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Making Sense of World War II: How Russian and Ukrainian Textbooks Foster National Identities

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ABSTRACT[1]

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the memory of World War II has been used in state-led nation-building processes of post-Soviet countries to foster a sense of national belonging. This paper provides an insight into the official discourse of World War II in Russia and Ukraine by concentrating on a comparative analysis of World War II representations in Russian and Ukrainian school history textbooks. The study is based on a discourse analysis approach, focusing both on key textbook themes, such as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the German attack on the Soviet Union, the Nazi occupation regime, the Soviet army offensive and resistance movements, and on their linguistic realization. The study reveals that in the Ukrainian textbook national identity is created through a portrayal of Ukrainians who suffered under the German occupation and the Stalinist regime and who also heroically contributed to the victory over Nazism in Europe. In the Russian textbook, in contrast, the national identity is built through a depiction of the heroism and self-sacrifice of all Soviet people on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

INTRODUCTION

In the Soviet Union, World War II came to be known as the Great Patriotic War and served as one of the historical myths that legitimized the Soviet Union's existence. Particularly, glorification of the struggle of the Soviet Army against the enemy became an underpinning of the Great Patriotic War myth. As Langenohl suggests, the victory of the Soviet Union in the war was supposed to legitimize communism and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the leading forces behind the Soviet people's fight against Nazi occupiers. Starting from the 1960s under Brezhnev, the meaning of the Soviet victory in the war was coded as a heroic self-sacrifice of parents and grandparents in order to foster a feeling of patriotism among their children and grandchildren.[2] After World War II, as Francois argues, the Allies created a heroic picture of the war by defining two groups of people linked to the war experience – heroes and victims. Among the heroes were not only the

charismatic military leaders of World War II but also partisan resistance fighters. Among victims, millions of civilian victims of bombings, Nazi massacres and mass executions were remembered and their places of suffering were often sacralised. Such an interpretation was advantageous for the countries that fought against Germany. In its function as a new beginning, the master narrative contributed to the restoration of internally divided countries, served as a basis for people's identity, suppressed the dark sides of the past and offered integration for people who fought on different sides in the war.[3]

Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, the memory of World War II has not faded in post-Soviet societies, however. For the leaderships of the former Soviet republics the re-interpretation of this historical event has even become one of the key elements in creating their countries' post-Soviet national identities. In Ukraine, for example, along with the famine of 1932–33, World War II became one of the main historical events shaping the post-Soviet Ukrainian national identity. As Troebst argues, in the re-interpretation of communism and World War II, Ukraine is the only CIS country where conflicts over the interpretation of the past turned into a battlefield for the post-communist and the national liberal political camps. These processes are similar to what has been taking place in Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia.[4] As Scherrer points out, the state-led nation-building in Ukraine has focussed on the construction of an identity that lies beyond the Soviet past that it shares with Russia. In this way, instead of a common Soviet heritage, Ukraine wants to establish a national culture, independent of Russia, that promotes a Ukrainian collective memory.[5] Previous studies on the formation of national identity in post-Soviet Ukraine have revealed that a new victim-and-hero paradigm has been adopted in the public and academic discourses, often portraying Ukrainians both as victims of the Soviet regime and as descendants of heroes of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) in struggle for Ukraine's independence.[6] According to Marples, in the case of victimization, "the suffering has permitted the prevalence of the national conception of history that perceives and isolates Ukraine's past as

3   François, E. (2004), 'Meistererzählungen und Dammbrüche. Die Erinnerung an den Zweiten Weltkrieg zwischen Nationalisierung und Universalisierung,' in Flacke, M. (ed.), *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 – Arena der Erinnerungen. Katalog zur Ausstellung im Deutschen Historischen Museum Berlin*, Mainz: Philipp von Zabern Verlag, pp. 15–17.

4   Troebst, S. (2005), 'Jalta versus Stalingrad, GULag versus Holocaust,' *Berliner Journal für Soziologie*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 381-400.

5   Scherrer, J. (2004a), 'Ukraine. Konkurrierende Erinnerungen,' in Flacke, M. (ed.), *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 – Arena der Erinnerungen. Katalog zur Ausstellung im Deutschen Historischen Museum Berlin*, Mainz: Philipp von Zabern Verlag, p. 728.

6   Marples, D. R. (2007), *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine*, Budapest: Central European University Press.

a lengthy struggle against foreign oppressors, principally Russians and Poles, but also for a time Germans as well."[7] In the case of heroization, Smith et al. observe that the description of the UPA as fighters for Ukraine's liberation follows a myth of resistance and revival of national histories: "As in most nationalist mythologies, heroes and martyrs, and the description of the striving of the nation towards eventual redemption, tend to play a prominent place in the Ukrainophile […] schema".[8]

In Russia, on the other hand, a continuity of old authoritarian structures hinders a clear rejection of the communist past. This is the case also in Moldova and other CIS states, particularly in Belarus and the de-facto state of Transnistria, where authoritarian elites explicitly refer to the communist regime model.[9] As Gudkov argues, in Russia the victory of the Soviet Union in the Great Patriotic War became the most important identification symbol for the national consciousness in Russian society.[10] "Deeply rooted in society, the memory of the war is the most important shared memory in the country and plays a prominent role in the building of a national identity", Ferretti argues.[11] The understanding of World War II in Russia as the Great Patriotic War, as the study further shows, still conceives today's Russia as being identical with the territory of the Soviet Union. As Smith et al. explain, socialization in Russia during the Soviet period had a major impact on the development of contemporary Russian identity. Unlike the ethnic republics of the Soviet Union, which possessed their own national institutions – e.g. Communist Party, Academy of Sciences and even KGB – Russians did not have an obvious national homeland with accompanying institutions and, therefore, were encouraged to think about the Soviet Union as their homeland. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, when people of the Soviet ethnic republics have been provided with a choice of identity on the basis of institutions, Russians have lacked a particular association with their union republic. They therefore identify themselves with the Soviet Union, in the sense that the boundaries of the Soviet Union coincided with the Russian sense of identity.[12]

7   Marples, D. R. (2007), op. cit., p. x.

8   Smith, G. et al. (eds.) (1997), *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 41.

9   Troebst, S. (2005), op. cit.

10 Gudkov, L. (2005), 'Die Fesseln des Sieges. Rußlands Identität aus der Erinnerung an den Krieg,' *Osteuropa* 55, no. 4–6, pp. 56–72.

11 Ferretti, M. (2012), 'The Shoah and the Gulag in Russian Memory,' in Blaive, M., Gerbel, C. and Lindenberger, T. (eds.), *Clashes in European Memory: The Case of Communist Repression and the Holocaust*, Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, p. 25.

12 Smith, G. et al. (eds.) (1997), op. cit., pp. 6–7.

The question of how exactly the official discourse of World War II creates a sense of national belonging in Russia and Ukraine remains, however, unanswered in previous studies. In order to depict the pattern of the state-led construction of a national identity, this paper therefore analyzes official representations of World War II as used in school history textbooks in Russia and Ukraine. The content of Russian and Ukrainian history school textbooks has been investigated in a number of previous studies. However, in most cases these studies present only fragmentary information on the representation of World War II in school history textbooks.[13] Most of the previous studies discuss World War II only as one of the historical events that are to be considered formative in the construction of the Russian and Ukrainian national histories. Moreover, previous studies concentrate mostly on the content or textual analysis of World War II representations, limiting the readers' possibility to understand what exact vocabulary and grammatical structures are used in the portrayal of the historical event analyzed.

In contrast to previous studies, this paper concentrates only on World War II representations in Russian and Ukrainian school history textbooks and therefore aims to contribute to the literature on national identity construction in post-Soviet countries. Two school history textbooks for the 11th grade published in 2011 are taken into consideration: "Istoriya Ukrayiny" by Turchenko et al. (Kyiv: Heneza, 2011)[14] and "Istoriya Rossii: 20th-nachalo 21st Veka" by Levandovskii et al. (Moskva: Prosveshcheniie, 2011).[15] These textbooks are approved by the national ministries of education and thus represent the official version of national histories. The analysis of these textbooks is performed by employing a discourse analysis, focusing both on the key themes and their linguistic realization. The latter focuses on the linguistic construction of certain phenomena, i.e. the item of interest is not what is said but

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13   Popson, N. (2001), 'The Ukrainian History Textbook: Introducing Children to the 'Ukrainian Nation', *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 325–350; Janmaat, J. G. (2007), 'The 'Ethnic Other' in Ukrainian History Textbooks: The Case of Russia and the Russians,' *Compare: a Journal of Comparative Education*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 307–324; Zajda, J. (2007), 'The New History School Textbooks in the Russian Federation: 1992–2004,' *Compare: A Journal of Comparative Education*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 291–306; Korostelina, K. (2010), 'War of Textbooks: History Education in Russia and Ukraine,' *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 129–137; Marples, D. R. (2007), op. cit.; Jilge, W. (2006), 'The Politics of History and the Second World War in Post-Communist Ukraine (1986/1991–2004/2005),' *Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas*, no. 54, pp. 50–81; Liñán, M. V. (2010), 'History as a Propaganda Tool in Putin's Russia,' *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 167–178; Levintova, E. and Butterfield, J. (2010), 'History Education and Historical Remembrance in Contemporary Russia: Sources of Political Attitudes of pro-Kremlin Youth,' *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 139–166; Pääbo, H. (2011), *Potential of Collective Memory Based International Identity Conflicts in Post-Imperial Space*, Dissertation, University of Tartu; Janmaat, J. G. (2002), 'Identity Construction and Education: The History of Ukraine in Soviet and Post-Soviet Schoolbooks,' in Kuzio, T. and D'Anieri, P. (eds.), *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, Westport: Praeger, pp. 171–189.

14   Turchenko, F. G. et al. (2011), *Istoriya Ukrayiny*, Kyiv: Heneza.

15   Levandovskii, A. A. et al. (2011), *Istoriya Rossii: 20th-nachalo 21st Veka*, Moskva: Prosveshcheniie.

rather how it is said.[16] The discourse analysis concentrates on the discussion of the key themes identified in the textbooks such as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the German attack on the Soviet Union, the Nazi Occupation regime, the Soviet Army offensive and resistance movements, and the linguistic realization of these themes. At the same time this analysis does not account in detail for the portrayal of World War II, but rather unveils semantic themes and patterns of linguistic argumentation that are used to forge a sense of national belonging among young Russians and Ukrainians.

WHY ANALYZE HISTORY TEXTBOOKS?

History textbooks have played an important role in the construction of national identity and in coming to terms with the Nazi and communist past in various East European countries.[17] By analyzing history textbooks it is possible to trace the patterns of legitimization and formation of a national culture of remembrance of a certain society. In line with Nora, in the process of collective remembrance a history textbook can be considered an important *lieu de mémoire* that preserves a certain narrative of historical events and produces a feeling of belonging among people who share the same culture of remembrance.[18] This site of memory is a fixation of national memory that is deliberately created by a group of people in order to remember and preserve or impose a certain identity. In the view of many scholars, nations do not possess collective memories but rather construct them in order to produce a feeling of belonging among the members of a nation. For Anderson,

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16 Wodak, R. and Meyer, M. (2009), *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis*, London: Sage; Klerides, E. (2010), 'Imagining the Textbook: Textbooks as Discourse and Genre,' *Journal of Educational Media, Memory, and Society*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 31–54; Wodak, R. (2008), 'Introduction: Discourse Studies – Important Concepts and Terms,' in Wodak, R. and Krzyzanowski, M (eds.), *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan pp. 1–29; Wodak, R. and Busch, B. (2004), 'Approaches to Media Texts,' in Downing, J. et al. (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Media Studies*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 105–123.

17 Silova, I. (1996), 'De-Sovietisation of Latvian Textbooks Made Visible,' *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 35–46; Loitfellner, S. (2008), "The Appalling Toll in Austrian Lives...' The Wehrmacht and Its Soldiers in Austrian School Books,' in Heer, H., Polak, A. and Wodak, R. (eds.), *The Discursive Construction of History: Remembering the Wehrmacht's War of Annihilation*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 155–174; Christophe, B. (2010), 'Erinnerung an Helden und Tränen. Sozialismus und Gegenwart im litauischen Schulbuch,' *Osteuropa*, vol. 60, no. 8, pp. 71–89; Rodgers, P. W. (2006), 'Contestation and Negotiation: Regionalism and the Politics of School Textbooks in Ukraine's Eastern Borderlands,' *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 681–697; Razmadze, M. (2010), 'Abgründe des Goldenen Zeitalters. Sowjetvergangenheit in Georgiens Schulbuch,' *Osteuropa*, vol. 60, no. 8, pp. 91–103; Mannová, E. (2004), 'Der Kampf um Geschichtslehrbücher in der Slowakei nach 1990,' in Corbea-Hoisie, A., Jaworski, R. and Sommer, M. (eds.), *Umbruch im östlichen Europa: Die nationale Wende und das kollektive Gedächtnis*, Innsbruck: Studienverlag, pp. 125–147; Radonic, L. (2011), '„Unsere" Helden, Opfer, Täter. Der Zweite Weltkrieg im kroatischen Schulbuch,' *Osteuropa*, vol. 61, no. 11, pp. 97–114; Nikolayenko, O. (2011), *Citizens in the Making in Post-Soviet States*, London: Routledge.

18 Nora, P. (1989), 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire,' *Representations*, no. 26, pp. 7–24

for instance, a nation is an "imagined community" where people are bound by a feeling of belonging to a certain community through the image of a communion.[19]

For Klerides, any history textbook may also be understood in terms of a multifunctional domain and a discourse. As a multifunctional domain, the textbook produces, sustains, and transforms reality in a certain way. As a discourse, a textbook is defined through a particular way of writing about the past. It consists in this respect of two levels: the semantic or content level and the linguistic realization of the semantics. The thematic narratives are grouped around actors, the setting and the plot. The linguistic realization can be observed in the choice of vocabulary and grammatical structures.[20] The textbook is also an inter-discursive field: it is generated from the combination of discourses that frequently originate outside of the educational field, it draws on discourses of academic historians and political discourses, and it blends different synchronic and diachronic discourses and fluctuates between different fields of identities, between past and future, tradition and change.[21]

WORLD WAR II IN RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN SCHOOL HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

The memory of the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945) served as one of the historical myths that legitimized the existence of the Soviet Union. With its hero-and-victim narrative the remembrance of the war contributed to creation of the Soviet identity by introducing collective patriotic symbols and collective remembrance practices.[22] The Ukrainian school history textbook under investigation clearly departs from the notion of the Great Patriotic War and calls the section on the war "Ukraine in World War II (1939–1945)", thus moving the Ukrainian narrative closer to the portrayal of World War II in Western European countries. In the Russian textbook, however, the section on World War II is called "The Great Patriotic War", thus referring further to the discourse of World War II in the Soviet Union. Although the Russian textbook does not avoid the notion of World War II, it includes the beginning of the war in the section on forging modernization in the Soviet Union, which precedes the "The Great Patriotic War" section.

19 Anderson, B. (2006), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, pp. 5–7.

20 Klerides, E. (2010), op. cit., pp. 32–37.

21 Ibid., 38–46.

22 Hrynevyč, V. (2005), 'Gespaltene Erinnerung : der Zweite Weltkrieg im ukrainischen Gedenken,' *Osteuropa*, vol. 55, no. 4–6, pp. 88–102; Scherrer, J. (2004b), 'Sowjetunion/Russland', in Flacke, M. (ed.), *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 – Arena der Erinnerungen. Katalog zur Ausstellung im Deutschen Historischen Museum Berlin*, Mainz: Philipp von Zabern Verlag, pp. 619–670.

Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

For the authors of the Ukrainian textbook the discussion of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the description of the Stalinist regime apparently present a challenge for creating a coherent national narrative that would suit all segments of the divergent Ukrainian population. The analyzed Ukrainian textbook draws an ambivalent picture of Stalin's regime in Ukraine. On the one hand, the westward border crossing of the Soviet Army following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact is described as an act of military aggression (p. 12) and the annexation of Western Ukraine is called "incorporation" (p. 12). On the other hand, the Soviet Army is presented as a liberator in western parts of Ukraine (p. 14) and the unification of the Ukrainian lands under Stalin's military campaign is considered to be important for future Ukrainian statehood (p. 17). The textbook states that the Soviet propaganda, claiming the desire of Western Ukrainians to unite with Eastern Ukrainians, as well as the Polish-Ukrainian struggle led the people in western Ukraine to see the Soviet soldiers as liberators (p. 14). However, for the sake of a feeling of national belonging among Ukrainians, this ambivalence in the portrayal of the Red Army in Ukraine and the Stalinist regime is resolved with a reference to Ukrainians' struggle for an independent Ukraine. The textbook states ultimately that the beginning of World War II convinced the Ukrainians that "real liberation was possible only as a result of creating their own independent country and not with a change of a country-patron" (p. 72).[23]

In comparison to the Ukrainian textbook, in the framework of Soviet foreign policy at the beginning of World War II the Russian textbook creates a narrative that focuses on the unity of the annexed states and lands that later became the Soviet republics. The authors seem to justify this by arguing that these lands, including Ukraine and Western Belarus, belonged to the Russian empire until the 1920s. This claim also stretches to Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, which were later joined with the Ukrainian and Moldovan Soviet republics (p. 182). This emphasis on Soviet territories in comparison to the Ukrainian textbook is even more pronounced in the textbook's discussion of Stalin's preparation for the war. As the textbook argues, "J.V. Stalin was convinced that in the war against the Soviet Union, the hitlerites would aim first at conquering Ukraine in order to leave our country without rich economic areas and seize control of Ukrainian bread, Donetsk coal and afterwards Caucasian oil" (p. 187). While linking the description of the Soviet Union with the wording "our country", meaning today's Russia, the Russian textbook presents contemporary Russian national identity in territorial terms, referring to the territory of the entire

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23 All translations from Russian and Ukrainian are my own.

Soviet Union, a tendency that is evident throughout the Russian textbook narrative on the Great Patriotic War.

The German Attack on the Soviet Union

In the portrayal of Soviet Army's resistance during the German attack on the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian and Russian textbooks follow a narrative of heroization, similar to what has been observed in the creation of the Soviet understanding of the war. As Symonenko argues, in the creation of the myth of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet authorities relied on the narratives of heroization, which was intensified through the self-sacrifice of the Soviet people. The memory of the war was de-individualized, creating a heroic mass of people who suffered in the war and struggled against the enemy; everyone in the Soviet Union was portrayed as having supported the Soviet authority and having been ready to give their lives in the fight for their fatherland.[24]

Similar to the Soviet narrative, the Ukrainian textbook accentuates the heroism of Soviet soldiers; however, it describes military operations that took place mostly on the territory of today's Ukraine and not on the territory of the Soviet Union. The heroism of Red Army soldiers is emphasized by the claim that the German occupiers planned to conquer Ukraine within a couple of weeks but instead required thirteen months (p. 28). In this struggle, as the textbook argues, "while being in absolutely difficult conditions, the Soviet soldiers and officers showed a bitter resistance to the invaders" (p. 22). The heroic defence of Ukrainian cities by the Soviet army is emphasized by the numbers of days during which the cities were able to withstand sieges, for instance the defence of Kyiv lasted 72 days, that of Odessa 73 days and Sevastopol 250 days (pp. 26–27).

The Russian textbook also emphasizes the heroism of the Soviet people, for whom World War II became the Great Patriotic War (p. 190). Similar to the Ukrainian textbook, the Russian textbook uses figures to describe the military strength of the Soviet Union: the Soviet army included "3 million Soviet soldiers and officers, 39.4 thousand cannons and mortars, 11 thousand tanks and attack machinery, 9.1 thousand military planes" (p. 190). The heroization of the Red Army is further emphasized in the Russian textbook by the claim that "after an immediate encounter with the fierce resistance of the Red Army during the first five weeks of the war the Wehrmacht lost more than 190 thousand soldiers and officers (twice as many as during the first two years of the war in Europe), a half of its

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24 Herasymenko, L. and Pyliavets, R. (eds.) 2009, *Ukraina i Ukrainskyi Narod u Druhii Svitovii Viini: Dyskusii* [Ukraine and Ukrainian People in the Second World War], Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, pp. 79–81.

tanks and almost a quarter of its airplanes" (p. 193). In its linguistic realization, the heroism of the Soviet soldiers is described in the Russian textbook by using many epithets attached to the nouns "resistance", "battle" and "courage", e.g. "bleeding profusely defenders of the border fortress halted the German division" (p. 192), "the Wehrmacht immediately encountered a fierce resistance from the Red Army" (p. 193); "the people trapped in the siege of Leningrad could only endure due to courage and self-sacrifice unknown in history" (p. 194); "with massive efforts the enemy was stopped" (p. 197); and "the enemy troops encountered resistance and courage of the Soviet soldiers" (p. 198).

In portraying the heroism of the Soviet soldiers and civilians during the German army attack, the Russian textbook stretches the notion of being Russian to the Soviet territory as a whole. As one of the German generals stated, the textbook argues, the German troops soon understood "what it means to fight against Russians; although the situation on the Soviet-German front was becoming fierce" (p. 193). Also in contrast to the Ukrainian textbook dedicated to the military operations only on the territory of today's Ukraine, the Russian textbook focuses on military operations on the territory of the whole Soviet Union. It talks about the heroic defence of the Brest fortress (p. 192); massive German bombing of Murmansk, Liepāja, Riga, Kaunas, Minsk, Kyiv and Smolensk (p. 193); the biggest tank battle at the beginning of the war on the line Rivno-Dubno-Brody; the tragic situation around Kyiv; the German occupation of Odessa and Sevastopol (p. 195), the siege of Leningrad (p. 194) and the defence of Moscow (pp.197–198).

The Nazi Occupation Regime

In illustrating the German occupation regime, the Ukrainian textbook incorporates a narrative of victimization in which Ukraine – not the Soviet Union – is portrayed as a victim of German aggression. In the description of the German attack on the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian textbook states that "Ukraine was turned into one of the most important theatres of the giant battle between the Soviet and Hitler armies" (p. 72). This claim is supported by the number of years and months – three years and four months – during which military action took place on the territory of Ukraine (p. 72). The Ukrainian textbook also uses figures to account for the victims of the brutality of the German occupation regime:

> "during World War II, Ukraine lost 8 million people […], 2.5 million fell in the battles, 5.5 million prisoners of war and civilians died. If all demographic losses are taken into account (apart from those killed, it also includes people who died from disease and hunger, deported people, who were mobilized [to the army],

who emigrated, and losses in natural growth), the number is enormous – 14.5 million. In 1945, 27.4 million people lived in Ukraine, whereas in 1941 there were about 42 million. Cities were de-populated and ruined. Of the 900,000 inhabitants of Kyiv in 1940, 186,000 were left in 1945. Odessa and Kharkiv lost almost 200,000 people each, Rivne 100,000 […]. 16,150 factories, 27,910 *kolhosps*, 872 *radhosps* and 1300 equipment and tractor stations were destroyed by the occupiers and the Soviet Army. In 1943 and 1944, the Germans took 9,200,000 tons of grain, 622,000 tons of meat and meat products, 950,000 tons of vegetable oil, 208 thousand tons of butter, 400,000 tons of sugar, 2,500,000 tons of forage and 3,500,000 tons of potatoes from Ukraine" (p. 62).

The Ukrainian textbook uses the passive voice to portray the Nazi occupation regime, thus describing Ukrainians as being subordinated to Nazi occupation forces, e.g. "during the punitive actions, 215 villages were demolished in Ukraine. And in total, 3.9 million civilians and over 1.8 million prisoners of war were killed and tortured to death, 300 concentration camps operating in Ukraine were transformed into horrible 'death factories'" (p. 31) and "2.3 million mostly young people, men and women, who were able to work best, were taken from Ukraine to industrial and agricultural installations in Germany, in fact into Nazi slavery" (p. 32).[25] A long section in the Ukrainian textbook describes a contribution of Ukrainian science, culture and literature to the victory over Germany (pp. 66–71). The Ukrainian textbook argues that "Ukrainian workers showed their dedication and their heroic labour" (p. 46), "people evacuated from Ukraine deep into the Soviet rear contributed with dignity to the destruction of the German forces" (p. 47) and "the intellectual talent of the Ukrainian people, their culture and art did not stop; cultural life during the war surely served for the purpose of self-preservation and the proclamation of humanistic ideals" (p. 71).

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25 In the description of the German occupation regime in Ukraine, the Ukrainian textbook mentions the Holocaust as the mass murder of the Jews. It also points to the murder of Jews and people of other nationalities in Babyn Yar near Kyiv and in other Ukrainian cities and conveys that in the first months of the Nazi occupation in Ukraine 850,000 Jews fell victim to the regime, although some Jewish people were able to save their lives with the help of the local population (p. 31). A special section in the textbook is also devoted to collaborationism of the local population with occupiers (pp. 31–32). This information is an upgrade in comparison to the textbook of the same authors from the year 2005 and presents a move towards a critical reflection of the Holocaust. The Russian textbook, however, does not mention the Holocaust, although it describes the goals of Nazi Germany as to liquidate the Soviet state by means of genocide, race discrimination and mass terror against the Soviet people, including Jews and Russians (p. 210). As is known, from first being a German experience, the critical reflection of the Holocaust in World War II eventually became one of the core topics in the formation of a European identity and even turned out to be a "negative" foundation myth of Europe. See François, E. (2004), op. cit.; Müller, J.-W. (2010), 'On 'European Memory'. Some Conceptual and Normative Remarks,' in Pakier, M. and Stråth, B. (eds.), *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, Berghahn Books, pp. 25–37; Blaive, M., Gerbel, C. and Lindenberger, T. (2011), *Clashes in European Memory: The Case of Communist Repression and the Holocaust*, Innsbruck: Studien Verlag.

The Russian textbook also devotes a long section to the description of the civilians' efforts in fighting the German occupants. As the Russian textbook argues, "the economic victory over fascist Germany and its satellites was achieved through the merits of the intense labour of workers, peasants and civil servants" (p. 219). However, whereas in the Ukrainian textbook the narrative of heroization refers to Ukrainians, in the Russian textbook it is associated with the Soviet people. Although the Russian textbook does not neglect the totalitarian nature of Stalin's Soviet Union, it argues that not only the economic merits, but also the moral-political unity of the Soviet people played an important role. Fascist Germany, aiming at the destruction of the multi-ethnic state, did not manage to create a conflict between workers and peasants and between various ethnic groups. Moreover, as the textbook states, the unity of soldiers on the fronts was based on the patriotism and preservation of Russians and other peoples and the understanding of the deadly danger that was threatening their fatherland (p. 221). The notion of fatherland often refers both to Russia and the Soviet Union and ultimately these two categories merge into one when the textbook describes the German occupation regime in the Soviet Union: "According to the leadership of fascist Germany, the invasion of the Soviet Union was not a normal war. The 'Ost' plan […] was set up to complete the liquidation of the Soviet state, to resettle large parts of the population in Western Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia to Siberia […], the physical destruction of 5–6 million Jews and 30 million Russians. Nazi directives ordered the destruction of Russians as a people, to divide them from within and to reduce the biological strength of the Russian people […]" (p. 210).

In contrast to the Ukrainian textbook, the Russian textbook accentuates the victimhood not of Ukrainians but of the Soviet people. Yet its use of figures is similar to the Ukrainian textbook. The price paid for the victory of the Soviet Union was far too high: "27 million people perished on the front, in captivity and in the occupied lands. […] 1710 of our country's cities lay in ruins, more than 70 thousand villages were burnt down. The occupiers demolished almost 32 thousand factories and plants and 65 thousand kilometres of railway, 1135 mines were flooded and blown up, 427 museums and 43 thousands of libraries were plundered" (p. 229).

The Soviet Army Offensive

In the portrayal of the Soviet Army offensive and of the ultimate defeat of the German forces, the Ukrainian textbook concentrates on the heroic deeds of the Soviet Army and civilians, stating that battles were "difficult and bloody" (p. 42) but "overcoming fearless resistance, the army was moving further" (p. 54). The heroism

of the Soviet Army is also underlined by the numbers of German lives lost: in the Soviet Army attack on Shpola-Zvenyhorodka 55,000 German soldiers and officers were killed or wounded and 18,000 were taken prisoners of war (p. 54). At the same time, the Ukrainian textbook adds a Ukrainian component to this narrative. It eventually presents the Soviet Army offensive and the role of civilians in the fight against the German forces as the story of Ukrainians. In contrast to the Soviet myth of the war, where the titular Russian nation was portrayed as playing the most important role in the Soviet victory[26], the Ukrainian textbook focuses on the role of Ukrainians who heroically resisted the German attack. The Ukrainian textbook argues that:

> "Ukraine contributed enormously to the common fight against Germany and its allies. About 7 million of Ukrainian citizens were fighting in the Red Army. After the Russians, the Ukrainians were the second largest group in the Red Army. Many of the chief commanders on the fronts and in the armies were Ukrainians. […] Heroic deeds of many Ukrainians are marked by the highest awards. 2072 Ukrainians received the title "Hero of the Soviet Union". 32 of the 115 people who received the title "Hero of the Soviet Union" twice were Ukrainians […]. 2.5 million of the 7 million medals and orders awarded to soldiers and officers of the Red Army were awarded to residents of Ukraine" (p. 73).

The Ukrainian textbook additionally portrays not only the contribution of Ukrainians in the Soviet army, but also points out to Ukraine's contribution to the victory of the anti-Hitler forces in Europe: "despite all the victims and failures, the participation of the Ukrainian people in World War II gave a huge boost to the consolidation of the Ukrainian nation as a European nation; being part of the Great Victory increased self-respect and collective national upheaval." (p. 74). At the same time in the Ukrainian textbook, Ukrainians are presented as victims of the Soviet regime. As the Ukrainian textbook emphasizes, "in the eyes of many commanders-in-chief and commissars, [...] Ukrainians were potential traitors who were supposed to be 'given a good lesson' and to be forced to 'take on responsibility to pay with blood for the shame of staying on occupied territory.'" (pp. 45–46).

The Russian textbook presents the military operations of the Red Army offensive and the ensuing military operations in the Central and East European countries as a story of people who nowadays live in independent states: "in August and September 1943 Oryol, Belgorod, Kharkov and Smolensk were liberated" (p. 201); "the enemy was forced out from Belarus" (p. 202), "Moldova was liberated" (p. 202). As a result "the state border of the USSR was re-established along the whole

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26   Herasymenko, L. and Pyliavets, R., op. cit., pp. 79–81.

territory from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea" (p. 202). In contrast to the Ukrainian textbook describing the contribution of Ukrainians to the victory over fascism in Europe, the Russian textbook, again, emphasizes the role of the Soviet people. As the textbook observes, "the liberation of the fatherland was not completed yet, as the Red Army crossed the state border and started liberating European countries. Our soldiers showed such moral principles as humanism, brotherhood and solidarity with people who suffered under fascism" (pp. 207–208). As a result, "the Soviet Union made a decisive contribution to saving the world from fascist slavery" (p. 228). The Russian textbook also highlights the heroism of the Soviet people, as "the great victory was won through the selfless courage of Soviet soldiers and the work of civilians along with the mighty potential of the Soviet state" (p. 228). Summing up, the textbook argues that "a spirit of dignity was developed among the fighting brotherhood of all the peoples who lived in the Soviet Union" (p. 207).

As in previous themes, a number of paragraphs in this theme explicitly substitute the word "Russian" or "Russia" for "Soviet" or the "Soviet Union". As the Russian textbook is convinced, the Soviet people were fighting in the war because "there was a real threat of defeat; it was a question of life or death for the Russian state and the people living in this state; it influenced the whole thinking and feelings of Soviet soldiers" (p. 206). Moreover, "huge losses of the Soviet Union were the goal of the Nazis in order to destroy the Russian statehood and people" (p. 229). In the description of the losses that the Soviet Union experienced during the war, the word "Soviet" used in the first sentence of the paragraph is substituted by "our" meaning "Russian" in the second sentence of the same paragraph, e.g. "the price paid for the victory of the Soviet Union was far too high […]. 1710 of our country's cities lay in ruins" (p. 229). The following example in the Russian textbook emphasizes the notion of Russia stretching to the territory of the whole Soviet Union and all Soviet people regardless their nationality. In a letter from the front a soldier confessed that "people of various nationalities are fighting in the army; Russia and its traditions are not only the pride of Russians, but also of various peoples living in our country; the feeling of fatherland became common for us; soldiers of various nationalities often say: 'We are Russian'; and this is not due to neglect of their own nationalities" (p. 207).

Resistance Movements

The theme of resistance movements in Ukraine is another important component of the World War II discourse in the Ukrainian textbook. Given the number of heated public, political and academic debates in Ukraine on the role of the OUN

and UPA in World War II[27], the Ukrainian textbook faces a challenge to present this theme coherently in order to foster a sense of common national belonging among Ukrainians. In contrast to intense debates elsewhere, the Ukrainian textbook equates the two principal forms of resistance movement in Ukraine during World War II: first under the Soviet slogans and second with the aim of creating an independent Ukrainian state (p. 34). Moreover, the Ukrainian textbook also presents an idea of unity of the Ukrainian people by claiming that both Soviet partisans and the OUN were widely supported in Ukraine. As the textbook argues, the partisan movement recruited people from very diverse parts of society, often including women, children and volunteers who did not belong to the Communist Party (p. 35) and also gives the impression that the OUN was a widespread Ukrainian movement by mentioning that OUN-like organizations were established in many Ukrainian cities, also in Crimea and in the eastern part of Ukraine, where they allegedly had many sympathizers among local intellectuals, high-school students, workers and peasants (p. 38). Eventually, the presence of the OUN in these parts of Ukraine proved that "the wish for an independent Ukraine was shared among people in all parts of Ukraine" (p. 74). The Ukrainian textbook fosters the idea that the national liberation movement during World War II was part of the extended struggle of Ukrainians for a sovereign state, beginning with the liberation struggle of 1917–1920 and eventually leading to Ukraine's independence in 1991 (p. 75).

In the Russian textbook, in contrast, diverse anti-Soviet resistance movements in various Soviet republics are portrayed as an attempt by Nazi occupational forces to incite inter-ethnic hostility in the Soviet Union. As the Russian textbook argues, the Nazi leadership required its occupation authorities to exploit contradictions between Lithuanians, Estonians, Latvians, Ukrainians and Russians in Germany's interest (p. 212). With help of Russophobic, nationalist feelings, as the Russian textbooks observes, Berlin managed to gain support from the Central Muslim Committee, Kalmyk nationalists, pro-fascist organizations in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Belarus, from extremists under the leadership of Bandera and the OUN and UPA, as well as from the Russian military formation in Kuban and the Russian National Committee under the leadership of Vlasov (p. 212). Ultimately, the textbook

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27 Shevel, O. (2011), 'The Politics of Memory in a Divided Society: A Comparison of Post-Franco Spain and Post-Soviet Ukraine,' *Slavic Review*, vol. 70, no. 1, pp. 137–164; Jilge, W. (2006), op. cit.; Scherrer, J. (2004a), op. cit.; Krasun, A. (2010), 'Soviet History and the Politics of Memory in Ukraine: Some Evidence from Discourse Analysis and Expert Interviews,' *Der Donauraum*, vol. 50, no. 3–4, pp. 197–211; Marples, D. R. (2007), op. cit.; Amar, T. C. et al. (eds.) (2010), *Strasti za Banderoiu: Statti ta Eseii (Passions about Bandera: Articles and Essays*, Kyiv: Hrani-T; Himka, J.-P. (2011), 'Debates in Ukraine over Nationalist Involvement in the Holocaust, 2004–2008,' *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 353–370; Marples, D. R. (2006), "Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero," *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 58, no. 4, pp. 555–566.

condemns the national resistance movements in the former Soviet Union as being directed against the integrity of the Soviet Union: the aims of the occupiers were to spread interethnic hostility and in this way Berlin helped to organize nationalist military entities on the basis of the Russophobic feelings (p. 212).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to discuss the creation of national identity through the analysis of representations of World War II in Russian and Ukrainian secondary school textbooks. As the analysis reveals, the notion of national identity with regard to World War II has been constructed differently in the Russian and Ukrainian textbooks. The Ukrainian textbook devotes the discussion of World War II to the territory of today's Ukraine, as well as to Central European countries. It separates Ukrainians from the Soviet people and portrays them as heroes and victims of the German and Soviet aggression. In contrast, the Russian textbook conceives Russia in terms of the territory of the Soviet Union and Russians as people of the Soviet Union with many Soviet republics, despite the fact that today these are separate nation-states. In representations of World War II both the Russian and the Ukrainian history textbooks concentrate on the following key themes: the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the German attack on the Soviet Union, the Nazi occupation regime, the Soviet Army offensive and resistance movements. In linguistic terms, the textbooks employ a diverse range of vocabulary and particular grammar structures to strengthen their description of the events in World War II. The variety of linguistic means of the realization of key themes ranges from employing epithets and figures to sentences in the passive voice.

In the description of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Ukrainian textbook is ambivalent in its portrayal of the Soviet regime: on the one hand it describes the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as an act of aggression, but on the other hand it portrays the Stalinist regime as contributing to the unification of Ukrainian lands. In comparison to the Ukrainian textbook, the Russian textbook focuses on the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as a unification of all lands that became part of the Soviet Union. In the description of the German attack on the Soviet Union, the textbooks present heroic deeds of the Soviet soldiers. However, the Ukrainian textbook pays more attention to military operations on the territory of today's Ukraine whereas the Russian textbook focuses on the heroic deeds of the Soviet people, for whom World War II became the Great Patriotic War. In the theme on the German occupation regime, both textbooks portray the German forces as an external oppressive force. However, whereas the Ukrainian textbook portrays this

regime as an existential threat to the Ukrainians, in the Russian textbook it poses a threat to the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian textbook turns Ukrainians into victims who suffered under the German occupation and the Stalinist regime. Moreover, if the Ukrainian textbook portrays the contribution of Ukrainian civilians in the rear in resisting the Nazi invasion, the Russian textbook emphasizes the role of the Soviet people as a whole. In the Russian textbook the notion of fatherland frequently refers both to Russia and to the Soviet Union. During the Soviet Army offensive, Ukrainians are portrayed in the Ukrainian textbook as heroes heroically resisting the Nazi invasion and fighting for victory over fascism in Europe. The Russian textbook points out the role of the Soviet people in resisting the German invasion and contributing to the victory over fascism in Europe. On the resistance movements, the Ukrainian textbook clearly equates the Soviet partisans and the OUN and UPA as liberation movements fighting for the Ukraine's independence. The Russian textbook, however, portrays several anti-Soviet movements as a German attempt to destabilize the multi-ethnic Soviet state.

Further research on the representations of World War II in Ukrainian textbooks might include a study of visual representations in the textbooks and any additional didactic material included in them. Moreover, it would be interesting to investigate the politics of textbook production and to study the role of historians, civil servants and politicians involved in the production of these textbooks. As Apple and Christian-Smith observe, a textbook is produced and authorized by real people with real interests, it is published within the political and economic context and is a result of political, economic and cultural activities, battles and compromises.[28] The question of the extent to which the textbooks analyzed in this paper in fact shape the historical consciousness of young Russians and Ukrainians also remains open.

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28 Apple, M. and Christian-Smith, L. (1991), 'The Politics of the Textbook,' in Apple, M. and Christian-Smith, L. (eds.), *The Politics of the Textbook*, New York: Routledge, p. 3.

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