

Author: Michał Marek

Doctoral dissertation abstract

*Cultural diversity of the society, identity and national cohesion - the analysis of the phenomenon on the example of South-Eastern Ukraine*

This dissertation concerns the problem of relations between cultural differentiation of the society and national identity and cohesion. The dissertation is a case study examining the given issue on the ground of the society of southeastern Ukraine.

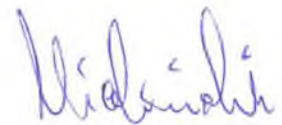
The main research questions include: 1) the role of cultural differentiation of modern society in the formation of national identity and cohesion, 2) the relationship between cultural heterogeneity and national identity and regional identity of the country areas – how the cultural heterogeneity affects national and regional identity, 3) the consequences that cultural differentiation brings to modern society.

In order to answer the indicated research questions, the author used a case study as the leading method. Within the frames of the discussed dissertation, also the critical content analysis and expert qualitative focused interview were used as research methods.

Within the framework of this dissertation, the author analyzes phenomena and processes related to the ethnic, national and confessional situation present in contemporary Ukraine. The historical processes that were the genesis of the formation of the Ukrainian cultural melting pot are also analyzed. The paper also discusses the influence of the Russian Federation on Ukraine through the use of cultural and ethnic diversity for foreign policy purposes. The influence of Russian and Soviet political myths on Ukrainian society is also analyzed. The research also examines the consequences of the expansion of the Russian language during the Soviet period and prior to the Revolution of Dignity (during Viktor Yanukovich's presidency) on the cohesion and identity of Ukrainian society. The researches also examined the approach of Ukrainian political elites to the process of forming a Ukrainian model of identity. An important element of the research was also the matter of showing differences and analogies between shades of Ukrainian identity found in the regions of southern and eastern Ukraine.

The conclusions obtained through the research process indicate, among others, that the high level of ethnic and cultural (including linguistic and religious) differentiation are not in themselves a factor which negatively affects the condition of social cohesion of the country. However, a high level of ethnic and cultural diversity may be a tool that, if the right conditions are created by an external factor, can be used to destabilize the internal situation in a given country. The findings also indicate that the view that there are 'two' opposing Ukraines: the eastern one ('pro-Russian', with a strong cultural and ethnic differentiation) and the western one ('pro-Ukrainian'/'pro-European', with less cultural and ethnic differentiation on a national scale), is outdated. The obtained conclusions indicate that the current reality in Ukraine is definitely more complex, and assessing the socio-political processes taking place there from a bipolar perspective simplifies the reality, which may lead to partially erroneous conclusions.

Kraków, 06.09.2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kisielecki".