

University of Tartu
Faculty of Social Sciences and Education
Institute of Government and Politics

MA Thesis

Galina Jevgrafova

**Gender issue and the process of nation-building: the case of
Ukraine**

Supervisor: prof. Viacheslav Morozov

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/Galina Jevgrafova/

Abstract

Gaining independence in 1991 has brought many challenges for the new Ukrainian state. Among those challenges was a struggle to find new national identity. As an attempt to do so, a look back to the pre-Soviet times, particularly to the values of “traditional Ukrainian family” was used as a chance to go back to the national roots. Consequently, a highly essentialist approach both to nation and to gender issues, e.g. division of duties in family, has become very popular and influential in Ukrainian public and political debates. The aim of the paper is to analyse how these issues – process of nation-building and gender issue – interact and affect each other. The thesis is theoretically framed by Brubaker’s concept of “nationalizing states” and the role of gender issue in the newly independent states. The study is empirically based on the speeches, interviews, statements and other political texts of the most influential Ukrainian politicians of the time of the first three Presidents – Leonid Kuchma, Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovich. The political texts of the political elite expressing opinions on the process of nation-building, finding Ukrainian national idea, together with views on gender roles and women’s position in the society are chosen for critical discourse analysis. The analysis concludes that regardless the fact that Ukrainian politicians of different parties try to distance themselves from each other, their views on the above mentioned topics are very similar and highly essentialist. Thus, women are supposed to contribute to the construction of the Ukrainian nation through giving birth to children and children’s patriotic upbringing, together with taking care of their husbands and inspiring them to great achievements in the sake of Ukraine.

Key words: nation-building, gender issue, Ukraine, nationalising state.

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Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union, among many other aspects, turned out to be a challenge for many newly independent states in the case of finding their new national identity. The general trend was to oppose the new state to the old Soviet past as much as possible, but besides terminating the Soviet legacy there was also a challenge to address the new situation. Looking back to the pre-Soviet times might have seemed the most natural decision, but was not particularly helpful, since most of the former republics were not independent states before the Soviet times; besides, not only the internal political situation has changed, but also the economic, social and foreign political, affairs have undergone tremendous changes.

As Ukrainian society has started to transform with the newly gained independence, perception of woman's role in the society has transformed too. Until the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s the dominant role model for women was the image of an educated working Soviet super woman with high morals. The fail of the socialist model has brought a peculiar combination of the ideals to the image of femininity: nationalism that promoted the pre-Soviet traditional understanding of femininity; rising mass consumption that exploited women's sexuality and sexist stereotypes to sell goods; harsh economic conditions making women dependent on their partners (and pushing women to look for and make themselves attractive to the wealthy ones).

What is particularly interesting regarding the Ukrainian case is the fact that the essentialist concept of the new national idea significantly affected the development of gender issue, in many cases preventing gender equality from mainstreaming and rooting into the society. However, the national idea *per se* is highly "generalised", making the perception of genuine Ukrainian women and traditional Ukrainian family a centre element of it. Thus, the hypothesis of the thesis is: the perception of gender issues in a nationalising state is deeply connected with and mutually dependent on nation-building. Consequently, the aim of the thesis is to demonstrate how the process of nation-building defines the development of gender issue in Ukraine, and how the process of nation-building itself is further affected by the gender issue it has shaped. In order to do that, the speeches, interviews and statements of the most influential Ukrainian politicians –

presidents, prime ministers, speakers of the parliament and members of the cabinet – will be analysed with the help of critical discourse analysis in the scale of a single case study.

To make the research most relevant, the core political figures of the whole independence period will be taken into consideration, though ending on Yanukovych's time in office, with the most recent political speech will be dated as March 2013, without thereby including the latest Ukrainian political crisis of 2013-2014. The earliest speech analysed originates from the year 1999, due to the availability of the material. That will still cover five years of Kuchma being the President, consequently providing an expressive illustration of his vision of the analysed issues, and the visions of his team. The politicians are chosen as the agents due to their ability both to reflect the public opinion and to shape it.

The material for the critical discourse analysis – political texts of the above mentioned politicians – will be chosen in accordance to its relevance to the thesis. To this extent, the political texts on national idea, challenges of the process of nation-building, visions of the further development of the nation together with the perception of gender roles, family, women's position in the society will be gathered and used for the analysis.

Ukraine is a suitable case study due to uniquely high importance the gender issue occupies in the process of nation-building. What is also important is the fact that the transition period of the country is not over yet. Consequently, the issue of nation-building is still highly relevant and is more subjected to influence of the socio-political processes. Moreover, fairly every new government in Ukraine tries to address the challenge of delivering the new national idea and contribute to the construction of national identity. Nevertheless, none of them have found the struggle easy. The novelty of the project lies in analysing not only how the gender issue is affected during the unstable time of new independence, but also by taking into consideration how the gender issue itself affects the construction of the Ukrainian nation. To this extent, it provides a better understanding of the political discourse in independent Ukraine and provides alternative information on how the process of nation-building develops in the post-Soviet society.

The analysis will address the following research questions:

1. How political elite formulates the new national idea?
2. How political elite formulates their vision of gender roles in everyday life?
3. What division of gender roles is seen in the perception of the process of construction of the Ukrainian nation?
4. Is the search of the unique national idea still of current importance in Ukraine?
5. What is the dependence between essentialist perceptions of national idea and gender issue?

The questions will be addressed using the method of text critical discourse analysis. The analysis itself will be divided in two parts. First, the political elite's speeches, interviews and statements regarding the struggle of delivering the new national idea will be examined. After that, the speeches, interviews and statements regarding the gender issue will be also divided into two subsets. Thus the speeches, interviews and statements given in the framework of the official greetings on the occasion of the International Women's Day will be studied. Then, the political texts revealing the opinions of political elite on gender roles and their perceptions of women's role in the society in general and in the formation of the Ukrainian nation precisely will be conducted. As a result of the analysis I will demonstrate, which perceptions of national identity, nation-building, gender roles and women's position in the society dominate among the Ukrainian political elite, whether these perceptions differ during the time of the three Ukrainian Presidents – Leonid Kuchma, Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovych – and prove that they are mutually dependent.

The thesis is done in the following structure. The relevant academic literature on nationalism in the newly independent states, particularly "nationalizing states" of Brubaker's concept will be studied in order to get an insight into the specific processes of the nation-building in the case of the research. The state of affairs of gender equality in Ukraine will be then estimated in order to understand what the condition of the issue is, and to be able to compare how it is addressed by different politicians. After that, the methodology part of the work will follow in order to present a full-scale report on the

used empirical procedures and operationalisation. The next step will be to present the empirical data and to analyse them. The conclusion respective to the analysis will end the thesis.

The main possible limitation is in the methodological approach. Thus, due to the scale of the thesis, it will not be possible to analyse every single speech, statement or interview, where the representatives of the political elite express their opinions on nation-building or gender roles. There is also a chance to cover only some particular ideological approaches, while neglecting the others. However, I do not claim to cover literally all public debates on the respective issues. I aim at providing an insight into perceptions of above mentioned issues in the public political discourse in Ukraine. As regards to covering diverse opinions, I will examine those of the ruling governments, providing the analysis of the main trends. The opinions of the radical political actors, whose parties could not enter the parliament, will not be taken into consideration due to the marginal effect of their contribution to the reflection and shaping of the public opinion.

1. Nationalism in the newly independent countries

1.1 Nationalizing states

Let us turn to Rogers Brubaker's concept of "nationalizing state". To begin with, in his book "Nationalism reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe" Brubaker settles very clear requirements for a state to be categorised as a nationalizing one. Firstly, there is an "imagined" existence of a "core nation", which is viewed with the help of ethnocultural terms. The notion of the "core nation" is strictly differentiated from the concept of civic nationality. Secondly, there is a vision that the "core nation" has a legal right to "own" the state polity, and that "the polity exists as the polity *of* and *for* the core nation".

Thirdly, there is a general belief that in spite of the fact that the core nation legally "owns" the state, the interests of the core nation are not represented sufficiently, and the core nation as a whole is aggrieved in a number of cases. Fourthly, it is believed that a multileveled strategy is needed in order "to promote the language, cultural flourishing, demographic predominance, economic welfare, or political hegemony of the core nation". Fifthly, this multileveled strategy is justified as being essential in order to compensate the previous "discrimination against the nation before it had "its own" state to safeguard and promote its interests". Sixthly, the beliefs of this kind – are implemented with the help of a number of different settings: "legislatures, electoral campaigns, the press, associations, universities, the streets". And the seventh criterion of the nationalizing state is an adoption of policies corresponding to the above mentioned visions and beliefs by both state and non-state bodies and organisations (Brubaker 1996: 83-84).

1.2 Interwar Poland as a nationalizing state

I would like to pay particular attention at Brubaker's thought, with which he advocates the generality of the criteria listed above. Thus, he claims that "state-based, nation-promoting nationalisms – the post-independence nationalisms of nationalizing state – are inherently more diffusive than state-seeking nationalisms". Brubaker points

out that the state-seeking nationalisms often differ from the post-independent nationalisms in one very important issue: the former kinds of the nationalisms usually have clear goals – be that more autonomy or full independence. When these goals are achieved and a new state is established it is often the case that nationalizing nationalism lacks clear goals. Such state of affairs results in, as Brubaker notes, the fact that “it is harder to point what is specifically “nationalist” about politics in such states. In such settings, nationalism becomes an “aspect” of politics – embracing both formal policies and informal practices, and existing both within and outside the state – rather than a distinctive movement. It is that diffusive and pervasive yet nonetheless distinctive aspect of politics [...]” (*ibid.*: 84).

Interestingly, Brubaker studies the case of interwar Poland as an example to visualise his theory. However, the case of Ukraine, especially in the 1990s, not only corresponds fully to the criteria of the nationalizing state, but has strikingly a lot of very important issues in common with the particular Polish case. That may be explained not only by the fact that Ukraine is indeed a country of the “New Europe”, as Brubaker calls it, but – as a result of the significant part of common history and cultural aspects Ukraine and Poland share. Let me thus have a very brief overview of the characterisation Brubaker gives to the situation in interwar Poland.

Thus, newly emerged Polish state was a very different country in comparison with what used to be before; it differed significantly both from the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and from the empires it used to belong to in the nearest past. What has changed was not only the fact of independence or the amount of territories, but also the very concept of nation. If before that, in the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth the nation was “defined by social and political status, not by language or ethnicity”, than in the newly independent Second Polish Republic the notion of nation was rethought and instead of the social and political class, ethnolinguistic notion has prevailed. This change of the concept of the nation resulted in two considerable aspects, which Brubaker names as “social deepening” and “ethnic narrowing”. The social deepening was caused by the fact that the notion of status that used to be the bounding element of the “gentry nation” concept has lost its urgency. That, in-turn, made democratisation possible, provoking thereby the spread of the idea of “social deepening”. At the same

time, “the increased salience of language as nation-bounding diacritical marker reflected the experience of prolonged statelessness, which prevented the development of a state-oriented, state-framed, “civic” or “territorial” understanding of nationhood”. Another very interesting aspect of the new Polish concept of the nation is its oft-martyred character, viewed as “Polish ethnonation’s heroic struggle for independence” (*ibid.*: 85).

Consequently, since martyrdom was believed to be one of the key elements, which made the regaining of independence possible at all, occupied a considerable place in the formation of the national myth and affected future policies. The idea of martyrdom thereby contributed significantly to and later advocated the emergence of the understanding that “the new Polish state [...] was conceived as the state *of* and *for* the ethnolinguistically (and ethnoreligiously) defined Polish nation, in part because it was seen as made *by* this nation against the resistance of Germans, Ukrainians, and Jews. A clear distinction was universally drawn between this Polish nation and the total citizenry of the state” (*ibid.*). As a result, the national policies towards national minorities were dual. Thus, Belarusians and Ukrainians outside of Galicia were seen as candidates to become a part of the Polish nation in the future; thereafter, policies meant for them implied assimilation. At the same time, Germans and Jews were not considered as those possibly assimilating in the future (and even unwanted to by the state); therefore the policies towards them were “more “dissimilationist” or “differentialist,” based on differential treatment by ethnocultural nationality among citizens of the Polish state” (*ibid.*: 86, 100).

To this extent, Germans and Jews were replaced from the most important economic and political positions, and their emigration from the country was encouraged. Regarding specifically the German population of Poland, there were two main issues the Polish state had, so to say, to blame them in. First of all, due to the historical events (mainly the Germanization during the rule of the Kaiserreich), the above mentioned policies towards the ethnic Germans were “presented as remedial and compensatory, as needed to reverse the political, economic, cultural, and ethnodemographic legacy of the decades-long policy of Germanization”. The second “fault” of the ethnic Germans was the fact that even if they did not have the citizenship of Weimar Germany, they shared

the “ethnocultural nationality” with “a powerful neighbouring state with unconcealed revisionist ambitions” (*ibid.*: 87).

Brubaker makes a very considerable remark about the reasons of the varied policies towards the different national minorities in Poland. Thus, while the Germans and the Jews lived mostly in the cities, often holding important positions in the society, the mostly rural population of “Belarusians and Ukrainians occupied no desirable economic or political positions from which there was any interest to excluding them. They were recognized – while Germans and Jews were not – as autochthonous; no one sought to encourage them to emigrate” (*ibid.*: 98).

1.3 Post-Soviet Ukraine as a nationalizing state

After analysing the interwar Poland’s case, Brubaker points out that at least two of the seven elements of nationalizing state are also present in the now independent former Soviet republics. These key-elements are the “sense of “ownership” of the state by a particular ethnocultural nation that is conceived as distinct from the citizenry or permanent resident population as a whole, and the “remedial” or “compensatory project of using state power to promote the core nation’s specific (and heretofore inadequately served) interests”” (*ibid.*: 103-104). I would suggest that in the case of Ukraine all the initial seven elements were present to a greater or lesser extent. Brubaker highlights the case of Ukraine among the other new states, claiming that “significant elements of nationalization can be found even in states that have presented themselves as models of interethnic harmony, notably Ukraine and Kazakhstan” (*ibid.*: 106).

Thus, let me address Brubaker’s seven elements of the nationalizing state in the case of Ukraine. To begin with, the first element – the existence of the core nation that is differed from civic citizenship; the second element – the idea that this core nation has the right to “own” the polity, which in-turn exists as the one *of* and *for* the nation; and the fourth element – “the idea that specific action is needed in a variety of settings and domains to promote the language, cultural flourishing, demographic predominance, economic welfare, or political hegemony of the core nation” – are almost fully stated in the Ukrainian Constitution, which proclaims that:

“The state promotes the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, its historical consciousness, traditions and culture, as well as the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine” (Constitution of the Republic of Ukraine¹. Chapter 11. Doc. Nr. 254к/96-вр. 1996, ed. 02.03.2014).

“The state language of Ukraine is Ukrainian.

State ensures the comprehensive development and functioning of the Ukrainian language in all spheres of public life throughout the territory of Ukraine.

In Ukraine, the free development, use and protection of Russian and other languages of national minorities of Ukraine are guaranteed.

State promotes the learning of languages of international communication.

The use of languages in Ukraine is guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine and is determined by law” (ibid. Chapter 10).

As regards to the concern of the demographic predominance, it was particularly a big issue in Ukraine. Thus, starting from the 1991, the ideology of “demographic development” was not only a part of a nation-building agenda, but it was also sometimes, as Zhurzhenko notes, “explicitly nationalist” (Zhurzhenko ed. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 32). Thereby, some demographers write about the “national reproduction of Ukraine”². However, it often means a concern about reproduction of the core ethnos – Ukrainians, rather a general concern about the demography of Ukraine. Furthermore, some demographers, like O. Chirikov and I. Vinnichenko, whom Zhurzhenko quotes in her work, are bluntly pleased by the fact that with the emergence of the Ukrainian state the ethnic balance has started to change in favour of the ethnic Ukrainians.

At the same time, Chirikov and Vinnichenko find that repatriation of the Crimean Tatars to Ukraine, refugees, transit migrants and illegal immigration from the countries of Africa, Middle East and Asia is a highly worrying tendency, which not only may find reflection in the increased criminal statistics, but “threatens the very existence of the Ukrainian nation”. The cross-ethnic marriages are also seen as a regret-worthy

¹ All translations in this thesis are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

² I will go back to this idea of “national reproduction of Ukraine” several times during the thesis; many Ukrainian politicians will formulate it using these or other words, but due to the high urgency of the idea in the Ukrainian society and its direct accordance to the issue being studied in the thesis I will pay more attention at that later.

practice (*ibid.*). Besides, there is also a concern regarding not only the decrease of the population, common to many other post-Soviet and Western European states, but the “national degeneration”. The reason of the “national degeneration” of the Ukrainian nation is seen in the Soviet past:

“Mass migration of Russians and members of other Russian-speaking peoples into Ukraine, linguistic Russification of Ukrainians, insufficient development of Ukrainian professional culture, decline of endogamy between Ukrainians on some territories, ideological brainwashing of the population, especially children and youth, open blackening of the history of Ukraine and the inculcation of inferiority complexes, ascribing an archaic character and a lack of perspective to all things Ukrainian – all this has prepared the ground for a total and irrevocable Russification in the near future”. (Chirkov and Vinnichenko quoted in Zhurzhenko eds. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 33)

Here it is where we, in addition to the demographic concern, also reach the third Brubaker’s element of the nationalizing state: “the idea that the core nation is not flourishing”; that also repeats the fourth element – the belief that some concrete actions are needed in order to help the core nation to flourish; and the fifth element – “the conception and justification of such action as remedial or compensatory, as needed to counterbalance and correct for previous discrimination against the nation before it had “its own” state to safeguard and promote its interests”. As regards to the sixth and seventh elements of Brubaker’s nationalizing state (those are implementation of the above mentioned ideas with the help of number different settings: “legislatures, electoral campaigns, the press, associations, universities, the streets”; and adoption of policies corresponding to the above mentioned visions and beliefs by both state and non-state bodies and organisations, respectively), they are also well reflected in the rhetoric about the demographic policies and in rhetoric about nation-building (the latter will be studied separately in the last chapter).

I would also like to address some aspects of nationalism, which Brubaker points out while analysing interwar Poland; thus as I noted before, in addition to the seven elements, by which a nationalizing state may be recognised, I see some other similar moments in modern Ukraine. To begin with, when Ukraine emerged on the geopolitical map of the world as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was a country that differed significantly from what used to be there before, regarding both territory and

kind of the government. Moreover, as we could see in the Constitution, in Ukraine too, the concept of the nation was constructed with the help of the ethnolinguistic terms. Besides, as it was showed above, just like in interwar Poland, in newly independent Ukraine there were different national minorities, which were addressed differently.

Thus, the Crimean Tatars similarly to the Belarusians and Ukrainians in Poland, who “were recognized [...] as autochthonous” (Brubaker 1996.: 98) – Crimea was the only autonomous republic of Ukraine. At the same time, the Russian population of Ukraine, similarly to the Germans of Poland, were seen as those directly connected to the legacy of the previous authorities, repressive to the national identity of the core nation. Besides, analogically with the Weimar Germany having its “revisionist ambitions” just next to Poland, there is Russia neighbouring Ukraine and minding rather comparable ideas. The decrease of population of ethnic Russians, as Chirikov and Vinnichenko note in their work, was highly appreciated, similarly to the Germans in Poland, who were bluntly “encouraged to immigrate”.

Another very important issue that both interwar Poland and independent Ukraine have in common is the notion of martyr character of the struggle for independence and of national identity. It is well reflected in the State Anthem of Ukraine with the title “*Ще не вмерла Україна*” being also the first line of the lyrics. That may be translated as “Ukraine is still alive”, but the literal translation is “Ukraine has not yet died”. Interestingly, the title and also the first line of the State Anthem of Poland is “*Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła*”³, which means “Poland has not yet died”. This is a highly important aspect: national anthem is traditionally very patriotic piece, addressing the most considerable moments of a nation’s history, stating its “motto” or ideas, aimed at uniting people. This is also something that is regularly repeated, especially at the most solemn ceremonies, on the greatest dates.

Consequently, having a message in the most important “song” of the state that proclaims that the country “has not yet died”, underlines and, to some extent, shapes the understanding of a highly complicated struggle for independence. Furthermore, by stating that the country “has not yet died”, there is a message that there was or there is

³ The original version adapted in 1926 used to be “*Jeszcze Polska nie umarła*”, which has the same meaning as the current variant of the lyrics.

some power that is eager to stop the country from being independent; the “not yet” remark implies that this evil-minded power is stronger, and the only reason this “not yet” has not happened is a miracle created by the nation. To this extent, this particular national anthem contributes to promoting the idea of a heroic martyrdom.

This concept of heroic martyrdom, as Brubaker shows, is an important part of the formation of national myth, which has an effect on policies. What was though different from the Polish case was the fact that Ukrainians lacked the linguistic unity the Poles had. Thereby, according to the population census of 2001⁴, around 78% of the population define themselves as ethnic Ukrainians and around 17% define themselves as ethnic Russians (State Statistics Service of Ukraine. Population Census 2001: Ethnic Composition of Ukraine). At the same moment, when we reach the tricky language issue, 67,5% of the whole population identify Ukrainian language as their mother tongue, while around 30% say that for them Russian is the native language (State Statistics Service of Ukraine. Population Census 2001: Linguistic Division of Ukraine). This is a very interesting aspect. One may explain it with the legacy of Russification policies of the Soviet Union, others may refer to even older historical reasons. I would not, however, view these numbers in order to question why quite a significant part of those, who define themselves as ethnic Ukrainians, speak Russian as a mother tongue, nor I would like to oppose these two groups in any way. What I find important, is the fact that Ukrainians are bilingual, according to statistics, 58% of the population uses both Ukrainian and Russian on a daily basis equally (Talaga 2012).

Besides, the Ukrainians also lacked the unity in religion, as, according to the CIA Factbook, even though the population is mostly Christian, there is still quite a considerable diversity. Thus, there is, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate that is followed by around 40% of the population, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate – followed by around 30% of the population, and also the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Jewish religions with the number of followers below 3% of the population (CIA. The World Factbook: Ukraine. 2013). Consequently, I suggest

⁴ The population census of 2001 is the only census carried out in independent Ukraine. The next census is planned for the year 2016.

that the bilingualism and the different denominations of the Ukrainians were not taken into consideration sufficiently in the new situation of the nationalising state.

2. Gender issue in independent Ukraine

2.1 What is it like to be a woman in Ukraine?

Before we even start analysing the mutual impact among the gender issue and the nation building, let me pay attention at some worrying data regarding the position of women in Ukraine. To begin with, domestic violence is seriously a big issue. According to the report carried out in 2006 by the Amnesty International “Ukraine: Domestic Violence – Blaming the Victim”, in the first nine month of 2005 there were 83 150 reports of violence in the family registered in Ukraine⁵. These statistics fail to provided data on gender of the victims, but according to the Department of Public Safety of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, 90% of the victims are women. Furthermore, according to the same source, in the period of first nine months of 2006, there were 1008 murders and 402 cases of manslaughter at home registered, with the absolute majority of the victims being women. Here it is significant to add that the data quoted above is based on the official reports of violence, which eventually reach police (Amnesty International. Ukraine: Domestic Violence – Blaming the Victim. 2006: 2).

The Amnesty International’s report also provides data collected with the help of a survey carried out by the Winrock International in 2001, the survey interviewed 6000 women of the age 12-30. Thus, according to the survey, 33% of the women “suffered from moral or verbal assault, usually perpetrated by their husbands, friends, or neighbours. Of the women interviewed 11-12% were subjected to sexual abuse, and five per cent suffered from physical abuse, usually by their husbands” (Winrock International 2001 quoted in Amnesty International. Ukraine: Domestic Violence – Blaming the Victim. 2006: 3). Not only domestic violence is a an inexcusable abuse f human rights, but it also has a “pushing effect” for women to agree for a job abroad, which may end up for women being trafficked. The International Organisation for Migration provides the data that shows that 80% of the trafficked women whom they have helped have suffered from domestic violence before they were trafficked (International Organisation for Migration quoted in Amnesty International. Ukraine: Domestic Violence – Blaming the Victim. 2006: 4).

⁵ The population of Ukraine is 48 millions, as estimated by the census of 2001 (States Statistics of Ukraine. Census 2001. General Number of Population).

Regarding the reasons of domestic violence, there are such factors as general difficult socioeconomic situation that often provokes men for the alcohol abuse, which, in-turn, stimulates aggressive behaviour; legal system that fails to protect the women, how were attacked; social system that fails to prevent violence; and sexist stereotypes common in the Ukrainian society, which justify and provoke violence (Amnesty International. Ukraine: Domestic Violence – Blaming the Victim. 2006: 1, 4). To this extent, the Amnesty International sums up that “despite measures taken by the Ukrainian government to combat domestic violence, the problem remains widespread and women who are victims of violence in the home do not have adequate protection or recourse to justice. Ukraine is failing to fulfil its obligations under international human rights law to exercise due diligence to secure women’s rights to equality, life, liberty and security, and freedom from discrimination, torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment” (*ibid.* 2006: 2).

In addition to the situation with domestic violence, there is also a significant pay gap between men and women. According to the statistical data of 2013, in Ukraine, women earn on average around 23% less than men (State Statistics of Ukraine: Average monthly wage of women and men by economic activity in 2013). Besides, among the 21 professional occupations, there was only 1, where women earned more than men – employment in libraries, archives, museums and other cultural institutions – a field, where in traditionally for the post-Soviet countries, most of the employees are women (Rimashevskaja eds. Rai, Pilkington, Phizacklea 1992: 13).

Besides, the general political instability highly affects the situation with gender issue in Ukraine. As a consequence, gender equality developments have been as instable as the other policies. For instance, in 2005 Ukraine passes the law on “ensuring equal rights and capabilities of women and men”, with the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport Affairs taking the main responsibility of the issue. However, in 2010 the Ministry was reformed into the Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Sport Affairs. By that the only governmental unit responsible for forming and implementing family and gender policy, preventing family violence, counteracting human trafficking and ensuring equal rights of men and women was abolished. In 2011 150 representatives of civil society organisations and international organisations signed a letter addressed to

president Yanukovych urging him to re-establish a corresponding governmental unit. In the end of 2013 the Government approved the project of the “State Programme on Ensuring Equal Rights and Capabilities of Women and Men till 2016”, with newly reformed Ministry of Social Affairs being responsible for the programme. The meanwhile state of affairs is probably most illustratively summed up in the Global Gender Gap Report⁶, which places Ukraine on the 48-th position in 2006, on the 57-th in 2007, and on the 61-th – 64-th ever since.

To sum up, there is still a lot of work that must be done in order to improve the situation with gender equality in Ukraine, to help it not only nominally exist in the legislative documents and action plans, but to actually take roots in the society. Below, among others issues, I will pay attention to the fact how this issue is recognised – both by women in general and by politicians in particular – and how it is addressed.

2.2 Culture, gender and nation-building

To begin with, in order to better demonstrate the significance of gender issue in the process of constructing a nation in a nationalising state I will need to address the issue of culture. That will demand to start – though very briefly – from the corner stone of cultural studies, Raymond Williams’ three meanings of culture, which he offered in his book “Culture and Society: 1790-1950”. Those are respectively “culture as civilization” (general intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development), “high culture” (“intellectual and artistic activity”) and “a particular way of life, whether of people, period or a group” (Williams 1983: 90, quoted in Yuval-Davis 1997: 40).

Further on, Jonathan Friedman suggested there is a notion of “generic culture” that is inherent for the whole human race, and “differential culture” that “consists in the attribution of a set of social behavioral and representational of properties to a given population” (Friedman 1994: 72). What is also important is the fact that, as Friedman notes, regardless of any dissimilarities, both of these notions are deeply essentialist, since both of imply that “they do what they do because they are what they are” (*ibid.*:

⁶ The Global Gender Gap Index 2013 is the result of collaboration of the Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley. The index ranks countries as accordance to their gender gaps, and their scores can be interpreted as the percentage of the inequality between men and women.

73). To this extent, due to the situation in the particular country that I address in the scope of the thesis, while minding “culture”, I will process from Williams’ third notion – “a particular way of life, whether of people, period or a group”, and Friedman’s “differential culture”.

In addition to that, the dynamic character of the culture, which Yuval-Davis points out, also needs attention before we proceed to the next part of the work. Thus, the idea that “cultural myths and symbols have an enduring ability which is being reproduced generation after generation, notwithstanding changing historical and material conditions”, often occupy a significant place in the construction of a nation’s identity linked to its “archaic roots”. Yuval-Davis notes that this durability may be very deceptive, because even though there are some cultural practices, which have survived during the time, there might have been many others, which have not survived. Moreover, those cultural practices, which have survived till today, hardly exist in the modern world in their authentic form, often undergoing considerable transformation, saving only symbolic meaning or even obtaining a completely new meaning (Yuval-Davis 1997: 41). Consequently, the authenticity of a culture is rather an artificial, imagined concept, which may or may be not be supported by historic facts.

Interestingly enough, the role of gender issue is more than important as a result that the notions of such issues as “family” and “women” constitute core elements of every nation or ethnic culture, being seen as a guarantee of the nation’s homogeneity and uniqueness; and by demonstrating the nation’s uniqueness, these elements actually prove the very essence of the nation, as they set the cultural differences, which separate the nation from the others. To this extent, women are seen as custodians of the past of the nation through practising, preserving, transmitting and displaying its traditions; further, women are also seen as those providing the future of the nation through nurturing children (Zhurzhenko eds. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 28).

Consequently, “because of the central importance of social reproduction to culture, gender relations often come to be seen as constituting the “essence” of cultures as ways of life to be passed from generation to generation. The construction of “home” is of particular importance here, including relations between adults and between adults and children in the family, ways of cooking and eating, domestic labour, play and bedtime

stories, out of which a whole world view, ethical and aesthetic, can become naturalized and reproduced.” (Yuval-Davis 1997: 43) The similar, but more ancient practice of using women to symbolize the honour of the nation might be seen in the past (and also today in fundamentalist societies and communities), when premarital sexual relations or adultery was especially damnable for women, being explained by the stupendous importance of purity of breed that is believed to consist in the purity of women (Faquir 2001: 69).

2.3 *Berehynia*: from the ideal of native femininity to the national idol

Berehynia, once a pre-Christian feminine folklore spirit, revived in the late 1980s and early 1990s by patriotic-spirited Ukrainian male writers, is a highly interesting phenomenon, as it has become one of the centre aspects of political and public debates regarding the new national identity. Originally *Berehynia* was a mermaid spirit; etymology of the word comes from Ukrainian *берег*, “a bank”, and *берегти*, “to take care”, “to protect” (that might originate from the belief that when on the bank one is protected from the water, from drowning. *Berehynia* used to be well-forgotten during the Soviet time, often oppressive towards national cultural heritage. What is noteworthy is the fact that its artificial revival was so successful because, as Kis points out, “it fulfilled a real social demand for a new, nationally rooted model of femininity” (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 106).

Moreover, the phenomenon of *Berehynia* did not only mean recalling the old national myths, but rather creating them and adapting to the socio-political needs of the time. As result to widely promoting the myth of this powerful mermaid spirit, and exaggerating its importance in the Ukrainian culture as an ideal of femininity, the notion of *Berehynia* has provoked an illusion that Ukrainian women have been emancipated and have been enjoying equal rights with men for ages. The illusion, partly needed to represent Ukrainians as a highly progressive nation, has done a disservice to the development of the gender equality in the country, as it was widely introduced that all rights are already there, so there is a need to concentrate on the more urgent problems now, without wasting time and energy on emancipation (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell;

Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 108, 111; Zhurzhenko eds. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 29).

A closer remark on the concept of *Berehynia* should be done here. Thus, it indeed did not try to present Ukrainian women as mermaid spirits. What was taken from the initial concept of the pagan *Berehynia*, was her supernatural power and ability to protect. That was, however, “reconstructed” as a belief in supernatural power of women, which must be fully directed at protecting and taking care of her family in all possible aspects. Consequently, despite the advertised progressivity of the notion of *Berehynia*, it is built on the essentialist belief that motherhood is the only and most natural fate of women, their most important duty. Surprisingly, such a deeply essentialist view on gender roles is found even in the numerous intellectual periodical and academic publications. In these publications authors passionately declare that “the woman’s supreme mission is the physical and cultural reproduction of the nation through appropriate nurturing of children, a mission which is fulfilled by every genuine Ukrainian woman” (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 109). As a result, this artificial notion of *Berehynia* became a widely spread ideal of femininity, and was highly used in public and political debates on gender issue (Zhurzhenko eds. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 29).

In addition to that, the notion of *Berehynia* propagates such essentialist element as the need for contemporary Ukrainian women to go back to being housewives. The idea, again, idealises historical practices, suggesting that such a state of affairs is the best for women themselves, since it is seen to be the only way to provide them rights and respect they deserve. Sadly, this essentialist view fails to take into consideration the significant changes in economic, social and political affairs, which have happened during the last century. Peculiarly as it may look at first, this essentialist *Berehynia*-centred view on gender roles has found substantial support among Ukrainian women. However, there is a rational explanation behind: first, after the years of restrained femininity according to the Soviet ideology, together with the rising importance of private life, the role of a housewife appeared to be attractive; second, the harsh economic conditions in newly independent Ukraine, resulted in the fact that women were first to lose their jobs and often failed to find a worthy alternative for self-

actualization (Pavlychko ed. Buckley 1997: 225). This state of affairs has made having a partner necessary for surviving, and as a result, a “housewife-friendly ideology” was met with a generous response (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 109).

Another considerable aspect of the *Berehynia* notion as defining national Ukrainian femininity is its attempt to differ Ukrainian women both from the Russian ones and from those in the West. To this extent, the myth of the matriarchal character of Ukrainian culture, which propagates the illusion of Ukrainian women having been given all the rights ages ago naturally, by the very essence of the national culture, claims that Ukrainian women enjoy a better situation and are much freer than their counterparts in patriarchal Russia. At the same time, although Ukrainian women are as strong and independent as the Western women, unlike them, Ukrainian women are not that self-centred, they are altruistic and caring, strongly family-oriented (Zhurzhenko eds. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 29).

Furthermore, often they are seen as “wiser and more responsible than men and assume real [spiritual] leadership in their families” (*ibid.*). This ulterior leadership in the families (which often means more duties and still marginal respect) is used as a stronghold of the belief of the Ukrainian women’s emancipation. As a consequence, once again, it results in an excuse to neglect the necessity of protecting women’s rights. Such behaviour of the political elite is unlikely explained by an evil plot hatched in order to knowingly discriminate women. It is rather a logical consequence of the situation when the gender equality has not taken deep roots in the society, and political elite is nothing but a part of it that often reflects and speaks out the values of this society.

Thereby, when gender equality is still far from being mainstreamed, political elite has a potential to improve the situation through policies and social campaigns. This is a complicated and long process, but the first step of the process is to recognise that there is a problem like that and it needs to be changed; an initiative for that may come from the politicians or from the social activists (e.g. women’s organisations). This is something Ukrainian society has not achieved yet. What is also important is the fact that, as Zhurzhenko points out, such a dissociating of the Ukrainian women both from

the Russian ones and from the Western ones is an important contribution to the process of national identity formation. Differentiation from the Russian women marks significant process of cultural decolonisation and nation building; the unwillingness to be identical with the “egoistic” Western women demonstrates a struggle to find the unique own way of the Ukrainian national identity (*ibid.* 30-31).

2.3.1 Visualisation of *Berehynia*. In the end of the 1990s the notion of *Berehynia* becomes even stronger in political discourse. Taken as the ideal model of femininity it is regularly referred by the highest officials (e.g. presidents, prime ministers, members of parliaments, et), especially during the speeches of the International Women’s day, which we will scrutinise later. Thus, the concept of *Berehynia*, who gives all her energy to guard and take maternal care of both family and the state, becomes “one of the central elements of the new nation-state ideology” (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 112).

Later on, in the beginning of the 2000s and ever since, Yulia Tymoshenko has made her best in order to visualise the image of *Berehynia* for the purpose of her political career. Before that, being a successful business woman, and even at the beginning of her political career, Tymoshenko was natural brunette and dressed in expensive, fashionable business suits. Her famous blond around-the-head braid appeared in the end of 2001 and marked the transformation of her image from the “gas princess”, the name she received while running the United Energy Systems of Ukraine, to self-proclaimed *Berehynia* of the Ukrainian nation. The renewed image of Tymoshenko consisted of two main parts: the famous blond (blond is often believed to be typical hair colour for Slavs) braid, (traditional national hairstyle for married Ukrainian women), which, according to the Forbes Magazine “alludes to Ukrainian folklore, innocence, patriotism, royalty and sainthood” (Forbes 2005;); and the new dress-style, again, with folklore elements, in light colours and of more mature look.

2001 was also the year when *Berehynia* received another visualisation, apart from Tymoshenko. Thus, as a celebration of the 10 years of Ukrainian independence, the Monument of Independence was raised on the *Maidan Nezalezhnosti*, the Independence Square in the centre of Kiev. The monument features a woman dressed in Ukrainian national costume, holding a frond of a snowball tree (another element of Ukrainian

folklore) in her hands in patronizing-triumphing gesture above her head. The monument, often referred as “*Berehynia* statue”, has become a true symbol of the independent Ukraine (Kiebum 2012), with the most significant events in the state often happening on the square (including the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the EuroMaidan of 2013-14). By this monument, Ukrainian “national idol” *Berehynia* was given form and substance.

Summing up the concept of *Berehynia*, it should be noted that its success may be explained by its multifunctionality. It serves the nationalist needs very well in by both promoting “traditional” life style and creating national myth. Besides, such a visualisation of idealised images of a woman, often a mother, for the purpose of creating the national story is not unique. There is a notion of Mother Russia, Mother Ireland, Mother India in the respective countries, and “La Patrie”, a figure of a woman giving birth to a child was a symbol of the French Revolution (Yuval-Davis 1997: 45). “Women are constituted as political subjects in the new nation, not only through the practice of motherhood but also in and through the complicated process of visual identification with iconic representations of virtue and nationalism” (Landes 2001:18 quoted in Kis eds Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 118).

However, what is particular for Ukraine and its fixation on the *Berehynia* notion is also the fact that it corresponds to the national myth so well. Thus, if we keep in mind Brubaker’s idea that “heroic martyrdom” (which, as I have showed in the beginning of the work, is especially urgent in Ukraine), is one of the key elements of a nationalizing state’s identity. Moreover, this is an element that is used in order to build the national myth, which eventually will affect the identity of the nation, and the character of the policies. To this extent, the concept of *Berehynia* is a quintessence of this “heroic martyrdom” myth. Seriously, what else can be more heroic and martyr-like than a woman, selflessly dedicating all her time and energy to take care of her family, to protect it from the possible misfortunes a life can bring; and who transforms this ultimate maternal care to the whole country, “nurturing” the nation through “physical and cultural reproduction”?

Consequently, *Berehynia* fulfils not only the part of a national model of femininity, it is also an important part of the new national myth – taken from the archaic folklore

culture and adapted to the needs of a modern nation – affecting the process of formation of the Ukrainian nation. It affects the character of social policies, the position of women in the society and the gender equality in general, but that by any means does not affect only the lives of women. Social policies affect the lives of the whole family; and the lack of gender equality is nothing but the lack of tolerance, destructive for the society. To this extent, the significance of the concept of *Berehynia* in the case of construction of the new Ukrainian identity can be hardly overestimated.

2.4 Women's organisations

What is highly important is the fact that, considering the wide acceptance of this vision of “national femininity”, it had very important consequences both for gender equality failing to take deep roots in the society and for the formation of the national identity of the Ukrainian people as a whole. To this extent, in a situation when the notion of *Berehynia*, first, underlined the essentialist paradigm of gender roles; second, spread the myth of high level of emancipation of Ukrainian women; and third, made women responsible for the “physical and cultural reproduction of the nation”, there occurred a peculiar situation when even women's organisations advocated this traditional division of the gender duties. As a result, the struggle for equal rights was undermined from within (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 111).

Moreover, in the early 1990s, Ukrainian national women's organisations tended to sacrifice women's issues in the name of the nation building. As Kis quotes some of the women's organisations' constitutions, the Ukrainian women, being members of the organisations, have come together in order to “contribute to the revival of the Ukrainian nation and firmly establish it among the other free peoples in the world”, to “establish the democratic ideal and national awareness in the society, to preserve the territorial integrity of Ukraine /.../ to contribute to patriotic education of future generations”, to “struggle for the nation's physical and spiritual revival, to build an independent Ukraine as a national state”, and to “join in women's activities for the consolidation and

development of the Ukrainian nation-state” (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 110).

Consequently, the goals of the Ukrainian women’s organisations are notably different from the goals one may find in the EU women’s organisation’s programmes. As for instance in Sweden women’s organisations are focused on promoting such issues as gender equality at school and workplace, parental leave, equal opportunities of men and women (e.g. in politics), gender mainstreaming, prevention of violence against women and gender pay gap (Official Web Page of Sweden: “Gender equality in Sweden”. 2010). If we have a look at Poland once again, which, as it is noted in the beginning of the thesis, is a considerably closer country to Ukraine than Sweden, both historically and geopolitically, among the missions of the women’s organisations we will also find such an article as advocating the right for a legal abortion (Polish Federation for Women and Family Planning: Mission).

Thus, when the women’s organisations of some other countries take the trouble to protect women’s rights and promote gender equality, Ukrainian organisations of that kind set the goal to do something completely different. Not only there is no place for advocating women’s rights, but by agitating and persuading Ukrainian women to take maternal care of the whole nation, there is not many chances left for the gender equality to become a part of the society, as there is no one who would have stood up for it⁷. One of the main reasons for this state of affairs is the fact that women’s organisations in Ukraine emerged in the late 1980s on the crest of the wave of *Perestroika*, and at that time nation-oriented programmes were a logical consequence of the inspiring, often romantic nationalist sentiments, which have swept the society. However, when Ukraine has got its independence, as Pavlychko notes, “the patriotically inclined women’s organisations last their sense of mission”. Their greatest aspiration – independent Ukraine – has become real. There was a chance to transform their mission into promoting gender equality and advocating women’s rights, or at least speak up there are

⁷ That may look astonishing, but I could not find information of any “traditional” women’s organisation in Ukraine, an organisation that would claim promotion of gender equality as their main aim. There are some activists, how might say from time to time something in defence of women (like politician Iryna Gerashchenko, whom I will quote in the final chapter), but that is never their main agenda, and those are separate people, not women’s organisations.

some changes needed on this account. Nevertheless that never happened (Pavlychko ed. Buckley 1997: 229).

Interestingly, this crisis of relevant post-independence political ideas reflects very well Brubaker's note about the fact that once independence is achieved there is often a shortage of concrete national goals for the further development. I assume this is also the case with the women's organisations of Ukraine. At the same time, when Ukraine gained independence it was already when the notion of *Berehynia* was very strong in the society, and that notion dictated women to be selfless and nation-oriented. I would not underestimate the power of impact of this notion on Ukrainian women. The tremendous impact of the concept of *Berehynia* and its requirements to "genuine Ukrainian women" will be vividly demonstrated in the discourse analysis part.

2.5 Mass consumption and the vision of modern Western femininity in Ukraine

Despite the tremendous impact of the notion of *Berehynia* on the state of affair with the gender issues in Ukraine, it was not the only widely spread ideal of femininity. Thus, in the early 1990s, with the opening of the market, the culture of mass consumption and globalisation was introduced. Among many other new goods, the luxury products have appeared. What is probably more important than the appearance of the luxury goods (as very few could afford them) is the fact that together with them a whole new industry of promoting them and a corresponding life style have emerged. Those were in the first place women's magazines, worshipping glamorous life style full of expensive clothes, cosmetics, and strategic advice on how to get oneself a wealthy man. Kis names this model of femininity "Barbie", much to the similarity with the "beautiful expensive doll". As oppose to *Berehynia*, the term "Barbie" for titling this notion of femininity is not widely used in the Ukrainian public discourse (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 119). I would note that these women, believed to be a part of the new Western culture, do not really have their proper name in the society, but rather agreed characteristics, mostly adjectives describing physical appearance ("pretty", "chic", "idle", "fashionable", "sexually attractive").

Another aspect of the *Barbie* concept promotion is the new way of advertising – full of sexism. Thus the print and video adverts in independent Ukraine appear to use all the techniques of sexist advertising: misusing gender stereotypes on gender roles in household, professions, and gender behaviour “typical” or “appropriate” for men or women, objectification of (most often) women’s body, exploiting women’s sexuality, showing body to sell any kinds of products. In addition to showing women’s body to sell for instance lingerie, one may observe it everywhere, especially when it comes to the product meant for men, most typically alcohol and cars. (*ibid*: 118-125)

What is important is the fact that visual advertising is especially influencing in forming public’s opinion on what is normal. To this extent, as the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe points out, sexist advertising is one of the obstacles for the gender equality development. Furthermore, besides showing mostly women models in the adverts for child’s care product and mainly men models when it comes to creating an image of a successful career-oriented person, sexist advertising regularly uses plots, which show scornful and even humiliating ways of interaction between sexes (with the victim most often being a woman).

The disquieting thing here is that the impact of sexist advertising does not even end with “legitimising everyday sexism and discriminatory practices”, but through promoting such passive aggressive or clearly aggressive behaviour, making it look as normal and natural sexist advertising supports gender-based violence (Council of Europe. Parliamentary Assembly. Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. 26.05.2010. *Combating sexist stereotypes in the media*. Doc. 12267, p.2). Such a practice is particularly dangerous in a society where government neglects and denies discrimination against women and even women’s organisation are not focused on protecting women’s rights.

To this extent, Kis claims that even though the concepts of *Berehynia* and *Barbie* may look dissimilar and even mutually excluding, they share some very crucial characteristics in common. Both of the notions view women from a very essentialist and patriarchal point of view, concentrating on the so to say “natural abilities” of women directly concerned with the body: maternity for *Berehynia* and sexual attractiveness to

men for *Barbie*. Interestingly enough, these two models of femininity in Ukraine correspond quite well to the two dominating images of women in the nineteenth-century Russian literature, those images, as Konstantinova refers Plessix Gray, imply following aspects: on the one hand, the idealisation of the moral and ethic qualities of women, with a conclusion that women are spiritually superior to men, and on the other hand, negative image of women's sensuality and their intellectual ability (Plessix Gray 1989: 118 quoted in Konstantinova eds. Rai, Pilington and Phizacklea 1992: 204).

Peculiarly, even though there are some women, who will be satisfied with one or another of these models of femininity, there are a lot of other women, whose activities and goals go beyond the quite narrowly limited ones of *Berehynia* and *Barbie*. However, the women who successfully combine (or choose only some particular elements) education, career, family life, political participation and active civil position still fail to find a role model for them in Ukraine (*ibid.* 128-129). I assume these women, even though doubtlessly existing, badly lack recognition from the state. As well as the state neglects and denies the existence of discrimination against women, it also refuses to admit that "genuine Ukrainian women" apart from being ideal housewives may also be independent, active women. These women do not fit in the essentialist model of the national femininity. Interestingly enough, unlike other women, who are seen to contribute to the nation-building by giving birth to and taking care of children, contribution of socially and/ or politically active women is not recognised by the state. Moreover, as the discourse analysis will demonstrate, these women are bluntly condemned.

Kis points out that feminism only starts to find some response in Ukraine. I would even suggest that taking into consideration the wide acceptance of *Berehynia*-centred gender roles among women and the women's organisations' ignore of women's issues mentioned above, together with flat unwillingness of the women politicians – as few as there are – to be associated with someone, interested in drawing attention to women's issues as we will see below, there is a strong feminist phobia. Anyone openly announcing to be a feminist will meet an ardent condemnation. Such a state of affairs demonstrates very well how deeply antifeminist notions of *Berehynia* and *Barbie* are rooted into the society.

2.6 Addressing gender issues through family policies

Similarly to the model of femininity, family policies of the independent Ukraine present a highly complex phenomenon, consisting of a set of socio-political issues: often idealised, and even, as it may look from the first, mutually exclusive. Besides, due to the unpleasant economic conditions, the actual family policies frequently differed from the political ideals promoted in the political elite's rhetoric. However, I suggest that in the case of Ukraine family policies reflect very well the situation with gender issues during the period of nation building. Moreover, these developments define vividly the nation building itself.

2.6.1 Neofamilialism and national identity. To begin with, during the 22 years of Ukrainian independence there were different family policies, some more successful, some less. To this extent, quite typically for the post-Soviet states, there appeared certain nostalgia for the “traditional family” in the newly independent Ukraine. Unlike many other former republics, there was an idealised model of the Western family. (Zhurzhenko eds. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 28) Here it is important to once again turn to the *Berehynia* concept, which idealises traditional Ukrainian family model. Consequently, the main ideological basis of the policies is idealised Western family model and idealised model of traditional Ukrainian family.

If Kis points out that women are responsible for the national revival and reproduction of the nation in Ukraine, then Zhurzhenko claims it is family that is seen to be the stronghold of the national revival. No contradiction should be seen here. As Yuval-Davis quoted above figured out the significance of images of “women” and “family” for ethnic national identification, we may notice that in contemporary Ukraine throughout its independence the notion of “women” and “family” are always connected. Moreover, having a closer look at the Ukrainian family policies, it is clear that women's issues are regularly viewed as a (small and less important) part of family issues. However, what are the most characterising features of Ukrainian family policies, different as they have been throughout the 22 years of time scale of the research? Simply speaking there is an interesting combination of the old practices remained from the Soviet times, the idealised views on western practices, together with the idealised

views on pre-Soviet Ukrainian national traditions, and the difficult economic situation to spoil all the ideals.

2.6.2 Neofamilialism and economy. Neofamilialism discourse based on the essentialist *Berehynia* concept has substantially influenced family policies and general situation with gender equality in Ukraine. Thus, the promoted neofamilialism idea of women “should better go back home” and the taken over from the Soviet past policy of “protection of motherhood”, ended up with making women’s labour less competitive in the new market economy system, since there were no more socialist not yet democratic mechanisms to protect women’s rights. As for instance the approved by the Government in 1996 Programme on the Disengagement of Women from Industries Connected with Heavy Work and Harmful Conditions and on Limitation of Women’s Work during Nighttime did not decreased the number of women working under unfavourable conditions but rather increased it. At the same time, the Programme was often used by the enterprises as an excuse for dismissal of women (Zhurzhenko eds. Kuehnast and Nechemias 2004: 36).

Pavlychko too points out that “women were the first to lose jobs in the stress of the period of the transitions” and states bluntly that the “return home” rhetoric was used as an effort to hide and vindicate discrimination at workplace and high rates of unemployment among women. She also claims that “a high level of unemployment among women is characteristic of the situation in post-Soviet countries” (Pavlychko ed. Buckley 1997: 225). In spite of the strong unwillingness of the officials to recognise the problem of gender-based discrimination at workplace, some respective data was collected – sadly, that was done only as a result of the foreign pressure (e.g. the Human development report on Ukraine from the year 1995, which Pavlychko uses in her work).

Similarly to the Ukrainian women’s organisations forgetting to add struggle for women’s rights to their aims, Ukrainian female politicians – as few as there were – not only did not add women’s issue to their programmes, but refused to admit there was social and economic discrimination against women and a need to change it. Moreover, they tried to distance themselves from women’s issues, and rather show they are interested in “serious questions” (ibid.). Pavlychko wrote about the state of affairs in the year 1997, but Kis repeats the same in 2005 while talking about Tymoshenko.

Thus, Kis claims that according to Tymoshenko's life style, she could be considered a feminist⁸. Notwithstanding, Tymoshenko always objected to be associated with any kind of women's movement. (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlbäck; Hurd; Rastbäck 2005: 115). A situation when women social activists and women politicians try to do their best not only to contribute to neglect the very existence of gender inequality, but to be *not even associated* with women's problems at all is a very interesting one. I suggest it may be explained both by the extremely low social profile of women (often reflected in gender stereotypes and sexist rhetoric), and by the total denial of these problems in public and political debates. I will try to prove this point in the analysis of the political elite's speeches and interviews below.

⁸ Yulia Tymoshenko's feminism is a rather controversial topic. She is indeed an interesting role model of an independent and powerful woman with a very strong personality. Nevertheless, I would not agree her life style is a feministic one, but quite the opposite. She follows the rules of a patriarchal society, knows the "male rules" of the political scene and uses them very well for her own political career. That would have been a great risk for a politician to raise the topic of gender equality in modern Ukraine. Furthermore, she bluntly exploits her physical appearance and female sexuality – something that feminism eagerly condemns (she for instance was wearing a miniskirt and jackboots on the meeting with the ex-Head of the "Gazprom" Rem Vyakhirev). To this extent, Tymoshenko's unwillingness to stand up for women's rights is a logical consequence of her not being a feminist, on the one hand, and knowing the "male rules" of Ukrainian politics very well, on the other hand.

3. Methodology

The research will be carried out with the method of discourse analysis as a tool to empirically examine the relation of the process of nation-building and gender issue in the case of nationalising Ukraine. Speeches, interviews and the material of the press conferences of the political leaders of Ukraine will be analysed in order to find out their perception of Ukrainian national idea, gender roles, position of women in the society and concerns regarding promotion of gender equality, and how these components interact with each other. To this extent, for a better perception of the analysis, it will be divided into two sets: political elite's statements on Ukrainian idea and political elite's statements on gender roles. The set of political elite's statements on gender roles will be also divided into two subsets: political elite's messages while greeting women on the occasion of the International Women's Day; and finally political elite's generalised remarks, e.g. referring Yulia Tymoshenko's activities. The data will be collected from the main Ukrainian media resources and official governmental web pages. This will allow to access the data in the most original, unchanged state, almost always in the original language.

Consequently, the language and narrative styles of the speeches, interviews and statements will be examined in order to analyse, how such topics as national idea and gender roles are addressed in the Ukrainian society and what is the dependence between them. In order to provide a legitimate analysis, the speeches, interviews and statements of the most influencing and "lasting" political figures of independent Ukraine will be collected for the research. That includes three Presidents – Leonid Kuchma, Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovich – together with the most remarkable prime ministers, members of cabinets and speakers of parliament of the time of all the three presidents' being in office. That would allow to estimate if the perceptions of national idea and gender roles have changed during the time and if different cabinets have been addressing them differently.

3.1 Operationalisation

Empirical evaluation of the political speeches will be carried out with the help of critical discourse analysis. The reason to choose this particular technique is the fact that it suits very well the needs of political text study. Among other advantages of this technique of analysis for the case studied in the thesis I would like to point out the fact that it is a way to examine the way the actors, whose speeches are analysed, see “the world”. Discourse analysis takes into consideration their “worldview”, which they see as “natural”, based on their experience of interacting in the framework of the particular society (Johnstone 2008: 73). Nevertheless, since discourse analysis may mean different approaches, let us pay attention at what is common and what is specific for the approach, which will be used in the analysis below.

To begin with, according to Gee, discourse analysis “focuses on the thread of language (and related semiotic systems) used in the situation network. The situation network is constructed with the help of six “building tasks”, which are the following:

1. semiotic building, that uses cues and clues of the language in order to collect meanings of semiotic systems of knowledge, which are relevant in the given situation;
2. world building that uses cues and clues of the language to collect the meanings of the “reality” of the studied case;
3. activity building that is using cues and clues of the language to collect situated meanings on what activities are going on;
4. socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building, that uses cues and clues to collect situated meanings on what identities and relationships are relevant to the interaction, including their attitudes, values, ways of feelings, knowing, believing, acting and interacting;
5. political building that uses cues and clues to examine the character of such social goods as status and power;

6. connecting building that uses cues and clues to examine how “the past and future of an interaction [...] are connected to the present moment and to each other” (Gee 1999: 85-86).

The reliability of the research is provided through the use of a number of different sources (official governmental web pages or acknowledged media resources), all available for public use, guaranteeing transparency if the material being analysed. In addition to that, the political actors, whose speeches and statements are analysed, used to occupy the highest positions in Ukrainian politics, and to this extent their impact on the decision-making process and public opinion is very important. Moreover, in order to provide a better representation of the analysed problematic issues, the research embraces a wide time scale, taking into consideration the periods of all three Ukrainian Presidents being in office.

When using the method of discourse analysis, validity is indeed not guaranteed by stating that this empirical method is a way to reflect reality. According to Gee, validity is based on four core elements: convergence, agreement, coverage, and linguistic detail. Convergence is reached through trustworthiness of the data being analysed. Agreement means being able to convince linguists and other professionals of discourse analysis that the research analysis is valid. Coverage is achieved by being able to connect different elements of the data between each other and examine them together reaching a smooth analysis. Finally, linguistic detail is the ability to interpret communicative details effectively using social and linguistic theory and methods (Gee 1999: 95).

As regards to the one concrete approach of discourse analysis – critical discourse analysis – which I am going to use in the thesis, according to Jørgensen and Phillips, it “provides theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 60). This method may be characterised by five common features:

1. The character of social and cultural processes and structures is partly linguistic-discursive. This feature implies that discursive practices are positioned as an important form of social practice that affect the constitution of the social world, e.g. social identities and social relations.

2. Discourse is both constitutive and constituted. This feature is pointed out to highlight that the discourse under scrutiny not only constitutes social world, but is also constituted by other social practices. To this extent, critical discourse analysis does not only shaping social structures but reflects them.
3. Language use should be empirically analysed within its social context. Unlike Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and discursive psychology, critical discourse analysis requires concrete, linguistic textual analysis of language that is used in the social interaction.
4. Discourse functions ideologically. By this characteristic element it is claimed that in critical discourse analysis discursive practices contribute to the creation and reproduction of unique power relations between social groups.
5. Critical research. Thus, unlike objective social sciences, critical discourse analysis does not aim at being politically neutral, but rather at being a critical approach, "which is politically committed to social change (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 62-64)".

4. Critical Discourse Analysis

4.1 National idea and building of Ukrainian nation

Thus let us pay attention at the visions on the Ukrainian national idea the political elite was promoting in their speeches, interviews, governmental documents, etc. To begin with, ex-president Leonid Kuchma has once said that there is no national idea in Ukraine (Tymoshenko 2007). His position was well illustrated at the presentation of his book “Ukraine is not Russia” (ironically, the book was originally written in Russian), when then-president has stated:

“Russian nation was created long ago by its own history, and there is no danger that it will cease to be Russian. As for us [Ukrainians], there is a task on our agenda [...]: to create a Ukrainian. There is a danger not to come back to one’s Ukrainianness for millions of the Ukrainian citizens”.
(Kuchma 2003b)

This technique of opposing Ukraine to Russia while talking about the unique Ukrainian path, expressed in the title of the book – “Ukraine is not Russia” – is a very revealing both for the points of view expressed in the piece and for the general public opinions on Ukrainian national idea. Thereby, the Ukrainian national idea or “the Ukrainianness” is hardly ever couched in clear terms, but it is almost always opposed to “the Russianness”. To put this another way, there is an obvious difficulty not even to reach a wider public consent on whether this or that notion of national idea is “the right one” or at least accepted by some substantial part of the society, but even to pronounce any concrete concept of national idea.

In August 2004, celebrating Ukraine’s 13th Anniversary of Independence, Kuchma gave a very interesting speech, where he shares his understanding of the struggle of nation building Ukraine is going through; what makes this speech even more noteworthy is the fact that it was the 10th year for Kuchma as President – longer than any other Ukrainian president has served. It was also the same year, when in November the Orange Revolution has begun. Thus, Kuchma claims the first 13 years of independence were not easy, but very significant for the formation of the Ukrainian nation:

“First of all, it was necessary to transform the province of a collapsed “empire” to the status of a sovereign state. The Russians, Bulgarians, Romanians did not have this problem. [...] We did not have the level of national identity of Lithuania or Estonia – and [we have] survived famine⁹ that broke the backbone of the Ukrainian nation. [...] it was necessary to transform the fifty million fragment of so-called “Soviet people” to the level of a self-sufficient political nation. Russians, Estonians, Poles and East Germans had no such problem. Furthermore, there is hardly anywhere in Europe and even in the world a nation, which had to overcome the disastrous effects of 300 years of statelessness, which for centuries has been divided between the empires”. (Kuchma 2004)

Moreover, Kuchma notes that the very way Ukraine obtained independence did a serious disservice to the newly emerged state:

“The sad truth is that the emergence of a new state on the political map was not the result of a long struggle for independence of the political elite, in which a specific strategy and tactics of building of independent Ukraine could have been developed. Communist nomenklatura, which was the sole heir to power, was not prepared to such a function because the formation of sovereign Ukraine was for it as unexpected as it was for its Kremlin masters”. (ibid.)

The ex-President goes on paying attention at the newness of the Ukrainian state and nation, claiming there are corresponding difficulties, which need to be tolerated and overcome:

“In our patriotic circles we hear all the time about the deep traditions of the Ukrainian state, with the reference to the covered by legends times of the princes or hetmans. But even affecting national mythology cannot be attached to a particular everyday case. [...] Today's generation lacks awareness that we live in a country, which did not exist yesterday, and which needs to be improved – namely as a state. Such awareness, on the one hand, helps to understand the shortcomings of the current state authority, and on the other, to feel as a part of the state building”. (ibid.)

Finally, despite the fact that Kuchma is often represented as a “pro-Russian” politician, he states the Ukrainian national idea as follows:

“Europeanization has already become our national idea”. (ibid.)

In 2006, two years after Kuchma, then-president Viktor Yushchenko in his speech on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of Independence of Ukraine, repeated his

⁹ Kuchma is talking about the famine of the 1931-1932, highly controversial topic, which in 2006 Ukrainian Parliament pronounced as the genocide of the Ukrainian nation.

predecessor's concern – though in a considerably more optimistic way, as it was inherent in Yushchenko's speeches – regarding the still urgent process of formation of the Ukrainian nation:

“During fifteen years of independence we have learned to be a people, a state, and now we are collecting knowledge in order to become a nation”.
(Yushchenko 2006)

Yushchenko was also one of the most devoted promoters of the another attempt to find the Ukrainian path – besides opposing it to Russia – by linking it to Europe in particular and the West in general. Speaking about the progress reached at the time of his team being in office, Yushchenko names also:

“[...] definition and preservation of the course of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. We deliberately did the exact strategic European choice that most closely corresponds to the essence of national interests of Ukraine”. (ibid.)

A year later, in August 2007¹⁰, Yulia Tymoshenko drew attention to the necessity of finding new national idea and highlights the unstable nature of the existing state of affairs:

“Ukraine is a tabula rasa in the modern world. What has been before is destroyed and the new one was never built”. (Tymoshenko: 2007)

This is a very crucial claim – it corresponds fully to what we have studied before. This situation of the terminated Soviet legacy and the future path not chosen yet is one of the most characteristic features of the Ukrainian politics. What makes the picture even more peculiar is the fact that as the new way is not there yet, the old way is still often used. We will see that below when analysing the politicians' statements on gender roles.

Tymoshenko too, as many of her colleagues, highlights that Ukrainians need to become a unite nation:

“Belonging to unite country, to one nation (I say, in the civic sense of the word)”. (ibid.)

¹⁰ Tymoshenko became a Prime Minister for the second time three months after the publishing of the article, in December 2007; she did not hold an official post at the time of the article being published due to the dissolution of the Parliament, where she was a member from May 25 2006 till June 14 2007.

As many others Ukrainian politicians, Tymoshenko is sure that the emergence of the national idea will bring a brighter future:

“New national idea of the country will forever deprive our people of an inferiority complex, inferiority syndrome, dissociation, helplessness, and exceed the limit of ambitious national aspirations”. (ibid.)

What is noteworthy is the fact that though being clearly at a loss for finding concrete words for proposing the national idea, Tymoshenko’s statement quoted above on what should be overcome in the Ukrainian society gives a profound overview of what is happening in the society. The “inferiority complex, inferiority syndrome, dissociation, helplessness”, which Tymoshenko is talking about characterises very well the complicated process of nation building aggravated by the difficult economic situation. Consequently, even though no particular proposal was named – not talking of concrete agenda – Tymoshenko’s words contribute to a better understanding of the, paraphrasing ex-President Kuchma, state of affairs with the project of the construction of the Ukrainian nation.

Further on, still lacking concreteness while talking on national idea, Tymoshenko again uses rather general terms:

“This new Ukrainian national idea should be the construction of a better, optimal system of social organization that will give each person a sense of justice, harmony, security and openness of all desirable opportunities”. (ibid.)

The same year, then-president Yushchenko goes on highlighting the importance of maintaining the European orientation in politics and of achieving unity among people:

“[...] the national idea is the vision of the state’s national choice: it is the one official language; and avoiding double standards in politics, history, culture and language”. (Yushchenko 2007b)

Among the other Ukrainian politicians Yushchenko speaks the most about the national idea. To this extent, when reaching most closely to inventing any particular slogan for that he comes back to what was already said by Kuchma in 2004:

“A European state is the national idea”. (ibid.)

Thus, the technique of explaining the Ukrainianness by separating Ukraine from Russia and linking it to Europe pointed out above becomes Yushchenko's perception of the national idea *per se*. Besides, as Tymoshenko above, he highlights that reaching the unity among the nation is highly significant. In his "Message of the President to the Parliament of Ukraine on the situation with internal and external affairs of Ukraine" Yushchenko states:

"[...] the essence of the national idea is the revival of the Ukrainian nation as a single and vital organism, which embraces all of our people, all citizens of Ukraine regardless of the views, origin and faith". (Yushchenko 2008b)

Now we reach to analysing Yanukovych's speeches. This might seem a slightly more difficult task due to a rather peculiar choice of colloquial words, often including slang, and regular slips of the tongue¹¹. Besides, since Yanukovych was in office shorter than his predecessors quoted above – three years only – there is also less material.

Thus, at a meeting on socio-economic development of the Ivano-Frankivsk region Yanukovych has stated the Ukrainian national idea literally as follows:

"The national idea is to love your family, the state, the land, to work, and not to wag one's tongue". (Yanukovych 2010d)

A year later, the Advisor to the President, Head of the Department of humanities and social and political issues of the President's Administration, Ganna German states that Yanukovych pronounced the new national idea of Ukraine and it is European integration. German refers to Yanukovych's speech at PACE in June 2011. German claims that after two decades of searching, thanks to Yanukovych the national idea is now found. (German 2011)

Holding a speech on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of independence of Ukraine, Yanukovych sums up the first two decades of the Ukrainian state. He partly

¹¹ Yanukovych's speeches might be considered phenomenal in a certain way. He regularly mistakes pronunciation and meaning of the words, especially when it comes to the words of foreign origin. He, for instance, once called the citizens of Lviv city "the best genocide of the country", confusing "genocide" with "gene pool" (*henotsid* and *henofond* in Ukrainian) (Yanukovych 2010a). There is now even a term "yanukism" in contemporary Ukrainian language to indicate gross linguistic howlers of the politicians. As entertaining as it may seem, it is also very hard to choose adequate material to analyse in the thesis.

overlaps with Tymoshenko's concern quoted above the inferiority complex the Ukrainians suffer from. Unlike Tymoshenko, Yanukovich is more optimistic:

“During the years of independence, we have overcome complex formed for centuries – an inferiority complex. No less important today is to overcome common apathy in the society”. (Yanukovich 2011b)

Like many other politicians Yanukovich highlights the initial and inherent Europeanness of Ukrainian culture, and defines European integration as a decided aim of the further development of the states. It is also noteworthy that he is talking about spirituality, another often mentioned topic among the Ukrainian politicians while talking about the culture and the special Ukrainian path (I will pay more attention at that below when scrutinising political elite's opinions on gender roles):

“We must finally realize that the real foundation of our twentieth anniversary [comes from] a century of experience in search for and development of the statehood, spirituality and culture. [We] [a]lso have to remember that our history has always been inextricably linked with the formation of European civilization. [...] Today I say with confidence: in Ukraine there is a wide consensus on what country we are creating together. This is a modern, democratic, rural, high-tech advanced state, which is an integral part of European civilization. This goal unites all Ukrainians, regardless of their political priorities or faith”. (Yanukovich 2011)

To this extent, Yanukovich also repeats the opinion on diversity of the society (political and religious ones, while ignoring the linguistic and/ or ethnic issue), but is again more optimistic in his appraisal. Further on, Yanukovich had no mercy evaluating the consequences of the Orange Revolution, initiated by his political rivals:

“After the [O]range events of 2004 we actually survived 5 lost years of the state life. Ukrainian politics has been turned into an endless talk show. [...] Let me remind you also that the country experienced a forced experiment with a ridiculous reform of the political system and unjustified extraordinary parliamentary elections in 2007. As a logical consequence, shaken tattered country was not ready for the challenges of the global economic crisis, [and] was among the leaders of the economic downturn. [...] After the presidential election of 2010, we corrected the situation”. (Yanukovich 2011)

While mostly praising the work of his team in office, Yanukovich speaks up the critical problem of corruption and also mentions how corruption ends up in the

incompleteness of reforms, visible in so many aspects of political, economical and social aspects of the state:

“The unfinished reforms are the main factor of social distress and instability in the country. [...] corrupted system of power destroys any reform. I admit that in the current government the level of corruption remains critically high”. (Yanukovych 2011)

Breaking now chronological sequence that I have been following until now, I would like to end this part of the chapter turning back once again to one of Kuchma’s speeches. Thereby, on August 23 2001, celebrating the 10 years anniversary of the Ukrainian independence, while unveiling the Monument of Independence, President Kuchma has stated that the monument “symbolizes the *Berehynia* of the Ukrainian nation”, which is “the essence of our national idea” (Kis eds. Pushkaryova 2003). If in other speeches Kuchma and those who succeeded him either lack words for stating the national idea, or simply oppose it to Russia or link it to Europe, this particular statement is probably the one that actually states Ukraine’s own way. That brings us back to what we have learned above, when studying the mission women are believed to fulfil in the process of nation building through giving birth to children, bringing them up in the framework of the ethnic traditions, and thus preserving the nation both physically and culturally, setting cultural and ethnic limits separating it from other cultures and ethnics, thus proclaiming the integrity of the nation. Ukrainian *Berehynia*, a selfless woman-mother, wise and caring, concentrated on family, and performing this maternal role not only to her own children but to the nation, is a uniquely precise incarnation of this theory. And it appears to be the most widely accepted, the most deeply rooted Ukrainian national idea.

4.2 Gender and family issues

4.2.1 The International Women’s Day speeches. Thus, if above we read that Ukrainian politicians talk about the necessity of the nation to unite and to follow the European integration, when it comes to gender issues one may find that the attitude to this particular topic lacks contemporary European touch. Moreover, despite the unity talks, gender issues are still used to divide and label the citizens. Let us start this part of

analysis with a very peculiar sort of speeches: congratulations on the International Women's Day on the 8th of March¹². Let us again start in chronological order, and thus with Kuchma's statements. To begin with, in 1999, Kuchma congratulated Ukrainian women with the Women's Day in the following way:

“This is a day of male solidarity, the day of our repentance, deep respect and boundless gratitude to you – our dearest, the most beautiful, the wisest and the most gentle”. (Kuchma 1999).

The same year, then-Speaker of Parliament Oleksandr Tkachenko has addressed women on that day: “Woman-Mother, Woman-Wife, a Berehynia of our family” (Kis eds. Asztalos Morell; Carlback; Hurd; Rastback 2005: 112).

In 2003 Kuchma's presidential greeting stated:

“[...] The 8th of March – the wonderful holiday that symbolizes the incredible moment of awakening nature. And [...] I'm convinced [that] our greatest happiness, our greatest joy and our biggest concern – it is you [the women]. Woman-mother, woman-Berehynia, woman-friend – you are the ones, without whom our nation could not take its rightful place in the world, without whom we could not have become the nation and the people. We, men, love you. Giving you flowers and heartfelt words, we strive to make you feel happy and [let you] know how much we appreciate you. It is you, your powerful energy, power and responsibility, which vivify our lives with bright colours. And it is your care, your responsible position in life – as well as everyday homework – this is the key to our achievements, peace and stability, the spiritual rebirth of our country [...] Kowtow to you and sincere gratitude for the maternal wisdom, for your dedication and understanding, for your tenderness and sensitivity. Let your house be full of love and joy. May you always have spring in your hearts”. (Kuchma 2003a)

What is particularly interesting in this speech besides the general and annually repeated epithets on women's tenderness and beauty, is the admission of that women only inspire men (with their tenderness, care and fulfilment of everyday housework) to great achievements. Even though women are again positioned as those responsible for the “spiritual rebirth of the country”, the achievements are supposed to be done solely by men, while women are placed in the position of passive supporters.

¹² In Ukraine, as in many other post-Soviet countries, the 8th of March has nothing to do with the fight for women's rights and gender equality. On the contrary, this occasion is often used in order to emphasise the importance of traditional gender roles and strengthen gender stereotypes.

One should not, by any case, be mistaken that such understanding of women's role and participation in the society comes only from the men politicians. Yulia Tymoshenko, as we know from the previous chapters of the thesis, is one of the most striking promoters of these patriarchal views. Consequently, there is little surprise that in 2006 she greets women as follows:

“My dear women! Dear mothers, grandmothers and daughters! I congratulate you with the first spring holiday [and] it is fair that this is the Women's Day. Today it is still cold outside [...], but the spring will win anyway! Kindness, love and justice will win!” (Tymoshenko 2006)

Remarkably, while addressing women Tymoshenko uses several terms: “mothers, grandmothers and daughters”. However, all of them indicate women's position in the family. No word on women also being citizens, professionals, activists is said, like these roles do not exist for the women. The Ukrainian politicians, including Tymoshenko, repeatedly lock women in the frames of the family.

The same year, political party “Our Ukraine”¹³ has published another essentialist compliment:

“Dear women! “Our Ukraine” congratulates you on the International Women's Day [and] wishes you passionate love, attention and warmth by your darlings, harmony and prosperity in your homes, [and fulfilment] of your secret desires. [We are] particularly pleased to welcome you on the cusp of spring, when nature awakens from hibernation. Your presence, care and attention always inspire men to live and work! We thank you for being with us, for being the Berehynias of our homes, for what you share joy, comfort, love, stay faithful, and take care about the children”. (“Our Ukraine” 2006)

Here again we read about women being the source of inspiration for their work. All the wishes are about prosperous home and successful love life; all the cherished qualities of women are those of an ideal housewife, passive in all the other aspects of life and obedient to her man.

A year later, in 2007, then-President Yushchenko presents a different point of view, paying credits at the initial purpose of the International Women's Day and even driving attention to the difficult situation with gender equality in the country:

¹³ “Our Ukraine” (“*Nasha Ukrayina*”) is a political party, where Viktor Yushchenko used to be an honourable leader during the years of 2005-2013.

“This day is celebrated all over the world. The international community [and] free media attract public attention to the problem of inequality between women and men. March 8 is the official holiday of the United Nations, and the European Union declared 2007 the Year of Equal Opportunities”. (Yushchenko 2007a)

Despite this breakthrough start, Yushchenko, however, goes on with the traditional compliments, consolidating yet once again the *Berehynia*’s role of the Ukrainian women, and the passive part of being a source of men’s inspiration:

“The most valuable things in our lives are connected with women. [...] [They are] a source of inspiration and optimism, tenderness and love, the Berehynias of each of our homes and the whole Ukrainian land”. (ibid.)

In 2008 Yushchenko goes back to mentioning only family positions among women’s roles, and to highlighting that men are the ones responsible for actions – which they, of course, dedicate to women, who, in-turn, share love and caress.

“In my heart there are the tenderest feelings for you. Millions of Ukrainian men are charmed by you, devoted to you and grateful to you for your love. [...] All that we do – we do for you. This Day and Mother’s Day in May, and probably our every best day, are dedicate to you. [We] love you, respect you and thank you – our mothers, our wives, girlfriends and loved ones, our daughters – all the important women in our lives”. (Yushchenko 2008a)

Another very significant and traditionally included aspect of the political elite’s greetings on the International Women’s Day is mentioning that this day symbolises the beginning of spring, which is the revival of the nature, and comparing that to the role of Ukrainian women in the process of nation building through providing cultural and physical revival of the nation. Moreover, comparing women to spring, such epithets as “beautiful” and “tender” are repeatedly used. Tender and beautiful women are thus supposed to guard the homes and the whole country, take care of their children and husbands, do the housework and not even think about standing up for their rights and equality.

The following year the *Berehynia* attributes of femininity are proclaimed anew by then-President Yushchenko:

“Dear Ukrainian women, you are amazing. [...] Life is reviving. Life is beautiful. And you are our life. I heartily congratulate you on the holiday that sets the beginning of the spring . [...] We thank you for the love, for the feeling, which protect all of us – your men. You are wonderful and definitely wiser. You kindly

know that nobody will never love you more and selflessly than we do. [I] wish you well and any desired success – that kind of success that you deserve. Spring is coming. Life is reviving. Life smiles. Both today, and on the future Mother’s Day in May, and every day – easy and pleasant to tell you that we love you and believe in your reciprocity”. (Tymoshenko and Yushchenko 2009)

Then-Prime Minister Tymoshenko adds also some remarkable nuances to the greetings:

“Ukrainian women are the most beautiful and the strongest in the world, and therefore they will cope with honour and dignity with all the difficulties in life. Today in the country, to be honest, life is not better. I know all that. That is why this holiday is so important for us today – each smile, every kind and warm look, every word spoken from the bottom of the heart, every act done with love. The Eighth of March is the day when our dear men cook us their lovely breakfasts, give flowers and gifts. And this is the attention we really need. It inspires us, gives new powers that are so necessary, because today the big responsibility for warmth and comfort in the house is on us. Congratulations, dear ones [...]. [I wish you] spring, hope, and the best expectations! Let all your dreams come true! Believe me, everything will be fine!” (Tymoshenko and Yushchenko 2009)

Interestingly, Tymoshenko mentions the unique strength of the Ukrainian women (an aspect very characteristic for the *Berehynia* notion) that helps them to bear everything on the one hand, and on the other hand she wishes women hope, expectations and promises them that everything will be well. One would wonder why those who have the unique strength would wait for somebody else to put “everything” to rights. Apparently that unique strength is supposed to be directed at keeping the house clean and a man content, using that unique strength in order to improve woman’s own life is not forseen. Furthermore, Tymoshenko wishes women the fulfilment of their dreams, as her colleagues above too wish the fulfilment of women’s secret desires. Nobody talks about wishing strength to achieve desired goals. What is noteworthy is that in all the speeches, the only strategy meant in order to fulfil the dreams and desires is to wait until it is fulfilled by others: politicians, husbands, anyone else, but not a woman herself. That again highlights the passive character of the role meant for women.

When Yanukovich holds the President’s post, nothing really changes in his greetings to women in March 2010:

“We love you. We are fascinated by you, dear women. We respect you for your patience, wisdom, faithfulness; for what in your heart is love. We all

are in debt to you, dear woman. The state owns you. But we will fix this situation. I wish you wisdom, health, joy, happiness and realization of all your dreams". (Yanukovych 2010c)

In 2011 Yanukovych locks women to the private domain of the family anew:

"I wish you a sunny spring; I wish you a clear sky; kindness, happiness, love and tender, successful days. Let all turn out well. Let your smile bring joy to your loved ones, friends, colleagues. Let your children be healthy, and your house prosperous. Let our dear Ukraine exist for you. And let you [exist] – for Ukraine". (Yanukovych 2011)

In 2012 women's tenderness and faithfulness are again emphasised, though this time their civil and economic contribution is also mentioned:

"You are the embodiment of love, faithfulness, tenderness, maternal warmth, and your prudence and wisdom is the key to peace and harmony in the society. I express my sincere respect and gratitude to every Ukrainian woman for the daily care of the family, an active [civil] position, [and] contribute to the socio-economic development of our country". (Yanukovych 2012)

A year later, again, family is the only women's domain Yanukovych mentions. Furthermore, Yanukovych implies women's passivity and incapability to manage their lives as he wishes them to have a strong and capable man next to them in order to support them and apparently make their lives better:

"I wish you peace, rest; health and happiness to you and your families. [Let there] always be a reliable shoulder next to you that will serve as a true support in life. Please accept my deep respect and gratitude". (Yanukovych and Azarov 2013)

Then-Prime Minister Mykola Azarov goes on:

"March 8 is another great opportunity to thank you for the life you give, for the beauty and endless wisdom. Your contribution to the establishment of our state deserves the highest appreciation". (Yanukovych and Azarov 2013)

This quote of Azarov is a very remarkable one in order to sum up the political elite's messages while greeting women on the occasion of the International Women's Day. Thus, Presidents and Prime-Ministers emphasise women's physical appearances ("beautiful", "charming", "amazing"), maternal qualities ("tender", "caring", "embodiment of love"), the role of a housewife ("taking care of the children" doing

“everyday housework”), fulfilling *Berehynia*’s part (using the unique and extraordinary strength to guard homes and the whole country, being faithful and wiser than men), and the passive way of women’s roles, with their wishes being fulfilled by others, and a need of a “reliable shoulder” next to them in order to go through life.

Moreover, as the last quotation of Azarov indicates, the state acknowledges the contribution of women to the state building, but this accepted contribution is solely the ability to give birth to children (“the life you give”), and to inspire men to implement the great achievements. The only scope of activity that the Ukrainian politicians mean for women is family – thereby we come back to the “physical and cultural reproduction of the nation” being promoted and accepted as women’s highest mission. All the names, with which women are addressed in these statements, define women’s position in the family: “mothers”, “wives”, “daughters”, “sisters”, and finally “*Berehynias*” – the special title for women, which extends her maternal duties from her family only to the whole Ukrainian nation. Women are not supposed to act beyond the framework of the family duties; they only inspire men for the greater performances and wait until men make everything fine.

4.2.2 Gender roles and the position of women in the society. In the final part of this chapter, let us now throw light on how gender roles, e.g. the significance of women’s contribution to politics and nation building are placed when the political elite is not offering compliments on a holiday once a year, but how these aspects are presented on the ferial days. It will consist of a number of different related statements, but a special place will be given to politicians’ statements regarding Yulia Tymoshenko, as she is the most publicly visible, and is the most powerful woman of Ukraine¹⁴. Furthermore, I will only pay attention at those statements about Tymoshenko, in which the speakers vouch their positions by mentioning Tymoshenko’s gender.

¹⁴ Forbes magazine has ranked Tymoshenko as the number “three” among the 100 most powerful women in the world in 2005. (Forbes 2005) Also, Tymoshenko has been placed number one among the most powerful women of Ukraine in the chart, organised by Ukrainian Focus magazine from 2006-2013 – all the years, when the magazine has made the surveys. The editors suggest the most powerful Ukrainian men to choose 100 among 116 publicly known Ukrainian women (the spheres of politics, business, science sport, show business, media are represented) and rank their positions from 1 to 100. (Focus magazine 2013)

Thus, when after the first round of the 2010 presidential elections Yanukovych and Tymoshenko were two most successful candidates, and the two had to compete in the second round, Tymoshenko offered Yanukovych to have Television debates before the final voting. If Yanukovych had agreed, he would have let Tymoshenko, a charismatic speaker, to shine next to him, and would have looked even more linguistically clumsy than usually in comparison with her. Yanukovych answer was as follow:

“All that she [Tymoshenko] had to say these days after the first round – everyone knows that she is in despair. She sees that [she] has already lost the elections, [and that is why she] invites me to join her to compete with her in mud, in lies. They say to me it is in vain to argue with a woman – it is not right, I do not agree. I think that, first of all, she is the Prime Minister and [thus she] should be responsible for every word [she says]. But if she is a woman – she must go to the kitchen and show her whims there”.
(Yanukovych 2010a)

This was said just a month before his speech as the President on the occasion of the International Women’s Day, when Yanukovych certified women of the respect he, and other Ukrainian men, are full of towards the ladies, for their “patience, wisdom, faithfulness”. Apparently, the respect is only valid as long as women do not leave the kitchen. Moreover, the three above mentioned reasons to respect women are also very specific, and not only there is no qualities of a good speaker among them, but not even gentlest hint on intellectual abilities being also a reason to respect women. Consequently, there is little surprise in these bluntly rude and chauvinistic remarks. As a matter of fact, Yanukovych is far from being the only one to make no bones of expressing his anger and outrage by the very fact that Tymoshenko, so to say, has left the kitchen.

In February 2010, after the second tour of the elections was held (but before the official results were declared¹⁵), Kuchma gave an interview, where he express his delight of the fact that “his team” is coming back to the office. When asked about his relations with Yushchenko and Tymoshenko, he said that he “has no personal problems” with Yushchenko. However, as regards to Tymoshenko he stated:

¹⁵ The second round of the presidential elections was held on February 7 2010. The official results were declared on February 14, with Yanukovych winning over Tymoshenko with the advantage of 3%. The quoted Kuchma’s interview was given on February 8.

“Oh, if only this woman behaved like a woman, not as Vesuvius! When she speaks, her mouth always looks like crater”. (Kuchma 2010)

Three aspects are quite indicative in this message: firstly, Kuchma has no claims to Yushchenko, who has been the leader of the campaign that has put Kuchma out of the office ahead of schedule, but to Tymoshenko, who has not even been the Prime Minister for the whole period of Yushchenko being the President. Secondly, Kuchma, as Yanukovych earlier did, tries to discredit Tymoshenko’s way of giving speeches – something, in what she is especially strong and talented. Thirdly, the biggest blame Kuchma imputes to Tymoshenko is that she is not behaving “like a woman”. Behaving like a woman, as we know from the Kuchma’s and other representatives of the Ukrainian political elite statements analysed above, would mean being “wise”, “faithful”, “caring” and apparently “quiet”, since Tymoshenko’s oratorical gifts clearly irritate her male colleagues.

Moreover, Iryna Gerashchenko¹⁶ too suggests that through sharing their opinions on Tymoshenko, male politicians show their real attitude to women. Thus, Gerashchenko points out that when in 2010 Dmytro Tabachnik, then-Minister of Education, has stated during a press conference that Tymoshenko has come to politics with the help of her intimate relations with the powerful men of the previous governments and business (“sprang from the Lazarenko’s¹⁷ bed or Vyakhirev’s rumpus room” (Tabachnik 2010)), Tabachnik has said out loud the general opinion of the Ukrainian male politicians about their women colleagues. Consequently, as Gerashchenko claims, in Ukraine it is thought, as Volodymyr Lytvyn (Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament in 2002-2006 and 2008-2012) has once expressed his opinion, a woman is publically active only if she has problems in personal life and “she has nothing else to do”. In case her personal life is fine and she is still publically active, it is explained by the fact that her man has settled a good position for her (Gerashchenko: 2010).

This is a rather characterising attitude. Politics and any kind of civil activism is seen to be so much not a business of women that they are believed to enter this field

¹⁶ Iryna Gerashchenko is a member of UDAR, Vitaliy Klychko’s political party.

¹⁷ Pavlo Lazarenko used to be an influential businessman and politician in the 1990s, who also served as a Prime Minister of Ukraine in 1996-1997.

only if all the other options, which are seen as the better ones for women, are closed for them. As the option of being publically active is supposed to be available only if a woman's personal life is unexciting, it is easy to suggest that those better options are apparently the roles of a wife and a mother, with the role of a housewife being a pinnacle of the desires. The belief that a woman with a happy personal life is publically active thanks to her man "appointing" her to an attractive position illustrates very well the notion of women being unable to make themselves a successful career independently, and needing to have a powerful man as an only opportunity to get a promotion.

Such a vision of politics being simply inherently not a suitable place for women is stated bluntly by the ex-Prime Minister Mykola Azarov. While answering the criticism that in his first government, formed in February 2010, among the 29 newly appointed ministers there were no women at all, Azarov forms his position in the following way:

"Some say that our government is [too] large, others [say] that there are no women in the government, no one to look at during a meeting of the Cabinet. [Only] the most boring [male] faces. With all the respect to women – it is not women's business to carry out the reforms". (Azarov 2010)

According to Azarov, the new government will consist of the people, who "can work 16 hours a day, seven days a week; who can take responsibility and are not afraid to say "no" to the higher-ups". In the scope of the thesis this is indeed a significant statement. Thereby the Prime Minister gives the characteristics needed in order to be a member of the government: an ability to work hard, being able to take responsibility, having the nerve to disagree with one's boss. It also indicated clearly that women do not suit to do this job, apparently due to the fact that they lack these important qualities and abilities. However, Azarov mentions above that since there are no women in the government, there is "no one to look at". Consequently, according to Azarov, this is the only task a woman qualifies for in the government: to be looked at.

Further on, when Tymoshenko was accused of murder of Yevgen Shcherban¹⁸, Kuchma has shared an interesting opinion regarding the situation:

¹⁸ Yevhen Shcherban was a Ukrainian politician and oligarch. He was killed in 1996, and the murder has provoked a wide public resonance. In 2011, while already being in prison for the gas case-2009,

“We may talk about anything, but we have no grounds to open a criminal case against Tymoshenko. [...] I just feel pity for her, first of all, as a woman – she is charming, beautiful. I think the lust for power has led her to the situation, in which she has found herself today. Today she is accused of all sins, including the murder of Shcherban”. (Kuchma 2013)

That too indicates a very remarkable way of thinking. To this extent, a politician is accused of murder. According to what Kuchma knows, this accusation is fake. However that may be, Kuchma is not concerned with the judiciary system failing to be independent from politics, or by the fact that the most significant political rival of the acting President has gone to jail due to rather questionable charges. Kuchma is concerned that a charming and beautiful lady is in jail. The reason of her being in jail is not the corruptive judiciary system but rather her own “lust for power”. Consequently, summing up the Ukrainian men politicians’ above quoted statements on gender roles and women’s position in the society, we may conclude that following their way of thinking, has Tymoshenko been behaving “like a woman”, without messing into politics, which is “not women’s business”, she would have not been in jail. Most likely she would have been perfectly safe in the kitchen.

However, moving further from the particular case of Tymoshenko, there is another important issue that deserves to be mentioned. Thus, in 2012 the Ministry of Health Care of Ukraine has published some data quoted by many Ukrainian newspapers and channels with a catchy title: “Every Ukrainian woman must give birth to four children in order to save the nation” (TSN.ua). Everything in this statement is noteworthy: the fact that women are the ones who are addressed, not “every Ukrainian family” or “every household”; the fact that women “must” do it, not “should” or “if they did then...”; finally, the fact that this is needed “in order to save the nation”, not in order to “improve demographic situation” or, for instance, “to avoid an economic crisis in the future”. What is interesting is the fact that other demographers note that in the case of Ukraine it is not that much low fertility that negatively affects the demographic rates and generally damages development of the country, but rather high mortality (which is especially an issue among men), marginal indicators of health and low life expectancy (Zhurzenko eds. Hankivsky and Salnykova 2013).

Tymoshenko was accused of being connected with the organisation of Shcherban’s murder. The accusation has not found any legal evidence and was ultimately dropped.

Let me add one last quote to this chapter, the quote of ex-President Yushchenko from his interview of 2011 on occasion of his wife's, Katherine, birthday. Thus, Yushchenko formulates Katherine's greatest talent:

"I have not seen mothers like her. It is her great talent in the family to do the most important thing – dealing with children. I lack this capacity."
(Yushchenko 2011)

When asked what are the things, which he does not like in her, Yushchenko said he cannot stand the noise she is making while mixing the tea and turning the newspapers' pages. Katherine remarks that she thought among the things her husband does not like in her he would name the fact that she, born in the USA, was more feministic than the Ukrainian-born women. Yushchenko gives a following answer:

"That is true, but things like that [Katherine's feminism] pass. To a certain degree, why not, let the woman to amuse herself. Let her think so. But in fact, the greatest deeds are directed by men" (ibid.).

Yushchenko too, though using different words, expresses the opinion that civil or political activism (in this case particularly feminism) cannot be a mission, a real job or even a serious concern of a woman, but rather a way to "amuse herself" for a while, but eventually she will get bored with it and will come back to fulfilling her true mission, realising her "greatest talent" – being a mother.

Earlier in the chapter I have paid attention at the way Ukrainian politicians talk about gender roles in the festive atmosphere of the International Women's Day, giving the speeches written by professional speechwriters in advance. After that I have also analysed how they regard the same subject in a less prepared, and sometimes not so nice atmosphere of press conferences and interviews. One may find a striking difference between the well-prepared phrases of the greetings and the words said on the press conferences, often full of rage and irritation. However, I see no contradiction here. In both cases the notion of understanding gender roles is often sexist and even chauvinistic. Therefore, there might be a difference in the terms and the level of courtesy, but there is no difference in the message. And the message says that women should operate in the framework of their homes, taking care of their family members. When a woman leaves the private domain she clearly irritates the men.

Here I would like to make a remark that I have by no means chosen only the statements, which would show Ukrainian men politicians' way of thinking in this particular way. The fact is that it would be a real challenge to find an evidence of them saying the opposite things, which might be evaluated as supporting gender equality. On the other hand, I would disagree that the reason the statements I analyse were said the way they were is these particular people's political conspiracy against all Ukrainian women in general and Yulia Tymoshenko in particular. As it was briefly discussed earlier, it is probably not so much them, but the general opinion accepted in the society by both men and women – appreciated or not, but accepted. When politicians, who are trying to do their best in order to oppose themselves to the other and show that they are not like the previous ones, politicians of different parties, three different presidents and several prime ministers keep saying the same things, they must be saying something that is considered to be right by the public.

Moreover, I suggest that this particular state of affairs with gender equality is a direct consequence of the earlier studied *Berehynia* concept that was accepted as a national idea of Ukraine. Thus who is *Berehynia* if not a woman-mother, loving, caring, faithful and protecting? Those are indeed distinguished qualities, but in the state of affairs, when those are the most important qualities of the national model of femininity, it locks women in the private domain. The acceptance of the notion of “Barbie” makes an attempt to leave this domain to look as a “whim”, most likely organised with the permission and help of a wealthy man, and as a consequence something that cannot be taken serious. The rooted notion of neofamilialism makes a woman, who wishes to fulfil her potential in a different filed than family, look like there is something wrong with her.

Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to find out the interdependence of gender issue and the process of nation-building in contemporary Ukraine. The specific character of the process of nation-building in a newly independent country was studied guided by Brubaker's work on nationalizing state. The state of affairs of the gender issue in Ukraine, e.g. gender equality and gender roles, was examined using the relevant international surveys, reports and statistics, together with evaluating the attempt of the government to contribute to the development of the issue through adopting respective policies. The role of gender issue in the process of nation-building in the case of Ukraine was studied with the help of contemporary Ukrainian scholars. The appropriateness of the theoretical base of the thesis to the particular case of contemporary Ukraine was tested by the use of critical discourse analysis, when the speeches, interviews, governmental and presidential statements of the core Ukrainian politicians of the period of independence were examined, focusing on an actor-oriented top-down approach. The data were empirically evaluated with the help of the critical discourse analysis method.

The analysis of the above mentioned political texts has showed that despite the 23 years of independence, the topic of nation-building is still highly relevant in Ukraine. That is reflected also in the fact that there is a lack of certainty even among the political elite regarding what could become the unique Ukrainian national idea. The most accepted and the most widely used notion of the possible national idea is of *Berehynia*, the notion of unique Ukrainian model of femininity. According to this notion, every genuine Ukrainian woman must devote all her energy to taking care of her family and "guarding" her home. Moreover this attitude should be broadened from one's family to the whole Ukrainian nation, making the task of all Ukrainian women to revive the Ukrainian nation through cultural and physical reproduction, and by unlimited, selfless maternal care. This deeply essentialist approach affects the situation with the gender issue in Ukraine by locking women in the private domain of the family, and making it not almost impossible then highly unwelcome and condemned by the society to raise the issue of underdeveloped gender quality.

There are two main narratives of perception of women's role in the Ukrainian society: the first one is the home-oriented *Berehynia* (woman as mother) and the second one compliments the attractiveness of women's physical appearances to men on the one hand, but condemns demonstration of women's socio-political activeness and intellectual activities (woman as sex object). Both notions are essentialist at their character and correspond to the essentialist approach to the concept of nation adopted in Ukraine. To this extent, the essentialist character of these two elements – concept of nation and concept of gender roles, with the latter being proclaimed as the only agreed national idea – interact with each other, since while addressing the issue of the nation-building, corresponding to the essentialist perception, the issue of women and family are inevitably linked. As a consequence, the essentialist character of both of the perception of nation-building and gender issue is carefully guarded and preserved, making the essentialist approach dominant in the society. What is probably even more significant is the fact that these two concepts guarantee each other's relevance: to give in essentialism of the concept of the nation would mean to abolish the notion of *Berehynia*, which has already become a sacred national idol, the precise national idea that the Ukrainians have been looking for so long.

Interestingly enough, the prevailing of the essentialist approach is also reflected in the way the European integration is addressed. Thus, the politicians view Ukraine as an inherent and inseparable part of the European civilisation, advancing the arguments by bringing to memory such moments as for instance Anne of Kiev (Anna Yaroslavna) becoming a queen of France in the 11th century (Kuchma 2004). Those are the moments of a very distant history, and in order to overcome the legacy of the recent historic events and “get back to Europe”, the essentialist approach may do a disservice by taking for granted something that is not even achieved, because of the belief that the desirable thing inherently belongs to one by its own nature. An analysis of the impact of the essentialist approach on the implementation of the reforms in Ukraine would deserve, though, a separate study.

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Sooküsimused ja rahvuse loomise protsess: Ukraina juhtum

Galina Jevgrafova

Resüme

Selle töö eesmärk on uurida, kuidas sooküsimused ja rahvuse loomise protsess mõjutavad teineteist iseseisvas Ukrainas. Üleminekuperiood äsja iseseisvaks saanud Ukrainas tõi endaga kaasa palju muudatusi ühiskondlikes protsessides, sealhulgas arusaamises sooküsimustest: muutus visioon naiste rollist ühiskonnas, mis tänu rahvuslikule retoorikale muutus tunduvalt traditsionaalsemaks. Samuti hakati pidama eriti tähtsaks ning just naiste rolliks panust rahvuse loomisse laste sünnitamise, kasvatamise ja pere eest hoolitsemise kaudu. Lisaks näitan oma töös, et mitte ainult rahvuse loomise protsess ei mõjutanud sooküsimuste arengut Ukrainas – sealhulgas takistas ka soolise võrdsuse põhimõtte juurdumist – vaid ka essentsiaalses paradigmas toimivad sooküsimused mõjutasid oluliselt rahvuse loomise protsessi.

Töö koosneb neljast osast. Esimeses osas, lähtudes Brubakeri kontseptsioonist „natsionaliseeruvatest“ riikidest („*nationalizing states*“), vaatlen rahvuse loomise protsessi eripärasusi Ukrainas ja leian, et selles küsimuses on postkommunistlikus Ukrainas olulisi sarnasusi sõdadevahelise Poolaga. Teises osas uurin sooküsimuste olukorda Ukrainas. Sellest selgub, et Ukraina rahvuslik müüt kangelaslikust eneseohverdamisest on leidnud endale kuju arusaamises „tõelistest Ukraina naistest“, kellest oodatakse, et nad pühendaksid kogu oma energia emalikule hoolitsusele oma perede ja Ukraina riigi eest. Uurin ka Ukraina naisorganisatsioonide ja perepoliitika rolli vastava visiooni kujundamises.

Kolmandas osas keskendun uurimuse metodoloogiale selgitamisele. Neljandas osas, kasutades kriitilise diskursuse analüüsi meetodit (*critical discourse analysis*) ja lähtudes Ukraina mõjukamate poliitikute kõnedest, intervjuudest ja avaldustest, uurin, kuidas nad peegeldavad ja kujundavad ühiskonna arvamust rahvuse loomisest, rahvusideest, soorollidest ja naiste positsioonist ühiskonnas. Selleks vaatlen Ukraina kolme presidendi ja nende meeskondade (peaministrid, ministrid, parlamendi juhid jne) poliitilisi tekste. Analüüs käsitleb eespool mainitud isikute poliitilisi tekste ajavahemikus 1999–2013. Analüüsi algpunkt on valitud materjali kättesaadavuse tõttu, analüüsi lõpp-punkt on valitud seoses poliitilise olukorra muutmisega Ukrainas, mille analüüs nõuaks hetkel olematuid materjale. Analüüsi tulemusena selgub, et Ukraina

poliitikud rõhutavad järgmisi naiste positiivseid omadusi: ilu, õrnus, armastusväärus, hoolivus, mõõdukus, truudus. Naistele on jäetud passiivne roll inspireerida mehi suurteks saavutusteks. Samuti valitseb poliitilise eliidi seas arusaam sellest, et naise kõige loomulikum ja sisuliselt ainus õige tegevusala on perekond. Just „perekondlikud“ naised on need, kes panustavad rahva loomisse. Muid naiste tegevusalasid Ukraina poliitilise eliidi visioonis ei ole. Väljaspool perekonda tegutsev, sotsiaalselt ja/ või poliitiliselt aktiivne naine on Ukraina poliitikutele valdavalt vastumeelne, sest ta ei käitu „nagu naine“.

Kokkuvõtteks võib öelda, et Ukraina tugevaim rahvusidee on rahvusmüüdist pärinev visioon naiskangelasest *Berehõnja*, mis oma sügava essentsiaalsusega määrab rahva loomise protsessi ja „lukustab“ naised perekonna sfääri. Samal ajal ei luba *Berehõnja* kontseptsiooni pühadus tänapäeva Ukraina ühiskonnas rahvuse loomise protsessi eemaldumist essentsiaalsusest.