

## PHILOSOPHY

*Marina A. Igosheva*

*(Rostov state university of transport. Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation)*

### **Ethnic identity as a tool of nation-building in the post-Soviet space**

The subject of this research is the process of politicization of ethnicity as a tool for legitimizing separatist projects, the basis for the sovereignization and nation-building of the post-Soviet states. It is given a detailed description of ethno-nationalism as a means of constructing national identity in the former national republics of the Soviet Union. Special attention is paid to the analysis of the politicization of the ethnic factor in the nation-building of Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic States. It is shown that the scenarios for the creation of new States had both common features – reliance on historical myth-making distinctive ones – Russophobic sentiments, ethnic nationalism. The methodological basis of the research is based on the constructivist paradigm, which laid the foundation for understanding the nation-building process launched as a result of the collapse of the USSR and accompanied by the revival of ethnic identity in the former Soviet republics. The results obtained allow to substantiate theoretically the existence of a powerful potential for ethnic identity that demonstrates the effectiveness of mobilizing ethnic groups in the struggle for power and economic resources; provides legitimacy to acts of violence against ethnically "strangers"; acts as a means of legitimizing and delegitimizing political power in a transitional society with a complex ethno-social structure; provides local certainty to the individual and group, and a sense of collective security.

Key words: ethnic identity, politicization of ethnicity, sovereignization, nation-building, ethnonationalism, national identity, myth-making.

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