

CHALLENGES TO CROATIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY WITHIN THE EU: THE POLISH PERSPECTIVE

Ryszard Ławniczak

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ABSTRACT *The aim of this paper is to share the experience of a post-socialist country and a member of the EU since 1 May 2004 and the problem of preserving its own national identity, while also trying to promote it. The author first examines the definition of the concept and the relevance of the Nation's Brand Identity Model with respect to Croatia. Next, he addresses the issue of how to preserve national identity facing "the winds" of unequal competition from more developed EU member countries as well as other global players – mainly United States. (perhaps even more dangerous). The issue of media ownership plays an extremely important role. Based on the evidence from the Polish experience, the author developed a new concept of "the reed effect." In the final section of the article, he recommends public diplomacy as the potentially most efficient tool for building relations and promoting national identity. Finally, he concludes the study with a rather optimistic observation that external threats tend to strengthen national identity, yet the process is time-consuming. In the case of Poland, the appeals for "economic patriotism", defending the purity of the Polish language, slogans like "buy Polish" and "proud to be Polish" did not emerge until 6-8 years after accession to the European Union and about 18-20 years after the beginning of the country's economic and political transformation. This phenomenon can be observed after the first waves of enthusiasm for the "western/individualistic" value system, consumer goods, junk food, films, foreign direct investment and media "freedom".*

KEY WORDS

NATIONAL IDENTITY, EUROPEAN UNION, "THE REED EFFECT", CROATIA, POLAND

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INTRODUCTION

It was during the course of the Polish Presidency of the European Union Council when Croatia signed its Accession Treaty. The film *Dobrodošli* welcoming Croatia and accompanying the signing of the EU Accession Treaty, was viewed 62,000 times (including 50,000 during the first 48 hours). These facts, among other things, have encouraged the author to share his personal, subjective observation concerning the challenges to national identity faced by Croatia as a new member country.¹

This paper's methodological approach is based on his accumulated body of knowledge coming from own research (Ławniczak, 1971; 2005; 2009; 2012) on European integration issues and international economic relations, as well as the author's practical experience in traditional and public diplomacy, international business and public relations. Additional sources of information and analysis are based on personal interviews with Polish and international experts. The analysis presents a specific, econo-centric approach² to international public relations, which underlines the impact of economic/ financial power on communication management. The specific research question driving this article may be formulated as follows – In what way may the experience of Polish efforts to preserve and promote its own national identity, gained within 10 years of Poland's EU membership, allow us to draw some conclusion that may then prove useful for Croatia in the near future?

THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY, THE NATION'S BRAND IDENTITY MODEL AND ITS RELEVANCE TO CROATIA

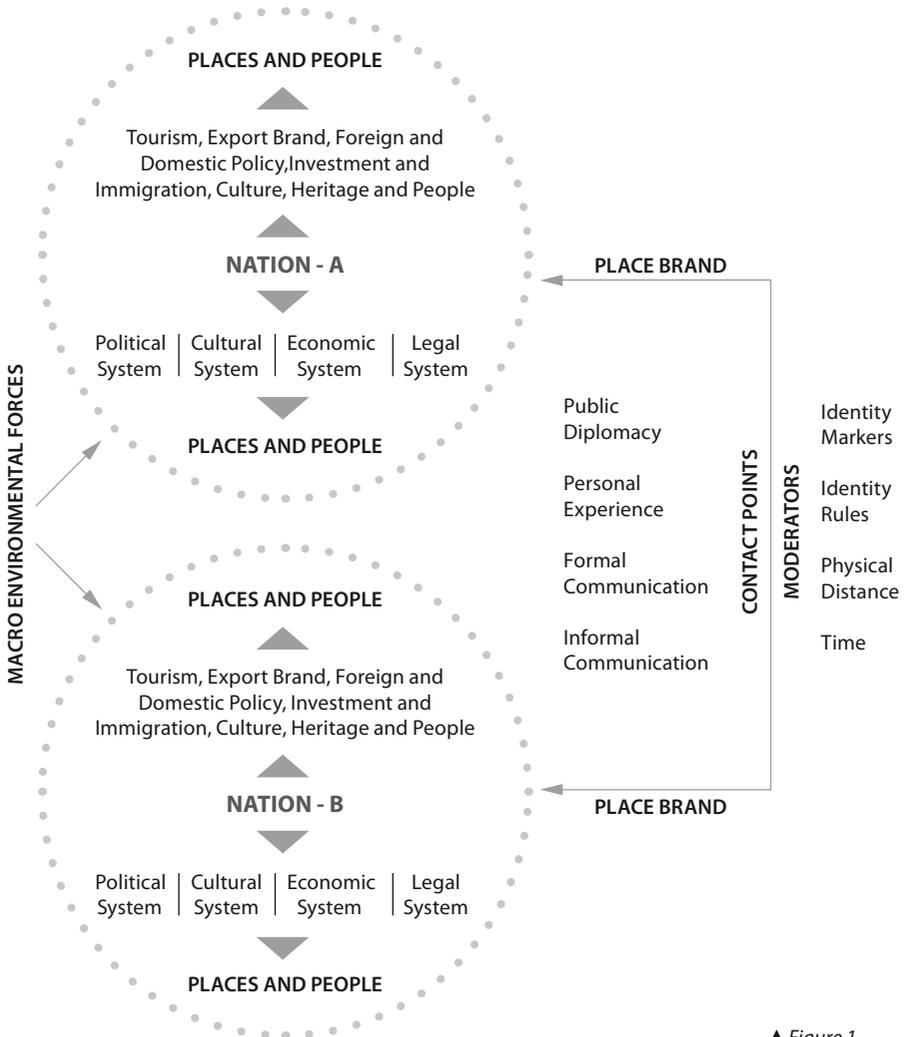
There exist many definitions and approaches to the concept of national identity. In this paper I interpret (Smith, 1991: vii) *national identity* as a multidimensional concept, including a specific language, sentiments and symbolism. To be more precise, it should be understood as the collective identity of most of the citizens of one state or one nation which includes elements like national symbols, language, national colours, the nation's history, national awareness, blood ties, culture, music, cuisine, etc. Smith himself (1991: 14) distinguishes the following features or *dimensions of national identity*: 1. a historic territory or homeland, 2. common myths and historical memories, 3. a common mass public culture, 4. common legal rights and duties for all members, 5. common economy with territorial mobility for members.

When speaking of national identity, the term "nation" may indicate a nation-as state or a nation-as people. Over time, however, one can observe certain dynamics – the concepts of a nation-as-state and a nation-as-people "have converged to identify national and cultural facets of economic, legal, cultural and political systems with the choice

¹ An excellent study (lamentably not translated into English) by Prof. Bozo Skoko is a broad analysis of this subject from Croatia's point of view (Skoko, 2005).

² When speaking about *econo-centric PR/ econo-centric approach*, or the *economic context* in public relations, we relate it to the following issues: the impact of economic/corporate power on public relations/ communication practice; economic roots of public relations practice in the historical context; the relationship between the public relations theory and the theories of economics and political economy; the importance of economics to public relations practitioners; application of public relations techniques in the present economic crisis by business and the government alike.

for individuals to consciously choose their definitions according to their traditions and values" (Skinner and Kubacki, 2007). The dynamics of nationhood, national and cultural identity as well as place branding have been elaborated by two known researchers in their Nation's Brand Identity Model shown in Figure 1.



▲ Figure 1.
The Nation's Brand Identity Model
(Skinner and Kubacki, 2007: 305-316)

The above presented model compares the interaction of two nations and its factors. Each nation has an ability to affect places and people outside its borders, for example through people.

Also in Anholt's (2002) Nation Brand Hexagon (Figure 2.), except for tourism, exports, governance, investment and immigration, culture and heritage people are also mentioned as an important factor contributing to the perception of a country and its "place branding". People, as one of the factors allowing to reconstruct the global perceptions of a nation's image and its appreciation of its contemporary culture, should be measured for their reputation, competence, education, openness and friendliness as well as levels of hostility and discrimination.



▲ Figure 2.
The Nation Brand Hexagoon
(Anholt, 2002)

Karl Nessman has rightly noticed that "People have always used a rich repertoire of techniques, either consciously or unconsciously (underlined by R.L.) so as to leave a lasting (positive) impression on others" (cf. Nessmann, 2004). Nessmann's observation allows for a conclusion that at a certain level in the historical development of a country's national identity one can observe a *conscious* use of people for building relations as a country branding tool and construction of its desired national identity. That is why in the last part of the paper, I recommend public diplomacy as probably the most efficient way to combat prejudice and stereotypes and to promote a country's own national identity in international relations.

However, quite a number of nations do not enjoy the luxury of living within the borders of an independent, sovereign nation-state. For them the struggle for *statehood*³ becomes the first priority of their independence movements (e.g. Kurds living in Turkey, Iraq, and Syria).

³ I define "statehood" as the condition of being a body of people permanently occupying a definite territory and politically organized under a sovereign government.

CHALLENGES TO CROATIA'S NATIONAL IDENTITY WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION

When worrying⁴ about one's own national identity in the European Union, which Croatia is going to access, one should first consider the fact that by 2013 when it becomes a reality, there will be a totally new European Union compared to the time when Croatia started negotiations and when Croats voted in favour of membership in the Union. This very fact will obviously impact the entire issue of Croatian national identity within the EU.

The model of the European integration could be referred to as a "moving target." The direction of the evolution increasingly leads to a conclusion that it will most probably result in a two-speed European Union⁵ with the core embracing the Euro-zone members and the periphery consisting of the remaining member states, including Poland and Croatia.

The identity crisis within the EU (Fukuyama, 2012; Svitch, 2013), the actual question of what kind of European Union is Croatia exactly entering, allows us to identify the following three main challenges to Croatia's national identity connected with its approaching European Union membership:

- > challenges related to the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia,
- > challenges related to the integration process within the European Community,
- > challenges of globalization strengthened by the impact of European integration.

The challenges of disintegration – how to distinguish Croatia from the other states of the former Yugoslavia?

In the past twenty years, a number of countries which had been members of larger federations, small or larger states made efforts to regain their independence. Examples of such forms of disintegration include the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the split of the former Czechoslovakia and the recent endeavours on the part of Catalonia or Scotland. The experiences of countries regaining their independence after years of being part of larger federations / Länder (e.g. the former Soviet republics like the Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia or Slovakia) indicate these countries' need to differentiate themselves from the other members of the former union. They make efforts to demonstrate their dissimilarity by emphasising one's specificity, different history, culture, and language. Before their accession to the European Union, they compete against each other to become members as soon as possible and to attract the potential investors' fullest attention. When they become EU member states, they compete for the biggest pool of aid funds.

Croatia is also facing this type of need to emphasise its national autonomy and differentiation from the former Yugoslav republics. This issue may be classified as the first challenge to its national identity. The question arises: how to emphasise this dissimilarity in the most effective way?

⁴ According to *Spiegel ONLINE International* from June 26, 2013 "even in the relatively young nation on the Adriatic Sea, enthusiasm for Europe has cooled considerably, with little evidence of optimism. Polls show that only 39 percent welcome the accession to the EU".

⁵ *Financial Times Europe* dated June 7, 2012, draws the attention of its readers to the fact that "Merkel insists on two-speed Europe".

While literature on the subject recommends several methods (James, 1997: 11), in this aspect, the creation of a *sense of national pride* seems to be most important, based on the country's history and tradition, beautiful nature, cultural and scientific achievements, ability to offer its own "national" products in international markets (e.g. NOKIA is associated with Finland and SAMSUNG with Korea). In my subjective opinion, Croatia's three features most characteristic and worth emphasising include:

- >the unique beauty and size of the Dalmatian coast,
- >the characteristic colors and design of the national flag,
- >world famous personalities like e.g. Tesla (not sufficiently promoted).

In the author's opinion, the other important factor which offers differentiation and reinforcement of national identity is developing *economic patriotism* and resisting the accusation that support and promotion of Croatian products, folk music, choosing Croatian Airlines by civil servants, are all signs of nationalism.

Challenges related to the European integration process

Another challenge is posed by the *competition effect* on the part of the stronger and better developed economies from the EURO zone. The good news is that contrary to former fears and appearances, the "European identity" will not be the biggest threat to national identity. Progress in integration within the European Union, as we know it today has not resulted in a sense of *European identity* or the EU citizens adopting the claim "Proud to be European,"⁶ as their claim, just as Americans have long been "*Proud to be American.*" Quite the opposite, the process of identity building in the European Union has produced an interesting phenomenon. In the absence of a united identity, national identities have confronted each other, typically resulting in a tendency to strengthen the national identity in a single country and on a single territory. One can agree with Victor Orban's statement that

A good Union is about good Frenchmen, good Germans and good Poles who are well aware of their national identity and who perceive Europe in their own ways. A Pole, a Hungarian, a Frenchman – each of us sees Europe slightly differently which is good. We need to cut off from that European universalism which makes us look at Europe through one pair of glasses only. We all have our own glasses to look through. We need to be proud of different European identities, our diversity and we need to express this diversity in different aspects of life. (Janke, 2012: 291)

If we agree with Orban's recommendation the question arises, how can the above mentioned national identity be most effectively maintained? How should it be communicated and what role the media can play?

The econo-centric approach in international public relations (Ławniczak, 2009: 346-352) suggests that in international economic relations, including the regional integration, the major role is played by an economic/financial power which reinforces the bargaining position of partners with higher economic development. Therefore, the national identity

⁶ As reported by the *Le Monde*, dated 21st November 2012, on the occasion of the summit of the Heads of State on the budget negotiations Pascal Lamy, the President of the WTO, acknowledged the difficulties in building a European identity.

of a state member which is new, and is not part of the EURO zone, is chiefly threatened by unequal competition on the part of stronger and privileged companies from better developed member states. This will result from the liberalization of the flow of goods, capital and services following accession to the economic union. A strong whiff of often-times unequal competition is in a good position to “wipe off” from the market smaller and weaker Croatian banks, small and medium-sized companies and shops, as well as advertising agencies, media buying houses and local newspapers and TV stations. A.H. Amsden (Amsden, 2009: 64) emphasizes that Foreign-owned enterprises (FOEs) can crowd out private-owned (POEs) FOEs in direct competition with POEs are not necessary for economic development to flourish and it is dangerous for promising POEs to confront privileged FOEs in its own back yard, often with the backing of one of the FOEs powerful government (*ibid.* 65).

With reference to Polish experiences, one can conclude that it would be difficult to maintain one’s national identity and even more difficult to promote it without one’s own “national brands” and competitive products, strategic industries controlled by the government, retail chains and, first and foremost, without media owned or controlled by nationals.

Experience accumulated during Poland’s transformation and membership in the Union indicates that ownership of media is a specifically important condition of maintaining a country’s national identity as part of an international community. This is because media ownership allows for media control and influences the media content. (Sriramesh, Vercic 2009: 16) American scientists emphasise that “the public is not sovereign over the media – the owners and managers, seeking ads, decide what is to be offered, and the public must choose among these” (Herman and Chomsky, 2008: XIX). Excessive foreign ownership of media can be harmful, and there is mutual dependence of media, public opinion and national identity.

When presenting this issue based on the Polish example, it is worth mentioning that in 2008 about 85% of local and specialised media was owned by foreign capital, (Kledzik, 2008) primarily German. For example, Neue Passauer Presse, which changed its name to Polska Presse, is a mogul in the market of regional and local press while Bauer is number one in women’s weeklies and magazines. According to the most recent study (Media&Marketing Polska, 2012)⁷, in 2012 Bauer published 36 titles, sold 294 million copies and advertised 1583 brands. As a result, the concern reached 16.3 million readers which means that every other Polish person read at least one of the titles published by Bauer.

A Polish study (Andrzejewski, 2009: 176) underlines the fact that foreign-owned media will too often be allowed to promote the value systems, interest of their own companies and governments and this way indirectly weaken the national identity of the host country. For example, in the entire region of Silesia where German companies have purchased nearly 100 newspapers, on 1 September 1998 only one of them published information about the anniversary of the onset of WWII, in a very unexposed place at that. In the light

⁷ Special report titled: Wydawcy (Editors).

of this fact, a Polish scientist Maciej Kledzik, commented that this should come as no surprise: "We cannot agree for our national awareness, the remembrance of the past to be shaped outside our country by foreign financiers." (2008: 10)

As a conclusion one may emphasise over and over again that *enterprises/media ownership matters* (Amsden, 2009: 64-77) in maintaining national identity. The author of this paper advises caution; if in the future someone asks you "How do Croatian media approach the issue of ... and how does the Croatian public perceive something?", the right answer should not be "The same way as the foreign owned media published in Croatia want the Croatian public to see it".

Challenges posed by globalization

It may look as a paradox when the author puts forward a thesis that it will not be Croatia's full membership in EU that will pose the biggest threat to the country's national identity but rather the effects of globalization/Americanization/MacDonaldization (Ritzer, 1996). The process of integration will only strengthen those effects by providing an additional free flow of goods, capital, services and ideas.

The most sensitive area where the negative impact of globalization will take effect is the broadly defined culture. Let me illustrate the above statement, which may be considered controversial, with the most recent examples from Poland. I was polishing this article just before Christmas and was bombarded round-the-clock with standard American Christmas tunes in shopping centres, in every radio and TV station. Traditional Polish Christmas carols have almost disappeared from the radio replaced by the omnipresent tunes like *Jingle Bells*, *I'm dreaming of a White Christmas* or *Let it snow*. Another example: in early December 2012, I was invited to an anniversary concert by a juvenile brass band from a small town (about 25 thousand inhabitants). About 40 people were on the stage accompanied by a children's ballet group and cheerleaders beautifully dressed in rich Polish national garments. The declared aim of the orchestra is to promote Polish culture (folk dances and music) in Poland and abroad. After the concert, while stunned, I stated that approximately 75-80% of the performed music included famous American bestsellers like *Oh when the Saints*, *In the moon* and other numbers. When asked about the reason, the conductor replied that he suggested the repertoire and it was easier and cheaper (if not free of charge) for him to acquire ready-made music arrangements for a 40-person concert band.

For a very long time, traditional Polish food specialities almost disappeared from popular restaurants and food stands. Cities were once invaded by chains like McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken with pizzas sold on every corner and delivered to houses. However, the situation has changed over the last two or three years. Hopefully, Croats will be able to preserve their "Cevapcici," "Burek" or roasted piglets in the villages close to the Adriatic coasts even after joining the EU.

The Polish language has been increasingly contaminated with English phrases and notions like *deadline*; young people say *WOW* instead of the traditional *Ah*. Other words

like *body building*, *jogging* etc., are in common usage. Young Poles send text messages using pseudo-Polish neologisms like *trendi*, *seksi* and *kul*.

Approximately 80% of films shown in Polish cinemas are Hollywood productions; the dominating private radio stations broadcast English and American hits. For some reason, it is difficult for French or Spanish songs to make their way to the Polish radio. It no longer broadcasts Italian songs and performers, once so popular in Poland; membership in the EU has done nothing to change the situation.

POLAND'S EXPERIENCES IN FACING THE CHALLENGE OF EU MEMBERSHIP AND GLOBALIZATION – THE SO-CALLED "REED EFFECT"

It was not particularly difficult for Poland to overcome the first challenge resulting from the disintegration of the former socialist community of countries – members of CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). This challenge consisted of a need to differentiate from the other countries in the group. Poland accessed the EU as a country whose first independent trade union "SOLIDARITY" and its leader Lech Wałęsa were the first to abolish the old system and to introduce a market economy. Topped with the achievements of the "Polish Pope" John Paul II, these specific Polish "national brands" allowed Poland to promote Polish national identity in the European Union from the very beginning of the country's membership.

Lately, two events have allowed Poland to reinforce the sense of national identity among Polish citizens, namely the Polish Presidency of EU and the EURO 2012 football championship. On that occasion the Polish Government on its website proudly announced that:

The Republic of Poland assumed the Presidency of the European Union on 1 July 2011. It was a matter of tremendous prestige for the governing coalition as well as for many Poles who view their country's elevation to the EU Presidency as the grand coronation of Poland's EU membership. According to a poll conducted by the (Polish) CBOS Institute in early June, 71 percent of individuals surveyed opined that the EU Presidency would bolster Poland's position and image in Europe and, indeed, throughout the world... (Styrna, 2011)⁸

On the other hand, EURO 2012 (a football championship co-hosted by Poland) was described by *The New York Times* (July 2, 2012) as "Poland's Beautiful Victory." According to its correspondent "It is this gelling of Polish national identity that could become the true legacy of Euro 2012 [...] visiting fans were presented with young, dynamic and tolerant Poland." (Boyes, 2012)

In the author's opinion, the second and third challenge – the results of economic competition from both EU membership as well as global competition, triggered an interesting trend: following the first symptoms of slacking national identity in the initial

⁸ Poland's EU Presidency, <http://www.sfppr.org/Page.aspx?pid=495> (15.05.2013)

years of the transition to market economy, reinforced by EU accession in 2004, a revival of national identity in the country and on its territory could be observed. I have labelled this tendency *the reed effect*.

Exposed to gusts of wind, the reed bows until it touches the water and returns to its original position. It does not break because it is sufficiently flexible. Polish society and business responded in this way to a strong blow of foreign competition as a result of the so-called transformational "shock therapy" followed by reinforcement of this competition after EU accession in 2004. Union membership further enhanced the economy's openness and boosted foreign competition as a result of an extra stream of free flowing goods, labor, capital and services from the European Union member states.

"*The reed effect*" can be divided into three stages: *stage one* is the biggest slackening and threat to the Polish national identity. *Stage two* is the initial disappointment and unfulfilled expectations as a result of a need for reinforcing the sense of "Polish national identity" expressed in various ways. *Stage three* (mainly following the 2008/9 economic downturn) is reconstructing the sense of national pride, economic patriotism and a growing need for reinforcing the national identity. It is worth noting that the challenges to the national identity posed by integration and globalization tend to overlap to some extent. It is equally difficult to identify precisely the date when each of these stages started and ended.

Stage one, the slackening Polish national identity (the reed bends strongly), started with the beginning of Poland's transformation i.e. in the early 1990s when, following the Washington Consensus, the process of privatisation, deregulation, trade liberalisation and limitations to foreign investment as part of the economic "shock therapy." Polish products were increasingly rare on shop shelves and replaced by colourful, beautifully packaged and intensely advertised foreign juices, beverages, cheeses, alcoholic drinks, cars, TV sets, bicycles, medications, etc. Polish banks, insurance companies and manufacturers of such products regularly went bankrupt and / or were taken over by foreign owners.

Media, privatised and gradually taken over by foreign companies, placed an increasing number of colourful advertisements for these products. Multiplexes – the new types of cinemas (which emerged as a result of foreign investments) and television stations would show more and more imported (chiefly American) films at the expense of Polish productions. English was *the* language of show business, be it concerts, music festivals, radio or TV programmes.

The second half of the 1990s marked the onset of disappointment with these beautifully wrapped albeit not necessarily top quality products. Foreign producers would "push" their goods to the post-communist markets hungry for consumer goods. Gradually, shops would use an increasing number of "Polish product" signage. What is more, a campaign was launched to promote Polish products with the expression, "Good – because it's Polish." In retrospect though these were merely the first symptoms.

Stage two started approximately in the late 1990s and consisted in more indications of the reed bending back to its original vertical position. The name "Polish" gained increasing popularity beyond the consumer goods market. In the hospitality business, a Polish restaurant chain *Chłopskie jadło* (*Polskie jadło* since 2006) promoting traditional local cuisine and Polish-ownership tried to compete with McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken and other foreign chains. Supermarkets started to mark food products as "Polish products" (e.g. in the *Kaufland* chain – "Polish butter"). In such circumstances the *Chata Polska* supermarket chain enjoyed growing popularity. In the financial market, SKOK savings bank group and Polish co operative banks started to successfully compete with foreign banks. In their operations, both groups emphasised their "Polish capital".

1996 marks the beginning of operations of Solaris Bus&Coach, now a Polish manufacturer of most modern buses, trolley buses and trams, which successfully competes with the best western companies in the European market. Solaris was established in Poland by managers who took over shares and production facilities once owned by MAN and previously by NEOPLAN, operating in Poznań.

Since 2004, as Poland accessed the European Union, foreign competition got its second wind, another bend of the reed towards the water. More banks, insurance companies, consultancies, marketing companies, newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations were taken over or established. More liberal regulations related to land and real estate ownership brought about an influx of capital from the European Union, investing more or less officially (by a person of interest with Polish citizenship) in land and real estate, especially in Masuria and the western part of Poland called the "Recovered Territories." In some tourist destinations, German inscriptions and real estate owners became part of the local flavour.

Poland's accession to the EU was also accompanied by a generous flow of aid; the biggest beneficiaries included the most entrepreneurial farmers, as well as owners of small and medium-sized companies. This allowed many companies to become more robust. A case in point is a group of Polish confectionery producers who in 2004 purchased from NESTLE a traditional Polish brand and chocolate factory GOPLANA.

The global economic downturn of 2008/2009 commenced *stage three* when the reed almost reached back to its vertical position; this was accompanied by growing economic patriotism and a sense of national pride. This was reflected, among other things, in weakening foreign competition. Poland which is outside the EURO zone (one of the reasons why it has survived the downturn nearly intact) has been the only EU member state enjoying a positive growth rate. The government proudly presented Poland as a "green island" in the sea of escalating crises. In this situation, a number of western companies, licking their crisis-inflicted wounds, had to withdraw from Poland. This posed an excellent opportunity for the most dynamic Polish businessmen to purchase foreign companies and even start expansion in international markets, in the form of exports and foreign direct investments alike. For example, the Wall Street Journal explained in an article entitled "KGHM Enters Major League in Copper" that "Poland's copper miner KGHM Polska Miedz SA Monday completed a \$2.91 billion acquisition of a Canadian peer

and became one of the world's largest copper firms... Through its acquisition in Canada, KGHM made a big step toward becoming a global metals producer" (2012).

In the press market, on August 17, 2009, a Polish publishing group INFOR.S.A purchased from Axel Springer Polska a national newspaper "Dziennik" to merge it with the existing "Gazeta Prawna" into a new entity "Dziennik Gazeta Prawna" while Axel Springer took over 49% of shares in Infor Biznes company. In 2011, a Polish publisher Grzegorz Hajdarowicz, owner of Presspublika publishing house, purchased a majority interest in "Rzeczpospolita" national daily (formerly with majority shares owned by HERSANT, ORKLA and Mecom financial group). Since February 7, 2011, Presspublika has published "Uważam Rze" weekly with a distinct patriotic /national profile reflecting the political line of the opposition party PIS (Law and Justice) regularly supported by approximately 30% of the electorate. Soon "Uważam Rze" was the biggest selling weekly leaving "Newsweek" and "Wprost" in tow.

A seminar organised by the Economic Institute of the National Bank of Poland⁹ was an extremely important and characteristic event held on December 10, 2012. Two authors (S. Kawalec and M. Gozdek), representatives of Capital Strategy, presented the theses of a report dedicated to the opportunities and modes of increasing the share in Poland's financial system of locally controlled banks i.e. a desirable ownership structure of the Polish banking sector in the near future. They explained that as a result of the model of privatising the Polish banking sector preferred over a dozen years ago, 69% of assets of banks operating in Poland are owned by foreign financial groups. This structure had its benefits: it allowed for quick reinforcement and modernisation of the sector, yet now and in the future it may pose problems to the Polish economy. One such problem demonstrated itself following the emergence of the global crisis. In 2009-2010, banks dependent on their foreign owners decreased credits for Polish companies by 12.5% while locally controlled banks increased it by 20.6% and co operative banks even by 35.4%. The sector's existing structure, with dominant banks dependent on foreign groups, may also impede regular financing of the government debt and will further limit local macro-precaution policies. These threats would be less serious if the sector's structure were more balanced and locally controlled banks enjoyed a stronger position. According to the authors, within the next 10 years or so, the share of banks dependent on foreign groups should decrease by half to approximately 30-35%. The government should officially adopt a "repolonization" strategy for part of the banking sector.

Finally, since 2011 appeals to economic patriotism have been another important demonstration of the revival of Polish national identity in the economy. Initially they appeared in small numbers in blogs (e.g."PatriotyzmEkonomiczny.pl"). Finally, in 2012 Wojciech Rybiński, one of the most prominent Polish economists, published an article in the national daily *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna* in which he wrote:

It is time for Poland to earn respect in the world not for having organised a mass event (EURO 2012) but because it has successfully built robust Polish capitalists who will create hundreds of thousands of well-paid jobs. A new vision is in need: twenty Polish companies operating globally with tens of billions of dollars in capitalization in 2020. Then we will be proud of Poland. (Rybiński, 2012: 7)

⁹ http://nbp.pl/home.aspx?f=aktualnosci/wiadomosci_2012/20121210_seminarium.html (09.07.2013)

A weekend extra to the same newspaper, controlled by Polish capital, on November 9, 2012, posed a question on the front page "ARE YOU an economic patriot?"

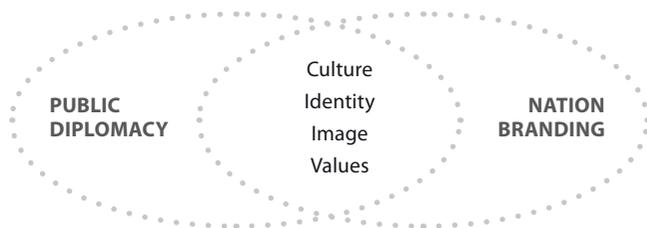
To sum up, it took approximately 20 years of transformation and 8 years of membership in the European Union for the notion of economic patriotism (a reflection of reinforced own national identity – "the reed effect") to make its way in media controlled by Polish capital.

WHICH STRATEGY, METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS TO USE TO PROMOTE OWN NI? PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AS A RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

Among the six usual areas of national assets, characteristics and competence, formulated by Anholt in his Nation Brand Hexagon, the human capital of each country – the people may play a crucial role in changing the perceptions of a country /nation abroad. Public diplomacy – broadly understood as people to people (p2p) communication, seems to be the best bottom-up way to overcome prejudice, combat stereotypes and promote national identity.

Public diplomacy is a relatively new notion with no internationally recognised definition. It is of American origin and popularity, contrasting with the European/British roots of *nation branding*. Among many definitions of public diplomacy the one suggested by E. A. Gullion, seems most appropriate. According to him: "By public diplomacy we understand the means by which governments, private groups and individuals influence the attitudes and opinions of other peoples and governments in such a way as to exercise influence on their foreign policy decisions." (Gullion, 1966: 4)

Gyorgi Szondi (2008) has defined the conceptual similarities and differences between those terms. National identity building and promotion may be considered in his opinion as a common public diplomacy goal. However, relationship building and people-to-people communication should be considered the main relation. On top of that "...public diplomacy and nation branding share some common grounds but nevertheless neither incorporates the other and each has its own characteristics" (Szondi, 2008: 27). It may be illustrated in Figure 3 below.



▲ Figure 3.
Public diplomacy versus nation branding
(Szondi, 2008: 27)

German-Polish and German-French relations may serve as a good example of how public diplomacy, when understood as a relation building between people from different countries, may also support Croatia's efforts to become a recognised member of the European Community. The historical perspective and heritage of WWI and WWII have obviously shaped the goals and practices of German Public Diplomacy (PD), particularly in relation with the country's closest neighbours: France and Poland. After WWII, the gradually increasing economic power of Germany triggered concern in the neighbouring countries, and in the world in general, about trends towards retaliation and the revival of German nationalism, which became even stronger following Germany's unification. The German government realized these concerns; this is why on top of more traditional channels of foreign policy they decided to resort to more active public diplomacy in order to calm down politicians and entire societies, especially in the adjacent countries.

The chief goal of Germany's public diplomacy could be referred to as "...including Germany and Germans into the international community as trustworthy neighbours, responsible partners and co-founders of Global Justice" (Witte, 1992: 13). Another goal of Germany's public diplomacy (Bohdanowicz, 2008: 182) was "...foreign support of Germany's economic policy ... increasing general approval of German products, investments, services i.e. promoting the 'Germany' brand."

However, special attention should be paid to the *strategy and applied instruments* of Germany's public diplomacy, which were adopted to achieve the above mentioned goals. It focused on relationship building on the people to people (p2p) level, carefully coordinated and supported by governmental institutions and private corporations (e.g. party-related foundations like the Adenauer Stiftung, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung or private/corporate like Bosch Stiftung, Volkswagen Stiftung etc.). When speaking about people it is worth emphasizing that these public diplomacy efforts were targeted at a specific group of people, the so-called "message multipliers" like journalists, teachers, university professors, scientific authorities, public opinion leaders and primarily the youth.

This type of building of mutual relations between young people has been an instrument of a planned and systematically maintained network of relations between partner towns as well as between schools, choirs or sports clubs in cities. A large offer of grants for pupils, students and scientists is another instrument worth mentioning.

A similar strategy of public/cultural diplomacy was formerly applied with respect to France, a neighbour and an ancient enemy. In both cases (Jelisić, 2012: 46):

People come, gain their own impressions, make their own conclusions about and connections with Germany. They get to know it better, and speak positively about Germany when they return to their countries. They see for themselves what kind of people we are, what do we do and don't, which way is more credible than any government attempt to promote this abroad (Opinion of a FFO diplomat, Berlin, May 2009).

The example of Polish-German relationships is the best evidence that this method of promoting national identity and positive image of a country and nation may be very efficient. Research conducted by the Polish Institute CBOS (2010) shows that in the long run, the perception of Germans and Germany in Poland was changing for the better, in spite of the entire tragic history of the two nations. For example, according to the above mentioned report (CBOS, 2010: 3-4) over time sympathy for Germany grew from 23% in 1993 to 39% in 2010 with dramatic growths observed in 2008 (37%) and 2010 (39%) as compared with 30% in 2007. One could assume that this resulted from, among other things, Poland's accession to the European Union. On the other hand, aversion to Germany dropped from 53% in 1993 to 28% in 2010.

The above presented arguments should encourage decision makers in Croatia to apply public diplomacy to support accession to the European Union. The first steps have already been observed at the 13th CEI Dubrovnik Diplomatic Forum on "Strategic Public Diplomacy" (May 20-22, 2010).

CONCLUSIONS

1. Polish experiences show that following the reformed European Union, the chief threat to the national identity of Croatia will be posed by the economic power of competitors from better developed countries – the EURO-zone members. It is a paradox, however, that this competition will result from globalization rather than the process of integration in the EU. The very process of integration will only aggravate these negative effects.

2. Maintenance or trends towards losing national identity will be largely affected by the media or rather ownership thereof. If media are excessively owned by foreign moguls, it will largely undermine the possible maintenance and shaping of national identity.

3. To be able to defend and promote national identity it is highly important to possess economic power. That is why I recommend: 1) promoting economic patriotism ("Buy Croatian... when it's best"); 2) controlling and limiting foreign ownership, particularly in the media, financial institutions and strategic industries.

4. With reference to Poland's experiences one may assume that the so-called "reed effect" is also likely to occur in Croatia. Following the initial bending under the influence of competition, the reed should "rebound" i.e. national identity will be reinforced under the influence of the growing economic patriotism, national pride and local companies and national treasures tending to "regain posture". This process may take even more than 10 years. One should be patient, but never cease to act.

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IZAZOVI ZA HRVATSKI NACIONALNI IDENTITET UNUTAR EU-A: POLJSKA PERSPEKTIVA

Ryszard Ławniczak

SAŽETAK Cilj je ovoga rada podijeliti iskustvo Poljske, postsocijalističke zemlje, članice Europske unije od 1. travnja 2004., koja se s jedne strane suočava s problemom očuvanja vlastitog nacionalnog identiteta, a s druge strane istovremeno ga pokušava promovirati. Autor ispituje relevantnost modela brendiranja nacionalnog identiteta u odnosu na Hrvatsku. Osvrće se i na pitanje očuvanja nacionalnog identiteta s obzirom na "vjetrove" neravnopravne konkurencije, kako europske, osobito bolje razvijenih zemalja članica Europske unije, tako i svjetske. Izrazito je bitno pitanje medijskog vlasništva. S obzirom na poljsko iskustvo razvijen je novi koncept – "efekt trske". U posljednjem dijelu rada javna je diplomacija preporučena kao potencijalno najučinkovitiji alat za izgradnju odnosa i promoviranje nacionalnog identiteta. Studija je zaključena s razmjerno optimističnim opažanjima da vanjske prijetnje osnažuju nacionalni identitet, ali i da taj proces dugo traje. U slučaju Poljske apeli za "ekonomski patriotizam", obrana čistoće poljskog jezika, slogani poput "kupuj poljsko" i "ponosan da sam Poljak" nastali su tek prije 6 do 8 godina, odnosno nakon ulaska u Europsku uniju, te 18 do 20 godina nakon početka ekonomske i političke transformacije. Taj fenomen može se uočiti nakon prvih valova entuzijazma povezanih sa "zapadnim/individualističkim" vrijednosnim sustavom konzumentskih dobara, brze hrane, filmova, direktnih inozemnih ulaganja i medijske "slobode".

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