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Аннотация. Интересы играют ключевую роль во внешней политике того или иного государства, в том числе и в международных отношениях. В социальной среде на каждое действие или решение определенного актора влияют его интересы. Но прежде чем обладать какими-либо интересами, должен быть какой-то «драйвер», который заставляет или влияет на форму и степень интересов актора в отношении определенной области или набора объектов. В международных отношениях это то, что «водитель» придает идентичность.

Предполагая, что социальные субъекты имеют, во-первых, личность, а затем у них есть интересы, можно было бы сказать, что исследование идентичности как подхода к внешней политике конкретной страны имеет большое значение для понимания и установления определенных значений конкретной политики или стратегии. Существуют различные теоретические объяснения международных отношений, которые способствуют различной степени важности для идентичности, в то время как лишь немногие из них ставят роль личности как существенную. Цель этого тезиса заключается в поддержке и укреплении значения самобытности в международных отношениях и в социальных науках в целом.

В течение, по крайней мере, последних десяти лет происходили грандиозные дебаты на тему русской идентичности. В этих дебатах различных авторов анализировался главным образом статус российской идентичности, которая находится в кризисе вследствие советской истории или авторитарных тенденций ее элит, или другие мнения, например, Россия должна взять пример из других стран и так далее. Верно или нет, что российская идентичность была в кризисе или насколько глубока был этот кризис, - это одно и может быть полезно для предотвращения тех же ошибок или для улучшения определенных политик. Однако такой подход не анализирует решения, принятые в российской внешней политике в отношении идентичности.

Другая проблема заключается в том, что радикальные решения в российской внешней политике в последние годы предоставляются в дискурсе «ревизионизма», «империализма» или в контексте личных амбиций Путина перестроить Советский Союз, и лишь немногие делают связь с Роль российской идентичности в целом и ее роль во внешней политике России.

По существу, целью этого тезиса является различный подход к проблеме российской идентичности и российской внешней политики, который заключается в выявлении

компонентов, формирующих российскую идентичность, и которые далее преследуются с влиянием на внутреннюю и внешнюю политику, с предположением, что существует Отсутствие достаточного количества исследований, которые в хронологическом анализе разрабатывают построение российской идентичности.

Исследования доказывают и отстаивают важность идентичности в международных отношениях, анализируя построение российской идентичности в определенный период и признавая российские компоненты идентичности, ее динамику и влияние на российскую внешнюю политику также в узком политическом дискурсе с Западом.

Ключевые слова: Кризис, дискурс, внешняя политика, идентичность, интересы, международные отношения, Россия, Запад

Abstract Interests are playing key role in foreign policy of particular state, thus in international relations as well. In social environment, every action or decision of certain actor is influenced by its interests. But before possession of any interests, there must be some kind of "driver" that is forcing or influencing the shape and extent of actor's interests towards specific area or set of objects. In international relations is that "driver" accorded to identity.

Assuming that social actors are having firstly identity and then they got interests, led one to acknowledge that research of identity as an approach to foreign policy of particular country is significant in understanding and establishing of certain meanings of specific policy or strategy. There are various theoretical explanations of international relations which are promoting different level of importance towards identity, while only few of them are placing identity's role as essential. The intend of this thesis is to support and strengthen the importance of identity in international relations and in social sciences in general.

During the period of at least last ten years there were tremendous debates on the topic of Russian identity. These debates of various authors were analyzing mainly status of Russia's identity, which is in crisis as a consequence of Soviet history or authoritarian tendencies of its elites, or other opinions like Russia should take example from other countries and so on. Whether it is true or not that Russian identity was in crisis or how deep that crisis was, is the one thing and can be useful for prevention of same mistakes or to make improvements in particular policies. However, such approach is not analyzing decisions taken in Russian foreign policy with respect to identity.

Another issue is that radical decisions in Russian foreign policy in the last years are accorded in the discourse of "revisionism", "imperialism", or in context of Putin's personal ambitions to re-construct Soviet Union, and only few are making connection to the role of Russian identity in general and its role in Russia's foreign policy particularly.

Essentially, aim of this thesis is different approach towards the issue of Russian identity and Russian foreign policy which is to identify the components that are forming Russian identity and that are further pursued with influence on domestic and foreign policy, with assumption, that there is a lack of enough researches which are elaborating the construction of Russian identity in chronological analysis.

Research is proving and advocating the importance of identity in international relations by analyzing the construction of Russian identity in specific period and by recognizing Russian identity components, its dynamic and influence for Russian foreign policy also in narrow political discourse with the West.

Keywords: crisis, discourse, foreign policy, identity, interests, international relations, Russia, West

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Introduction

As every political decision is social phenomenon, it cannot be understood properly without making the research of the context in which it was created, that is society, social groups as well social actors which are creating their actions with reference to which they are identifying with. Simply said, social subjects are having firstly identity towards which they are further legitimizing their action while the examination of actor's identity is beneficial for understanding the environment in which it was created and also to understand actor's actions as well motives behind them. As every identity is specific in its elements or components which are creating it, each identity requires different approach to be analyzed and also different approach for the further interaction that is intended to have specific outcomes. For instance, one group simply cannot dishonor the specific values that are creating the identity of another group without expecting adequate response from group which feels itself dishonored. It doesn't matter if that action was conscious or unconscious, response should be expected but what is more important, study of that group's identity which is one making reference to can prevent unpredictable calculations.

Purrpose of this thesis is to prove that identity is important element in IR and to estimate this issue and recent developments specifically in Russian identity context. By analyzing of Russian identity construction in 2010-2016 thesis is applying to prove that study of actor's identity is important in order to understand his actions (foreign, domestic policy) as well motives behind them. Furthermore, analysis of actor's identity helps to predict possible outcomes in meaning of costs or benefits from particular action or strategy with respect to him and also with respect to objects which are forming his identity. Nevertheless study of actor's identity is beneficial also in calculations of possible trends and prospects in his domestic and foreign policy as well in his further interactions with international environment. Study of identity supports the development of explanatory understanding mainly in historical but also in sociological means, that is - what are or what were the reasons of behavior of certain state.

Discourse on Russian identity over the last years is rather intensive, but not sufficient in analyzing and achieving of widely common opinion. Scholars are divided in different characteristics of elements that are influential in defining of Russian identity and also divided in perspectives that they are applying on the research and sources influential for the status of Russian identity. However, there is widely accepted opinion that there are attempts to create

new Russian identity, but its concept and exact characteristics are not certain or not widely accepted.

One of the fundamental reasons for this problem lies also in fact that researches on Russian identity are in many cases performed out of official discourse on Russian identity and are arranged in the sort of "cogitations" that fits author's various preferences like ideological, political or limitations and boundaries of identity theory. For instance, this means that several studies are oriented on Russian identity, but after all they are not applying research method from theories that are treating identity as important in international relations and also that which are having specific studies and concepts on identity and its role in global politics.

Assuming the incoherence on the Russian identity discourse means also similar inconsistency in its role in foreign policy, or better say assumptions that Russian identity is weak for consistent foreign policy. Another problem in analyses of Russian identity, particularly in its role in foreign policy is the media's framing of subjective opinion of any civic representative or random citizen in foreign policy and identity issues, what is further misused for the purposes of analysis of identity or foreign policy what is after all not very independent. Same is applicable in the researches on Russian identity provided with focus on another context of Russian policy from which is further analyzed assumption on Russian identity issues, while such studies lacks comprehensive identity context.

Similar are studies undertaken mainly by politically motivated opposition with aim to discredit government in another issue while at the end it refers also to identity because only few things are indicating on it. Such views then having "snowball" effect and are starting to play "role" in topic. Likewise issues could be identified in many other topics of social sciences. What was intended to analyze and explain is that topic of identity is view that construction of actor's identity cannot be transparently analyzed by having predisposition that there is one or whatever number of generally applicable concepts of identity or whatever number of the "right" identities. Identity is specific set of elements that are "generated" by and for specific community, while each has its particular elements, components.

Aim

For the purpose of examining or challenging the context mentioned above, thesis is applying research question - *Is Russian Identity Strong Enough for Consistent Foreign Policy?*, and also, thesis is forming complementary question – *How is the Conflict Between the Russia and the West Perceived Through the Dynamic of Russian Identity Construction*.

Aim of this thesis is to analyze the official activity of different social but mainly political actors in the process of construction of Russian identity in the researched period of 2010 until 2016. Such construction in the time period is beneficial for evaluating possible progress or regress in the set of researched issue; as well it helps to consider whether researched object which is Russian identity is formed due to accidental circumstances, or it is planed consistent form of strategy. Nevertheless, time horizon is also useful in comparison of two different administrations of the researched country – presidential terms of Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin. Mentioned approach is crucial in order to reach the answers on formulated questions, while thesis will prove the level of consistency and influence of Russian identity construction into foreign policy of Russia and also will analyze what role is dynamic of Russian identity construction playing in the conflict between the Russia and the West.

West is in this research understood as the group of countries with the liberal democracy as the official political ideology. Additionally, West is represented by the NATO and EU members.

International environment is meant as a set of various active objects that are creating international relations, as states, organizations, communities, representatives.

Objectives

In order to achieve the aim of this research, it is important to set the objectives. Fulfilling of correctly chosen objectives is making the ground of research framework coherent, as well the connection of proper objectives is making the outcomes and conclusion of analysis evident.

As the main object of this thesis is identity, first and primary objective is to constitute the meaning of identity that is used in this research, that is to define the theoretical approaches that are used for analysis of identity and what are these approaches meaning under the term of

identity. The whole thesis works with the theoretical approaches of constructivism and primordialism and their relation to identity.

Second objective is to make literature review on the Russian identity in order to understand what are the trends in this research, what approaches are scholars using and what are their conclusions. This is beneficial in realizing what are these debates missing, why are they divided and what is their common opinion on the issue. It allows to understand the perspectives of analyses on Russian identity and to balance the context that is missing in other researches.

Next objective is to make research on historical overview of Russian identity that is useful in realizing its evolution and its influence on identity in contemporary by creating the parallels between the similar and past events in this topic.

Final objective is to analyze the official documents issued by the Russian administration in identity discourse and identify in them the most crucial components that are influential in Russian identity construction. Additionally, it is important to examine the role of those components towards Russia's foreign policy. The official documents are including transcripts, speeches, news, documents, laws and amendments of Russian Presidents, as well of governments.

Methodology

The method of research performed in this thesis indicates the use of historic approach supplemented with documentary analysis. It is historic approach because analysis is in fact focused on the events that were arranged through the past until contemporary, furthermore one whole chapter of thesis is accorded to deeper historical perspective on the topic, while other two chapters are referred to period of 2010-2016.

It is supplemented with documentary analysis because majority of empirical evidence on Russian identity as object of this research is collected from the official documents of Russian Federation. Whole basis that is necessary to achieve aim of this research is analyzed in these documents.

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Chapter 1: Theoretical Analysis on Identity, Constructivism, Primordialism and Literature Review – Mainstream Interpretations of Russian Identity Issue in Contemporary Literature

Discussion over the topic of Russian Identity and identity in general over the last few years is very intensive. The opinions and views on this topic of Western group and Russian (pro-Russian) group of researchers are different, nevertheless these opinions differs also within the one group. Before the proceeding to the review of these discussions, it is necessary to recognize what it is understood under the notion of identity in international relations, as well its development and its desire in this social science. For this aim, following theoretical analysis review starts with theoretical explanations of identity in two theoretical approaches in order to better understand the issue and to make a framework of topic in primary sources, which are the official documents in Russian identity discourse. Second purpose of this chapter is to make a general overview on mainstream interpretations of Russian identity, different perspectives on this topic with various backgrounds within last seven years; these are the secondary sources of this analysis. These, predominantly constructivist's titles of different authors were beneficial in order to realize in what discourse is Russian identity analyzed, while identifying the issues of terms as interests, ethnicity and nationalism, as well their presence or influence in social relations, specifically in Russian identity. Research of articles from different authors are useful to find out on which points they do and do not agree, and also they are beneficial for stimulation to look on the object of analysis from various perspectives. This part of literature is essential for the purpose of making a theoretical framework that was later applied to the research of the dynamic of Russian identity construction and its examination.

The second category of literature used for the purpose of this study consists of empirical research what are the primary sources of this thesis. In order to analyze the issue of development of Russian identity, this research used official documents of Russian administration as well speeches, statements, amendments and actions of various social actors, mainly presidents of Russian Federation-Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin which are responsible for executive power in country and so were the most important element regarding to this topic. These actors, their action respectively are the primary sources which are evaluated in research part of dissertation, chapter 3 and 4.

1.1 Identity in Global Politics

Occurrence of the term "identity" in social analysis and its further spread among the social sciences was presented in the 1960s in the USA. German-born psycho-sociologist Erik Erikson was the most important scholar for development and popularization of identity and introduction of the term "identity crisis" into social sciences. It is taken that identification was developed originally from psychoanalytic context introduced by S. Freud, and further connected with the ethnicity and sociological role together with reference group theory. Since this period the term identity started to proliferate among the journalists and academicians as well started to play the role in social and political analysis. Different politicians and movements initiated to pay the attention towards identity politics with accordance to their different issues regarding ethnicity, nationalism, gender, religion, culture or race.

Introduction of identity in global politics is related with finding of an alternative towards the realists and liberals and their construction of international behavior. The concept of identity in International relations (IR) is the one which helps us to understand the social or political action and motivation to act in specific way of particular actor. Identity is essential for recognition of one group of same people according to unique characteristics – "self", and their division towards the different – "other". Various theoretical explanations of IR and individual scholars are suggesting different relevance to the actor's identity, while the theoretical explanations of identity and its relation to IR chosen in this dissertation are constructivism and primordialism. Mentioned theories are analyzing the role of identity in social interaction and global politics, as well are making theoretical perspectives on topic researched in this thesis. Purpose of choosing these two theories lies in their contradictions on the basic opinion on identity whether it is changeable or not. Such approach can cover broader identity discourse as well it is essential in finding the "breakthrough" between the theories, thus new perspective on elaborating of identity.

¹ Brubaker R. Cooper F. Beyond "identity"// Theory and Society, Vol. 29, #1, 2000. P. 2

1.1.1 Role of Identity in Constructivism as International Relations Theory

Constructivism as one of the theories of international relations is essential in realizing of social construction of behavior among the states and application of identity to problems connected with global politics. However, there are different opinions on the role of identity among the constructivist scholars mainly with regards to the issues as how is the identity constructed and how are identities changing within the time periods. Purpose of this paragraph is to elucidate the most significant opinions on topic of identity and elements intertwined with it, in order of better understanding the core of research in this dissertation. Nevertheless, by promoting of constructivist approach of identity is not meaning that whole research based in this thesis is oriented on theory of constructivism, however, we cannot deny that international reality is socially constructed what is the essence of constructivist study.

Development of constructivism in IR is intertwined with the downfall of the Cold War period, in the late 1980's. With regards to Friedrich Kratochwil (1989), "in a socially constructed world the existence of cause and effect relations, arrangements and also states themselves are dependent on networks of meaning and practices which constitute them."² These features could be sometimes relatively stable, albeit never fixed or confused for permanent objects. In contrast to "materialistic" ideas of (neo) realism and (neo) liberalism, social approach of constructivism is focusing on institutionalized and intersubjective ideas that are shared among people and expressed as practice, interests or identities. According to Jeffrey Legro as large organizations are requiring ideas to guide them in their interactions in the international field, similar nature of ideas is needed for nations or large societies in order to clarify to their members what they stands for; meaning that "ideas are not so much mental as symbolic and organizational; they are embedded not only in human brains but also in the collective memories, government procedures, educational systems, and the rhetoric of statecraft."3 Thus, theory of constructivism is proposing that material units as for example military, borders or oil must be perceived through the social concepts that define their meaning for human life.

² Kratochwil F. (1989) in Hurd I. The Oxford Handbook of International Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. P. 300

³Legro J. W. Rethinking the World: Great Power Strategies and International Order. Ne w York: Cornell University Press, 2005, P. 6

Important element in study of international relations and as well important denominator of research in this thesis is the role of (state/national) interest. In constructivist theory, the formation of interest is socially influenced and to particular extent interest is intertwined or is the product of identity. The relation between interest and identity lies in actor's interactions in society; actor's common identification in beliefs, expectations, role-specific understandings of common environment what can be a starter to gain more prestige or social recognition in socially constructed world of different actors, thus the generator for the interests. This means that the process of interest construction depends on many social processes and interactions as historical experiences, socialization, internalization, and the effects of social norms including the desire to create norms that legitimize one's behavior, altogether with presence or absence of a sense of community.⁴

In contrast, non-constructivist theories insists that the nature or influence on construction of actor's interests is for practical reasons stable and includes combinations of their desires, stating that socially constructed interests are not changing the fact that the primary interests of actors are indicated by the material capabilities and situation of the actors, "and so states are either constructed by material forces or can be treated as if their construction is irrelevant to their interests and behavior." 5

Among the first researchers who introduced the term of constructivism to the theories of IR was Nicholas G. Onuf. According to him, it is the phenomenon of human nature and its further action to construct social facts and relations among the individuals and states⁶, rather than (neo) realist's opinions that international politics is influenced by the egoist actors and their utilitarian calculations. Onuf is simply putting attention to that the world is constructed by language, race, culture, gender or class inequality, instead of results promoted by the nature of politics or settings beyond the control of human nature.

Further development of constructivism in IR was presented by Alexander Wendt and his "social construction" of international system. Wendt's acquisition to constructivism lies in his alternative to materialism which is represented mainly by realism and liberalism. He assumes

⁴Hurd I. The Oxford Handbook of International Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. P. 303

⁵Hurd I. The Oxford Handbook of International Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. P. 302

⁶Onuf N. G. World of Our Making, Rules and rule in social theory and international relations. New York: Routledge, 1989.

that "a fundamental principle of constructivist theory is that people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them." In his article Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics (1992) Wendt is developing a sociological argument on behalf of the liberal claim stating that international institutions can transform state identities and interests, which is involving a "sociological, social psychological" form of systemic theory in which identities and interests are the dependent variable. Wendt is also opposing claims of (neo) realists stating that the existence of self-help9 and power politics are in international relations due to process, not structure of politics, as well they are institutions of world politics instead of features of anarchy. Furthermore, he is creating confident arguments how are these instruments as self-help and power politics constructed under anarchy, as well Wendt is also proposing three ways in which interests and identities are transformed under anarchy: by an evolution of cooperation, by the institution of sovereignty, and by intentional efforts that transform egoistic identities into collective identities – one can assume the role of globalization in here.

Identity and interests in Wendt's ideology of foreign policy plays endogenous role to the state system as a part of fully socialized systemic theory¹¹. This point is stressing the importance of identity and interests in understanding of actor's behavior in social sciences, and international relations particularly. Wendt treats identity as a "property of intentional actors that generates motivational and behavioral dispositions" with a "subjective or unit-level quality, rooted in an

⁷ Wendt A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics // International Organization, Vol. 46, # 2, 1992. P. 396–397

⁸ Wendt A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics // International Organization, Vol. 46, # 2, 1992. P. 394

⁹ Wendt A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics // International Organization, Vol. 46, # 2, 1992. P. 392 – "This starting point makes substantive sense for neorealists, since they believe anarchies are necessarily "self-help" systems, systems in which both central authority and collective security are absent. The self-help corollary to anarchy does enormous work in neorealism, generating the inherently competitive dynamics of the security dilemma and collective action problem. Self-help is not seen as an "institution" and as such occupies a privileged explanatory role vis-a-vis process, setting the terms for, and unaffected by, interaction. Since states failing to conform to the logic of self-help will be driven from the system, only simple learning or behavioral adaptation is possible; the complex learning involved in redefinitions of identity and interest is not.' Questions about identity- and interest-formation are therefore not important to students of international relations. A rationalist problematique, which reduces process to dynamics of behavioral interaction among exogenously constituted actors, defines the scope of systemic theory"

¹⁰ Wendt A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics // International Organization, Vol. 46, # 2, 1992. P. 394-395

¹¹ Wendt A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics // International Organization, Vol. 46, # 2, 1992. P. 402

actor's self-understanding"¹². According to him, identities are constituted by ideas held by the self and those held by the other, meaning that they are constituted by internal and external structures. Nevertheless, Wendt is also stressing the existence of various "kinds" of identities, dependent of internal-external relationship, describing four of them as follows – personal or corporate; type; role and collective, however, he is mentioning that these definitions are definitive. In contrast to possible admit of realists that while the global system is socially constructed, corresponding interests and identities are almost impossible to transform once they become institutionalized, Wendt is opposing and promoting three institutional transformations of identity and security interests, thus clarifying that "institutions transform identities and interests"¹³.

Furthermore, Wendt adds other factors under anarchic context that can transform identities and interests collectively and which are an important dependent variable, such as – domestic, transnational, systemic or individual factor. However, he points out that relative coherence of interests and identity in the real world is characteristics of our inclination for habitual, rather than creative action, and if actors were continually reinventing or transforming their identity, social order would be impossible. This is further analyzed by Wendt's conclusion that identities and interests should not be treated as given in every instance, while the research strategy or definition of problems in IR should be question-driven instead of method-driven and if the research is not interested in identity and interest formation, assumptions of rationalists would be fully reasonable. He analyzing that anarchy is what states make of it and underlying important processes of identity and interest formation in global politics which were absent in constructivism before, Wendt's article is making a significant part of theoretical basis for the research of identity in this dissertation.

To conclude this section, analysis of constructivism has indicated that many elements of IR are socially constructed instead of being managed by uncontrollable nature of human being or the nature of politics. Perception of international relations in constructivist's terms means taking into account what states and people think and how they behave in global politics with

¹² Wendt A. Social Theory of International Politics. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999. P. 224

¹³Wendt A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics // International Organization, Vol. 46, # 2, 1992. P. 412

¹⁴ Wendt A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics // International Organization, Vol. 46, # 2, 1992. P. 423

emphasis on social construction of particular actors, events or institutions. This includes social processes and interactions with focus on actor's beliefs about the world, historical evolution, shared understandings and practices as well the identity about self and others.

Although, the shift from (neo) liberal and (neo) realist's conceptions of international relations to socially constructed assumptions was very dubious in the beginning of 1990s, gradually it became widely respected among the researchers. The fact that the materialist theories of international relations are adopting some elements taken from constructivism as for example socially constructed interests¹⁵, is making the boundaries of international relations theories more intertwined, creating the possibility of emergence of artificial distinctions among them. However, by defining the terms and meanings of notions in particular concept it is making itself clear what is the real object of this study, thus by a part, introducing the meaning of identity in constructivist's terms. Nevertheless, by promoting of constructivist approach of identity is not meaning that whole research based in this thesis is oriented on theory of constructivism, however, we cannot deny that international reality is socially constructed what is the essence of constructivist study.

1.1.2 Criticism of Constructivist's Identity

Interesting comments and analysis on constructivist's identity is formulated by R. Brubaker and F. Cooper (2000) in their article *Beyond "identity"*. They argue that mainstream constructivist stance on identity surrounded by the attempts to "soften" the term and dispose "essentialism" of it by setting identity multiple, fluid and constructed is making the term irrational and irrelevant for examining the "hard dynamics and essentialist claims of contemporary identity politics." Rather than promoting identity as a constructed or defining it as fluid and multiple, their approach towards identity is to use it as a social analytical concept. Authors insists that concept of "social analysis" of identity is helpful for better understanding of the "claims and possibilities that arise from particular affinities and affiliations, from particular commonalities and connections, from particular stories and self-understandings, from particular problems and predicaments in more differentiated manner",

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¹⁵ Hurd I. The Oxford Handbook of International Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. P. 301

 $^{^{16}}$ Brubaker R. Cooper F. Beyond "identity"// Theory and Society , Vol. 29 , # 1, 2000. P. 1

meaning to go "beyond" identity not in the name of imagined universalism but rather in meaning of conceptual clarity required for social analysis and political understanding¹⁷.

1.2. Primordialism as Social Theory and Identity

Contrary to constructivist's socially constructed reality, primordialism states that social structure and its development is ancient, natural phenomenon, while its ideas can be traced in the German Romanticism. Primordialism insists that in order to make an analysis of particular "national identity" first of all it is important to interpret the term of nation. Nation in terms of primordialism is associated with community that is united by individuals on the basis of "same blood and common values." Furthermore, nation lies somewhere between the ethnic community and state, while it can be defined in two different meanings. Firstly it can be an ethnic community or ethno-nation, and as a political community or state as a second meaning. However, primordialism emphasizes that state is exclusively instrumental social organization which is not belonging into primordial types of community. Another important element of identity in primordialism is the term of ethnic community. Geertz (1963) insists that "primordial attachments are created on social level of community when it shares ideas of blood ties and same speech, religion, territory, customs and traditions" while those ideas are further developing ethnic community. Such interpretation of nation and ethnic community is making a reference to the ethnicity as undeniable variable to nation, thus creating the "ethnonation". Accordingly, term "ethno" is influential in primordial vision also in providing deepest identity for individuals, thus creating "ethno-identity." This identity is in primordialism unchangeable, deeply rooted in individual and is given to member of community once he was born.

With respect to close relation between nation and identity and not only in primordial terms, Anderson (1983) states that in order to understand membership to particular nation, thus "nation-ness" (nationality) as a cultural artifact of particular kind, firstly we need to consider its historical being and how did its meanings changed and evolved through the time altogether

¹⁷ Brubaker R. Cooper F. Beyond "identity"// Theory and Society, Vol. 29, # 1, 2000. P. 36

¹⁸ Bačová V. The Construction of National Identity - On Primordialism and Instrumentalism // Human Affairs, Vol. 8, # 1, 1998. P. 29

¹⁹Geertz C. (1963) in Bačová V. The Construction of National Identity - On Primordialism and Instrumentalism // Human Affairs, Vol. 8, # 1, 1998. P. 32

with its powerful emotional legitimacy link in contemporary.²⁰He further believes that those artifacts were developed through the history spontaneously and as they were once created, they gradually became capable to fulfill usefulness to various degree of self-consciousness and match the wide variety of needs for different political or ideological intentions. Anderson (1983) is arguing that the essential possibility of imagining the nation has evolved historically only due to the lost of value of particular cultural conceptions. These cultural conceptions as ontological and privileged truth in particular script-language of Christendom, Islamic Ummah and others; belief that society was naturally organized under and around the high centers necessarily hierarchical because the existence of ruler; and as for third indistinguishable presence of history and cosmology whereas the origins of men and world are historically corresponding.²¹ These points are clearly confirming the imagined communities on the basis of nations which are instrumentally constructed out of primordial conception.

As for the conclusion of this paragraph, it is possible to assume that primordial social construction is dependent on ethnic identity towards particular ethnic community. However, emergence and existence of nations in 18th century is a social fact, thus strictly instrumental, constructivist approach is also necessary to take into account in order to understand their establishment. Nevertheless, development of the states is not solely dependent on the identity of its citizens and beliefs on social constructions whether primordial in meanings of ethnic communities, or whether instrumental (constructivist) in terms of national communities but are dependent mainly on the history of particular community. In these regards it is significant to make historical perspective on such construction, what is in the case of this paper - Russian nation/community and its identity. This approach will be useful for analysis whether Anderson's three points were present in Russia's evolution of identity until contemporary, thus they are influential in its identity formation also in today with reference to primordial theory or whether constructivist approach is in such development playing influential role. This will be helpful to understand background of particular concepts of identity and its dynamics. The value to what extent is particular community or nation influenced to primordial or constructivist beliefs of self national identification, determines not only content of its identity

²⁰ Anderson B. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso, 1983. P. 48

²¹ Anderson B. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso, 1983. P. 52

but also the extent of its identification meaning the crisis and conflicts of identity, as well vulnerability and the feeling of threat to its identity. Keeping Anderson's opinion in mind will be helpful in order to comprehend the historical outline on Russian identity as well it can be useful to understand its mentioning itself with reference to contemporary identity conception and its dynamic to some extent.

To sum up, constructivist's theory on identity states that identity is changing with its interaction with social environment, while primordial vision declares that identity is once given and fixed. Aim of further research is not to prove which theory is right or not, but rather to identify components of Russian identity in historical approach and connect or make relation of them to elements of identity in official acts of Russian administration and further analyze them in identity discourse of both mentioned theories, creating possible "breakthrough".

1.3. Russian Identity Discourse - Common Ground

The role of Russia's international behavior in recent years was very inconsistent and partly surprising for other actors in international relations. This amazement has brought confusion also among the scholars and researchers as well. Russia's inconsistency in international behavior intertwined with dramatic shift generated academic questions about the goals and basis of such policy.

In order to understand Russian behavior in recent period, there are various approaches among the academics, but probably two most influential. First, stating the undemocratic character of Russian political system associated with authoritarian personality of Russian President V. Putin. Most likely it can make sense if such research is performed consistently altogether with empirical evidence, but after all this issue of international and domestic behavior of particular country cannot be simply resolved only by concluding the structure of Russian political system and proposed undemocratic values. It should be supplemented also by the nature and social environment consisting of individuals, institutions and both formal, informal joint interactions among them and further interaction with international environment. This is exactly second important approach among academics towards this issue, thus Russian identity discourses.

This discourse is creating plenteous debate among the academics about various elements which are influential in defining the creation of Russian identity. However, those elements vary from one researcher to another; they got at least three points in common, regardless to their political affiliations. In first instance, all of the researched scholars agree on that there is an attempt or need of creation of new Russian identity, thus there is no coherent, widely accepted concept of Russian identity. Second point of relatively common opinion on Russian identity and its inconsistency is accorded to the Soviet past, and as for the third, majority of academics are indicating on dramatic shift of Russian identity since V. Putin third presidential term in 2012. These two fundamental points can be taken as a source of inspiration for making this analysis on Russian identity discourse.

Points which are creating common ground among the scholars could serve as a "runway" in realizing questions as why has this dramatic shift in Russian identity occurred in this period, and why this question about Russian identity was not relevant before, why do the scholars agreeing only on few points, why there is no academic widely accepted consensus in question of Russian identity at all. Nevertheless, fact of such a fruitful set of questions or uncertainties and various opinions indicates that this issue is required or important among the scholars of IR, however, it is not the aim of this thesis to answer them all; questions for this thesis are already set and answers on them could provide prospects for future research that can answer other uncertainties in this issue.

1.3.1 Literature Review on Russian Identity – Politically Divided Concepts

This paragraph refers to various researchers and followers, which are supporting pro-Western, pro-Russian and also neutral (probably) opinions on Russian identity. All of the groups are suggesting different positions which are influenced to some extent by contrasting sets of political preferences what is creating fruitful environment for debate. As this paper is orienting on recent period between the years of 2010-2016, it is analyzing period not older than ten years in research of assumptions among the scholars with respect of making this analysis transparent to the context and its match with title.

Concepts of Russian identity are traditionally dependent on its relationship mainly towards the West; this relationship is further outlined in historical approach. As the concept of identity is in its core reliant on interaction between the self and the other, relationship of West towards Russia is influential in forming this concept as well. However, since the beginning of 20th century and also later after the split of the Soviet Union and rise of influence of Eurasianism in concepts of Russian identity, Russian relations towards Asian countries were influential with regards to identity formation as well; this topic is also further analyzed in historical approach. This can serve also as a "sketch" in realizing the assumptions made by scholars on topic of Russian identity depending on which side of political preferences and theories of international relations they are orienting and identifying themselves.

The roots on the issues of contemporary Russian identity are perceived among the researchers in various opinions. Some of them suppose that this issue is stemming from the crisis of national identity in Russia during the post-Soviet period. For example, A. Likhacheva, I. Makarov and E. Makarova in their article Post-Soviet Russian Identity and its Influence on European-Russian Relations are suggesting that "weak national identity makes it susceptible to political propaganda and turns identity into an instrument of foreign policy instead of being its key driver and determinant."22 According to mentioned authors, Russia is in difficult identity situation as a consequence of Post-Soviet identity crisis, followed with the fracture of Russian society in ideological, religious and ethnic terms with active participation of elites. Inconsistent policy in solving of issues of new morality, ideology, religion, family or work after fall of the USSR has broaden the division among Russian society having a negative impact on realizing identity formation, altogether with lack of governmental initiative to deal with the identity search itself. Authors are concluding that mentioned points filled up with negative identity are having negative impact on Russia's relations with the West; as well it is having unfavorable effect on domestic policy. Their analysis is revealing that Russia is facing serious problems with identity on different levels stemming from the heritage of previous periods, while they are proposing that education and socialization of people would be beneficial in order to overcome of deepening this trend.

Alexander Zevelev in his article *Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy* is also identifying post-Soviet identity problem as a source of issues in contemporary identity formation in Russia by insisting that failure of Moscow to find its place in the transatlantic

²² Likhacheva A., Makarov I., Makarova E. Post-Soviet Russian identity and its influence on European-Russian relations // European Journal of Futeres Research, Vol. 3, # 4, 2015. P. 2

security architecture after the Cold War led to reliance on the domestic discourses isolated from world process with regards to answers on international issues. He perceives as a problem that during period of 1992-2011 national identity of Russia was treated as politically and intellectually important among the liberals, communists and centristspragmatists only by nationalists. Zevelev assumes that according to historical factors, Russian citizens appeared from the Soviet Union "as an incomplete, under-articulated nation with a surprisingly low level of national consciousness, lack of mass-based national movement, and blurred vision of its own political boundaries."²³ Author is proposing that factors which are shaping Russian foreign policy are stemming from domestic ideas about Russian identity rather than from conceptualizations of the world order that are established in the theory and manner of international relations. According to him there is sort of consensus on these ideas among Russian elite assuming that peculiarity of Russian identity lies in its specific factors as history, nuclear weapons, great power and distinct civilization what is predicting special place for Russia within international arena. However, he concludes that such specific status of identity reveals itself almost inaccessible endeavor for a country without a "longer-than-thousand-year history as a political entity", what would make excessively difficult for any future Russian leader to redefine Russian national identity.²⁴ Author is identifying "big ideas" in Russian intellectual history which were influential in the centuries-old debates over Russian identity and which are adopted by the Kremlin as a prescription of its worldview including exceptionalism, special spiritual and civilizational mission among the Eurasian neighborhood with portrayal of West as evil.

Differently structured position towards Russian identity crisis is proposed by Murod Ismailov and Nozima Ganieva. In their article *In Search for the Russian National Identity:* Do History Textbooks Hold the Answer? they are proposing that crisis of Russian identity is "connected to unresolved issues of a three-fold dimension", intertwined with obstructions to elevate national identity after the fall of USSR. They insist that first dimension is bounded with the essence of Soviet Union formation as a huge multinational state with the lack of instituted nation-state or new form of imperialism. Thus, the legacies of Soviet past as national formation at the level of secondary units within the Soviet Union or drawing the clear boundaries between "Russian proper" and non-Russian areas are the heritage of past

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²³ Zevelev I. Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy, Washington, DC: CSIS, 2016. P. 8

²⁴ Zevelev I. Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy, Washington, DC: CSIS, 2016. P. 18

which are making the process of national identity formation uncertain in contemporary.²⁵ Second dimension according to authors is regarded to "dilemmas of civic or ethnic nation-building". These dilemmas are stemming from "dual" civic identity mentioned also further in Goble's article as "Russkiy" dealing with inclusive citizenship and "Rossiiskiy" based on exclusive ethnic identity with regards to culture, language or religion. As for the third dimension, authors are stressing the uncertainty of Russia's belonging to East or West according to its identity. This uncertainty is reflected from the partial consideration of Russia on its special path of unique multiethnic civilization differing from the western one, altogether with depicting of USA as its significant "other", and partially from reflection of Russia as a country with western origins, culture and values.²⁶

Other authors are choosing different perspective on analysis of Russian identity. For example, Paul Goble is analyzing Russian identity on the background of the Ukrainian crisis started in 2013, respectively 2014, while he is comparing the Ukrainian identity with the Russian one. In his article Russian National Identity and the Ukrainian Crisis, Goble is highlighting the fragility of Russian identity and the incomplete essence of Putin's actions mainly under the doctrine of "Russian World". Author is drawing attention to unexpected strength of Ukrainian identity in civil and ethnic meanings, comparing with far more weak and fragmented Russian identity. Article is describing factors on uncertainty of Russian identity, starting with the elements that were influential to make promotion of national identity in state-controlled media at the end ineffective: reactions on the increasingly numerous non-Russian nationalities to any ethnic Russian identifications; tensions inherent between identities that state supports and those it fears, and fundamental weakness of Russian identity.²⁷ Goble is supporting his article also with statements of other authors, as for example with Russian political scientist and nationalist Pavel Svyatenkov. He argues that Russia lacks supra-national non ethnic identity which the state has wanted. This is stemming from inconsistency in Russian national movement which "is in essence a union of subcultures" what could be constructive only "if the subcultures existed on the basis of a

²⁵ Ismailov M., Ganieva N. In Search for the Russian National Identity: Do History Textbooks Hold the Answer? // Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences, Vol. 5, # 2, 2013. P. 367

²⁶ Ismailov M., Ganieva N. In Search for the Russian National Identity: Do History Textbooks Hold the Answer? // Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences, Vol. 5, # 2, 2013. P. 367-368

²⁷ Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 37

single Russian identity". Instead, they are operating on the basis of subcultures creating their own identity, what can led to that that subcultures will start replacing the nation in future. Goble is outlying inconsistency of Russian identity further on the basis of its unclear formulation and comparing it with coherently formulated Ukrainian identity, which is based on "consciousness" and "the acceptance of 'Ukrainism' as an ideological anti-Russian doctrine". At this stage he is presenting interesting point of ability of such doctrine that is capability to integrate outsiders, meaning that "study Ukrainian and say that you Ukrainian". With comparison to Russian nationalist act which is working on the basis of excluding people due to their inheritance or something else. Such excluding is presented also by Svyatenkov saying "the concept of 'a drop of non-Russian blood' dominates," what is basically meaning that anybody without Russian ancestors will not be integrated as a Russian, no matter how he wants.

The split in formulation of Russian identity in Goble's article is also suggested by director of Russian Public Opinion Research Center Valery Fedorov. According to him, existence of two different linguistic concepts for understanding Russian identity as "Rossiisky" which implies to the Russian state and Russian citizenship; and word "Russky" that denotes to ethnic Russian identity, ²⁹ is only underlying the inconsistency in Russian identity. Editor of Kazan's "Zvezda Povolzhya", Rashit Akhmetov is putting attention on combination of a civic Russian identity with Putin's "authoritarian and great chauvinist approach" what is worsening ethnic identities of Russians and non-Russians. Thus, collision of civic and ethnic identities is limiting the ability of Russian and non-Russian people living inside Russian Federation to solidify their identities. Another insufficient idea with regards to Russian identity introduced in Goble's article is drawing lines of Moscow Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology director Valery Tishkov. Tishkov's idea of creating civic Russian identity on the basis of Soviet people with regards to American experience is seeing inapplicable, as far as the US common identity was constructed on level of tolerance towards diversity as a kind of "melting pot", while historically neither Russian Empire or

²⁸ Svyatenkov P. (2014) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 38

²⁹ Fedorov V. (2013) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 39

³⁰ Akhmetov, R. (2014) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 39

USSR, nor Russian Federation in contemporary is not capable of becoming melting pot society, due to fact of imposing one identity, thus keeping the people apart.³¹ By constant press of Kremlin for a single "supra-national" identity and not accepting its distinctions, it is presenting risk for non-Russian part of population. According to Akhmetov, at this point is Tishkov's idea "Rossiyane" falling apart with Putin's "Russian world" and "Novorossiya" concept.³²

Another important argument of unsuccessful promotion of supra-national identity through the state media is the alliance between Kremlin and Russian Orthodox Church. With respect to Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, any effort to subsume Russians into larger groups or giving them any "new artificial identities is absolutely incorrect, Russians should not be afraid of being quite specific about who they are and about questions concerning their 'national self-consciousness."³³The first deputy chairman of the Muslim Spiritual Directorate (MSD) of Russia, Damir Mukhetdinov is not seeing his community as the part of Putin's "Russian World" pointing on fact that Islam is very much part of Russia, while stressing the evidence that Russian constitution specifies no state ideology, nevertheless he assumes that restoration of "Russian World" is kind of "proto-ideology", what cannot be taken into account among Muslim population³⁴. The chair of the Carnegie Moscow Center's Religion, Society and Security Program, Aleksey Malashenko completes Mukhetdinov's opinion by stating that Islamic self-identification is not corresponding to Russian one, while it "exists independently and is linked more closely to processes taking place in the world's Islamic Umma.³⁵"

Nationalists are playing also influential role in defining of Russian identity fragmentation in Goble's article. Ukrainian commentator Aleksey Kupras is pointing on active support of Russian authorities of "great power ideology by financing some mega radical groups". According to Kupras, in period between 2008-2014 there was huge increase of radical

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³¹ Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, #1, 2016. P. 40

³² Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, #1, 2016. P. 40

³³ Cherepov S. (2015) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 40

³⁴ Mukhetdinov D. (2015) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 42

³⁵ Malashenko, A. (2013) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 43

movements in Russia which can be divided between pro-Kremlin and anti-authority ones. Kupras is pointing on around 500 camps established in 2014 to provide basic military training for radical nationalists, more than half of them were pro-Kremlin which "officially works as a recruitment points for the war with Ukraine.³⁶" Kupras insists that Putin's possible too soft approach towards Ukraine can probably face a "Right Sector Threat" similarly like the Ukraine does. Even the shift of the Moscow's policy towards radical nationalism followed by persecutions and launching the criminal investigations against them in order to negotiate could be counterproductive in the way that it can attract new anti-Kremlin members, as Kupras shows that in the period of 18 months has number of members in radical groups "almost doubled." In addition, radical Russian nationalist Dmitry Demushkin states that government is threatening and persecuting the nationalists no matter their affiliation or position towards governmental questions, what is suggesting the struggles of Kremlin to promote only their form of identity.³⁷ Another Russian commentator Yekaterina Schulmann identifies "strange symbiotic relations" between the Russian nationalist movement and political management together with special services with regards to "cracking the whip" sometimes in order to show "who is in charge of whom", with further suggestion that nationalists are being misused for the Putin's purposes and his extra glorification as the only fighter against Russian fascism.³⁸

Regarding to Eurasian identity, Malashenko suggests that hardly anyone among the Russians, Avars or Tatars will consider himself definitely as an Euro-Asian. According to him people understand Europe and Asia, however, "Eurasian perestroika is not understandable a priori", same as imperial identity "cannot provide the basis for a new identity within the Russian Federation's current borders."³⁹

Examining Goble's article, we can observe little bit different logic in assessing of crisis in Russian identity than in previous articles. He is constructing his opinion of fragmented

 $^{^{36}}$ Kupras A.(2015) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 40-41

³⁷Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, #1, 2016. P. 41

³⁸Schulmann E.(2015) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 41

³⁹ Malashenko A. (2013) in Goble P. Russian national identity and Ukrainian crisis // Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, # 1, 2016. P. 43

Russian identity on the background of particular political orientation of Vladimir Putin towards the crisis in Ukraine, with supplementing of particular political actions on domestic arena of Russia. He is proposing that specific political decisions of Russian president in foreign and domestic affairs in the name of "Russian World" identity doctrine and with objective to achieve as much centralized power as possible are contra-productive, creating negative and fragmenting impact on Russian identity. Nevertheless, in order to assume and analyze the differences or his position towards the evaluation of Russian identity it is somehow important to mention the possibility of contradictory political stances of Goble together with other researchers used in his article towards ruling government in Russia, meaning that opposition is always biased in most cases against all the elements of the side towards which is its opposition aimed. After all, political bias and media framing is efficient in majority analyses of Russian identity as it was outlined in introduction already.

Another author which is outlining Russian identity construction on the background of Ukrainian crisis and Crimean annexation is Yuri Teper. In his article *Official Russian identity discourse in light of the annexation of Crimea: national or imperial?* Teper is analyzing this conflict more in primordial vision rather than Goble's constructivist analysis of Russian identity crisis and its development since the 2013. He is stressing that Russia's involvement in this conflict was to large extent described by ethnicization of the identity discourse⁴⁰ in ethno-cultural and ethno-lingual terms and Russia was portrayed as a territory of ethnic Russians. Pointing on the discourse of official Russian identity towards its ethnicization, Teper is showing the shift in Kremlin's promotion of identity from previously state-oriented point of reference for constructing identity. Author is concluding with the idea that the annexation of Crimea and the official identity discourse on it allowed political leadership to saw a potential in ethno-national appeal as well its popular agenda has forced itself to find a definition for previously ambiguous Russia's national concept.

Interesting consideration on the topic of Russian identity is presented by Boris Dubin. He is presenting a notion of a "uniquely Russian path" as a source of identity with reference on sociological survey data to considerations of Russians whether Russia should take a special

 $^{^{40}}$ Teper Y. Official Russian identity discourse in light of the annexation of Crimea: national or imperial? // Post Soviet Affairs, Vol. 32, # 4, 2016. P. 384

path that distinguishes it from all other states. 41 By reviewing such surveys he is analyzing that three of five Russian adults agree that Russia should develop itself in accordance with its special path, while finding out that Russian uniqueness is stemming more from negative view of the other. Importance of his research for identity analysis lies in repeatedly recurring and most common held positions of Russian's regarded to significant characteristics and Russian uniqueness. Among the most positions for the purpose of this paper were perceptions of differences in values between Russia and West; opinions that the ruling elite is the force that establish the society and collective identity; preferences for sameness and at the same time rejection of differences that is meaning inclination to collective character of society in order to prevent individual initiative with respect to Russian specialness and perception of rejecting that is special, external or separate within society; Furthermore, it showed importance of particular characteristics of Russians self description, thus special *character of individual* as the result of historical circumstances.⁴² Dubin's analysis can serve as a way to understanding and confirming the importance of collective identity for the majority of Russians, as well it shows the possibility of its function of representing that identity as a whole by ruling elites.

Similar analysis of the surveys was made also by V.I. Pantin (2010) in his article *The Political and Civilizational Self-Identity of Contemporary Russian Society in a Global Context*. He suggests that the citizen's opinions about the special path of the Russia's development and a special character of Russian civilization are conflicting, what is a reflection of unstable situation in which is Russian identity going through the crisis.⁴³

Marlene Laruelle (2014) prefers the opinion that Russian identity promoted by Kremlin is based on Soviet nostalgia that oversteps social and ideological divisions, while she believes that "Russkaia ideia" discourse is profoundly determined by the Soviet ideas and Kremlin's efforts to promote militarized patriotism.⁴⁴ Laruelle argues that content of certain Russian television channels are shaping cultural and political consensus in Russian society,

⁴¹ Dubin B. The "Special Path" and the Social Order in Today's Russia // Russian Social Science Review, Vol. 52, # 6, 2011. P. 70

⁴²Dubin B. The "Special Path" and the Social Order in Today's Russia // Russian Social Science Review, Vol. 52, # 6, 2011. P. 74-75

⁴³ Pantin V. I. *The* Political and Civilizational Self-Identity of Contemporary Russian Society in a Global Context // Russian Social Science Review, Vol. 51, #1, 2010 P. 19

 $^{^{44}}$ Laruelle M. The "Russian Idea" on the Small Screen : Staging National Identity on Russia's TV // Demokratizatsiya, Vol. 22 , # 2, 2014. P. 317

furthermore she hypothesizes that television is a central driver of identity debates in Russia. Laruelle criticize that broadcast of Russian identity is taken in traditional framework leaving no room for a modern and globalised form of identity debate, allowing the space for primordialist interpretations. In this case it is necessary to contradict Laruelle's opinion, what if the Russian identity is specific also in that that it defends itself from the process of globalization, to preserve its "uniqueness", "special, civilizational role" which is mentioned for example in Dubin's research among Russian citizens and which is also mentioned in philosophical views throughout the Russian history what will be mentioned as well in next chapter, accidentally, isn't precisely this primordial opinion, by any chance.(?) From the previous research answer on this rhetorical question should be evident and as well as background of Laruelle's opinion.

Aim of this paragraph was to introduce few positions on the state of Russian identity among the scholars during the period not later than ten years, however majority of them are not older than seven years. It is possible to observe that opinions on Russian identity are divided in various terms and perspectives, however, the authors have got at least one point in common – that concept of Russian identity is uncertain and is weak respectively. Some of the authors are analyzing the roots of this issue in recent past, arguing that problems are stemming from Soviet and Post-Soviet insufficient attention towards identity. Others are suggesting that building of the concept of identity on the basis of ethnicity with regards to "Russian World" is counterproductive for Moscow's domestic and foreign policy with respect to the rise of tensions and nationalism between the various ethnic groups living on the territory of Russian Federation as well it is bringing the suspicion and difficulties to promote Russian education and culture in Post-Soviet countries with significant Russian population. Opinions of authors are diffusing with respect to which particular element of identity they are discussing in accordance to specific political action among the Russian society or government and with regards through which "scope" of theoretical perspective they are analyzing it, nevertheless, we cannot forget about their political affiliation and various biases. This is creating plenteous uncertainty as well discussion on the topic of Russian identity, what is having to some extent also neglecting impact on conflict between Russia and the West due to political affiliations and spreading of debates. Aim of this analysis is not to spread uncertainty on Russian identity any further, its aim is to

chronologically define that construction of Russian identity between 2010 and 2016 was taken in particular dynamic, under the specific tenets with peculiar outcomes and explicit results. That this dynamic was not evolving accidentally within the situations in domestic and international arena, but it was gradually modified effort to respond on these challenges with accordance to lines of specific identity construction in order to promote and put together precise concept that will have effect in domestic and foreign issues as well. Next chapters are attempting to build up proposed intention as well are making conclusion on such development with answer to the research question (s) and potential insights for the future.

Chapter 2. Evolution of Russian Identity – Historical approach

Similarly as in many other topics, "iron rule" of history is applicable also in topic of identity. Understanding of Russian identity formation throughout the history is beneficial for understanding specific components of Russian identity in contemporary. It is important in realizing the assumptions of constructivism with regards to observation of changes of Russian identity during the different periods as well context of such changes. Similarly, historic approach is significant for primordialist view on identity in identifying whether there are components which are in Russian identity invariable, stable through the whole period of evolvement. This chapter will gradually analyze most significant events of Russian identity formation during different periods and identify crucial elements of identity in them.

2.1 Historical Perspective on Russian Identity

The rule of the Peter the Great is considered to be one of the biggest milestones in Russian history. It is possible to assume that beginning of Russia's realization in identity issues started also due to his efforts of modernization of Russia in many spheres. His contribution towards culture, society, government or science according to western image provided the split of "traditional" approach towards daily issues among society and introduced the new, more "cultivated" one. The fact that Peter the Great ignited broader correlation between Russia and West has reflected later in philosophical cleavage and debates about Russia's identity belonging. Those debates started to be more tenacious in the beginning of the 19th century mainly among the proponents of traditional, uniquely Russian way of development strongly influenced by Orthodox Church, labeling themselves as "Slavophiles". In contrast, "Zapadniki" (Westernizers) philosophical camp was advocating western economic, industrial, cultural or political reforms in order to make Russia more advanced, comparable with West. Remarkably, it is possible to observe Russian identity formation at least since the eighteen century, since when Europe acted as a relatively stable "constituting other" with the set of geopolitical, economic and cultural factors according to which was Russian identity defining and redefining⁴⁵.

 $^{^{45}}$ Malinova O. Creating meanings and traps: competing interpretations of the idea of nation in the debates of Russian Slavophiles and Westernisers in the 1840s // European Review of History, Vol. 15, # 1, 2008. P. 41

2.1.1 Slavophiles

The core of Slavophile thought was formulated by ideas of Russian poet Aleksey Khomyakov and literary critic Ivan Kireevsky in the second half of 19th century. As a byproduct of cultural westernization imported by Peter the Great, Slavophiles were distinguishing themselves from the majority of people by their culturally traditional values, education and mainly by their breach towards western community values. They insisted that only guarantee of Russia's great future lies in its emphasis to preserve its traditional way of development. Significant role in their thought was presented by the Orthodox Church as a basis of Russian culture, as well as a "carrier" of spiritual enlightenment of both peoples and national idea contrary to the western logical and empirical way of enlightenment. 46 Central role of Orthodox Church in Slavophile philosophy was determining its main ideology of behavior and role or purpose of Russia in the world. This ideology called "Sobornost" was introduced by A. Khomyakov and was basically doctrine of "togetherness", a type of harmonious spiritual life and an antithesis towards the authoritarian Roman Church and western individualism which was insisting on all nations coming together for the purpose of common, holly good. Slavophiles believed that Russia due to its geographical position can serve as a bridge connecting the cultures of Asia and Europe with the help of Orthodox Church what is making Russia's unique destiny. According to prominent Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev: "The Slavophiles not only defined our national consciousness as religious in spirit and purpose, but formulated the basic theme of East and West. This theme suffused the entire intellectual life of nineteenthcentury Russia."47 Paradoxically, majority of important Slavophiles received their education in Europe; as well they were interested into German philosophy that they were misusing in their declarations against the ideas of Westernizers. As for example of Russia's unique destiny with regards to Hegel's "historical peoples" and also with respect to Khomiakov -'genuine education' is "available only for those countries, the inner composition of which is based on unity of tribal and mental elements", while he meant that the development of society is dependent on spontaneous vital principles 'inherent in the whole body' inherent in individuals, thus the recovery of western society could be "a result of immediate borrowing of

⁴⁶ Rabow-Edling S. The Political Significance of Cultural Nationalism: The Slavophiles and Their Notion of a Russian Enlightenment // Nationalities Papers, Vol. 32, # 2, 2004. P. 449

⁴⁷ Engelstein L. Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia's illiberal path, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009. P. 111

Slavic principles."⁴⁸ At this point is important to memorize components of Slavophiles identity as Orthodoxy, special, unique role, traditions or collectivism.

2.1.2 Westernizers

It is taken that this debate between Westernizers and Slavophiles started to be more vigorous after the moment when Pyotr Chaadayev has published his *Philosophical Letters* where he criticized Russia's development. Chaadayev's criticism was aimed mainly on the isolated status of Russia from the western world and on Russia's small contribution towards progress of civilization, whilst he was trying to encourage the Russian intelligentsia to become more active. Firstly, Chaadayev's intentions were sentenced to failure and he was sent to madhouse, but gradually enlightened principles together with public participation were part of Great Reforms in which Russia has conceded essential principles of western society as expanded educational access, free labor supply or independent judiciary⁴⁹. Among the most influential members of Westernizers were for example Alexander Gerzen or Vissarion Belinsky. Contrary to Slavophiles which stressed the difference of Russian society from European, Westernizers assumed that specific features of Russian society could fit with the European model of development, but on the same hand it is necessary "to be Russians in European way.⁵⁰"

Russia's search for national identity in order to catch up modernization process in 18th and 19th century can be perceived to some extent as a conflict among intelligentsia between modern and traditional society, or between the reality and ideal assumptions. To sum up first identity crisis in Russian history between Slavophiles and Westernizers it is important to mention also common motivation behind nationalist excitement which was spreading throughout Europe and Russia as well. Nationalism (narodnost) played significant role mainly for Slavophiles by promoting of Russian uniqueness and traditions in order to differentiate from the West. According to Rabow-Edling, the socio-psychological function of Slavophilism is indicating importance of cultural nationalism not just for possible political action, but as for a way from identity crisis as well, thus "cultural nationalism acts as a promoter of national

 $^{^{48}}$ Malinova O. Creating meanings and traps: competing interpretations of the idea of nation in the debates of Russian Slavophiles and Westernisers in the 1840s // European Review of History, Vol. 15, # 1, 2008. P. 48-49

⁴⁹ Engelstein L. Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia's illiberal path, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009. P. 84

 $^{^{50}}$ Malinova O. Creating meanings and traps: competing interpretations of the idea of nation in the debates of Russian Slavophiles and Westernisers in the 1840s // European Review of History, Vol. 15, # 1, 2008. P. 44

consciousness in the sense of a public identity separated from state.⁵¹" Issue of nationality was stressed also by official doctrine promoted by Nicholas I what was influenced by rebellion in Russian Kingdom of Poland. In wake of these events, tsar has adopted doctrine of "Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality", this doctrine was significant for Russian identity formation in the past and in following periods as well. Philosophical heritage of both intellectual camps were later excluded from public discourse during the Soviet Union, but their ideas from liberal, religious, conservative or idealist political spectrum were providing important background for reinterpretation of Russian identity in post-Soviet period.⁵²

2.1.3 Eurasianism

Another impact in formation of Russian identity later in 20th century was development of Eurasianist's concept during the 1920s. Beginnings of Eurasianist's ideas could be observed in the outlines of Russia's focus on keeping Eastward expansion in Central Asia in the late of 19th century. Russia's Imperial Orientalism was to some extent product of Slavophile's preoccupation among intellectuals in society connected with the idea of strengthening eastern learning in order to counterbalance the influence of western domination. According to Sanjay Kumar Pandey (2007) importance of colonialism in Asia for Russia's sense of self-identity does not consisted in its alternative to Europe, but rather it was in Asia where Russia found its 'Europeaness', what is Pandey further adding with Dostoevsky's admitting "In Europe we are hangers on and slaves, but in Asia we are masters, In Europe we are Tatars, but in Asia we too are Europeans. 53" Another source of inspiration for Eurasianists can be observed in more "radical" part of Slavophiles labeling themselves as the "Easterners" (Vostochniki). Easterners were proposing to fulfill Russia's holy mission in the Far East Asia with different perspectives on assimilation between Russian, Chinese and Turanian races, while some of them were against so called "Yellow Peril" and some of them were favoring "Yellow Russia". Another point of Easterners in search of Asian connection can be traced in understanding of Scythians as predecessors of Russian people coming from Asia. Mentioned elements of Asian legacy in defining of Russian identity had significant impact on evolution of Eurasianism

⁵¹Rabow-Edling S. The Political Significance of Cultural Nationalism: The Slavophiles and Their Notion of a Russian Enlightenment // Nationalities Papers, Vol. 32, # 2, 2004. P. 453

⁵²Aizlewood, R. Revisiting Russian Identity in Russian Thought: From Chaadaev to the Early Twentieth Century. // The Slavonic and East European Review, Vol. 78, # 1, 2000. P. 20

⁵³Pandey S. K. Asia in the Debate on Russian Identity // International Studies, vol. 44, # 4, 2007. P. 325

(Evraziistvo) as a political movement with specific features. Among the most influential proponents for beginning of Eurasianism and of its foundation was Prince Nikolai Trubetskoy and Russian geographer and economist P.N. Savitsky. According to Trubetskoy's "Evropa i chelovechestvo", there is no reason for Russia to employ Romano-Germanic values which is Europe considering as universal and higher than others, instead he is proposing alternatives against Europeanization in concepts of Panslavism or "Panmongolianism. Trubetskoy's book altogether with radical anti-Westernism was among the main desires for Eurasianism. Their main idea was that Russia does not eminently belongs neither to European society nor to Asian one, but it belongs rather to clearly unique, original Eurasian ethnic community. Regarding to Eurasianism this geographically stipulated condition makes Russian culture, statehood and its identity influenced by both Asian and European features different from the Western one, thus Russia's political orientation got specific values.

Important aspect of Eurasianism in order to establish new concept of Russian nation was also their new interpretation of Russian history. Main points of their reinterpretation of the history was their raising attention to historical periods before Peter the Great, namely to Genghis Khan Empire. They insisted that Muscovite state was the continuation of Genghis Khan Empire stretching from the Ukraine and Belarus to Siberia, while subjugated Tatars under Genghis Khan were important part of the Muscovite state and its education.⁵⁵ This helped Eurasians to support their opinion on peculiarities about Russian ethnicity and culture, explaining that Russians are neither Slavs nor Turanians, but rather they are part of a long process of influence of various ethnic groups among themselves. On the other hand, such belief on Russian ethnicity brought inconsistency towards the issue of Orthodoxy making it the weakest place in the Eurasianists doctrine. Realizing the multiethnic background of Russian or Eurasian nationality, it is important to take into account its religious diversity.

Such construction of identity (nationality) and interpretation of history serves for Eurasians as a background in formation of their ideology. Their leading idea was intertwined with the historical mission of Russia before and Eurasianist's political platform was summarized into the notion of ideocracy, insisting on their beliefs that ideocracy will be the structure of future.

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⁵⁴Mazurek S. Russian Eurasianism: Historiosophy and Ideology // Studies in East European Thought, vol. 54, # 1/2, 2002. P. 109-111

⁵⁵Mazurek S. Russian Eurasianism: Historiosophy and Ideology // Studies in East European Thought, vol. 54, # 1/2, 2002. P. 112

With respect to establishment of Soviet Russia it was the first modern ideocracy according to Eurasianists, however, Soviet rule altogether with politicization and ideologization led to the split of Eurasians into two camps-one represented by Savitskii, Ilin and Trubetskoy, anti-Bolshevik one; and second pro-Bolshevik associated with Karsavin, Efron or Sviatopolk-Mirskii.⁵⁶

2.1.4 Identity Discourse during Soviet Period

After the seizing of power by Bolsheviks, there was no place for Russian identity in Communist ideology as the Soviet nation-building project was more oriented on recognition of rights and separating identities of Russia's ethnic groups.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, at the same time when the Soviet regime was separating identities of ethnic groups, it was also providing unifying concept in order to merge all people of Soviet Union together in Soviet patriotism. Following the period of de-Stalinization and subverting the official Marxist-Leninist ideology by Nikita Khrushchev, Russian citizens turned to traditional patterns of religious and national identity with regards to samizdat literature by reviewing the Slavophiles and Westernizers altogether with Russia's place in the world history.⁵⁸ This process of de-Stalinization was also influential on formation of Russian nationalism among politicians and intellectuals thanks to Khrushchev's policies mainly in religion and agriculture. Main issues among Russian nationalist movement were the search for new political ideals as well reinvention of the Russian national identity.⁵⁹ In reaffirming of new Russian identity, nationalists were debating about the Asian influence on evolution of Russian nation. Debate was extensive mainly on the issue of Genghis Khan and the role of Turkic cultures before the Mongol invasion. Pandey (2007) is mentioning different Russian nationalist authors which are describing various consequences from Mongol invasion in fourteen century and also its implications towards the relation between Russia and West. Authors differ in opinions like Mongol invasion was the main reason of Russia's backwardness towards West due to destroyed productive forces (Narochnitsky 1980), other claims that Russia saved Europe from plunder of Mongol Horde,

⁵⁶ Mazurek S. Russian Eurasianism: Historiosophy and Ideology // Studies in East European Thought, vol. 54, # 1/2, 2002. P. 117

⁵⁷ Tishkov V. The Russian People and National Identity // Russia in Global Affairs, # 3, 2008. URL:http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n 11287 (01.15.2017)

⁵⁸Pandey S. K. Asia in the Debate on Russian Identity // International Studies, vol. 44, # 4, 2007. P. 327

⁵⁹Brudny M. Y. Reinventing Russia: Russian Nationalism and the Soviet State, 1953-1991. London: Harvard University Press. P.3

thus served as a shield of West (Kuznetsov 1980).⁶⁰ Analyzing historical period under the influence of Genghis Khan Empire allowed Russian nationalists to utilize their ideas and become more known among the society mainly due to the 600th anniversary of Battle of Kulikovo in 1980. Nationalist intellectuals insisted that by victory of Russians in this battle Russia has acquired its spiritual self-identity and as since this battle Mongols started to lose its influence, while the Muscovy as predecessor of Russian Empire started to rise, role of Orthodoxy is for Russia's identity essential in revitalization of its society. Doing so, Russian intellectuals started to underline the role of Orthodoxy in Russia's identity and its history, thus Orthodoxy should replace Communist ideology.

2.1.5 Post-Soviet Identity Formation

Split of the Soviet Union has brought emergence of newly independent countries altogether with new geopolitical situation in the world. In these regards, newly occurred Russian Federation started to find its orientation and role in newly created international order with focus on its foreign policy, later mainly in the Post-Soviet space. Nevertheless, debates about Russian foreign policy among politicians were closely interlinked also with debates about new Russian identity. Perceptions on identity in Post-Soviet Russia among politicians were influenced by consistency of ideological values and psychological belief system; furthermore different concepts of identity were dependent on political needs of each group of politicians.⁶¹ According to Chafetz (1996), there were three separated groups of politicians which were capable to shape Russian foreign policy. Their beliefs were shaped by their distinct opinions about the nature of international environment and different approaches towards Russian identity. First group consisted of liberal views on world politics stressing that it is highly institutionalized and interdependent. This group of politicians also known as 'Liberal Internationalists' or 'Atlanticists' was inclining towards Europe and identified Russia with democratic, modern states believing in free market economy, united by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Andrei Kozyrev and President Boris Yeltsin. With regards to democratic principles, European sympathies and describing the West as a natural ally, their inspiration by Westernizers of 19th century is more than evident. Second group consisted of politicians who were permanently opposing 'Atlanticists' and insisting that international

⁶⁰ Pandey S. K. Asia in the Debate on Russian Identity. International Studies, Vol. 44, 4, 2007. P. 329

⁶¹ Chafetz G. The Struggle for a National Identity in Post-Soviet Russia. Political Science Quarterly (Academy of Political Science), Vol. 111, # 4, 1996. P. 662-663

politics works under the Hobbesian conditions of war all against all. Their ideas about political system were shifting them towards authoritarianism, while their ideologies divided this group into communists and authoritarian chauvinists. Group of nationalists united by Zhirinovsky and communists led by Zyuganov possessed common antipathy towards capitalism, liberalism and Western model of democracy; nevertheless they were advocating authoritarian government and attempts of resurrection of Russian Empire or Soviet Union at least. However, this group was ideologically divided and they did not represented any coherent concept of Russian identity, nonetheless their common opposition towards at that time liberal government in charge represented some elements of Slavophilism or Panslavism respectively. Their hostility towards Western liberalism's focus on individuality instead of collective values recalled debates of Westernizers and Slavophiles again. The third group across the Post-Soviet political spectrum was represented by the statists. Political stance of this group was somewhere in the middle of the previously mentioned groups, though their perception of Russian identity with regards to history was confirming the one introduced by the Slavophiles much more than liberal did.⁶²

Since 1996 it is possible to notice shift in Russian foreign policy and its identity. With the admission of Yevgeni Primakov as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, change from the Western-Oriented to Eurasian-oriented policy started to become evident. Primakov's understanding of Russia as a great power led him to tailor Russia's foreign policy with emphasis to the Post-Soviet space and to confirm the role of Russia in this region altogether with Russia's identification towards the rest of Asia, thus recognizing with Eurasian identity. Significance towards geopolitics, rather than to political cultural or philosophical ideology was the shift or difference of neo-Eurasianism⁶³ from classical Eurasianism presented by intellectuals in the early 20th century. Rather than perceiving of Eurasianism as a substitution for Russian identity in sociological or cultural terms, strategy of Eurasianism adopted by Primakov in 1996 served somewhat as a confirmation and justification of Russia's status of a Great Power in this region. According to various approaches of implementation and purposes of Eurasianism, it is taken that there are at least three different interpretations of this concept. With respect to Paradorn Rangsimaporn (2006), a key of balanced foreign policy concept under Yeltsin and

⁶² Chafetz G. The Struggle for a National Identity in Post-Soviet Russia. Political Science Quarterly (Academy of Political Science), Vol. 111, # 4, 1996. P. 673

⁶³ Pandey S. K. Asia in the Debate on Russian Identity. International Studies, Vol. 44, # 4, 2007. P. 332

Putin's first presidential term which was justifying Russia's interests both in Asia and west is described as Pragmatic Eurasianism, more evident in rhetoric than in practice. Second interpretation of Eurasianism as a neo-Eurasianism was considered by some nationalist oriented and anti-Western part of political officials as a national ideology, while its main characteristics lied in reorientation of Russia's alliance and foreign policy from the West and to ally with other powers in order to counterbalance the global power of USA. Strictly instrumentalist, geopolitical approach of Neo-Eurasianism serves also as an "decoy" for Asian countries to attract them as allies with Russia in the East and further contrast the dominance of the West. The last, Intercivilisational Eurasianism interpretation focused on implementation of Russia's geographical position on unifying of the Asian-Pacific economy with the European and fulfilling so Russia's 'intercivilisational' potential between two continents. This approach towards Eurasianism was responsible for development of economic partnership and integration of Russia in Asia, and for its strategic and political relations as well.

Implementation of Eurasian identity into Russia's foreign policy since the 1996 served clearly as a pragmatic and instrumentalist approach in order to maintain its influence in region an gain as much benefits from it as possible. This pragmatic path served during presidential term of Yeltsin and to some extent to Putin during his two terms; however Russian identity during Putin's period was not strictly Eurasian. Russian identity through the first two presidential terms of Vladimir Putin was rather ambiguous; unclear what is reflecting lack of attention towards the concepts of Russian identity. According to Tsygankov (2007), Westernisers represents opposition of Russian identity towards Eurasianists on the different spectrum of the 'poles' since and across their historical introduction, thus their ideas are radically different, while Putin's perception of Russia as being "normal great power" is melting right among these 'poles'. During his first presidential terms, Putin insisted that Russia is sharing same basic democratic principles as the nations of Western Europe, but on the other hand the form of government must be unique and capable with traditions of the nation, thus preserving its

Rangsimaporn P. Interpretations of Eurasianism: Justifying Russia's role in East Asia. Europe-Asia Studies, Vol.
 #3, 2006. P. 372

⁶⁵ Rangsimaporn P. Interpretations of Eurasianism: Justifying Russia's role in East Asia. Europe-Asia Studies, Vol. 58, #3, 2006. P. 372

⁶⁶ Tsygankov A. P. Finding a Civilisational Idea: "West, "Eurasia," and "Euro-East" in Russia's Foreign Policy." // Geopolitics. Vol. 12, #3, 2007. P. 381

distinctive identity.⁶⁷ Such ambiguity and inconsistency in identity allowed him to maintain the flexibility of action in foreign and domestic politics, but on the other side it has brought issues regarding to Russian identity in the future, and showed that insufficient attention to identity can have negative impact in creating a social or political agenda.

It is possible to observe that historical development of Russian identity and its crisis has brought periodically almost similar repeating of concerns as what is the place and role of Russia in the world and where Russia does belongs to. These concerns were putting a question whether Russia should follow the Western path of development or country has rather maintain its own vector of progress according to its geographic orientation, values, traditions, culture or religion. What was in common during this evolution since the 18th century is a fact that Russia was managing its identity always in relation to Europe or West as its significant 'other'. However, not only because of its geographical location, Russian identity was seriously influenced by both, Europe and Asia in particular points as political reforms, culture, education or language to different extent, undoubtedly. Europe can serve as influential point of reference to Russian identity taking into account that it was the process of Westernization of Russian Empire during the Peter the Great's period which initiated the debates and crisis of country's identity, as well it was competition with West in Asian region in conquering its territories rather than vice-versa, however, we can doubt about Russian military expeditions in Eastern Balkans whether it was competition against Asian (Ottoman) influence in regards to Slavic patriotism or it was struggle in order to prevent a possible further influence and intervention of West in this region, one way or other, same, traditional elements of Slavophiles were in this action present, for instance Orthodoxy or Slavic unity. Nevertheless, significant part of intellectuals were not satisfied with the formulation of Western values in discourse of identity and turned towards Orthodox community as Slavophiles, another part of intelligentsia turned later towards Asia as Eurasians, while in following period there was no space for identity with respect to Marxist-Leninist ideology. Nationalist movements during Gorbachev era started to re-open the issues concerning Russian identity what could contributed to some extent into split of USSR. Immediate Post-Soviet inconsistency of identity firstly tried to integrate Russia into the western community and its unsuccess continued with the ideas of new Eurasianism. Period of Putin's two terms was

⁶⁷ Evans A. B. Putin's Legacy and Russia's Identity // Europe-Asia Studies, Vol. 60, #6, 2008. P. 908

influenced by ambiguous, inconsistent perception of identity, mixing the elements of traditional Slavophile conceptions with Westernism and Eurasianism. Notwithstanding, it is possible to perceive new Eurasianism as the latest development of Russian identity until the period which was analyzed in this paragraph that is until 2008. However, its features as a cooperation in Asia and reasserting Russia's status as a Great Power could be recognized also in contemporary, but still, one should realize very utilitarian or instrumental essence of such Eurasianism which is having artificial elements of identity with regards to huge economic intentions of such concept, or project better say. However, next stages of this paper will unveil the most recent development and opinions according to Russian identity, while one should keep in mind components of single conceptions of identity mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter 3: Construction of Russian Identity during Presidential Term of Dmitry Medvedev 2010-2012

One can doubt about the years that are in title of this chapter as the presidency of Dmitry Medvedev started in 2008. Yet, the years in title are having specific meaning that meant shift in Russian identity construction what would be analyzed further, and thus it fits better to aim as well to title of the whole thesis.

Inauguration of Dmitry Medvedev into presidential office was accompanied by ceremony and oath after which he has expressed strategy and goals that he would like to achieve. He emphasized particular importance on the fundamental role of law, nevertheless, among the other goals were planned achievements in the sphere of agriculture, economic development by supporting of entrepreneurship and fighting corruption, Russia's influence on international community, making country more open to the world and what is important for the topic of identity to some extent were his plans in continuing cooperation between country's different religious faiths, social and ethnic groups in order to strengthen peace and harmony in "our (Russian) common home." However, title of this paragraph is indicating the period for analysis since 2010, there should be no doubts that among the most significant event during the presidential term of Dmitry Medvedev with regards to international relations and global impact was the armed conflict in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August 2008. It is important to mention it because this conflict had specific implications also on Russia's identity construction in following years.

3.1 Russkiy Mir, South Ossetia and Abkhazia Conflict in 2008 as a Background for Russian Identity Construction

Following paragraphs are making reference to conflict in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in order to analyze its influence on further dynamic of Russian identity construction. It depends on the perspective that is used in analysis of this conflict, while this research assumes that this conflict served as "generator" for realizing that Russian identity needs more attention because this event has proved its decline. Whether was further Russian action in this conflict performed to "hold back" its identity that was falling down from reef, or whether was this

⁶⁸ Speech at Inauguration Ceremony as President of Russia. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/1 (01.13.2017)

action part of planned events for reconstruction of Russian identity is hard to prove, but fact that this conflict played role in Russian identity is evident.

3.1.1 Russkiy Mir

Development of Russkiy Mir Foundation was significant decision for designing of Russian foreign policy as well for further implications stemming from such establishment towards Russian identity construction. Decree on creating of this foundation was signed by then President Vladimir Putin in 2007 for the official purpose "to promote the Russian language, as Russia's national heritage and significant aspect of Russian world and culture, and supporting Russian language programs abroad." Foundation is a source of Russian soft power policy, projected by Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education while its funding is realized by public and private funds. Social factor as one of the main aims of this foundation and potential doctrine to some extent is crucial in realizing priority assignments in Russian foreign policy in the shadow of country's identity formation.

3.1.2 Abkhazia and South Ossetia Conflict 2008

Since the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991, Russia was struggling with sovereignty issues in Caucasus region several times. Firstly, these sovereignty problems were concerning the region of Chechnya in 1994 to 1996. Conflict started by declaration of independence of Chechen Republic of Ichkeria from Russia due to its dissatisfaction with the new Russian Federation Treaty. Following military operation for the purpose of "restoring constitutional order" in region necessitated in many casualties, submitting ceasefire in 1996 and signing the *Peace Treaty and Principles of Interrelation between Russian Federation and Chechen Republic of Ichkeria* in Moscow, 1997. Second Chechen war due to invasion into Dagestan by Chechen militants and several bombings on Russian territory, commenced in 1999 until 2000, and with the insurgence until 2009 resulted into establishment of pro-Russian government over the territory of Chechnya. Mentioning Chechen cases to the context of South Ossetia and Abkhazia case is only illustrational, and serves for the purpose of understanding how differently was framed the nature of ethnic and national identity by Russian government. While the first Chechen war framed separatist claims, second conflict in Chechnya during

⁶⁹ About Russkiy Mir Foundation. // Russkiy Mir Foundation. URL: http://russkiymir.ru/en/fund/index.php (01.13.2017)

Putin's administration framed separatist requirements in connection with religious and national extremism, terrorism and national security issues, while in Abkhazia and South Ossetia was the main cause need of "liberalization."

Following the day after initiation of conflict in South Ossetia, Dmitry Medvedev issued a statement with respect to situation in the region on 8th of August. Among the others, he declared that "as the President of the Russian Federation it is his duty to protect the lives and dignity of Russian citizens wherever they may be", as well that "Russia has historically been a guarantor for the security of the peoples of Caucasus, and this remains true today."⁷¹ Such statement was emphasized with the message that the perpetrators will be punished, while pointing on the Georgian "aggressors". From president's statement it is possible to presuppose that Medvedev was paying attention to some extent towards both, historical and ethnic construction of Russian identity. If this conflict was not escalated or directed under Russia's scenario by "covert actions" as it was presented by some western medias⁷², it is possible to assume that due to circumstances which occurred in Ossetia and Abkhazia, Medvedev started to introduce, perform and legitimize the concept of Russian identity as a reaction on the situation that has occurred. Nevertheless, on the eve of conflict, majority of citizens in concerned region possessed the passports of Russian Federation thanks to the interesting opportunity as it was possible of doing as easily as until 2002, while people were refusing to obtain Georgian citizenship what has influenced and justified Medvedev's decisions reinforced also by policy of Russkiy Mir Foundation. During the meeting with leaders of parties represented in Russian Parliament, several days after the escalation of conflict in Northern Caucasus, Dmitry Medvedev has except the description of situation in region also repeated that it is Russia's historical mission and duty to preserve security for people living in Caucasus and also that "Russia will not leave its fellow citizens in misfortune." Furthermore, during the meeting with servicemen from the Russian Armed Forces Medvedev stated that the people of South Ossetia have survived a genocide thanks to inevitable and justified actions

⁷⁰ Rukhadze V., Duerr G. Sovereignty Issues In the Caucasus: Contested Ethnic and National Identities in Chechnya, Abkhazia, And South Ossetia // National Affairs/Sprawy Narodowosciowe, # 48, 2016. P. 30

⁷¹ Statement on the Situation in South Ossetia. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/1042 (02.13.2017)

⁷² WikiLeaks cables claim Russia armed Georgian separatists. // The Guardian. URL:

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/01/wikileaks-cables-russia-georgian-separatists (02.13.2017)

⁷³ Opening Remarks at a Meeting with the leaders of parties represented in Russian Parliament. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/page/214 (02.13. 2017)

taken as the direct duty of Russian state, performed by armed forces in order to defend the interests of Russia, while he was "confident that you (soldiers) will continue to protect the lives and interests of Russian citizens, and to carry out (your) civilian, military and human duties."⁷⁴ Two years after this conflict, during his meeting with President of South Ossetia Eduard Kokoity, Dmitry Medvedev said that the recognition of independence of two countries was the right one, and it has given these citizens opportunity to develop without fear of extermination and genocide.⁷⁵

For illustration of the feelings of Russian citizens and their identification with political action taken by representatives of Russia, it is significant to mention their view on this topic. According to the Analytical Center of Yuri Levada poll conducted on 1600 Russian respondents in 48 regions of Russia in September 2008, Russian public opinion generally supports the course of government actions in Caucasus.⁷⁶

From such statements which were emphasizing the historical role, duties and citizens it is evident that ethnic and national discourse in terms of identity has played significant role in assessment of political action since the beginning of Medvedev's presidential term. Interestingly, assuming Russia's recognition of independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia after conflict, and six months before Kremlin's immediate reaction on independence of Kosovo as a possible precedent for independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia at the same time non-acceptance of independence of Kosovo by describing it as a "special case" in international law is bringing the issue of Russia's identity even on a higher stake. Main purpose of this paragraph was to illustrate which event can serve as a background on realizing of definite re-construction of Russian identity or since when it is possible to observe shift in identity formation, thus taking the legalistically framed defense of Russian citizens (*Russkii*) living in separatist regions of Georgia (or anywhere abroad) as a starting point influential in analysis of Russian identity construction.

⁷⁴ Meeting with Servicemen from the Russian Armed Forces. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/page/213 (02.14.2017)

⁷⁵ Russian – South Ossetian talks. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia.

URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/414 (02.14.2017)

⁷⁶ Russian Public Opinion Levada Update. // Social Science In The Caucasus. URL:http://crrc-caucasus.blogspot.ru/2008/09/russian-public-opinion-levada-update.html (02.14.2017)

3.2 Russian Identity Construction in 2010-2012

At his speech during the first Meeting of Council for Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights on May 2010, Medvedev stressed the importance of discussion about the fundamental right to life, underlying that mainly people of North Caucasus but also people throughout the Russia are under the threat and attacks of terrorists and armed gangs. He assumed that this situation mainly in Caucasus is stemming from complex problems as a corruption, unemployment and lack of mutual respect between the ethnic groups while Medvedev stressed that "we are all one people and we must live in peace together." It was another time after the military operation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia when the topic of Northern Caucasus in the context of identity concern was assessed. During this meeting, council has agreed that people of Caucasus needs to be integrated as proper members of Russian society and in order to achieve this, Medvedev presented that the creation of full-fledged Russian identity is necessary, otherwise Russia will face "very dire fate." However, Medvedev has already started some policies of identity in Caucasus before, he has never officially linked them namely to identity nevertheless the link was evident, this time he declared that Russia's identity redefinition is necessary. Similar tendencies in restoration of important aspects for Russia's existence and its interaction with international community is possible to observe during Medvedev's term also in improving of relations with USA according to New START treaty in the same year or application to WTO.

It is important to mention that these new trends altogether with new identity formation in Russia can be traced and connected to Medvedev's article called *Go Russia!*, issued in September 2009 where he promoted historical role of Russia and its future as well modernization program for Russia mainly in scientific regards.⁷⁸ This article can be taken as possible template of his policy as well as identity argument in the next years.

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⁷⁷ Speech at Meeting of Council for Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/7792 (02.17.2017)

⁷⁸ Dmitry Medvedev's Article, Go Russia! // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/5413 (02.17.2017)

3.2.1 Religious Component of Russian Identity

Stressing the historical role of Russia, Medvedev has understood the position of Orthodox Church in it as well its connection to Russian identity formation. Several meetings of President or Prime Minister of Russian Federation with Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia were indicating continuation or even improvement in these relations. One of interesting Medvedev's policies in this respect was for instance setting a new memorable date in Russia's calendar – Baptism of Rus Day on July of 28^{th79}. Giving the importance for this day officially and legally on federative level and not only among the Orthodox religious people makes legislative and general identification of Russia to Orthodoxy and its historical role towards Russia's development, due to fact that this day is symbolizing a memory to Grand Prince Vladimir, Baptizer of Kievan Rus. Additionally, this decision was influential also for strengthening of Russian statehood as well for social, spiritual or cultural development of Russian citizens. Similar identity politics towards Orthodox Church during Medvedev's administration is evident in issuing of executive order on celebration of 700th birth anniversary of spiritual leader and reformer of monarchism in Russia, Saint Sergius of Radonezh aimed for strengthening of spiritual unity of the Russian citizens.

In identity context, this step should be taken relevantly considering the concept of Slavophiles and the role of Orthodoxy in it with respect to their opinion on Russian identity as something on its own way of development, different from the Western one, in religious questions as well.

It is possible to observe that ethnic element of Russian identity construction in this period is strengthened also with religious component. Medvedev was aware that Orthodox Church as leading religion in country can serve not only to utilitarian purposes for identity development in promotion of ethnic and religious harmony in country but as well it can be useful for achieving foreign policies with regards to compatriots and the role of Church in it as a source of unification.

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⁷⁹ A new memorable date has been set in Russia's calendar – Baptism of Rus Day. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/7913 (02.18.2017)

3.2.2 Role of Great Patriotic War in Russian Identity

It is well known that the 9th of May is one of the most important holidays in Russia as well its celebration of victory in the Great Patriotic War (World War II) is definitely the most prestigious and biggest among the former allies in conflict. USSR as the main contributor of peace in Europe by defeating Nazi Germany for the price of huge casualties has honored its loses and heroes by establishing lots of monuments, statues and memorials across its territory as one of the elements of proud, glory and memento of eternal memory for further generations. Russian Federation as internationally recognized successor state to the former USSR continued on building its importance to the victory in horrible conflict and stressing the significance of USSR, and mainly Russia's role during the war as well stimulated consciousness among the citizens in order to identify them with its relevance in Russian history also during the presidential term of Dmitry Medvedev. In order to strengthen the awareness of Russia's importance during the conflict and bridging its relevance to contemporary issues, Medvedev's administration has done various more or less symbolic decisions or actions which are having its place in context of identity construction. Among the traditional annual celebrations on 9th of May, Medvedev has also conferred the titles City of Military Glory to various cities what is somehow an extension or substitution of similar to USSR Hero City title which was given to cities due to their importance, courage and heroism during the Great Patriotic War. Interesting was also holding the anniversary of 25th EU-Russia summit, 2010 in Rostov-on-Don, at that time recently awarded City of Military Glory. As Medvedev stated that choice was to great extent symbolic as Rostov went during war through hardships and endurances, what is "symbol of our good relations." Significant element for realizing the role of Great Patriotic War in Russian identity and its role in politics was speech of then Prime Minister Vladimir Putin during the foundation stone ceremony for the We Fought Together Against Nazism monument. Putin has presented monument to faith, sacrifice and courage of military brotherhood of people of different nationalities against Nazism mentioning that the victory in war was primarily the victory of the Soviet soldier, while condemned the destruction of the Monument of Military Honor in Kutaisi, Georgia previous December. In this regards he continued that: "Our duty is to preserve and defend historical truth, defend the honor, dignity and good name of the living and fallen heroes. We will use

⁸⁰ Speeches at EU-Russia Summit. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/426 (02.22.2017)

everything in our power to do this: politics, law, mass media, the power of civil society and Russia's prestige and influence in the world."81 From this speech it is evident that among the role of Great Patriotic War, considering the "Soviet soldier" victory and government's willing to use necessary tools to defend memory in any of Post-Soviet countries - the element of Soviet Union is also important in Russia's government identity construction. The role of such identity in international settings was confirmed by adoption of Russian draft by UN General Assembly on disapproving of destroying monuments to the fighters against Nazism.

Furthermore, during review of the year 2010, a live television show speech, Medvedev has placed 65th anniversary of Victory in Great Patriotic War among the year's biggest events and greatest challenges. He has assumed that it is very special date for Russians that shapes "our identity as Russian citizens and that makes us modern individuals, but does not let us forget our past.⁸²"

3.2.3 Eurasian Conception of Russian Identity

Russia's integration into Eurasian region started at beginning of Putin's first presidential term. This integration starting mainly in economic terms was followed by particular countries of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) creating the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) in 2000. During Medvedev's presidential term there were several meetings of leaders of member countries, but the most important development in this area was establishment of the Eurasian Customs Union (EACU) between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, effective since January 2010. This integration removed all customs borders between participant countries and brought them closer to planned, more extensive economic integration in future by proposed founding of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) which later came into existence. According to fact that this union is aimed only on one sector of cooperation which is economy, decision of such arrangement is perceived through the pragmatic reasons on the first sight rather than through the identity search. However, as the identity presupposes the interests, which definitely are present in case of Russia towards Post-Soviet countries that were the members of EAEU at that time, identity component and its formation in Medvedev's

⁸¹ Prime Minister Vladimir Putin speaks at the foundation stone ceremony for the We Fought Together Against Nazism monument. // Official Website of the Government of the Russian Federation. URL:http://archive.government.ru/eng/docs/10515/ (02.22.2017)

⁸² Review of the year with President of Russia. // Official Website of the Government of the Russian Federation. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/391 (02.25.2017)

administration towards Eurasia cannot be oversight. This view on Eurasian factor of Russian identity is strengthened by Soviet past or its memory further emphasized by previously mentioned element of Great Patriotic War and Russky Mir conception and its relation towards Post-Soviet space as well.

Nevertheless, assuming Eurasian promotion of Russian identity during Medvedev's term is on the one hand reinforced by analyzing Russian rather small cooperation with the EU while his administration was contrariwise making its own integration in the Eurasia, on the other hand it is colliding with strictly Eurasian perception according to Medvedev's visit to G-20 meeting in 2010 where he declared to Western journalists that even though Russia is not member of EU, it is European country as well European nation.⁸³ This collision was even deepened by Russia's preparation to cancel visa regime with the EU in the same year, however it not found support among some European countries. Such vector in Russia's policy by searching of balance between the East and West can serve as indicator in the identity search by reviewing possible benefits. Despite the fact of pragmatic essence of Eurasian Economic Union, such political orientations still can serve as intentionally demonstrated evaluation of Russia's identity construction under Medvedev's administration.

3.2.4 Compatriots Living Abroad

Compatriots living abroad are the most important part of previously mentioned "doctrine" of Russky Mir established by Putin in 2007 and represents Russian speaking people, fellow countrymen in the countries of the former USSR, keeping in touch with their historical homeland. Support for compatriots on governmental level is secured by Government Commission on Compatriots Living Abroad, established in 2007 in order to ensure coordinated action in pursuing the state policy towards Russians living in other countries. For purpose of defending and supporting compatriots, Medvedev's administration established in 2008 the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of the Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and the International Humanitarian Cooperation, called Rossotrudnichestvo. This agency operates under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implements

⁸³ Interview to the Wall Street Journal. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/8082 (02.25.2017)

state policy of international humanitarian cooperation as well promotes objective image of contemporary Russia abroad. Rossotrudnichestvo also provides assistance in protection of human rights as well it supports the linguistic, cultural and religious needs of Russian community abroad and by doing so strengthening their links with their historical "Motherland." In contemporary, it operates in 80 countries while there is long-term project aimed on opening more representations by 2020.

Another development towards this policy during Medvedev's presidency was made by Amendments to the Federal Law on Russian Federation's State Policy towards Compatriots living Abroad⁸⁵. This Federal Law clarified recognition of compatriots based on the principle of self-identification and excludes requirements for issuing on behalf of Russian Federation of certificates confirming that person is identified as a compatriot. In addition it also clarified objectives of state policy towards compatriots as well it defined that voluntary relocation of compatriot to Russia has to be provided with accordance to a relevant state program. This amendment has strengthened and developed ties between compatriots and their "Motherland" and was also influential for future foreign policy of Russian Federation mainly in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries. For the purpose of efficiency and implementation of compatriot policy there was World Conference of Compatriots named *The* Contribution by Compatriots to Russia's Modernization held in Moscow in 2010 during which were introduced ideas with respect to Russia's innovation by academics and professionals from 70 countries. Russian compatriot policy during presidency of Dmitry Medvedev was progressing in 2011 by his signing Executive Order on Establishing a Foundation for Supporting and Protecting the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad.⁸⁶ Its development was taken by Ministry of Foreign Affairs altogether with Rossotrudnichestvo in order to provide necessary support of protection of compatriot's rights and interests in their particular countries, funded mainly by federal budget as well by voluntary contributions. Practical implementation of such policy could be observed on February, 2012 by Medvedev's signing of Federal Law on Ratification of Agreement between the Russian Federation and the

⁸⁴ Support for Compatriots Abroad. // Rossotrudnichestvo. URL: http://www.rs.gov.ru/en/activities/5 (02.26.2017)

⁸⁵ Amendments to the law on state policy toward compatriots living abroad. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/8429 (02.26.2017)

⁸⁶ Executive order on establishing a foundation for supporting and protecting the rights of compatriots living abroad. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/11345 (02.26.2017)

*Republic of Estonia on Cooperation in Pension Provision.*⁸⁷ This has established the outline for rights to pensions by citizens of Russian Federation, Republic of Estonia or people without citizenship located in these states.

The role of Russian identity construction in context of compatriots living abroad is significant. Firstly, this policy is aimed on preserving ethnic identity of Russia abroad and also is determining or influencing the Russian foreign policy with respect to specific countries in Post-Soviet, Eurasian region due to its identity orientation. The fact that foreign policy towards Post-Soviet countries altogether with protection of rights of compatriots living abroad were the main priorities of Russian Federation are confirming the words of Dmitry Medvedev during the working meeting with Konstantin Kosachev in 2012, newly appointed director of Rossotrudnichestvo. Medvedev stated that "Relations with CIS countries have always been one of the Russian Federation's top priorities" and that the "...protect the rights of our compatriots living abroad - another of our foreign policies priorities...⁸⁸"

Secondly, policy of compatriots living abroad serves as a pretext and it confirms gradual construction of Russian identity unofficially established on the backgrounds of North-Caucasian conflict in 2008 by defending of Russian people and confirmed official identity construction by Medvedev's speech in 2010 mentioned previously. However, at this stage it was not known how weak is the Russian ethnic identity within the Russian borders and what role in it can be performed by nationalism.

3.2.5 Nationalism, ethnicity and Russian Identity Construction

With the beginning of December 2010, series of nationalist demonstrations, violent protests, ethnic brawls, mass arrests and other similar events has took place across the Russian Federation. Main trigger for such events was conflict between Russian soccer fans and North Caucasian young people in Moscow which has resulted in death of one of the Russian soccer fan. It is possible to predict and to assume that such event in multiethnic country like Russia will bring something like a "social crisis" that wakes up the spirit of nationalism. Thereafter, it has provoked many nationalists as well neo-Nazi demonstrators to organize several massive

⁸⁷ Federal Law on Ratification of Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Estonia on Cooperation in Pension Provision. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/14427 (02.26.2017)

⁸⁸ Working meeting with Konstantin Kosachev. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/310 (02.27.2017)

gatherings and violent clashes against Russian policeman throughout the various cities of Russia. These events have shown up that Russia's policy towards ethnic relations inside the country is weak as well that nation-building efforts are not sufficient; consequently, Russia's ethnic identity is not coherent. Furthermore, realizing that regions of Northern Caucasus were the objects against which were the protests aimed, it has presented to some extent that separatist tendencies were still possible issue of the country.

In his reaction with respect to most violent gathering with clashes between police and protesters on Manezhnaya square Medvedev has stressed that riots as such will be "crack down" hardly and "vandals" which participated in these action must be imprisoned. He continued that "responsibility must come indifferently regardless to where it takes place or regardless to permanent place of residence of offender, no matter if he is Muscovite or citizen of other places of Russia even Southern or Northern places", while at the end he stressed that ignition of riots based on nationality differences is serious crime in Russian Federation that can occur in other countries, but not in Russia. His has promoted that Medvedev's government will fight against such "ethnical cleavage" strictly; additionally, nationalist tendencies inside the country had utilitarian purposes for his administration as well in meanings of performing the multiethnic Russian identity construction. With regards to multiethnic identity, several days after the spread of nationalism in the country, Medvedev in his *New Year's Address to Nation* stated among the others that Russia is the country which "cherishes its multiethnic traditions."

Another interesting point of systematic utilization of expanding Russian nationalism as a tool for political legitimization of further actions on the one hand and stopping nationalism in order to prevent possible (nationalistic) competition in government and possible secessionist ambitions on the other hand, Medvedev has opened the issues of education in this context. For this purpose during the *Meeting of the State Council Presidium on Measures to Strengthen Interethnic Harmony in Russian Society*, ⁹¹ Dmitry Medvedev mentioned that "work on

⁸⁹ Медведев о Беспорядках на Манежной площади 11.12.2010. // Youtube. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c00yxvEef8 (03.02.2017)

⁹⁰ New Year's Address to Nation. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/385 (03.02.2017)

⁹¹ Meeting of the State Council Presidium on measures to strengthen interethnic harmony in Russian society. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/10312 (03.02.2017)

interethnic harmony and communication between cultures should begin in our schools and universities...", he continued that the quality of civic education in Russian education system needs to be examined, concluding that "we need to take a close look at textbooks" content and at teaching methods". In these regards, noticing the flags of Bashkir military forces fighting against Napoleon or against Nazi army, Medvedev suggested that influential personalities of country's different people should be constantly mentioned and he repeated that "our (Russia's) major challenge is to forge a future national identity...our task is to create a full-fledged Russian nation while preserving identity of all the peoples inhabiting our country." Additionally, Medvedev expressed his hope believing that each federal subject of Russia will give priority to preservation of interethnic unity, assuming that "there can be no state without interethnic unity".

Similar task for purpose of interreligious and interethnic harmony Medvedev discussed with the representatives of civil society during the meeting of the Council for Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights held in the capital of Kabardino-Balkaria in 2011. Significance and improvement of education in history with respect to Russian multiethnic society and its role in Russian identity was also the topic of meeting on preparations for celebrating the 1150th anniversary of Russia's statehood where Medvedev stressed the necessity of maintaining "the so-called genetic memory of a nation and to develop the identity of our people. 93" President has also mentioned that Russia's historical advantage lays in multinational, powerful civilization with a unique cultural and ethnic potential that stimulates challenges that are needed to be overcome. Additionally, in 2012 Medvedev has signed executive order On Holding the Year of Russian History to promote the role of Russian history in global historical developments and to wake up interest among the citizens in history and Russia's part in it. With such proceedings it is possible to assume that Medvedev's identity construction was making reference to Slavophile's ideas again, namely to their idea of special and historical role of Russia in the international processes which he used for making a progress in establishing harmony among the citizens with different ethnic background.

⁹² Meeting of the State Council Presidium on measures to strengthen interethnic harmony in Russian society. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia.

URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/379 (03.02.2017)

⁹³ Meeting on preparations for celebrating the 1150th anniversary of Russia's statehood. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/357 (03.02.2017)

With respect to influential role of Orthodox Church inside the Russian society and as well as important denominator of Russian identity construction, Medvedev mentioned in his greetings to Patriarch Kirill and also stressed during the meeting with participants of the Bishops' Council that interethnic clashes and the wave of extremism in country could be prevented by partnership between the Church and state authorities drawing the attention to "strengthen in society the fundamental values of Russia's spiritual traditions as humanism, patriotism, tolerance towards other faiths, and good neighborliness. 94" It is noteworthy to mention that interethnic and interfaith harmony in Medvedev's addresses was present very often and since this period almost every address of Dmitry Medvedev towards Russia's religious components did reference to emphasis on strengthening of such harmony among various ethnicities and denominations no matter if Islamic, Buddhist or Orthodox.

According to policies aimed to stop any radical nationalism or extremism inside the country, Kremlin has performed several police activities, gestures and cancelations of various nationalistic movements, organizations as well criminal prosecution against extremist groups and their propaganda, and also adopted laws increasing efficacy of countering extremism, supported by establishing the Interdepartmental Commission on Countering Extremism. Nevertheless, government has also formulated the official position towards this issue in order to unite the citizens publicly.

After bombing at Moscow Domodedovo airport in January 2011, Medvedev stated that besides the terrorism, the ethnic hatred, xenophobia, violence and propaganda is fundamental threat to existence of Russian Federation. Assuming the role of ethnicity and nationality with respect to identity and realizing the relevance of this issue in Russia's social and political environment altogether with circumstances that were provoked with the wave of nationalism, the politics of identity and its construction during Medvedev's presidential term has obtained another achievement to which was not paid enough attention previously in Post-Soviet Russia.

Wave of nationalism stimulated by lack of attention towards ethnic policy in previous periods inside the Post-Soviet Russia initiated Russian government to solve this issue more seriously. In these regards Prime Minister Vladimir Putin mentioned the need to form "all-Russian"

http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/381 (03.05.2017)

 $^{^{94}}$ Greeting to Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and the participants of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:

patriotism", an analogue of Soviet patriotism⁹⁵. Such idea can be traced or connected with previously mentioned role of the Great Patriotic War in formation of Russian identity, while the role of statues or monuments of Soviet soldiers and victory can play symbolic role that is common not only for ethnicities living in the Russia but as well in Post-Soviet countries and the assessment of interethnic and interfaith peace between ethnicities inside Russia by developing of all-Russian sense of nationality is having ideological, practical character. Realizing that fundamental effect of identity is merging of units on the basis of common elements or relation to particular object, ethnic consolidation on the basis of mutual all-Russian sense of patriotism or nationality is having very important influence in context of construction of Russian identity. The process of such ignition with respect to the spread of nationalism that included only one ethnicity among the lot of others on the territory of Russia has proved that Russian identity was at that time in structural crisis what had an effect on tensions in domestic as well in foreign policy issues with regards of possible loss of influence of Russia in particular Post-Soviet countries, thus practical character of identity construction was necessary to achieve.

As it was presented in previous chapter which was referred to historical analysis of Russian identity and its first crisis in 19 century, it was mentioned that Russian policy in that period was constructed mainly on pillars of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality. These pillars were identified by ruling elite as a "template" for implementation of policy; as well they were a background for motivation of Russia's interests, concluding that those pillars were also kind of prescription for Russia's identity construction. Those pillars were developing throughout the Russian history until the Soviet Union emergence. Formation of USSR has wiped out the pillars of nationality and religion in order to promote unity and integration among the citizens of Soviet republics while the later split of Soviet Union and the global pressure on Russia as a successor state of USSR in the meaning of destruction of communist ideology and adopting of Western, liberal one has brought chaos in Russian political orientation also due to its identity crisis. Such crisis was more or less present and not solved in Russia until particular decrees of Vladimir Putin as President in 2007 and his adoption of compatriots' policy which was followed up and developed later by Dmitry Medvedev in office as presented. This chapter has illustrated that similar pillars of new Russian identity formation were present also during

⁹⁵ Formation of Russian Nation. // Svobodnaya Mysl. URL: http://svom.info/entry/255-formirovanie-rossijskoj-nacii/ (03.05.2017)

Medvedev's presidency, however, pillar of autocracy was not as much evident or presented as a one of the main pillars and it was subsided by more convenient term according to international environment by recognizing the Russian President as a "strong leader".

It is possible to observe that formation of Russian identity during Medvedev's term was based on steps that were adopting the features of Russia's historical formation of identity in the 18th and 19th century with regards to Orthodox Church and ideas of Slavophiles and their primordial vision of Russia as authentic and on its own way of development. These features were supplemented by ideological, utilitarian and unifying purpose of identity inherited from the Soviet times which can be perceived as an instrument for Eurasian character of Russian identity as well for Russia's legitimization of policy in Eurasian region. Due to fact that this identity is kind different than the set of first features of identity is only confirming that constructivist's opinion that identity is changing. This feature of Russian identity construction is referred mainly to the role of Great Patriotic War as well to policy of compatriots living abroad, nevertheless ethnic policy and anti-nationalist regulations are part of it as well.

From the objective view of this paper and assuming the identity as an object of this study, this chapter has showed that both, constructivist's and primordialist opinions on identity are right, i.e. identity can change or can be "rooted" respectively. From the subjective perspective of this work assuming the Russian identity construction, the chapter has analyzed on particular events how identity in Russia started its construction and that this process was intentional and was no coincidence, however, from philosophical point of view it is not possible to define the precise intentions inside the head of Dmitry Medvedev that led him to perform such steps, feasibly, it could be the identity. Next chapter will analyze further construction of Russian identity and implementation of it as well during presidential term of Vladimir Putin since 2012.

Chapter 4: Russian Identity Construction during Presidential Term of Vladimir Putin 2012-2016

As Dmitry Medvedev refused to participate in 2012 Russian presidential elections, he nominated Vladimir Putin as only candidate of United Russia party. Putin has won in elections by overwhelming majority of support, preceded by his interesting speech during the Russia's holiday named Defender of the Fatherland Day at Moscow's Luzhniki stadium in front of some one hundred thousands of possible supporters. Vladimir Putin performed his speech with references to history, namely to 19th – Century Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov and his patriotic Borodino poem that commemorated battle against Napoleon in 1812, stressing that battle for Russia is going on and we (Russia) will win because Russia is a victory nation. Among the others, Putin has also mentioned the diversity of Russian ethnicities that they are altogether forming strong nation and Russia is not pushing away anyone, on the contrary Russia is inviting everyone who perceives Russia as its own motherland and who is ready to protect, cherish and believe in Russia to unite around. Another point of his speech was that nobody will be dictating or trying to apply its will to Russia as far country has its own will and its sense for determination.

From this speech it is possible to identify Putin's main aims and values which were his ground in order to obtain success in elections and maintain presidential office. It is evident that the role of patriotism and unification based on nationality and ethnicity connected with history are the main elements proposed by Putin to citizens with aim to be elected, and whether these features were evident also during his presidential term will be analyzed in this chapter. Taking into account previous chapters of this paper, it is worth saying that those elements in Putin's speech are apparently linked with the identity construction in terms like unity, ethnicity, nationality, history and in issues of domestic and foreign policy as well. However, previous chapter has analyzed construction of Russian identity in politics at first stage mainly in its formation process; this part will analyze and show Russian identity creation and its reinforcement more in practical terms.

4.1 Strengthening of National Consciousness

President Putin started to perform those ideas proposed in his "Borodino speech" literally since his inauguration on the 7th of May 2012. On that same day, Putin has signed various executive orders that were concerning state's social, demographic or education policy. For instance, executive order on measures to implement state social policy was aimed on preserving and developing of Russian culture by several instructions that included development of cultural centers, internet information network and free access to it for public, support for talented children, creating virtual museums and galleries and last but not least grants and scholarships for cultural and arts figures. 96 Executive order on demographic policy was aimed among steps on fertility rising also on measures improving migration policy in terms of education and implementation of programs of integration and social adaptation of migrants. Assuming the role of culture and education in national consciousness altogether with provision of education for migrants is making sense in adaptation and purpose of such policies in order to strengthen the consciousness among citizens and unify them in perception of the reality as well identify them on international scale with Russia's interests, needs or purposes. Such "social" policy is possibly supplementing the role of ideology, which has Putin refused before becoming the President of Russian Federation in 1999 stating that "Russia should not have a state ideology," nevertheless it is definitely strengthening Russia's national consciousness and constructing identity at the same time.

4.1.1 Patriotism and Identity

Besides annual celebrations of Victory Day on 9th of May which was during Medvedev's term yearly accompanied by presidential address, typical military parade, lying of the wreaths or uncovering of new monuments, in 2012 president Putin added congratulations to the leaders of CIS countries, Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia on the 67th anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War. Putin congratulated by letters to presidents of particular countries except Georgia where the consignee were the people of Georgia instead of president. In his messages, Putin was mentioning mainly the necessity of "brotherhood", "selfless patriotism" or "glorious historic traditions" in defeating of Nazism and that these and other values serves

⁹⁶ Executive Order on measures to implement state social policy. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/301 (04.29.2017)

⁹⁷ Sakwa R. Power and Policy in Putin's Russia. New York: Routledge, 1999. P. 22

as a basis and are important for strategic partnership and relations between mentioned countries. This act can be perceived to some extent as strengthening of the role of Great Patriotic War in Russian identity context to another stage with keeping in mind previous Putin's address to Post-Soviet space during revealing of monument as a Prime Minister. By this act Putin only confirmed that WWII events are part of re-established Russian identity and that Eurasian element of identity is renewed factor for influence in Post-Soviet space and for legitimization of policies in this region. Additionally, as any other acts related to Great Patriotic War and their patriotic feature, it is also strengthening national consciousness not only among the citizens of Russian Federation but also of citizens living in former USSR countries that are perceiving Russia as their homeland and influencing the process of unification between different ethnics for the purpose of maintaining common sense and acceptation of the Russian nationality.

Nevertheless, among the role of patriotism and strengthening of national consciousness one cannot forget to mention Patriotic War of 1812 (French invasion of Russia) and its connection to Putin's construction of identity with regards to his pre-election "Borodino speech" and the "real Borodino speech" during the celebrations marking the 200th anniversary of the battle of Borodino already during his third presidential term on September 2nd of 2012. During his speech, Putin mentioned relation between the battles of 1812 and 1941 in this region and underlined that two patriotic wars will remain forever in history showing the exceptional patriotism of Russian people and at the same time two significant cities in regards of patriotic wars were ordered by the title of City of Military Glory.⁹⁸

Another important element in strengthening of patriotic feelings among the Russian citizens and mainly among Russian youth were the measures proposed by Vladimir Putin during the meeting with public representatives on patriotic education for young people. Putin insisted that the system of Russia's education is determinant of country's future development and also significant for prevention of losing identity in a very comprehensive modern setting and continued that Russia's future must be build on strong foundation that is patriotism. ⁹⁹ To be more specific, Putin meant mainly respect for Russia's traditions, history, long period of

⁹⁸ Celebrations marking the 200th anniversary of the battle of Borodino. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/16346 (04.29.2017)

⁹⁹ Meeting with public representatives on patriotic education for young people. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/353 (04.29.2017)

culture and remarkable experience of coexistence of numerous languages and ethnic groups on the territory of Russia. For the purpose of achieving of such goal Russian President suggested that any public content as medias, advertising, internet, audio or video networks must be "to serious, heightened attention from lawmakers and the public". As a message of this meeting, Putin concluded that Russia stopped to pay attention towards education of patriotism what was during the Russian Empire times developed by the Church, while suggesting that such patriotic education should be done skillfully, uniting people of different nationalities and religions and at the same time he repeated that it should not be ideologydriven. At this point the component of patriotism building during Putin's administration is having further implications towards national consciousness, nationalism and further on Russia's identity construction as well. However, it is difficult to say whether national consciousness is subordinated to patriotism, or if nationalism is subordinated to national consciousness or any other scheme of subordination of these three terms and its further relation towards identity, this is not the objective of this thesis. Objective is to prove that systemic development of mentioned terms are having effect on the construction of Russian identity under the administration of Vladimir Putin.

Additionally, any activity towards facts that are recognized by the international military tribunal, as spreading of false information about Soviet activities during WWII, approving the crimes that this tribunal judged or spread of disrespectful information related to Russia's military glory or symbols will be punished by the Federal Law that counters attempts to infringe on historical memory in relation to events of WWII.¹⁰⁰

4.1.2 Nationalism

In order to improve exact policies, goals and targets in the sphere of interethnic relations and for preparing of drafts for the state priorities in this sector, as well to ensure the cooperation between the federal state power bodies and constituent entities, local authorities, academicians and public associations, President Putin has signed executive order on the Council for Interethnic Relations under the President of Russian Federation. During first meeting of this

¹⁰⁰ Law to counter attempts to infringe on historical memory in relation to events of World War II. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/207 (04.29.2017)

¹⁰¹ Council for Interethnic Relations has been established. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/291 (04.29.2017)

council Putin has lined essentials for the National Strategy that should be followed and finalized until the end of 2012. According to President, essentials of strategy should include the issues of education, information with respect to cultural and historical events and promotion of Russian and other languages in Russia. Putin concluded that national accord, strong interethnic ties, peace and harmony are essential for integrity and sovereignty of Russia and are necessary for facing of issues in economic and social sphere as well are crucial for foreign policy and nation-building. 102 From the proposed strategy and with regards to national consciousness and identity, especially the phrase of nation-building is very interesting. According to Panov (2010) nation-building can be defined as the action of reproducing or constructing of national identity and is predominantly discursive process that aspires to justify and define why the population of the state is a whole entity, meaning that officials have to provide the citizens with "appropriate notions, reasonable categorizations, cognitive schemes, narratives, myths and so forth." Significance of nation-building further lies in assumption that any activity that is concerning national notions is having effect on the nationalism, and the nature of those notions chosen by the administration are influential on that which type of nationalism will emerge. 104 Simply, nation-building is influential for emergence of nationalism and identity construction.

Following the next meeting of the Council for Interethnic Relations chaired by Vladimir Putin on February 2013, participants were debating about the implementation of the *National Ethnic Policy Strategy through to 2025*. Again, core objective discussed and proposed by Putin was to achieve harmony and peace among multiethnic and multi-religious composition of Russian people for the purpose of unity and feeling that they are citizens of a one country. This objective was formulated in strategy that was achieved in December 2012 and called the new *National Ethnic Policy Strategy through to 2025* that has changed previous policy in these issues adopted in 1996 and known as the *Outline of Russian State Policy on Nationalities*. The essential difference between these strategies lies in the role of different ethnics in forming of

¹⁰² Meeting with members of the Council for Interethnic Relations. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/379 (04.29.2017)

 $^{^{103}}$ Panov P. Nation-building in post-Soviet Russia: What kind of nationalism is produced by the Kremlin? // Journal of Eurasian Studies , Vol. 1, # 2, 2010. P. 87

¹⁰⁴ Panov P. Nation-building in post-Soviet Russia: What kind of nationalism is produced by the Kremlin? // Journal of Eurasian Studies, Vol. 1, # 2, 2010. P. 87

¹⁰⁵ Meeting of Council for Interethnic Relations. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/336 (04.30.2017)

Russian nation. While the 1996 strategy indicates main, "state-forming role" to the Russian (Russkii) people, the new 2012 strategy insists on "unifying role occupied by the ethnic Russians in generating a unique socio-cultural civilizational community, the multi-people Russian (Rossiiskiy) nation." ¹⁰⁶ In order to deepen or specify this strategy more, Putin has also proposed several points how to achieve it and make this plan successful also supported with the Russia's National Policy Strategy through to 2025. 107 According to Putin, the fundamental point for achieving national unity and for the interethnic communication in the country is promotion and creation of favorable conditions for study of Russian language, what is further essential and influential for other points of this national policy like education, civic and cultural environment. Other points were aimed basically again on points introduced by Dmitry Medvedev during his administration and mentioned in previous chapter that is education and the role of schools in shaping of interethnic relations, the forms of textbooks, state projects referred to national history and other cultural projects that will "strengthen the unity of the peoples of Russia and our (Russia's) historical and cultural unity." ¹⁰⁸ In these regards, Putin has introduced several various projects launched by National State Television, Radio Company, Russian Geographical Society, or governmental packages for strengthening interethnic relations via internet and media, federal program for support of public initiatives called Strengthening the Unity of Russian Nation and the Ethnic and Cultural Development of the Peoples of Russia or proposed various major sporting and political events like Olympic Games, Universiade and so on.

Paradoxically, as it was mentioned in previous chapter, Medvedev's anti-nationalism measures referred to ethnicity had after all to some extent effect on rise of nationalism during Putin's third presidential term. This effect lied in building of new all-Russian nationality without differences on ethnicity and strengthening of "togetherness" and national consciousness by various presidential instructions towards Council for Interethnic Relations in meaning of television programs regarded to education, history, traditions and culture of

¹⁰⁶ Foxall A. Ethnic Relations in Post-Soviet Russia: Russians and Non-Russians in the North Caucasus. New York: Routledge, 2015. P. 31

¹⁰⁷ Executive Order on Russia's National Policy Strategy through to 2025. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/17165 (04.30.2017)

¹⁰⁸ Meeting of Council for Interethnic Relations. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/336 (04.30.2017)

various peoples in Russia or holding a yearly national folk festival *Together we are Russia*. ¹⁰⁹ Such attempts for organization of ethnic harmony and indifferences among citizens in Russia also for the purpose of re-establishing of Russian identity have brought specific kind of nationalism, which some observers likens it to so called "ethnonationalism." ¹¹⁰ However, by assuming previous analysis that Putin is trying to unite all ethnics in Russia under the one all-Russian idea, opinion of "ethnonationalism" which prefers self-determination and direction of one ethnic ¹¹¹ in multiethnic environment is at this stage somehow irrelevant.

On the first sight it is possible to observe that Putin has continued in the construction of Russian identity in the Medvedev's "steps" and his ideas, but what is more important, Putin switched from the "talks" or better say from the theory of identity formation to the real action of identity construction in practice domestically and what will be analyzed further to the "real" identity politics with the impact on foreign policy. The fact of linking of Russia's identity to international affairs or "events that are taking place in the world" Putin confirmed during his speech at the meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club¹¹² on September 2013. At this meeting Russian President also declared that "finding and strengthening of national identity is fundamental for Russia", and as well that "debates about identity and about our (Russia's) future are impossible unless their participants are patriotic". This confirms that analysis provided above with regards to relation of Putin's patriotism and discourse over Russian nationality is having planed and conscious impact on Russian identity construction.

4.2 The Ukraine Crisis and Russian Identity Interaction

The mass protests on November of 2013 which resulted from refusal of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych to sign an association agreement with the European Union led into formation of political opposition known as "Euromaidan" that insisted on collaboration with the EU and overthrow of Yanukovych. Taking into consideration Kremlin's worries about the

URL:https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/ethnonationalism (05. 03. 2017)

¹⁰⁹ Presidential instructions following a meeting with Council for Interethnic Relations. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/303 (04.30.2017) ¹¹⁰ Laruelle M. Misinterpreting Nationalism: Why *Russkii* Is Not A Sign of Ethnonationalism // PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo, # 416, 2016. P. 1

¹¹¹ Ethnonationalism. // Oxford Dictionaries.

 $^{^{112}}$ Meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia.

NATO's enlargement after the fall of USSR closer to Russia's borders and a role of "Atlanticism" in the relationship between the EU and NATO, it is evident that Russia was worried about the destiny of Ukraine. After the first weeks of "Maidan" protests in Ukraine, Russian president thought that such crisis in Ukraine can be extinguished by raise of common trade between the countries with very favorable conditions for Ukraine. During the press statement following a meeting of Russian-Ukrainian Interstate Commission on 17th of December 2013, Putin stressed that the "countries are strategic partners and Russia is Ukraine's biggest trade partner by far." 113 Russian President later continued with other numbers related to economic sector between the countries as well with the special gas prices for Ukraine. But what is more important for the purpose of this research is that Putin tried to head off the crisis in Ukraine and its possible accession to the EU with the words of common historical events between the countries like upcoming anniversaries with regards to culture-200th anniversary of Taras Shevchenko birth, WWII victory-70th anniversary of Sevastopol liberation altogether with upcoming 70th anniversary of victory in Great Patriotic War or with respect to common history-1000th anniversary of the death of Grand Prince Vladimir. Realizing these points with regards to analysis on previous pages of this research it is evident to assume that Putin was trying to settle the disputes in Ukraine also with politics related to Russian identity that Russian administration started to construct since 2010 and thus newly reshaped Russian identity started to play its role also in foreign policy.

4.2.1 Crimean Crisis

However, these identity statements were still only words, nevertheless with planned program for the future in the more or less symbolic effect, they were altogether with trade developments among the countries not efficient to calm down the discontented Ukrainian citizens and "Euromaidan" governmental opposition what has resulted into violent revolution with success of "Euromaidan" movement and president Yanukovych was forced to leave his office in the February 2014. In such conditions, new interim government was formed in Ukraine which was more inclining in favor of European and US direction, rather than the Russian one. These circumstances led to a political schism with regards to orientation and the future of Ukraine between the Russian speaking citizens on the Eastern and Southern parts as

¹¹³ Press statement following a meeting of Russian-Ukrainian Interstate Commission. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/19854 (05.05.2017)

well Crimea and the rest of the country. People in the concerned parts of Ukraine were not in favor of revolution while they were demanding autonomy and closer relations with Russia what has later erupted into different demonstrations in the East of Ukraine. Bearing in mind Kremlin's assumptions towards Rossiiskii people and its relation towards Russia's identity construction, it is presumable on which side in its foreign policy would Russia in this conflict stand and who will be supported by the Kremlin. However, at that time of this crisis it was not probably as evident by third parties as today that Russian foreign policy will behave in such manner also due to lack of interest or information that Russian identity is under construction with specific features which are shaping and influencing further action of Russian administration. Nevertheless, the new interim government which occurred in Ukraine after the revolution was not recognized by Moscow and in following days Putin has submitted appeal to the Federation Council on March 1st 2014 which approved deployment of the military contingent of the Russian Federation Armed Forces on the territory of Ukrainian Crimea. The document stated that such solution is necessary due to: "...extraordinary situation that has developed in Ukraine and the threat to citizens of the Russian Federation, our compatriots...¹¹⁴" Notwithstanding the fact that apparent Russian soldiers without insignias has occurred on the territory of Crimea at the end of February¹¹⁵, that is even before Putin's appeal.

Following Kremlin's permission to allocate Russian soldiers in Crimea officially, Vladimir Putin did not miss the calls from representatives of the EU, UN or USA with respect to situation in Crimea, stating almost the same answer to each deputy that such decision was necessary in order to defend Russia's interests, citizens and compatriots from criminal actions of ultranationalists supported by the Kiev.¹¹⁶

Reaction of the Supreme Council of Crimea towards revolution in Kiev and its opinion that illegitimate government has been formed resulted into referendum about Crimea's reunification with Russian Federation which was preceded by declaration of Crimea's

¹¹⁴ Vladimir Putin submitted appeal to the Federation Council. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20353 (05.05.2017)

¹¹⁵ The little green men A look at the people behind annexation of Crimea. A photo series by Sergey Ponomarev. // Meduza The Real Russia, Today. URL: https://meduza.io/en/galleries/2015/03/11/the-little-green-men (05.05.2017)

¹¹⁶ Telephone conversation with US President Barrack Obama. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20355 (05.06.2017)

independence as a necessary condition for further referendum.¹¹⁷ The results of referendum where almost 96% of ballots were for joining of Russia were disapproved by the majority of the countries stating that the referendum is illegal, while Putin during his telephone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated that "the Crimean people express their will in full accordance with international law, in particular, article 1 of the UN Charter that sets forth the principle of equal rights and self-determination of the people." ¹¹⁸Interesting point has Putin added during his telephone call with the US President Barack Obama on the same issue where Russian leader stated that referendum was also in line with Kosovo precedent. ¹¹⁹

4.2.2 Crimea as a Part of Russian Identity

Following the results of referendum and admission of the Republic of Crimea into the Russian Federation, Putin made his address to the Russian deputies and representatives in the Kremlin on 18th of March 2014. In his speech it is possible to recognize that the "moral" justification of Crimean "return" to Russia is legalized on the basis of Russian identity, which is further overlapping with the "technical" justification that is supported by Kosovo precedent as well by UN Charter's right of nations to self-determination. As for the examples of Russian identity construction context and its relation to history and other elements analyzed previously, Putin mentioned that "everything in Crimea speaks of our (Russia's) shared history and pride...this is the location of ancient Khersones, where Prince Vladimir was baptized...his spiritual feat of adopting Orthodoxy predetermined the overall basis of the culture, civilization and human values that unite the people of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus."120 President continued with "...the graves of Russian soldiers whose bravery brought Crimea into the Russian Empire are also in Crimea...this is also Sevastopollegendary city with an outstanding history, a fortress that serves as the birthplace of Russia's Black Sea Fleet...Crimea is Balaklava and Kerch, Malakhov Kurgan and Sapun Ridge...each one of these places is dear to our hearts, symbolizing Russian military glory and outstanding

¹¹⁷ Crimean parliament declares independence from Ukraine ahead of referendum. // RT News. URL: https://www.rt.com/news/crimea-parliament-independence-ukraine-086/ (05.06.2017)

¹¹⁸ Telephone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/197 (05.06.2017)

¹¹⁹ Telephone conversation with US President Barack Obama. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/194 (05.06.2017)

¹²⁰ Address by President of Russian Federation. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/191 (05.06.2017)

valour." Nevertheless, Vladimir Putin mentioned also ethnic elements of Russian identity with regards to Crimea as "...Crimea is a unique blend of different peoples' cultures and traditions...this makes it similar to Russia as a whole, where not a single ethnic group has been lost over the centuries...Russians and Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars and people of other ethnic groups have lived side by side in Crimea, retaining their own identity, traditions, languages and faith." To sum up, all components like patriotism, history, culture, ethnicity or Orthodoxy existent in Russian identity and its construction since 2010 were present also in Putin's address towards the accession of Crimea to Russian Federation.

In order for "technical" legitimization or recognition of such action by international environment, Putin has made parallel of the right of nations for self-determination declared by UN Charter in Crimean case compared to case "...when Ukraine seceded from the USSR it did exactly the same thing, almost word for word." Moreover, Russian President mentioned that the Supreme Council of Crimea referred also "...to well-known Kosovo precedent – a precedent our western colleagues created with their own hands in a very similar situation, when they agreed that the unilateral separation of Kosovo from Serbia, exactly what Crimea is doing now, was legitimate and did not require any permission from the country's central authorities." Putin further continued with analogues of double standards of the West in the cases of Yugoslavia, Libya or Iraq with the reference to the invasions and bombings without UN mandates and West's "hypocrisy" and that the "...infamous policy of containment, led in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, continues today."

Just for illustration, according to polls conducted by *Pew Research Center*, huge majority of Russians (84%) believed that referendum in Crimea was free and fair as well 89% of Russians think that the Ukrainian government should recognize the results of Crimean referendum. With respect to polls performed by *Levada-Center* in the period of 21-24 March 2014, 57% of Russians supported Crimea's unification with Russia definitely, 31% mostly, while only 6% were mostly against, 1% definitely against and 4% were not sure. On further question *why do you support Crimea's unification with Russia?* for those who answered positively for

Despite Concerns About Governance, Ukrainians Want To Remain One Country, Chapter 3. Russia: Public Backs Putin, Crimea's Secession. // Pew Research Center, Global Attitudes & Trends.

URL:http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/05/08/chapter-3-russia-public-backs-putin-crimeas-secession/(05.06.2017)

¹²² Crimea. // Levada-Center. URL: http://www.levada.ru/en/2014/11/12/crimea/ (05.06.2017)

unification with Russia, 74% answered that "because Crimea is a Russian land", 36% responded "because otherwise Crimean people could have been subjected to violence by Ukrainian right-wing radicals" and 16% replied "because otherwise Crimea would have been forcibly ukrainianized."123 From this research, it can be measured various outcomes about the social standings of Russian citizens. One can be that the majority of Russian's are supporting country's foreign policy, another can be that people are supporting Putin, nevertheless, outcome that Russian citizens are identified with components of Russian identity that were used as a "motive" for particular political action is also valid, thus Kremlin's identity construction is interactive with country's citizens. However, we cannot forget about the influential role of media's coverage, which was during the Ukrainian crisis and particularly during Crimea annexation decisive. For majority of Russian citizens, state-controlled television was during these events certainly the most important and credible source of information, as well significant basis for regime's political mobilization, while President Putin played a role of leading newsmaker and essential expert of political message that was further spread and clarified by the official media. 124 At the same time, it is not purpose of this paper to find out what is the source of inspiration of citizen's opinion, maybe to some extent it is important the final opinion of majority with regards to identity and whether it collides with official identity construction, this can be used just for illustrational purposes and again, it is also not purpose of thesis.

As it was analyzed, all of those components of Russian identity and its construction since 2010 that were mentioned in previous paragraphs were also used for justification of foreign policy of Russian Federation with respect to Crimea in the eyes of domestic, public context. Components of patriotism, Orthodoxy, history, culture or ethnicity mentioned in Putin's speech were influential and played important role in fulfilling particular action towards Crimea. Additionally, for the purpose of justification this political action not only at home but also world-widely, Putin has also referred firstly to moral values as the part of Russian identity stating that "...those who opposed the coup (Maidan) were immediately threatened with repression...naturally, the first in line here was Crimea, the Russian-speaking Crimea...in view of this, the residents of Crimea and Sevastopol turned to Russia for help in

¹²³ Crimea. // Levada-Center. URL: http://www.levada.ru/en/2014/11/12/crimea/ (05.06.2017)

¹²⁴ Teper Y. Official Russian identity discourse in light of the annexation of Crimea: national or imperial? // Post-Soviet Affairs, Vol. 32, # 4, 2016. P. 379-380

defending their rights and lives, in preventing the events that were unfolding and are still underway in Kiev, Donetsk, Kharkov and other Ukrainian cities..naturally we could not leave this plea unheeded; we could not abandon Crimea and its residents in distress...this would have been betrayal on our part." Secondly, international context was further strengthened by Putin's turn to components of Western identity and its values that are referred to justice or democracy and recognized by international environment.

Just for illustration, according to polls conducted by Pew Research Center, huge majority of Russians (84%) believed that referendum in Crimea was free and fair as well 89% of Russians think that the Ukrainian government should recognize the results of Crimean referendum. 125 With respect to polls performed by Levada-Center in the period of 21-24 March 2014, 57% of Russians supported Crimea's unification with Russia definitely, 31% mostly, while only 6% were mostly against, 1% definitely against and 4% were not sure. 126 On further question "why do you support Crimea's unification with Russia?" for those who answered positively for unification with Russia, 74% answered that "because Crimea is a Russian land", 36% responded "because otherwise Crimean people could have been subjected to violence by Ukrainian right-wing radicals" and 16% replied "because otherwise Crimea would have been forcibly ukrainianized" 127. From this research, it can be measured various outcomes about the social standings of Russian citizens. One can be that the majority of Russian's are supporting country's foreign policy, another can be that people are supporting Putin, nevertheless, outcome that Russian citizens are identified with components of Russian identity that were used as a "motive" for particular political action is also valid, thus Kremlin's identity construction is interactive with country's citizens. However, we cannot forget about the influential role of media's coverage, which was during the Ukrainian crisis and particularly during Crimea annexation decisive. For majority of Russian citizens, state-controlled television was during these events certainly the most important and credible source of information, as well significant basis for regime's political mobilization, while President Putin played a role of leading newsmaker and essential expert of political message that was further

¹²⁵ Despite Concerns About Governance, Ukrainians Want To Remain One Country, Chapter 3. Russia: Public Backs Putin, Crimea's Secession. // Pew Research Center, Global Attitudes & Trends. URL:http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/05/08/chapter-3-russia-public-backs-putin-crimeas-secession/ (05.06.2017)

¹²⁶ Crimea. // Levada-Center. URL: http://www.levada.ru/en/2014/11/12/crimea/ (05.06.2017)

¹²⁷ Crimea. // Levada-Center. URL: http://www.levada.ru/en/2014/11/12/crimea/ (05.06.2017)

spread and clarified by the official media.¹²⁸ At the same time, it is not the purpose of this paper to find out what is the source of inspiration of citizen's opinion, certainly to some extent it is important whether the final opinion of majority with regards to identity collides with official Russian identity construction, this can be used just for illustrational purposes and again, also it is not the aim of this thesis. Aim of this paragraph is to prove that the Kremlin's action towards Crimea as well address of President Putin proved that previously considered components of Russian identity, constructed since 2010 started to be influential in foreign policy of Russian Federation and that since the third presidential term of Vladimir Putin any "injustice" or global action towards Russian people or any of components of Russian identity mainly on historical territory of Russia can await adequate response from Russian government.

4.2.3 Unrest in South-Eastern Ukraine in Russian Identity Discourse

As it was delineated previously, the results of revolution in Kiev in February 2014 were unacceptable for majority of citizens similarly as in Crimea also in the South-Eastern parts of Ukraine. These are the parts of Ukraine where majority of around 17% from total country's population are presented by ethnic Russians. Citizens living on this territory of Ukraine were not satisfied with the new country's administration what they reflected in the mass anti-Maidan protests since March 2014 in the regions of Donetsk, Kharkov, Luhansk and others. Dissatisfied citizens were demanding adaptation of Ukrainian constitutions with the reference to decentralization of power to regions as well the status of Russian language. At the beginning of April, situation has further continued into seizing of several administrative buildings by pro-Russian protesters in this region with the demand of similar referendum as in Crimea. However, after first seizing of administrative buildings by pro-Russian activists and declaring the People's Republic of Donetsk on April 6th, interim president of Ukraine Oleksandr Turchynov asked Ukrainian troops to take "anti-terrorist" action what has resulted into gunfights between the Ukrainian army and pro-Russian militants. Despite the evident

¹²⁸ Teper Y. Official Russian identity discourse in light of the annexation of Crimea: national or imperial? // Post-Soviet Affairs, Vol. 32, # 4, 2016. P. 379-380

¹²⁹ Major Ethnic Groups of Ukraine. // WorldAtlas. URL: http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/major-ethnic-groups-of-the-ukraine.html (05.07.2017)

¹³⁰ Ukraine Crisis in Maps, Pro-Russian Demonstrations in Eastern Ukraine. // The New York Times. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-divisions-crimea.html?_r=0 (05.07.2017)

insurgency in the region of South-Eastern Ukraine, Vladimir Putin has expressed his greetings to Odessa residents on the 70th anniversary of liberation from Nazi occupation¹³¹. The text of his greetings stated among the heroism of various ethnic groups which fought together for liberation of Odessa and Ukraine, also his opinion that "centuries-old traditions of good neighborliness and mutual support will continue to unite Russians and Ukrainians." Putin also stressed that common duty of Russians and Ukrainians it to "cherish the memory of the past war, to thwart any attempt to rewrite history and to bring up the younger generation on the high ideals of patriotism and pride for our Great Victory." From his message is possible to assume that Russian President tried on the one hand to calm down the situation in the Ukraine with identity discourse regarded to ethnic unity and history with respect to common memory between the Ukrainians and Russians. But on the other hand he underlined the discourse of patriotism and Great Victory against that Nazism, which has according to him supported by the part of new Ukrainian administration after the Maidan revolution, and so he delineated justification for his support of those who fight against it meaning also against new Ukrainian establishment. In short, Putin presented his standpoint towards emerging conflict in the identity context. Sadly, one month afterwards, Putin was obliged to send condolences to the same city due to "punitive operations of Kiev authorities" resulted in dozens of people burned alive in the administrative building blockaded by pro-governmental protesters. 133

After few days of escalation of the conflict in southeast of Ukraine, Russian President during TV program called *Direct Line with Vladimir Putin* has reopened and strengthened the discourse of history component of Russian identity with relation to Ukraine by reminding that the concerned parts of Ukraine inhabited by ethnic Russians and Russian speakers are the part of historical region of Russia also known as Novorossiya in the tsarist days that were given to Ukraine by the Soviet government in the 1920s by unknown reason.¹³⁴

Gradual seizing of administrative buildings by pro-Russian militants in different cities of southeastern Ukraine led into proclaiming of sovereignty of Luhansk and Donetsk People's

¹³¹ Greetings to Odessa residents on the 70th anniversary of liberation from Nazi occupation. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/193 (05.07.2017)

¹³² Vladimir Putin expressed condolences to families of victims in Odessa. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/185 (05.07.2017)

¹³³ Odessa slaughter: How vicious mob burnt anti-govt activists alive. // RT NEWS. URL:

https://www.rt.com/news/156592-odessa-activists-burnt-alive/ (05.07.2017)

¹³⁴ Direct Line with Vladimir Putin. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20796 (05.07.2017)

Republics on May 12th, while on 14th of May prime ministers of both self-proclaimed republics submitted an agreement of unity of regions into Union of People's Republics-Novorossiya. This led into increased Ukrainian military presence, mainly after the presidential elections in Ukraine on 25th May 2014, thus to more clashes between pro-Russian militants and Kiev forces and at the same time situation in this region started to have features of civil war. In these regards, Vladimir Putin has exchanged many telephone calls and meetings with the representatives of EU, USA condemning the "punitive operation conducted by army and requisite to establish ceasefire and peaceful dialogue between Kiev and representatives from southeastern Ukraine."

Promising opportunity for creation of dialogue between the two sides of Ukrainian conflict was after declaration on a ceasefire of newly elected Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on June 20th 2014. Putin's reaction on this was performed in June 22nd on the day when Great Patriotic war began to which he made parallel again, stating that "so many years after the start of Great Patriotic War, blood is being split on the former Soviet Union's soil and this is terrible thing." Russian President stressed that detailed dialogue is required for the purpose of renewing of Ukrainian integrity, and few days after in order to help of de-escalation of conflict, Putin requested to repeal Federation Council Resolution *On the Use of Armed Forces of Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine*. However, this ceasefire was many times interrupted and in addition it was hit hard by downing of passenger plane of Malaysian airlines on the territory of southeastern Ukraine, while neither of participants in the conflict has not confessed to this act. Afterwards, massive fights were taken in various cities of the concerned region¹³⁹. With respect to this Putin addressed message to Novorossiya soldiers that confirmed Moscow's stance to the conflict stating that "It is clear that militia has achieved a major success in intercepting Kiev's military operation, which represents a grave

¹³⁵ Istoriya konflikta na yugo-vostoke Ukrainy. Dos'ye. // TASS, Informatsionnoye Agentstvo Rossii. URL:http://tass.ru/info/1547347 (05.07.2017)

¹³⁶ Telephone conversation with Prime Minister of Italy Matteo Renzi. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/21100 (05.08.2017)

¹³⁷ Response to journalist's question about the peace plan in Ukraine. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/174 (05.08.2017)

¹³⁸ Proposal to Federation Council to repeal resolution to use Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46057 (05.08.2017)

¹³⁹ Ukraine Crisis in Maps, Fierce Battles Continue in Region During Crash Recovery. // The New York Times. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-divisions-crimea.html?_r=0 (05.10.2017)

danger to the population of Donbass and which has already led to the loss of many lives among peaceful residents." ¹⁴⁰

The first agreement on stopping of conflict in Ukraine was signed on September 5th 2014 known as Minsk Agreement in which were present parties of OSCE, Ukraine, Russia and leaders of Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics. This agreement included except the details of ceasefire also the requirements of separatists as "special status" of People's Republics as well free use of Russian language. Ukrainian authorities also guaranteed no prosecution or punishment of participants in the conflict and provision of elections for local leaders. Despite the fact that majority of the agreements has been fulfilled, the ceasefire was violated several times what was one of the reason why any tremendous peace-talks were not taken.

With the connection of the Ukraine crisis and Russian identity with regards to compatriots as a one of its components, it is important to mention domestic measures related to Ukrainian refugees. Russian administration performed several amendments since June 2013 to law on Russian citizenship for simplifying the procedure of its obtaining by foreign nationals, stateless persons and recognized native speakers of the Russian language. Additionally, during meeting of government members on July, Director of the Federal Migration Service Konstantin Romodanovsky introduced Vladimir Putin with the draft of Presidential Executive Order which states principles on relocation of compatriots as the part of national program what helps also people that were forced to leave Ukraine. This is also stating the criterions that compatriot needs to meet in order to receive citizenship within one year instead of eight. These were the residence of compatriots or their direct ascendants on the territory of Russian Empire or Soviet Union, moving to Russia and achieving permanent residence, renunciation of previous citizenship and status of Russian language speaker.

¹⁴⁰ President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiya militia // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/163 (05.08.2017)

¹⁴¹ Istoriya konflikta na yugo-vostoke Ukrainy, Dos'ye. // TASS, Informatsionnoye Agentstvo Rossii. URL: http://tass.ru/info/1547347 (05.08.2017)

¹⁴² Amendments to law on citizenship. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46027

¹⁴³ Meeting with Government members. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL:http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/170 (05.10.2017)

To conclude the interaction of Russia's identity with the conflict in southeastern Ukraine, it is important to assume the Kremlin's reference to history and ethnicity as components of Russian identity. In this case, Moscow has referred several times to "Russian historical lands" and Russian speakers which are oppressed by governmental unwillingness to apply citizen's requirements in exchange of accepting Kiev's authority. However, these were still only verbal statements that proved the role of Russian identity as motives and sympathies of Kremlin towards the particular side of the conflict in southeastern Ukraine, it has not presented any particular tactile or evident action of Kremlin towards the Ukraine also due to fact that opinions and convincing proofs on Russian presence in Ukraine are to huge extent contradictory. And if are those proofs or evidences due to whatever reason convincing for somebody, Russian representatives are refusing to admit them¹⁴⁴, thus they have no value to analyze them in the Russian identity discourse as they are appearing as to be non-existent for the Russia as object of this research. Nevertheless, the next paragraph will prove that these verbal statements or verbal action at least by taking Russian official position was enough to perceive Russian identity as a source of conflict between the Russia and West with regards to southeastern Ukraine, while the case of Crimea was bit different with respect of Russia's involvement.

4.3. Sanctions-Russian Identity as a Source of Conflict with the West

Since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, various representatives of West were suspecting Kremlin for inciting the crisis by its support of secessionist ambitions of particular actors in Crimea and southeastern parts of Ukraine. However, Russian representatives has never admitted that its government played role in the escalation of conflict to that extent which was presented by the West¹⁴⁵ what has reflected into huge debate about the involvement of third parties represented by Russia and West into the Ukrainian crisis.

The fundamental difference in positions towards situation in Ukraine between Russia and West (plus Ukraine as well) is in the framing of the groundbreaking events which happened in

¹⁴⁴ Ten Things You Should Know about Russian Involvement in Ukraine. // Atlantic Council. URL:http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/ten-things-you-should-know-about-russian-involvement-in-ukraine (05.10.2017)

¹⁴⁵ Putin admits Russian military presence in Ukraine for first time. // The Guardian. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/17/vladimir-putin-admits-russian-military-presence-ukraine (05.10.2017)

this country since autumn 2013 until spring 2014. Spring 2014 was not the conclusion of the whole "situation" in the country, but it definitely was a pretext for what has happened afterwards. West with Ukraine as well has framed that "power transition" in the country as a revolution or in many cases as a "Revolution of dignity." ¹⁴⁶ In western sources it was outlined as three months long period of civic protests against corrupted regime of Ukrainian president Yanukovych that resulted into violent but successful uprising. ¹⁴⁷ On the contrary, Russian framing of the situation in Ukraine was held in context of the "coup d'état", later also confirmed by the Moscow court. ¹⁴⁸ Russian administration was stating that this coup was supported and organized by USA and was blaming Washington for its "crude interference in the former Soviet republic." ¹⁴⁹

After the "power transition" in Ukraine on February 2014 and disagreement of the citizens in the southeast of Ukraine but mainly in Crimea with this transition, western Medias started to publish the articles about Russian invasion with regards to "little green men." ¹⁵⁰ In accordance to that there was pressure from the West on president Putin to explain this situation of Russian soldiers influencing the situation in Crimea; he explained it as these are the "self-defense units." ¹⁵¹ However, during Putin's interview with French medias in June 2014, Russian President made bit different statement on same dispute of annexation of Crimea by Russian troops. Putin admitted that Russian troops helped Crimean people hold a referendum on their independence and desire to join the Russian Federation and he continued that because ..." Europe and US was supporting anti-constitutional coup in Ukraine... we could not allow a historical part of the Russian territory with predominantly ethnic Russian population to be incorporated into an international military alliance, especially because

¹⁴⁶ Opinion: Revolution of dignity in Ukraine. // DW, Deutsche Welle. URL: http://www.dw.com/en/opinion-revolution-of-dignity-in-ukraine/a-18077223 (05.10.2017)

¹⁴⁷ Student Protest as the Trigger for the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine. // IWM, Insitute for Human Sciences. URL: http://www.iwm.at/transit/transit-online/student-protest-trigger-revolution-dignity-ukraine/ (05.10.2017)

¹⁴⁸ Moscow court recognizes 2014 turmoil in Ukraine as coup d'état. // RT.

URL:https://www.rt.com/politics/371924-moscow-court-recognizes-2014-turmoil/ (05.10.2017)

¹⁴⁹ Russia Claims U.S. Is Meddling Over Ukraine. // The New York Times. URL:

https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/07/world/europe/ukraine.html (05.11.2017)

¹⁵⁰ "Little Green Men" or "Russian invaders"? // BBC NEWS. URL:http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26532154 (05.11.2017)

¹⁵¹ Vladimir Putin answered journalists' questions on the situation in Ukraine. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20366 (05.11.2017)

Crimeans wanted to be part of Russia."¹⁵² The role of Russian identity in the case of Crimea is undeniable and can be concluded by Putin's address to government members after the Crimean accession where president stated if there was no choice as the Crimean people made, it would meant that "NATO's navy would be right in this city of Russia's military glory what would make a real threat to whole southern Russia…we are against of having military alliance in our historic territory…I cannot imagine that we would travel to Sevastopol to visit NATO sailors."¹⁵³ With the development of the situation in Crimea, USA and EU imposed several sanctions on the Russia and vice-versa with the effect of mutual damage.

In the case of southeastern Ukraine the dispute was little bit different. Since the beginning of unrest in this region, as it was mentioned previously, Putin declared this territory also known as Novorossiya as the part of "historic land" of Russia, populated by Russian speakers and given to Ukraine by unknown reason. This identification is constructing prediction that Russia would have in this region interests to defend its people but with the logic of imposed sanctions from the West, Russia is being denied to defend its interests. Realizing the accession or annexation of Crimea as a decisive point for imposing the sanctions on Russia and further as some kind of Russia's action against values of the West. It is not possible to observe similar action of Kremlin towards southeastern Ukraine, at least not any that was confirmed by Moscow officially or the one which is empirically possible to justify by the actors of international environment that Russia is actively involved in the conflict, except the humanitarian aid by sending of convoys. However, sanctions on Russia were extended also after further escalation of this conflict, while interruptions of ceasefire convened by latest Minsk agreements from February 2015 still continues and conflict in Ukraine is "frozen".

Realizing the components of Russian identity in Putin's addresses, statements or amendments, one cannot deny that Russian identity is influential in certain political action of Russian Federation towards Crimea. The motives of Russian foreign policy in the case of Crimea influenced by Russian identity led into impending of various economic and political sanctions on Russia from the EU and USA. The analysis in this paragraph has proved that Russian identity is in some aspects responsible for the conflict between the Russia and the West and

¹⁵² Vladimir Putin's interview with Radio Europe 1 and TF1 TV channel. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/177

¹⁵³ Address by Russian President of the Russian Federation. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603 (05.11.2017)

also has showed that how can be this conflict perceived through the Russian identity construction. It is showing conflict between identity of West that is regarded to values as anticorruption fight or democracy for example in framing of Ukrainian "Revolution of Dignity" against and the values of Russian identity with respect to its values intertwined with history, patriotism or ethnicity, what can lead to assumption that one of the element(s) responsible for the crisis in Ukraine is represented by identity. To what extent is identity influential in this example depends on perception of particular actor pays attention to its identity, nevertheless, this research has showed so far that Russian administration is constructing Russian identity intensively what has revealed also in its foreign policy towards Ukraine. However, another point of identity role in Ukraine crisis can be outlined by assuming of identity crisis of particular actor in this case probably/most definitely of Ukraine (thesis that national/ethnic identity crisis in Ukraine with regards to dissatisfaction and split among citizens towards governmental action, both during Poroshenko and Yanukovych and further as a reason of whole Ukraine crisis-identity crisis) and further through the perception of the clash between the identities of Russia, West and Ukraine.

4.4 Recent Developments in Russian Identity

As it was analyzed in previous paragraphs towards Ukraine crisis, Russian identity played important role in foreign policy of Russian Federation. With this in mind, it is possible to assume that Russian identity in this period have turned from the process of construction already to process of implementation of its specific features in the policy of Kremlin. However, as Putin mentioned during the Valdai International Discussion Club, identity is "rather living form than thing that last forever" and its process of construction and strengthening is connected to the important worldwide events and process of globalization. This paragraph will analyze developments in Russian identity as well will bring final results of this thesis necessary to comprehend final conclusions.

4.4.1 Strengthening of Interethnic Unity

Interethnic unity plays significant role in promotion and strengthening of identity in multiethnic community as Russia definitely is.

¹⁵⁴ Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/222 (05.12.2017)

In order to strengthen the interethnic and interfaith harmony and unity of the country's multiethnic society, Vladimir Putin has instructed Dmitry Medvedev to establish Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs on March 2015. 155 Except the mentioned, agency should also develop, implement and carry-out state and federal targeted programs with respect to interethnic and ethno-religious relations. To emphasize the role of multiethnic dimension of Russian identity also in history, Deputy Chief Staff of Presidential Executive Office Magomedsalam Magomedov noted during seminar on ethnic policy that at the celebration of 70th anniversary of Victory in Great Patriotic War it should be highlighted its multiethnic dimension and at the same time structural work with youth is relevant for prevention of spread of nationalist ideas. 156 Another agency that was established with regards to promote and carry out the issues of minorities or particular ethnics in Russia was Federal Agency for Nationality Affairs. Development of mentioned agencies allowed to strengthen efficiency of Russia's National Policy Strategy through to 2025 as well more effective implementation of Russia's State Ethnic Policy Strategy up to 2025 towards the subjects of Russian Federation as well better interaction among the particular elements, mainly majority and minority ethnic groups to which is mentioned policy aimed. According to this, during the Seminar on implementing of ethnic policy in 2015, Vladimir Bulanin (Presidential Plenipotentiary Envoy to the Northwestern Federal District) mentioned that system for socio-cultural adaptation for migrants and state programs aimed on strengthening of Russian civic identity by maintaining of cultural and ethno-cultural development of the peoples of Russia resulted in "noticeable drop in interethnic tensions in the federal district." ¹⁵⁷ Magomedov added that systematic efforts to provide a patriotic education to youth are "preventing manifestations of nationalistic ideology that are stimulating Nazi ideas." Additionally, during meeting of Council for Interethnic Relations presidium on September 2015, Magomedov stated by creation of Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs, the state ethnic policy is completed as well that "federal

¹⁵⁵ Instructions on the establishment of the Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs.// Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/26/events/page/4 (05.12.2017)

¹⁵⁶ Seminar on implementing ethnic policy. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/26/events/page/4 (05.12.2017)

¹⁵⁷ Seminar meeting on implementing state ethnic policy. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/26/events/page/4 (05.12.2017)

target on program aimed at strengthening the unity of Russian nation and the ethno-cultural development of the peoples of Russia is in effect."¹⁵⁸

Another significant and uniting force of Russian nation presented by administration, and as it was presented already is Russian language. With these regards, Putin held a joint meeting of Council for Interethnic Relations and Council of Russian Language in order to strengthen interaction and coordination of these council's that are having many overlapping tasks. As the conclusion of this meeting it is possible to mention statement of Vladimir Putin in which he expressed that "It is extremely important for preserving of our identity, unity and, so, the sovereignty of the Russian state...This means preserving our diversity and maintaining the status of Russian language and national languages of the Russian Federation...This is our wealth." ¹⁵⁹

To emphasize the importance of strengthening of Russian national unity as the one of crucial state's policies, on April 2016 President Putin decided to establish presidential prize of 2.5 million rubles annually on the November 4 which is National Unity Day, to those citizens which provided productive work for "reinforcing the national, civic identity and spiritual common community of Russia's multiethnic people, harmonize interethnic relations, and develop Russia's ethnic and cultural diversity." ¹⁶⁰

This shows that ethnicity plays important role in Russia's policy, and also ethnicity as one of the elements of identity is proving that construction of Russian identity is taken as important measure or agenda for Putin's administration. Improvements provided in ethnic policy and national unity of Russia since Putin's last presidential term are already showing positive results. For example, during the Meeting of the Council for Interethnic Relation in Astrakhan in October 2016, Russian President underlined that 80 percent of Russian population considers relations between people of different ethnic origin as friendly or normal, while a few years ago this number was at 55 percent. Putin also noted that formation of Russian

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¹⁵⁸ Meeting of Council for Interethnic Relations presidium. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/26/events/page/4 (05.14.2017)

¹⁵⁹ Joint meeting of Council for Interethnic Relations and Council for the Russian Language.// Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. (05.14.2017)

¹⁶⁰ Meeting of the Council for Interethnic Relations Presidium. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. (05.14.2017)

¹⁶¹ Meeting of the Council for Interethnic Relations. // Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia. URL: http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/26/events/53173 (05.14.2017)

identity is very complex process that cannot be finished overnight, while the process is for sure underway and has been "quite active over recent years."

4.4.2 Russian Identity and Foreign Policy

Paragraphs related to the Ukraine crisis analyzed that Russian identity is influential in foreign policy of Russia. The thesis of identity presence in foreign policy of Russia in this case lied in conviction that elements as history, ethnicity, language, culture, patriotism or religion are influential for Russia's identity, while they serves as motives to manifest Russia's interests towards the objects where are these elements present, as for official discourse for political action. This experience of Russian foreign policy could served as a source of inspiration to formation of article of Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, named Russia's Foreign Policy in a Historical Perspective. In his article, Lavrov is analyzing historical parallels towards contemporary international affairs in the context that is advocating unique path and legitimate part of Russia in development of international relations. Main assumption of historical analysis of Minister of Foreign Affairs is that Russia played special role in world history since the baptism of Kievan Rus in 988 an throughout the whole process of evolution it played unique role in process of cooperation on the one hand, but on the other Russia's growing capacities and power were subjected of the policy of containment or "subjugation of the Russian lands by the West and depriving Russians of their identity" ¹⁶². Lavrov insists that this policy is in Russian's genes, whereas the author made a parallel to contemporary foreign policy of Russia that is trying to develop broad substantial cooperation with the West and which is searching to solve problems peacefully also by its membership in various international organizations for the purpose of "long-term improvement of international relations". Foreign Minister made also kind of parallel to policy of containment from the West by stating that Russia is permanently accused of "revisionism" and of attempts of destroying current international system.

Lavrov's article is making significant reference towards the important events in Russia's history and their role in international relations and its further influence on contemporary global politics of Russia. His article can serve to some extent as kind of official agenda for

¹⁶² Sergey Lavrov's article "Russia's Foreign Policy: Historical Background" for "Russia in Global Affairs" magazine, March 3, 2016. // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. URL: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2124391 (05.14.2017)

foreign policy of Kremlin, or as Igor Zevelev (2016) noted "it provides an excellent glimpse into the framework of current Russian foreign policy, its philosophical foundations and general overview of the Russian elite...what matters is that they feel obliged to develop and implement their policies in a way that would not contradict the main narrative." ¹⁶³

Bearing in mind the role of history in Russia's identity and Lavrov's connection to history in framing of Russian foreign policy and at the same time assuming the analysis of Ukraine crisis and Russia's foreign policy to it in identity discourse, it is possible to clearly deduce that Russian identity is influential for Russia's foreign policy. Additionally, Zevelev notes that "Lavrov started producing his narratives of history and national identity to supplement Putin's ideas...These narratives explained, justified, and motivated Russian foreign policy since 2012." 164

Nevertheless, to sum up it will be essential to mention latest Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016) which is one of the fundamental documents of Russian foreign policy. According to this document one of the fourteen points of General Provisions is "to strengthen Russia's role in international culture; promote and consolidate the position of the Russian language in the world; raise global awareness of Russia's cultural achievements and national historical legacy, cultural identity of the peoples of Russia, and Russian education and research; consolidate the Russian-speaking diaspora; Nevertheless, several other objectives in this document are concerning terms as history, culture, Russian language, Russian Orthodox Church or interethnic and last but not least the term of compatriots, for example as one of the objectives of the International Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights states "to further the consolidation of compatriots living abroad so as to enable them to better realize their rights in the countries of residence, and to facilitate the preservation of the Russian diaspora's identity and its ties with the historical homeland, as well as voluntary relocation of compatriots to the Russian Federation; "165

¹⁶³ Zevelev I. Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy, Washington, DC: CSIS, 2016. P. 11

¹⁶⁴ Zevelev I. Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy, Washington, DC: CSIS, 2016. P. 11

¹⁶⁵ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016). // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. URL:http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-

With respect to mentioned document on foreign policy and compatriots and its relation to Russian identity construction in contemporary development, at least two recent amendments should be noticed. This is regarded to State Duma approval of a bill on simplified issuance of Russian citizenship on March 2017. This amendment "On citizenship of Russian Federation" allows applying for Russian citizenship to those who was born in "Historical Russian Lands", meaning in Russian Empire or Soviet Union, as well their descendants in a straight line. ¹⁶⁷ According to initiator of this bill deputy Konstantin Zatulin, "Those who were driven to leave the country by the "will" of history at the beginning of century, or those who were "left" by the state after dissolution of USSR, should be recognized as citizens of Russian Federation, regardless of whether they want to move to the country or not. Among the opponents of this bill are mainly western oriented commentators which are stating that similar distribution of Russian passports was also in Abkhazia and South Ossetia what further led into war with Georgia, while in this case situation can appear in southeastern Ukraine, thus it can be used as pretext for annexation of other countries. ¹⁶⁸

Second important amendment issued recently on April 2017 with regards to compatriots is connected to one mentioned above. Zatulin mentioned during his comments to the proposed law that "it would be fair that those applicants for Russian citizenship do not lose their current citizenship. According to this, Sergey Mironov proposed amendment on Russian citizenship for Russian speaker without losing their current citizenship, aimed mainly on Ukrainians.¹⁶⁹

However, these amendments are beyond the research period of this dissertation, but in fact they can serve for illustrational purposes of that, that Russian identity, or identity in general is process of constant construction due to global changes in international environment. But nevertheless, these assumptions have showed that Russian identity construction continues in

¹⁶⁶ The State Duma Approved a Bill on Simplified Issuance of Russian Citizenship. // Russian Reality. URL: https://rusreality.com/2017/03/11/the-state-duma-approved-a-bill-on-simplified-issuance-of-russian-citizenship/ (05.16.2017)

¹⁶⁷ V Gosdume obsudili priyem v grazhdanstvo RF nositeley russkogo yazyka. // Rossiyskaya Gazeta. URL:https://rg.ru/2017/03/20/v-gosdume-rasskazali-o-novom-principe-polucheniia-grazhdanstva-rf.html (05.16.2017)

¹⁶⁸ Proposed citizenship law-the way for Russia to annex other countries. //EUROMAIDAN PRESS. URL: http://euromaidanpress.com/2017/03/15/proposed-citizenship-law-the-way-for-russia-to-annex-other-countries-euromaidan-press/ (05.16.2017)

¹⁶⁹ Pasport RF predlozhili davať bez otkaza ot grazhdanstva drugoy strany. // Rossiyskaya Gazeta. URL: https://rg.ru/2017/04/25/pasport-rf-predlozhili-davat-bez-otkaza-ot-grazhdanstva-drugoj-strany.html (05.16.2017)

same trend since the period in which started its research in this paper, what is strengthening the answer for the research question whether Russian identity is strong enough for consistent foreign policy. Notwithstanding the assumption of constant change of identity and its understanding as a process with regards to constructivist's opinion, its determinant elements or components towards which is particular identity orienting are remaining the same, and so much to primordial theory.

Conclusion

This thesis has analyzed the dynamic of identity construction in the period of 2010-2016. Starting with the theoretical explanations of the term of identity in theories of constructivism and primordialism, research did framework of analyzed object for the purpose of understanding under what characteristics is identity in this paper understood. Intend of choosing constructivist and primordial theories lied in fact to find a "breakthrough" between these theories which contradict each other in basic opinion on identity and further to prove that such "breakthrough" is applicable in practice.

While the constructivism admits that identity is changing due to interactions with the other social actors, primordialism states that identity is fixed, given and undeniable. However analysis has shown that both of these theories are applicable, but regarding to fact of their final statements and contradictions whether identity is changeable or not, this research has proved that "compromise" between these two approaches should be found. This first outcome of thesis was achieved by elaboration of historical perspective on Russian identity which has identified specific elements or components through the evolution of identity in Russia since the 18th century up to the beginning of researched period that is since Medvedev's presidency and the year 2010 respectively. Historical evolution has pointed out that Russian identity was changing for example with regards to debate between Westernizers and Slavophiles and further on conceptions of Eurasian identity before and during the USSR or liberal western or uncertain one after the collapse of the Soviet Union. At this point, constructivist theory on changing of identity is absolutely correct. However, this historical analysis has identified also few elements that were present in different concepts on Russian identity during different periods of time and these elements are still persistent or better say are influential in Russian identity also in contemporary. Components of Orthodox Church, unique path or historical role of Russia and various elements stemming from it like its historical lands, unifying components of different ethnics and religions or Russia's history in general were present in conception of Russian identity in history and as it was presented, they are influential in contemporary as well. Assuming this, the primordial opinion on identity that it is fixed or somehow given is also correct. The prove of "breakthrough" between the two theories on identity stipulates the opinion that the academic attention towards the research on identity should continue also in other perspectives that are already elaborated and also that identity discourse in social science, namely in international relations is important what is extended in other findings of this research.

Second finding of this dissertation points on its research question, respectively to its answer whether is Russian identity strong enough for consistent foreign policy (?). The literature review on topic of Russian identity has presented the discourse on this topic among the various authors, with different background and distinctive approach for their findings. However, their different point of views has found at least one common conclusion among the majority of authors, and that is that concept of Russian identity is uncertain and weak. This conclusion of theirs is certainly dependent on assumption towards which and who's component of international relations or politics they were its conclusion constructing. Nevertheless, literature review has analyzed why Russian identity was at certain period weak, and what led the Russian officials to indulge this topic. Another purpose of such different opinions in literature review was to prove how plenteous discourse on Russian identity is and how differently can be identity examined.

Nonetheless, to challenge the crisis in Russian identity discourse and whether that crisis was (is) still present, and how did Russian administration dealt with this issue appears like a motive for research question-if Russian identity is strong enough for consistent foreign policy. To identify findings on this question this research has analyzed mainly presidential statements, amendments and speeches, as well other governmental documents that were issued or submitted by president Dmitry Medvedev since 2008 in broad discourse on Russian identity, but more specifically since 2010 when he publicly announced that attention on the topic of Russian identity in politics is essential. Since then, Russian administration started to work on (re)construction of identity mainly in symbolical decisions in order to develop the domestic social status and to promote the country's interests and position towards identity mainly at home. Significant progress or shift in Russian identity construction occurred during third presidential term of Vladimir Putin in 2012. Putin has presented specific policy strategy that was regarded to identity construction and that was not only symbolic but had effect in various domestic policies. His administration did various effective amendments and laws that

were influential for construction and promotion of Russian identity not only in domestic terms but also had effect in abroad. Putin's administration was faced with the foreign policy with regards to situation in Ukraine, where has construction of Russian identity subjected to first international or foreign test. In the beginning and also during continuation of this test, Russian identity is holding same position with reference to the status quo in Ukraine; furthermore framework of policy towards Russia's identity presented and gradually developed by Putin is influential for Russia's foreign policy also in recent developments with regards to amendments on Russian citizenship and compatriots. With results of such analysis, it is possible to prove that Russian identity is strong enough for consistent foreign policy, as for the second finding of this dissertation.

Third finding of this dissertation is regarded to complementary research question on how is the conflict between the Russia and the West perceived through the dynamic of Russian identity construction (?). For the purpose of finding of answer for this question, it was necessary to provide a research of Russia's foreign policy in terms of Russian identity and its further discourse on statements or actions provided by the representatives of the West. In order to obtain the results of perception of conflict between the Russia and the West, this research has analyzed the Russia's foreign policy to Ukraine crisis and Crimea respectively. As the Kremlin's particular action and position towards the Ukraine and Crimea was led by the Russian identity discourse as the main (official) generator of this conflict in opinions between the Russia and West, and further action of the representatives of West towards Russia in the meaning of sanctions, the answer on this complementary question is evident. The conflict between the Russia and the West through the dynamic of Russian identity construction also in the context of recent developments in the Russian citizenship whereas mainly western representatives are blaming Russia from "revisionism" and pretexts for annexations, while the Russian side states that it is only trying to preserve its identity in context of "Russian lands", compatriots or "historical injustice" and that Russia have right to defend its people and interests as every other nation. Furthermore, this conflict can be perceived also in the discourse of conflict between the identities of particular actors. On the one side is Russian with its conviction of unique historical role, moral values and other mentioned components of its identity, while on the other stand the West with its components as democracy, liberalism, justice, human rights and so on and in addition, in the middle of this conflict is Ukraine with its uncertain identity. According to the split of country's citizens about the framework of political system, ideology, languages and foreign policy, country is

struggling in its search of identity between the Russia and the West on the one hand, and is also struggling to find or construct its own identity on the other.

Finally, this dissertation has proved that identity is important feature or phenomenon in foreign policy and international relations in general. It has validated that study of identity as a social behavior of particular actor is useful in assessing action towards that actor as well interaction of certain actor towards the others. Analysis of actor's identity in international relations can be helpful in prediction of outcomes, costs and benefits that can be achieved by performing of specific action towards specific state, or other subjects of reference in international relations. With regards to assumption whether this thesis can find any "collaboration" with other analysis in Russian identity discourse with similar outcomes on Russian identity, thus to support or strengthen the findings of this thesis, it is possible to conclude that outcomes of Igor Zevelev (2016) are similar with respect to his identification of "big ideas" adopted from Russian intellectual history as "exceptionalism, special spiritual and civilizational mission and portrait of West as evil" played role through the evolution of Russian identity and are still influential in Russia's foreign policy and identity as well.

Consistency of Russian identity analyzed on recent events suggested that this social behavior of Russian Federation is relatively stable. From this perspective it is possible to predict potential insights for Russian behavior regarding to identity in future and also to indicate the interests of Russian foreign policy as well Russia's interaction towards specific issues that are concerning analyzed components of Russian identity. However, on each of those components can be written extensive research, this thesis at least have analyzed them what can be useful before realizing specific action and making particular decision.

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