borderland. We proposed to call this model "ethnocultural gradient".

**Gradient in Russia.** In the process it was discovered a certain ratio, which can be described as harmonious, between landscape and mentality of the people, by the natural and cultural landscapes, as well as elements of Ukrainian culture in the language and architecture. It became possible by the search features of Ukrainian identity in the physical and mental landscape.

The authors considered components of these landscapes that participate and are significant for worldview and identity of the local population. In general terms these components are shown in Table 1.
Table 1 – The components of the regional identity (RI) and ethnic culture (EC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Components of RI and EC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Language (dialect), which is spoken by the majority of the population, and cultural and historical preferences of the population, reflected in the peculiarities of the local urban and rural architecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Awareness of the population specificity of their place of residence (&quot;the spirit of place&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Memory of territorial entities of the past (the historical provinces, etc.), including Ukrainian (Hetmanshchyna) and Russian-Ukrainian (Sloboda Ukraine)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Memory of Ukrainian roots and the territories of origin of his family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ethnic Identity (What man himself &quot;believes&quot; to a greater extent?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Self-identification in the polls (What man himself &quot;called&quot;?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The components are down from more stable, long-term to a less stable

Calculating the frequency of occurrence of Ukrainian culture elements in the above components in Russia, we found three zones of the gradient. See some concrete results that generalized in these three areas in [Gritsenko, 2011].

We came to the conclusion that the assimilation of the local indigenous Ukrainian population was proceeded in Russia in the vast borderland area. The process of this assimilation is natural, gradual and not completed yet. It should be noted that elements of Ukrainian culture continues organically include into the regional identity of the inhabitants of the territories bordering Ukraine, this organic
is enhanced by the preservation of traditional elements of Ukrainian culture in the landscape.

In Russia, the gradient is characterized by the spatial order in the distribution of the elements of Ukrainian culture in the consciousness of the Russian inhabitants, and their presence in the landscape, in the presence of the inhabitants of the "Ukrainian roots" and the spatial orientation to Ukraine, expressed through a consideration of the neighboring Ukrainian regions as areas where the countrymen are living (regardless of ethnicity belonging in both Russian and Ukrainian territories). The appearance of the gradient goes back to the existence of Sloboda Ukraine - a kind of the Russian-Ukrainian formation inside Russia. A feeling of closeness and belonging continues to hold in Russia and Ukraine, as well as Russian and Ukrainians within the limits of the once united Sloboda Ukraine (and conjugated historical territories). Outside the Sloboda Ukraine the effects that are associated with mental closeness of citizens of Russia and Ukraine, of the Russians and Ukrainians are considerably weakened (more precisely, to a small extent a feeling of closeness are remained, but it is less sustainable, as no longer a part of the regional identity).

Gradient in Ukraine. Elements of Russian culture in the Eastern Ukraine as ethnic culture (the culture of "Great Russians") are quite clearly, that is shown to the recent past in the classic works of L. Chizhikova. However, the gradient in Ukraine can hardly be considered to be sufficient, because they are more turned to the traditional culture and do not relate to many aspects of modern "ethnicised" regional identity of the Russian-Ukrainian borderland, particularly in the cities. However, in general the problem of Russian in Ukraine and Ukrainians in Russia is not symmetric.

In Ukraine, considered the gradient is determined primarily by the nature of the relationship with Russia as a whole (in Russia - with respect to neighboring regions of Ukraine as his own). This ratio depends on many factors, including various opportunistic - often spatially differentiated. Relationship with Russia can be as "sister" as a friendly, but sometimes as unfriendly, a neighbor, to put pressure on Ukraine, in particular, on the border regions. The stereotype of this attitude to Russia is largely made up of local and revealed through indicators that reflect different aspects of distancing or closeness (cultural, ethno-cultural, ethno-political) to Russia. Therefore, cultural (ethnic-cultural, ethnic and political) distance between Russia and Ukraine can be considered a model of the gradient, indicating its dependence on the position factor.

As well as in Russia, the gradient reflects the nature of spatial variation in the ratio of "Ukrainian" and "Russian" identity component of the population. The components considered are:

- understanding of their roots and about area residence "fellow";
- images of neighboring country;
- reviews on natural or artificial new state border and the feasibility of strengthening the bilateral relations between Russia and Ukraine;
- feeling the pressure exerted by the neighboring regions of Russia and Ukraine;
• individual relationship to Russia (Ukraine), including interpretation of the common historical past;
• relationship to the idea of Slavic unity, and to the division of the Russian Orthodox Church;
• social interaction associated with the use of the Ukrainian language, or one of the variants of the hybrid Russian-Ukrainian dialect (“surzhyk”).

One should pay attention to the fact that the increase of the degree of "ukrainization", according to the model of the gradient, are not in general spatially correlated with the historical borders of the Hetmanate and Sloboda Ukraine, although in the long run tends to him. Perhaps here affects an ancient 'single Slavonic "nature of the population Severskaya land (Novgorod-Seversky, Chernigov).

REFERENCES

TERRITORIAL IDENTITY OF UKRAINIAN POPULATION: IMPACT ON SPATIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

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Abstract. The regularities and factors of territorial identity of Ukraine’s population formation and transformation are revealed at different hierarchical levels. The interdependence between development and transformation of the physical and mental space is investigated. Perception of territorial transformation is depicted through the prism of regional identity on certain historical-geographical cross-sections. The determination of spatial transformations by the territorial identity of the population is studied.

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