This paper will examine notions of how Ukrainian poets represent their Ukrainian identity in their poetry over the 19th and 20th centuries. Ukrainian national bard Taras Shevchenko exhibited his Ukrainian identity first and foremost by writing in Ukrainian, focusing on folklore and folksongs of the people to awaken notions of a common identity, then by appropriating the central image of the blind Ukrainian minstrel, the Kobzar, who sang of the Kozak (Cossack) courage and glory as well as the Kozaks’ shortcomings in Ukrainian history. Additionally he portrayed the suffering of his people as well as his own suffering through the archetypal images of a young girl abused and abandoned by a Russian soldier and of an orphan. He also made the central emblems of the Ukrainian land (the wide Dnipro River, the steppes, the groves) sacred for his people through his verbal virtuosity. Ukrainian poets who followed after him on the one hand both had the obligation to write in Ukrainian and place themselves in dialog with Shevchenko, and on the other hand to expand on that to present their Ukrainian identity in different ways. Pavlo Tychyna, for example, embodied the Ukrainian idea in his early poetry, focusing on the suffering of the land and the people during the revolutionary and civil war years, and later embedded his Ukrainian identity in his later period in a more Aesopian way under repressive Soviet rule. In the period of the so called Great Patriotic War (World War II), when specifically Ukrainian patriotism was permitted by the Communist Party, Volodymyr Sosiura was able to publish his classic “Love Ukraine” poem, for which he was later condemned. Maksym Rylsky, too, during that same time period expressed his open love for the Ukrainian land in his long poem “Thirst,” which later was attacked for its excessive Ukrainian patriotism. Both Sosiura and Rylsky later sublimated their Ukrainian identity in nature poetry, which was more generic and safer, as well as in what was a Russian colonial cliché, the melodiousness of the Ukrainian language. The Shestydesiatnyky (Poets of the Sixties) expressed their patriotic fervor more openly but in various ways, focusing largely on the personal emblem of freedom. Lina Kostenko wrote on heroic topics such as the 17th century songstress Marusia Churai and through national emblems such as the Dnipro River; Vasyl Symonenko both in nature poetry that focuses on the beauty and suffering of the Ukrainian land and in his poetry of statement; Ivan Drach in specificially Ukrainian emblems such as sunflowers and the guelder rose; and Vasyl Stus through his poetry of personal anguish as a prisoner of conscience. The BU-BA-BU generation of poets in the late 1980s exhibited their Ukrainian identity by openly rejecting it through carnivalization and parody – of Kozaks, of blatant Ukrainian nationalism of a type found in Sosiura’s “Love Ukraine” as well as in the poets of the sixties, and by not emphasizing the traditional Ukrainian folk song but focusing on world music instead (particularly rock, jazz, and rap), thereby elevating Ukrainian identity as part of world citizenship.