

# Political Culture and National Identity in Russian-Ukrainian Relations

MIKHAIL A. MOLCHANOV



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MIKHAIL A. MOLCHANOV



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To the memory of my father,

Aleksandr Prokofievich Molchanov (1922-1975)





# Contents

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Acknowledgments	ix
Introduction	3
CHAPTER	
1 Political Culture and Nationality in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies	18
2 A History of an Uneasy Relationship	58
3 Ukraine's Departure and the Crisis of Russian Identity	95
4 Russian Political Culture: Recurrence and Reformulation	127
5 Political Culture and Nationality in Ukraine	166
6 Ukraine's Russian Problem	207
7 Fears and Hopes: Ukraine, Russia, and the West	245
Conclusion	280
Notes	293
Bibliography	325
Index	341





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Mikhail A. Molchanov



## Political Culture and National Identity in Russian-Ukrainian Relations



# Introduction

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The end of the Soviet Union heralded an era of dramatic transformations affecting both the shape of the world system and the direction of regional developments. With stable bipolarity gone, the structure of the world system softened to the point of near-chaos, where one can discern almost anything along the spectrum from the uncertain U.S. hegemony to fleeting multipolarity with the emerging new centers of power in Europe and Asia-Pacific. While ex-socialist states find themselves in the political and economic limbo of the so-called transition (to what?) and consolidation (of what?), advanced industrial democracies are fully engaged in their own “structural adjustment” to the new global imperatives.<sup>1</sup> Global chaos contributes to the uncertainty of transition and makes authoritarian downturns and local wars of attrition define the course of the postcommunist transformations in the European periphery and throughout much of Eurasia. This, in turn, places new strains on international security worldwide.

Post-Soviet developments are also interesting as yet another attempt at social engineering with broad international implications. Most of those who believed in the possibility of a big leap forward toward the radiant capitalist future were bitterly disappointed. Political scientists now talk of “liberalization without democratization,” “peripheralization,” “balkanization,” or “third-worldization” of what used to be the Second World of more or less developed socialist states.<sup>2</sup> Reality shows no signs of a civilized market economy or triumphant liberal democracy emerging in the vast expanses of the former Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup> Instead, both government and opposition name corruption, cronyism, nepotism, privatization of the state, and overt criminalization of the economy as dominant characteristics of the emerging “corporate-oligarchic” capitalism.<sup>4</sup> Post-Soviet regimes tend to resemble Latin American

*democradura*, a dictatorship masquerading as democracy, much more than Western presidential republics. Neosultanistic regimes dominate Central Asia and good part of the Caucasus, while ethnonationalism has become the state trademark in Latvia and Estonia.

The problems of the former Soviet Union are part and parcel of the global problems of today. Solutions, however, are to be found locally, as no external player can mend the texture of social relations ruptured by communism and further distorted by the “bandit capitalism” of the postcommunist transitions. Only people who have lived here for centuries can do it, provided they are spared new catastrophic upheavals and have time to recover from the old ones. Both economic growth and political maturation will come naturally, if these societies are spared artificial schemes that are imposed from above, by either national governments or outside regulators.

The former Soviet Union had been predicated mainly on the Eastern Slavs’ collaboration. With the creation of the Russia-Belarus Union, the shape and the prospects of the post-Soviet order have largely depended on the position of Ukraine. While Ukraine’s reabsorption by Russia would spell the doom of the country’s dream of independence, an independent Ukraine that is intrinsically hostile to its eastern neighbor and supported in this hostility by the West would sow discord between the increasingly resentful Russia and the rest of Europe. Ukraine’s anti-Russian position could actually strengthen those who back the creation of a xenophobic, antidemocratic and internationally revisionist Russian state. Finally, an independent but Russia-friendly Ukraine would serve as a bridge connecting Russia to Europe, a mediator in Moscow’s sometimes tense relations with the Western security community, and, in the best-case scenario, as an example of successful transformation of a Soviet-type society into a society of the East Central European type. The Russian-Ukrainian coexistence may be benign and mutually beneficial or fraught with animosity and disturbing to the world community at large. The outcome depends on both countries’ ability to find a *modus vivendi* that will best serve their national interests without creating a zero-sum situation where victory of one side means sure loss for the other. Such ability is crucially shaped by political cultures and perceptions of national identity that lay the groundwork for formulations of national interest and that importantly influence policy.

If there is one common element unifying otherwise dissimilar works on Russian politics and society, the theme of the unique Russian political culture might be it. Whether it is conceptualized as political culture, national character, or even destiny, the idea that Russian politics is somehow different from

what we might find elsewhere has proven surprisingly resilient. In its more dogmatic reincarnation, this view holds that Russian political culture is doomed to be authoritarian.<sup>5</sup> Even in less assuming comparativist or institutionalist accounts, political culture often lurked backstage as a “residual variable,” always there to “explain out” whatever has been left unexplained.<sup>6</sup> More often than not, conclusions have been pessimistic. As Russians could not change for the better, reform chances are always slim. If this were true, one might say in hindsight, perestroika would never have happened, and the USSR would never have disbanded as peacefully as it did.

New works on the topic showed up after the end of the Soviet Union.<sup>7</sup> While some of them predictably saw Russia as chasing the “mirage of democracy” without getting any closer to the real thing, others argued that institutional change could influence traditions of governance and discovered political culture supportive of democratic values.<sup>8</sup> The unraveling of the Soviet federal state created an additional problem for scholars, as the once-unified field of research was now fragmented into several nationally defined subfields. If only recently they could have been described as “subcultures” at the most, the reality of the new state formations demanded more respectful treatment. Explicit comparisons between Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and so on appeared in print.<sup>9</sup>

When the Soviet Union fell, ending the Cold War and the half-realized project of “actually existing socialism” in one stroke, the ultimate victory of liberal democracy seemed to be assured.<sup>10</sup> Ten years later, Russia appears closer to a bureaucratic authoritarianism of the Latin American type.<sup>11</sup> Ukraine, potentially the strongest post-Soviet economy, has recently joined the list of the world’s poorest countries. Communism has been replaced by regimes that are premised on varying dosages of nepotism, kleptocracy, nationalism, and presidential despotism. In several important aspects, post-Soviet elections and referenda do not significantly deviate from their predecessors’ infamous rubberstamping of “elections” under communism. Both public opinion and public trust are commonly manipulated and abused, and nationalism, as presidential elections in Ukraine in 1991 or in Russia in 2000 have clearly demonstrated, becomes a central instrument of such manipulations. In the post-Soviet world, participation may not necessarily lead to democracy, and the latter must not be equated with mere electoralism.<sup>12</sup>

Theories of political culture are frequently invoked to explain Russia’s failure to embrace more democratic ways of governance. These explanations often start in the country’s distant past, which is then extrapolated to the future. Sources of change remain obscured, and so do perspectives for the better.



In Russia's case, doom wears "imperial" attire, as the Russian imperial legacy is almost never discussed in tones other than unforgiving criticism. In the case of Ukraine, the fate of the nation is just as often sealed with the stigma of "nationalism," described, again, as a decisive feature of its domestic and international politics. In both instances, certain historically transient temporary stages of political development grow, under the pen of a writer, into the core elements of national *identity* of who the Russians or the Ukrainians really are. National identity, in this presentation, appears immutable and uncontrollable by the people. People, on the other hand, are shown as destined to bear the same preconceived "identity," once they are born to this or that presumably homogeneous "nation."

Fortunately, historicism of this sort is not the only way to problematize culture and identity after the end of communism. Recently, new voices have been raised to defend the themes of *multiplicity* and *construction* as "the two central motifs dominating the current rethinking of culture and identity in social theory."<sup>13</sup> A constructivist approach represents social identities as intrinsically multiple and sometimes conflictual images of the self, whether the identified self is individual, corporate, or international. According to this view, cultures are created by people and changed when new ways of life arise to replace the old ones. No national identity is immutable, just as no culture can stay untouched by history. Identity, perceived as "the action unit of culture,"<sup>14</sup> organizes and structures available cultural resources in a particular fashion to bring them into the orbit of social practices and to use them as currently required.

What lessons can be learned from this for our better understanding of Russian-Ukrainian relations? Identity considerations are to be found among the central variables construing or misconstruing post-Soviet dialogue between the two countries. Identity politics takes the form of nationalism, which represents an attempt at a task-specific utilization of cultural resources of a certain large group of people defined as a nation. On the other hand, postcommunist nationalism is an offshoot of political culture that had little space for pluralist values before and can hardly cope with their swift introduction now. Nationalism, therefore, should be looked upon as a political-cultural phenomenon in its own right. Political culture is understood as a complex of historically established modes of collective political action, and the distinction between elite and mass political cultures is taken as methodologically important. Postcommunist nationalism appears as elite-constructed politics and ideology that are extensively drawn upon to compensate for state incapacity and the underdevelopment of civil society in newly liberalized nations.

This study approaches the problem of cross-cultural negotiations between Ukraine and Russia in a broader context of these countries' dramatic search for their new identities in the postcommunist order. Russia learns to live as a regional rather than a global power, but also, in the process, has to fight shadows of its imperial and communist past. Ukraine, as a former part of the Russian Empire, is the crucial stumbling block in Russia's movement to a normal nationhood. Should Ukraine be considered a zone of the Russian "vital interests"? Is it possible to ignore it altogether? These questions plague Russian policy makers and thwart the ongoing negotiations between the two countries. Ukraine, for its part, has to defend its national independence against Moscow's attempts at reintegration, which are not surprisingly supported by many Ukrainian Russians and Russophones, especially in the left-leaning eastern areas of the country. Nationalist appellations on both sides promote further estrangement between the two countries and encourage authoritarian tendencies that frustrate development and jeopardize international security.<sup>15</sup>

Ukrainian-Russian relations cannot be disentangled from a history of intense interpenetration of Ukrainian and Russian cultures and national identities. Not only has the Ukrainian self-image been heavily Russified by the former empire, but the latter also, in its own turn, became inadvertently Ukrainianized through the permanent influx of Ukrainian talent, cultural borrowing, and reflection on the common past. A peculiar pattern of expansion through non-exclusive incorporation and assimilation heavily influenced Russian national consciousness. Russians had never learned to distinguish themselves as imperial overlords from the non-Russian subjects of the empire. Ukrainians were the primary beneficiaries and, on occasion, first victims of this predilection, which still shapes international relations in the region, generating a number of problems for all sides involved. On the Russian side, a crucial question is whether or not it can successfully follow a nation-state model of development that, some would argue, is more suitable for smaller European nations. If it cannot, refederalization of at least some part of the former Soviet space, of which the Russia–Belarus Union serves as an early indicator, might well be the only course for Russia's national revival.<sup>16</sup> The counterpart question for Ukraine is whether or not a fully autonomous nation building can succeed in a situation where not only does one-third of the population consider Russian to be the mother tongue, but where the very identity sought appears to be influenced by conscious and subconscious mirroring of its Russian counterpart.<sup>17</sup>

Despite a number of similarities, the identity crises both countries experience are rooted in different historical milieus. While Russians struggle to

accommodate Ukrainian “otherness,” Ukrainians find it difficult to rediscover Russian “sameness.” The two peoples are very close indeed. Their languages are mutually comprehensible, their histories are intertwined and apparently originating from the same ancestral homeland (Kievan Rus), their patterns of settlement are intermeshed, and their psychological profiles are very much alike. Inter marriages between the two groups are commonplace, and Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism is widespread.<sup>18</sup> Cultural and ethnic interpenetration is profound. Still, Russians and Ukrainians are not one and the same people. Dissolving Ukrainian distinctiveness in Russianized “family culture” is both impossible and unethical. Russia’s attempts to dictate to Ukraine what the Ukrainian policy should be like may not be excused by any amount of cultural similarities. Reciprocally, the Ukrainian quest to become a part of “Europe,” as opposed to the “Eurasian” Russia, overrates the cultural distance between the two and creates false imagery, which can only impede Ukraine’s progress in the desired direction. Proponents of Ukrainian Russophobia must remember that “their own ideas risk pulling Ukraine in a half-circle, away from the modern West and back toward a much older and darker Europe, not Russian or Soviet, but also not to be remembered with much nostalgia.”<sup>19</sup>

Ukrainian “otherness” in the Russian eyes, or Russian distinctiveness vis-à-vis Ukraine, is of such a special nature that we may think of these two as being the “closest” and most significant “others” with respect to each other. Closeness of this kind can mean one of two things. It may result from a genuine sister-nation relationship that advances equality and complementarity of the parties. Or it may reveal a long-standing relationship of hegemonic domination and assimilation that eradicates cultural specificity of a subdominant group and underscores its liminality, aiming to dissolve it in another nation’s body.<sup>20</sup> In the first instance, the closeness of the two peoples drastically reduces the possibility of a “hot” conflict between them, if it does not eliminate the chance of conflict altogether. However, intercultural closeness can actually heighten hostilities in the second instance. Cultural anthropologists have observed that in many instances the lesser distance between “us” and “them” tends to be translated into fiercer reactions to “their” encroachments on “our” territory.

Both interpretations of Ukrainian-Russian closeness have been offered and defended. If Soviet propaganda stood behind the image of a “brotherly family of nations,” anticommunist scholarship was all too often tempted by the no less propagandistic image of a “prison of the peoples.” In that hypothetical prison, Russians were the principal guardians and executors, while Ukraini-

ans, together with other non-Russians, usually took the place of inmates. Whether the two peoples were “friends” or “foes” depended on the perspective of the writer. Changing the stress from “enmity” to “friendliness,” interestingly, did not make the result of an enterprise less reified than before. If not antagonists, Ukrainians and Russians were doomed to remain “brothers,” with the former inevitably assigned a “junior brother” role.<sup>21</sup>

The “friends” or “foes” dichotomy is itself constructed and may well designate a false dilemma. Ambivalent relationships are not uncommon among states, just as they are not rare among individuals or groups. It is reasonable to expect that both positive and negative meaning-structures with regard to the other may coexist, influencing mass psychology and decision making alike. These structures may also alternate, depending on perceived behavior of the other and concrete predicament and corresponding priorities of the self. Finally, if “either-or” is wrong, then “neither-nor” could be just right—a possibility that we must always be prepared to accept. “We” construct “their” identity in no smaller way than “they” constructed it on their own. The resources of both parties are involved in the process. The way the opponent is treated is conditioned by the actors’ culture, which is tantamount to political culture whenever larger social groups and nations are involved.

While Russian political culture has been extensively studied since at least the late 1950s, Ukrainian political culture has barely presented a research problem until recently. The reason was simple: Ukrainians have lacked a state of their own. In spite of that, indigenous traditions of governance and local styles of politically relevant behavior did have a chance to develop. Modes of collective behavior in Ukraine differed from those in Russia, reflecting differences of political development. It is erroneous to treat Ukrainian political culture as just a regional variety of Russian political culture, if only because the former has also been shaped by Polish, Austro-Hungarian, and other foreign domination. The study of Ukrainian political culture presents an important research task of its own.

An explicit comparison helps to throw the principal values of both peoples into a sharper relief. By looking at Ukrainian political culture as such, we may arrive at a better understanding of contemporary Ukrainian state and society. We may also learn something new about Russia. From here, we may proceed further to discuss the nature of Russian-Ukrainian relations, as they developed historically and continue to evolve at the moment. Since political culture conditions the self-other imagery and methods of dealing with opponents, better and more detailed knowledge of culture-relevant aspects of politics is indispensable for the theory and practice of international relations.

“Cultured” identities of the parties acquire special weight and meaning, when identity formulations set the stage for issue-specific negotiations, as is usually the case in Ukrainian-Russian relations.

Political culture and national identity of a country are mutually complementary aspects of the same phenomena. Since nationality is politically shaped and reflects the national traditions of governance, political culture must be seen as an important aspect of national identity. Reciprocally, the process whereby national identities are formed also lays the groundwork for political development along nationally specific lines, hence for political culture defined on a national basis. Political culture can be seen as a form of historical memory of a nation, which organizes political behavior according to the lessons drawn by the nation from its earlier experience.

For now, ethnicity and nationality, on one hand, and political culture, on the other, remain two different fields of expertise. One of the goals of this work is to tackle them together. I argue that nationalism after communism is a phenomenon of political culture and a result of conscious choices made by political elites. It has nothing to do with primordial ethnic animosities and remains underexplained in terms of the security dilemma popular with international relations scholars. Postcommunist nationalism did not arise out of external threats to the security of newly independent states but created these states in the first instance and instigated feelings of insecurity and perceptions of threat in the second. Nationalist leaders consciously and continuously introduce external “threats” in order to secure mobilization of public support. As with any other self-fulfilling prophecy, invented threats become reality once they are taken seriously.

An immediate practical question concerns the prospects for Russian-Ukrainian coexistence after the end of the Soviet Union. International perceptions change over time, and so do rules of international conduct. For Moscow czarism, Ukraine was but a part of a natural dynastic legacy, once lost to external powers. It had to be retrieved in accordance with the “divine right” of the monarch. For the absolutist Russian Empire, Ukraine did not and could not represent a matter of foreign policy, since it was regarded as an internal province with, at best, a limited autonomy of local government. The Kremlin shaped Ukraine’s external profile throughout most of the Soviet period. Though proclaiming the right of secession on paper, Leninist visions of national self-determination excluded such a possibility in practice. The collapse of the Soviet Union has belatedly launched Ukrainian-Russian relations to international heights. What cultural and political resources are brought into this dialogue now? How do legacies of the past influence the policies of today?

A well-known hypothesis of “democratic peace” postulates that democracies never go to war with each other. This is essentially a political-culturalist proposition. It asserts that achievement of a certain level of political development prevents the state from attacking one of its kin. Though neither Russia nor Ukraine can be considered a full-fledged democracy, these two are in many respects akin. Their political and national identities, histories, and cultures are interwoven, their languages are traceable to a common root, their ethnic features exhibit profound similarities, and their mutual perceptions on a mass level are generally not hostile. Does this say anything about their expected behavior in a conflictual situation?

I support an optimistic answer to this question. However, Russian-Ukrainian relations are not unproblematic. For one thing, culture compatibility cannot overdetermine live politics. Economic interests, security considerations, and domestic and international contingencies of all sorts directly influence decision making, demanding swift ad hoc solutions to arising problems. Historical legacies form an important, perhaps a decisive, part of the environment for political action, but the action itself answers the immediate needs of the moment and therefore cannot be preordained by history. Second, culture changes. An unforeseen upheaval or a sustained propagandistic effort may well disrupt the delicate balance in the Ukrainian-Russian field of politics, thus bringing erstwhile “brothers” to the point where no easy return to a more or less amicable relationship of the past will be possible.

As one analyst astutely noted, a “finely poised” situation in Ukraine “means that only the foolhardy would attempt to predict the future.”<sup>22</sup> The statement is also true with respect to Russia. As Ukrainian-Russian relations go, they are subject to so many stresses from both inside and outside that any interpretation is bound to remain provisional. A Yugoslavian scenario has not materialized, despite all fears and predictions to the contrary that were advanced in the first postindependence years. Political-cultural compatibility and predominantly nonexclusive discourses of identity may have played roles in securing such an outcome. Now regional stability depends on the further development of a mutually beneficial Ukrainian-Russian collaboration. Many believe that Russian hegemony should be put in check by the local nationalisms in the “near abroad.” In my view, this strategy is wrong and can lead only to estrangement between Russia and its neighbors, as well as Russia and the West. Russia’s postcommunist embrace of Western ways and values is too valuable to the world to be reversed with a new variant of the containment strategy.

Despite generally favorable attitudes toward democracy, operational codes of behavior in a post-Soviet society cannot but exhibit a strong imprint of the

authoritarian ways of governance.<sup>23</sup> Because of this discrepancy, normative structures lack stability, occasioning loss of orientation, blurred identities, and the want of a consistent vision of national development. This leads to weak predictability of foreign policies and opens the stage for potential conflicts. The post-Soviet space, fragmented into several newly independent states, emerged as a highly competitive arena of international politics, with Ukraine poised against Russia as a chief local competitor. Ukraine's distinct position in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and its criticism of the Russia–Belarus Union thwart Russia's attempts to recreate a confederation or even a new federation under Russian control, which could be further used to bargain with the West “as equals.”<sup>24</sup>

In Russia as in Ukraine, politics of identity shape both the internal political landscape and the whole set of goals and instruments of foreign policy. Identity politics is laden with traditional (territorial disputes, defense policies) and nontraditional (national images, developmental goals) security considerations. No less than in any other sphere of human practices, political identities are about “using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from,’ so much as what we might become.”<sup>25</sup> Discourses of national identity convey an image of a desired future and expose what a post-Soviet political culture may be like tomorrow. In Russia, the debate centers around the choice of a civic versus neoimperial model of nation building. In Ukraine, the choice is between ethnically “nationalizing” and broadly inclusive consociational policies. Whatever transpires will determine whether the society will embrace a neo-isolationist or a liberal-democratic course of development.

Authoritarian turns in contemporary Russian and Ukrainian politics may not be explained in terms of fully rational decision making nor as somehow predetermined by despotic propensities of the national character. Transitions backfired because of the culturally informed choices and practices of the immediately preceding period. Yet, people, who bear responsibility for their actions, make choices. The elite, who use the politics of identity to justify new allocations of power and privilege, largely shape postcommunist realities. Meanwhile, dislodged and disoriented masses are more than ever open to political manipulation. Moscow's attempts to hold Russia by force slowed down democratic development. Nationalist visions of Ukrainian nation building may have a similar effect if implemented by Kiev. The Russian and Ukrainian elite are mutually dependent and demonstrate the capacity to learn from each other—not only in Ukraine, which closely followed Russia's political development after communism, but also in Russia, as seen in its recent rela-

tive economic closure or the state-led assault on independent media. This mutual learning process bears witness to the ongoing cultural and political relationship, which cannot be characterized as either wholeheartedly cordial or simply inimical.

Contemporary situations in postcommunist societies are characterized by a tension between global aspirations of the ruling elite and their attempts to create social cohesion on a national base. On the elite level, discourses of identity perform the important functions of labeling political opponents as “traitors” or “aliens” (“Us vs. Them”). On a mass level, ethnic identity provides a surrogate for the broken ties of erstwhile Soviet communitarianism, satisfying that feeling of belonging that underdeveloped unions, simulated parties, or fledgling professional and neighborhood associations will not be able to furnish any time soon. Nationalist mobilization against a designated “enemy” may be more or less successful, depending on a number of factors, of which a history of coexistence with the targeted other and current socio-economic conditions of the country may weigh heavier than the others. Anti-Russian nationalism in Ukraine is limited by the region and weakened by a continuing dependence on Russian energy subsidies. Hard feelings toward Ukraine in Moscow are kept in check by considerations of ethnocultural affinity and pure economic expediency, as Russia still sees Ukraine as its largest export and import market and a natural “corridor” to the West.

## **THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK**

Since identity is shaped by discursive practices, I open the book with a review of the literature (chapter 1). An analysis of classic and more recent representations of the Soviet and Russian political culture in what came to be known as studies in Sovietology aims to satisfy more than pure academic interest. Throughout the Cold War era, Sovietology, more than any other academic discipline, was called upon to serve practical politics. Sovietological perceptions of reality framed the *realpolitik*, and continue to do so. Western representations of Soviet Russia and the role of Ukraine in the former Soviet Union went a long way to give Ukrainian-Russian relations after the end of communism a false start. The mantra of totalitarianism, still chanted by some of its particularly zealous adepts, not only preempted a genuine dialogue between postcommunist Russia and the other former Soviet republics, but also instilled Russians with a totally overblown complex of guilt that required equally potent negation and suppression. Anti-Soviet myths uncritically taken by Gorbachev’s “glasnost” journalists, led them to gloss over the striking differences



between high Stalinism and the post-Stalin periods of development. As a result, the left alternative to Russian oligarchic capitalism has been excluded from the start. Worse still, in most non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union, the regime's crimes were ethnicized and given a Russian face. Western writers have gone out of their way to remind Russians of their dusty imperial heritage, to warn of the impending "Weimar," and to suggest blithely that Russia's disintegration might well leave the West happy. As a result, the people were provoked into embracing, first, the rhetoric of imperial glory (an unconditional taboo throughout the Soviet period) and, second, a quintessentially imperial view of the substance of Russia's Chechen problem. The chapter also compares the various methodological approaches to political culture and nationality, supporting those that view culture as a process of social interaction and insisting on muting the external observer's ideas in order to give more attention to the ideas and views of the observed.

Chapter 2 deals with the history of the Russian-Ukrainian relationship. History and politics converge in many ways. First, current politics is a historical phenomenon itself. It is informed by history and based upon historic antecedents. Its claims to historic continuity form an important part of its legal continuity. The goals it poses today become events or failures of tomorrow. Second, history enters politics via the medium of political culture. Political culture is a historical product, a record file of yesterday's live politics. Political culture inherited from previous stages of development and selectively refurbished with the help of historically "proven" components shapes the political behavior and the perceptions of the national interest. Finally, national history is a privileged reservoir of national identity. Identity is made of history as much as it is made of desire. When history and desire collide, they spawn the phenomenon of usable history: that is, historical narratives that serve political purpose. These narratives usually take certain focal events of history as their primary objects of interpretation and/or contestation. The chapter examines some of these climactic points and overviews the history-influenced debates that are relevant to Ukrainian-Russian relations today.

Chapter 3 examines the postcommunist crisis of Russian national identity, specifically tracing the impact that the loss of Ukraine had on triggering this crisis. Russia's Ukrainian problem is put into a broader context of new Russia's search of a foreign policy free from its ideological burdens of the past. The analysis shows that this initially liberating quest was quickly superseded by a new round of "return to the roots" policy, which brought new ideological problems to Russia's relations with the "near abroad" and the West. The chapter further analyzes how various actors in the Russian political spectrum differ in

their perceptions of Ukrainian independence and corresponding visions of policy toward Ukraine. While Soviet style internationalists lose ground, nationalist visions of all sorts accept prominence. Resurgent nationalism draws upon the imperial legacy, which leads it to embrace an amorphous concept of the “all-Russian” (East Slavic) identity to the detriment of a specifically Russian national identification. Hence, the crisis of Russian national consciousness continues, receiving new boosts from the very attempts to alleviate it. The chapter argues that the idea of a confederate East Slavic Union could indeed be approached as a workable policy blueprint under the conditions of decentralization and full equality of the participants.

The next two chapters are devoted to the Russian and Ukrainian political cultures, as they influence identity and politics in both countries. In chapter 4, historical evidence and data of a more recent nature are employed to explain certain paradoxes in Russian politics before and after communism. The meaning-structures that gave rise to seemingly inconsistent political manifestations are grouped into two main complexes, of which the first is distinguished by a high degree of ambivalence and oscillations between the revolutionary and conservative lines of behavior, while the second betrays an inclination to rely on authoritarianism as a means of development. Both value systems are approached as ideal-typical constructions. The revolutionism-as-conservatism problem is illustrated through voting inconsistencies and through the example of the short-lived post-Soviet “liberal” revolution. Developmental excuses for authoritarianism are traced back to the Petrine “well-ordered” empire.<sup>26</sup> Subsequent attempts to modernize the country through executive fiat have been similarly informed by a belief that an organizational effort from above may be substituted for the natural process of grass-roots development and self-organization. Developmental authoritarianism informs a broad range of Vladimir Putin’s policies and influences Russia’s relations with the “near abroad.” Finally, I turn to the problem of Russian nationalism, seeing it as a conservative reaction to the loss of previously dominant Soviet identity.

In chapter 5, I look at political culture and nationality in Ukraine. Since the country had long been devoid of independent national statehood, its political culture developed features of dependency and parochialism. It has grown as a political culture of a stateless nation, as patterns of power-related behavior were constructed through a complex adjustment to the exogenous sources of authority. A political culture of accommodation reflected this predicament and helped to deal with it. As Ukraine was divided and redivided among its neighboring states, so the political culture that Ukrainians developed could not but be fragmented into several regionally, linguistically, and religiously

defined parts. Fragmentation, in turn, fostered localism, parochialism, and dependency. It also prevented national consolidation and thwarted ambitions of would-be nation builders. Fragmentation remains a significant feature of Ukrainian politics today, keeping the Russified east and south at an arm's length from the nationalistic west of the country.

The inconsistent nature of Ukraine's political culture has greatly contributed to the secondary and dependent character of Ukrainian nationalism. As a particular example of "learning by doing," Ukrainian nationalism followed in the wake of similar intellectual and political developments in East Central Europe. Both government and the right-wing opposition in Ukraine could copy the cultural codes of other "model" nationalisms as late as the early 1990s.<sup>27</sup> Political and cultural dependence prompted the state to take full charge of the nationalist mobilization after the end of communism. Ukraine's reliance on Western support and the elite's desire to move away from the former Soviet center led to the policies of the "othering" of Russia and the Russians and to an identity construction without much regard to the history, the economic reality, or the wishes of the country's Russian-speaking population.

Chapter 6 describes Ukraine's attempts to counter the identity threat emanating from Russia and the government's inability to draw a principled line of distinction between Moscow's policies and rhetoric, on the one hand, and cultural demands of local Russian community, denigrated as a "fifth column" in nationalist press, on the other hand. The analysis involves such issues as language policies and minority rights, territorial claims and counterclaims, the debate on "European" versus "Eurasian" heritage, military and security policies, economic interdependence, and the recurrence of the "Russian question" in the electoral cycle. The chapter addresses Ukraine's regional divide, which continues to influence practically all aspects of its daily life, and demonstrates that regional reactions to the Russian challenge diverge to the point of their diametrical opposition. Ukraine's politics of identity is misplaced first and foremost because it does little to close the political and cultural gap between regions. An ethnically ascriptive identity promulgated by the government simply does not work in a good half of the country. Perhaps, it will—in the future—however, the price, in the form of further estrangement of citizenry from already not too popular government, may prove prohibitive well before the desired future comes.

The last chapter looks at the problem of Russia, Ukraine, and the West. It pays special attention to the security implications of Russian-Ukrainian relations and analyzes the divergent attitudes to the idea of deeper integration within the framework of the CIS. It takes a closer look at the problem of the

Ukrainian “Russian” territory (Crimea) and the continued presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in the Crimean port of Sevastopol. It finally turns to both countries’ relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and to the danger of the potentially turbulent repercussions of this relationship. The chapter argues that the Western policy of encouragement of the two countries’ distancing from each other, which has been motivated by geopolitical considerations and without much regard to their interwoven histories, economies, and cultures, might prove itself ill conceived and plainly detrimental to the stability and economic viability of the post-Soviet area.

This book does not pretend to write a comprehensive history of Ukrainian-Russian relations or to exhaust the topic of their political cultures and national identities. Its notion of political culture owes more to the history than to the survey research. My views are consciously interpretive and do not claim to discern the “objective truth” behind the Ukrainian-Russian relationship. However, I do hope to orient the reader in the maze of conflicting narratives and practices that make up postcommunist politics in Russia and Ukraine and shape the two countries’ perceptions of each other.

# Political Culture and Nationality in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies

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The concept of political culture was applied early on to the Soviet reality. As Sovietology was interested in everything from engineering to the economy to public management to the arts and literature, political culture was invoked in quite different contexts, making it difficult to compare various uses of the term and establish a common denominator. The periodic change of methodological focus caused additional difficulty. Soviet studies followed bigger trends in social and political sciences. Theories of political culture had to accommodate intellectual fashions that accompanied periods of dominance of the totalitarian school, developmental models, modernization theory, interest group theory, and so on.<sup>1</sup> Whether Soviet studies as a whole could be regarded a part of the academic mainstream was also a debated question. When Sovietology had finally found its due place under the rubric of “area studies,” which were somewhat reluctantly claimed by comparative politics, new scholarship questioned the very compatibility of political culture research and the conventionally understood “comparative project.”<sup>2</sup>

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the world socialist system, some felt that comparative communism studies belonged to the past. The Russian/Soviet political culture and the most appropriate ways to study it became a subject of a historical debate. Decision makers do not take the political culture of a bygone polity into consideration. The main-

stream “science of politics” prefers to deal with actual politics, rather than its historical recollection, too. All of a sudden, the political culture of “real socialism” exemplified by the former Soviet Union became an artifact for some future “archaeologist of knowledge”: too close to be studied by cultural anthropology, yet too remote to present any interest for comparative or international politics.

However, the issue resurfaced before too long. As new unexpected problems blocked the political and economic liberalization of the former Soviet states, the search for the mechanism of inertia started in earnest. The problem cannot be of a structural character: almost each and every institution of the former socialist society has been changed, destroyed, or substantially modified. Social structures are malleable and should eventually reconfigure, if a persistent effort to change them is exerted for a long-enough period. In the postcommunist world, national governments preside over a grandiose attempt at social engineering, which involve immense international resources. And yet, the effort, reasonably successful in East Central Europe, brought bitter disappointment throughout the former Soviet Union. The radiant capitalist future did not materialize. International aid only increased the outstanding portion of national debt. Reformed communists returned to the parliaments in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, using the very mechanism of free, contested elections they had opposed for so long. Large sections of the former *nomenklatura* stayed in power, national executives donned bureaucratic-authoritarian garbs, and more or less pronounced regimes of oligarchic dominance of society have been established. The liberal-democratic dream all but evaporated. Why did it happen?

A frequently cited answer is the political culture. It is often viewed as a reservoir of stability and a force of inertia that curtails and molds the process of change. Human culture is that link between the past and the future that pierces the present, making it very much what it is. Political culture serves as a template for contemporary practices and institutions: not only in the realm of politics per se, but everywhere the relations of authority are involved. This quality exempts political culture from the museum of antiquity and transforms its study, including the study of its historical antecedents, into a politically relevant project, something more than an exercise in the pure “archaeology of knowledge.” It allows taking some insights of the old Sovietology aboard and makes a bridge to post-Soviet studies possible.

Yet, there is more to political culture than inertia and continuity. As a historical phenomenon, it is prone to change. When its inertial side prevails, it obstructs social transformation. Conversely, when political culture itself

undergoes rapid changes, the change in the society must be accelerated. The debate on continuity versus change in Soviet and post-Soviet societies thus proceeds on two levels: one addressing changes in political culture and the other addressing its effects on the political and social systems at large. On one hand, Russia's failure to reform supports culturally deterministic explanations of the country's fate, advanced by those who see political culture primarily as a mainstay of historical continuity. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Edward Keenan, Henry Kissinger, Richard Pipes, and Stephen White, among others, saw the early Muscovy, the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and now, it seems, postcommunist Russia, too, as equally prone to absolutism, despotism, and servility. In this rendering, Soviet and then post-Soviet political culture appears but a bleak shadow of the mysteriously immortal political culture of the Russian monarchy, as it came into existence circa 1500s. On the other hand, there are those who, drawing on the insights of the totalitarian school in Sovietology, seek the root of all the present ills in the communist legacy of the country.<sup>3</sup> This approach inadvertently seconds the idea that the communists were indeed successful in changing traditional ways of life to the point of their virtual disappearance. If the change could be achieved so quickly, political culture must not be regarded solely as a reservoir of stability. We should see it rather as both a result and a vehicle of social and political transformations.

Both sides to the debate have concentrated their attention on the autocratic and antidemocratic elements of Russian political culture. If in the first case those were attributed to an antique historical heritage, in the second case they were believed to be created by the Soviet regime or the party, which carried seeds of the regime's design from the start.<sup>4</sup> Continuity or change, the Russian political culture was doomed to perpetuate the authoritarians in power. The picture was simply too narrow to accommodate Russia's own liberal and democratic traditions.

The first Western studies attempting to modify this view of Soviet political culture as "subject" or, at best, "subject-participatory" were published not earlier than the 1980s.<sup>5</sup> In one of them, DiFranceisco and Gitelman argued that the Soviet system had in reality provided for a rather broad and authentic participation that went well beyond the officially induced show of support to the system.<sup>6</sup> They noted the personalized character of unsolicited participation, informal communication and networking in pursuit of both personal and corporate goals, and more or less genuine political activism. In another persuasive statement, Stephen Cohen observed that "inadequate historical analysis leads to inadequate political analysis" and criticized "the Whig con-

sensus in Soviet studies” that asserts an “unbroken continuity” between dramatically different epochs in Russian and Soviet history. Cohen disproved this thesis empirically and exposed its methodological flaws: deep ahistoricism, reliance on “some concept of predestination,” lack of contextual sensitivity, and an implicit teleology in treating political traditions as if they were “virtually autonomous and deterministic.”<sup>7</sup> He advocated a more balanced and realistic approach to Soviet and Russian history, seeing it as open to contradictory tendencies and different models of development.

At the height of perestroika, Jeffrey Hahn saw signs of a democratic, rather than an autocratic, political culture in the city of Yaroslavl’ in central Russia. He specifically addressed the issue of continuity and change and compared the results of his 1990 survey to the American National Election Study of 1976, showing there was little difference between the two in terms of the political values and attitudes of the respondents. No recurring patterns of dominance and servility were found on the Russian side. Instead, “on all dimensions of political culture measured . . . political efficacy, political trust, support for popular elections, political interest and knowledge—the evidence suggests that Russians come closer to what we find in Western industrial democracies than to what we would expect to find if the traditional cultural patterns ascribed to the period of Russian autocracy had persisted.”<sup>8</sup>

From 1990 to 1996, several more studies by James L. Gibson, Arthur H. Miller, Nicolai N. Petro, William M. Reisinger, Richard Sakwa, and others came to the conclusion that democratic values and love of freedom form an important part of Russian political culture.<sup>9</sup> Some of these studies followed an historic interpretivist model, while others reported the results of a behavioral survey-based research. In the first case, we were reminded of usually disregarded facts in Russian history, like the Novgorod *veche*, Zemskii Sobor, *zemstvo* in general, and other manifestations of collective decision making in both local and national governance. Historical accounts emphasized the traditionally mitigating role of the Russian Orthodox Church and presented evidence of a subdominant but nevertheless viable protodemocratic tradition. In the second case, a number of survey studies showed Russia’s public opinion sufficiently tolerant, mature, and generally receptive of the democratic and civic values needed to support a transition from communism to democracy. Studies of both types defied dogmatic and overdeterministic presentations of Russian political culture as inherently “autocratic.”

While the thesis of a Russian “in-born” predilection for authoritarianism has been largely discredited, the totalitarian model remains useful for the analysis of the Stalinist “revolution from above” and its lasting impact on



social psychology of the people, an impact that has not been completely eliminated. Together with other studies of mass society, it provides a useful tool in the analysis of the concrete preconditions and mechanisms of social atomization, politically forced mobilization, state control, manipulation of culture symbols, and exploitation of instrumental rationality.<sup>10</sup> It helps to explain how “atomization and disorganization left individuals open to the assertion of the total claim, to co-optation into a social movement whose operating principles were rationalized by science and displayed as myth.”<sup>11</sup> Totalitarian theorists may yet have something to offer concerning the power of ethno-nationalist mobilizations after communism.

The early antecedents of the totalitarian model can be found in the works of the German Frankfurt school of thought and in some writings of such Russian émigré philosophers as N. Berdiaev, G. Fedotov, or S. Frank. If the Frankfurt theorists concentrated mostly on the “critique of instrumental reason” and “central plan fetishism,”<sup>12</sup> postrevolutionary Russian thinkers attempted to delineate those features in mass psychology that made the public yield to the manipulations by a small “antinational” elite. Admiration of force and the tradition to obey authorities were rightly or wrongly cited as Russian national characteristics. Underdevelopment of civil society, weakness of constitutional tradition, autocracy, and the absence of a dialogue between the state and the public were all seen as leading to a new-age despotism. Exile writers noted that the Russian masses tended to switch from the periods of mindless obedience to the spontaneous upheavals and riots that almost certainly only helped to excuse repeated brutality of the powers-that-were. The postrevolutionary dictatorship was described as a logical, though unfortunate, continuation of this centuries-old tradition.<sup>13</sup>

Russian émigrés pointed to the mutually alienating gap between the elite and the masses in the country. This implied the existence of two irreconcilable cultures, none of which could claim a nation-wide acceptance. From this point of view, Stalinism could have been seen as either an elite creation or the offshoot of mass psychology. Many researchers took the first way. The classic totalitarian model explained “outputs as initiated by the central leader, and as implemented through . . . the political process without significant modification.”<sup>14</sup> Later revisions produced a more sophisticated portrait of the power games, negotiations, and confrontations among competing political actors. Yet, the elite bias of mainstream Sovietology remained. When applied to Soviet realities, decision-making models were usually narrowed to a picture of competing, bargaining, and occasionally collaborating elites ultimately responsible for sometimes erratic and sometimes consistent policies.

With Stalin's death and the Khrushchev "thaw" that followed, the totalitarian explanation was gradually modified and replaced by bureaucratic politics models. A new focus on decision-making and policy implementation in complex organizations led researchers to acknowledge the internal diversity of the Soviet elite and the respective variety of its several organizational, if not political, cultures.<sup>15</sup> Reflecting on the dramatic changes that unfolded in Soviet society, the totalitarian school writers adopted a more relaxed view on such issues as the centrality of terror, salience of the top leader, or the internal coherence of the elite. No longer seeing the Soviet political establishment as a monolith, researchers were able to present Soviet politics "in light of the 'political resources' available to various participants . . . at different stages in the formulation, execution, and reformulation of public policies in the post-Stalin era."<sup>16</sup> Carl Friedrich stressed the existence of the "rival bureaucracies of a totalitarian dictatorship" and pointed out that the division of the party into two hierarchies, intended to increase its control over industry and blurring in some sectors the distinction between government and party, will create new problems because those functionaries preoccupied with production, whether industrial or agricultural, may increasingly neglect other functions.<sup>17</sup>

However, the idea, which opened an avenue for promising analyses of competing elites and their respective political and managerial cultures, was not taken further. Had it been, the 1991 partition of the USSR into constituent republican enclaves would not have come as a surprise to Western observers.

Hannah Arendt's brand of the totalitarian model offered a more balanced view of the interaction between the elite and the masses. The model's applicability was explicitly restricted to the period since Stalin's "second revolution" (1929–30) until the death of the dictator. Arendt emphasized the novelty of totalitarian rule, counterposing it to the Leninist "one-party dictatorship." She offered deep insights into the sociological and psychological mechanisms of mass support for totalitarian regimes. In Arendt's view, the disintegration of a modern nation-state and the decomposition of its class structure engendered feelings of loneliness, uprootedness, and superfluousness that pushed socially atomized individuals to embrace totalitarian movements and their universalist claims. The elite and mass reactions to this predicament were described as mutually reinforcing.<sup>18</sup>

Further studies stimulated by this vision might have presented the "elite" culture of the Russian revolutionary movement through the analysis of its lumpen-proletarian sources. On the other hand, mobilization of disenfranchised masses for the purposes of "radical destruction of every existing creed, value, and institution" would not be attributed solely to the elite's cynical

manipulation. The totalitarian project, by definition, requires willing participation of the masses. Terror, domination, and propaganda alone, or even all of these taken together, cannot by themselves account for the prevalent mood of the time. Totalitarianism indeed succeeded in sharing responsibility for its crimes with masses “who had lost their home in the world and now were prepared to be reintegrated into eternal, all-dominating forces which by themselves would bear man . . . to the shores of safety.”<sup>19</sup> The deterministic ideology of Soviet communism had found fertile ground in mass fatalism, alienation, and the hope born out of despair. This ground had been prepared by wars, revolutions, and pogroms that constituted a larger part of early twentieth-century Russian history.

Yet another insight of remarkable relevance to the present-day situation in postcommunist societies concerns “the delusion of human omnipotence through organization” that Arendt aptly noted in the totalitarian movement.<sup>20</sup> Not only does this observation place totalitarian ideologies and political cultures among the bastard descendants of the Enlightenment; it also tells us something about the current transition from socialism to capitalism, portrayed as “neo-Bolshevist” approach to the economic reform by a number of critics.<sup>21</sup> For another illustration of the same delusion of omnipotence and corresponding lack of humility before the unknown, one need not look farther than the nation- and state-building policies of the newly independent states gambling on ethnic nationalisms of a “titular nationality.” Here too, the laborious work of creating modern citizenry on the basis of interethnic compromise and the democracy of consensus has been abandoned in favor of deceitfully simple solutions of ethno-cultural “streamlining.”

The totalitarian model in Soviet studies was succeeded by several approaches drawing upon the behaviorist paradigm that came into being as a reaction against legalist and speculative philosophical theorizing of the preceding epoch. The behaviorist revolution was fed by the use of advanced quantitative methods, most notably survey research and statistical analysis. The first attempts to apply these methods to Soviet realities were undertaken in the early 1950s, that is, virtually simultaneously with their debut appearance in sociology. Of those first studies, the most known remains the Harvard Refugee Interview Project (HIP).<sup>22</sup> According to Alfred Meyer, “many of its findings were in conflict with the images conveyed by the totalitarian model. In their survey work, the members of the Harvard team discovered informal behavior and informal organizations underneath the totalitarian facade, a second economy, beginnings of a civil society, social stratification, role conflicts, and ethical notions opposed to Party doctrine.”<sup>23</sup> This information allowed schol-

ars to substantially correct the then dominant picture of the Soviet polity, based primarily on the sources from the Smolensk archives.<sup>24</sup> Some of the Harvard Project's conclusions bore direct relevance to the problem of political culture.

First, the class nature of the Soviet society in Weberian terms of social status, prestige, and life chances had been established. Second, the discovery of informal behavior and organizations disproved the previously unquestioned image of a totalitarian monolith based on coercive mobilization. Western observers now better understood the gap between "words" and "deeds" that Khrushchev admitted in his speech to the Twentieth Party Congress. Finally, the findings of the project paved the way for the application of a number of pluralist models ranging from interest group theory to corporatism to the studies of policy networks, coalitions and shifting alliances.<sup>25</sup> Now Soviet political culture had to be understood as an intensely diversified array of values and norms associated with different actors, each with its own political "weight" and group history, or as a median shaping out in interaction between these groups. By the early 1990s, behaviorist studies of the Soviet and early post-Soviet political culture boasted three nation-wide surveys with data sets largely comparable to each other. While the Harvard project had been most concerned with the class or quasi-class nature of the Soviet society, the second study of a comparable range, the Soviet Interview Project (SIP), delved deeper into the attitudes and value structures.

The SIP researchers noticed important connections between the intensity of formal and informal participation, generational and educational differences, and income inequality. They have established positive relation between participation and "unconventional" behavior such as: "refusing to vote, listening to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and other foreign broadcasts, reading and distributing *samizdat* . . . and participating in other unsanctioned activities." Political attitudes of "the best and the brightest" seemed to indicate the weakest support for the communist regime, the highest rate of alienation from its key values, and a clear predisposition toward "unconventional" behavior. The youngest and the best educated were not inclined to admit the priority of the state power over individual rights and civil liberties or to concur in the state control of the economy. Significantly for the would-be application of the rational choice models, the researchers maintained that, "other things equal, support for regime values and for the institutional structure of the Soviet social system increases with increases in material rewards. The problem, however, is that material benefits do not keep pace."<sup>26</sup>

These findings showed a degree of pluralization of the Soviet society and its political culture, which DiFranceisco and Gitelman characterized as “covert-participant,” suggesting that “the Russian-Soviet case (like others, especially in the Third World) demonstrates that there is no ineluctable progression from parochial to subject to participant political cultures. The Soviet system, like many others, is syncretic, adapting traditional clientelist modes to what appears to be institutions for democratic participation.” A growing domain of “privatized politics” inside the former Soviet Union was duly noted and specified as “the interaction between the citizen as client or supplicant looking for private benefit and the representative of the system interpreting and implementing policy for this individual.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, “privatization of politics,” said to be the defining feature of oligarchic capitalism in post-Soviet societies, was fully prepared by the Brezhnev-era developments.<sup>28</sup>

The grand design tradition of the HIP and SIP projects has been followed by the New Soviet Citizen public opinion survey, started by the University of Iowa scholars in June 1990.<sup>29</sup> The survey was conducted in Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania, allowing for a cross-national comparison. Research questions centered around such issues as alienation and support, participation, political and interpersonal trust, tolerance, deference to authorities, valuation of liberty, and rights consciousness. The survey’s focus on the prospects for democratic development highlighted political change, rather than political stability. Researchers discovered widespread support of democratic values, concluding that the enduring patterns of political behavior gave way to the newly evolved prodemocratic patterns. In a parallel cross-national study of connections between attitudes toward democracy and support of a market economy, James Gibson found that both Russian and Ukrainians, far from being inborn authoritarians, wanted a responsible state and “socialism that works,” meaning a hybrid between a welfare state and a market economy. Popular preferences thus uncovered showed that “the Russians and Ukrainians probably differ little from many of their Western counterparts” in the support they give to both individual freedom and social equity, or democratic processes and socially responsible governance.<sup>30</sup>

These studies replaced the outmoded static image of the Soviet political culture with a more dynamic one. However, the static model had been so firmly established in academia that the new results contradicting its basic assumptions were interpreted as a sign of the waning of political culture theory in general. The divorce between political culture “pessimists” and modernization “optimists,” respectively relying on either “bad” or “good” history for evidence, reappeared in another dichotomy between “survey researchers,” more

sensible to the value shift currently under way in the former Soviet Union, and “historians,” generally supportive of a dreary view of the post-Soviet predicament. In this false opposition, political culture is taken to work against change, and “the argument for the importance of a ‘Russian’ political culture . . . in the sense of historical continuity is faring poorly” with survey researchers.<sup>31</sup> In fact, what fares poorly is only one view of Russian political culture as immutable and intrinsically antidemocratic. Recently “discovered” democratic values did not appear out of the blue. The historical evidence that is often neglected by the “pessimists” shows that these values were not alien to Russians long before Gorbachev. Historians should not be rebuked for their working with the past, rather than the present, but only if the picture they draw appears monochrome, lopsided, or oversimplified.

Behaviorist projects do not exhaust the whole spectrum of political culture research. The so-called interpretivist explanations, which emphasize historic interpretation and other hermeneutic methods, are well represented in communist and postcommunist studies.<sup>32</sup> Interpretivist accounts of Russian and Soviet political culture are much indebted to Russian émigré thinkers. Studies of the Russian national character and social psychology of Russian intelligentsia by Nikolai Berdiaev, S. Bulgakov, S. Frank, P. Struve, and other intellectuals of the *Vekhi* tradition; thoughts and writings on Russia by Pitirim Sorokin; the “Eurasianist” theories by P. Savitskii, N. Trubetskoi, and associates; and the ideas of the Parisian *Novyi grad* group (G. Fedotov and others) all bear direct relevance to the present discussions.<sup>33</sup> Several Western intellectuals of Russian descent continue this tradition now. The latest wave of emigration from the former Soviet Union brought new works in this genre, though of a lesser academic value and often harmed by their excessively aggressive anti-Russian bias.<sup>34</sup>

Interpretivist accounts, by definition, are supposed to be more vulnerable to subjective distortions than self-consciously “value-free” conceptualizations. Interpretivists do not engage in a value-neutral, nonnormativist analysis precisely because a good measure of subjectivity is required by the canons of the genre. Still, naked subjectivism will not be excused either. The accepted subjectivity is not that of an interpreter, but that of the people who are dealt with in the study. Interpretivists view political culture “as the ‘meaning’ of political life, or the meaningful aspect of politics.”<sup>35</sup>

But what should we take as “meaning”? What seems meaningful to an external observer may be less meaningful, or not meaningful, in the same way to the observed. On the observer’s side, “meaning” is too broad a concept to be unambiguous. Behaviorists operationalize political meaning through the

values, attitudes, and opinions held by the citizenry. Historians look for meaning in broad historical trends and landmark events. Anthropologists seek it in the rites, the rituals, and the customs of a society. Social psychologists tend to uncover it in patterns of collective interaction and group behavior, which may not be self-consciously recognized by participants. Institutionalists emphasize organizational rules that, in their view, define political and social conventions prevalent under the circumstances.<sup>36</sup> What scholars see as meaningful aspects of social life varies from one discipline to another and can embrace quite different things. The problem is further complicated by inevitable variances of meaning on the side of the agent. Even if the observers are inside the observed community, there is no definite way to ascertain that their personal reading of the process actually replicates meaning attribution by the group.

Most agree that meaning finds its source in social practices. Once constituted, social meaning feeds back into the practices that have generated it in the first place. Looking at how meaning is constructed helps to understand, what meaning *is*.<sup>37</sup> Since social processes actually “live” only in the eyes of the beholder, their outcome(s) will differ in significance, value, and even configuration depending on the particular standpoints of participating agents. No singular meaning can be derived from a detailed investigation of the process because the process itself unfolds as an infinite multiplicity of individual strategies of action. This means that any diligent (“objective”) reading of socially shared meaning remains first and foremost an interpretation, that is, by necessity a subjective account of externally unfolding events, with a researcher attempting to reconstruct perceptions of these events by participating agents and understand their significance for the actors from either a functionalist or a normativist perspective.

A third way is informed by phenomenology. By shifting the focus of attention from the analyst’s ideas to the participants’ ideas and from the culture as a value system to the culture as a process of social interaction, phenomenological interpretivism achieves a degree of objectivity (“intersubjectivity”) that other approaches may not be able to reach. While necessarily relying on some preexisting knowledge of a society’s “workings,” phenomenology sensitizes us to the fact that those “workings” can be supported by patterns of interaction and value structures different from our own. Most importantly, value structures are seen as negotiable, flexible outcomes of interactive practices, rather than rigid, fixed entities. Culture, from this point of view, is a “narrative, which persons are constantly rewriting,” while “meaning and purpose are not found in formulae, but emerge from discourse.”<sup>38</sup>

Phenomenological applications to the field of Soviet and post-Soviet studies are few. Stephen Welch looks at Stalinist “cultural revolution” and its impact on ordinary people, for whom the artificially constructed culture was quite real, since it provided “a basis for their own continuance and functioning as a social group.”<sup>39</sup> A counterexample of unofficial “shopfloor culture,” guided by more pragmatic considerations than the exalted ideology of socialist construction, serves to further illuminate culture’s social-practical roots. Michael Urban’s analysis of post-Soviet political discourse concentrates on essential similarities between the formally opposed “democratic” and “conservative” camps in the postcommunist Russia, tracing these similarities backward to their common Soviet past and projecting them forward to the uncertain postcommunist future. Vladimir Zviglianich explores the “phenomenology of Soviet conservatism” and writes about the carnality of perestroika, itself a product of the later-Soviet-era ritualization of reality. Oleg Kharkhordin draws on Michel Foucault to examine the role of communist rituals and practices of surveillance in creation of the Soviet individual.<sup>40</sup>

The phenomenological project merits further attention. Quantitative sociology misses a great deal of information on meaning creation, conveyance, and restructuring. As survey researchers acknowledge, “We tend to know a good deal more about values and opinions than about other dimensions of the political culture, such as affective attachments and aversions and patterns of background knowledge, information acquisition, and opinion formation.”<sup>41</sup> Phenomenology may shed new light precisely on these “patterns of background knowledge” and routine practices of “information acquisition.” It explains affective dimensions of culture and identity as social-practical outcomes of the activities that are not “preset” by existing institutions or values but open to constant reshaping and reinterpretation by participating actors. While behaviorism tends to see values as absolute and enduring, phenomenology treats them as intersubjective dynamic configurations of reciprocal stances and dispositions of the actors. Hence, the meaning of liberty in Russia must not necessarily repeat its American reading, and the latter itself changes over time, expanding into previously uncovered or even untouchable areas.

The concept of political culture usually refers to a nation state. Subnational units are thought of as supporting subcultures at best. If so, political culture must be seen as a political representation of the whole national system of culture. National values enter political culture and form its important constitutive part. These values mirror the political, the social, and the ethnic history of the people. When people are united by a common language, common traditions and customs, and a collective consciousness and shared identity,



we see their collective culture in terms of ethnicity. Surprisingly, political culture studies rarely make ethnic values a separate, conceptually distinct object of analysis. Equally, most studies of nationalism avoid paying political culture more than a fleeting attention. As a result, these two problem areas are seldom brought together and assessed against each other. Neither Sovietology nor more recent research in postcommunist politics could develop the linkage in a methodologically rigorous manner.

### SOVIET NATIONALITY POLICIES IN SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET STUDIES

The first critical studies of Soviet nationality politics were published in the interwar East Central European countries. To describe the newly installed communist regime, Polish, Czech, and Hungarian writers coined the label of “red czarism.”<sup>42</sup> The stress on continuity blocked the analysis of the regime’s innovations. Communist nationality policy was presented as a simple continuation of the Russian imperialist expansion and subjugation of the conquered peoples. Russians were accordingly depicted as a “normal” imperial nation dominating minorities at home and exploiting colonial subjects abroad. This evaluation was seemingly in line with observations of the national and social struggle in the non-Russian periphery, where local communists, often outnumbered by better-entrenched formations of the propertied classes, had to rely on the aid of the Moscow-directed Red Army in their bid for national hegemony. The myth of Russian communist “intervention” and the “occupation” of helpless peripheries ignored local communist presence in the peripheries and downgraded power-sharing arrangements practiced by the Bolsheviks as trivial.

The arrival of the misnamed “national Bolshevism” and other manifestations of the *“smena vekh”* (“change of signposts”) movement among the exile Russians lent the thesis of Russia’s resurgent imperialism some credibility. *Smenovekhovstvo* had its logic, which reverberated with the traditional worldview of the Russian statist. As long as the territorial integrity of the country was preserved and a strong ruler managed the affairs of the multinational state successfully, the concrete beliefs of the ruler or the political-economic direction of the state did not matter much. In the opinion of a leading “national Bolshevik,” the revolution could “evolve” away from its original cosmopolitanism. The émigré “fellow-travelers” would then be able to serve their homeland by securing, “as far as possible, the organic or even mechanic adjustment of the revolution to the national interests of the country.”<sup>43</sup> Rea-

soning such as this could find its way to Russian monarchists, former imperial bureaucrats, supporters of the authoritarian “strong hand,” and even opportunistic people of formerly liberal convictions. No doubt there was some sympathetic audience among the Bolsheviks, too.

However, this was *not* an authentic Bolshevik program. Properly speaking, *smenovekhovstvo*, much criticized by the party leaders, should have been characterized rather as “bolshevized” nationalism, not national Bolshevism. It was an ideology of émigré intellectuals, many of whom were lost between the Right and the Left in political struggles they could not fully comprehend. These people appealed not so much to the Soviet government as to their fellow emigrants. They encouraged collaboration with the communists, seeing the ruling party as a legitimate promoter of the Russian national cause. But they did not belong to the party themselves nor vested by the party with policy implementation functions of any significance.

Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, characterized by Lenin as “Russified non-Russians” who “are always on the prodigal side when it is a matter of truly Russian attitudes,” represented the closest approximation to national Bolshevism.<sup>44</sup> Whether Lenin himself was a hidden Russian nationalist or a genuine proletarian internationalist, so cautious of great Russian chauvinism as to welcome “preventative” discrimination against Russians remains an open question.<sup>45</sup> This author subscribes to a view that the very nature of the overcentralized system of the communist government allowed any “hidden nationalist” at the apex of political power to reveal their secret inclinations in full. There was no point in fighting against Stalin’s proposal of “autonomization” for full Union membership and respectively upgraded status of several non-Russian nationalities. There was no need to incorporate the “secession clause” in the first Soviet Constitution. If Bolsheviks had simply embraced the traditional political culture of the Russian imperial elite, there would have been no reason for them to deviate from the unitary model of the state whatsoever.

The phenomenon of national Bolshevism was really created by the national-minded leaders of the non-Russian communist parties and the national minority cadres of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) (RKP[b]). The Ukrainian Communist Party (*borot’bysty*) was exemplary in this respect.<sup>46</sup> Before the principle “socialism in one country” was adopted, Ukrainian national communists had prioritized national liberation over social emancipation. By taking this position, they moved closer to the leftist Ukrainian nationalists than to the Orthodox Marxists of the RKP(b) intellectual core. As the Ukrainian socialist leader Volodymyr Vynnychenko observed, both opposing camps in Ukrainian politics of the time had proven

to be wrong.<sup>47</sup> While the issue of national and social liberation was, in essence, a twofold problem, each part of which was inseparable from the other, communists and nationalists alike disassembled it into two seemingly independent parts. Nationalists tended to elevate the national over the social to the complete disregard of the latter, whereas socialists mistakenly saw the task of national liberation as second-rate, if not altogether irrelevant to the task of social emancipation.

Presenting the Soviet regime as a hollow shell for Russian domination and imperialism misrepresents the facts. From the standpoint of communist ideology, ethnicity was but a nuisance that had to be controlled, while it existed, in anticipation of its eventual disappearance in the future. For the regime's purposes, it was simply not that important, and Russian ethnicity was least important of all. The Soviet state proclaimed the equal treatment of all nationalities and introduced elements of affirmative action through the policies of indigenization, persecution of Russian "great-power chauvinism," and resource redistribution from the center to the least developed ethno-national peripheries. In its attempt to equalize the living conditions of the working masses, the party disregarded Russian national interests no less, if not more, than the national interests of other subjects of the federation. Under the slogan of "socialist internationalism," Russians were called upon to sacrifice their own national well-being and development for the sake of development of other Soviet nationalities and more distant "friends" in Eastern Europe and beyond. A policy of heavy subsidies and direct handouts to the numerous clients inside and outside the country, particularly via artificially devalued energy exports, generous credits for military procurement and capital construction, and frequently inflated import prices, distorted the Russian economy and depleted the national reserves. Continuous neglect of the "metropolitan" nation reached catastrophic proportions by the late 1980s, when villagers who joined the waves of labor migrations traversing the USSR in all directions abandoned the areas in the so-called Non-Black Earth region of Russia proper.

Economic and social statistics draw a rather bleak picture of Russia's comparative social and economic standing vis-à-vis less neglected national republics of the Soviet Union. Judging by several indices of development, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) fared worse than its Soviet partners. In the late 1980s, its average living standards were about the lowest in the USSR; its education and health care provision were hovering around the median; and the proportion of budget revenues it had been allowed to retain for internal purposes was usually lower than in other republics. In terms of growth of the industrial output from 1980 through 1987, the RSFSR lagged

behind Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and most other Union republics. Production of consumer goods per capita was higher in all of the European non-Russian republics, except Georgia and Azerbaijan. In the last years of Soviet rule light industry in Russia produced fewer goods than in Belarus, Georgia, or Moldova, let alone the Baltics or Armenia, which had been more than two times more productive than Russia. In the volume of paid services per inhabitant Russia yielded, from 1986 to 1987, to Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Residents of Estonia, Latvia, and Georgia enjoyed better access to health care facilities, while Russia had less doctors per ten thousand inhabitants than any of these republics.<sup>48</sup> By more than one measurement, Russian national resources, including people, were among the most exploited in the whole of the former Soviet Union. The situation was conducive to the inception of nationalist mobilization, which started to unfold as soon as the strict controls of Russian national feelings imposed by the communist state were slackened.

The practice of “weeding out” all sprouts of Russian nationalism that might have been inherited from the Empire’s last years was sponsored by Lenin. It followed directly from ideological premises of Marxist communism with its notion that “proletarians do not have a Fatherland.” Soviet communists put a great emphasis on the “socialization” of the national cultures. The “socialization” practices involved comprehensive streamlining of the national cultures on the basis of their presumed, ascribed, or newly constructed socialist content. Traditions and customs that did not fit the project were excluded from consideration and actively suppressed. Cultural engineering made use of “positive” (assimilationist) and “negative” (disruptive) measures, including the rewriting of national histories, the reconstruction of languages, the creation of propagandistic art and literature, indoctrination practices in academia and education, the never ending fight with “vestiges of bourgeois nationalism,” and so on.<sup>49</sup>

These measures were part and parcel of a grand social project of tying the intentionally atomized, destratified, declassed, and de-ethnicized individuals together in an open-ended ideologically propelled movement whose very existence justified its inception.<sup>50</sup> Cultural atomization implied that only those elements of culture that had been deemed useful by the party were officially supported. Deviant discourses were silenced, whether they drew on the past or on the unlicensed visions of the future. The “cultural revolution” was therefore waged on two fronts: against both national traditions and innovative contemporaries whose pursuits did not fit the scheme. Russia’s traditional culture fell an early victim to this struggle. Artistic and philosophical liberalism followed. Intellectual debates inside the party were outlawed, and diversity was sacrificed to ideological unanimity.

Modern nationalism needs both a tradition to work with and the national intellectuals to perform the job. Both prerequisites were lost in the communist Russia. The Soviet state disassembled the first (without reconstituting it in a *Russian* national form) and essentially incapacitated the second. The culture that appeared as a result was not motivated by a Russian national idea: neither in its form (if we believe the culture to be wider than its linguistic shell), nor in its content. The use of Russian language for the purposes of administration of a multinational state was not motivated by conscious desire to promote Russian national values.

Several scholars have argued that the October, 1917, Revolution arrested Russian national development, as well as the national development of other Soviet peoples.<sup>51</sup> There has been little continuity between czarist and communist nationality policies. While the imperial bureaucrats could meaningfully employ the notion of Russian national interest, the Soviet communists could not. If the Empire cared to distinguish between Russians, other Orthodox Christians, and legal aliens (*inorodtsy*), the communist state indiscriminately addressed everyone as “Soviet people.” In a certain sense, the “new Soviet man” had actually arrived to supersede former distinctions. The very depth of Soviet transformation marked a profound shift in the culture and identity of the people. To what extent is the discussion of continuity in either political or ethnic culture possible under such circumstances?

To answer this question, we need to bear in mind that, first, political culture is not a uniform set of beliefs, principles, and values equally shared by all of the conationals. Second, continuity must not be universal. Certain aspects of a political system or certain varieties of behavior have no precedent in the past. What often appears under the rubric of “Russian traditional political culture” has really more to do with the political culture of the Russian traditional elite. Such concepts as “statism,” “authoritarianism,” or “patrimonialism” refer to the worldview of the upper levels of society. Of course, this is not to say that behavior informed by these principles is completely alien to the population at large. The point, rather, is that the political culture of the elite may or may not penetrate to the depth of the popular body, and its level of acceptance varies from one stratum to another. Just as Russian imperialism had been less characteristic of the traditional Russian peasant and more of the imperial bureaucracy, so the “new Soviet man” arrived with varying measure of success in the party and in some segments of the population and failed in other less enthusiastic sectors of the society. Since Russians lagged behind such European nationalities as Ukrainians or Estonians in the degree of national development achieved before the revolution, they proved more open

to denationalization. However, even in this case the regime could not succeed in eliminating either the national identity of the people or their desire of national self-realization.

Political-cultural continuity may or may not bring about any particular succession in nationality policies. Parallels between the past and the present should always be drawn with great caution, especially when a revolution or other turmoil of equal magnitude completely changes established ways of life. On deeper scrutiny, czarist Russia did not have a nationality policy at all, if policy is understood as a strategically planned, consciously designed, and officially carried out set of measures. The closest approximation to something like a “national policy,” several chaotic attempts to Russianize the non-Russian population here and there, were indeed undertaken by the imperial bureaucracy in the last decades of the nineteenth century. No policy pertaining to the national development of the Russians themselves had been ever devised or thought of. The Russian language lacked the very concept of the nation before Peter’s reforms opened it to the borrowing from other European languages. Official promotion of the “autocracy, orthodoxy, nationality,” initiated by the minister of education, Count S. S. Uvarov, in the mid-nineteenth century, had little to do with nationalism *per se*. It was rather a belated attempt to reinvigorate a medieval sense of unity between the monarch and the people, prompted by the Orthodox tradition of close association between spiritual and worldly powers. Modern understanding of nationality had not been introduced *en masse* before the advent of Soviet power, and nationality policies in the Soviet Union were in many respects started from scratch.

This point should be remembered to avoid a not-uncommon confusion between nationalism and traditionalism or between proper nationalist and premodern forms of xenophobia. Contemporary scholarship sees nationalism as a product of modernization, and Russia has not experienced a normal, full-blown modernization until very recently.<sup>52</sup> Because of that, Russia did not have and could not have a nationalism of its own until well into the twentieth century. Saying that Gorbachev’s “policy of greater openness and public discussion had unleashed longstanding feelings of extreme Russian nationalism, anti-Semitism, and interethnic hatred” misconstrues the facts.<sup>53</sup> The logic is flawed, too. If nationalism was created or mobilized by perestroika, it could not be “longstanding.” If, on the other hand, interethnic hatred was so common before, it should have revealed itself in some form well before a dozen or so anti-Semites associated with a fringe Pamyat (“Memory”) group had brought it to the fore around 1988. But there is no evidence to support

the idea of a longstanding Russian hatred of other nations, while there is much evidence to the contrary, including that of continuous incorporation of non-Russian elites into the ranks of the Russian ruling strata, unimpeded social mobility of non-Russians throughout most of the imperial and practically the whole of the Soviet eras, virtual absence of systemic discrimination against non-Russians or crimes motivated by ethnic hatred, widespread intermarriages, mutual acculturation, and so on.

Russia's modernization is an as yet incomplete process. The Gaidar-Yeltsin government between 1991 and 1992 attempted a "playback" of political and economic modernization modeled on other nations' success stories. Though "shock therapy" failed to boost the economy, it succeeded in dislodging and disorienting large segments of the population that became ready stock for nationalist mobilization. Deliberate destruction of the patronage networks associated with the socialist welfare state, coupled with the propaganda of "survival of the fittest" under the guise of liberal individualism, resulted in social atomization that was not possible even in the last years of the Romanov Empire. It is only on this stage that a fully secular, posttraditionalist nationalism could finally arise. Born in economic and ethno-political competition that was left to run amok by the post-Soviet "absentee state," new Russian nationalism, as mass movement and ideology noticeably distinct from premodern xenophobia and parochial "interethnic hatred," emerges in mid-1990s. To become "longstanding," it will have to endure present pains of economic ruin, governmental incapacity, and international disdain for quite some time, long enough for the movement entrepreneurs to socialize a new generation of followers.

A certain negative continuity in Russian national development does exist. Czarist imperial supranationalism was followed by communist denationalization and then by the national humiliation of the postcommunist transition. The absence of a clearly defined Russian national identity thwarted or distorted development in each of these cases. Russian national consciousness had no chance to evolve under the Empire because it would have meant the separation of the national "core" from the alien "periphery," first in theory and then probably in practice, which the czars were not prepared to condone. National identity was further diluted by Soviet socialist cosmopolitanism. Ideological distinctions aside, authoritarian regimes in Russia had put the state before and above the nation—an archaic pattern that national revolutions in the West successfully undid.

Thus, the Russians never developed a *national* identity, except as the dominant part of a greater Russian empire. Unlike the peoples of Europe (and the

“near abroad”), where national consciousness based on ethnic identity has become the norm, the “national consciousness” of the Russians, even in modern times, has been based first and foremost on territory and the state.<sup>54</sup> Ethnicity was simply not a point of reference for Russian creative intellectuals who, according to Miroslav Hroch, would be expected to initiate the national movement. Even the famous Slavophiles versus Westernizers debate of the nineteenth century was not couched in explicitly national terms. Neither were its distant reminiscences of the early postperestroika period. Yeltsin’s defense of the Russian national interest, notes Valerie Bunce, “was framed in center-periphery and not ethnic terms,” it was “primarily civic in emphasis . . . committed, above all, to ending socialism and constructing a liberal order in its place.”<sup>55</sup> Yeltsin’s “liberal democrats” were little concerned with the national values, essentially construing Westernization as negation of Russia’s distinct traditions and much of its history. Their nationalist opponents, be it on the left (Ziuganov) or on the right (Zhirinovskiy), once again focused on the state and made few direct ethnic commitments. Cultural conservatives attempted to resuscitate Slavophilism.

Back to the nineteenth century, it is hardly appropriate to present original Slavophiles as nationalists. The Slavophile idea of nationality was nothing like its contemporary European nationalist concept. The pan-Slavic movement was precisely the opposite of the modernizing ventures of its contemporaries—nationalist movements in East Central Europe. While all of the latter sought to distill “their” unique national identities from all-inclusive imperial or supranational families, the pan-Slavic ideologues tried to submerge ethnic differences under an all-encompassing idea of “Slavic unity.” “There is no such thing as a Slavic race, but this did not prevent Pan-Slavs from calling for ‘racial emancipation.’”<sup>56</sup> Somewhat later, the idea of all Slavs’ unity had been narrowed down to the “Eastern Slavs’ unity” and proved equally damaging to the national differentiation of the three east Slavic nations: Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. “Pan” aspirations have stymied development of Russian civic patriotism. If Slavophilism is a form of “macro-nationalism,” it has proven inimical to Russian nationalism *per se*.

Original Westernizers found little worth in domestic traditions, preferring to see Russians as Europeans or candidates for “Europeanism.” They were more or less cosmopolitans and honestly proud of that. This observation, while somewhat exaggerated with respect to people like Aleksandr Herzen or Timofei Granovskii, accurately describes “liberal democrats” of the post-Soviet variety. Whether we speak of economy, foreign policy, or culture, it is equally hard to find sustained evidence of a “liberal-democratic” understanding that



Russian national interests may be separate from, or even contradictory to, the interests of global capitalism. For a mediocre Russian liberal, there simply cannot be any tension between the direction world markets take in their development and Russia's own peculiar position in these markets. If the tension is too obvious to ignore, it is usually interpreted as a technical economic problem, not to be assessed from a vantage point of the national interest. Liberalism in Russia remains inescapably elitist, which hinders its growth and transformation into a national force. For the same reason, it is incapable of presenting any program of national development that the general public would support, as the results of all parliamentary and presidential elections since 1993 and the apparent isolation of the Union of Right-Wing Forces since 2000 conclusively show.

To sum up, neither czarism nor communism were able to develop a distinctly pro-Russian nationality policy or showed any sign of being sincerely interested in such. Official nationalism of the czars lacked a popular element and ethnic specificity, while Soviet patriotism deliberately downplayed ethno-national values, making at best occasional and opportunistic use of them. The net result of Soviet nationality policies, as applied to Russia and the Russians, was clearly detrimental to the growth of national consciousness. Official internationalism of the Marxist-Leninist Party proved fertile ground for various patterns of intellectual cosmopolitanism.

### *Ukraine and the Ukrainians*

If Russia is still struggling with its past, trying to redefine its national identity and develop a corresponding set of policies, what can be said of Ukraine? For many Soviet studies specialists, Ukraine was but a shadow of Russia. The overall consensus has been that, even if Ukraine is important, its importance is best assessed vis-à-vis Russia and Moscow's plans to resurrect its traditional sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. One of the most insightful works on Soviet nationality politics described Ukrainians as Russian "younger brothers" and junior partners.<sup>57</sup> While the empirical evidence of the Ukrainian participation in the central apparatuses of power and the prominent role Ukrainians played throughout the USSR largely confirmed this assessment, it nevertheless downplayed the potential for independent action Ukrainians so convincingly revealed since 1991.

Ukraine's problems with Russia since the seventeenth century, as well as its earlier and subsequently less visible problems with Poland, are well documented.<sup>58</sup> Even in the most sympathetic accounts, Ukrainians are usually

introduced as “history’s victims” and “underdogs.”<sup>59</sup> The prolonged absence of the national state is regularly cited as major evidence to that end. However, the “stateness” or the “statelessness” of an ethnic group is but one indicator of its clout. Culture can survive without the state, even in a generally adverse environment. In a number of cases, the social mobility of ethnic minorities is at least comparable, if not surpasses, the social mobility of politically dominant nationalities. Ethnic diasporas in North America, Australia, and elsewhere have achieved remarkable levels of integration into their host societies. For more historically distant examples, one may think of the Chinese sea-shore traders of the Indian Ocean littoral or of Jewish merchants in early capitalist Europe.

Ukraine’s “victimization” was of a peculiar kind. Though denied their national state, Ukrainian aristocracy actively participated in medieval Lithuanian and Polish-Lithuanian states of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and Ukrainian clergy—in the building of the Russian Empire since the 1700s. Ukrainians, as no other people, were intimately connected with the structures of power in Moscow czarism, the Russian Empire, and the Soviet Union. Historically, the Ukrainian aristocratic families—Razumovskie, Vyshnevetskie, Skoropadskie, Glinki, and others—were highly visible in the upper echelons of Russian nobility. Ukrainian Orthodox monasteries remained strongholds of the Orthodox faith and raised a number of Russian church leaders and ideologues. Ukraine had its own capitalists of indigenous ethnic origin: Rodzyanki, Tereshchenki, and Symyrenki being the most prominent. Finally, communists never lacked Ukrainian representation in the party’s apex—not only in Ukraine proper, but also in Moscow and other parts of the Soviet Union. Ukrainians constituted the weighty proportion of the Red Army brass; a KGB career starting in Ukraine and ending in Moscow was not exceptional either.

Even if all Ukrainian grievances were indeed caused by past national oppression, Ukrainians, just as other recently stateless nations, “have no monopoly on trauma.” They are obviously “not the only ones whose ambitions were thwarted and to whom history has dealt a raw deal or two.”<sup>60</sup> It must be noted that the very construct of the “fairness” or “unfairness” of history is anthropomorphic and burdened with narrowly subjective value judgments. We shall never be able to avoid them completely, since historical interpretation is by necessity a subjective present reading of the things past. While some facts are deemed relevant others are discarded, depending on the research agenda, frame of reference, ideology, and ethics. The discourse of “victimization” should always be verified against the whole spectrum of the known

facts pertaining to the period in question. A nation's fortunes have to be assessed against the background of historically viable alternatives, not our present humanitarian standards. Struggle for the national liberation in Ukraine must not be seen in disjuncture from the other social forces at play: class struggles within the seemingly "homogeneous" nation, elite collaboration with imperial powers-that-were, or mass acculturation to the once-foreign ways of life.

There are several distinct explanations of Soviet nationality policies. Each of them presents the Ukrainian movement differently. We will consider these explanations in turn, looking at how more general assumptions reflect on the respective view of Ukraine and Ukrainians.

The earliest accounts saw all policies originating from Moscow or Saint Petersburg as essentially motivated by base impulses of the Great Russian chauvinism. The writers of this persuasion tended to equate political hegemony with national oppression and disregarded the elaborate politics of alliances that made the very existence of both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union possible. Continuous incorporation of the non-Russian elites by the imperial center was largely ignored, as were the facts of intricate power sharing between the central and the republican elites that jointly populated all branches of the Soviet communist hierarchy, importantly including its repressive organs. Echoing "red czarism" speculations, these authors spoke of "Soviet Russian nationalism," presumably propelled by a straightforward desire to suppress all other nationalities of the Soviet Union for Moscow's benefit.<sup>61</sup> The view of Ukrainians as underdogs conforms to this model.

The "younger brothers" explanation is rooted in the functionalist paradigm, according to which Soviet modernization undermined nationalism by opening new avenues of social mobility for both elite and general public. The theory led many to "overestimate the potential for assimilation among Ukrainians."<sup>62</sup> Its early proponent, though now disavowing a "combination of structural functionalism and the single rational actor approach," continues to see relations between eastern Slavs, "apart from completely alienated West Ukrainians," as "a family quarrel, in which bitter reactions to mistreatment alternate with reconciliation to the Russians."<sup>63</sup> A relatively benign handling of Russian-Ukrainian disputes, professed attention to each other's minorities, or ethnic composition of both countries' elites seem to corroborate this conclusion, especially against the backdrop of the Russian-Chechen hostilities or the "cold war" over the rights of Russian minorities in Latvia and Estonia.

Offshoots of the totalitarian model engendered what may be called an ideological explanation of Soviet nationality policies. According to Arendt, ideological conformity is crucial for the very existence of totalitarian regimes.

Nationalism and communism are therefore bound to become mortal enemies, as both strive to immerse a certain “absolute principle into reality.”<sup>64</sup> It follows that Russians must have been no better off than Ukrainians in having to sacrifice national allegiances to the anonymous cause of “international proletarian solidarity.” In Ernest Gellner’s words, “a genuine, full-blooded socialism must also be an absolutist ideocracy.”<sup>65</sup> Because of that, national communism in both Russia and Ukraine, as a particularly troublesome hybrid of two competing ideologies, had to be unconditionally weeded out, and “from the Communist point of view, such ideas were dangerous enough in themselves; while Communism could tolerate for a time basically antipathetic forms, it could not allow its own forms to be used as a cover for a developing and independent ideology.”<sup>66</sup>

The view that Soviet nationality policy is best explained by its ideological nature may work well if the Soviet ideology itself is understood as a rather complex and multilayered sum total of norms, ideas, and practices. A useful point of departure is the distinction between the officially declared and practically operational ideology. Ideological pronouncements of the communist regime must never be taken at their face value. Divergence between the words and the deeds was commonplace, as was the lack of concurrence between behavior and institutions. Because of that, “the pragmatism of power, which has characterized the use of ideology in all other areas of Russian political culture, also dominates the manipulation of the concepts of nationalism by the Communist leadership.”<sup>67</sup> Postcommunist nationalism provides new illustrations, as former party bosses one after another embraced a nationalist agenda to stay in power (Ukraine, Kazakstan), to win it anew (Georgia, Azerbaijan), or to form a “systemic” opposition to the government (Russia).

The fourth approach to the study of nationalism conflates nationalism and religion, claiming “interdependence and, at times a symbiosis of religious and national ideas.”<sup>68</sup> However, this link, even if present, is not indispensable and varies from case to case. Nationalism does not have to go hand in hand with religion and is often constituted as a fully secular phenomenon. When a religion does play a role in modern national mobilization, the less ethnocentric this role is, the better for the society. Religious ethnocentrism is narcissistic, overbearing, and abusive of its own faithful, not to mention explicitly xenophobic and implicitly aggressive. It is in this sense that “religion and nationalism are a frightening mixture indeed,” and the more so the more “backward looking” and hence detached from reality they are.<sup>69</sup>

Religious-cultural explanations of national differences in politics see the acceptance of a particular set of beliefs as historical turning points.<sup>70</sup> A

representative example in the field of Ukrainian studies offers political and sociological analysis of the contact societies in Eastern Europe in terms of “several models of underlying spiritual-ideological values, the type of organization based on them, and, finally, certain political concepts resulting therefrom.”<sup>71</sup> Religious dissidents of the Soviet era in Ukraine, the Uniate, and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox churches (called “national churches” by the author)<sup>72</sup> “represent a single pattern: religiosity is treated as the ‘national character’ of Ukrainians; and a separate, indigenous Ukrainian cultural development, as opposed to the Russian one, is stressed. Here national culture has been inspired by religion for over one thousand years and therefore a symbiosis of religion and nationality is taken for granted. . . . Religion, in principle, tends to identify with ethnic nationalism.”<sup>73</sup>

Apart from throwing in ancient Slavs to prop up the anachronistic construct of a “thousand years-old” Ukrainian culture, the author fails to observe that the oldest and numerically most powerful church in Ukraine, the Russian Orthodox Church, has never been particularly warm to the idea of Ukrainian separateness. He says that the Church “became nationalist—not in a narrow ethnic sense, but in a pan-Russian and pan-Slavic sense, integrating many ethnic elements in the process of their gradual Russification.”<sup>74</sup> If so, one might suspect that the Russian Orthodox Church would not stop short of the overwhelming success in the land of its origin, Ukraine. Why should its political values (mentioned are “Soviet-Russian nationalism,” “Unity of historical Russia,” and “Autocracy”) be alien to the Ukrainians, whose membership in the Russian Orthodox Church outnumbered both “national churches” combined? The question cannot be satisfactorily answered if religion is treated as an independent variable.

As noted above, the single rational actor approach was applied to the Soviet realities in the 1960s. It was further developed in a vision of competing rational actors engaged in distinct organizational processes and bureaucratic feuds.<sup>75</sup> Yet, the realm of nationality studies remained dominated by the single actor paradigm. Usually, nationality policy was perceived as “made” in Russia. The monofocus persisted even in the studies of non-Russian nationalities, commonly portrayed as a collective individual suffering from central policies. This methodology, which prevailed for several decades, impeded comparative research in Soviet nationality politics. If the comparisons were drawn, the compared units were lined up vis-à-vis the “center” and evaluated in terms of its politics, goals, and intentions.

The situation changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Striking individuality and substantial political power of the republican “rational actors”

were revealed in most obvious ways, while their singular common denominator all but disappeared. A complex “mixed-motive” game of unstable alliances, temporary cooperation, dependence, mistrust, bargaining, conflict, and defection involved multiple rational actors—Union and autonomous republics, territorial-administrative units, political parties and powerful individuals—competing against each other and jointly against the Moscow center. Rational choice and familiar problems of collective action determined direction and substance of the autonomy struggles on several territorial-administrative levels of the former federation. In Russia, the fight between those who disengaged from the Soviet Union and those who believed that restoration of the Union was essential for Russian national survival revealed different understandings of the national interest and incongruent visions of national identity. The single rational actor model was no longer applicable to this new reality, which could be better described as the interaction between multiple rational actors—each with its own ethno-political strategy and each scrambling for scarce resources inherited from the fallen superpower and new prospects for development dependent on the benevolent attitude of the West.

Soviet successors included “the center,” the “first-order titular nationalities,” the “second-order titular nationalities,” and the “non-titular” nationalities.<sup>76</sup> Each of these actors behaved rationally, in pursuit of self-interest, seeking to maximize the utility it expected from interaction with others. It is important to separate the late Soviet and post-Soviet “center” from Russia proper. Russian national interests need not be confused with insular interests of the Moscow elite that governed first in the name of the Union and then in the name of the Russian Federation and finally managed to completely alienate both. The distinction between the “first-order” (Union) and the “second-order” (autonomous) nationalities helps to explain the orderly dissolution of the former USSR, the separatist and irredentist claims that ensued, and the situations when smaller nationalities sought the protection of the former center from the encroachments of their “first-rank titular” overseers. The Ukrainians, being the “first-order titular nationality” of the former Soviet Union, could not stop short of achieving full independence in their national republic. Their situation was quite different in Trans-Dniester, the Baltic states, or indeed Russia, where Ukrainian activism was limited by the status of a minority. Even the mobilized and territorially concentrated Ukrainian community in Trans-Dniester failed to realize its ambitions in full.

The next model of nationality politics is based on the use of social-economic and political-organizational factors as independent variables. It may be called realist or social-determinist. Just as the previous one, it is skeptical

of oversimplified explanations in terms of Russian “imperialism,” “Great-power chauvinism,” or a presumed “perennial” tradition of “despotism and servility.” The gist of the argument is secular and relational, denying strict essential continuity between regimes and epochs. As Mary McAuley comments, “those who search for the roots of the ethnic attitudes of Russians in the culture of the Muscovite court . . . are looking under the wrong stone. These are modern attitudes, whose mature development has a pre-requisite in the popular assimilation and refinement of the drawing-room notion of *narod*.”<sup>77</sup> Political culture realists criticize studies that are prone to the “idealist,” essentialist fallacy and emphasize sociohistorical factors that mold group consciousness and behavior. They view political culture and national identity as historically determined, relational, yet lasting patterns of social interaction.

McAuley’s writings illustrate the model.<sup>78</sup> In agreement with modernization theorists, she sees economic growth and its “spillover” effects as principal explanatory variables in political culture and nationality studies. However, she does not ascribe an unconditionally positive or indeed any unambiguous value to the process. She would not agree to the Deutschean claim that social mobilization is necessarily accompanied by national assimilation. Idiosyncrasies of local situation and history of previous development always condition modernization outcomes. In certain cases, “the accompaniments of economic development—increased social mobilization and communication—appear to have increased ethnic tensions and to be conducive to separatist demands.”<sup>79</sup> The most mobilized of the former Soviet nations also proved to be the most restive. It is especially interesting that, contrary to the modernization argument, post-Soviet nationalism has been specifically bolstered by the success of modernization efforts.

In contradistinction to the assumptions of political-cultural continuity, the realist view denies any idea of longstanding ethnic animosities. Nationalist mobilizations in post-Soviet countries have been more often prompted by the short-term utility considerations. Modernization affects different segments of the population in different ways, changing social alignments and forcing new kinds of competition on the groups that enjoyed a relatively safe existence before. Hence, nationalist feelings among Ukrainians arise, depending on “where the job opportunities are, against whom they are competing, and whether Russian-Ukrainian divisions coincide with jobs, opportunities and benefits.”<sup>80</sup> Nationalism in Russia similarly followed in the wake of the gigantic economic disenfranchisement brought by the postcommunist redistribution of property and responsibility that left the majority of Russians out in the cold.

More recent developments brought new attention to the role of nationalism in international politics. Several theorists see nationalism as a particular solution to the security dilemma of weak and immature states. Nationalism, according to this view, “results from a gap between a group’s inadequate capacity for collective action and acute threats to the group’s military or economic security.”<sup>81</sup> In the post-Soviet space, this gap appeared with the collapse of the former superpower, which, for all its ills, had been able to maintain at least some control over territory and people in its zone of responsibility. The breakup of the USSR and the violent collapse of Yugoslavia left many newly independent states without viable institutions of governance and the others in disarray. Since feeble states are poor providers of security, potential and real threats to the nation dictate that some other force of social cohesion should take the state’s place. In the absence of mature civil society, religion and nationalism emerge as prime candidates for the role.

If nationalism is related to security, its intensity is directly proportional to the level of uncertainty in interstate relations and inversely proportional to the achieved level of interstate and interethnic trust. Judging by these parameters, Russian-Ukrainian relations do not represent the worst-case scenario. Suffice it to say that, throughout the first decade of post-Soviet existence, Ukrainian Russians have enjoyed approximately the same levels of interpersonal trust and tolerance as ethnic Ukrainians themselves, pulling quite ahead of the Jews, Poles, Germans, Romanians, French, or Americans in this respect.<sup>82</sup> As Barry Posen notes, “the security situation between the two republics is favorable from a stability standpoint.” An optimistic diagnosis is based on the assessment of such factors as the patterns of Russian settlement in Ukraine, military capabilities of both states, and relatively benign “histories of each other, as well as their past relations.”<sup>83</sup> History is perhaps the singular most important factor. Hence, it is absolutely indispensable to understand what made it “benign” in the first instance, particularly in view of the continuing attempts at historical revisionism. Trust is a consumable commodity: if it is not continuously replenished, it may dry out quickly. A redrawn history can alienate once-friendly nations more than their passing trade disputes, disagreements on foreign policy, or renegotiated borders.

Most of these explanatory models, with the exception of the last one, are equally applicable to both Soviet and post-Soviet periods. While each captures some part of a complex, multidimensional relationship between several variables that make national politics what it is, no singular approach can be considered exhaustive. Yet, some of them can grow more popular than the others and appear to dominate both academic and popular discourses for the



time being. The imperial paradigm in particular has been recently reborn in a number of studies that see Russia as an imperial heir par excellence. In light of this paradigm, it is seductive to see Ukraine as a former imperial periphery recuperating from centuries of subjugation.<sup>84</sup> National identities and post-communist politics and policies all appear hopelessly trapped in the cast forged by history.

This interpretation is countered by studies that see postcommunist nationalism as a recent product of social construction or as a political resource used by elites and movement entrepreneurs to buttress their respective power claims against competition and to secure mass following inside and broader international acceptance outside the country.<sup>85</sup> The rational choice theory emphasizes the element of conscious adoption of a particular strategy of nation-building, which, following Rogers Brubaker, can be called “nationalizing.”<sup>86</sup> Constructivist theories essentially oppose the structural determinism of the imperialist paradigm via the emphasis they place on the relational, intersubjective aspects of nation-building processes in the former communist countries.<sup>87</sup>

#### **POSTIMPERIAL SYNDROMES AND NATIONALIZING STATES**

Not only the politics of nationality, but all politics in Russia today can be characterized as suffering from what is called a “postimperial syndrome” or a “crisis of postimperial viability.”<sup>88</sup> The notion of the “empire” means different things to different people, however. An imperial analogy may be used to designate any big and powerful state in a position to crucially influence world affairs. Then “empire” becomes synonymous with “great power” and can be applied to countries as different as Austria-Hungary of the Habsburgs, Russia of the Romanovs, the Third Reich, the USSR, or the United States. Alternately, “empire” could mean a country that has grown by amassing territories inhabited by ethnically and culturally unrelated peoples and incorporating those into the structure of governance imposed from outside. Many countries, including medieval Spain, Portugal, and Holland, but also modern Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Brazil would qualify here. The “empire” may be read as a state responsible for the creation of an ethnically or racially based division of labor that privileges the core “imperial” nationality and disadvantages the rest. It would be difficult to fit the Russian Empire and the USSR into this model, while the British, the French, and the Spanish empires; the Creole states of Latin America; and certain contemporaries in Africa, Asia, and Asia-Pacific might qualify. The empire can be explicated as a

two-edged structure of governance that links a developed metropolitan “center” to more or less remote peripheries exploited for the center’s benefit. Finally, empire might simply mean political domination of one or several countries by a hegemonic power that can exercise leadership without necessarily rewarding itself with pecuniary gain. In any case, the imperial analogy must be conceptually clarified and grounded in empirical evidence before it is used as a theory-generating instrument. Otherwise, the metaphor of an empire remains just that, a metaphor posing as a theory.

The imperial hypothesis encounters certain difficulties when applied to the Soviet Union. Some of these difficulties stem from the semantic and conceptual polyphony of the term. It is not always clear which of the aforementioned meanings of empire is engaged in this or that instance. Failure to clarify the notion collapses its several meanings into one, thus stretching the concept beyond the limits of its academically stringent application. In one move, Soviet communist despotism, which equally oppressed all nationalities of the country, becomes synonymous with Russian ethnic domination. In another case, political domination is equated with economic exploitation. Ideologically driven goals of the regime are treated as *Russian national* aspirations. Administrative abuse is seen and gets explained as national oppression, whereas communist messianism is seen as a cover for hiding secret designs of *Russian* imperial efforts allegedly exerted “partly on behalf of society, partly in the service of a claimed superior Russian morality.”<sup>89</sup>

Yet the Soviet state was not an empire based on the center’s exploitation of the periphery or imposition of foreign governance through military subjugation of the conquered nations. A much-reiterated hypothesis of unequal exchange between the Russian Federation and the rest of the republics, presumably disadvantaged in the process, has not been borne out by empirical evidence. The unequal exchange, where it existed, proved to benefit periphery at a cost to the Russian core, and Russia’s hinterland was badly bruised because of these policies. Postcommunist Russian nationalism has grown in no small extent out of the recognition of this fact. The hypothesis of the ethnic division of labor has not been proven either. The structure of ethnic representation in political and administrative posts, management, science, and culture approximated relative weights of each group in the whole population of the country. Titular nationalities were dominated by their “own” homegrown political and administrative hierarchy. Russians could have an edge in qualified labor positions and were slightly overrepresented in masses of the party rank and file, contributing to its bloated numbers. They were less than proportionately represented in regional and central committees of party

organizations in the Union republics and were in no position to control decision making in the republics. A simple observation of who rules now in newly independent non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union confirms this proposition. In most cases, coethnics who cut their political teeth in various positions of prominence in their respective home republics rule post-Soviet states.

Even if empirical evidence is inconclusive, however, metaphors are still able to shape discourse, and academic discourse is no exception. The imperial hypothesis, popular with the students of nationalism in the former Soviet Union, sees the Soviet collapse as the disintegration of an oppressive imperial system. The struggle of top communist bureaucrats in the republics to break free from the center is accordingly represented as “national liberation” pursuits. Seeing the USSR as an empire and Russia as an imperial inheritor often sets a key for interpretations of post-Soviet nationality policies. The ensuing picture cannot escape being colored in black and white tones, most black reserved for the former “imperialist.” If the fight against the empire, past and present, is a priority, anti-Russian nationalism in Soviet successor states must be seen as a school of democracy. This interpretation excuses systematic mistreatment of minorities, collectively ostracized as “Russians,” “Russian settlers,” “the fifth column,” or even “occupiers” by nationalist politicians and media.

The imperial thesis calls for a discussion of “national revolutions,” which are sometimes seen as a primary force in bringing communism down. It is argued that victorious national movements imploded the “empire” and set in democratic transformations in the respective successor states.<sup>90</sup> One problem with this thesis concerns the fact that some of the successor states, particularly in Central Asia, learned of their independence after reading newspapers from Moscow. National revolutions in others appeared less concerned with the former metropolitan center and so much more with their nearest neighbors, engaging them in a number of local conflicts from Nagorno-Karabakh to South Ossetia to Tajikistan to Abkhazia. Russia has been systematically called upon to mediate between the warring parties. The most “national” of all national revolutions, those that have come to pass in the Baltic states, Ukraine, and Moldova, often covered a variety of protodemocratic and populist manifestations, which ethnic nationalists were able to harness in support of their cause. A retreat to collaboration with Russia, increasingly visible in both Ukraine and Moldova as of 2001, makes one think that the “national revolutions” in both have failed to develop sustained feelings of hatred against Russian “imperialists,” now more commonly seen as the former and would-be

strategic partners. Conscientious nationalism was simply not enough to ruin the Soviet Union, had broader social problems been averted or a convincing vision of further development offered by the center.

Setting aside the question of whether “national revolutions” or other forms of popular mobilization occurred on the eve of independence, the idea of revolution as necessarily initiating democratic change is up for discussion. Revolutions do not follow liberal-democratic procedures. As a particular expression of popular will, revolution demands immediate satisfaction of what is conceived to be public interest at the expense of all other conflicting interests. Revolution justifies its excesses as retaliation against injustice that was inflicted by a dislodged oppressive regime. Non-Russian states of the former Soviet Union, viewed in this framework as creations of national liberation movements, are expected to pursue some sort of “postcolonial project.” Collective status relegation administered to the Russian minorities or the all-out attack on the Russian language in the former republics must therefore be appreciated as natural “decolonization” efforts. Democracy appears reserved for representatives of titular nationality. When the idea kicks in and becomes institutionalized in electoral law and administrative practices (as has been the case in Latvia and Estonia), disenfranchisement of nontitular groups leads to the formation of “ethnic democracy” in a *de facto* multicultural society.

It must be noted that, were the Soviet Union such a hotbed of national tensions that nothing short of revolution could remedy the problem, it would have collapsed long ago. State repression, however massive and crude, proves a weak barrier against the wrath of nations. And yet, nationalists were unable to secure mass following anywhere in the country until the 1980s because the system delivered resources for development and offered possibilities for social mobility. Once these two mainstays of the “national contract” unraveled, the system went down, and anti-Russian nationalism triumphed. Nationalism in Russia proper started growing after corruption-ridden privatization pauperized “imperial” nationality, while the wholesale revision of history poisoned not only the communist regime but also national pride and dignity.

Several observers noted that the Soviet regime made Russians pay a dear price for the political leadership they assumed in the Soviet Union. The ethnopolitical losses they suffered in the country they allegedly dominated, and the comprehensive package of Soviet policies that secured privileges and promoted development of titular non-Russian nationalities, featured an empire with a difference. Hence, “studies that treat the USSR as an imperial power like all others are misleading. So too are those that view Russians as the hegemonic group and all non-Russians as equally oppressed colonial subjects.”<sup>91</sup>

The label of “oppressed colonial subjects” is particularly hard to apply to the Ukrainians, visible on all echelons of power and in practically all localities of the Soviet Union.

For the imperial thesis to have more than poetic meaning, it has to be established, first, that the state treated its “core” nationals better than the rest of its subjects, and second, that the latter were in no position to legitimately improve their lot within the existing system of government. We may not establish that the former Soviet Union actually met either condition without twisting the country’s historical record. The “empire-colony” analogy would lead us to assume that certain channels of social and/or political mobility were reserved for Russians only. However, this assumption is impossible to prove on the basis of known evidence. Among all of the Union republics, the Russian Federation was the one that lacked the whole battery of obligatory state institutions from the national capital to “power ministries” to the Academy of Sciences. The “national cadres” policy erected intangible barriers that blocked ethnic Russians from effectively competing with the locals for the positions of political or administrative responsibility. There were no such restrictions on promotion of non-Russians residing in the Russian Federation.

A concentration on very real misfortunes that non-Russian Soviet nationalities suffered at hands of the communist regime must be balanced with the analysis of those premises of Soviet “national contract” that made coexistence possible and in most cases acceptable to local elites. Such aspects of the unwritten “pact” as intense local collaboration and incorporation of national “cadres” into all branches of power structure, including its decision making and repressive organs, go long way in explaining relative stability of the system in the post-Stalin years. Against this background of collaboration, incorporation, and power sharing, presenting the history of Soviet nationality policies as a never-ending spin of terror is false, “for we know that over half a century the Soviet system provided the basis for rapid economic growth and social change, for improved living standards, for the establishment of a welfare state, for the creation of cultural, educational and scientific structures of international quality, for stable relations for the greatest diversity of ethnic groups in any country of the world, and for a defence establishment able to maintain the country’s security in the face of the greatest imaginable threats.”<sup>92</sup>

The imperial thesis leaves several other important questions unanswered, most notably the surprising stability of the system, which must have unraveled long ago had it been based solely on brutal subjugation, and the particu-

lar timing of the collapse, which coincided with attempts at a more or less genuinely democratic reform of Soviet federalism. When postcommunist Russia is concerned, the imperial analogy stumbles at the question of identity, as Russia's manifold identity crisis gets subsumed under the one-dimensional heading of "postimperial syndrome." Political, social, economic, cultural, and ideological aspects of identity change have to be sacrificed to make geopolitics singularly important. If federal arrangements are flawed, nothing else but the imperial heritage must take the blame for Moscow's folly. If nationalists succeed in procuring some electoral support, the explanation, once again, is the imperial nostalgia of the voters. It is expected that the country will be driven by nationalists to claim its former imperial possessions back. Russia's concern with the fate of compatriots abroad is taken to signify nothing more than the "resurgent imperialism" of the fallen superpower, which the West must contain to protect "democracy." As long as "imperialism" is contained, almost anything else might go as a "growth disease." Guided by such considerations, Western policy makers preferred to ignore the rise of the corrupt Yeltsin "family" among the Kremlin insiders in a vain hope of keeping Moscow's foreign policies under control. An excessive concern with Russia's "postimperial syndrome" led to a de facto encouragement of anti-Russian nationalism in the neighboring countries, visualized as "bastions of democracy," beacons of liberalism, or, on a more moderate note, a cordon sanitaire separating Russia from the West.<sup>93</sup>

Nationality policies in most non-Russian successor states, whether inspired by a genuine "decolonization" ethos or other considerations, do exhibit interesting similarities. The project of national consolidation pursued by these states gives prime of place to the rights of a titular nationality or a dominant ethnic group. The main features of this project include de-Russification and promotion of the vernacular language, invariably elevated to the level of the official language of the state. The dominance of the official language is assured through nativization of education and media and official language requirements for political participation and business practices, litigation, and adjudication. All communication between the central and local governments, all documents and instructions regulating day-to-day activities of the people, all public TV and radio broadcasts, and most publications subsidized by the state accordingly have to be issued in the officially designated language. Guided by these rules, the nationality policy of a newly independent state exhibits openly assimilationist intentions toward ethnic minorities. It becomes a *nationalizing* policy, the one that is ultimately inspired by a vision of ethno-cultural

homogenization of culturally and ethnically diverse population, or, should this goal prove remote, aims at ethno-political restructuring of society to assure dominant position of state-bearing nationality throughout.

Though the states pursuing this policy are usually “ethnically heterogeneous,” they are “conceived as nation-states, whose dominant elites promote (to varying degrees) the language, culture, demographic position, economic flourishing, and political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation.” A distorted perception influences not only elites but also the affected minorities and their external “national homelands,” often represented by the neighboring states. The “triangular relationship” established by these actors can become deeply conflictual, since “a nationalizing state is precisely not a nation-state in the widely used sense of an ethno-culturally homogeneous state, the very large majority of whose citizens belong to the same ethno-cultural nation. Quite the contrary. The term “nationalizing state” implies that this completed condition has *not* been achieved. A nationalizing state is one conceived by its elites as a specifically *unfinished* state.”<sup>94</sup> The perception that the state is somehow incomplete may provoke fear of imaginary or real threats to its existence, and hence, to political existence of its elite *as elite*. Nationalizing policies address this fear by seeking to eliminate its sources, for example, by preventing mobilization and fostering assimilation of ethnic minorities, by distancing the state in question from the countries that pose as external homelands for these minorities, and by institutionalizing markers of ethnic privilege via language and/or citizenship laws. The state elite has many instruments at its disposal to pursue these objectives, while keeping the appearances of a perfectly legitimate “postcolonial” or “democratizing” project. A post-Soviet state especially, being a graduate of a long tradition of official doublespeak, feels unconstrained by the letters of its democratic constitution or the laws on minorities that diligently proclaim all the niceties expected of them. The real-world administrative practices and professional and business regulations guided by the imperatives of a nationalizing project can factually annul the law, however well meant. Thus, a “formally liberal and ethnically neutral definition of statehood and citizenship may, in an ethnically heterogeneous state in which the state-bearing majority and a minority understand themselves as belonging to distinct ethno-cultural nations, mask a substantively ethnocratic organization of public life.”<sup>95</sup>

Several scholars applied Brubaker’s theory, complemented by David Laitin’s model of linguistic assimilation, to Ukraine.<sup>96</sup> The perception that the state remains fundamentally unfinished is definitely widespread in Ukraine, influencing its political and social life in more than one way. A recent poll

showed that 84 percent of Ukrainians were disappointed with their country and believed that independence had not brought them what they expected.<sup>97</sup> The nationalizing project is one answer to this predicament. Pervasive corruption and disdain of the law is another. By now, familiar twists and turns in foreign policy—expectedly pro-Russian before the elections and in times of crisis, and invariably anti-Russian once the problems are over—can be considered the third.

Dominique Arel has argued that nationalizing policies in Ukraine are noticeable in “(1) mandatory and exclusive use of the Ukrainian language in state administration and in higher education, both in the center and in the regions; (2) official promotion, in the media and in state institutions, of the historical symbols and myths of the Ukrainian nation; (3) the Ukrainian nation’s concomitant claim of ‘indigenoussness’ on the territory or ‘homeland’ of the new state; and (4) a policy of ‘disengagement,’ or disentanglement, from the ‘Soviet/Eurasian space,’ as is illustrated by the Ukrainian government’s sustained refusal to actively commit Ukraine to CIS structures and by designation of Russian a ‘foreign’ language in Ukraine.”<sup>98</sup>

Andrew Wilson has characterized these policies as nationalistic and defined them as a “minority faith” that may endanger civic nation building in Ukraine by promoting one culture and one particular view of the national history at the expense of the other, no less valid interpretations.<sup>99</sup> Laitin has doubted Ukraine’s officially spotless record of nationality policies, noting that “Ukraine presents to the world a civic agenda; but just below the surface seethes anger against, even hatred of Russians.”<sup>100</sup> The state does little to dissuade the morbid nationalist propaganda, which sees Russian influence, past and present, as a primary source of Ukrainian suffering.

Not only ethnic Russians are made to feel the burden of nativization. Arel, in several works, points out that linguistic divisions in Ukraine should be perceived as more salient than ethnic divisions. Since nominal “passport” ethnicity frequently diverges from the factual ethnicity, as indicated by the accepted culture and language of communication, nationalizing policies in Ukraine tend to straitjacket a good part of the country’s population, importantly including ethnic Ukrainian Russophones. Bureaucratic decisions made on the basis of statistics representing *nominal* ethnicity conflict with individual aspirations formed through the life experiences of the *real* one. As a result, “ethnic Ukrainians who consider Russian their mother tongue may no longer have the practical choice of sending their children to Russian schools,” watching Russian TV programs, or even listening to the Russian radio broadcast.<sup>101</sup> Ethno-cultural streamlining of the nation, based on the imaginary



picture of what constitutes the “authentic” Ukrainianness, may limit life choices and thwart natural ethnic processes in the country, blocking not only ethnic diversification, but ethnic consolidation as well. The nationalist chorus alleging that all “Russified” Ukrainians should feel sorry for their embrace of the Russian language and culture, that their national identity must be seen as somehow “spoiled” because of this heritage, and so on, presents good half of the nation as, simply put, “substandard.” This results in artificially created divides splitting both the core nation and the society at large.

Not all scholars share the view of Ukraine as a “nationalizing” state. Taras Kuzio has doubted the usefulness of the concept for comparative political analysis and its applicability to the postcommunist Ukraine in particular. In the latter case, he prefers to speak of the “affirmative policies” of the Ukrainian government with respect to the official language of the state and culture of its titular nationality. As most states tend to prioritize their official languages, either historically or in the current education and cultural policies, or both, the “nationalizing” project becomes something of a commonplace, another word for regular nation building practices. Great Britain, or France, or Russia, or even the United States, from this perspective, must be considered no less “nationalizing” than newly independent states of Eastern Europe.<sup>102</sup>

The view that postcommunist Russia, too, is, or should be seen, as yet another “nationalizing” state is particularly intriguing.<sup>103</sup> With further examination, however, the analogy does not work. While the rhetorical defense of the “compatriots” in the near abroad, demonstration of the state sympathies to the Russian Orthodox Church, or the hodge-podge appropriation of certain imperial and Soviet symbols (tricolor and two-headed eagle introduced by Yeltsin, the old Soviet anthem and the red banner for the army returned by Putin) might have suggested so, Russia does not meet the definition of a nationalizing state because it is, first, a federation, and second, an official multiculturalist. Russia recognizes a broad spectrum of autonomous rights of its territorially concentrated minorities and does not seek to bring its national republics into linguistic or cultural conformity with some ideal model of “Russianness.” Nationalizing states are also usually less inclined to entertain diversity in their political structure or cultural politics. Autonomous republics of the Russian Federation are free to use languages other than Russian for the purposes of official communication, of education, of state-supported media, and of public forums. The republican authorities determine school curricula and support national historiography, which need not coincide with the Russian one. The collective rights of ethnic minorities in Russia are insti-

tutionalized via territorial autonomy and home rule, which is precisely what ethnic minorities in other successor states lack—or are plainly denied by the governments.

Though nationality policies in Russia are subject to many abuses of bureaucratic nature, nationalizing zeal is not among them. The most painful example of Moscow's failure—the war on Chechnya—was clearly not motivated by ethno-cultural considerations and should be regarded as an example of the struggle for power and resources that unfolded between the center and the locality against the background of progressing state debilitation.<sup>104</sup> The fact that the, ethnically close to Chechens, people of Dagestan sided with Russians in repelling the aggression of the Chechen warlords in 1999 confirms this assertion. The situation may change, however, if ethnocentric Russian nationalists win over the masses and are able to control the executive and legislative politics in Moscow. The idea to abolish ethno-territorial division of the country, replacing present republics with de-ethnicized administrative-territorial units, favored by Zhirinovskiy's Liberal-Democratic Party (LDPR) and such nationalist groups as the Russian Popular Union, is indicative of what may signal the start of Russian nationalizing policies.

## CONCLUSION

Different views of Soviet and post-Soviet nationality politics reflect broader theoretical claims as to the nature of the society in question. Ideological determinism, inherited from the totalitarian school of Sovietology, influences both “nationalism versus communism” and “religion and nationalism” accounts. It stands to reason that the turn from Soviet communism to national communism to nationalism pure and simple that was executed throughout the former Soviet Union under *nomenklatura's* guidance and with its direct participation casts doubts on the first explanation. The nationalist-populist evolution that the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) underwent under Gennadii Ziuganov's leadership and the nationalist enlightenment that visited upon, first, the Kravchuk and then the Kuchma ex-communist administrations in Ukraine must be read as proving either essential conformity of the two ideologies, or immense ideological flexibility of the post-Soviet communists. As for the principal coincidence of religion and nationalism, they are obviously capable of mutually reinforcing each other. However, nationalism need not rely exclusively on religion and must not be seen as fully defined or limited by it. Secular nationalism is commonplace. Champions of the same

nationality habitually belong to different and even opposing churches. Four churches fighting for the national mantle in Ukraine prove the point.

Ideologically deterministic assumptions are prone to fatalism and tend to essentialize most ephemeral side of human practices—their intersubjective and rhetorically manifested aspects. Ideological determinism is thus a form of idealistic reasoning that has long plagued studies in comparative communism and continues to resurface in theoretical schemes that, working from the premise of ahistoric political-cultural continuity, represent Russia's post-communist transformation as just another variation on the familiar motifs of Soviet communism and the Empire. Essentialists have little to offer to improve our understanding of modern Russia's nationality policies or relations with the countries of "near abroad," which they see, in both instances, as mere manifestations of the expected "postimperial syndrome."

A pluralist approach to the post-Soviet politics of identity returns a picture of collaborating and competing actors who learn to use resources of the state for their particularistic benefit. This picture is pertinent to a discussion of separatism and localism among territorially concentrated minorities or of "nationalizing" policies launched by the newly independent states. Behaviorist and institutionalist models are good at elucidating domestic sources of these policies and help to suggest institutional checks that can be put on them to prevent human rights violation and preserve interethnic peace. It helps to see nationalism as a power resource in its own right, which politicians and movement entrepreneurs commonly use in pursuit of rather mundane objectives of organizational control, besmirching of opponents, and personal aggrandizement.

Rational choice theory facilitates discussions of the Soviet "nationality contract," which, once unraveled, ceases to be a linchpin of stability and breeds a potent negative reaction that may be hard to neutralize.<sup>105</sup> Each agent seeks to renegotiate the terms of the implied agreement to maximize the expected utility for itself. The result, as public choice theorists so convincingly demonstrate, proves detrimental to everyone. The model is instrumental in studies of ethno-political competition in a multinational state, but also helps to explain lackluster fortunes of such multilateral institutions as the CIS or the lack of vigor behind other regional formations in Eastern Europe. Realist approaches seek the roots of nationalism in social and economic change, accompanied by sweeping political and institutional developments that make nationalist strategies of social advancement attractive to certain groups and actors. International relations theory sees nationalism as a product of interna-

tional communication, particularly in relations between states that share a common history and reciprocal security concerns. This is undoubtedly relevant to the present state of Ukrainian-Russian relations. Historical allusions play a major part in the shaping of the post-Soviet national identities in both countries. The link between nation-building processes and historical memories in Russia and Ukraine will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

# A History of an Uneasy Relationship

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Though often believed to the contrary, national identities do not emerge as an end product of ethno-national self-realization. They are not pre-given and, hence, cannot be “discovered” by national elites. They cannot “grow” or “mature” in a sense of naturally pre-programmed development of some inner quality. Neither can they reveal themselves as an inherent, but temporarily obscured feature of an ethnic community. However, they can be constructed and changed in a complex process of social interaction involving both domestic and foreign players.

In some aspects, a foreign connection is even more important than the domestic one. Identity is always a relational quality, and national identity is no exception. People claiming to be a nation must see themselves as sharing something in common, and others—as having no part in it. The rise and maturation of national consciousness depends on the presence of others and, arguably, on the degree of “their” group cohesion, as measured against “ours.” National identities are formed through international communication, often in response to real or imaginary threats from outside. To develop a national consciousness, a group of people sharing common territory, economy, language, and (presumably) ancestry, has to be surrounded by other nations or nations-in-the-making. This goes a long way to explain why there were no nations in the world of medieval principalities and multiethnic empires.<sup>1</sup> However, the very first attempts at national rechristening of preexisting identities in France and Germany immediately provoked a wave of emulations throughout Europe, with further repercussions for Latin America, East Asia, Japan, and so on.<sup>2</sup>

The breakup of the world's socialist system centered on the former Soviet Union saw a new tide of nationalist mobilizations. National identities were reconstructed and redefined to reflect dramatic changes in social and political orientations of the formerly communist countries. This reconstruction had to account for the international failure of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon in no lesser way than for the domestic failure of party-dominated regimes and command-administrative economies. Ex-communist nations sought new identities and therefore new benchmarks to construct them. Their visions were as relational now as they were before, but both the nature and the direction of once-familiar relationships changed. Erstwhile friends were no more welcome. Those long deemed potential enemies became, to the contrary, friends. In the postcommunist universe of meaning, practically everyone moved from one position to another, sometimes distant and even opposite to the one occupied before. Though many moves were structurally similar (e.g., joining the WTO or dealing with the IMF), some countries have found themselves in a rather unique situation. Because of their central role in collapsed multinational formations, these countries were to take the blame for others' misfortune. As their own problems could not be claimed on someone else's "foreign governance," these countries were not able to pass the buck further down. Russia, Serbia, and, to a lesser degree, Czech Republic appeared in this category.

To all those once dependent on the Russian resources and protection and once vulnerable to the vicissitudes of Moscow's politics, Russia is an obvious and favorite scapegoat. New national identities of Russia's former satellites can be forged in clear and deceitfully uncontroversial juxtaposition to Russian "imperialism" past and present. Having an unambiguous object of "othering" facilitates both the separation and consolidation of the group. Sometimes, a nation is too close to separate successfully. All attempts to arouse anti-Russian feelings in Belarus failed, although the political environment created by the less-than-competent president, Europe's "last dictator" and ardent Russifier Aleksandr Lukashenko, was most conducive to their success. At the same time, ethno-democratic regimes in Latvia and Estonia successfully incorporated nationalism into the body politic and have not shied away from discrimination against ethnic Russians and Russophones, while playing the specter of the Russian threat to prop up their NATO applications. The Ukrainian case clearly stands out, as neither a wholesale rejection of the Russian influence nor an unconditional embrace of Russia and the Russians is realistically possible. The Russian-Ukrainian relations are truly ambivalent, whether we look at them from the Ukrainian or the Russian side. The result is as controversial as mutual perceptions of each other. To find the roots of

this ambivalence, we need to go to the history of Russian-Ukrainian relationship, which is often viewed differently by the parties. Such a difference of opinion may be constitutive for shaping a separate national identity, if it is accepted and shared by the respective majority. Subjective histories should therefore be taken seriously and complement the factual analysis presented.

### **THE PROBLEM OF ANCESTRAL HOMELAND(S)**

The mainstream view among historians holds that modern Russian and Ukrainian nations descend from several East Slavic tribes of the Dnieper basin.<sup>3</sup> The first state formation known to be put together by these tribes between seven and nine A.D. bore the name of Kievan Rus and was centered on Kiev, the present capital of Ukraine. At its peak, circa the mid-twelfth century, Kievan Rus extended from the Carpathian mountains and the Black Sea in the south-west to the White Sea in the north-east, thus including about two-thirds of what later became Ukraine and most of present-day Belarus. The ethnic Russian heartland of what currently is Pskov, Novgorod, Vladimir, Suzdal', Tver', Riazan', Smolensk and other regions of central Russia were also included in the empire dominated by great princes of Kiev. The political organization and culture of the early Rus were shaped in interaction with a number of neighboring peoples, of which Turkic tribes (Khazars, Pechenegs) and Scandinavians (Varangians) were among the more important.

As attested by the chronicles, the most celebrated dynasty of the Kievan princes was begun by the Varangian warrior Riurik (Hrörekr). The circumstances surrounding this event spawned much controversy about the origins of the East Slavs' statehood. While the so-called Normanist school of historians denied local population any role in the state making and argued the Norse lineage of the word "Rus,"<sup>4</sup> the anti-Normanist tradition, pioneered by Mikhail Lomonosov and the nineteenth-century Russian historians, views Scandinavian involvement in the old Rus politics as secondary and dependent on the choices made by the indigenous elite. New analyses show that the name "Rus" or "Ros" appears in the sources that predate the arrival of northerners by several centuries.<sup>5</sup> A middle-of-the-road idea of original "Rus" as a band of ethnically mixed adventurers and "an international trading company" still maintains a measure of external involvement in the creation of Kievan statehood.<sup>6</sup> For our purposes, however, it is more important to specify ethnic nature of the local state-forming element rather than the exact degree of external involvement. Whether the Varangians or the Khazars created the state centered in Kiev is of little consequence from the point of the subsequent

historical and cultural development that did not make Rus a part of Sweden or put a North Germanic, or any other, language in place of the heretofore spoken Slavic dialects. By the time the legal code *Pravda Russkaia* was written (eleventh century A.D.), nobody would associate the term “russkaia” with some part of Scandinavia.

Ukrainian and Russian historiographies generally disagree on several points regarding the political and ethnic origins of Kievan Rus and even more importantly, its political and ethno-cultural legacies. One theme underlying these disagreements is that of continuity, another is that of belonging. If history is looked upon as unbroken continuity, the search for ancestral homelands is inevitable. Consequently, for Russian historians the Kievan period is unequivocally “Russian,” the first and on many accounts the most illustrious manifestation of the “Russian civilization” created by “the Russian people themselves.”<sup>7</sup> Ukrainian authors, on the other hand, treat Kievan Rus as a necessary link of “continuity of a distinct Ukrainian historical process that begins in pre-Kievan times and lasts until the present.”<sup>8</sup> The literature currently popularized in both countries staunchly upholds these diametrically opposed interpretations.<sup>9</sup>

The theme of belonging is based on the idea of continuity. Today, not many scholars would dispute the claim that Kievan Rus was, at its height, sufficiently close to Europe to be considered the easternmost part of the European civilization. Greek, Roman, and Byzantine influences on Rus both before and especially after the adoption of Christianity (988 A.D.) are well established. Rus culture made creative use of the Byzantine literary tradition, contemporary European styles in architecture, icon painting and applied arts. Local folklore, music, popular theater and so on resembled their West European counterparts much more than those of neighboring nomadic tribes of the East.<sup>10</sup> Political and legal systems, as reflected in *Pravda Russkaia* and other available evidence, were not that different from those adopted by Carolingian Franks.<sup>11</sup> If so, Kievan inheritance should be regarded as a European inheritance par excellence. The claim is politically important, since it allows even a distant successor state to bolster its international image, posing as a rightful member of the European family of nations. As “Europe” is universally associated with a high quality of life, democracy, rule of law, prosperity, and personal safety, knocking at the European door means, logically, an assertion of one’s moral and historical right to partake in these benefits. The implications for policy are numerous: from arguing for most-favored-nation status in trade to pressing for full membership in the European Union and NATO.



In parallel claims of belonging, a number of Russian and Ukrainian academics see Kievan Rus as exclusively “theirs,” refusing to acknowledge that the other side may have any part in its legacy. If the claim to continuity answers the question of origin, thus giving policy makers a convenient foundation myth, the claim of belonging helps to find one’s “proper” place in today’s international community. It creates a myth of relationship, separating “us” from “them” and denying the excluded a role in “our” community of reference. Nationalist myths of belonging, though based on the attempt to appropriate the past, are fully addressed to the present and the future. Say, Ukraine is “European” and Russia is not. Ukraine then may have a place in a NATO-based security system in Europe, whereas Russian participation is uncertain at best. If, conversely, Russia alone is to be deemed a European power in both origin and inheritance, Ukraine’s autonomous existence is rendered dubious and should be attributed to a historical accident. Taking the same example with NATO, then Russia should be accepted as a full-fledged member, while Ukraine does not need to be separately involved and may well be represented by Russian forces or a joint Russian-Ukrainian contingent under Russian field command.

The debate over ancestral homelands with its parallel claims of belonging does not have to be a zero-sum game. As Soviet historians noted some time ago, Kievan Rus was based on a polyethnic tribal conglomerate that, in the course of time, developed features of a unified premodern *ethnie*, the so-called old Rus people.<sup>12</sup> Despite a variety of local dialects, most people of Kievan Rus spoke essentially the same Slavic language. The written language of the epoch is equidistant from modern Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian. Judging by available evidence, “there is no doubt that Kievan Rus was the cradle for all three modern East Slavic peoples.”<sup>13</sup> With this in mind, the new round of haggling over the Kievan inheritance is a clear throwback to the past, prompted by considerations of political expediency, rather than the new facts uncovered by historians.

### THE RISE OF MOSCOW AND THE FALL OF KIEV

In 1240, a Mongol army led by Jenghis Khan’s grandson Batu sacked and destroyed Kiev. Though Riurikid princes continued to rule their former domains, the ultimate sovereignty now rested with the khans. The vestiges of former glory survived in one-time borderlands, which the invaders made vassal dependencies—in the northern area around Novgorod and to the southwest, in Galicia-Volhyn’, where “another strong principality with a different

political culture” continued traditions of the old Rus for another hundred years.<sup>14</sup> The badly devastated north-east Rus managed to recover and eventually led the drive for independence from foreign overlordship. From the fourteenth century on, the leadership in this cause fell upon the princes of Moscow (first mentioned in 1147)—a new power center in the Vladimir-Suzdal’ land. Why Kiev failed, and why Moscow succeeded in forming a stable political entity is a much-debated question, as is another one of the nature of the relationship between the later czardom of Muscovy and the Rusyns/Ukrainians of former Rus principalities in the south and southwest. Let us look at these two issues in turn.

For some historians, the secret of Moscow’s power lies in the extraordinary sycophancy of the Vladimir-Suzdal’ rulers, who secured their position “by ingratiating themselves for generations with their overlords, the khans of the Golden Horde.”<sup>15</sup> Russian and Soviet historiography sees the key to the Moscow’s success in political and economic centralization that helped to bring all the resources of the country into the fight for its independence. The growth of Muscovy is often attributed to particular diplomatic and state-building skills of the princes, and sometimes—to a relatively high degree of local ethno-cultural consolidation, started due to the availability of “a strong state center” in Moscow and “a powerful economic center” in Great Novgorod that was spared the devastating consequences of the Mongol invasion.<sup>16</sup>

The last point sheds some light on the origins of the popular mythology of Russians as the “older brothers” of Ukrainians—the mythology that dominates thinking of many among policy makers and general public in Russia today. According to this line of reasoning, a nation’s “seniority” and “strength” are measured by its ability to create and sustain one’s own independent state, that is the state ruled by an indigenous elite. The earlier the state appears, the better for the nation. One nation is “older” than the other if its tradition of independent statehood runs relatively deeper in history. The Russian-Ukrainian relationship after the rise of Muscovy is accordingly presented as a continuous tutelage of stateless Ukrainians by statist Russians. The fact that Russians managed to repel foreign aggressors and liberate the country from dependence on external powers, while Ukrainians fell subjects to Lithuanian and then Polish rulers is not infrequently explained by differences in political systems and political cultures between the three power centers of Kievan Rus—the oligarchic south (future Ukraine), the democratic north (Great Novgorod) and the autocratic east (Muscovy). Of the three, only the latter survived and led the struggle to reunite the lands of the old Rus into a single state governed from Moscow. Autocracy was the price that people had to pay for the success

of the effort, but ultimately also a solution, a choice forced by circumstances and vindicated as a means to national self-preservation.<sup>17</sup>

Autocracy thus becomes a distinctively Russian feature, something so peculiar to Russia that it appears, “for all intents and purposes, synonymous with its ethnic identity.”<sup>18</sup> It should be noted, however, that neither autocracy was uniquely special to Russia nor did Russia know just one, autocratic, political tradition. Max Weber’s studies of “patrimonial” autocracy, supported by mostly West European evidence, showed patrimonialism (a system of personal monopoly of power that makes no distinction between political, public, and private realms) to be a cross-culturally applicable, indeed an ideal-typical phenomenon.<sup>19</sup> Russian autocracy had numerous counterparts in other times and places, medieval Europe included. As for the rarely disputed domination of autocratic consensus throughout most of the Russian history, it needs to be noted that both Muscovy and later Russia abounded in examples of what Nicolai Petro calls the alternative political culture whose values “were formed in binary opposition to the values of the regime.”<sup>20</sup>

If autocracy should not be awarded an exclusive credit for the success of Moscow’s state building efforts, the question is, what should. No ready-made answer is available. It is obvious, though, that a number of factors were at play here. Political and economic power over most of the Northeast Rus was definitely instrumental. The relative remoteness of the northern hinterland saved Great Novgorod from destruction, thus preserving a strategically located and open-to-foreign-trade economic base. Moscow managed to match the political and military organizations of its conquerors with its own political and military organization, while in Galicia-Volhyn’, to quote another strong Russian principality, it was hardly possible because of “superficial co-existence of the western-type and eastern-type social structures” that thwarted all attempts at political realignment.<sup>21</sup>

Moscow had also won where Kiev lost in terms of ecclesiastical authority. The Metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus left Kiev for Novgorod in 1299. A few years later, his successor moved to Moscow, which hosted the metropolitan residence until metropolitanate was succeeded by the Russian Patriarchy at the end of the sixteenth century. The metropolitanate was renamed as “Moscow and all Rus” in 1448. Notwithstanding claims of the rival bishops in Lithuania, Moscow hierarchs continued to assert their right to exercise spiritual guidance and authority over the Orthodox believers throughout the former Rus lands.

By the end of the fifteenth century, the czardom of Muscovy emerged as the only state formation of the East Slavs that survived foreign domination.

The famous “gathering of lands” by purchase and conquest initiated by earlier Moscow rulers now gained momentum. Ivan III proclaimed all the Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian lands held by Lithuania his own “patrimony” and actively supported secessionist move of the Chernigov princes—descendants of the old Rus dynasty. On several occasions, Russian czars tried to win allegiance of the Zaporozhian Cossacks—the freelance warriors of the Ukraine steppe—by sending them gifts, money, and supplies. Migration of Ukrainians into the Russian borderlands was encouraged and indeed acquired mass proportions by the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>22</sup>

### THE LIBERATION WAR OF 1648–54

The nature of the Ukrainian-Muscovite relationship in this period is far from being firmly established. Ukrainian historians often see Moscow’s interest as an early indication of the imperial ambitions of the Russian rulers bent on personal aggrandizement and indiscriminate territorial acquisition. Russian and Soviet versions of the events prefer to emphasize natural economic, political, and cultural links that tied “Little Russians” (Ukrainians) to Muscovy. These links, as viewed against the background of increased social, national, and religious oppression of Ukrainian peasants in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, explain, accordingly, a “categorical demand of the [Ukrainian] people who did not want to listen to anything but joining with Moscow.”<sup>23</sup>

The Polish-Lithuanian rule in southern Rus saw the creeping enserfment of peasantry, the eradication of all relics of former political autonomy, and the massive onslaught on Orthodox Christianity. The old Rus aristocracy was gradually Polonized, being forced to abandon Orthodoxy for Catholicism. The Orthodox townsmen suffered discrimination, the Orthodox clergy was humiliated and not infrequently expelled, and the smaller nobility had their political rights and privileges denied. The newly imposed serfdom was for all legal purposes tantamount to slavery: no external validation was required, for example, if a lord decided to put a serf to death. For many, escape to borderlands that were scarcely populated and hardly controlled by any state was the only viable option. Among the Cossacks, everyone was free and had a chance to rise in ranks. This was a society of freebooters and mercenaries that accepted disgruntled nobles and runaway serfs alike.<sup>24</sup> Although diverse in ethnic and even religious composition, Zaporozhian Cossacks had a sense of corporate unity and affinity with the Russian Cossack bands of the lower Don River. On occasion, the ad hoc armed expeditions attracted people from both camps.

In the Ukrainian founding myth, now and then repeated in scholarly literature, Cossacks are to be celebrated as “both free farmers and border patrolmen,” spontaneous democrats, egalitarians and even founders of the first modern democratic constitution in Europe.<sup>25</sup> Soviet mythology added a new dimension, representing Cossacks as “antifeudal” revolutionaries and organizers of peasant rebellions against Polish and Ukrainian landlords. However, peasant rebellions and Cossack booty raids were only marginally related until the beginning of a large anti-Polish uprising in 1648. Ukrainian Cossacks were bitterly divided between the “registered” (recognized as servicemen to the state) and the “nonregistered” factions. Especially the former, but some of the later, too, had “feudal” appetites comparable to those of the Polish *szlachta*.<sup>26</sup> As for the common portrayal of the Cossacks as “zealous defenders of Orthodoxy,” it should be recognized that “national, ethnic, or religious matters were completely irrelevant to them” well into the seventeenth century.<sup>27</sup>

The nonregistered Cossacks, however, did represent a revolutionary ferment of some sort, as they were armed and personally free men under a constant threat of enserfment, if not capital punishment by the state authorities. By the mid-seventeenth century, their position became particularly precarious due to the campaign to expand Polish landownership into previously unoccupied territories. In the process, the land claims of smaller Ukrainian nobility and the Cossack “seniors” (*starshyna*) were routinely challenged, thus preparing the ground for the registered Cossacks to join in the common anti-Polish sentiment. Ukrainian Orthodox clergy that had suffered a dramatic setback after the 1596 Union of Brest and had put a number of parishes under the authority of Rome, in most cases, supported the uprising. Grossly abused peasantry waited for little more than a signal to start rioting that very soon engulfed Ukraine on both sides of the Dnieper.

The Ukrainian Liberation War was led by a prominent Cossack “senior” Bohdan Khmelnyts’kyi (elected Hetman in 1648). After a series of battles, Khmelnyts’kyi won several important concessions from the Polish king and managed to create a factually autonomous political and military structure in the Left-Bank (eastern) Ukraine. Military effort, however, proved inconclusive, forcing Cossacks to seek external allies. From early on in the war, Khmelnyts’kyi probed chances for Moscow’s involvement on the Ukrainian side. After extensive deliberation and two rounds of consultations with the elected “council of the land,” the czar decided to grant the requested protection. In 1654, the Cossack leaders swore allegiance to the tsar in the city of Pereiaslav. The war over Ukraine resulted in the Peace of Andrusovo (1667) that split the territory of the contested country roughly equally between Poland and Muscovy.

## REUNIFICATION OR ANNEXATION?

Ukraine's gradual incorporation into Russia that started with the Pereiaslav Rada continues to be surrounded with controversy. Russian scholars and intellectuals en masse remain convinced that Pereiaslav meant nothing more and nothing less than the voluntary reunion of two fraternal peoples—a formula that was widely used during official celebrations of the three hundredth anniversary of the agreement.<sup>28</sup> The Pereiaslav Treaty is seen as a realization of the two peoples' "centennial longings" that arose out of shared "history, culture, national characters, and political-military goals." Russia is presented as a "natural ally and reliable defender" of the Ukrainians, who were doomed to perish as a nation, if not for Russian help. The argument often smacks of teleology: "In spite of the colonial policies practiced by the tsar and the [Russian] landlords, reunification did not push the Ukrainian people into the backstage of history; its objective impact was rather to promote Ukrainian development and facilitate subsequent nation building."<sup>29</sup>

Ukrainian writers, to the contrary, view Pereiaslav as the first step in Russian all-out offensive on the Cossack territorial autonomy. According to this interpretation, the Russian-Ukrainian agreement buried presumably close prospects for independent Ukrainian statehood. The treaty and the events that followed are depicted as "annexation" of the Ukrainian lands on the part of Muscovy, or the national "betrayal" on the part of Khmelnyts'kyi and the pro-Moscow Cossack *starshyna*. Less dramatic interpretations insist on the temporary and provisional character of the union, variously describing it as a military alliance, a personal union of two leaders, a protectorate, a vassalage and so on. Most tend to agree, however, with the conception of "an autonomous Cossack Ukraine," born out of the Liberation War struggle and carried forward to the post-Pereiaslav period.<sup>30</sup>

Cossack *starshyna*, though never considered an independent source of power by the czarist government, was indeed granted considerable rights and privileges. Cossacks secured a de facto command of local government and administration, including tax collection, litigation, and adjudication. First hetmans were also able directly to conduct negotiations with foreign powers, which led some of them away from Muscovy and into the embrace of its enemies. The better-known episode of the latter kind was Hetman Mazepa's ill-fated attempt to side with Charles XII of Sweden against Peter I between 1708 and 1709. Mazepa's "betrayal" confronted Russians with the fact that Cossacks' loyalty to the czar was less than assured, while the imperial bureaucracy had virtually no instruments to control or even accurately monitor local developments.

In order to consolidate their power in “Little Russia,” tsars chose to restrict political autonomy of the Hetmanate, as the Cossack polity became known. Peter I initiated numerous organizational changes that put the Cossack authorities under direct scrutiny of the Russian officials. Catherine II followed in his footsteps by abolishing hetmancy as an institution in 1764. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Cossack stronghold in the Zaporozhian Sich was destroyed, and the Cossack self-administration fully replaced by the imperial bureaucracy. The erstwhile free warriors of Ukraine were either co-opted into the ranks of the Empire’s service nobility or expelled beyond the new Russo-Turkish border. In 1792, the Black Sea Cossack Army, formed out of the first group, was relocated to the Kuban’, southern Russia, where many still claim the Cossack descent. The Cossack period in the history of Russian-Ukrainian relations ended, leaving profound marks on both nations’ political and cultural memories.

#### THE AGE OF NATIONALISM

In 1793, during the second partition of Poland, the Russian empire acquired most of the Right-Bank Ukraine. The western Volhyn’ was added in 1795. Of all presently Ukrainian lands, only Galicia, Transcarpathia, and northern Bukovyna remained in other countries’ possession. The new imperial domains were subjected to political and administrative streamlining that eliminated such vestiges of the old autonomy as the Magdeburg Law, enjoyed by many western Ukrainian cities since medieval ages. The local administration was reorganized along the lines of the Provincial Reform of 1775, initiated by Catherine II. The use of the Russian language was promoted in schools for the nobility and in provincial administration.<sup>31</sup> Though subsequent Russian rulers adopted a laxer attitude and largely ignored such local idiosyncrasies as the continued use of the Lithuanian Statute in the right bank Ukraine, the policy of administrative Russification acquired new strength after the suppression of the Polish insurrection of 1830 and 1831.

The age of nationalism was brought into the heretofore-cosmopolitan Empire in the wake of Napoleon’s invasion of Russia in 1812. The war, the defeat of the French, and the ensuing rise of patriotic feelings throughout Europe affected Russians and Ukrainians alike. Ukrainian Cossacks fought Napoleon alongside of the Russians, and the “Little Russian” nobles, the father of the modern Ukrainian literary language Ivan Kotlyarevs’kyi among them, contributed substantial sums of money to support enrollment in the imperial army. After the war, the Congress of Vienna (1815) raised Ukrainian hopes of

Orthodox revival throughout “Little Poland.” However, national sentiment of the Ukrainians was of a different kind than undifferentiated Russian patriotism. While Russians formed the core of the imperial nation, Ukrainians had no separate state of their own. Even most liberal Russian intellectuals were obliged to side with the Empire in their treatment of such issues as, in Alexander Pushkin’s phrase, “a family quarrel” between the Russians and the Poles. The “Little Russian” patriotism, on the other hand, invoked memories of the Cossack “freedom” and the bygone semi-autonomous existence of the Hetmanate at least as frequently as loyalty to the Empire and perceptions of a common destiny.

Russian predominant association with the state versus Ukrainian idealized historical memories had important consequences for development of the respective images of the nation: “The Russians felt they had to legitimate their presence in Europe in conformity with the new ideas of nationality then arising in Europe. They began to write the history of the Empire and its predecessors as a Russian *national* history. Their nineteenth-century historians had taught the Russians to look at the Empire as the national state of the Russians. . . . and the new philology and ethnography defined the Russians as a Slavic and Orthodox Christian people.”<sup>32</sup> The state imagery informed the link between autocracy and nationality (“*narodnost*”), as the latter was understood primarily as an epiphenomenon of the Empire’s political system and official religion. The Russian “nationality” accordingly embraced not only ethnic Russians, but all eastern Slavs, all Orthodox Christians, christened Jews, Germans, Tatars, and indeed anyone who belonged to the Orthodox Church and was loyal to the czar. The language and other ethno-cultural characteristics, specific to the Great Russians, were really peripheral to this idea of nationality.

Bureaucratic “nationalism” of the Russian empire was not based on developed national consciousness. Benedict Anderson suggests “these ‘official nationalisms’ can best be understood as a means for combining naturalization with retention of dynastic power, in particular over the huge polyglot domains accumulated since the Middle Ages.”<sup>33</sup> This nationalism had the state, not nation, as its point of reference. Additionally, the referenced state, in the Russian case, was an autocratic monarchy, with a result that the modern notion of citizenship was as alien to it as the modern idea of ethnicity. All loyal subjects of certain social standing could have equal career opportunities. Ukrainians were obviously not excluded, and neither were Kazakhs, Tatars, Georgians, and others. On the other hand, the vast majority of the core Russian *ethnie* (peasants) had no chance to play any formative role in the nation building until very late into modernity.



In Little Russia, national awakening could either follow the path of the pan-Russian imperial nationalism or go in completely different direction, defined by cultural borrowing from Eastern and Central Europe. Many chose to side with the Empire, building on the statist notion of nationality. The others had to rely on idealized memories and reinterpretations of history. A typical product of such a reinterpretation was the myth of the Cossack polity as a knightly community of equals reflected the Romanticist mood of the epoch, complete with the conservative Romanticist notion of a serene harmonious society and its ruin at the hands of doom (the arrival of “Muscovites”). The myth created by descendants of the assimilated Cossack *starshyna* played a notable role in the early formulation of the idea of Little Russian uniqueness.<sup>34</sup>

The first semilegendary “history” of the land that offered dissimilar genealogies for the “Rus” (Little Russian) and the “Muscovite” tribes, *Istoriia Rusov*, was most likely created in these circles. The story centered on wholesale glorification of the Cossacks, presenting them as indigenous *szlachta*, hereditary nobility of the Rus, bearers of “undeniable rights” to the riches of the land. The “Muscovites,” on the other hand, were aliens, barbarians, ruthless invaders and exploiters of the Little Russian people. As a typical example of early cultural nationalism, the book evoked “a golden age of achievement as a critique of the present.”<sup>35</sup> Politically, it was a demand to restore the old Cossack privileges that had most probably originated inside the lower segments of the Little Russian elite and reflected its subordinate position not only vis-à-vis the imperial authorities, but also comparing to the more successful and fully integrated into the Russian nobility magnates of a similar local origin.<sup>36</sup>

The Ukrainian movement was launched into existence by a small group of intellectuals who formed its first semipolitical organization, the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, in 1845. The leader of the group, historian Mykola Kostomarov (1817–1885), contrasted spontaneous individualism and democratic values of the Ukrainians to the alleged collectivism, statism, and despotism of the Russian people.<sup>37</sup> Another important member of the circle, Taras Shevchenko (1814–1861), was to become the great Ukrainian national poet and, to the scores of subsequent interpreters, also a symbol of the defiant nation. His political ideas went much farther than liberal constitutionalism, cultural autonomy, and the Slavic Federation preached by Kostomarov. Having been influenced by *Istoriia Rusov*, Shevchenko developed a revolutionary-nationalist outlook on all major problems in Russian-Ukrainian relations. He squarely blamed both real and alleged misfortunes of the Ukrainian people on the Russian czars and Muscovites in general. Most twentieth-

century fighters for Ukrainian independence, notwithstanding frequently bitter political and ideological disagreements among them, have held the poet in high esteem for the special part he played in the “awakening of the nation.”

Ironically, it was the policy of Russian official nationalism that helped to crystallize Ukrainian sense of distinctiveness and brought representatives of nascent Ukrainian intelligentsia into the studies of such “genetic” subjects as ethnography, folklore, philology, and history.<sup>38</sup> The “scholarly” phase in the development of the Ukrainian national consciousness saw, in accordance with Miroslav Hroch’s argument, poets, writers, and historians attempting to forge a new sense of national individuality and to reconstruct available cultural material according to this vision.<sup>39</sup> Being unable to harness power of the state to their cause (as that would equal associating with the polity they had rejected), Ukrainian culture nationalists “operated as an educational force, inspiring in a nascent public opinion a sense of loyalty to the national model, which furnished a matrix for later political nationalist movements.”<sup>40</sup>

The broadening of the Ukrainian movement’s social base was achieved after the abolition of serfdom in 1861, when Ukrainian national populists of the Russian Empire formed a number of educational societies and were able to propagate their ideas in several periodicals. Interestingly, their efforts were granted a more enthusiastic reception abroad, in Galicia, where an important nationally conscious constituency was thereby created. For the first time ever, Ukrainian intellectuals managed to stretch the concept of a separate national identity across the Russo-Austrian border: “the Ukrainians of Russia and Austria did not become one nation because they spoke the same language; they came to speak the same language because they had first decided to be one nation.”<sup>41</sup> However, success in the West was not matched with any comparable developments in the East. The mass audience there remained essentially Little Russian—that is, parochial and largely conservative—in its response to the populist message. The stage of “patriotic agitation” had to be repeated anew when the Russian Revolution of 1905 brought limited constitutional reforms and relative freedom of press in its wake.

The imperial bureaucracy learned to take Ukrainian separatism seriously. In 1847, it crushed the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, arresting and exiling its members. Shevchenko suffered a more severe punishment than the rest of the group. In 1863 the Russian government, reawakened to the problem of nationalities by the second Polish uprising, chose to impose a number of restrictions on the use of the Ukrainian language. A circular by

the Minister of the Interior P. Valuyev prohibited publication of textbooks and popular education literature in Ukrainian. Still harsher measures, including the ban on import of the Ukrainian books and on theatrical performances in Ukrainian, were introduced by the Ems *ukaz* of 1876 signed by Alexander II.

The reasons behind the linguistic policing were mostly geopolitical. In the Ukrainian movement, the czar government saw only overt manifestation of an externally sponsored conspiracy that, if successful, would reverse the settlement brought by the Partitions of Poland. The imperial scramble for colonies was in full rage, all major powers had territorial “interests” beyond their borders, and the ailing empire of the Romanovs fought not to become Europe’s next “dead man.” According to Szporluk, “this set the tone for how Russia would view Ukrainian nationalism for decades to come: in the future, ‘Ukrainianism’ would be viewed as a product of German, Austrian, or Vatican plots, besides being seen as, in one way or another, an originally Polish invention.”<sup>42</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Ukrainian movement made considerable progress toward the development of a new sense of national unity based on shared historical narratives, recently codified vernacular, and common ethnicity. Because Russia remained an empire with no clear border separating its core from the external periphery, the core Russian *ethnie* could not boast comparable achievements. Ethno-national growth of the Great Russians, or Russians proper, was retarded. Official nationalism of the czars could hardly serve as a vehicle for the development of modern national consciousness. However, it did give a shape to the Russian views of the Ukrainian separatism as an “abnormal,” unnatural phenomenon, an aberration brought into the East Slavic family through exogenous interference. The idea was inherited by the Soviets and resurfaced again after the end of the Soviet power.

On the Ukrainian side, a parallel myth of unredeemable Russian animosity toward Ukraine and Ukrainians used structurally similar psychological displacement to equate certain policies of the imperial establishment with the Russian popular attitudes at large. Another persistent problem that the Ukrainian nation makers had to struggle with was intense cross-fertilization and fusion of the two cultures, which was rather one-sidedly read as the problem of the Russian influence on the Ukrainian mind. This kind of influence had to be rejected to avail “purification” of the national spirit, which was repeatedly regarded as acute a problem as political autonomy itself. The struggle continued after the breakup of the Empire.

**REVOLUTIONS: SOCIAL AND NATIONAL**

The 1905 Revolution sufficiently softened the czarist regime to allow the Ukrainian parties to enter into public life, to take part in the elections to the first two State Dumas, and to win a noticeable share of the seats. Initially, populists, who sought political and cultural autonomy for Ukraine within democratized and federated Russia, dominated the stage. Subsequent polarization between national separatists and socialists brought most of the latter into the all-Russian camp of already established groups of a similar ideological persuasion. While socialists had to pay tribute to the ideas of proletarian internationalism, the relatively low priority they learned to place on the national cause per se came to be balanced with increased radicalism of the separatists. Many of those who at first tried to combine nationalist devotion with socialist ideas and principles were forced to choose between the two.

The Revolution in February, 1917, brought the end of autocracy and the period of dual powers in Russia. The Provisional Government's authority was constantly being challenged by the *soviets*, popularly elected councils of workers' and soldiers' deputies. The situation was even more complicated in Ukraine. Power was distributed between the local bodies of the Provisional Government, the soviets that sprang up in the cities, and the autonomist government of the Central Rada. The promise of a long-awaited land reform helped Rada to win over peasants. In the 1917 election to the all-Russian Constituent Assembly, the Ukrainian parties overwhelmed their local contenders. By contrast, the Bolsheviks won only 10 percent of the vote.<sup>43</sup>

However, the strength of the competing powers was not to be determined through the ballot box. On November 7, 1917, the Bolsheviks toppled the Provisional Government in Petrograd and called their Ukrainian comrades to arms. The October Revolution began. On December 25, 1917, the first Soviet government in Ukraine was born and made its base in Kharkiv. Joint forces of the Ukrainian Bolsheviks and Red Army detachments sent by the Council of People's Commissars fought the Central Rada and the Ukrainian National Republic it proclaimed. Being unable to withstand the drive, the Central Rada chose to trade the country's independence for foreign military aid and invited the Germans. Upon arrival, the Germans found the Rada of little use and dissolved it on April 28, 1918.

The fall was precipitated by the Rada's social and economic policies. Mass support waned when it became obvious that the promise of the land was not to be heeded. Later on, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, the head of the Rada's government, acknowledged that "the Rada was on the side of the propertied

classes.” When the less privileged came to see this, “they naturally turned to those who offered them more tangible goods—the Bolsheviks. Not Russian but Ukrainian regiments took Kiev later for the Bolsheviks.”<sup>44</sup>

After a brief interregnum of the German client government under Pavlo Skoropads’kyi, named the Hetmanate in uncanny allusion to the glorious past, some of the Rada successors returned. Headed by V. Vynnychenko and S. Petliura, a new nationalist government of the Directory was formed in December, 1918. By that time, Ukraine was embroiled in anarchy. The Red Army was advancing on one flank, the counterrevolutionary Volunteer Army of General Anton Denikin (the “whites”) on the other, and peasant rebellions spread all over the country. Self-appointed warlords, *otamany*, terrorized and looted the countryside and small towns alike, changing their allegiances as they saw fit. The newly established state of Poland laid a claim to the Right-Bank Ukraine and started a war that eventually brought Petliura into the Polish camp. The Bolsheviks appeared the only force capable of bringing order into the ravaged country and throwing out both foreign invaders and local strongmen. While it may be true that their victory was largely determined by the ability to master an overwhelming military strength,<sup>45</sup> there should be no confusion as to the fact that a sizeable part of the Bolshevik-commanded forces consisted of ethnic Ukrainians and other local loyalists. The “national revolution” ended amidst deep factional struggle of its leaders.<sup>46</sup> The Soviet regime was reinstated and took the task of national consolidation upon itself.

Whether the roots of the Ukrainian Soviet government were Russian or Ukrainian in origin remains a disputed issue. Ukrainian nationalist discourse would have it that “Ukrainians were the first victims of Soviet Russian aggression,” and subsequent Soviet administrations in Ukraine were hardly anything more than the “puppet rulers.”<sup>47</sup> Russian nationalist academics draw a different picture, holding the Bolshevik revolution responsible for the “fairy-tale” realization of “the most audacious desires” of a politically impotent group of Ukrainian separatists: “The Second World War completed building of a unified (*sobornoi*) Ukraine: Galicia, Bukovyna, Carpathian Rus that were not yet attached to it emerged as parts of its body. It was given the Crimea under Khrushchev. If the Caucasus will be given under Brezhnev, the geopolitical dream [of the Ukrainian devotees] will come true in reality.”<sup>48</sup> The Soviet scholars denounced both interpretations, favoring the idea of class solidarity between the workers and the peasants of the two nations. A myth of the Communist Party as a political vanguard of the toiling masses helped to uphold the regime’s legitimacy in Russia and Ukraine alike.

If Ukrainian scholars commonly refer to the struggles between 1917 and 1920 as the “Ukrainian Revolution,” the same period in the books centered on Russia is usually covered under the heading of “Revolution and the Civil War.” It is not customary to refer to the October, 1917, revolution in Russia as the Russian national revolution, since nation building tasks for Russian radical socialists were clearly not a priority. The monarchists and the Constitutional Democrats (the “whites”) were even less supportive of the “plebeian” idea of national mobilization. Russia, for them, was first and foremost the Empire, where Russian people were to be treated on a par with other loyal subjects of the tsar. Yet, a change did occur not only in the social and political realm, but also in the national realm. The old political system was dismantled and the new one put in its place. The established social structure was crushed and its remnants leveled off, to make room for the promised “equality” and “homogeneity” of society. The equivalent of these changes in the national domain was the “unmaking of the nation,” the abortion of the Russian nation building project inaugurated by the Revolution of 1905 and continued in between February and October, 1917.<sup>49</sup>

Both Russian and Ukrainian revolutions were multifarious, multidimensional upheavals that blended several agendas in one gigantic struggle whose goals were less than adequately formulated, frequently blurred and misunderstood by the participants. It stands to reason that “the use of the term ‘Ukrainian Revolution’ to describe the period is therefore somewhat misleading, as it implies that the attempt to create a national state was the one and only drama unfolding on Ukrainian territory.”<sup>50</sup> Most certainly, it was not. The struggle to overcome exploitation and social inequality coincided, intersected, and at times contradicted the national liberation efforts. The threat of occupation by external powers was aggravated by the civil war inside the country. Political, economic, social, and national tasks were to be solved simultaneously, and the state element in both Russia and Ukraine had to be asserted against forces of anarchy and self-serving factional struggle. All taken into account, “it is more accurate to refer to revolutions in the plural when talking about the Russian Empire in 1917.”<sup>51</sup> For most European nationalities of the Empire, these revolutions were both social and national in nature. In Russia, as in Ukraine and throughout Russian borderlands, a truly revolutionary change unleashed by the October, 1917, revolution affected not only political and social, but also national development. The birth of the “Soviet Man” became a national revolution in its own right, although misconceived and miscarried. But who said that only successful revolutions count?

### NATION BUILDING, SOVIET STYLE

For a brief period of time, Soviet states coexisted as *de facto* equals. Kiev hardly bowed to Moscow's authority in anything save party discipline. The established hierarchy of charismatic revolutionary leaders was acknowledged, but matters of day-to-day governance were decided mostly locally or via the shared control system of "unified commissariats."<sup>52</sup> From here, the Ukrainian SSR could arguably move either into a tighter form of the union with Russia or in the opposite direction, "away from Moscow," in a catchphrase of the Ukrainian national communist Mykola Khvyl'ovyi. Although the Bolsheviks proclaimed the right of national self-determination, the party maintained that the actual separation of former Russia's borderlands would be detrimental to the task of socialist construction. To quiet the national sentiment, Lenin offered to create a federation based on the national-territorial principle of representation and administration of local affairs. The party was to remain a singular structure of political authority that would override parochial impulses of the federation units. The federation itself had to be understood, in Stalin's words, as the "surest step to the most solid unification of the different nationalities of Russia into a single, democratic, centralized Soviet state."<sup>53</sup> The party's monopoly of power meant that the Ukrainian communists had little choice but to accept the terms of the proposed Union treaty—or to risk being accused of a "bourgeois-nationalist" desire to break free from revolutionary Russia.

On December 30, 1922, the treaty on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was ratified by representatives of the four Soviet states, three of which bore the names of the East Slavic nationalities and the fourth, the Transcaucasian Republic, was to be partitioned into several national administrative units some time later. The treaty and the USSR Constitution that followed (1924) severely limited the sovereignty of the republics, concentrating supreme legislative and executive powers in Moscow. As a result, Ukraine lost the right to independently conduct foreign relations and foreign trade, to have its own armed forces, or to control the national economy and the communication system. All major functions of the government were to be executed under direct supervision of the respective all-Union bodies. The republican government retained nominally undivided jurisdiction over health care, education, social services, agriculture, internal affairs, and justice.<sup>54</sup> In practice, however, most of the latter were fully controlled by Moscow bureaucrats within ten years. The officially reconfirmed right of secession amounted to little, as even Lenin argued that factual centralization designed and imple-

mented by Stalin “reduces the freedom of exit from the Union, with which we justify ourselves, to a scrap of paper.”<sup>55</sup>

Though much criticized as a fake, Soviet federalism nevertheless signified an important step forward for previously stateless peoples, Ukrainians included. To the latter, it gave formal recognition of national existence, the trappings of statehood, and a working model of at least some power sharing between the center in Moscow and the subcenter in Kiev. The Bolsheviks rejected the Austro-Marxist principle of national-cultural autonomy on a personal basis and the corporatist principle of de-ethnicized sectorial representation, both of which had their supporters in the party. Instead, they opted for a formula that was supposed to provide a sense of national self-determination and thus to assuage local patriotic sentiment, containing it within the borders of respective Union republics. The national-territorial principle of federal organization allowed to harness various brands of populism in the periphery, making the national awakening work for the purposes of socialist construction.

By tying ethnicity to territory, the Soviet regime gave a push to the nation-building processes even where people did not ask for this favor.<sup>56</sup> Those who did ask, like the Ukrainians, were given an opportunity to realize some of their visions of political and cultural development through a number of officially approved policy measures collectively known as *korenizatsiia* (indigenization). A recent work describes it as “a three-pronged policy: foster the development of the local language and culture; recruit members of the indigenous national group into the Party and state apparatus; and employ the local language in all Party and state business.”<sup>57</sup> Ukraine, as the largest and most influential of all the Union republics besides Russia itself, was in a position to advance farther than the rest with its own version of *korenizatsiia*—Ukrainianization.

Scholars have offered various reasons for the policy of indigenization. While some of them believe that the Soviets attempted to emulate the Western experience of economic development on the nation-state basis, more common interpretation is that the policy was designed to compensate for the lack of the Communist Party support in ethno-national peripheries.<sup>58</sup> Yet another explanation emphasizes the historical longevity of political-cultural variables inherited by the revolutionary elite. According to this line of thought, “the wirings of the old state” endure, even if power changes hands. Successful revolutionaries become statist, and as such, they feel obliged “to adopt the putative *nationalnost*” of the eponymous country. If the fallen regime was somehow involved in pursuit of nationalistic goals, the policy of official



nationalism is bound to reappear in the form of “that ‘state’ Machiavellism which is so striking a feature of postrevolutionary regimes.”<sup>59</sup> The immediate predecessors of the Soviet Ukrainian government were nationalist regimes of the center-right (Central Rada), the conservative monarchist (Hetmanate), and the right populist (Directory) persuasion. Many of those who helped to bring these regimes into existence returned to public life as ardent promoters of Soviet-style Ukrainianization. For these people, the leftist radicalism of the Soviet regime was acceptable as long as the communist powers promoted the “Ukrainian cause” in culture and education.

The regime’s nationalist transformation seemed to be in the making. Even the leading émigré figures, such as the former President of the Central Rada Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi, were allowed to take positions of state importance and “adapted themselves as best they could to the conditions of the Soviet regime in the hope of its evolution.”<sup>60</sup> Inside the Communist leadership itself, the left-wing nationalist survivors of other parties (O. Shums’kyi, V. Blakytnyi) and the “national communists” of more stable Bolshevik loyalties (M. Skrypnyk) headed the drive to expand the Ukrainian-language education and bring Ukrainian to the fore of cultural and political life in the country. The results were impressive. Although there had been few teachers of Ukrainian before the revolution, there were forty-five thousand by 1923, and the Ukrainian language was made compulsory in all of the republic’s schools. By the end of 1927, 82 percent of all elementary schools were using Ukrainian, and 93.9 percent of Ukrainian children were taught in the native language. By the early 1930s, more than 70 percent of all new books and 89 percent of newspapers in the republic were published in Ukrainian. Titular nationality had a safe majority in the government and among party members. In 1927, 70 percent of government business was conducted in Ukrainian, and nearly 57 percent of all university students were ethnic Ukrainians.<sup>61</sup> Although Stalin’s recentralization profoundly muted the impact of these policies, it cannot be denied that “the system was already too well established to be dismantled overnight, and the educational policies pursued by the Bolsheviks have left their mark on the character of post-Soviet nationhood.”<sup>62</sup>

While Russian nationalists lamented “coerced Ukrainianization of the Little Russian people,” they had no less reason to be concerned with developments at home.<sup>63</sup> No Russian equivalent of indigenization was ever attempted. In their obsessive fear of “Great Russian chauvinism,” the Bolsheviks took special precautions to arrest and completely thwart Russian own national development. Through the first postrevolutionary decade, top leadership of the Communist Party in Moscow remained largely non-Russian in ethnic com-

position and fiercely anti-Russian in wide range of culture and nationality policies. In Petro's opinion, "Russians were singled out because it had been their culture and institutions that had bound the empire together."<sup>64</sup> The imperial culture, as the most powerful enemy of Bolshevism, was accordingly subjected to annihilation that was achieved through temporary and permanent ban on publications, crude censorship, revisionist editing, reinterpretation, and outright destruction of cultural artifacts. Prerevolutionary intellectuals perished in the Civil War and subsequent purges; those who went into exile were never allowed to come back. Russia was deprived of the vital instruments of national statehood: it had no national party organization, no separate national capital, no Academy of Sciences, and no security forces of its own. While the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was allowed to be born in 1921, the Russian Orthodox Church was prosecuted as a mainstay of the imperial tradition, and thousands of its priests died in the Gulag.

The "indigenization-in-reverse" that struck Russia after 1917 severely undermined and distorted national identity and solidarity of the Russian people. Stripped of most institutions with a distinctly national character, Russia had to accept its own denationalization as a sacrifice for the greater good and messianic destiny. Its national development was "interrupted or sidetracked by the Communist experiment, in which an empire was restored, or, more precisely, a new empire was founded on an expressly anti-national, universalist ideological foundation."<sup>65</sup> By contrast, the Ukrainian nation building acquired a new momentum, fostering legitimate aspirations of bringing the real substance into the national form of the state. The Soviet nationality policy of the 1920s affected the national identities of the two peoples in diametrically opposed ways. If Ukrainians were moved closer to the genuine national awakening, Russians were cut off from their national roots in the imperial history (as the latter was declared antinational) and denied modern national statehood to shoulder the burden of future planetary citizenship. Once the latter proved remote, it was Russians again, whose transformation into denationalized Homo Sovieticus had to be effected first.

## **STALINISM AND NATIONALITIES**

National revival in Ukraine came to an abrupt end in the 1930s. In 1930, the show trial of a group of well-known Ukrainian intellectuals ended in their indictment on accusations of counterrevolutionary activities and treason. This had signaled an all-out attack on both prerevolutionary intelligentsia and its national communist outgrowth. New trials followed between 1931 and 1933.

The all-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences was purged, the local Institute of Marxism-Leninism abolished, and several independent associations of fine arts and literature ceased to exist. In a parallel move, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was banned as an instrument of “bourgeois nationalist” propaganda, its clerics suffered prosecution, and most of the faithful had to change allegiances.

Elimination of the national-minded intellectuals was supposed to clear the slate for the Stalinist campaign of forced collectivization that was especially ferocious in the rich agricultural areas of Ukraine, southern and central Russia, and the North Caucasus. Stalin believed that levying a tribute on the peasantry was the only way to the fast industrialization of the country. However, peasants could resist, and the indigenous elite was there to organize the resistance. Hence, all signs of “national deviationism” had to be closely monitored and stamped out. The campaign to “liquidate kulaks [rich peasants] as a class” could be successful only if local bosses had no sense of national solidarity or compassion.

Soviet nationality policies had always trailed “larger” social and economic designs. Mass collectivization “altered the political constellation upon which earlier nationality policy had been based in two ways, by necessitating the centralization of authority in Moscow and by negating the political expediency of indigenization.”<sup>66</sup> Once the campaign was launched and in a matter of months, about three hundred thousand peasant families, or nearly 1.2 million people, were deprived of their property and sent into exile in the scarcely populated areas in Siberia, Central Asia, and the Far East.<sup>67</sup> A quarter of a million of those “class enemies” were Ukrainians, women and children included.<sup>68</sup> Forced requisition of grain under conditions of poor harvest and mass peasant resistance to collectivization caused widespread starvation in the countryside. The cities were only marginally safer. The Great Famine of 1932–33 claimed the lives of millions of Ukrainian peasants and city dwellers.<sup>69</sup> Many died in the blacklisted villages guarded by the security police, where people were deprived of all food and denied any help by authorities.

Everywhere, collectivization was pushed down the peasants’ throats with terror. Comparably brutal measures were applied to the Kuban’ and Don regions of the southern Russia, where repression began even earlier than in Ukraine, to the peasants of the Volga basin and to several central Russian regions.<sup>70</sup> A student of the peasant opposition in the USSR noted: “Clashes occurred almost everywhere, from the Ukraine to Siberia, from the Caucasus to the gates of Moscow, where the peasant rising of Ryazan sowed panic in governmental quarters. Everywhere murders, arson, fighting were on the rise.

In the Smolensk region the prosecutor counted thirty-four acts of terrorism in July and August, 1929, and forty-seven in October. Party militants engaged in confiscation operations were advised to ‘stay out of range of windows and not to use village streets after nightfall.’<sup>71</sup> Similar policies produced similar outcomes across the country. Kazakhs were decimated. Southern Russians were left to die in a ravaged countryside without the benefit of international aid they received during the famine of 1921. Smaller peoples of Caucasus and Central Asia were devastated. But Ukrainians suffered on such a scale that even local Stalin’s loyalists dared to question the policy and sought to ameliorate it.<sup>72</sup> Discontent inside the party was suppressed with a series of purges that took a heavy toll on the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine (CP[b]U) and most of the central Ukrainian governmental agencies. The Politburo membership changed several times, as the former first men of all ethnic backgrounds went on the death row and were replaced by the newcomers, whose fate often repeated the plight of their predecessors. No form of dissent was tolerated. All local attempts to lessen the shock of the forced requisitions of food were beaten back.

High Stalinism brought the reversal of Ukrainianization and tightening of bureaucratic controls all over the country. The attack on Great Russian chauvinism subsided, as neoimperial recentralization became the task of the day. The Soviet administration in Ukraine ceased to be culturally distinctive when appointees from Moscow came to take place of the dislodged officials. The Russian language was promoted as a medium of international communication, and the school courses of history became increasingly Russo-centered. The coming war seemed close with each new success of the Axis powers, and the history textbooks sought to illuminate particularly “those critical moments when the nation fought for its existence and repelled the invader from Russian soil.”<sup>73</sup> The modernization that Stalinism brought to Ukraine was devised in Moscow, secured with terror, and further entrenched through strengthening of Ukraine’s economic dependence on the rest of the Soviet Union, Russia in particular.<sup>74</sup>

Did Russian people benefit from these policies? Hardly. Witch hunts in the Russian Federation often preceded and set the stage for analogous repressions in the other Union republics. Just as in Ukraine, dekulakization in Russia was accomplished in tandem with destruction of the old intelligentsia. Standard accusations of sabotage, espionage and anti-Soviet conspiracy were heard at the Shakhty prosecutions in 1927–28, during the trials of the fictitious Industrial Party in 1930, the “Menshevik” professors in 1931, the Metro-Vickers engineers in 1933, and so on.<sup>75</sup> Brutality of collectivization in what some writers

call the Soviet center can be appreciated if one looks at figures of peasant resistance in ethnic Russian or mixed, with strong Russian presence, areas of the country. In 1930 only, there were 200 guerrilla groups in the Moscow region, 32 underground organizations and 190 anti-Soviet peasant groups in the lower Volga area, 76 counterrevolutionary organizations and 411 groups with combined membership of 6,259 in the North Caucasus.<sup>76</sup> Guerrilla movement in Siberia quadrupled between 1927 and 1929, and by 1930 even local militiamen were fighting the regime alongside the peasants. Not only did the terror-famine between 1932 and 1933 not spare the traditional agricultural areas of the central and southern Russia, but the massive deaths from starvation were reported as far east and north as the Urals, western Siberia and the Trans-Volga.<sup>77</sup> The Great Purge of 1937–39 was principally centered on the Old Bolsheviks and top military commanders, most of whom were to be found in Moscow and Leningrad. Its later reach into the periphery was felt throughout the Russian hinterland in no less measure than in the national republics. “Great-power Russian chauvinism” in the Leningrad party organization was purged as ruthlessly as “national deviationism” in the Caucasus, Ukraine, or Central Asia.

On all accounts, Stalinism in Russia was as much a national tragedy as it was in Ukraine. Its genocidal policies arrested national development. Eradication of the old intelligentsia prevented the rise of modern national consciousness. Purges destroyed extant elements of the civil society. Mass terror pulverized whatever naturally developed mechanisms of social cohesion existed before and replaced them with artificial limbs of all-pervasive totalitarian structure. Russian people were “atomized” and homogenized, just like the rest of Soviet “socialist nationalities” subjected to the same nullifying impact of the Stalinist nationality policies.

But Russians were different in one significant respect, and this distinctiveness still tarnishes the new Russia’s attempts to come to terms with its own past and with its new neighbors, the former Soviet Union republics. The Russians could not convincingly disown the regime in a manner that other members of the Soviet federation could employ, and indeed employed after the breakup of the USSR. The seat of Stalin’s power was there, in Moscow, and millions of Russians obeyed it. So did millions of non-Russians, but their submissiveness could be excused as something extorted by the Russians. The latter were, of course, sufficiently strong to overpower smaller nationalities. What happened in the Russian case was, on the other hand, a particular instance of a proletariat “overpowering” a nation, canceling its own national existence to keep the denationalized empire together.

Russia's tragedy and self-mutilation notwithstanding, a burden of historical responsibility still lies there, even if a good case can be made that other nations of the former Soviet Union had their own measure of participation in the system.

## WORLD WAR II: A CHANCE TO FIGHT COMMUNISM?

For the great majority of Russians, World War II began in 1941 when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. The Red Army's march on the Baltic states, the Soviet aggression against Finland, and the annexation of the West Ukrainian, Bessarabian, and North Bukovynian lands in 1939–40 even now in popular imagination remain somehow detached from the "true" history of what many Russians still call the Great Patriotic War. For the western Ukrainians, September 17, 1939, and June 22, 1941, are inseparable. On the first date, Soviet tanks crossed Poland's eastern border and reclaimed the ethnic Ukrainian territories for the "socialist Fatherland." Collectivization, dekulakization, and the Russian-speaking security police (NKVD) soon followed. On the second date, tanks again rolled over the country, this time coming from the west. Nazi Germany declared war on the USSR, and Hitler's "new order" began spreading east. "Liberation" from Stalinism proved dubious, as some of those who greeted Germans with bread and salt ended up in Nazi concentration camps, while others—in the resistance movement.

The Nazi plans for enslaving and physical extermination of the East Slavs were put to swift realization in the occupied territories. Very soon, most of those involved could guess that the stakes in the war were as high as national survival. However, there were people among both Russians and Ukrainians who believed that tactical alliance with Germany was possible and in the end justifiable, if some higher-order goals were thereby served. The goals thus privileged included achievement of national independence and delivery from Stalinism.

### *The OUN-UPA*

On the Ukrainian side, this position was taken by the radical right Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), whose leaders maintained close contacts with German special agencies as early as the 1920s. The OUN's collaboration with the National-Socialists was expedited by an ideological kinship and a common hatred of communism.<sup>78</sup> National statehood for Ukraine seemed to be achievable in the form of a German protectorate, and,

once the statehood was granted, the OUN could hope to exonerate its actions, claiming the mantle of a legitimate representative of the Ukrainian national interests.

However, the Germans were unwilling to entertain the idea of even token Ukrainian statehood. The country was little more than a colony attained through military conquest, and as such, it had to pay the tribute. The nationalists were tolerated as long as they assisted in keeping locals docile, which they did, fighting the red guerrilla movement in the forests and eliminating Soviet sympathizers in the cities. Nothing more was expected of them. Meanwhile, the severity of the occupation regime and its increasing appetite for slave laborers (est. 2.3 million deported to Germany from Ukraine) forced many nonparty Ukrainians into hiding and eventually into resistance movement. By 1943, the OUN managed to secure control over these noncommunist partisans and to combine their forces under the umbrella of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). The UPA's anti-German stance was rather limited in scope and application, allowing a long-time student of the problem to doubt "whether they [nationalist partisans] achieved anything of importance, for by the time the Germans were inclined to make concessions, their authority was already on the verge of being overthrown by the Red Army."<sup>79</sup> By contrast, the anticommunist and anti-Russian credentials of the OUN-UPA remain beyond any doubt, since "most of its actions were against Soviet forces."<sup>80</sup>

Dramatically different assessments of the Ukrainian nationalists' military record during the Second World War continue to be published in Russia, Ukraine, and the West. Most Russian writings on the issue, though sometimes acknowledging that military resistance to Stalinism was morally justifiable, essentially repeat the Soviet condemnation of the Ukrainian nationalists as traitors who partook in the crimes of the occupiers, "assisted the Nazi executioners in exterminating the Ukrainian population, helped to ship Ukrainian youth to hard labor in Germany, looted the Ukrainian people, and carried out fascist orders to uphold the occupation regime."<sup>81</sup> Procommunist and Russophile Ukrainians generally tend to subscribe to this view, labeling the OUN-UPA a fascist organization, while their nationalist opponents, largely concentrated in the western Ukraine and in Kiev, glorify the "heroic struggle" of the nationalist guerrilla, unconditionally treating it as a genuine national liberation movement. Right-wing speakers for the Ukrainian diaspora in the West granted the UPA the role as the main protector of the Ukrainian population "against German military and police units, as well as against Soviet partisans," and see the wartime Ukrainian nationalism "as a revolutionary

democratic force” engaged in “the struggle against both totalitarian powers.”<sup>82</sup> More balanced assessments counterpoise the OUN’s “unsavoury reputation for authoritarianism, collaboration with the Nazis and anti-Semitism” to its “relatively diverse and politically flexible” tradition of ideological adaptation and the ability to “carry on an armed struggle, even to a limited extent and for a comparatively short time, against both the German and the Soviet forces.”<sup>83</sup>

### *The Vlasov Army*

Russian participation in the Second World War was not wholly pro-Soviet either. If the Ukrainian nationalists were inspired by the idea of national independence, Russian defectors from Stalinism often sought to overthrow the dictatorship. This, indeed, was the main rationale behind the creation of the Russian Liberation Army (ROA) under Gen. Andrei Vlasov. As a British expert claims, it took Vlasov “approximately a year to realise that his assumptions as to the wisest policy toward the Soviet Union were not and could not be shared by the Nazi authorities,” whose occupation regime in Russia was premised on the postulate of racially asserted colonialism.<sup>84</sup>

The ROA, though most visible, was not a unique instance of the severity of ethnic Russian opposition to Stalinism. There were also Cossack formations that volunteered and were included in the Wehrmacht, writes Aleksandr Nekrich, who estimates the end-of-war strength of the Vlasov force at three hundred thousand men.<sup>85</sup> Several Western observers noticed that Russians were at least as hostile to the regime as non-Russians, and actually led the resistance, while “non-Russian Soviet individuals did not emerge anywhere as outstanding opposition leaders either during or after World War II, although one might cite secondary leaders among Ukrainians, Tatars, and Caucasians.”<sup>86</sup> We have seen, however, that the Ukrainian nationalist movement, if anything, was hardly dependent on any Russian opposition leaders and had developed a completely separate agenda of its own. The available documents of the Russian Liberation Movement show certain sympathy to the national aspirations of non-Russian nationalities and indicate that the Russian opposition, if successful, was prepared to take the principle of national self-determination seriously.<sup>87</sup> Still, its *raison d’être* was Russia’s own democratization. Rather naïvely, the ROA leaders believed that military defeat at the hands of Hitler’s armies would free Russia from totalitarian dictatorship.

In the Soviet Union, General Vlasov and his entourage were rarely depicted as anything more than a handful of traitors and Nazi collaborators,



their concrete personal motivations usually dismissed as opportunistic or simply unimportant. Mass participation in the movement was explained as a result of forced mobilization and intimidation of the prisoners-of-war, whose refusal to join the ROA would have meant, in most cases, certain death in Nazi prison camps. More sympathetic accounts tended to exaggerate the mass hatred of Stalinism at home, even going as far as to suggest “that to win the war the Nazis had merely to arm Soviet citizens and let them fight against their own government, but Hitler was extremely reluctant to try that.”<sup>88</sup> Both views are rather extreme. Instead, it must be fair to argue that the Vlasov movement was as much a product of the Soviet system as its militant adversary. Totalitarian upbringing helped to negotiate with the German high command, while anti-Stalinism facilitated acceptance of a more or less pro-democratic position, developed under the influence of the Russian émigré group known as the Popular Labor Alliance (NTS).<sup>89</sup> The Russian Liberation Movement made no use of fascist ideology and had never espoused the doctrine of ethnic superiority. In Conquest’s assessment of General Vlasov, “His program shows that he was entirely out of sympathy with Nazism, and only concerned with a democratic Russia—he was comparable, in fact, to the Irish revolutionaries of 1916 who sought German support against Britain, or the Burmese and Indonesians of the Second World War who came to agreements (or tried to) with the Japanese against the West.”<sup>90</sup> Vlasov’s choice of allies was odious nevertheless. Still, what we know of the Russian Liberation Movement’s political platform indicates a basic longing for a nontotalitarian Russia. That sort of Russia could allow Ukraine to secede, had the majority of Ukrainians demanded it. In Petro’s opinion, the imprint left by the democratic views of the exiled compatriots on the Russian Liberation Movement demonstrated historical viability and continuity of Russian alternative political culture.<sup>91</sup>

Whatever else may be said of the Ukrainian and Russian anti-Soviet military resistance during World War II, they were united in a common desire to bring the Stalinist regime to its end. Both groups chose to join together with the Nazis to achieve this goal. Many eventually came to sincere disillusionment with the idea and even turned their arms against the former sponsor (the UPA) or demanded a real organizational autonomy, including the rights of the national government (the ROA). By the end of the war, both the Ukrainian nationalists, represented by the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (UHVR), and the Vlasovites, who launched the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (KONR), moved to embrace an ideology that was more sensitive to the rights of national minorities and promised some hope for harmonious national relationships in the societies they respectively

claimed to represent. These wartime experiments, even if their immediate political and military context remains morally dubious, are worthwhile to remember because of their role in reemergence of noncommunist political culture in the Soviet Union after the war.

### NATIONALITIES AFTER STALIN

The red flag was raised over Berlin in 1945, and the Soviet Union entered Europe as a military superpower. The event could not but provoke reminiscences of another occasion when Russia similarly helped to bring peace to Europe and was similarly consulted on the matters of the post-war settlement—the end of the Napoleonic wars. Then, a major victory aroused mass patriotic feelings and widespread hopes that the regime could change for the better. Not incompatible feelings and hopes flooded the Soviet society after World War II. Stalin's response to the outburst of patriotism was to toast the Russian people as "the most outstanding nation of all the nations within the Soviet Union."<sup>92</sup> Simultaneously, a wave of repressions launched between 1941 and 1944 against the suspect non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union continued and even gained momentum in recently annexed areas, the western Ukraine included. The policies of official Soviet Russian patriotism set against the background of systematic prosecution of dissidents in ethnonational peripheries created a schism that ran deep in the society. The full measure of mutual estrangement between Russians and non-Russians that was born out of this schism would be felt for years to come, finding its outlets in the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, the two Russian-Chechen wars between 1994 and the present, the discriminatory citizenship laws of postcommunist Latvia and Estonia, and the continuous tensions between Crimean Tatars and ethnic Russians in the autonomous Crimean Republic of Ukraine.

The death of the dictator and subsequent de-Stalinization efforts promulgated by Nikita Khrushchev between 1956 and 1962 could only partially reverse the trend thus established. For one thing, Khrushchev was a loyal Stalinist himself through much of his career. He personally supervised purges in the Ukrainian Communist Party and stopped well short of exposing all of the crimes he no doubt was well aware of. The famous rehabilitation of the regime's victims was not extended to such deported nationalities as the Volga Germans or the Crimean Tatars. The fight with "bourgeois nationalism" in the Union republics continued. The brief decentralization campaign of 1954–58 was quickly reversed when the party leadership in Moscow awoke to the fact

that “national and territorial autonomy were about to overcome their status as propaganda slogans and become reality.”<sup>93</sup> As the rule of the party’s center was threatened by the increased power of local decision making, the period of institutional innovations on the republican level ended, and control over the economy was transferred back to the all-Union bureaucracy.<sup>94</sup>

For other reasons of only limited success of the de-Stalinization effort in Soviet nationality policies one may think of “the plebeian sense of Slavic cultural superiority that appeared to move Khrushchev,” or “the basically conservative fear of anarchy that seemed to motivate Brezhnev,” or refer to still other idiosyncratic factors that, because of the system’s excessive reliance on personal leadership, unduly influenced decision-making process in the Soviet Union.<sup>95</sup> Although we can speculate further in this direction, the institutional inertia of the giant Soviet apparatus was probably a factor that outweighed even the most powerful personalities. The system developed a bureaucratic logic of its own that circumvented all attempts at reform.

According to this logic, Russians, as the country’s most numerous ethnic group, were supposed to bind the Empire together. Since the Russians did not conceive the Empire as a national state, but rather as a model of nationally indifferent organization of “labor masses,” they were also the first to taste the full flavor of the denationalization experiments undertaken in the name of socialist and “proletarian” solidarity. A combination of these two thoroughly opposed intellectual moves yielded equally ambivalent policies. On one hand, the “new Soviet man” had to speak the “language of international communication,” that is Russian, to be effectively administered by a centralized bureaucracy. This consideration revealed itself in intensified Russification efforts of the Brezhnev administration. On the other hand, the de-ethnicization of the rest of the Soviet people was to be modeled on the Soviet Russian, already de-ethnicized prototype. Hence, popular Russian nationalism remained as outlawed in the 1980s as it was in the 1920s, and the very notion of the Russian national interest as at least theoretically distinct from the Soviet one was diligently suppressed.

Although tolerating the nominally federal structure of the state as an inevitable throwback to the past, the official theory and ideology probed the possibility of a switch from the national-territorial to the territorial-administrative principle of political organization. An opinion that the change would probably better address the needs of a uniform management was widespread among party intellectuals. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union’s (CPSU) 1961 program reflected the mood, stating that the borders between Union republics were increasingly losing their former significance. The future “single

culture” of communist society was seen as free from national divisions. One culture for all Soviet nationalities had to be developed first, as a necessary step in that direction. The Russian language was apparently designated as a preferred medium for “international” Soviet culture, and the education reform of 1958–59 attempted to tilt the balance between Russian and non-Russian languages in the national republics in favor of the former.

Parallel to this trend, there were signs of a diametrically opposed movement to greater assertiveness of the Union republics. The national contract between the center and the peripheries was renegotiated before. First, the party moved from unconditional acknowledgment of the right to national self-determination to a more tentative formula that made better use of “international proletarian solidarity” and practical political centralization. Next came the switch from Stalin-preferred “autonomization” to the national-territorial principle advocated by Lenin. *Korenizatsiia* was cut short by collectivization and the Great Purge. The Great Patriotic War against the Third Reich naturally demanded more room for patriotic feelings; the Soviet leadership had to admit not only Russian, but also Ukrainian, Georgian, Bashkir and other historic figures in a pantheon of officially celebrated heroes. The postwar consolidation could not but trigger new adjustments in Soviet nationality policy, and this time they were more complex and less straightforward than earlier.

First, de-Stalinization and, second, Brezhnev’s policy of the stability of cadres removed an element of fear in the relations between Moscow and the republics. Due to the relaxation of controls, the Soviet system ceased to be totalitarian, though it was still run by the authoritarian party. Individual dictatorship of the party leader was replaced by more or less genuine, though extremely limited in scope, collective leadership of the Politburo. Republican administrations received a better representation in the center and, more importantly, a greater freedom of action at home. Ukrainians enjoyed especially favorable treatment, as their representation in the CPSU’s Central Committee rose from 6.8 percent in 1952 to 18.5 percent in 1961, which was above the national Ukrainian average in the total population of the Soviet Union. Though this figure had somewhat declined by the early 1980s, Ukrainian representation in the central organs of the party, the Ministry of Defense and other central institutions was high enough to put Ukrainians firmly in a position of political pre-eminence that, Russians excluded, was second to no other Soviet nationality.<sup>96</sup>

The special treatment of the Ukrainians underscored a particular value that the Russian-Ukrainian partnership held for the party. For both the Khrushchev and Brezhnev administrations, Ukraine was a country of choice, as their personal climb to power proceeded from local power bases. Mass

influx of the Ukrainian cadres in various decision-making bodies at the center came after each leader's elevation. Brezhnev's successor Yuri Andropov, reaffirmed Ukraine's position as second to Russia only in his best known pronouncement on the national question.<sup>97</sup> While the next Soviet leader, Konstantin Chernenko, in one writer's observation, spent some time of his brief tenure attacking Russian nationalism and religion, he pretty much left Ukraine to its own premises.<sup>98</sup> The fight against "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" was largely abandoned in Moscow and for all practical intents and purposes became house preoccupation of the Ukrainian ideological establishment supervised by Brezhnev's loyalist Volodymyr Shcherbyts'kyi. The trend did not change much under Gorbachev, who was so eager to embrace Ukrainians as "brothers" that at times he seemed to take them for a regional variety of the Russian people.

When compared to the rest of the country, Ukrainian elites after Stalin enjoyed definite political success. However, it was revealed mostly through individual political careers—which traversed all of the former Soviet Union and were not capped by a republican "ceiling"—and certain corporate accomplishments won, for example, by Ukraine's coal industry or defense enterprises and research centers. Elite success was not translated into automatic gains for the republican economy or culture. A balance of regular budgetary appropriations versus investments per republic clearly did not favor Ukraine. That the Russian Federation fared no better was poor excuse for the republic's leaders. By the early 1970s, the trend was well pronounced: "regions with the highest representation at the center (the Ukraine, Georgia) have done poorly; while regions with few such political resources have done remarkably well."<sup>99</sup> At the same time, Russian language made new advances in education, with a result that Russian books and periodicals were read by ever growing segments of the public. An attempt to promote Ukrainian through a variant of nativization policies, sanctioned by the Communist Party of Ukraine's (CPU) Central Committee under Petro Shelest, was thwarted amidst accusations of localism, parochialism, and, worse than that, nationalist deviationism.<sup>100</sup> A longstanding Politburo member, Shcherbyts'kyi, who succeeded Shelest as Ukraine's party chief, had concentrated mostly on the economy.

Among many unintended consequences, Khrushchev's "thaw" revived a national consciousness in non-Russian republics and spawned dissident movement in intellectual centers. In Ukraine, these trends combined to produce nationalist dissent of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The dissenters—such as writer Ivan Dziuba, journalist Viacheslav Chornovil, and lawyer Levko

Luk'ianenko—were persecuted and isolated, only to return as heroes twenty years later. Some signs of national reawakening were registered in Russia, too.<sup>101</sup> However, the Russian dissent, with few exceptions, was concentrated mainly on all-inclusive human rights problems and less concerned with the plight of Russian ethnicity and culture. Although fully supportive of the fight non-Russians waged against nationality policies of the regime, the Moscow dissidents on the whole failed to address the issue of denationalization in Russia proper.

Russian nationalism remained an unrealized project. A “return to the soil” movement pioneered by writers of the so-called village prose, though lamenting the loss of a distinct Russian identity and criticizing the destructive impact of modernization, did not attempt to openly blame the regime for decline of the core Soviet nationality. Official nationalism of the Brezhnev period glorified multinational Soviet people, proclaiming its own variant of unity in diversity. Though knowing and speaking Russian language was thought of as one of the key manifestations of the “unity,” development of Russian distinct national consciousness was not endorsed for fear that it could undermine supranational political identity of *Homo sovieticus*. Russian national opposition, most prominently represented by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, continued to perceive Ukrainians and Belarusians as little more than the regional types of the bigger Russian nation, thus obfuscating the tensions that were simmering under the facade of “brotherly” relations. Not grounded in either clearly defined ethnicity or the shared polity, the mainstream Russian nationalism of the late Brezhnev era could not serve as a base for political mobilization. For the same reason, the cultural identity it provided was, at best, ambiguous. Without perestroika, national mobilization in Russia proper had no chance to get off the ground.

## PERESTROIKA AND AFTER

Gorbachev's distinct lack of sensitivity to the issue of nationalities was clearly demonstrated in his June, 1985, slip of tongue, when, to the astonishment of a street crowd in the Ukrainian capital, he used “Russia” as a synonym for the Soviet Union as a whole. Almost every analyst writing on the topic noted that the last general secretary uniquely rose through the ranks without having to serve anywhere beyond the borders of the Russian Federation. Gorbachev's personal background was therefore particularly ill suited for the job, as running a multinational country, let alone attempting to reform it, required skills he had no chance to acquire.

The new course started with a bid to dismantle the established instruments of Soviet nationality policy. Gorbachev apparently had a very dim understanding of its working principles, when “(1) he called for zero-based budgeting, a direct challenge to the republics’ role in the economy; (2) he treated the periphery in an undifferentiated way, not giving pride of place to the republics over the oblasts of the REFSR; and (3) he appeared to call for an end to affirmative action, arguing that the selection of cadres in both Moscow and the republics should be conducted the same way—on merit and without favoritism.”<sup>102</sup> As if all of this was not enough to insult the republics and trigger a massive counterattack, the reform-minded leaders in Moscow launched a vicious offensive against local middle-management cadres, denigrating them collectively as a bureaucratic deadwood and “mechanism of inertia.” The campaign of “acceleration” located the seed of the country’s economic ills in intermediary elites who were directly responsible for smooth functioning of territorial and sectorial formations of the Soviet system. Presumably fighting with provincial despotism, corruption and favoritism, Gorbachev in effect sold Moscow’s most trusted allies down the river. In other words, he was the first to breach the unwritten national contract that gave the center ultimate power together with ultimate responsibility for its workings. The national cadres understood their leader had betrayed them.

The end results of this policy were structurally similar in Russia, Ukraine, and the rest of the republics. Sovereignist elites had to be born to withstand the pressure of the increasingly irrelevant Union authority and to take on the tasks of management and coordination that were one by one divested by the Kremlin. Meanwhile, the center detached itself from reality and showed signs of progressive intellectual debilitation and organizational incapacity. Gorbachev lived in a dream world, preaching “new thinking” to the world, while failing to address mundane problems of day-to-day governance. He ended wars and commanded withdrawal of troops; the republics had to resettle the returnees. Politburo fought alcohol consumption; the republics lost revenues from wine and vodka sales. A money reform confiscated people’s savings; local bosses had to prevent chaos and to secure food supply. Moscow refused to enforce inter-enterprise contracts; the republics attempted to shortcut economic circuits, rerouting them through the domain they could control. Naturally, they demanded more say in economic affairs. Authority over the economy became contested in the “war of laws” that Moscow increasingly lost to the periphery. Out of this turmoil, Kravchuk’s national communists were born in Ukraine and Yeltsin’s democrats in Russia. Both resented the ineffective and indecisive, yet pompous, center, as being a nuisance for conservatives and reformers

alike. Time was ripe for the real change, and all winds were blowing in centrifugal directions.

Ukraine's major reassessment of the relationship with Moscow came in the wake of the worst nuclear disaster humanity experienced to date: the Chernobyl catastrophe of April 26, 1986. With radioactive fallout about 200 times that of Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined, Chernobyl and its aftermath vividly demonstrated the organizational incapacity of the Soviet system and its blunt disregard to the people of labor it purported to represent.<sup>103</sup> The 1986 May Day celebrations in contaminated Kiev underscored profound dishonesty of the Soviet officialdom. Ecological movement was born soon thereafter, and the national opposition showed itself, under the name of the Rukh ("movement" in Ukrainian) in late 1988. Having started as a catchall movement, the Rukh quickly passed through a national-democratic phase to become a nationalist party of rather radical persuasion.<sup>104</sup> Dissatisfied national communists under the leadership of Leonid Kravchuk saw Rukh as a vehicle to promote the ideas they could not express in the open, and eventually took over the nationalist agenda.<sup>105</sup> When Moscow lay paralyzed by the abortive coup of August, 1991, the Ukrainian Parliament passed the Act of the State Independence of Ukraine. The erstwhile middle managers of the Soviet republic finally secured themselves from any and all attacks from the center. By the end of the year, a popular referendum rallied all the nationalities living in Ukraine in a common desire to end the country's dependence on the whims of demonstrably incapable rulers in Moscow.

Russia's parallel move was to secede from the Soviet Union, leaving Gorbachev and his circle to preside over the empty shell of the country. The Russian Republic declared sovereignty in June, 1990, one month before the Ukrainian declaration of a similar nature. Growing alienation of an increasingly narcissistic state from the "emergent Russian nation or 'society'" made the Soviet collapse inevitable and unstoppable.<sup>106</sup> The new Russian nationalism was born out of indignation at the waste of Russian national resources squandered on both external and internal clients. It was fuelled by the recognition that Soviet communist messianism and geopolitics were no small factors in the victimization of Russia's own hinterland, vast tracts of which now laid bare and abandoned. Many took Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's idea of "rebuilding Russia" close to heart, though not necessarily sharing all the particulars of his vision. In most cases, nation builders agreed on two things: (a) that Russia should divest itself of culturally alien and economically burdensome borderlands (their concrete register varied, depending on interpretation), and (b) that Russia should not be alienated from other East Slavic nations, and most importantly, Ukraine.



While on the first point Yeltsin performed nicely, the second point was barely paid the attention it deserved throughout all of the initial, “big bang” phase of reforms. Ukraine was pressured on such issues as nuclear and conventional weapons, division of the Black Sea Fleet, the status of Sevastopol, dual citizenship for the Ukrainian Russians, and so on. Though Russian subsidies to the Ukrainian economy continued, the tonality of the Russian-Ukrainian negotiations betrayed a distinctively commandeering approach on the part of Moscow. A thinly veiled refusal to treat Ukraine as a fully sovereign subject of international law soured the relations between the two countries. What was the role that political culture and perceptions of identity played in bringing this about? Why did the “big brother” imagery make its way back into the modern Russian political discourse? The next chapter will address the problem in some detail.

# Ukraine's Departure and the Crisis of Russian Identity

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The Soviet Union was formally dissolved by the leaders of the three East Slavic republics that made up its core: Russia (B. Yeltsin), Ukraine (L. Kravchuk), and Belarus (S. Shushkevich). The decision, reached on December 8, 1991, at the out-of-sight meeting in the national reserve park of Belovezhskaia Pushcha, struck Mikhail Gorbachev by surprise and became the most important part of the appropriately named Belovezhe agreements. Ukrainians took special pride in the event, which they believed would be impossible without their Declaration of the State Independence (August 24, 1991) and the pro-independence vote of the December 1, 1991, referendum. A typical account sees Ukraine's Independence Act as signifying "factual fiasco of one of the biggest empires of all times and nations."<sup>1</sup> Ukrainians are credited with a decisive role in dissolution of the USSR, which they presumably sank by blocking all the efforts to save it by both Gorbachev and his opponents from the State Committee for the State Emergency (GKChP).

The reality was more complex. Started as a critique of Stalinism, glasnost spun out of control to defame the Soviet way of life and historical legacy in toto, thus quickly degenerating into a large-scale muckraking campaign. Perestroika impaired the state, disabling not only conservative party bureaucracy but most working institutions of governance.<sup>2</sup> Ill-conceived experimentation in the economy that Gorbachev presented as a middle way between

the state and the market had wrecked the first and poisoned the second at its inception. The Soviet republics went sovereign to preserve a modicum of order needed to shield the public from increasingly pernicious policies of the center. The Baltic states and the Russian Federation led the way. The Ukrainian Declaration of Sovereignty was prompted by the analogous Russian act. Ukraine's state independence was proclaimed only after the defeat of the August, 1991, putsch in Moscow—the putsch that the Leonid Kravchuk leadership failed to condemn until it was over.

Apart from the concern for the well-being of the people, Ukraine's *nomenklatura* bosses were "frightened by the decisive measures of decomunization implemented by the Russian leadership" and sought to "disengage themselves from 'democratic bacchanalia' that all of them, full of panic, saw on TV."<sup>3</sup> State independence helped to delay economic reform and undermine democratic transitions. Separation walled off the economy and safeguarded powers of local elite. While most industries had to pay the price for disruption of the long-established ties with ex-Soviet neighbors, material benefits accruing to the high-placed officials were numerous. In a movement common to all postcommunist countries, ex-apparatchiks and their middlemen became endowed with property owing to their positions at the state's helm, through the unprecedented procedure of a neofeudal distribution of assets.<sup>4</sup> As political power was literally translated into money, large-scale corruption became endemic.<sup>5</sup> Independence delivered billions in international aid, which soon started flowing in private accounts overseas. The country's important geopolitical position could also be "sold" to both Russia and the West.<sup>6</sup>

Later on, Kravchuk boasted that the three leaders in Belovezhe could opt for the renewal of the Union, if Ukrainians were more inclined to entertain the idea. However, the December 1991 referendum closed this possibility. Ukrainians were no longer interested. The "elder brother" (Russia) lost both power and authority, while the "younger" one (Ukraine) was morally prepared to start afresh. The idea that Ukraine would be much better off on its own was widespread among all groups of the Ukrainian society, not least among the national-communist *nomenklatura*. By the end of 1991 the break-up of the Soviet Union became the reality.

## **PARTING WITH UKRAINE: FIRST REACTIONS**

The Russians met Ukraine's separation in one of two ways. On one hand, it must be fair to say that the majority did not take it quite seriously. This attitude, both plainly expressed and masked by the "wait-and-see" caveats,

fed the expectation that Ukraine would sooner or later “come back” into the Russian embrace. After all, Ukraine was nothing like the Baltic states, which through all of their Soviet history were never able to shed the aura of the “inner abroad.” Unlike the Central Asian nations of the former Soviet Union, Ukrainians were not separated by race or religion. Ukrainians and Belarusians were unlike the Caucasian nationalities, whose “exotic” cultures and languages that bore no words similar to any of the Slavic family. For all practical purposes and in other nations’ imagery, Ukrainians were the Russian alter ego, indeed, the second branch on the “all-Russian” family tree. If they wanted independence, let them go, but leave the door open and wait for a knock after dark.

Such was the way of thinking of many, relatively early expressed in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s article “How Are We to Rebuild Russia.” On the other hand, there were people who saw the loss of Ukraine as an inevitable step on the way of Russia’s transformation into a “normal” nation-state with limited geopolitical ambitions. For these liberal democrats, personified by Andrei Sakharov and initially Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, Russia’s continued control over the whole, or even most, of post-Soviet space was incompatible with the country’s democratic development. The right of national self-determination had to be granted to all non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union unequivocally, and the separation of Ukraine was seen as a major prerequisite for Russia’s own national liberation.

The second line prevailed from 1990 to 1993. First formulated in the opposition-prepared “Declaration of the Principles of Inter-State Relations between Ukraine and the RSFSR. Based on the Declarations of State Sovereignty,” it informed Yeltsin’s visit to Kiev in November, 1990, and signing of the first “post-Soviet” Russian-Ukrainian treaty that recognized inviolability of the existing inter-republican border. The “nonimperialism” of the Russian presidency stood in sharp contrast with more traditional quasi-Soviet views of Russian legislature: first, the Congress of People’s Deputies chaired by Ruslan Khasbulatov and, second, the first State Duma elected under the provisions of the new presidential constitution (1993) to replace the Congress. Occasional lapses notwithstanding, the Russian reformers endorsed the factual existence of an independent Ukrainian state and agreed to respect its borders, as inherited from the former Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.<sup>7</sup> The outstanding problems in Russian-Ukrainian relations seemed to be few and had to do mainly with the division of ex-Soviet hard currency reserves and strategic and military assets. Moscow had the full support of the United States on such a crucial issue as the denuclearization of Ukraine and the transfer of the

Ukrainian weaponry of mass destruction under the Russian control. The division of the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) and the status of its main base in Sevastopol were on the agenda of direct bilateral negotiations. The Ukrainian share of the Soviet property abroad was traded for debt when both sides agreed to the so-called zero option that left Russia solely responsible for the external debt incurred by the Soviets. The fairness or unfairness of the deal is still debated by Ukrainian diplomats and experts. Beyond that, however, the Ukrainian-Russian divorce proceeded fairly smoothly.

### IN SEARCH OF FOREIGN POLICY: ATLANTICISM

Aside from continuing gas and oil subsidies to the former junior partner, two years of Russian flirtation with the West left Ukraine pretty much to its own premises. New Russia's adulation of all things Western, pinned on the hope of being able to join the object of adoration in the typically Russian act of spiritual transmigration, resulted in the "Atlanticist" course in foreign policy. The Atlanticists, also known as Russian liberal internationalists, took an unashamedly "idealist view of international relations, seeing economic and political collaboration and observance of international norms as the most effective way of advancing national interests."<sup>8</sup> This led to the willful acceptance of a junior partner's role in relations with the West and relative neglect of "less developed" worlds, including the former Soviet companions.

At first, the Russians did not consider Ukraine a problem, and did not accord it more than a peripheral role in foreign policy. Since both ex-Soviet countries were seen as moving into the "all-European home," where national specificities would be subordinate to the dictate of "universal human values," to use a couple of splashy figures of speech much abused by Gorbachev's speech writers, Ukraine's diverging trajectory gave no grounds for concern. The loss of Ukraine could be considered even beneficial, in some ways, as it allowed for the concentration of resources and the focus of attention on Russian domestic problems. Parallel and complementary to that, one could discern a less idealistic desire to get the most spoils of the Soviet inheritance in Moscow's exclusive possession, which could be difficult to implement without a certain alienation of other pretenders. Finally, the Atlanticists shared in what must be seen as a key component in the Russian myth of Ukraine—the idea that Ukraine is naturally a part of a bigger Russian universe and destined to remain this way. From this perspective, independent or not, Ukraine was expected to follow in Russian footsteps as if by its own will. Hence, there was nothing in Ukraine's separation that could have hinted at the slightest trouble.

As a train of thought and a kind of surrogate ideology for the Russian foreign policy, Atlanticism was the primary manifestation of a deep crisis in Russian national identity that was traditionally construed on the basis of self-centered cultural opposition to Europe and the idea of Russia's special role in the Slavic Orthodox world, of which Ukraine was a principal part. Atlanticism logically extended ideas of the nineteenth-century Russian Westernism (*zapadnichestvo*), postulating that Russia formed a natural division of the West European civilization and, therefore, was destined to repeat the West European path of development. For postperestroika Atlanticists, the United States played the role of a quintessential incarnation of Western European imagery, and, Russia, as a prospective junior partner of the last remaining superpower, had to be accordingly refurbished to fit in. Here, traditional cultural opposition to Europe melted into insignificant differences of a predominantly quantitative character: Russia was behind, but had all chances eventually to catch up. It lacked in democratic institutions or market infrastructure but could create them reasonably fast. Countries of what used to be the Russian external periphery could probably learn from the Russian experience, and yet Russia could do little to speed up their individual transitions and assimilation into the Western cultural milieu. It was not Russia's task, after all, to Westernize its erstwhile clients and "junior brothers."

This picture of the world had no place for the oft-cited Russian imperialism, messianism, and cultural or political hegemony even on a limited scale. With respect to the Russian policy toward Ukraine, it dictated to minimize Russian influence within the former republic, thus pushing it—more or less inadvertently—into the West European and American spheres of interest. As we shall see later, the program was sharply criticized by the national patriots, who asserted that it ran contrary to the mainstream Russian political culture and historical memories of the nation. The Atlanticist course was looked upon as detrimental to a number of established cultural stereotypes ("archetypes") that are hard to ignore in any definition of Russian national identity. Indeed Atlanticism denied Russia's unique role in the European cultural universe, presenting the "easternmost European country" simply as an underdeveloped part of the West. Consequently, Russia could no longer pretend to any leadership with respect to other East European nations and had to become content with its subordinate position vis-à-vis more developed centers of the capitalist world. These tenets were rather unorthodox in terms of both religious and political traditions that made up the historical core of the Russian national identity.

As an ideology of foreign policy, Atlanticism could not go deeper than a rather narrow circle of idealistically procapitalist elites. Its incapacity to create a new national identity in place of the one demolished by perestroika was both symptomatic of the depth of the crisis and conducive to the alternative attempts to resolve it. Such an attempt came between 1992 and 1993 under the name of Eurasianism, borrowed from the eponymous current of thought that first showed itself in the Russian émigré literature of the 1920s.<sup>9</sup> As a homegrown reaction to liberal internationalism, Eurasianism should be considered the second and secondary manifestation of the crisis that affected Russian political and cultural self-awareness.

### **BACK TO THE ROOTS: EURASIANISM**

Unlike Atlanticism, Eurasianism has sought to anchor Russia in the East, underscoring the differences between Russian and Western values, ways of development, and historical and geopolitical profiles. The Eurasianist interpretation of history set medieval Muscovy sharply apart from the Petrine empire and blamed the latter for all the vices of Russia's European "seduction." Eurasianists insisted that two and one-half centuries of Mongol domination were not so much a ruin of the East Slavic civilization of Kievan Rus as a necessary push that started the engine of Russia's own historical development. Postperestroika Eurasianists proclaimed the spiritual and typological closeness of the two "traditional" civilizations—the Russian and East Asian ones, both of which valued collectivity and equity over individual achievement and private property. Geopolitical doctrine counted Russia among the great continental powers destined to control the core of the Eurasian "landmass" and naturally opposed to hegemonic moves of the "oceanic" (both Atlantic and Pacific) powers. A hostile counterposition of the world maritime powers, successful traders, and seafarers on one hand, and their continental antagonists, toilers of land and unifiers of warring tribes on the other, denigrated the first as natural exploiters, while elevating the second as peacemakers and guardians of communitarian values.<sup>10</sup>

Eurasianism emphasizes the conservative side of Russian political culture, elevating the state over society and defending impersonal "order" against the "anarchic" impulses of individual freedom. On a broader spiritual plane, Eurasianism seeks to restore the ties of organic solidarity between people, which are increasingly lost with the advance of Western civilization. Corporatism, rather than liberalism, is the preferred Eurasianist formula for state-society relations. In foreign policy, post-Soviet Eurasianists strove to

emulate China, not America, and to ally with Muslim, rather than Catholic or Protestant countries. In some of its more extreme manifestations, Eurasianism gravitates to Asianism pure and simple and loses Russia's European connection altogether. While it may be useful in justifying Russia's vast geopolitical pretenses, a radically antiwestern strand in Eurasianism paradoxically denies Russians their own European roots. Thus, though an interesting rendition of the "corporate nationalistic nature" of some segment of the Russian society, Eurasianism tends to create a historical and intellectual blind spot where good part of what Russians take as their "universe of the mind" disappears without a trace.<sup>11</sup> Ukraine is an obvious victim of this lack of sensitivity.

For a number of reasons, if Russia is a true heir of the medieval Mongol empire (as Eurasianists argue), Kievan Rus emerges as somehow alien to the later principdom of Muscovy. This is an argument popular with the Ukrainian nationalists, driven by the acute "psychological need to disentangle Ukraine from Russia."<sup>12</sup> The fact remains that, despite all contacts with various Turkic tribes, the political and legal organization of Kievan Rus essentially follows all-European patterns of development. Neither the limited autocracy of Kievan princes nor the merchant oligarchy of the Great Novgorod had ever come close to the military centralism and despotism of the horde. If the Russian monarchy was modeled mainly on the Tatar example, its claims to the Kievan inheritance appear largely nominal. Insisting on the "Eurasian" roots of modern Russia means striking out most early history it shared with Ukraine, Belarus, and the Balts and substituting it with the history of a despotic tribe of conquerors drawing from the Mongol steppe. However, there is no empirical evidence to support the idea. Instead, the available evidence supports the opposite position: that the Tatar-Mongol occupation destroyed important elements of the early Russian statehood without giving back anything of value. As Dmitrii Likhachev argues, both short-term and long-term consequences of the invasion were "disastrous for Rus, despite what the Eurasianists, who subject facts to their own preconceived ideas, write."<sup>13</sup>

Another problem with the Eurasianist reconstruction of history concerns the religious incongruence of eastern Christian and Asian civilizations. Until the Union of Brest (1596) put quite a few parishes of southern Rus under the authority of Rome, the ancestors of contemporary Russians and Ukrainians predominantly belonged to the Orthodox faith. Most of their eastern neighbors were Buddhists or Muslims. Mongol domination left the Orthodox Christianity intact, and the subsequent growth of Muscovy saw creeping Christianization of its Asian subjects, rather than the ethnic Russian embrace of Asian religions. Most analysts agree on the special role that the Orthodoxy



played in formation of the Russian national identity and its reconstitution after the periods of crisis. But Christianity came to Rus via Kiev, and Kievan monks inspired continuous resistance to the Mongol rule over Rus'ian lands. If the Eurasianists elevate Moscow over Kiev to save the "Asian" links of the Russian empire, they inescapably lose Russia's European grounds and have to downplay all history of Kievan-Russo-Ukrainian religious continuity. A contemporary Russian polemicist is worried that this perspective "objectively corresponds to the goals of the [Ukrainian] independentists: the Eurasianists abandon Kiev without any resistance and even show some disappointment that the break-up of Moscow and Kiev did not occur earlier and in a more radical form."<sup>14</sup>

The gist and main justification of the current "Russian [*rossiiskii*] Euro-Asian project" is its passionate rejection of "primitive Westernism" that informed political and social orientations in the first postperestroika years.<sup>15</sup> Most Russian politicians now agree that the time for "romantic relations with the West" is over, and no one will take care of Russian national interests save Russians themselves.<sup>16</sup> But does it mean that Russia's natural allies should be found in the East? Why must western enchantment be fought with the help of eastern spells? Eurasianism has no answer to these questions. Its failure to keep Ukraine inside the Russian cultural orbit (or, reciprocally, to anchor the Russian national identity in pre-Mongol Kievan past that Russians share with Ukrainians) betrays certain intellectual limitations and makes Eurasianism politically and culturally inadequate for modern Russian nation building.

Post-Soviet Russian nationalism has embraced the idea of the USSR as a greater Russia, a more or less legitimate heir to the Russian Empire—an idea that was tabooed throughout the Soviet period. The breakup of the USSR is accordingly rethought as a *Russian* national tragedy, the main cause of the ongoing crisis of the Russian national identity. However, the understanding that the former empire cannot be resurrected in any of its previous forms prompts the quest to save what, in the opinion of many, properly belongs to the "pan-Russian" sphere. Ukrainians, presented as an "integral part of Russian super-ethnos," are the primary target of this quest.<sup>17</sup>

## DEALING WITH UKRAINE

Even if the underlying view of Ukraine as Russia's significant other may be the same for various political actors, their prescriptions for policy differ.<sup>18</sup> Variation is wide: from the calls "to learn from the younger brother"<sup>19</sup> to the idea of total annihilation of Ukraine's independence and incorporation of

most, or all, of presently Ukrainian lands into a greater Russian state (Zhirinovskiy's LDPR). Liberal voices are among the weakest, while neohegemonic nationalism is on the rise, furnishing a new paradigm for postimperial Russian thinking on the problem.

### *Liberals and Cosmopolitans*

A good part of liberal democratic intelligentsia still waits for the Atlanticist promise to come true. They basically support NATO's expansion to the east and would not mind Russia's military participation in the U.S.-led war against terrorism. They rarely object to Ukraine's prospective membership in the alliance. They tend to see the source of most problems in Russo-Ukrainian relations after communism in what is often called "the old mentality" and in the reappearance of Soviet and pre-Soviet codes of thought and behavior that are demonstrably inadequate in the new situation. The idea is that psychological problems of this sort can be overcome as people grow accustomed to new realities and with the help of the enlightened "intellectual and educational work" aiming to dispel divisive ideological myths of old.<sup>20</sup> If so, Russia's patronizing attitude toward Ukraine is little more than a "remnant of the past." Speeding up both countries' entrance into the world community of nations will ease and eventually eliminate all tensions between them. Linguistic and cultural proximity, political and economic interdependence, and a densely intertwined history should not be taken to support claims to any special rights with the other, and Russian-Ukrainian relations in the future can be best modeled after Austria and Germany, or Great Britain and Ireland, or any other pair of culturally close European states. There is no way as effective in drawing Ukraine and Russia together as their further democratization and membership in the same European and Trans-Atlantic structures.

The liberal position in the Russian foreign policy debate, as summarized by Iver Neumann, was that of Russia's apprenticeship with Europe. Over the course of several years, it has gradually evolved to a somewhat more assertive idea of a partnership. "This insistence that Russia is just like Europe, only a little slower and a little less subtle, was initially the assessment made by the Russian state under Yeltsin's leadership. The state took over the liberal position and tended to see Russia as an apprentice returning to European-based 'civilisation.'"<sup>21</sup> The terms of the apprenticeship were harsh: Russia would have to turn into a "normal" national state and learn to deal with its erstwhile peripheries according to the norms of international law. Ukraine gave a litmus test: if no "revisionism" on the Russian part was observed here, one could

reason that the times of the expansionist empire were finally over. Nation building in democratic Russia would be assumed to enter the safe track of political consolidation within the present boundaries of the Russian Federation, with its non-Russian parts protected by the broadest possible autonomy of the local government and the right of exit if they so desire.<sup>22</sup>

For Russian liberals, support of the Ukrainian independence became a matter of honor, making them shy away from such “inconvenient” issues as a formal legal assessment of the transfer of Crimea to Ukraine in 1954 and again in 1991, or the plight of the Russian compatriots caught on the “wrong” side of the Russo-Ukrainian border and fiercely stigmatized as “occupiers” and unwanted migrants by the Ukrainian nationalists. A passionate desire to “come back to Europe” as soon as possible prompted both scrupulous observance of international ethics in relations to the “near abroad” and almost blithe disregard of the Russian diaspora and the multiple problems it faced in these very same countries. In A. Pushkov’s critical rendering, the logic of over-diligent Westernizers was simple: “We had to absolve ourselves of all the “extras”—the Central Asia, Ukraine, Transcaucasia. If we could only have a perfectly European Russia, would it not be swell?”<sup>23</sup> Liberals believed that national interest could be better served, if Russia’s powers were concentrated within a small, tightly knit country that would have no clients to support and no national peripheries draining on the limited resources. As long as liberals were in a position to influence the government, much of this attitude had been adopted by officials of the state and continued to play its part in Russian domestic and foreign policies until the financial shock of 1998 and subsequent marginalization of liberals in the December, 1999, parliamentary elections.

### *The Government*

An official position of the Russian government, though now skeptical of transatlantic unity of interests, is also unambiguously critical of “nationalist conceit and imperial ambitions.”<sup>24</sup> It comes close to the liberal-democratic understanding of Ukrainian independence as a serious political fact, something to be reckoned with. Throughout both of his terms in the office, Boris Yeltsin corrected, downplayed, and officially refuted occasional declarations of the State Duma and statements of individual politicians that could have been read as unfriendly toward Ukraine. Vladimir Putin has not digressed from this policy. At the January, 2000, summit of CIS heads, Putin insisted that the sovereignty of the former Soviet republics was irreversible. Though Moscow still believes that a

union with some of them may well be possible and desirable, Russia's Foreign Policy Concept now speaks of "different-speed and different-level integration within the CIS framework."<sup>25</sup>

Putin's participation in celebrations of the tenth anniversary of Ukrainian independence in Kiev underscored the importance Russia attaches to Ukraine as a sovereign partner-state. The preferred vision of Russian-Ukrainian relations, designated as relations of "friendship and cooperation" in the 1997 "big" treaty, is that of close bilateral cooperation. The treaty recognizes inviolability of the state borders and, hence, acknowledges Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea, deemed "truly Russian" by Moscow mayor Yurii Luzhkov and the nationalist parliamentarians. Granted, the Russian government would like to see Ukraine as a formal and informal ally, just as it sees the whole post-Soviet space as a sphere of Russia's "live interests." As Putin said with all clarity, "relations on the post-Soviet territory are a priority for us, especially with Ukraine, our largest partner."<sup>26</sup> Western involvement in the region is not infrequently lamented as manipulative and disruptive. An official line is that "any external forces" should be denied "a possibility to 'drive wedges' between Russia and the other CIS countries."<sup>27</sup>

In the opinion of the experts of Moscow's Institute of World Economy and International Relations, the problem of Russian-Ukrainian rapprochement may serve as a good example of divergence between Russian and U.S. interests in the region. A closely affiliated Ukraine makes Russia stronger, but resurrection of the Russian might is not among American priorities. The Russian Federation should exert maximum effort to encourage centripetal tendencies inside the Russian-Ukrainian duo, making no fuss about the "concrete form" that the process of integration may take.<sup>28</sup>

Officials of the Russian Foreign Ministry take pride in the Ministry's role in the negotiations that led to the conclusion of the "big" treaty and the three related agreements on the BSF, even if viewing these achievements as "fruit of an immense trade-off" on the Russian part.<sup>29</sup> Much of the State Duma was harshly critical of the documents, and their endorsement looked problem-laden throughout 1997–98. The treaty was finally ratified by the Russian legislature on December 25, 1998. In a symbolic gesture, Boris Yeltsin and Belarusian president Aleksandr Lukashenko chose the same day to agree on merging Russia and Belarus into a common state. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov interpreted both events as marking "a milestone in the effort for the unity of the three Slavic peoples." Sufficiently tactful not to press Kiev into immediate action, official Moscow still expects Ukraine to follow the path blazed by its Belarusian neighbors. The alternative, which is losing Ukraine

to the West, makes even hotly contended issues wane in importance. "Yes, the town of Sevastopol has been and will be the town of Russia's military glory. But juridically it now belongs to a sovereign state," Ivanov said before the Duma vote. "If we start questioning Ukraine's territorial integrity today and if the Russian-Ukrainian treaty on friendship and cooperation is not ratified by us today, that would reinforce those forces in Ukraine that are looking to the West."<sup>30</sup>

To deal with Ukraine as desired, Moscow needs a regularly functioning mechanism of cooperation that would allow a continuous dialogue on key issues and reciprocal accommodation of interests. So far, and despite all efforts to increase Ukrainian participation in several regional forums presided over by Russia, a mechanism of this kind has been absent. Since the CIS could not provide a reliable substitute, the Russian government pursues direct bilateral relations with Ukraine as a second-best alternative. The February, 1998, meeting of the two presidents resulted in a long-term bilateral program of economic cooperation until 2007. The Dnipropetrovsk summit in February, 2001, saw them signing more than fifteen documents, including the program of interregional and border cooperation for 2001–2007. Coordinated policies are expected in such areas as free trade within the CIS, regional and European security, energy, the economy, and finance. At the same time, "creation of a military-political union has been ruled out," at least for now, and those in charge of the Russian policy toward Ukraine continue to insist that relations between the former republics "hide no edge against the third countries."<sup>31</sup>

### *Communists*

For the Communists, constituting the largest faction in the State Duma, Ukraine is key to the Russian "second coming." The future of Russian-Ukrainian relations is consistently depicted as some form of a "close union," confederation or even federation, voluntarily chosen by both "fraternal" nations. Although striving for economic, political, and military union with Ukraine, communists insist that reintegration will not affect Ukrainian sovereignty. Ideally, it should come as a result of mass initiative and would be an act of popular free will. Before it happens, however, Ukraine and Russia are expected to work together on the main issues of foreign policy, and the pro-NATO course of the Ukrainian government is correspondingly seen as a matter of "great concern," a principal stumbling block in Russian-Ukrainian relations today.<sup>32</sup>

While the communists pay lip service to the notion of equality, Russia's leadership in the prospective union or confederation is either openly assumed or taken for granted. In the opinion of one of the most influential ideologues of the new "Russian communism,"

Russia must immediately initiate creation of the East Slavic coalition, possibly a confederation, as its would-be members are doomed to remain 'Europe's pariahs' anyhow. This movement should be launched in confidence, with special attention paid to the following principal components:

- ideological preparation, realized through dissemination of the ideas of Pan Slavism;
- regeneration of the ruined links to former members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the CMEA;
- reintegration of the CIS;
- prevention of the untimely hostility on the part of NATO member states.<sup>33</sup>

A key point in the Communist Party of the Russian Federation's program reads as "denunciation of the Belovezhe agreements and gradual restoration, on a voluntary basis, of a consolidated union state." As the first step, communists "support the union of Russia and Belarus, setting up integration links with all the other CIS countries." In Gennadii Ziuganov's presidential election platform, the task was concretized as voluntary reestablishment of "brotherly" ties, "first of all, between Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan."<sup>34</sup> Ukraine and Belarus are regarded as torn-away parts of the "Russian civilization," rather than sovereign countries: "That is precisely why the second strategic task—after the internal consolidation of all healthy political forces—is the task of a new reunification of Ukraine and Belarus with Russia."<sup>35</sup>

Some of the more forthright advisers to the Russian government basically concur with this assessment. Sergei Kortunov speaks for many Russian security analysts when he writes:

The direction of priority in Russia's policy in the CIS are relations with *Ukraine*. In perspective, our relations must acquire an allied character, moreover, there are essentially no serious obstacles—not economic, nor cultural or civilizational, not even military or political—for the development of such an alliance. The basic problem here

is external: the attempts of the U.S. and other large countries not to allow a reunion of Russia and Ukraine, which would lead to the formation of a powerful state in Eurasia, almost of the same scale as was the former USSR. On the other hand, without a strategic alliance with Ukraine, Russia will not become a genuinely great power which would in reality be appreciated, respected and addressed as a real power in the new system of international relations. The departure of Ukraine from Russia, the conversion of brotherly Ukraine into a good-neighborly state, and later, into simply a neighboring state would be a strategic loss for Russia.<sup>36</sup>

Although “actively supporting centripetal tendencies in the post-Soviet space,” Moscow has no “longing to restore the Soviet Union. Sovereignty of the CIS countries is not to be reversed. At the same time, comprehensive integration is in our common interests, since it allows to create favorable conditions for development of all of the CIS countries.”<sup>37</sup> But what are the long-term cultural and civilizational prospects of this development? If communists seek resuscitation of the state-socialist governance, if liberal democrats envision separate participation of the post-Soviet countries in global capitalist development led by the West, a growing group of Russian intellectuals defend the project of a unique “metanational corporation,” where Russia becomes a kind of “intercivilizational melting pot.” The East Slavic trio of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus is looked upon as a natural core of a future “imperium” united by the bonds of common spirit and culture into a transnational and supraethnic entity.<sup>38</sup>

### *Nationalists*

For Russian nationalists, the problem of Ukraine is at the very heart of the Russian nation- and state-building dilemma. Ukraine is not only “naturally” Russian; in some respects, it is more “Russian” than Russia itself. After all, the Russian Orthodox Church was born in Kiev, and historiosophical pilgrimage to Byzantium, Athens, and Jerusalem cannot but pass through Ukrainian lands. Ukrainians are lured back by promises of power and prosperity and are threatened with direst consequences if they choose the “wrong” side of what many see as a global divide separating the Russia-led world of Orthodoxy and the consumerist, individualist, and exploitative West. Russia, of course, will not deliberately seek to punish Ukraine if it goes astray. It is assumed that Ukraine “objectively” does not belong with

the West and that both Russia and Ukraine will lose if the latter will push its way into the European Union without the former: "the status of the Ukrainian nation as an integral part of the Slavic triumvirate in the former USSR should be compared with its potential status in Central Europe, being currently forged under the aegis of the united Germany. In the geopolitical system of Central Europe, Ukraine is definitely looking at the status of a marginal state."<sup>39</sup>

Concern with Ukraine's national interests does not prevent argumentation for "free self-determination" of ethnic Russians living on the Ukrainian territory. According to the Act on Unity of the Russian Nation, adopted by the second World Russian Congress (February 3, 1995), ethnic Russian irredenta possesses "indivisible national, i.e. extraterritorial sovereignty" and "has the right of reunification in a singular state body through peaceful change of the borders."<sup>40</sup> Natalia Narochnitskaia, cochair of the World Russian Congress, explains that "reunification" should not necessarily mean "restoration of exactly the same territory that used to be called Russia before, but the right of the Russian people, who found themselves divided without moving anywhere off their historical territory, to reunite."<sup>41</sup> The best way to solve the problem of Russian irredenta would be, of course, to draw the lands of its current habitation back into the orbit of the Russian state. But how to do that without provoking a naturally hostile response from the host nations and *their* titular states? Nationalists offer several solutions: (1) to restore a unitary Russian state within the borders of the former USSR (LDPR); (2) to launch a new Slavic Commonwealth on the basis of the Russian-Ukrainian-Belarusian triangle (Alekssei Podberiozkin, "Dukhovnoe nasledie," the CPRF nationalist wing); and (3) to incorporate Ukraine, Belarus, and northern Kazakhstan into a bigger "Russian Union," while supporting and encouraging Russian out-migration from Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Baltics (Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the Congress of Russian Communities, Sergei Baburin and the Russian Public Union).

The latter idea, which has grown increasingly popular in the "national-patriotic" circles, is premised on the assumption of "organic unity" that allegedly bonds Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians together into a single entity with the same "religion, culture and genealogy."<sup>42</sup> As Russian reactions to the plight of coreligious Serbs in Kosovo and the second war on Chechnya convincingly demonstrated, nationalism gained some mass support and wider acceptance in mainstream Russian politics, which now are not infrequently influenced by similar "culturalist" considerations. This repeatedly demonstrated "ability of the Romantic nationalists to attract the uncommitted or



the lapsed liberals” makes Western observers wonder, “how success on this score may force the state to shift its position away from the liberal and further towards the Romantic nationalist.”<sup>43</sup>

### IMPERIAL LEGACY AND ALL-RUSSIAN IDENTITY

Most sources for the Romantic interpretations of Russian identity lie in the double heritage of the Romanov Empire and its quasi-imperial successor, the Soviet Union. Slavophilist and Eurasianist arguments of A. Prokhanov, A. Solzhenitsyn, and I. Shafarevich find their ground in the first, while the national neocommunism of such people as G. Ziuganov, S. Kara-Murza, and A. Podberiozkin feeds on the second. A certain tension between the two groups arises out of different choices of the model state and different opinions on the “correct” mix of imperial and internationalist elements therein. If traditionalists are proud of their Russian imperial roots, defenders of Soviet socialism, even such an unlikely one as Alexander Zinoviev, do their best to convince the reading public that “the Soviet Union was not an empire in the proper sense of the word.” Among the most commonly cited arguments against the imperial hypothesis are two: (a) the lengths Russia went to develop non-Russian peripheries of the common socialist state, and (b) the price that Russia’s own ethnic core had to pay to subsidize this development. “No one seems to remember any more how much good [the Soviet Union] did to the ethnic minorities that lived there. If anything, it was an anti-empire or a topsy-turvy empire, as it were, as the one people trampled under foot in that ‘empire’ was the main nation—the Russians.”<sup>44</sup>

Presenting the Soviet Union as an “antiempire” leads to one of the two conclusions that can be posited in either a conflictual or mutually complementing manner, depending on the political orientation of a publicist. The first inference is openly restorationist. It maintains that newly independent nations should accept the renewed Russian tutelage for their own sake. If anything, their economies will be given a boost. The rights of local self-administration are to be respected, too, though different writers offer varying views on the exact measure of local autonomy (republican, gubernial, and so forth). The second conclusion has more to do with negative merits of the bygone antiempire, that is, its failure to take proper care of the Great Russian nation. The refurbished empire, or “metanation,” is consequently envisioned as the one that will correct the mistakes of its predecessor, being in particular more openly pro-Russian in its policies.

The problem, however, is that the Russians are hard to define, especially in the Russian-Ukrainian juxtaposition. Agreeing that all citizens of the present-

day Russian Federation should be considered Russians would help to solve the problem of civic nation building and dissipate ethnic unrest in internal peripheries, but at the price of leaving ethnic Russians in the near abroad out in the cold. The 11 million Russians in the diaspora in Ukraine accordingly become “civic Ukrainians” and have to be abandoned to the respective policies of the Ukrainian government. On the other hand, defining the Russian nation on purely ethnic grounds not only threatens political stability but also undermines the whole idea of a multinational federation. Ethnicization alienates those very “brothers” who are so desperately sought: Ukrainians and Belarusians. An attempt to base the prospective statehood on the Russian ethnicity narrowly defined blows up the idea of “all-Russian, common to all Russians” cultural-political field, where differences between Great Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians are presumed unimportant and signed off as merely local variations of the same quality.

Beyond considerations of political utility, extracting a separate Russian ethno-nation from a rather amorphous “all-Russian” mixture is hardly possible at the moment because of the blurred national identity of the Russians themselves. A particular path of imperial development through direct absorption of new territories and cultural assimilation of their inhabitants by the metropolis left Russians with no real frontier between the Russian heartland and its numerous peripheries. This legacy invalidates any consistently ethnocentric solutions to the problem of Russian identity.

The case of Ukraine is illustrative. The name of Ukraine means, literally, “borderland.” Both Russians and Poles considered that “borderland” to be a part of their territory. Consequently, the Russian czars and then commissars, though always aware of the borders separating Russia and Poland, had never accepted the legitimacy of the “internal” Russo-Ukrainian frontier, even when the latter existed in interstate reality. From the Left-Bank Ukraine's incorporation into the Russian czardom from 1654–67 until the transfer of Crimea on Khrushchev's order in 1954, the Moscow rulers had never imagined that “Little Russians” would require more than a limited and conditional autonomy. Russians grew accustomed to appropriate Kievan literary monuments, written in a language that is equidistant from both modern Russian and modern Ukrainian. The Kievan monks' “Russianness” was taken for granted, since their ecclesiastical pursuits reformed the Russian Orthodoxy and put it into its current shape. Political continuity between Kievan Rus, medieval Muscovy, and modern Russia seemed to be fairly clear and not interrupted through assimilation of the local/national elites in the foreign body politic. The history of Ukraine, if mentioned at all, has always been read as an inseparable part of the Russian history.

Kievan Rus, this “ancient area of Slavdom, the cradle of the Russian Orthodoxy and the symbol of the Byzantine succession,” remains a focal point for this mode of thinking.<sup>45</sup> The problem is, however, that it has to be shared with both Ukrainians and Belarusians. Kievan descent cannot be plausibly denied to any of the three East Slavic nations, and the founding myth of Russian nationalist thought immediately outgrows its ethno-national confines to become a myth of the East Slavic unity. The solution, shared by national monarchists and national republicans alike, is a straightforward one: “we ought to proceed from the fact that, with the exception of the West Ukrainians (Galicians), the shared (all-Russian) traits in Russians (Great Russians), Ukrainians and Belarusians prevail over the traits that are specifically Russian (Great Russian), Ukrainian, and Belarusian.”<sup>46</sup>

If so, there is but one way to lift Russian national consciousness from its presently underdeveloped state: to accelerate its further merger with “common to all Russians” (that is, eastern Slavs) “transnational” identity. Yet, realistically speaking, this proposal is untenable. The “all-Russian” medium will be inevitably shaped by the Great Russian component, if not modeled on it. The question of a common language in particular has all the chances to become a stumbling block for the proposed integration on the grounds of cultural unity. If Russian has already become a *de facto* vernacular for most Belarusians, nationally mobilized Ukrainians will never agree to part with their mother tongue or readily exchange it for the language of the eastern neighbor. The enduring prominence of the Russian language in about half of the Ukrainian territory, and the very proximity of the two East Slavic tongues breed fears of continuing Russianization. The overwhelming cultural hegemony of the Russian language, even in the present situation of sustained legislative and administrative policies aimed to elevate Ukrainian as the official medium of communication, does not bode well for the national language devoid of such an intensive support. Hence, administrative Ukrainianization continues, and the “all-Russian unity” is once and again rejected in that very sphere where, according to modern Russian Slavophiles, it could have the best chance of succeeding, namely, in the sphere of culture and “metanational” mentality of the people.

#### **RUSSIAN REPUBLIC OR EAST SLAVIC UNION?**

The idea of a separate Russian Republic inside the former USSR was first formulated during the late phase of perestroika, 1989–90. Though many times proclaimed dead, it proved surprisingly resilient, gaining new strength after

the collapse of the Soviet Union, during the 1992–93 federal debates and in the process of subsequent regionalization of the Russian Federation itself. In a nutshell, the plan calls for the formation of a singular, formally defined unit that would absorb all ethnically Russian *oblasti* and give them the right of a separate legislation and representation inside the federal Russia, including the right of ethno-political representation, presently enjoyed only by people of the non-Russian autonomous republics. Here, the logic of national-territorial division of the country would be drawn to its end, and the Russians would finally become a *de jure* titular nationality, if only within the limits of the one, though central, subject of the Federation. This would solve the problem of “Russian political nonidentity,” the argument goes, and bring the formal “acknowledgement of the state-building role of the Russian ethnos.”<sup>47</sup> Then, the Russian Republic could lead the charge for consolidation of the presently amorphous and debilitated Russian Federation. Propagandists of the idea believe it to be the best response to the double-edged problem of the “Russian territories” and “Russian power,” since addressing only one side of the dilemma is counterproductive and may backfire.<sup>48</sup>

On closer look, however, the idea of a Russian Republic cannot withstand criticism, as even many nationalist thinkers came to realize. First of all, it would have meant either shrinking of the current Russian Federation to a still smaller political body patched with numerous non-Russian enclaves or reassertion of Russian direct domination throughout the country. Either way, the national minorities will be alienated and those who enjoy the rights of titular nationalities in their respective administrative homelands (especially on the republican level) may be forced to take a hostile stance toward the newly born entity. As the experience of the Chechen war has all too clearly demonstrated, this is a recipe for disaster, “a way that will lead to a civil war.”<sup>49</sup> Peaceful disintegration of the country into a number of the national-administrative units may not be the worst-case scenario.

Secondly, the birth of the Russian Republic would automatically raise the size of the diaspora in need of protection, since Russians living beyond this republic's hypothetical borders would have lost their extraterritorial status with other subjects of the federation. This, incidentally, might add to the already huge ethnic Russian repatriation from ex-Soviet countries.<sup>50</sup> An attempt to proclaim the whole Federation as a Russian state *par excellence* will give a tremendous boost to the Chechen struggle for independence and, even in the absence of a hot conflict, will make an *internal* diaspora out of most Russian locals found in Tatarstan, Tuva, and elsewhere. The next logical step would be to abolish non-Russian republics formally, recreating the federation

on a territorial-administrative but not national-territorial basis. This is, incidentally, what Zhirinovskiy's LDPR proposes.<sup>51</sup> For Zhirinovskiyites, "a new administrative division of the country and abolition of the division based on the principle of nationality in favor of territoriality (20–30 gubernii) will permit to cut down on administrative expenses and to provide for real equality of rights for citizens throughout the whole territory of Russia."<sup>52</sup> If so approached, the slogan of Russian Republic loses its primary justification, and the problem will have to be rethought along the lines of constitutional reform, which, once again, none of the more powerful non-Russian nationalities would be willing to consider.

The recentralizing promise of the idea to shift the weight of Russian administrative structure on the territorial units or provinces, which are not defined in national terms, was not lost upon the Kremlin. One of the Putin administration's first policy steps, initiated by the presidential decree of May 13, 2000, jumpstarted the implementation of an ambitious administrative reform by ordering to create "federal regions" on the top of the existing territorial-administrative structure. While keeping the present hodge-podge of national republics and purely administrative oblasti intact, the top level of super-regions, controlled by the presidential appointees and directly answerable to the president, significantly empowers Moscow in dealing with provincial demands couched in the language of national rights. This way, the federal center was able to reassert control over both Russian and national peripheries without formally changing the constitutional makeup of the country.<sup>53</sup>

### *A Case of Nationalist Internationalism*

Adherents of the Soviet or Eurasian patriotism call for the restoration of a Union-like entity with most of the non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union, perhaps excepting the Baltic states. The leader of the Russian social and political movement "Spiritual Heritage" Aleksei Podberiozkin formulated the task this way: "we will never acquiesce to those borders that Russia has found itself in after 1991. These are artificial borders that go against history, economy, geography, and people's *will*. And we will do everything *to reestablish Russia in its 1990 borders by peaceful, democratic means*—no matter whether it will be called the Union, the Empire, or something else. Moreover, we are certain that other European and Asian peoples who suffered from the break-up of the USSR will join us in this quest."<sup>54</sup> Neoimperialists equate Russia as a geopolitical entity with the whole of the former Soviet Union. All the ex-Soviet territories are parts of legitimate Russian space. Russia's revival

is accordingly thought of as a new round of “gathering of lands” and claiming one’s “patrimonial” inheritance. The proposed movement’s vector is the opposite of that favored by the Russian Republic’s propagandists: the expansion, not contraction of the territory, and further national amalgamation, instead of administratively achieved consolidation, as a payoff and an inevitable consequence.

If Russia bounces back to embrace its former Transcaucasian and Central Asian peripheries, ethnic Russians will automatically become a minority. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, natural population growth in the Russian Federation has stopped, and the demographic situation has rapidly worsened to the point of a full-blown national catastrophe. Between 1992 and 1997, Russia’s population shrank by 4.2 million people and is likely to drop by another 8.6 million by 2015.<sup>55</sup> It currently decreases at a rate of 0.5–0.6 percent a year. Because of differences in the birth rate, ethnic Russians are affected more than Russia’s Turkic nationalities. Russian depopulation continues to parallel freefalling living standards, while demographic pressure and local conflicts in the ex-Soviet south bring millions to the north. No longer willing to wait for a dramatic upturn in the economy, both Russian talent and labor flee to the West, being gradually replaced by people coming from abroad. Thus far, most of them have been ethnic Russians and other Slavs, and migration by non-Russians is also significant.<sup>56</sup> Russia’s neighbors Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have their own problem with refugees fleeing Afghanistan. Under the circumstances, recreating the new Russia “in its 1990 borders” might be the surest way to establish a country dominated by Turkic and other Asian nationalities.

Such a change in the ethno-political composition of society may trigger reactions that are hard to predict and yet more difficult to control when they gain momentum. The concrete form of the Union can matter a great deal, as even a unitary state cannot be guaranteed against ethnic violence and separatism when different nationalities compete for power and resources in a politically and legally unstable environment. Eurasian restorationism might end up relying on the increasingly authoritarian powers of the state, which nevertheless would not be able to find a solution that could satisfy all ethnically consolidated centers of local power and privilege. To eliminate the sources of ethnic competition in economy, the government may be forced to impose harsher regulations on the market. As both economic and political freedoms must be restricted to keep such a country together, reincorporating Transcaucasian and Central Asian borderlands will effectively work against the Russian national interest.

*East Slavic Union: Images and Realities*

If neither Soviet or Eurasian restorationism nor the ethnically consolidated Russian national state can be regarded as a satisfactory solution, the question is, what can? Many are sympathetic to the idea of the East Slavic Union. The very concept of the Union fights ethnic isolationism hidden in all visions of the Russian Republic. As a core nation in the East Slavic triangle, Russia will have to be internally united and perceived as such by the partners. Unionization creates additional incentives to make the domestic federal structure work the way it should. Creation of a tripartite union with Belarus and Ukraine may dispel the menace of Russia's continuing disintegration and even symbolically reverse the process, exploiting the imagery of a "bigger country" and "unity in diversity." Symbolic "growth" of the country will send an important signal to the unstable autonomies. If transnational cooperation strengthens democracy and respects national sovereignty, it becomes a de facto part of the pan-European process. Russia might prove itself capable of becoming a leader in the comprehensive development of the region, which could thereby be moved closer to Europe. If Russian influence could limit presidential authoritarianism in Belarus and rampant corruption in Ukraine, the idea of the "common European home from the Atlantic to the Urals" (M. Gorbachev) might have a chance to become a reality.

The Russia-Ukraine-Belarus union looks better than the Russian Republic, but it is also preferable to the Eurasian Union and other projects of resurrection of the imperial glory. For one thing, the East Slavic Union can become viable only if talks of an "empire" are dropped by all the concerned states. Even demonstrably pro-Russian President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko could not agree to a suggestion of a unified government for the Russian-Belarusian Union he himself initiated. A model of a loose confederation was tried instead. Ukraine, which until 1999 refused to participate in the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly and was reluctant to sign the customs union with Russia for fear of losing some intangible part of its sovereignty, is an unlikely candidate for the empire-like Union. To get Ukraine onboard, its "special relationship" with Russia has to be developed and given a new meaning to demonstrate that Ukraine's sensitivities are taken into account.

Second, the East Slavic Union could probably help to protect the Russian (Ukrainian, Belarusian) ethno-cultural core from close to uncontrollable migration from the republics of the post-Soviet south. It might have solved demographic problems of closely associated East European nationalities, preserving existing ethnic make-up of their societies. On the other hand, cultural

solidarity and ethnic kinship that might characterize this kind of a union would be annulled if other post-Soviet states were likely to join.

Taking their clues from prerevolutionary Russian historiography, most ardent proponents of the idea even talk of what they call the “free triunity” of Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians.<sup>57</sup> This imagery overrates the cultural proximity of the three nations. Available statistics prove, however, that ethnic intermarriages among Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians are commonplace, while intermarriages between Russians and, say Georgians or Uzbeks are much less widespread. By the same token, the intensity of negative ethnic stereotyping within the East Slavic group of nations, with a sole exception of a rather unique Russian-West Ukrainian animosity, is practically negligible, especially when compared to similar phenomena on a broader post-Soviet and East European scale.

The Russia-Belarus-Ukraine Union could boost economic development of all the involved sides and sponsor creation of a regional free trade association with good prospects for growth. A new round of economic restructuring will be required, but the arrangement of the three countries keeping each other in check may help to negotiate the path of reforms without major excesses. While Russian businesses may serve as an engine for market reforms in Belarus and Ukraine, their national authorities would see that domestic economic interests are well protected and balanced internationally.

Finally, the East Slavic Union could be instrumental in satisfying all countries' national security interests. Even Russian nationalists tend to agree that the arrangement could dissuade their claims to Ukrainian territory, most notably the Crimea and the Sea of Azov. Ukraine would find a way out of its present predicament of a cordon sanitaire between Russia and the expanded NATO. The three countries would be in a better position to coordinate their joint security arrangements with the appropriate Euro-Atlantic structures, and military policy would still be decided by the national legislatures. Building on the accumulated positive experience of the Ukraine-NATO collaboration, the whole prospective union might be expected to adopt a more relaxed stance toward NATO and even negotiate an associate membership of some sort.

Although some of these points may seem far-fetched, the scenario is not utterly improbable. It could actually work if certain conditions were met first: the proposed union must result from voluntary association of the three nations; its political system should guarantee equal sovereignty of the participants; power concentration in one center must be avoided; participating countries should undertake sincere efforts to establish democratic governments; the right of exit has to be guaranteed; and national legislatures must



remain final arbiters of any decisions reached through the prospective organs of the Union. It is not yet clear if propagandists of the idea are aware of these qualifications and prepared to take them seriously.

But there is a more serious obstacle to Russia's state-building efforts, whichever direction they may take. This obstacle may be called a loss of the state will, "imperial fatigue," or a "breakdown" in ethno-political development. It has to do with the state of Russian national consciousness, as represented at both the elite and mass levels of society. This is, perhaps, the deepest dimension in the current crisis of Russian national identity, the one most intimately connected with the nation's vision for the future and its sense of mission.

If people have neither an image of a desired future nor an understanding of their place in it, any appeals for social consolidation will fall on deaf ears. Meanwhile, reforms require certain social cohesion to succeed. The idea of a shared national destiny is necessary to build social cohesion. The problem with Russians is that their feelings of national allegiance were disrupted by a series of self-inflicted misfortunes that befell the country during the course of a "long twentieth" century, which in Russia's case can be said to start in 1881 (the assassination of Alexander II). Periods of reaction, revolution, revolutionary reaction (Stalinism), stagnation, and mockery of reform (a political convulsion that became a state tradition in Russia) left little space for democratic national development. Whether or not the country long deprived of modern national identity can rebound now remains to be seen.

### IN SEARCH OF RUSSIAN NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

A clear sense of the national identity, of "who we are" and "who we are not," forms a nucleus for more complex forms of the national consciousness. Russia lacks a modern national consciousness and cannot simply rely on the traditional patriotism espoused by leaders of the Russian "white" movement and a large group of national neocommunists.<sup>58</sup> Russians are still arguing about who must be counted in and who should be vested with the job of national revival: the state, the society, the people at large, all of the "compatriots" found here and there, or all of these taken together? As one publicist who prefers the "society" has recently noted, no one can definitely establish, what "the Russian society" actually is or even whether it exists as a real-world entity: "indeed, does it unite only those who found themselves after the collapse of the Soviet Union within the borders of the new Russian state? Does it include Russians by origin who are stuck on the territory of those [non-Russian] state formations that were created anew? Should we also count, among

its members, that part of the country's population that, for national or other reasons, practically does not feel that it belongs to the Russian society?"<sup>59</sup>

The list can go on. Some people might add the Russian diaspora in the West and exclude national minorities of the present-day Russian Federation. Some others would think of all Russophones, even all those versed in the Russian culture, disregarding their concrete ethnic origin or political allegiances. Still others would equate Russian society with the community of Russian Orthodox believers and preach the cult of a "sacred Fatherland that is not identical to the state, i.e. a political institution with all its imperfections and vices."<sup>60</sup>

If the contours of Russian society are at best unclear and at worst impossible to draw with elementary precision, the "Russian state" appears plainly inadequate. For one thing, it still has to free itself from the grip of the postcommunist oligarchs who are rarely motivated by the national interest. Yeltsin's decade in the office became notorious for systematic abuse of the state by powerful external interests, Boris Berezovsky being but one better-known example. Second, the tradition of the absentee government launched by Yeltsin has continued under Putin, as witnessed by his hands-off response to the catastrophic sinking on the nuclear submarine *Kursk*. Third, there is no unity whatsoever on the question of what the ideal state should look like. Should it be a dictatorship or a democracy; a monarchy, absolute, or constitutional; a republic; a federation; a confederation; a nation-state; or an empire? Should it be centralized or decentralized? Can liberal democracy be adopted as a working model? What, if any, part of Russian historical legacy can be drawn upon? What social forces should constitute a backbone of the state revival? No unity on this front either. The "Russian state," though constantly invoked in the discussion, remains, so to say, a "thing in itself," an abstract existing beyond the realm of political practice.

Finally, "the people"—an amorphous category that shares all the drawbacks and uncertainties noted in the discussion of "society," but adds some extra deficiencies of its own. In Russian classical thought, from Radishchev to Berdiaev, "the people" exist in a conceptual opposition to the educated "society," the elite, and the intelligentsia. The split between Russian intellectuals and "the people," according to the thinkers of the Silver Age of Russian philosophy (N. Berdiaev, S. Bulgakov, G. Fedotov, S. Frank et al.), precipitated Russian tragedy of the last century. As "people" do not belong to the "society," so the "society" appears miles away from the people. Invoking "people" means piling a load of social and cultural contradictions on the top of purely ethno-political difficulties unavoidable in any definition of

“Russianness.” It also means indirectly stigmatizing the intelligentsia as allegedly “alien” to the people.

New works in this genre were published in the late-Soviet period and regularly appear in postcommunist Russia. In the tale of the “two peoples” (erroneously interpreted as anti-Semitic *par excellence*), Igor Shafarevich attacked no one else but the elitist part of the multinational Russian intelligentsia (“the small people”), which he represented as a culturally alien group espousing anti-national values.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Sergei Kara-Murza has published a number of articles and several books on the topic. One of them, characteristically titled “Intelligentsia on the Dust-heap of Russia” (Moscow, 1997), makes a point of conscious juxtaposition of the “non-Russian” (i.e., Westernized, “cosmopolitan”) liberal intelligentsia and the mass of ordinary people, arguing that only the latter are able to preserve the soul and spirit of the nation. However, these very people, in the author’s opinion, betrayed their calling once they succumbed to the pro-Western propaganda and traded pearls of the Russian/Soviet civilization for the anarchic and irresponsible “blind freedom” of self-seeking individualism. Thus, the people “liberated” themselves from participation in the state-building process, while the state fell prey to antinational forces exemplified by the Russian “comprador” capitalists.<sup>62</sup>

And so, the subject of the Russian national consciousness, or the supposed nation-building agent of the postcommunist era, is missing, as almost every analyst of Russian national identity today seems to admit. The Russian man looks like “a man without roots or identity.”<sup>63</sup> The idea of an East Slavic Union cannot materialize on such a precarious foundation. In the words of one author, “Russia is powerless, and there is absolutely no hope for her revival. Even if a certain weak hope existed before, it died after the idiotic Chechen adventure.”<sup>64</sup>

Ukraine could benefit from Russia’s weaknesses if the drift away from Russia could actually move it closer to the West. Instead, the Kuchma government has joined the list of the ten worst enemies of the free press in the world, and the ten most corrupt regimes among nearly a hundred surveyed. As the killing of independent reporter Heorhii Gongadze all too clearly demonstrated, “soft” forms of presidential authoritarianism in Ukraine had substantially hardened by the year 2000. Ukraine’s turning away from Russia did not make the country any stronger or happier. It stands to reason that some form of rapprochement between the two states could help to solve national crises they both experience. If properly channeled, Russia’s influence could actually aid Ukraine’s democratic development. Reciprocally, Ukraine’s proximity could help the Russians develop a modern national consciousness.

**DENATIONALIZATION OR MODERNIZATION?**

For Russian nationalist thinkers, the “loss” of Ukraine and the formal separation of Belarus, however precarious the latter’s independence might be, mean nothing less than a national tragedy, the breakup of an allegedly singular “Russian nation” into the three “regional” branches. The roots of the tragedy thus defined are traced back to 1917. The Bolsheviks, according to a new reinterpretation of history, launched an “experiment on the historical Russian statehood that was conducted under pretexts of the right of national self-determination’ but eventually denied this very right to one of the biggest nations of the world—the Russians.”<sup>65</sup> If the imperial form of nation-being is deemed the only one viable for the nation, then the loss of the empire is tantamount to this nation’s disappearance from history. Neoimperialists proceed from these premises. Hence, their inability to define the Russian nation with any precision: for the Empire, all Orthodox subjects of the Crown were Russians by definition, while the Soviets did their best to hide Russians (and others) behind the mask of a “new Soviet man.” For all the deficiencies of both czarist and Soviet nationality policies, they were built on essentially political definition of a nation: the state was a primary anchor of national identification.

The problem with Russian nation seekers today is that they disagree with the present form (and especially the present size) of the state, and thus are unable to use the latter as a frame of reference. Therefore, they have to turn to ethno-cultural definitions of the nation, which had no barter in Russia until recently. In this turn, Russian nationalists are paradoxically trailing intellectual developments in East Central Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They copy nationalism of the “small nations” of Europe, of those who were subject to foreign domination and had to consolidate themselves on the basis of common ethnicity and locally spoken vernacular, rather than common citizenship typical for ex-imperial metropolitan centers.

By seeking a nation in the cultural traditions, religion, and political history of the empire, Russian nationalists attempt a combination of the two hardly compatible constructs. One of those, the empire-breaking nationalism of a culturally distinct community, negates a good part of Russian history, leaving the ex-imperial nation alone and in opposition to other subjects of the former empire. The other component looks like a common civic patriotism for the ethnically diverse and disparate nationalities that are supposed to form a transnational unity under the one leadership. This one does not square well with the task of reinventing a distinct cultural tradition. Pulling in opposite

directions, the forces of political and cultural nationalism form an unsure unity. More often than not, they neutralize each other, thus aggravating the crisis of Russian identity. Meanwhile, both demographic losses in the ethnic Russian core and the accelerating process of ethno-national reidentification of the “compatriots” beyond the sphere of Moscow’s immediate influence evokes the ghost of “denationalization”—a concept of growing significance in Russian public debates.

“Denationalization” means various things to various people. Most of those who speak of it in Russia today are actually concerned with some of the following problems: physical diminution of the ethnic Russian (*ruskii*) population, its negative growth trend; same trends affecting all citizens of the Russian Federation (*rossiiane*); the loss of parts of the Russian “homeland” to neighboring states of the former Soviet Union that made a diaspora out of local Russian settlers; the loss of a sense of Russian national unity, the identity crisis per se; the dramatic change in national values and the spread of egotistic individualism; increased alienation between various segments of society; and, finally, political and economic changes that seem to privilege non-Russians over Russians on individual, societal and ethno-regional scales of comparison.

Those unwilling to accept “the loss of the Russian ethnic territories” to Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Estonia, and some other neighbors (the list varies) continue to raise the question of legitimacy of the post-Soviet political-territorial arrangement. Whatever the merit of the criticism of “arbitrarily established borders,” an attempt to redraw them unilaterally by either side would lead to an armed conflict, perhaps even a war.<sup>66</sup> Similar lamentations (and the popular mobilization that they inspired) preceded the wars and armed clashes in Karabakh, Trans-Dniester, Bosnia, Ossetia, Abkhazia, Macedonia, and other hot spots of postcommunist irredentism and secessionism. When millions of ex-Soviet Russians became the Russian diaspora in the “near abroad,” the change must have been painful for them and thoroughly confusing for the rest of the nation. Still, one has to acknowledge that the arrival of the Russian diaspora does not and cannot jeopardize the nation’s physical existence. When the European empires collapsed, they left scores of compatriots abroad. Denationalization did not follow in any of these cases.

The cultural trends that signify denationalization for the national patriots may actually indicate something else, namely the impact of modernization and even postmodernization on a less than adequately prepared postcommunist society. The sense of national unity would not be lost so easily if unity itself

had a chance to mature. While the Empire was united by loyal subjects of different ethnic backgrounds in a common faith and common allegiance to the monarch, the Soviet regime anticipated the end of national distinctions and attempted to unify everyone in a movement to a transcendent goal—the future communist society. In both cases, the Russian public had no chance to pursue modern national self-identification. People's unity was defined (and enforced) by political power, not the national consciousness. The tension between emerging “nationalism and other, older forms of legitimization” prevented national consolidation on a modern basis, creating a kind of impasse where “modern and traditional legitimizations live side by side and, to some extent, engage in struggle.”<sup>67</sup>

Russia's failure to modernize “correctly” led to the abrupt and swift dissolution of the ephemeral “unity” of its people, which had received no chance to grow into a real national unity. In most European nations' history, cultural “homogeneity imposed by objective, inescapable imperative” of industrial development eventually led “to the convergence of political and cultural units,” that is to national consolidation.<sup>68</sup> In Russia, cultural homogeneity was dictated from the top. Imperial expansionism, the preferential assimilation of non-Russian aristocrats, and the protracted neglect of underprivileged compatriots divorced the political and cultural elements of the nation. This gap could not be fully closed by the revolution whose ends were messianic, rather than national. Soviet quasi-federalism, internationalist overstretch, and arbitrary migration policies have further diluted cultural integrity. Industrialization brought about through administrative feats had lavishly contributed to “denationalization,” meaning the eradication of traditional ways of life and social atomization. Guided by the Marxist-Leninist imagery of the postnational society, Soviet modernization actually prevented national consolidation.

Russian nationalists attempted to return to the roots, seeking the nation in its own primordial past. Meanwhile, the process of (re)modernization continues, this time rebuilding on what many Russians take to be Western individualism. A slightest hint of still unfamiliar Western communitarianism is eschewed. Transition to the market is not infrequently interpreted as a social and economic free-for-all, where appeals to group solidarity are doomed to fall on deaf ears. Sharp polarization of society after decades of official egalitarianism does not help to unify people on a basis of any single idea, even the idea of national revival. Living in today's global village, the Russian political and business elites feel less obliged to define their cultural allegiances in national terms. Political and social anomie also enters into the picture, as indicated by

growing disorientation, social estrangement, “decentering” of authority, gloomy renouncement of only recently acquired experience of modern public life, cultural segregation, and exotic life styles. The balance of these often-contradictory tendencies is not favorable for Russian national consolidation. The crisis of identity is bound to be a long and painful one. The “lost” lands and the “abandoned” compatriots will continue to haunt Russian consciousness for some time to come. Ukraine, commonly acknowledged as a link to Russia’s glorious past and a centerpiece of the would-be working model of the presently moribund CIS, is fated to remain an object of close attention.

### REVIVING RUSSIA: WHO AND HOW?

Russia’s present condition is lamentable. With an economy turned into a pale shadow of its own Soviet past, a crumbling social sphere, ubiquitous crime and corruption, and politics that has a long way to go to its avowed goal of participatory democracy, Russia seems to have entered a period of devolution to some archaic state of existence, rather than the much-hailed transition to welfare capitalism and liberal democracy. By now, it is obvious that the nation cannot simply “cross over” to the Western shore; it has to rebuild itself in the most fundamental way. The task of the national revival is but one of many, yet the idea that here lies the key to the rest of problems may well prove its worth.

But what do we call national revival? How to assess its progress? What should be its dimensions—economic, political, cultural, and intellectual? There is no clarity, still less agreement on these issues, though concrete policies obviously depend on how the powers that be see the problem. True, national revival cannot be achieved without comprehensive regeneration of all sides of the nation’s life. Yet, it is a trivia that says nothing about priorities. For liberals, the transition to a market economy and law-based society overshadows all other problems. Nationalists argue that the task of national consolidation should be first. The main difference in this camp is between those who think that national consolidation can be achieved within the borders of the Russian Federation, and those who believe that the Russian diaspora in the near abroad should be included in the process. Since the diaspora issue legitimizes visions of a “powerful state with broad responsibility,” the latter group has secured some influence with the establishment.<sup>69</sup>

The diaspora problems intersect with the losses of territory to form a complex and potentially explosive combination. These two factors alone would suffice to account for a comprehensive crisis of identity. However, there is a

third element to it, and nowhere can it be seen better than through the Russian perceptions of Ukraine—the country that took not only land and people, but the core of the established historical mythology, and thus, a good part of the remembered history itself. For Russians, dealing with Ukraine means having to deal with all three aspects of the identity deprivation they suffered after the fall of the Soviet Union. Territorial claims of all sorts would have to be expected. Yet a serious conflict on these grounds was excluded from the start, and even extreme nationalists shy away from the perspective of what they see as civil war between ethnic brethren. Ukraine has been slated for “reunion.” An alternative, in the words of an influential, though officially disowned report, is “forcing [it] into friendship,” not stopping short of direct political and economic sanctions if a would-be friend fails to comply.<sup>70</sup>

Nationalists have never been so close to capturing the command heights in Russian intellectual life and politics as near the turn of the century. It is no wonder, then, that Vladimir Putin took their ideas seriously and incorporated them into his government's policy blueprints. The debate on Russia's national revival has changed its terms: now nationalists and statistes are talking to each other, rather than attempting to engage their liberal opponents. Politics of the state do not significantly diverge from “patriotic” precepts, like those repeatedly offered by the semiofficial Council on Foreign and Defense Policy. The latter essentially leaves the government with a choice between “reintegration with a sizable part of the republics of the former USSR” that must lead to the “institution of a new federated state,” and a characteristically reluctant “preservation of these states' political independence in exchange for the right of unrestricted access to their markets, the creation of an effective military-political union for defense, and the guarantees of a unified legal space for all national minorities.”<sup>71</sup>

Since the “sizable part” does not include the Baltic states, Ukraine and the Ukraine-led group of CIS dissidents that also includes Georgia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Moldova remain the main obstacle for realization of these plans. Without a firm alliance with Ukraine, Russia will remain crippled. There is little doubt that even the occasionally demonstrated outright hostility toward Ukraine's postcommunist leadership and its “treacherous” policies could be largely explained by the fact that “Ukraine is not only and not simply a problem *for Russia* but, more importantly, that it is also a problem *of Russia*.”<sup>72</sup> That is, it is a problem of Russia's perception of itself: posthegemonic, yet appreciably revanchist toward its ex-Soviet neighbors, and sentimentally nostalgic in its visions of past imperial glory and recipes to reclaim it.



One should be not surprised that the crisis of Russian national identity would bring about cultural and psychological trauma. However, most locally offered methods to heal it are less than adequate. Once again, the national energy of the Russian people is being channeled astray. Russia's revival, it is said, should begin with more assertive stance abroad. A growing number of intellectuals raise the banner of empire with pride, not shying away from respective advice to the country's foreign policy makers. One may be forced to think, as Richard Pipes does, that liberal-democratic development runs contrary to the values of Russian traditional political culture. If so, a democratic Russia is in serious jeopardy.

We do not have to share this conclusion, however. While it is true that national identity is shaped through the constant interplay between tradition and innovation, and political culture obviously represents a major reserve of tradition, political culture itself is not and cannot be a homogeneous, unidirectional force. Russian political culture in particular exhibits a host of contradictory tendencies. It harbors elements and even complexes of diametrically opposite nature, whose very coexistence bewilders generations of researchers:

the Russian people are held to be indifferent to politics, passive in the face of a government that promises to protect them. How, then, do we explain the turbulent course of Russian history, with its countless popular rebellions, political breakdowns and revolutions? Russians are said to be prone to grant legitimacy to whatever regime is in power. How, then, do we explain the rapid disappearance of the government's legitimacy? . . . On the one hand, Russians can identify the values associated with *gosudarstvennost*—statehood or the state system—as vital to the people's national life; on the other, they can portray themselves as an anarchic people, to whom government had to be brought in from outside—by the Vikings, Tartars, or the Baltic Germans, for example. How do we explain such contradictory self-interpretations?<sup>73</sup>

One or another tendency prevailing at a given moment defines a lot in both domestic and international politics and changes contours of the national identity. A timely analysis of these tendencies is more than just a theoretical exercise, it is important for policy. In the next chapter, I discuss paradoxes of Russian political culture, concentrating on the ideal-typical complexes that epitomize its contradictory drives.

# Russian Political Culture

## *Recurrence and Reformulation*

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It became customary to single out authoritarianism as a Russian tradition of almost perennial longitude and significance. Indeed, the authoritarian rule importantly characterized various periods of Russian history and exerted no small influence on political culture. However, there were also manifestations of other styles of relationships between the state and society. We have to account for those and explain periodical “openings” toward more participatory and more liberal types of politics. Russian authoritarianism must be looked upon from a comparative perspective. Authoritarian manifestations around the globe are many, which means that we cannot distinguish one nation from the others by simply labeling it as “authoritarian.”

However, the attempts to fully exhaust the theme of the Russian political culture with an authoritarian story of some kind never cease to appear in print. The story usually starts with the Tatar-Mongol domination, linking it to Ivan the Terrible and the early Muscovite czardom, then goes further to include the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. The advocates of the authoritarian thesis never fail to spot the same pattern of “despotism and servility to both czar and commissar.”<sup>1</sup> Few theorists ever attempt to question either the comprehensiveness or the comparative value of this historical pursuit. Nevertheless, neither protracted foreign domination nor serfdom nor absolute monarchy is unique to Russia. Poland, Romania, and other countries in Europe and Asia experienced similar periods in their development. Direct extrapolations from the past might be treacherous and must be approached with caution. No one seems to argue that German feudal disunity somehow explains, say, contemporary problems in the German federal system. Why do we look, then, for historical explanations of Russia’s current politics?

Political cultures are many, and every national tradition makes use of more than one. It hardly serves any good to attach the authoritarian label to Russia, the democratic label to Great Britain and the United States, and, for example, the corporatist label to the Low Countries. Just as authoritarianism, and, before that, autocracy, was a common feature of many political regimes around the globe, democracy exists in too many forms to be equated with a single Anglo-American tradition. It is important to note nationally specific variations of democratic, authoritarian, or corporatist regimes. In addition, seeing only “authoritarianism” in Russia, or, as was the case earlier, only “totalitarianism” in the Soviet Union, is about as correct as finding only “democracy” in South Korea or Lebanon.

Russian political culture has never conformed to any singular tradition, be it authoritarian or democratic, statist or anarchist. An ambiguous and more than fairly contradictory character very likely constitutes one of its systemic and historically persistent features. While its “authoritarian” core was addressed so often that the thesis itself became a cliché, democratic and libertarian elements were habitually ignored. Several corrections to this typical unidimensional assessment appeared in the first post-Soviet years, when hopes for imminent democratization in Russia were running high. Once again, however, an attempt was made to assign some unambiguous, logically, and systemically consistent quality to what should have been properly seen as an inherently conflicting constellation of values. This time, political culture in Russia was streamlined along the positive axis of its closeness to the West, rather than the more familiar negative axis of “Asiatic despotism” and brutality. Thus, while Hahn suggested a certain proximity of Russian political culture to “what we find in Western industrial democracies,” Petro portrayed Russia unequivocally “as an integral and necessary part of the West.”<sup>2</sup>

The idea was subject to criticism from both Russian and Western advocates of Russian specificity, though their reasons differed widely. Russian commentators insisted on positioning Russia somewhere “between the West and the East,” often arguing for cultural superiority of the Russian Orthodox civilization.<sup>3</sup> This very same civilization provoked harsh criticism from those who read Russia’s historical inability to become fully Western as a sign of weakness, if not inherent hostility to liberalism and democracy.<sup>4</sup> Even when seeing Russia as a part of Europe, domestic commentators tended to locate it within a cultural zone of its own. Then, the country does not have to conform to Western models and might be better advised to look for a separate, original path of development. The opposing view showed Russia as little more than Europe’s perennial backwater that for various reasons failed to

modernize correctly. While Russian high culture was more or less willingly appropriated, Russian civilization continued to be dismissed as fundamentally incapable of keeping up with the West.

Apart from the question of Russia's relationship to the West, intricacies of the national history prompted to introduce the notion of Russian "alternative" political culture.<sup>5</sup> Diverging values and traditions were thusly accommodated. Political culture came to resemble more of a medley of various "ways of life" than any singular, monochrome quality, presumably shared by all co-nationals. However, it was not enough to say that. Both dominant and alternative trends were still presented as more or less clearly identifiable and uncontroversial. Yet, the main problem with Russian political history is not the fact that it embraces more than one national tradition, but rather that all major traditions are inherently contradictory. Russian political development offers a continuity of inconsistency. Historically inherited inconsistencies are only exacerbated since the collapse of communism. The postcommunist situation in Russia resembles a game whose rules are being constantly renegotiated. In this game, no quality can remain uniform or fixed for any prolonged period. The ideological and institutional chaos of a transition period sharpened the traditional ambiguity of political values and behavior. This ambiguity now exceeds historically accepted levels, becomes intolerable, and breeds an anticipated reaction.

If any consistent pattern in postcommunist public opinion and political behavior may be observed at all, it reveals a desperate desire of the population to stop further degeneration of the state and society and to stabilize the political situation on whatever grounds seem better suited at the moment. This pattern of situational adaptation to rapidly changing reality appears in the late-perestroika period and may be illustrated by people's response to Gorbachev's initiatives aimed at the last-moment salvation of the Soviet Union. In the referendum on establishing a "renewed Union," called on March 17, 1991, 80 percent of the Soviet electorate showed up, and 76.4 percent of those supported the idea. In Russia proper, 73.6 percent voted for a renewed Union.<sup>6</sup> Several months later, however, most of the same voters endorsed state independence of the former Union republics, thus dismantling the Soviet Union in practice. Both in the Baltic republics and in Ukraine predominant numbers of the local Russian minorities voted for independence.

If the March, 1991, vote indicated a desire to preserve the USSR, why did Russians support Ukrainian independence in the December, 1991, referendum? Why did Muscovites back Yeltsin, and not the plotters of the August coup? After all, preservation of the Soviet Union was both a declared and an

implicit goal of the short-lived putsch. Why everywhere in the country, with the exception of the self-proclaimed Trans-Dniester Republic in Moldova, did local Russians not move a brow at the declarations of independence of the respective national republics? It can be argued that they wanted to salvage whatever elements of governability that could still be salvaged at the time. The simplest way to do that was by halting rampant devolution of authority on the republican, regional, or even local level. The Union “center” had demonstrated its incapacity, wasting the mandate given to Gorbachev at the March referendum. The “dual power” situation in Moscow masked practical departure of the center. In fact, most Russians did not even have to throw their support behind the democrats: it was enough to turn away from the communists and let the State Committee for the State of Emergency fall by itself—which it promptly did. “Revolutionary” conservatism reemerged as a political culture mainstay and facilitated the regime’s fall by the end of 1991.

#### REVOLUTIONISM AND CONSERVATISM

Russian liberal thinkers of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were the first to acknowledge a peculiar combination of revolutionary aspirations, radical goals and tactics, and conservative, if not outright archaic, tendencies in both the outlook and behavior of Russian revolutionary intelligentsia.<sup>7</sup> With the elite leading the way, the rest of society followed. Revolution in Russia has always been half-hearted and burdened with reactionary backslides, even when it professed a most dramatic break with the past. Domestic conservatism, on the other hand, proved unable to sustain traditions of lasting historical importance, perhaps, with the sole exception of Russian Orthodoxy. Attempts at stabilization robbed the nation of developmental momentum and prepared the ground for new revolutions. Attempts at revolution failed to establish sources of a consistent evolutionary change. The post-Soviet events, arguably a profound revolution in its own right, are once again retracing the vicious circle of unrevolutionary revolution and unconserving conservatism.<sup>8</sup> A reconsideration of history is needed to understand the origins of this unique pattern of development.

More than one author saw Russian history as a succession of several prolonged periods of stagnation, separated one from another and occasionally punctuated by short-lived catastrophes, that sometimes brought the desired change in their wake, but also laid the ground for a new variant of staleness. Russia has never experienced its own Renaissance or Reformation, though indigenous protoreformational heresies did exist, culminating in the “New

Teaching” of Feodosii Kosoï and other Russian Antitrinitarians.<sup>9</sup> Intrachurch debates were usually won by the powers that were. Whatever changes the Russian Church experienced through its history, they have never had any revolutionary impact on either the Orthodox doctrine or the ritual. All attempts to push the Church along the path first beaten by Western Protestantism did not grow to anything more than disunited, underpowered, and eventually marginalized “reformation movements,” rather than the full-blown Russian counterpart of the Reformation as a complex (and completed) historical event.<sup>10</sup>

Having missed the Reformation, Russia nevertheless managed to suffer substantial turmoil, owing to the largely bureaucratic and, in a sense, counterreformational Nikonian reform of 1653. The latter was aimed at the organizational streamlining and unification of some elements in ritual. Being oriented to old Greek standards, it actually strove to strengthen religious and sociopolitical conservatism, not undermine it.<sup>11</sup> The public reaction (*raskol*) was a burst of desperation: revolutionary in form, it completely denied “innovations” for the sake of “old ways,” that is, the traditional Russian practices. Though the proposed reform was, in fact, no reform at all, it split the Church in two parts, each trying to outcompete the other with the preferred brand of religious conservatism. The net result of the schism was “to weaken the power of the church and to make it more dependent on the government for support.”<sup>12</sup> Authoritarian tendencies in the government naturally gained further momentum.

Many authors trace the source of the later troubles to the extended period of Tatar-Mongol domination. Muscovite Rus had suffered 240 years of Mongol overlordship that brought the country’s development close to a halt. Be it for this or for another reason, Russia was the last country in Europe to abolish serfdom; it was among the last to embark on the path of capitalist industrialization and political reform.<sup>13</sup> The country did not develop a modern legal system until the late-nineteenth century, and it did not have a constitution until the early-twentieth century. By 1917, it lagged behind the rest of Europe in constitutional development, representation, local governance and public administration, and other aspects of political development. Very soon, the October, 1917, Revolution thwarted whatever small progress, on all these issues, that had been made before. In one view, the Bolshevik regime continued “patrimonial” patterns of governance and servility inherited from the early, Mongol-influenced Muscovy.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, Russia was the venue for several dramatic and prolonged peasant wars and rebellions. Its transition from medieval ages to the age of

reason was among the shortest in Europe (the Petrine epoch), and, although it had skipped revolutions of 1789 and 1848, three revolutions of the early-twentieth century compensated that generously. While it is probably true that “in the long run there is no appreciable difference in this respect” between Russia and a number of other nations, at least in terms of “frequency, length, and magnitude of these disturbances,” the Russian case is distinguished by the extraordinary packing of catastrophic events into relatively short segments of historical time.<sup>15</sup> The convulsive, spurtlike character of Russian development contrasted it sharply with a more balanced evolution in Europe. The recurrence of stagnation and reversal after the most radical efforts at reorganization prohibits parallels to North America, Japan, or late developers in Asia-Pacific. The ill-fated attempts at sustained modernization allow comparison to Latin America and Africa, but, given the profound difference in political and socioeconomic history, make the Russian case truly unique. One of the ways to grasp this uniqueness for the purposes of representation, if not explanation, is to look at Russian conservative revolutionism as a persisting pattern of political culture.

The emergence of Russian conservatism has been attributed to a number of factors. Most of the researchers tend to agree that the frontier position of the country, together with its peculiar vulnerability to external aggression, tilted the balance between tradition and innovation in favor of the once found ways of existence. At least on this account Russia does not stand alone. Another large continental country in a similar situation, also suffering from inability to effectively protect its lengthy borders and keep the invaders out, fell back on quite rigid traditionalism to maintain political and social cohesion. Chinese political culture became an epitome for “tory conservatism,” which had developed, embedded in political history and geography not wholly dissimilar to those of the Russians.<sup>16</sup>

In contradistinction to China, Russian conservatism has been attended by a radical and uncompromising tradition of violent changes in political and social system (in China, we cannot find this pattern until the nationalist revolution of this century). The new regime, once it emerges as victorious, immediately falls back on the familiar ways of development, and shapes the conservative modes of political behavior in its own image. Though it is true that “the eventual conservative aftermath of a great social revolution may be a kind of historical law,” Russia has been experiencing this pattern in a more intense and persistent way than many other countries, thus rising above the rest as “one of the most conservative countries in the world.”<sup>17</sup> Post-Soviet illustrations of this paradigm include more than the paradoxical support for

both Gorbachev's "renewed Union" and Yeltsin's "sovereign Russia" in 1991. The Russian president also enjoyed some sort of a popular mandate in a violent clash with the first post-Soviet Parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies, in October, 1993, while only a couple of months before, in the April, 1993, referendum on the executive-legislative relations and general confidence in the government, most Russian voters divided their sympathies almost equally between the two contending branches of power. Political observers had grounds to interpret the results as "a vote against a dramatic change of course and for the retention of both branches of power."<sup>18</sup> Why, then, did the mass public opinion not confront Yeltsin in his less than conciliatory move in October, 1993?

A large part of the public was prepared to excuse forceful measures, if they were required to stabilize the situation and resolve the crisis. Russian conservatism, though fearful of change, is even more fearful of the change uncontrolled. As demonstrated by the severity of antiterrorist operations in Chechnya, the public may be willing to give the government a mandate for a limited use of force to prevent an even larger calamity. Of course, the government has to be seen, at a minimum, as legitimate and capable of exercising the control it seeks. That is why the 1991 putschists had no chance to succeed: the government they represented had already lost all credibility and most institutional power. A unique combination of cautiousness and decisiveness that characterizes Russian revolutionary conservatism was revealed in 1993, too, but public assessment of the forces involved in both crises differed: "as a result, many of the same factors that had been at work in August 1991 were at work in October 1993, although the direction of their effect was changed. Whereas Yeltsin's legitimacy and the military's fear of split worked against [military] intervention in 1991, in 1993 they worked in favor of intervention."<sup>19</sup>

Not only formal legitimacy was important: after all, both 1991 and 1993 oppositionists had legal status as members of the higher political hierarchy. In 1993 as in 1991, the putschists had the vice presidents of the country on their side: Yanaev, the vice president of the USSR, in 1991, and Rutskoi, the vice president of the Russian Federation, in 1993. All "power ministers" (defense, security, internal affairs) rallied on the "wrong" side in 1991, and many parliamentarians, including the Supreme Council speaker (Khasbulatov) did the same in 1993.

Yeltsin's personal charisma can only partially explain the 1991 outcome, and even less the outcome of the 1993 standoff that followed the period of bitter dissatisfaction with Gaidar's "shock therapy" policies, endorsed by the



president. It seems, however, that in both cases the Russian populace backed stabilization efforts of the government and did not fail to support the stronger contender in a dispute. Yeltsin was stronger than the communist reactionaries in 1991, and he indeed offered some hope for improvement in the economy and politics alike, while his opponents could promise only the return to widely unpopular oscillating policies of the late-Gorbachev era, if not to an outright dictatorship. Dictatorship had to be based on force, which required a minimum of ideological and institutional commitment on the part of millions of rank-and-file functionaries, who alone could make the dictatorship work. And precisely this element had been missing—a fact that did not go unnoticed and contributed to the GKChP's perceived weakness. On the other hand, Yeltsin did manage to win some active support in the national capital and substantial passive sympathy nation-wide. "His" institutions (newly created institutions of the Russian presidency and the national government) were working and attracting cadres, while the institutions of the old regime, the so-called Soviet "center," had been paralyzed and demoralized by Gorbachev's ill-conceived innovations. Yeltsinites were stronger both morally and institutionally.

By the end of 1993, the "democrats" had lost moral appeal but more than compensated that in political, institutional, and economic power they amassed. The coup leaders in 1991 lacked control to such an extent that they could not even transmit the command properly, let alone get it implemented.<sup>20</sup> Yeltsin, on the other hand, did not have much trouble convincing military and police chiefs in Moscow of the necessity to suppress opposition with force. While using the army against civilians was deemed impossible only two years earlier, it came to be seen as appropriate once the reform government felt itself threatened. After trying it in the dispute between two branches of power in the center, Yeltsinites went on to apply military force in another type of conflict, this time with a secessionist Republic of Chechnya between 1994 and 1996. As earlier, the Russian populace predominantly backed the side of order and stability, and tolerated forceful ("revolutionary") measures that were believed unavoidable in the situation of protracted and seemingly insoluble crisis. Although giving their conditional and mostly passive support to the use of force by the government, Russians did not look forward to the despotic predominance of the central executive. Several surveys showed that, as Petro rightly noted, "this was clearly not a desire for a new dictatorship."<sup>21</sup>

A leading Russian vision of today is a variant of executive-led developmentalism. Ten years after the fall of communism, Russians learned to cherish such basics of democracy as free and contested elections, freedom of speech,

conscience, religion, mass communication, and association. These and other fundamental “rights and freedoms of man and citizen” are guaranteed by the Russian Constitution (chapter 2), which was adopted by a popular referendum. Freedom of the press and free elections are valued more than other aspects of democracy, while a presidential republic is preferred to all other forms of the government.<sup>22</sup> Given the character of the Russian presidential regime, one might hypothesize that Russians value freedom as chiefly an individual prerogative exercised within an orderly institutional context, provided by a strong and responsible executive. The vast powers of the president, endorsed by the constitution, do not normally ignite much worry on the part of the electorate. Until the dramatic deterioration of Boris Yeltsin’s health prompted an impeachment hearing in early 1997, it was not a structural imbalance between executive and legislative branches of power that troubled Russian voters. Much more than that, they were troubled by the demonstrable abuse of power and the president’s inability to control his cronies, thus breaching the unwritten social contract between the executive and the citizens.

### THE “RED-BROWN” SCARE: ELECTIONS 1993

Immediately after the shelling of the Russian Parliament and the arrest of parliamentary leaders, the Russian public appeared passive, if not supportive of the president. Yet, only two months later, in the elections for the newly constituted State Duma of the Russian Federation, pro-Yeltsin parties suffered humiliating defeat. About 23 percent of the party-list vote was given to the radical nationalist LDPR headed by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy; an additional 13 percent went to the somewhat reformed, yet unashamedly “red” CPRF, resurrected by Gennadii Ziuganov. The Agrarian Party of Russia (APR), representing mostly the antireform *kolkhoz* lobby, and the left-center Women of Russia got about 8 percent each. The propresidential Russia’s Choice had 15.5 percent, the centrist Yabloko 8 percent, and the Party of Russian Unity and Concord 7 percent of the vote, which gave the liberals a combined representation of roughly one-third of the Duma seats.<sup>23</sup>

Most pundits were quick to attribute the red-brown vote to the inherent antidemocratism of Russian political culture. Others cautioned against aggressive nationalism and, following Alexander Yanov, drew parallels to the last years of the Weimar Republic. Still others acknowledged the protest vote, exercised under conditions of stress and specifically aimed against unfair advantage, given to the propresidential Russia’s Choice party by the government.

However, the protest vote would have to be consistent with earlier probed values of the electorate. The problem was, it was not.

Once and again, surveys detected large and growing support for democratic values, individual rights and freedoms, reasonable inequality of income, private property, and a market economy.<sup>24</sup> The humiliated Russia's Choice espoused just these liberal-democratic values. Why did people fail to support the political organization so neatly fitting their beliefs? Polls "suggest a curious paradox: many of those whose values an outside analyst may classify as at least partially democratic refuse to vote (or at least failed to vote, at the end of 1993) for candidates explicitly identified with a democratic program or nominated by a democratic party."<sup>25</sup> Was it just a peculiar instance of the "protest vote"? A differently accentuated explanation might well be closer to the point. The conservative strand of the national political culture, with its "abiding anxiety that another disaster forever looms," motivated rejection of the dilettantish neoliberalism of Yegor Gaidar and other "democrats," whose experimentation with social and economic fundamentals plunged the country into chaos.<sup>26</sup> Conservatism meant advocating stabilization through the retreat to already tested policies, and those could not be anything else but moderated Sovietism of the CPRF variety. For those who were not happy with that option, there were no other alternatives but turning to Great Russian patriotism and nationalism.

The LPDR's success was not wholly accidental. By late 1993, Zhirinovskiy epitomized both a restorationist longing for lost "greatness" and a radical rejection of the powers-that-were. His party did not waste time in dissociating itself from both the communists and the new "democratic" oligarchy. When both sides of the executive-legislative conflict between 1991 and 1993 lost in public opinion—the first because of the methods used to solve the dispute, and the second because it so closely resembled the old Soviet *nomenklatura*—the LDPR emerged victorious as the one and only political actor known to the wider public as: (a) anticommunist; (b) not sponsored by the government; and (c) sufficiently close to the frustrations and hopes of an ordinary citizen. In this situation, the more preferential treatment by the state-controlled media Russia's Choice received, the more outraged the Russian public was, turning in large numbers to the available alternatives. The support given to the LDPR aimed to prevent the installation of a "democratically" embellished system of oligarchic rule. This support was retrogressive in its nationalist vision, the goals of stabilization, and the desire to recover the lost superpower status of the country.<sup>27</sup> It was revolutionary in seeking to stop the concentration of power in the hands of Yeltsin's coterie and to throw the "shock therapy" government out.

### RETURN OF A SUPPORTIVE VOTER: THE ELECTIONS OF 1995–96

The next elections took place on December 17, 1995. Apart from the continued adventure in Chechnya, these were not conducted under the duress of a sort that could explain the strong showing of antipresidential opposition in 1993. The “second” Russian republic stabilized politically, and the elections were held on schedule. The turnout grew from about 50 percent in 1993 to 65 percent in 1995, opening up what Michael McFaul calls a remarkable “series of democratic achievements.”<sup>28</sup> A 5 percent entry requirement for the parties helped to cut off a number of smaller self-serving groups, thus clearing the stage for serious players. As a result, only four parties made it to Parliament on the party-list vote.

However, the good news of relative stabilization was balanced with the bad news of a near complete collapse of more or less genuine liberal representation. In the December, 1995, Duma elections, the reformed communists won 22.3 percent of the party-list vote and 58 seats out of 225 allocated for single-member districts. The results of the combined vote brought them 157 Duma seats, or more than one-third of the 450-seat lower house of the Federal Assembly. Together with their allies, the procommunist Agrarian Party of Russia (20 seats), Power to the People (9 seats), less significant groups on the left, and a number of left-oriented independent deputies, the communists had no difficulty in securing control of over about 42 percent of the State Duma. Zhirinovskiy's LDPR, though on the decline, managed to come in second on the party-list vote (11.2 percent), retaining 51 seats and the chairmanship in several Duma committees, including an important committee on geopolitics. Overall, the “national-patriotic” coalition in the Parliament included fifty-seven people. A propresidential party called “Our Home Is Russia” had 10.1 percent of the vote and 55 seats, but it lacked in organizational unity or clear ideological orientation. The radical reformist Russia's Democratic Choice had to reduce its already small representation (seventy-six seats after the 1993 elections) to a mere nine deputies. The center-liberal Yabloko was the last runner to clear the 5 percent barrier, with its 6.9 percent of the party-list vote and won 45 seats. It could additionally count on no more than twenty supporters among other deputies of liberal-democratic persuasion.<sup>29</sup>

The net result of these elections was the strengthening of the communist influence on Russian legislative politics. The new CPRF was nothing like the old CPSU, however. Ziuganov's communists allied themselves with nationalists and parted company with the more radical “worker” parties on the left.

This patriotic coalition has found mutually acceptable modes of coexistence with the government. What could become a force capable of toppling the postcommunist ruling elite evolved into a so-called systemic opposition jockeying for positions and privileges. Once again, certified “radicals” turned out to be conservatives, working for the status quo and building up that very system they were supposed to fight. Restorationist rhetoric at the forefront and clannish politics behind the scenes made the second Russian Duma an unlikely factor of stability mediating between the people and the government. In voting for the party that essentially turned its back on revolutionary Marxism, the Russian electorate revealed its preference for the negotiated settlement of issues and mitigation of the reform hardships, rather than the outright overthrow of an antisocialist government. Even so, Ziuganov’s time was clearly running out.

The presidential elections in 1996 saw people voting for the widely unpopular Yeltsin, only to block the prospects of power monopolization in the hands of the CPRF. A dramatically inconsistent vote helped to compensate for the *de facto* absence of an effective system of institutional checks and balances that would make democracy work. Throughout most of the winter season of 1995 and 1996, the communist victory seemed inevitable. All polls showed Ziuganov leading Yeltsin by a substantial margin. However, Yeltsin started narrowing the gap in the late spring of 1996, and the first round of elections on June 16 brought him 35.3 percent of the vote. Ziuganov finished second with 32 percent. The subsequent conclusive victory of the incumbent in the July 3 runoff (53.8 percent to Ziuganov’s 40.3 percent), despite allegations of a fraudulent vote count in several regions, cannot be attributed wholly to manipulation by the government, nor just to the enormous advantage Yeltsin had in campaign spending, the use of state-controlled media, and organization. Even with all of these factors counted, the fact that the majority voted against the communist candidate still stands. The sanity of the electorate was also revealed by a relative preference given to liberal Grigorii Yavlinsky (8 percent) over Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (6 percent) and by a modest third showing of the nationalist darling Gen. Alexander Lebed (14 percent).<sup>30</sup>

And yet, the same electorate had voted largely procommunist and antigovernment less than a year before. To what end? Electoral behavior in 1995–96 was guided by a logic that was not dissimilar to that of 1993, when the Russian public also acted to prevent a potential usurpation of power—then, by the radical reformers associated with the government, and now, by the reformed, but recognizable neocommunists, associated with the dislodged gov-

ernment of the past. In both cases, there were signs of an electoral “revolt,” aimed to deny the government control over the national legislature. Yet, the conservative side of the “revolutionary-conservative” posture eventually prevailed. It was paradoxically revealed even in the red-brown vote of 1993–95, which was the only surrogate Russians had, at the moment, to indicate their longing for a “normal” civil society, where the free hand of the government has to stop at the electoral poll booth and might be tied by the results of popular expression. By 1996, postcommunist stability (Yeltsin) seemed a better bet than a new round of turmoil, political and economic reshuffling, institutional restructuring, and psychological uncertainty (Ziuganov). Russians had had enough of perestroika and shock therapy, in less than ten years, to become fascinated with the promise of another revolution. As much as one-third of those who voted for Yeltsin were in reality indifferent to his victory, yet voted as they did to block the prospect of a communist takeover.<sup>31</sup> Russians thus showed that they indeed preferred order and stability, even at a cost if need be. Of course, the concrete content of this or that preferred “order” makes all the difference. While “revolutionary conservatism” persisted, its historical modifications stood wide apart, even when they were as close as the elections of the period.

#### **POST-YELTSIN REALIGNMENT: THE ELECTIONS OF 1999–2000**

The turmoil of the first post-Soviet years, characterized by indiscriminate struggles of primary accumulation and rampant impoverishment of the majority, contrary to the expectations of progressive bulging of the protest vote, wore “revolutionary” resolve of the citizenry down. Revolutions ordinarily require massive amounts of energy on the part of the people and its active channeling toward revolutionary ends by radical movement entrepreneurs. By 1998, these elements were missing. The energy was spent on mundane tasks of social adaptation under the conditions of uncertainty, while both communist (CPRF) and nationalist (LDPR) opposition grew “systemic,” supporting the Kremlin then and there where a more principled stance would require an open confrontation. The communists failed to act amidst the financial and political crisis of 1998, when they had all chances to form the cabinet and implement at least some of their economic program.<sup>32</sup> The LDPR faction in the Duma had long had a tendency to vote with the government on the most crucial issues, never stopping shy of full turnabouts if properly stimulated by the Kremlin vote makers.<sup>33</sup>

Through these and other examples, Russians had learned that the postcommunist regime, however odd and even grotesque it looked at times, was here to stay and could not be dislodged, in Lenin's phrase, by a "cavalry attack." The change toward cultural flexibility showed itself in a statistically significant support of new political players on both the side of the government (Unity) and the side of the opposition (Fatherland-All Russia).<sup>34</sup> Since both parties pictured themselves as moderate centrists, the underlying consensus seemed to converge on a view that political succession must be evolutionary in nature. This bode well for the fledgling Russian democracy, and even better for the newly grown capitalists.

The elections in 1999 reflected a desire to move on and leave revolutionary designs behind, which was all the more understandable because of the apparent inability of most opposition parties to mount a serious challenge to the regime. The only party that verifiably threatened interests of the Yeltsin "family," the Primakov-Luzhkov coalition, professed pragmatism and national consolidation and stopped well short of calling for a radical change in the economy.<sup>35</sup> After the 1998 crisis, the electorate sought changes that would guarantee security and stability, and would not support socially and politically extreme power contenders. The prevalent mood was rather conservative. The 24.3 percent of the vote received by the communists reflected their newly found popularity of a party that was "not a bit on the Left, but [belonged with] a conservative nationalist movement."<sup>36</sup> However, the CPRF had few trump cards left up their sleeve, and the presidential elections 2000, which brought Zhiuganov 29.2 percent of the vote, revealed that limitation beyond any doubt. A strong showing by the hastily convened pro-Putin Unity (23.3 percent of the party-list vote) and a closely affiliated Union of Right-Wing Forces (8.5 percent) made these parties factually dominant in the newly formed Duma, where they together hold 114 seats, compared to the 85 seats controlled by the CPRF Duma faction. The Fatherland-All Russia Party, despite its 13.3 percent of the vote, ended up with forty-four deputies, and Yabloko finished barely ahead of Zhirinovskiy with 6.9 and 6 percent of the vote, nineteen and twelve legislators respectively. The Yeltsin-Chernomyrdin Our Home Is Russia Party, which had 59 seats in the outgoing Duma, received fewer votes than the Party of Pensioners and was buried for all practical purposes.<sup>37</sup>

The elections not only prepared Vladimir Putin's ascent to power and marginalized his rivals, they also signified the end of Russia's "unrevolution" for all parties and politicians with clearly identifiable ideological credentials. Although the communists got Duma portfolios in a backstage deal with the Unity Party, they were effectively finished as serious power contenders. So

were liberal reformists who prided themselves on opposition to the Kremlin (Yavlinsky). The Union of Right-Wing Forces, which did reasonably well thanks to its open support of the president-in-the-waiting, would be obliterated if it tried to get along without that “roof.” A bleak passage into oblivion of Gaidar’s previous project, the Democratic Choice of Russia, must have reminded this newly formed grouping of ex-prime ministers and deputy-prime ministers that “most Russians despise its professed ‘reformism’, which they associate with the looting of state industry by insiders.”<sup>38</sup> As for the LDPR, or Zhirinovskiy’s Bloc, as it is now known, the halving of its vote from one parliamentary election to another is sufficient evidence to forget about the mostly imaginary “Russian Weimar” scare, which kept Western observers alarmed way too long. The steep decline in the LDPR’s support became something of a bad omen for all certifiably nationalist parties on the list, none of which got sufficiently close to even 1 percent of the vote.

The conservative vote that these elections revealed was not ideological in nature. It was a cultural phenomenon, a vote for postrevolutionary stabilization, certainly coached by the Kremlin’s spin doctors and vast injections of oligarchs’ money, yet also reflective of the fact that Russia, in Putin’s words, “has used up its limit for political and socio-economic upheavals, cataclysms and radical reforms.”<sup>39</sup> The change Russians needed was the departure of the corrupt Yeltsin “family,” not the return of ideologists with grandiose schemes of making everyone happy. Tired of a caricature of the president, they wanted a real one, someone “like us,” and someone capable of restoring collective dignity to this imaginary “we.” Putin, propelled from relative obscurity into the limelight by the second Chechen war vowing to end the terrorist attacks against Russia proper and to restore Moscow’s rule in the breakaway region, seemed the right choice for many.

After Yeltsin’s abdication on New Year’s Eve, Putin’s victory in the presidential election on March 26 was hardly a surprise to anyone. His popularity rating peaked at 62 percent in January and hovered around 46–58 percent in March. Following Primakov’s announcement that he would not run for president, the left-center supporters of the Primakov statist program migrated to Putin, as did one in five of those who voted for the communists in December, 1999. Close to four-fifths of the Putin voters espoused centrist convictions and were prepared to vote for the government candidate, whom they saw as a candidate of stability. While about one-third of the centrist group were there because of their support for a strong national state, the ideological profile of the rest appeared as amorphous as that of the candidate himself. Sociological polls showed that these were the same people who voted for Yeltsin four years



before and then supported Primakov's government in 1998. In all of these instances, the candidate's ideology was less of an interest than the candidate's promise of order and stability. However, Putin differed from both Yeltsin and Primakov in being fully equidistant from voters on both the left and the right—9.1 and 11.2 percent of his supporters, respectively. The success of a candidate with blurred political sympathies and little of a platform at the time of the election had indicated not only the fatigue of the citizenry, but the ongoing shift in its political and social values: from ideological rivalry to more or less conscious deideologization and from the revolutionism of the Gorbachev-Yeltsin decade toward the conservative state- and nation-building consensus of the post-Yeltsin era.<sup>40</sup> Putin's victory with 52.9 percent of the vote in the first round of the election was achieved atop a wave of cultural discontinuity that tipped the revolutionary-conservative scale of Russian political culture toward its conservative side. With this switch of gears, other components of the national political-cultural complex came to the fore. Chief among them was the idea of a strong state supervising all aspects of national development, with the state presided over by a government that might side with the people to bridle the lecherous "oligarchs," Russia's most recent breed of politically and economically powerful people who draw their wealth primarily from the public coffers.

#### **AUTHORITARIANISM AND STATE-LED DEVELOPMENT**

Russian autocracy was traditionally "constrained" by various powers and institutions of society.<sup>41</sup> People's opinions mattered, and even the voice of the mentally impaired tramps and beggars, Russia's "holy fools," would count. There were also longstanding constraints of spiritual nature, perhaps best understood as motivations of historical-ideological character. The sense of a state-building mission, not atypical in comparison to other contemporary autocrats with ambitions worldwide, was acutely present in post-Mongol Russia. This sense of a mission, of responsibility that transcended vicissitudes of individual reign, motivated most czars and czarines that are regularly cited in historical annals. A princely rule that was pure self-gratification could not draw much attention from posterity. The monarchic "mission" in Russia, as understood by court ideologists and implemented in state practices, bore certain locally specific dimensions, which shaped national perceptions of the idea of state-led development.

Although modern connotations of either "developmentalism" or "authoritarianism" are seldom applied to a period before the late nineteenth century,

the autocratic strand in the political culture of the Russian elite was from early on burdened with two close correlates of the idea of development, namely: (a) the idea of growth and territorial expansion (“ingathering of lands”), and (b) the idea of continuity, succession, and perseverance (“the Third Rome”). The “ingathering of lands” was morally and dynastically justified by their previous “loss” to a foreign aggressor: Mongols, Poles, and Lithuanians. A self-aggrandizing perception of Byzantine inheritance helped to give some sense to the messianic “Third Rome” ideology: after the fall of Constantinople, Russia appeared as the largest center of Orthodox Christianity in Europe, and the rulers strove to capitalize on this in both political and symbolic terms. Interestingly, Russian messianism connoted not only a manifest destiny, but also an idea of gradual ascension toward spiritual and moral betterment, progressive self-fulfillment of the national whole. The closest thing Russians could have to the ideology of “development” before Peter the Great was inner perfection on the basis of individual and societal loyalty to the “genuine faith.” Even the most radical visions of social and political change were, by necessity, couched in this language.<sup>42</sup> Largely peaceful territorial expansion into scarcely populated areas played a secular counterpart to this understanding of development, moving the boundaries of the “Christian world” east and south of the Muscovite heartland.<sup>43</sup>

Since one of the czar’s primary responsibilities was to be a “defender of faith” (a designation similar to that of other European monarchs of the time), and a “defender” had to be strong, both religious perfectionism and its secular counterpart—proselytizing by incorporation—implied that the country’s and the people’s movement through history (“development”) were to be based on the undivided and therefore not weakened rule of the hereditary monarch. The latter, however, had to be a “goodwill” champion of Truth and Justice. Political power was deemed legitimate through its moral, not legal, justification. “In social thought, winning over authoritarianism originally revealed itself as affirmation of the authority of Truth.”<sup>44</sup>

The authoritarian thrust of the elite political culture was heavily based on a perception of the external threat to the Russian state and society. Given the continuous history of foreign invasions, we cannot say it was completely unwarranted. Russia had occupied a precarious position between the “pagan” nomadic East and the “unfaithful” Roman Catholic West; the threat from both sides was not only military, but also cultural in character. Since the balance of forces had been conspicuously unfavorable to the young Muscovite state, the “Third Rome” mentality could not mean any offensive imperialist inclinations on the part of the Russian rulers. On the contrary: it signified

perseverance in the face of an overwhelming enemy, and the moral obligation to endure. “Contrary to commonly held opinion (formulated in the 19th century), the theory of Moscow the Third Rome did not function as an aggressive or expansionist (imperialist) ideology of the Russian state.”<sup>45</sup> Though conservative and protective undertones of the idea prevailed, they did not close the space for its moralistic and perfectionist readings, which were, in a sense, dynamic interpretations in terms of spiritual growth and self-fulfillment.

The ambiguous character of the political culture of Muscovy can be appreciated through an analysis of that period in Russian history that many historians unequivocally depict as the reign of terror, associated with the rule of Ivan IV “The Terrible” (1533–84). While Ivan’s despotism and ruthlessness in the suppression of both real and imaginary enemies are all well known and much reiterated, the reforms he initiated and implemented in financial, military, and judicial affairs of the state and his attempts at moderate church reform are out of fashion with researchers. Ivan was “also responsible for the creation of Russia’s first parliament, the Zemskii Sobor (“Assembly of the Land”), which he convened in 1550 and again in 1566.”<sup>46</sup> Whether this protoparliamentary institution was “true” or “not true” in its representative and decision-making functions, its very emergence signaled movement toward at least a potentially “constrained autocracy,” and the fact that it made its appearance during one of the most despotic periods in Russian history tells much about the real limits the autocratic power had to deal with.<sup>47</sup>

Even more important, Ivan’s period witnessed several manifestations of the alternative political culture, represented in particular by the Boyar Duma, a council of the most powerful hereditary landowners. Although the boyars’ interest in the strong state was no less than that of a czar, they were opposed to the idea of unbridled autocracy and preferred an oligarchic rule. Boyars’ “protest against an ever growing autocracy did not necessarily mean their support for decentralization. Autocracy and centralization are not synonymous. The Boyar Duma was precisely one of the elements of a centralized state.”<sup>48</sup> The boyars’ understanding of the state interest differed from that of the czar on several issues, including the role of the representative institutions or the issue of the service nobility (*dvorianstvo*). The estates of big hereditary landowners had little need for “strengthening of the military-bureaucratic autocratic regime. In this respect, its interests could sometimes even coincide with the interests of the upper merchants’ group.”<sup>49</sup> Specifically, the reform aimed at the decentralization of law enforcement and furthering the rights of local public administration, when managed by the boyars, went as far as giving the urban merchants (*posadskie*) and even peasants the right to be locally

elected as heads of the respective law-enforcing agencies.<sup>50</sup> Had the *boyarstvo* an opportunity to withstand the czar and an historical chance to develop, the Russian's own version of the Magna Carta could have appeared shortly.

The alternative culture of the period was definitely demonstrated by the Russian reformation movement, in writings and sermons of its leaders, whom the Orthodox establishment fought with all vigor and not infrequently subjected to death or exile: Matvei Bashkin, Feodosii Kosoi, Fedor Kuritsyn, and others. To the czar's dictum "everywhere there is no freedom" the heretics opposed their own thesis—"the soul is sovereign." Kosoi went as far as to reject all external powers, both those of the state and those of the church.<sup>51</sup> His own iconoclast church was understood, in a radical protestant fashion, as a "gathering of faithful" and a "people's multitude," where no earthly "powers and authorities" were allowed to enter.<sup>52</sup>

A less radical, but much more influential political position of the merchant bourgeoisie, well represented in the *sobors* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was based on the power of financial credit to the government. In either structural or cultural terms, the "third estate" in Russia was not that different from its western European twins. Structural similarities underpinned parallel positions vis-à-vis the state, similar social functions (from moneymaking to money lending) and similar interests. Patterns in political participation, as one might have expected, closely followed these structural parallels. Merchant capital was active in demanding the guarantees of personal freedom and of freedom of domestic trade. It pressed for state protectionism in trade and sought local autonomy and self-administration on the level of cities and townships. The right of participation in Zemskii Sobors and the right of petition to the czar were used skillfully and continuously, making the Moscow government complain about the "endless bothering" (*dokuka besprestannaia*) in one of the documents of the epoch. The "endless bothering" of the rich burgers not only resulted in several documents codifying the special rights and privileges of the *posad* at home, but largely determined the course of Russian foreign policies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Be it war, peace, or bloodless territorial expansion of the state, all the "autocratic" decisions depended, in the last instance, on subsidies sought by the central government and given or denied by the "trade people."<sup>53</sup>

It is this social group and its distinct political subculture that contributed to the rise of mercantilism in Russia and established a rather distinct pattern of state-led development. As numerous petitions to the Moscow government, administrative directives of this government (*gramoty*) and a number of legislative documents adopted by the *sobors* (*sobornye ulozheniia*) show, the ideology

of the medieval Russian “middle class” was far from being unambiguously democratic. At the same time, if anything, it did not simply echo the autocratic tendencies of the Muscovite monarchy. *Posadskie* had vested interests in a strong, centralized state that would defend them from capricious and often abusive local barons. Their immediate fortune depended on unrestricted trade rights and the liquidation of local tariffs and levies, which was the task for the central government. In the mid-sixteenth century, following the British “discovery” of Arkhangelsk, Russian merchants had met their powerful West European competitors and started losing to them. Only the central government could help, which it did, when reminded of the connection between the merchants’ capitals and the state treasury.<sup>54</sup> The trade estate had internal competitors as well, on both higher and lower ends of the social hierarchy. These domestic encroachments on the estate’s monopoly of trade were also rebutted with the help of the government.

Appealing to the czar over the heads of nobility and siding with the czar against hereditary princes and boyars had major consequences: (a) consolidation of autocracy and (b) delegation of power to both representative (*sobor*) and administrative (central and local bureaucracies) institutions. The service nobility and merchants’ orders buttressed the monarchy’s authoritarian tendencies. The latter, however, were also responsible for putting some checks on them. Authoritarianism that served the interests of the rising middle classes, especially the trade bourgeoisie, deserves a “developmental” qualifier for more than one reason. First, from early on, this estate’s vision of the “strong czar” carried some signs of a constitutional monarchy, though predicated on common law to a much greater degree than on any uniformly codified body of legislative documents. Second, it had space for representative institutions, local self-government, and the right of petition. Third, and most important, it was conceived as aimed specifically at the country’s development in the sense of its nation- and state-building, consolidation of a domestic market and state protection of both domestic trade and fledgling domestic manufactures.

True, this brand of “ideology” created and furthered state-dependency to an extent that was, perhaps, never known to the leaders of West European capitalism, such as Holland or Britain. And yet, authoritarianism supported by the Russian *burgers* significantly differed from an autocratic model favored by czars and their ideologues. Most of the latter dreamed of unrestrained autocracy for the sake of autocracy, invoking, at best, the “glory of the land” and preservation of the “true faith.” The emerging bourgeoisie, on the other hand, needed autocracy constrained, but also regulated, if not manipulated, to the best benefit of the “third estate.” From the sixteenth century on, even

the territorial growth of the country was decoupled from the dynastic scramble to recover “lost dominions” and appeared to be increasingly governed by naked economic motifs.<sup>55</sup> Through the established linkage with the military fortunes of the state, economic rationality became accepted in the upper classes of Russian society and finally triumphed. The political culture of the *posad* prepared the ground for Peter the Great and his reforms.

Although Peter’s rule was certainly authoritarian and clearly developmental in its thrust, the precise balance between the two remains the question of scholarly debate in both Russia and the West. It is not our task to argue either the “benevolent” or “malevolent” or the “progressive” or “defensive” character of the Petrine reforms.<sup>56</sup> The important thing is that Peter’s design and implementation of the “well-ordered police state” marked a decisive departure from the previous epoch of Muscovite feudal monarchy, which still had some space for a limited representation of social estates in the central government and local public administration.<sup>57</sup> With Peter, Russia entered the period of absolutism, which Article 20 of the “Military Articles” (1715) defined this way: “His Majesty is an autocratic monarch, who does not have to answer for his acts to anyone in the world, but has power and authority to govern his states and lands as a Christian sovereign, according to his will and good judgment.”<sup>58</sup> Thus, the authoritarian part of the “developmental-authoritarian” political culture was, for the first time in Russian history, reinforced to such an extent that it could officially play a leading part in the tandem.

It is quite symptomatic that even under Peter (“even,” because he definitely had enough of both whim and power to move the country along much less “enlightened” and simply sultanistic ways of governance) the ideological and moral justification of the reforms was, nevertheless, framed in a language “of the ‘universal national service,’ the ‘fortress of justice,’ or the ‘common good.’ He used ‘interests of the state’ almost synonymously with ‘utility of the sovereign.’”<sup>59</sup> The pragmatic, rationalized, expedient character (or intentions) of the Petrine reforms are often reiterated, as are his conscious emulations of the West and forceful efforts at the modernization of almost all aspects of the country’s life. The one significant exception was the “second serfdom,” which, if anything, grew only worse during the “great reformer’s” rule. Even penal justice was vested with economic tasks, reminiscent of the “labor armies” of high Stalinism. As Peter himself once observed, “of course crimes and disorders must be punished; but at the same time my subjects’ lives must be preserved as far as possible,” since those lives apparently could be used to benefit the state.<sup>60</sup> The imperial bureaucracy created in this period supplanted the old aristocratic ways of governance, leading to a change in the

“sources of social mobility” and in the composition of the ruling elite.<sup>61</sup> According to the Table of Ranks adopted in 1722, the recruitment and promotion of public servants was to be based on the principles of merit and duration of service, rather than on earlier paramount blood lineages.<sup>62</sup> Nobility ceased to be a caste and acquired features of a more or less open social class. If the emperor’s “whim” produced these results, we are forced to admit that no matter how “oriental” Peter’s rule had been in its despotic manifestations, the reform he initiated was not only dictated by the West, but mostly Western-oriented in its essence, developmental in its goals, and rational-authoritarian in its formally institutionalized means.<sup>63</sup>

With Peter, developmentally oriented authoritarianism became the ideal-typical model for the elite’s political culture, just like the rationalized bureaucracy he created, forms “the institutional basis of the imperial regime throughout the remainder of its existence.”<sup>64</sup> Peter’s concern with the state-led political and especially economic transformation, development of the productive forces of the nation through a conscious effort of the government, may be counted among the earliest manifestations of contemporary mercantilist policies that through the next two centuries proved themselves helpful in spurring many of the late developers into modernity. The authoritarian foundation of the model was underscored by the fact that “nowhere else was the state to any comparable extent the demiurge of economic development.”<sup>65</sup> Also, nowhere else was the nation at large made as subservient to the dictates of “higher” state policies as was the case in Russia. The “well-ordered police state” created in this period was certainly more “police” than “well-ordered.” The Regulation to the Chief Magistracy (1721) significantly stated that “the police promote rights and justice, engenders good order and morality . . . assures the abundance of all that is needed for human life . . . brings up the young . . . [it] is the soul of civil society and of all good order, and the fundamental bulwark of civil security and well-being.”<sup>66</sup>

Extensive use of coercion for the purposes of political and economic development of an abstractly understood “nation” (made virtually synonymous with the state) marked a profound rupture in the traditional Muscovite political culture. The latter was largely religious- and custom-based, personalized, ascriptive, but also (because of that) less uniform, allowing some diversity, and, at least potentially, more open to various paths of development. With Peter, the alternative options were eliminated. At a closer look, and contrary to Richard Pipes’s opinion, it was not “patrimonialism” that so immensely structured Russian political-cultural and institutional evolution: a patrimonial phase of development occurred in all European countries. Max Weber had

established patrimonialism as a distinct feature of the Roman Empire and was the first to acknowledge that patrimonial manifestations “are to be found everywhere in Europe.”<sup>67</sup> Developmental authoritarianism, not patrimonialism, was responsible for the Russian political culture’s modern evolution. As a pattern of political behavior, it became a driving force for many state policies both before and after the 1917 Revolution. It is this force that, in the words of Peter’s most prominent ideologue and adviser, “opened up to thee, Russia, the way to all corners of the earth and carried thine power and glory to the remotest oceans, to the very limits set by thy own interests and by justice.”<sup>68</sup> One might be prompted to add a caveat: the “justice” which, indeed, eventually “set the limits” to Russian expansion, was born and nourished by this very force, or, more specifically, by the contradiction between developmental ends and authoritarian means that, from Petrine times on, propelled Russian politics.

#### STATE SOCIALISM AND AFTER

The pattern of the state-led development persisted after the 1917 Revolution. Both the Leninist “revolutionary dictatorship” and the Stalinist “revolution from above” attempted to solve developmental problems by extremely amplified executive or, rather, police action.<sup>69</sup> The regime’s official ideology was teleological and, at least in this sense, developmental. As reality goes, the net outcome of a “mercantilist semiwithdrawal” from the world markets was, if not wholly successful, than not completely disastrous either.<sup>70</sup> Soviet success stories in mass education, in comprehensive health care, in a modest yet all-encompassing welfare provision, in heavy industry and defense technology, in space exploration, and so on are not yet forgotten.

Though concrete manifestations of the developmental-authoritarian pattern varied through various phases of Soviet history, the overall extent of its internalization by the people may be appreciated in the very force of popular demand for change raised during perestroika. When glasnost revealed a dramatic gap between “better-life” aspirations and reality, the “developmental” side of the official myth, held dear by many, was demolished. At the same time, Gorbachev’s maneuvering between opposing sides and issues exposed the whole communist reformers’ camp as opportunistic, incompetent, and, most importantly, incapable of pushing anything through. Perestroika stripped the king of his clothes and showed him not only naked but weak and whining, too. With the last vestiges of authoritativeness, the government lost the remains of *authority*. The crash of the developmental myth precipitated the crash of the regime.



However, Yeltsin's "democrats" had resurrected developmental authoritarianism even before they seized power, following the demise of a lampoon August, 1991 "putsch." Capitalist development became the goal, and the main instrument of its achievement was a "liberal-democratic" state. The state had to liberalize prices, to impose financial discipline, to create a new system of taxation and enforce it, to demonopolize production, to privatize whole branches of the national economy, and so on. Through the "liberal" facade of a new postcommunist regime emerged the familiar features of an authoritarian statehood, with decisions being made by a narrow clique of the president and his cronies, with media controlled by the state and subsidized by the state-affiliated quasi-private capital, with opposition marginalized, if possible (the rule by decree), and ruthlessly suppressed, when "necessary" (October, 1993, the two wars in Chechnya).<sup>71</sup>

How could this happen? Was it a natural development, a predictable political-cultural continuity, or unexpected aberration on the way to a Western-style liberal democracy? While perhaps an aberration, it was not completely unexpected. Russian liberalism has always been rather weak, squeezed on both sides by potent conservative and revolutionist camps. Since the "Silver Age" of Russian social thought ended with the exile of its leading figures abroad (1922), the liberal tradition was largely lost on the country and became a factor of the émigré culture.<sup>72</sup> It took a change of a generation to yield a crop of open-minded individuals who transformed Khrushchev's "thaw" in something more than just another policy quirk. Yet, none of them were bona fide liberals. Two generations raised without the fear of terror made perestroika possible. Some people of genuinely liberal convictions, like Andrei Sakharov, were among its forefathers, but the long-awaited *parties* of a "liberal orientation" failed to materialize.

The self-anointed liberals of the last decade proved to be right-wing groupings of a rather radical persuasion. One of the early groups, the Democratic Union (DS), was fully prepared to shed blood in a revolutionary overthrow of the existing system and did not show much concern for the human cost of the effort. In January, 1991, during the party's Fifth Congress, the DS leader, Valeriia Novodvorskaia, called for members and sympathizers to start an immediate "preparation for armed resistance."<sup>73</sup> Among the first Russian "liberals," yielding in order of appearance only to the Christian Democratic Union of Russia and the Democratic Party (DP), renamed Conservative soon after it was formed, was Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's notorious Liberal-Democratic Party of (created as the Liberal-Democratic Party of the Soviet Union in December 1989). The most liberal of all "liberal" parties, movements, and groups of the

nineties, Democratic Russia, not only started showing “increasingly radical tactics” as soon as it could lay claim to a privileged position with the victorious Yeltsin’s government but actually moved to support the increasingly authoritarian policies of this government, once affiliated with it through a number of personal appointments.<sup>74</sup>

The most recent reincarnation of the liberal cause in Russia, the Union of Right-Wing Forces (SPS), while sneering at the “social dependency” of the impoverished population, professes to “legitimize de-staticization that was accomplished through privatization,” thus throwing its support behind the unprecedented transfer of billions worth of public assets to the select few members of the postcommunist political elite and their criminal associates.<sup>75</sup>

The best known illustration of the paradoxes involved in the “liberal-authoritarian” style of politics ushered in by the postcommunist Russian government is given by the reforms that were initiated by the acting prime minister and subsequent leader of Democratic Russia’s offspring—Russia’s Democratic Choice Party—Yegor Gaidar. As a good Hayekian, Gaidar has always acknowledged that “if the state, and only the state, legitimizes property . . . there will be no market.”<sup>76</sup> This theoretical belief did not prevent him from using the state machine to confiscate people’s lifetime savings (through price deregulation), to stifle noncompetitive industries (through high taxes and drastic cuts in regular subsidies), to effectively bring industrial investment to a halt (through high interest rates), and so on. The net result of these policies was a one-third decrease in production in less than a year. As economist Leonid Abalkin noted at the time, shock therapy apparently maintained “a certain constant contradiction between production stimulation and improving the management of money circulation.”<sup>77</sup> For a monetarist Gaidar, and as for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) team behind him, the latter had been definitely more important than either the production or the living standards of the people. As even proreform theorists were forced to admit, “on the standard measures . . . real income [in 1992] fell by one-half compared to the previous year and by one-third compared with 1985. The corresponding falls in consumption were 57 and 51 percent.”<sup>78</sup> In 1988, the percentage of people living below the poverty level in what was then the RSFSR stood at 6.3 percent. By September, 1992, that figure had grown to 37 percent of the total population, including half of Russia’s children.<sup>79</sup>

Nevertheless, the “big bang” approach continued. Dismantling the socialist state completely preoccupied the cabinet. Its economic policies were conceived and implemented in such a way as to bring about an utter “destruction of the existing system at whatever cost.”<sup>80</sup> By the end of 1994, Victor

Chernomyrdin's purportedly more "moderate" government, responding to IMF calls for financial austerity, pursued policies that caused the living standards of 51 million people—more than a third of the total population—to plunge below the poverty line.<sup>81</sup> Only increased reliance on self-help and various marginal "economies of subsistence" helped Russians to somewhat alleviate the burden of poverty in the following years.<sup>82</sup> However, this improvement could hardly be attributed to the success of governmental policies. If anything, it signaled a mass departure from participation in the national market; it was a fragmentation of common economic space into millions of minute islands of private and semiprivate activity that bore little resemblance to the operations of the modern market, resurrecting, instead, something of a traditional, premodern household economy.

An authoritarian style of economic liberalization was evident in all aspects of the reform. The very fact that it had started with price deregulation and not privatization, as one could naturally expect from self-proclaimed adepts of the liberal school of economics, says much about its design, overall thrust and direct beneficiaries. Grassroots capitalism was excluded from the very beginning by the confiscatory policies of the central government. This left only two sources of capital, ready to be used in the buying out of state property: (a) capital completely out of the state's reach (i.e., illegally accumulated, circulated and kept), and (b) the capital of the state itself, variously administered by its "public servants," industrial managers, and other economic bureaucrats. "Nomenklatura privatization" appeared as the leading strategy, to be supplemented with "mafia privatization" as its alter ego.<sup>83</sup>

State force was a primary agent of the recent Russian economic transformation, and the ways in which state force was applied were quite reminiscent of not only the Soviets, but even the rather remote imperial Russian past. Anatoly Chubais, Gaidar's partner in the reform cabinet and subsequently the first deputy prime minister in the second Yeltsin administration, recalled that "a total of 4,786 [large] enterprises have been included in the list for mandatory corporatization. . . . After the Presidential Decree . . . was issued, it became mandatory to sell 29 percent of the shares of privatized enterprises through a voucher action in the first three months after the registration of a joint stock company. . . . Certain local attempts to halt privatization . . . were met with resolute measures . . . including . . . an appeal to the Procurator-General of Russia."<sup>84</sup> The "mandate," "directive," and "resolute measures" language that Chubais shares with many other Russian "liberals" betrays the same authoritarian understanding of state-society relations that they are so quick to notice in contemporary Russian "statist" discourse. The gist of the

developmental-authoritarian approach to economic restructuring has nothing to do with either classic liberal or neoliberal reasoning. Both maintain necessity of the spontaneous order, and oppose forceful action from above. In Hayek's words, "The central belief from which all liberal postulates may be said to spring is that more successful solutions of the problems of society are to be expected if we do not rely on the application of anyone's given knowledge, but encourage the interpersonal process of exchange of opinion from which better knowledge can be expected to emerge."<sup>85</sup> The Chicago school's "given knowledge" certainly made no exception. However, this side of liberal philosophy—its ultimate preference of natural, bottom-up development over artificial, predesigned, top-down regulation of the economy—was completely ignored by liberal Russian reformers. Motivated more by wholesale contempt for the established ways of economic activity, and scorned simply because of their socialist roots rather than a genuine desire to tap into the sources of individual initiative, Russian liberals chose to take the ready-made prescriptions of certain Western economists and applied them throughout the administrative fiat. In the process, most customary channels of both official and semiofficial economic exchange were blocked or disrupted. All other (competing) opinions on the direction of economic reform were disregarded, and scant attention was given to the "marginal" problem of social support networks and other market "externalities."

It was apparent that the effort to employ shock therapy on the economic fundamentals of the state-regulated economy in a situation where no economic substitute existed or could be summoned on short notice "arose as much from the old Soviet political culture, with its belief that society can be reshaped from the top, as from an understanding of the actual economic effects of the policies themselves."<sup>86</sup> True liberalism, with its conservative respect for the people's right to choose freely the style and method of their economic engagement and to expect certain legal predictability from the state, was hardly in the cards. Instead, Russia concocted its own variant of "revolutionary liberalism" for those already endowed with power and those who could manage to convert their political and industrial connections into cash and capital.

"Liberal authoritarianism" was a distinctive mark of Yeltsin's economic policies.<sup>87</sup> Domestic prices were "liberated" and fixed at monopolistic or near-monopolistic levels by the state-sponsored industrialists and even individual retailers dominating the market. Privatization transferred public property into the hands of its former managers and their criminal associates. Inflation was curbed through systematic nonpayment of wages, which effectively suppressed

demand and took money out of circulation. This neo-Bolshevik riding of the economy for the pleasure of a tiny new rich stratum shrank Russia's gross domestic product (GDP) by nearly 50 percent in less than a decade.<sup>88</sup> What Gaidar saw as a postcommunist "open, democratic privatization" appeared as but a new edition of that very same "*nomenklatura* privatization" that he wanted to fight.<sup>89</sup> The only thing *nomenklatura* changed was appearances: the economy was no longer controlled by a bunch of Communist Party barons, it now appeared that a hodge-podge crowd of the president's affiliates, top bureaucrats, and slick new financiers with the right connections was in control. Whatever else can be said of Russia's economic transition since 1991, it was neither democratic nor open.

As a result, more than 40 percent of the GDP now belongs to the shadow economy.<sup>90</sup> While liberals of Russia's Democratic Choice Party insisted that "the real shock therapy" in Russia had "never happened," their leader felt obliged to concede: "The alliance of mafia and corruption at the very beginning of capitalism can bear a hybrid so dreadful that it would be probably unparalleled in the Russian history."<sup>91</sup> But where had this alliance come from in the first place? In one sense at least, it has been a prepackaged product of the postcommunist developmental-authoritarian policies, of the desire to crack the economy open by force and to excuse any, even shadowy, entrepreneurship, if it helps to achieve that purpose.

Thus, both communists and liberals have defended the ideas of state-led development and what may be called purpose-driven authoritarianism, although their visions of national priorities obviously differ. For the Left, it is "either assent to the leading role of the working classes, which also embrace, for the most part, entrepreneurs living from their own labor in the business of saving the country, or find themselves in the camp of those betraying the Fatherland." For the Right, the choice is between the "explosion (a new dictatorship) or 'unpicking' of social space, a transition from the bureaucratic to the open market . . . from the hidden, 'nomenklatura,' to the open, democratic privatization."<sup>92</sup> Although the two sets of alternatives may seem mutually exclusive, both sides converge on a more fundamental plank of discourse: Pitching their hopes at the state, which is called upon to implement them, by force if necessary, through realization of this or that "given knowledge" design. Russian liberals, like the communists, are developmental authoritarians. The "integration into the world economy through the creation of a transitional economic regime" that they propose implies repeated "big bang" hammering by the government, which acts as a servile agent of global capitalism.<sup>93</sup> If implemented in full, the liberal economic program would stifle small and

medium-size businesses and objectively clear the space for the tycoons who made fortunes through large-scale theft of the national property, rigged privatization auctions, speculation with budget funds, and money laundering. A “truly market redistribution of property” that Russian liberals pitch as an antipode to statism actually relies on the state as a “working instrument” of the propertied classes.<sup>94</sup>

These two antagonistic, yet not so distant in the underlying political culture, positions illustrate that Russian beliefs in the magic of state-led development are not tied to a particular party platform. The dream of a strong state has united all hues of the political spectrum. It fed the communist and nationalist attacks in the State Duma against pro-Western ministers who, like Andrei Kozyrev or Anatoly Chubais, were accused of shortchanging Russia by heeding Western advice and embracing a de-facto subordinate position vis-à-vis the United States. The 1993 parliamentary elections brought a considerable victory to Zhirinovskiy's LDPT, whose scant merits appeared much less of a consideration to the voters than its posturing as a statist party. Elections between 1995 and 1996 witnessed a strong resurgence of the Communist Party, based on its open support of “national-patriotic” values and the strong state (*derzhava*), which the Gorbachev-Yeltsin reformers presumably squandered.<sup>95</sup> The last years of Yeltsin's tenure saw young liberal reformers kicked from the government one by one to free the space for such old-style statesmen as Victor Chernomyrdin and Evgenii Primakov. Finally, the field was narrowed to a choice between two forms of mild authoritarianism that both professed “national pragmatism,” statism, and “belief in the greatness of Russia”: one on the center-left, represented by the Primakov-Luzhkov “Fatherland–All Russia Party,” and the other on the center-right, personified by Vladimir Putin and the pro-Putin Unity Party. Putin's victory under the banners of the “dictatorship of the law” and “deeper state involvement in the social and economic processes” and the subsequent realignment of patriotic forces in support of the president underscore that a postliberal brand of developmental authoritarianism is all the vogue in Russia now.<sup>96</sup> The perennial weakness of the genuinely “central” political center was reconfirmed in the 1999–2000 elections. “Strengthening of the state” became, in Putin's words, “the strategic task” of the year 2000.<sup>97</sup>

The next year saw Luzhkov's Otechestvo (Fatherland) Party unite with the pro-Putin Yedinstvo (Unity) Party to form a single party made up of presidential loyalists. The April, 2001, founding congress of the “Eurasia” social movement proclaimed its full and unreserved support of the president. Sergei Baburin, leader of the Russian Popular Union (ROS), went so far as to promise

to disband his party because it could no longer oppose a regime with policies that so closely approximate its own. All of these signs indicate that it will be some time before Russian politics will learn to do without the familiar props of a “strong state” and start relying on the political grass roots instead. Until this happens, “pattern maintenance” in the elite’s political culture will prevail over more radical changes.<sup>98</sup>

Although it is a recurrent theme in Russian political culture, developmental authoritarianism itself changes with time. The emerging consensus implies the subordination of authoritarian means to developmental ends, with increased awareness of the fact that those ends should not be postulated in some distant, radiant future. Russian developmentalism has finally dropped its messianic pretence. On the other hand, Russian authoritarianism is now constrained to such an extent that patrimonial or imperialist analogies can play no more than a limited illustrative role in its analysis. The political culture may still preserve important elements of the past, but the new institutions and new power games played out in a previously unimaginable, pluralized, and fragmented political landscape have fractured the inherited patterns of behavior in so many mediums that this sheer multiplicity of contending actors prevents us from making simple, straightforward conclusions with regard to the concrete outcome of developmental-authoritarian pursuits currently under way. After decades of Marxist-Leninist unanimity and centuries of more or less despotic *sobornost’*, the degree of pluralism in the country’s politics today becomes conspicuous. The search for the common denominator intensifies, and many analysts see nationalism as the most prospective candidate to fill this vacancy.

## NATIONALISM

Russia has never experienced anything close to the nationalist upheavals that shook nineteenth-century Europe. Russia’s own Enlightenment (M. Lomonosov, N. Novikov, A. Radishchev) and Romanticism (V. Zhukovsky, M. Lermontov, Slavophiles) remained an elite phenomenon and did not start a mass movement of national consolidation. There was no Russian counterpart to the Fichtean “Addresses to the German Nation.” For all practical purposes, “Russia has been a state-nation rather than a nation-state . . . identity has been centered on the state, which became an empire long before the population consolidated as a nation.”<sup>99</sup> Of course, the sense of patriotism was not alien to either Kievan Rus warriors or medieval Muscovites. Religious, cultural, and ethnic bonds, including both language and territorial attachment, were

also present long before the Age of Nationalism. However, ethnic distinctiveness could only lay the ground for the later national mobilization, not substitute it.

The reasons why Russia lagged behind Europe in its national development have much to do with its political culture, as described above. Revolutionary conservatism prevented a smooth evolution of state-society relations to such an extent that the society itself remained immature until very late into modernity. Authoritarian patterns of development, though moderately constrained by various manifestations of the alternative political culture, predominated, underscoring society's subordinate role vis-à-vis the state. The state and the state-affiliated elite were viewed as the primary agents of development, leaving the society at large to passively follow the lead. If the society (or its significant sectors) refused, the dissenters could not challenge the powers that were in a constructive way: their only choice was between complete withdrawal from participation or a violent revolt, aimed to overthrow the government. "The national being," argues Vladimir Weidle, "which is more important than the national consciousness and should normally precede it, presupposes joint, though hierarchically divided, participation of all people in creation of higher spiritual values."<sup>100</sup> The underdevelopment of civil society precluded the formation of the Russian nation, since no social prerequisites for the "joint national being" existed before serfdom was abolished in 1861.

The attempts to categorize the various stages in the development of the Russian nationalism according to the Hrochian scheme of three phases of national mobilization fall short of indicating anything like the crowning third stage of a mass national movement—either before or after the October, 1917, Revolution.<sup>101</sup> The stage of intellectuals may be found in the abovementioned Russian Enlightenment and Romanticism, united, despite their differences, by the elite nature of both. The stage of "patriotic agitation," erroneously attributed to the Slavophiles, would probably better characterize the Russian populists of the late-nineteenth century.<sup>102</sup> Still, their concern was primarily social and economic (land reform) and only marginally nationalist. The residual imperialism of the Russian *narodniki*, much lamented by representatives of the national-liberation movements of the Russian periphery, especially Ukrainians, hampered the development of a properly *national* program for the Russians themselves. The "dominant" nation remained dissolved in the overarching imperial whole, on one hand, and in semiprimordial local communes, on the other: "Localism, rather than nationalism, was in evidence throughout prerevolutionary Russia."<sup>103</sup>



Social and economic factors that had generated this situation are once again brought to the fore: late development, delayed modernization and the remnants of an estate society are all-time favorites. Political culture reasoning is invoked less frequently and with less enthusiasm. Curiously, when it is, it often leads to opposite and blatantly anachronistic conclusions: that nationalism in Russia existed, if not since the Kulikovo battle against Mongols in 1380, then definitely since the “Moscow the Third Rome” idea was raised by a “humble elder” more concerned with religious than political issues in a remote Pskov monastery in the fifteenth century.<sup>104</sup> Whatever evidence of medieval parochialism, princely raids, dynastic boasting, or perennial wars with neighbors can be found, is laid out to “prove” an anticipated early dawn of modern Russian nationalism. The “Russian Idea” in the title of Berdiaev’s book loses all touch with historical ground.<sup>105</sup>

With all due respect to the more sophisticated versions of the primordialist trend in contemporary studies of nationalism, when the monk Philotheus coined his “Moscow the Third Rome” dictum, neither he nor the great princes of Muscovy he addressed had the slightest interest in ethno-cultural things. This is the point argued by historian Edward Keenan, who also notes that “the Russian political culture, which first took its recognizable form in the late fifteenth century and has a continuous evolutionary development into modern times, is not at base expansionist.”<sup>106</sup> The thrust of the Russian idea was purely religious, not even imperial per se. The religious, not the ethno-cultural understanding of the Russian identity, is evident in the easy and speedy assimilation of the christened Tatar warlords into the Russian nobility after the downfall of Kazan’ and Astrakhan’ khanates. Common faith, together with more pragmatic considerations, forced Aleksei Mikhailovich to join forces with the Ukrainians against the Poles in the Pereiaslav Treaty. The absolutist empire of Peter the Great and his successors was not and could not be built on the national principle. The term *narodnost’* of the “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality” formula of Count S. S. Uvarov, the education minister under Nicholas I, would be more adequately translated as “populism,” or “kinship with the people,” rather than “nationality.” Uvarov’s “nationality” was meant to be shaped through a common religion and a common allegiance to the Orthodox monarch.<sup>107</sup> Though making use of conservative pan-Slavism, the imperial Russian ideologues of “official nationalism” were not exactly emphasizing specifically Russian ethnic component, thus leaving the door open to representatives of all peoples inhabiting the Empire.<sup>108</sup>

The first conclusion one may draw after a brief assessment of the facts of Russian history is that, before attempting to interpret contemporary Russian

nationalism, we have to explain why there was no mass nationalist sentiment earlier, even as late as the beginning of the twentieth century. As elite (imperial) nationalism goes, no sustained attempts to Russify the nation were undertaken by the czarist government until the late-nineteenth century during the reign of Alexander II. Even then, however, the main thrust of such efforts as the Valuev Circular of 1863 or the Ems *ukaz* of 1876 was limited to bureaucratic “normalization” of education and arts policies and to counter a largely imaginary “separatist movement” in Ukraine, purportedly inspired by the foreign powers (Austria-Hungary). In other words, the reasoning behind those measures was statist, preservationist, authoritarian, and conservative—but not nationalist per se. Xenophobic feelings on the part of the Russian imperial elite and the supporting intellectuals, though probably present, did not provide the main rationale for the action.

The socio-demographic explanation for the absence of nationalist sentiment and other related phenomena throughout most of Russian history, including the entire pre-Soviet period, has much to do with the fact that Russia, not unlike the United States, matured as a naturally formed “melting pot” of various “racial, ethnic, national, and cultural groups and peoples.”<sup>109</sup> Mutual acculturation and assimilation prevented not only the Russians themselves, but also other peoples of the Empire, from taking the path of national development that might lead to ethno-cultural consolidation through homogenization and exclusion of the national minorities as “others.” There were no ethno-nationally defined “others” in the Russian Empire, although parochial and religious divisions certainly existed.

The political-cultural reflection of this predicament bolstered a feeling of “unity in diversity,” which exerted a “powerful influence upon the psychology, culture, and social life” of both Russia as a whole and Russians as its core, “imperial” nation.<sup>110</sup> It is not accidental that the Russian word *mir* variously denotes: (a) the entire universe; (b) a village or other primordial community, a clan, an immediate contact group; and (c) peace, in all its variations—from the absence of war to tranquility of mind. The intermingling of these semantic layers, which in itself says much about both the worldview reflected in the language and the real history that had formed that worldview, led one American analyst to acknowledge: “While to us the word *peace* has connotations of isolated tranquillity and a live-and-let-live philosophy, the Russian word *mir* connotes harmonious, coordinated togetherness.” Thus, the Western vision of “the world as a collection of autonomous entities” has been traditionally alien to Russians. Instead, they embraced the view of international and inter-ethnic relations “as a social system, a system of ongoing relationships, a true

(nonidealized) community of nations.”<sup>111</sup> As long as other nations were taken as distant but natural extensions of one’s own, and “us” as an organic continuation of other nations’ existence, there was no room for ethnic nationalism. The oft-cited Russian “messianism” directly bears upon this phenomenon and should be interpreted as a particular instance of cultural amorphousness that impedes separating one’s own, specific national tasks from the universal goals of humanity as a whole.

In Sorokin’s words, Russia has been a nation “whose unity is based not upon the ethnic or racial homogeneity of its population but upon its *diversity*.”<sup>112</sup> It is worth adding that, until relatively recently, Russian intellectual discourse had no place for the word “nation” in its specific Western sense. Instead, the much broader *narod* and its derivatives were employed, including Uvarov’s *narodnost’* (erroneously translated as “nationality”). *Narod*, *narodnost’*, and other words of this type de-emphasized clear ethnic or national characteristics and the respective boundaries, implying rather an amorphous unity of the folk. Of course, some internal gradations were slowly introduced. Thus, the general perception of “unity in diversity” implied substantially tighter unity for the “Christian folk,” people of “genuine faith,” and so on. Historical memory and perceptions of a common destiny with regard to Ukrainians (“Little Russians”) and Belarusians (“White Russians”) crystallized into a notion of the “family” of all the eastern Slavs fairly early, drawing, in turn, on much earlier and still undivided cultural material of the Kievan Rus period.<sup>113</sup> Being lulled by cultural closeness and similarities, Russians failed to appreciate differences until it was too late. The “brothers,” much helped by Soviet nationalities policy, chose to go their own ways.<sup>114</sup>

As John Dunlop rather tellingly noted, “if the Tsarist empire cannot, except for its closing years, be termed a Russian empire, much less can the Soviet empire be so considered.”<sup>115</sup> Soviet communism did not promote the interests of the Russian nation over the other peoples of the Soviet Union. The whole design of the quasi-federal Soviet system, which aimed to contain non-Russian nationalism within administratively and territorially defined boundaries of the respective “titular” nationality, thus giving the latter an “autonomous” statehood, in fact nurtured nationalist feelings and created nationalist elites where they did not exist before. As a result of the Soviet nationality policy, “many nationalities became demographically more consolidated within their ‘homelands,’ acquired effective and articulate national political and intellectual elites, and developed a shared national consciousness. These more conscious and consolidated nationalities were ‘rooted’ to specific territories, with abundant privileges for the titular nations and their

local Communist elites.”<sup>116</sup> Soviet federalism and autonomy, however imperfect or even shallow they were, together with other instruments of “institutionalization of ethnicity,” instead of fostering the desired integration and even “merger” of nations, truly “promoted a peculiar process of nation-building.”<sup>117</sup>

This process was not harmed or slowed down in the least by the spread of linguistic Russification, which only a naïve person would see exclusively as a result of elaborate policies of assimilation directed from the center. Millions of migrants from the Russian Federation to other Union republics came of their own free will in a hope to find better life conditions than in Russia proper. These people, frequently themselves of a minority origin, used Russian as both a language of convenience and a medium of professional communication, thereby diluting local languages and shrinking their spheres of usage. For a variety of reasons ranging from sheer linguistic opportunism to considerations of social mobility and status, Russification was also a product of the republican elite jockeying for Moscow’s favors, which explains why it took a larger toll on the national republics of the Union than on Russia’s own autonomies.<sup>118</sup>

Meanwhile, the party deliberately blocked the process of Russian national self-identification in Russia proper. “Expressions of Russian consciousness have long been discouraged and Soviet traditions have been mixed with Russian.”<sup>119</sup> Institutionally, Soviet Russia was denied its own Academy of Sciences, KGB or Ministry of Internal Affairs, and national television—the whole set of ministries and central departments that were an expected attribute of any other Union republic. Politically, the Russian Federation did not even have a national capital of its own. The Russian section of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was not allowed to exist either. When the Leningrad oblast party organization attempted to raise the issue with the “center,” the initiative group perished in the gulag under the drum roll of accusations of “Great Russian chauvinism.” Meanwhile, the CPSU was constituted as a union of the national party branches, encompassing all the Union republics save Russia itself. The Russians were underrepresented in the branches of Soviet power, and their party representation was also proportionately lower than that of the Georgians or the Jews. Russians also were factually discriminated against in their level of access to intellectual professions and occupations. Judged by their representation in the ranks of the scientific intelligentsia, Russians fared worse than Jews, Georgians, Armenians, or Estonians.<sup>120</sup>

The standards of living of the “imperial” Soviet nationality were no better, and often worse, than those of non-Russian nations in their namesake Union republics. Sakwa observed: “Not only the peripheral republics but Russia also

was ruled by the Soviet Moscow in a neocolonialist manner, and the development of Russian national consciousness and statehood was inhibited. Russia itself was less defended against central policies than perhaps any of the other republics, and its social and economic welfare was neglected. Its educational level was among the worst of any of the other republics, and its standard of living was in the middle range.”<sup>121</sup> In the Russian Federation itself, ethnic Russians ranked fourth in their degree of urbanization, behind Jews, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. Judging by their educational level, defined as the number of people with at least some years of higher education per thousand of a given nationality, Russians fared significantly worse than Jews, Buryats, Armenians, and Ossetians, lagging also behind Ukrainians, Belarusians, Kalmyks, and four other ethnic groups in the republic. Overall, even if “completely modernized,” a recent assessment by domestic demographers shows that Russians did not make the first echelon of the country’s most modernized nationalities, forming instead, together with Ukrainians and Belarusians, the second from the top, though thickest in numbers, layer of modernization underachievers.<sup>122</sup>

Budgetary policies and economic planning in general consistently favored the national borderlands at the expense of the majority of Russia’s population. As a rule, less-developed republics were ahead of Russia in terms of capital investment, industrial growth, state subsidies, and the like. However, by the end of the Soviet period, Russia became the net donor even for most of the European non-Russian republics, which, on many indices, had been already *more* developed than the RSFSR itself. The amount of Russia’s self-destructive subsidies to the ethno-national “periphery” can be only imprecisely evaluated via a comparison of the republic’s share in the all-Union material production and the proportion of the Union budget it was allowed to keep for internal purposes. Judging by this measure only, in the last years of the Soviet rule Russia was constantly “underpaid,” producing about 61.1 percent of the USSR’s net material product, while retaining only 55.3 percent of the state-budget revenue for its needs.<sup>123</sup>

It is little wonder, then, that by the late 1980s Russian nationalism, previously invisible and largely confined to circles of the creative intelligentsia, made a “big leap forward,” spreading its influence over much broader sectors of intellectuals, political elites, and the Soviet “middle class” in general.<sup>124</sup> With glasnost, the linkage between the poor shape of the Russian national economy and the manifold international obligations both inside and outside the country became widespread knowledge. The lower living standards of the Russian people started to be increasingly attributed to the “imperial burden”

abroad and subsidies to other subjects of the Soviet Union at home. The other Soviet republics, on their own part, were in the midst of a vociferous “sovereignization” campaign. While Gorbachev still attempted to play the shallow ideological constructs of a “Soviet Man” variety, Yeltsin and the Democratic Russia Party responded by raising the issue of Russian national interests. By December, 1991, the newly born Russian national patriotism helped to secure a peaceful dissolution of the former superpower.

Since the end of the Union and especially after the “therapeutic” shocks of 1992–93, Russian nationalism became a factor in the mass politics, though not a paramount one. The combined legislative representation of the “national-patriotic” bloc—composed of parties as different as the LDPR, CPRF, or APR—gradually grew from 42 percent of the seats in the State Duma after the December, 1993, elections to 54 percent of the seats in 1995.<sup>125</sup> On the other hand, in April, 1995, the leading Russian polling organization VTsIOM conducted a poll, testing, among other things, party sympathies of the Russian population. The combined vote for those who until recently had been labeled the “red-brown” coalition was only 20 percent, the united forces of the neoliberal “democrats” mustered less than 5 percent of the vote, and the centrists garnered 22.5 percent of the total.<sup>126</sup>

These tendencies matured in time for the December, 1999, parliamentary elections in which centrists of all hues (including the progovernment Unity Party and its alter ego, the Fatherland–All Russia Party, as well as Yabloko, the perennial government critic) gained close to 43 percent of the party list vote. The communists still commanded 24.3 percent of the vote, and the certifiably liberal Union of Right-Wing Forces mustered 8.52 percent.<sup>127</sup> The Russian electorate remained cautiously conservative, despite the hardships of the postcommunist transformation and the more openly nationalist mood of mainstream politicians. The dramatic loss of popularity by Zhirinovskiy’s LDPR (from 24 percent of the party list vote in 1993 to slightly more than 11 percent in 1995 and less than 6 percent in 1999) underscored the traditional Russian risk-avoidance and paucity of a genuinely radical nationalist opposition. At the moment, the CPRF and LDPR together control no more than 22 percent of the chamber, while the openly propresidential factions have close to 30 percent. The two liberal factions—the softer Yabloko and the “hard core” Union of Right-Wing Forces—hold about 12 percent of all Duma seats.<sup>128</sup>

Although the end of the Soviet Union made postcommunist Russian nationalism a reality, it was accompanied by internal fragmentation of the core Russian/Soviet identity. The political consequences of this development included the breakaway of the Chechen Republic and the weakening of the

Russian state and its penetrative capacity, regionalism, and localism. Culturally, postcommunist social atomization is the product of the preceding, ideologically driven development that disregarded naturally formed allegiances and social bonds. This legacy still hinders social interaction, encouraging people to retire into their private isolated domains of family and individual self. Yet in no modern society is complete personal isolation possible. In the absence of more developed structures, rudimentary local, corporate, religious, or ethnic ties of solidarity fill the vacuum, thus acquiring new prominence as a means of group mobilization. The new Russian nationalism belongs to this group of political resources, increasingly drawn upon by the establishment.

The new nationalism uses both the Soviet and Russian imperial traditions, which means it does not necessarily have to be neoimperialist in nature or aspirations. Vladimir Putin's restoration of select Soviet symbols, which now uneasily coexist with the state symbols of the Empire, illustrates the predominantly rhetorical thrust of the project. Rhetoric aside, neither advocates of the Empire nor advocates of a postimperial nation are entirely successful in their attempts to build popular allegiance. The retrograde process of the postcommunist "remodernization" yields results exactly opposite to those deemed conducive to the development of national consciousness in the West. Civil society is not being consolidated but rather is further fractured; the gap between the elite and masses widens; market forces are pulling the country apart, instead of pulling its different parts together. Perhaps this condition is temporary and even necessary to bring the social layers, turned upside down and chaotically mixed by the communists, to their normal configuration. However, until this happens, the new Russian nationalism may exhibit more parochialism than nationalism *per se*. In other words, if the traditional Russian locus of identification lay with the state rather than the nation, now it may switch to neither the nation nor the state, but rather to the immediate social surroundings of an unspecified nature (profession or occupation, locality, source of income, family). Nationalist consciousness as such will be fed through a negative feedback, by the force of frustration over the loss of a "bigger" identity in the situation where no normal ties of national allegiance and solidarity have a chance to develop.

The emergence of post-Soviet nationalism has been attributed to quite different and even opposite intellectual developments. On one hand, there are people who argue that the driving force behind postcommunist nationalism is nothing other than the developmental materialism of a Marxist-Leninist variety. It is this ideology, they assert, that should be held accountable for both the "loss of identity that modernization promotes" and the resulting

increased “sense of self-awareness.”<sup>129</sup> On the other hand, instead of blaming soulless materialism, other analysts mention “the idealistic assumption of voluntary collectivism” that somehow “resulted in the society-wide institutionalization of opportunistic behavior and free-rider problems.” Postcommunist nationalism in this “rational choice” picture looks not unlike other forms of rent-seeking behavior, although the political resource that the group utilizes for its collective action is of a special kind, namely, the principle of national self-determination itself.<sup>130</sup> An interesting observation was made by Gellner, who suggests that “It may be the pantheistic inheritance of Marxism . . . which is to blame.”<sup>131</sup>

In this author’s view, Russian nationalism emerged as a reaction to the shocks of postcommunist development. Neither “idealist” nor “materialist” visions of the former communist ideology can fully explain it. A commonsense thesis that nationalism appeared to fill the void left by communism provides a post hoc, not a propter hoc explanation. The Soviet regime did its best to uproot nationalism both organizationally and ideologically. Communist ideology was internationalist for all practical purposes. It could not and did not bring nationalism about. While Soviet policies broke ground for a true nationalist mobilization, it could run its full course only when the system collapsed.

On the elite level, Russian nationalism represents an attempt to find a new mold for the developmental-authoritarian paradigm in the absence of a strong state, traditionally deemed to be the primary agent of change and innovation. On the mass level, the new nationalism successfully unites contradictory elements of the “revolutionary-conservative” behavior within a single conceptual framework. It offers “social solidarity” and “corporative forms of activity”<sup>132</sup> to prevent the full collapse of a badly injured and disunited society, and it simultaneously provides an outlet to channel social protest and frustration, inevitable in the situation of social and institutional uncertainty. This new Russian nationalism also indicates a more or less decisive and open disavowal of the former “unity in diversity” approach and reflects an understanding of the fact that the old Soviet “melting pot” failed. This does not mean, however, that it should be xenophobic. The established political-cultural models die hard, and in this instance they offer hope for a revitalized Russian Federation. Yet visions of “unity” and “diversity” will have to be substantially reformulated and renegotiated in the ongoing political debates and internalized by the public. Until then, the specters of the imperial past are likely to haunt Russian domestic and international politics.



# Political Culture and Nationality in Ukraine

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Until recently, studies of Ukrainian political culture as a nationally specific set of values and motor of social behavior were all but extinct. At the very best, the topic was addressed under a rather diminishing “political subcultures” umbrella, and even then in passing.<sup>1</sup> Academic institutions of the Ukrainian SSR did not go far beyond the standard critiques of “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism.” Simple positing of the question of separate trends and features in the Ukrainians’ own political culture amounted to that very “nationalism” itself and was diligently avoided. Most Western scholars, trapped by a model requiring political culture to be the property of a fully independent nation, ignored the issue altogether. The Ukrainian diaspora academics concentrated their efforts mostly on history, literature, language, and nationality problems and paid scant attention to the question of political culture.

Independence opened a floodgate for numerous works on the “Ukrainian national idea,” Ukrainian nationalism, and the unique indigenous traditions of economic and political life.<sup>2</sup> This time, Ukraine’s political culture could not fail to draw scholarly attention.<sup>3</sup> However, these studies lacked historical depth, just as the “national idea” historiography never bothered to look in any detail for the political-cultural underpinnings of postulated national specificity. In this chapter, I attempt an explicit analysis of Ukraine’s political culture and, therefore, of the political-cultural foundations of modern Ukrainian national identity. The problem of Ukrainian nationalism, though important in itself, will constitute only a part of this overview.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ethnic Ukrainians belong to the eastern Slavic group of peoples, which also include Russians and Belarusians (Belorussians). Among eastern Slavs, Ukrainians follow Russians in the population and the size of their ethnic homeland. Ukraine is the second most populous of the post-Soviet states, and the third (after Russia and Kazakhstan) in territory. Ukrainian language is a part of the eastern Slavic group of the Indo-European family of languages. Ukrainian and Russian are, by and large, mutually comprehensible and almost identical in their basic grammar structures—so are Belarusian and Ukrainian. However, Ukrainian is closer to the western Slavic languages than either Russian or Belarusian. The distance between Ukrainian and Polish or Ukrainian and Slovak is probably not bigger than that between the Spanish and Portuguese languages. Ukrainian harbors several local dialects, concentrated mostly in the western part of the country and in the adjacent Eastern European states. The other language in continuous use is Russian. The debate over the actual spread of both languages and the linguistic preferences of the population directly bears on the issue of national identity. Statistical data is open for new and retroactive reinterpretations, while current sociological surveys demonstrate continuing bilingualism of the predominant part of population.<sup>4</sup>

The ethnic composition of Ukraine is complex. In addition to the titular nationality, Ukrainians, it includes also Russians (22.1 percent), Jews (nearly 1 percent), Belarusians (0.9 percent), Moldavians (0.6 percent), Bulgarians, Poles, Crimean Tatars, Romanians, Hungarians, Greeks, Germans, Slovaks, and others. Most of these groups settled at least several centuries ago, while some of them, including local Russians in northeastern Ukraine and Belarusians in the northwestern part of the country, may have territorial attachments going back to the times of Kievan Rus. Russians of the Chernihiv-Sumy area, for example, are proven to be direct descendants of the indigenous ancient Slav population, while the Russian settlement of the Kharkiv region dates back to the fifteenth century. Jews, Poles, Romanians, and Armenians started settling Ukrainian lands in the early-feudal epoch, while Greeks appeared in antiquity.<sup>5</sup> A sizable part of the population was brought in by modern migrations of the late-imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet eras, that significantly boosted the demographic representation of Russians, Belarusians, Azerbaijanis, and Crimean Tatars.

The modern Ukrainian state is a twentieth-century phenomenon, having never known fully independent statehood before 1917. A quick succession of

nationalist governments between 1917 and 1920 was interrupted by a communist regime of quasi-federalist coexistence with other republics of the former Soviet Union. World War II saw an attempt by the Ukrainian nationalists to create a semiautonomous province under Nazi occupation. However, the attempt ended in complete failure, as its champions never approached even a limited degree of formal state independence enjoyed, at the time, by Germany's homegrown fascist satellites in Eastern Europe, Hungary and Romania. The real history of Ukrainian state and nation building started in earnest after the December, 1991, referendum, which effectively put an end to the Soviet regime in Ukraine and severed most of the Soviet-era links to Russia.

The state aspirations of the first Ukrainian nationalist government, the Central Rada, initially did not go beyond securing a degree of autonomy for Ukraine within a larger Russian Federation. According to the Rada's Third Universal, autonomous-federalist arrangements with Russia were accepted as a satisfactory model for Ukraine's national development.<sup>6</sup> However, this option was, in the nationalists' view, quickly exhausted by the unfortunate "experiments" of the Bolshevik government in Petrograd. As early as December, 1917, the Rada oriented itself toward full independence from Bolshevik Russia.

This episode is instructive because it shows an apparent lack of state-building determination on the part of the government that was sincerely animated by the "Ukrainian idea"—the government whose patriotic credentials are rarely disputed. This lack of will had certain historical antecedents. Throughout most of Ukraine's history, the elite sought affiliation with external powers, rather than relying on indigenous power bases. Even the dramatic events of the Ukrainian Liberation War of 1648–54 can be interpreted this way. On one hand, the great uprising led by Bohdan Khmelnytskyi (1595–1657) remains one of the most visible historical examples of initiative taking and of building the local power base to its fullest. On the other, it demonstrates what can be read as the opportunistic switching of elite allegiances from one foreign overlord (Poland) to another (Russia), and the unscrupulous search for new allies that undermines the trust of the already secured supporters.<sup>7</sup>

Ukrainian history is full of controversies, among which the problem of Ukraine's origins stands unrivaled because of its powerful implications for the national identity and the domestic and international politics of the country. The available answers to the question on the beginnings of Ukrainian history usually fall into one of three categories that can be provisionally labeled Russocentric, nationalist, and realist. According to the Russocentric model, first advanced by the imperial Russian historians, Ukrainian history constitutes an inseparable part of the all-Russian devel-

opments. As ancient homeland of the eastern Slavic tribes, Kievan Rus is presented as an essentially proto-Russian state formation. Dynastic ties between the later czars of Muscovy and the Kievan princes are emphasized. A theory of mass emigration from the core Kievan lands, ruined by the Mongol invasion in the mid-thirteenth century, to the northeastern Vladimir-Suzdal' principality, soon to become a part of Muscovy, is sometimes advanced to justify the idea of direct ethno-demographic succession. Contemporary Russian historians insist on a "culturally dualistic unity" of Russia and Ukraine, while nationalist polemicists go so far as to claim "only within [the] Russian state can Ukraine exist."<sup>8</sup>

The riposte most eloquently elaborated by Ukraine's best-known historian and president of the short-lived Ukrainian People's Republic, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, is based on the idea that Kievan Rus is the first Ukrainian state *prima facie*, while Russian claims of descent are at best secondary and at worst concocted.<sup>9</sup> An extreme version of this argument, originally advanced by a long-forgotten Polish-Ukrainian writer, Franciszek Duchinski, circa the mid-nineteenth century, has been recently reanimated in the Ukrainian political discourse.<sup>10</sup> It denies Russians not only the state and dynastic links to the Kiev principality, but even a degree of ethnic kinship to the "true" eastern Slavs, presenting Russian ethno-genesis as a result of interbreeding between Mongol invaders and local "Finno-Ugric" tribes of the Volga basin. An underlying, though rarely stated, premise of this argument is racial: truly "Aryan" Ukrainians are not only sharply differentiated from but are presumed to be genetically and culturally superior to "Eurasian" Russians. More moderate versions of the Ukrainian "foundation myth," though not denying Russians their part of the Kievan legacy, nevertheless assert Ukrainian primogeniture and insist on the primordial origins of the Ukrainian nation.

Finally, a realist argument views Kievan Rus in a way that is usually taken by a comparative historical approach, with respect to other ancient state formations, predating not only modern nation-states, but also medieval and absolutist empires that subsequently developed on the territory in question. In this view, presenting Kievan Rus as either a proto-Russian or proto-Ukrainian state is as convincing and scholarly solid as giving the Roman Empire a "proto-Italian" label, or speaking about direct continuity from the Merovingian or Carolingian states to contemporary France or Germany. The importance of the legacy of Kievan Rus for all three contemporary East Slavic nations is not disputed, although none of them is seen as having exclusive, or even predominant, rights to it against the competing claims of the two other nations. This approach will guide further discussion.

### THE PROBLEM OF ETHNO-GENESIS

Most modern nations usually have an ethnic core that at some earlier point served as a foundation for the nation-building efforts. This ethnic core could be revealed through the physical presence of a locally dominant ethnic group, or through the selection and codification of a particular vernacular for common use within the national boundaries, or through the religious affiliation of the majority of population, or through other more specific ways related to traditions, customs, and other locally identifiable forms of collective activities. As students of nationalism know, language has been found to be among the most powerful indicators of ethnicity. Development of a common vernacular from several local dialects marks a new ethnic group coming into existence, just as the vernacular's further standardization, codification, and dissemination in printed format lays the foundation for modern nation-building.<sup>11</sup>

As archeological evidence shows, the spoken language of Kievan Rus was basically the same in Kiev and Novgorod. All three contemporary eastern Slavic vernaculars developed on the basis of the ancient Russian language(s) and are mutually comprehensible because of this common lineage. After the introduction of Christianity by Kievan prince Vladimir (Volodimer) Sviatoslavovich (988 A.D.), the so-called Church Slavonic language, first codified under the Southern Slavs' influence, was also used across all the Russian lands along the trade route "from Varangians to Greeks" as a language of liturgy and literacy. Linguistic borrowing from other tribes (Khazars, Lithuanians, Turks, and others) was limited. While Scandinavia "gave Rus its military organization—the *druzhina*" and influenced state structures overall,<sup>12</sup> small bands of Swedish warriors were ethno-culturally assimilated before too long and left no noticeable mark on the eastern Slavic languages, if verifiably Slavic names of Riurik's progeny are any indication.

It was not until the thirteenth-century Mongol invasion and incorporation of the West Russian lands into Lithuania and Poland a century later that linguistic and ethnic differentiation started to develop. By the end of the sixteenth century, the process of ethno-genesis was complete. It was possible to register differences between the Ukrainian, Russian, and Belarusian languages at both "low" (folklore) and "high" (written document) levels. From about this time, the word "Ukraina," first used as mostly a relative geographic designation ("borderland"), acquired a more specific ethnic meaning. Hence, if we want to avoid the anachronistic stretching of the word "Ukrainian," we should not speak of Ukrainian history per se before the sixteenth century. The politi-

cal and ethno-social history of what currently are the Ukrainian lands is a wholly different matter, which surely merits attention in its own right.<sup>13</sup> The ethno-social history, however, should not be confused with the national history of the Ukrainian people, though the two will certainly overlap at some point. If, on the other hand, we concentrate on the history of the land, it is in equal measure a part of Ukrainian history and a part of the histories of Russia, Belarus, Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary.

### **POLITICAL CULTURE OF A STATELESS NATION**

Difficulties in the periodization of Ukrainian history pale in comparison to the task of its political-cultural analysis. The notion of political culture usually refers to the national traditions of governance. The question becomes how to apply it to a country that, through the most of its history, was governed from outside? Should we settle for the analysis of local self-administration or look at the methods the indigenous elite used when dealing with external powers? Should we go no further than crucial historical figures (Khmelnys'kyi, Mazepa, Hrushevsky) and landmark events (Cossack rebellions, the Liberation War, the 1917 Revolution)?

If only the state and quasi-state existence of the nation is of interest, we are faced with a punctuated history of the Cossack Hetmanate, the nationalist governments between 1917 and 1919, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the contemporary Ukrainian state. Variations in the degree of "stateness" preclude a meaningful comparison of the periods. Additionally, these state formations and their respective histories are not equally "owned" by all parts of the nation. The nationally conscious Galicia, for example, though eager to appropriate the traditions of the Ukrainian Cossacks now, has never hosted a Cossack movement of its own before. Likewise, the memories of the Soviet Ukrainian statehood, apparently meaningful for the Donbasites and the Crimeans are much less welcomed by west Ukrainians. Different parts of the country were exposed to different and sometimes mutually exclusive cultural influences through the centuries. Differences in the political culture of the eastern and western regions of the country make national consolidation a complicated, even daunting, task.

A new state is better off if it may claim a foundation of a domestic political tradition to build upon. In the case of Ukraine, these traditions are scarce. Most of the one hundred years of history of the Cossack Hetmanate transpired under the rather precarious authority of the hetmans, whose power was progressively supplanted by the czarist government.<sup>14</sup> The more recent

tradition of the Ukrainian SSR is ideologically dubious, while its national credentials are disputed. Nationalists present the Ukrainian SSR as an “alien” state formation, something that was, at best, imported from abroad or, at worst, installed as a result of foreign (Bolshevik) occupation. Both the Ukrainian national presence in the apparatuses of the Ukrainian SSR and the actual scope of the republic’s authority are constantly questioned. Indeed, the ultimate locus of power at the time lay with Moscow, and not Kiev. The Soviet government in Ukraine could not behave as a government of the independent state until 1991. Political traditions of the Soviets, although present and even nationalized to some extent in today’s Ukraine, yield the precarious foundation for state and nation building. Are nationalist traditions any better? Two of the twentieth-century nationalist regimes were established under German occupation and, therefore, should be regarded properly as puppet formations. The locus of authority was, once again, elsewhere, while the national elite, whatever their motivations were, served as auxiliaries and proxies of the occupiers.

If anything, the history of Ukrainian statehood, or the lack thereof, betrays a profound shortage of political will on the part of the Ukrainian statesmen and would-be-rulers. The stigma of the prolonged statelessness significantly defined the political culture of the newly independent nation.<sup>15</sup> Since a negative result also needs to be explained, I will address it in more detail below. The fact that the Ukrainian state failed to develop at an earlier time has much to do with a number of factors, such as the prolonged history of foreign domination, the precarious geopolitical location, the prevalence of household economy over trade and manufactory, and so on. Many, if not all, of these factors were present, however, in the history of other nations, whose statehood, nevertheless, did not fall prey to their “natural” misfortunes. It is not implausible to speculate that several historical junctures presented important “windows of opportunity” for the Ukrainian state to take off. For instance, even before the Khmelnyts’kyi uprising, the oligarchic republic of Rzech Pospolita was weak enough for the success of any concerted secessionist effort. The Polish-influenced Ukrainian aristocracy of the time never attempted such an endeavor. Later on, Khmelnyts’kyi’s successors had a chance to build all the actual prerequisites of an independent state upon the military power they wielded and the local support they could develop, but they also failed to realize the possibility. In this century, the first Ukrainian intellectual government (the Central Rada), as already noted, was quite hesitant in assuming full responsibility for running the country. Also, the wait-and-see reaction to the August, 1991, putsch in Moscow by the postcommunist government of Leonid Kravchuk is well known.<sup>16</sup>

The origins of this attitude, which may be described as the elite's political anomie, is sometimes seen in the "successive generations of conquest, be it Polish, Russian, or Soviet."<sup>17</sup> Foreign conquest brings the demise or denationalization of the domestic elite, teaching survivors to obey the foreign ruler. However, a conquest is never complete if it is not supported through the incorporation of local notables. The strategy of incorporation was used by most of Ukraine's external rulers, though to a lesser extent by the Poles or Germans, who kept an unambiguous distance from the locals, and to a larger degree by the successive Russian and Soviet regimes.<sup>18</sup> It is precisely because of much larger degrees of local participation in the affairs of the Russian Empire and the Soviet state that the elite's revolt failed to materialize earlier. In both latter cases, power-sharing arrangements between the center and the periphery were extensive, while conscious incorporation of local leaders and their promotion into positions of power at the center made full-hearted participation in a nationalist revolt back home impossible. It is no wonder that the Ukrainian political elite sought accommodation and power sharing first, before assuming full control and, therefore, responsibility for the affairs of the country. This pattern of behavior started to change only after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and even then not at once. Accommodation appears as an important strategy in power games played out by Ukraine's political classes, a recurrent element of Ukraine's political culture.

### **STRATEGIES OF ACCOMMODATION**

The predominantly risk-averse behavior of the Ukrainian political elite should not be interpreted as a lack of initiative or general inclination to passivity, since it also reveals flexibility and willingness to compromise, if necessary. The history of foreign domination, when open conflict could hardly serve the interests of the Ukrainian dominant classes, understandably strengthened these features. The strategy of accommodation worked well in cases when key economic and social interests of the local elite were not jeopardized by extraneous overlordship, which was in most instances true for both the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and later the Russian Empire. The case of Poland was more specific because of the price Ukrainian nobles and the educated classes in general had to pay for being accepted as equals: Catholicization. Next came Polonization and a complete loss of the distinct identity of once-Orthodox Ukrainian noble clans: "As it was only by becoming Polonized and adopting Roman Catholicism that they could enjoy any real equality of rights and privileges with the Poles, most of the more important and



ambitious gentry of Galicia, Kholm, and Podolia had by the end of the fifteenth century taken this step. In the sixteenth century the same process took place in Volynia and along the Dnieper. Though the Act of the Union of 1569 promised to the local Orthodox landlords equal rights with the Catholics, the promise had not been kept, and it was not long before they realized that all roads were closed to them unless they adopted Catholicism and became Polonized.”<sup>19</sup>

The dynasty of the Ostrozhsky princes, among others, serves as a quite illustrative example of this loss of identity. Catholicization provoked the first important split in the ranks of the Ukrainian upper classes, namely a divide between those who went along with it and those who opposed it. The opposition was understandably higher among the clerics. While the landed aristocracy could consider a change of faith as a rather small loss compared to the guarantees of power and privileges, the Orthodox clergy sometimes preferred to fight for what was their symbolic capital: control over the nation’s spiritual domain.

The important thing, however, is that both factions sought external protection from and even external arbiters to their dispute, being drawn, respectively, to either Poland or Muscovy (Russia). Catholicized Ukrainian nobles played not the last part in the Polish nobility (*szlachta*), while the Orthodox bishops from Ukraine greatly influenced the religious, cultural, and even political development of Russia, especially following their mass recruitment to prominent state positions by Peter the Great. The linguistic proximity of Ukrainian to both the Russian and Polish languages substantially facilitated the easy adaptation of the Ukrainian elite to the extraneous political and cultural environment. In post-Petrine Russia, co-optation of the Ukrainian upper classes into the ranks of the two topmost orders of the Empire—nobility (*dvorianstvo*) and clergy (*dukhovenstvo*)—was extensive. In this respect, the Ukrainian elite was hardly surpassed by the elite groups of any of the other nationalities. In fact, the czarist administration had never treated Ukrainians as a minority and did not discriminate against Ukrainian culture and language until the second half of the nineteenth century. Valery Tishkov observed: “Imperial laws were based on a notion of ‘one nation’ which included ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, and Byelorussians, as well as the peoples of the Volga-Urals region which had formed part of the Empire since the sixteenth century. All these subjects acted according to one set of laws and regulations.”<sup>20</sup>

This situation changed, when external events—the European revolutions of 1848 and their later repercussions in Poland (the nationalist uprising of

1863) and elsewhere—forced the imperial bureaucracy to address the threat of local separatism more seriously than before. While the Russian Empire could afford to ignore manifold manifestations of local national and cultural specificity until recently, now it acquired geopolitical sensitivity, went on the defensive, and became chauvinistic. The *ukases* restricting the use of the Ukrainian language understandably provoked a nationalist response among the Ukrainian intellectuals. “Yet, even as the nationalist construction of the ethnic enemy gained in power, the economic developmental policies of tsarism and considerations of security and profit attracted certain national bourgeoisies to try to work with the Russifying regime.”<sup>21</sup> Ukrainian entrepreneurs, who had never been treated as *inorodtsy* (“aliens”), were at the forefront, and encountered considerable success. Since the mid-nineteenth century and until the start of World War I, Ukraine was the fastest growing region in the Russian Empire. Shielded from foreign competition by protective tariffs, while simultaneously enjoying free access to the vast Russian market, local entrepreneurs were in the vanguard of Russian industrialization, contributing up to 22 percent of Russia’s manufacturing output at the beginning of the twentieth century. Imperial protection gave an enormous boost to the economy, which made such Ukrainian patriots as Mykhailo Drahomanov reject the idea of Ukraine’s potential separation from Russia as nonsensical. Whatever else can be said of Ukraine’s subordinate position, the Empire “did provide a unified legal environment, social overhead capital before its commercial justification, and free access to Ukrainian goods. . . . It furnished entrepreneurial capital . . . and maintained control, although foreign and domestic agents of many nationalities tried to succeed in this frontier area.”<sup>22</sup>

The period from the Russian Revolution of 1917 to the December, 1991, referendum on Ukraine’s independence saw several nationalist and communist governments in Kiev.<sup>23</sup> In most cases, they pursued policies of accommodation, if not appeasement, of the selected external powers. The initial autonomist stance of the Central Rada vis-à-vis the provisional government in Petrograd fell well short of claiming full sovereignty for the Ukrainian Republic. The short-lived Hetmanate of Pavlo Skoropadsky relied on German occupation forces as much as it did on former officers of the Russian imperial army. A quarter-century later, the German Wehrmacht brought into reality another guest “Ukrainian” government under the leadership of Stepan Bandera and Iaroslav Stets’ko. The Directory (1918–19) oscillated between the countries of the Entente, especially France, and Germany. Following the directory’s defeat at the hands of the Red Army, its leader, Symon Petliura, and the exile government of the Ukrainian People’s Republic had not hesitated to trade in

excess of one hundred thousand square kilometers of Ukrainian land to Poland for the promise of military aid in a war against the Soviets. A short-lived People's Republic of the Western Ukraine (ZUNR) was forced to compromise with the Volunteer Army of Gen. Anton Denikin, who had no interest in Ukrainian sovereignty whatsoever.<sup>24</sup>

The Ukrainian SSR is not infrequently treated as a case of token statehood. One of the key arguments in support of this proposition cites the regime's abuse of its subjects. Although we can hardly distinguish between the cases of genuine and less authentic statehood on the basis of such a precarious measure as government benevolence, the Soviet regime inflicted colossal tragedies upon the Ukrainian people. According to recent estimates, the population loss incurred during the Great Famine of 1932–33 alone exceeded 4 million people.<sup>25</sup> The Revolution, the civil war, and the Stalinist repressions claimed millions more. World War II brought immense suffering and turned Ukrainians against Ukrainians, as some of them actively resisted the Soviet advance westward, while the others were part and parcel of that advance.<sup>26</sup> The worst ecological disaster of this century, the Chernobyl nuclear plant failure (1986), also happened on Ukrainian land, when it was essentially ruled from Moscow.<sup>27</sup>

With all said and taken into account, the question of Ukrainian ownership of the Soviet regime remains open. History is full of self-inflicted tragedies, and Ukraine's is no exception. Ukrainians constituted a large part of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and in the last decades of Soviet rule were up to two-thirds of the Communist Party of Ukraine.<sup>28</sup> Ukrainians, Ukrainian-born Jews, and Ukrainian-born Russians were admitted to the very top of the Stalinist leadership, where they played an active role in policy design and implementation. Because Ukraine led Russia's industrialization before the revolution, underground cells of the Bolshevik Party appeared earlier here than in most Russian provinces. Bolsheviks were well established in such cities as Yekaterinoslav (now Dnipropetrovsk), Yuzivka (Donetsk), Kharkiv, Odessa, Luhansk, Kiev, and in several railway hubs in the Volhyn'-Polissia area.

The first Soviet government in Ukraine relied as much on the local support of the organized urban proletariat in Kharkiv, Yekaterinoslav, and elsewhere as it did on help from Petrograd and Moscow.<sup>29</sup> Most of the communist bosses in the Ukrainian SSR were locally born or spent the formative parts of their lives in Ukraine. All Soviet policies in the country were carried out by Ukrainians themselves or with their substantial participation, including policies of forced food acquisition that led to the Great Famine of 1933. It

is impossible to see the regime's brutality as the implementation of a deliberate genocidal design carried out by the Russians against the Ukrainians as a nation.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the nationalist insurgency in western Ukraine was suppressed largely by locals. Throughout most of 1960s, the CPU grew at a higher relative rate than the CPSU. By the early seventies, the ruling party organs in Ukraine—the Politburo and the Secretariat of the CPU Central Committee—were virtually 100 percent Ukrainian in ethnic composition.<sup>31</sup> The first secretary of the CPU, Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi, a CPSU Politburo voting member since 1971, moved through the ranks to become one of the most influential and longest serving members of the Brezhnev administration. Soviet communism had woven itself into the Ukrainian political tradition.

For more perceptive authors, there is little doubt as to whether the radical leftist trend constitutes an integral part of modern political, social, and intellectual developments in Ukraine.<sup>32</sup> Apart from the fact that Stalinism would hardly have materialized here without the local elite's collaboration, the Ukrainian cadres played an important role in the all-Union governance. This fact alone questions the erroneous perception of Ukraine as a colony or semicolony of Soviet Russia. In no known colony were the indigenous administrators allowed to have any say over the affairs of the metropolis. In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, Ukrainian-grown party and state officials from Kaganovich and Voroshilov to Khrushchev and Brezhnev overwhelmed Moscow's political leadership. On a mass level, Ukrainians were hardly discriminated against either. As a rule, they were better educated, had better living conditions, and enjoyed a better urban infrastructure than the majority of the Russian Federation's citizens. True, Ukraine was subject to political domination exercised from Moscow.<sup>33</sup> However, the Moscow center did not rule on behalf of the Russian Federation as an ethno-political entity. Moscow remained a cosmopolitan capital of the multinational empire, equally distanced from any of its constituent units and their national interests. The central political elite of the USSR was (a) multiethnic in composition, (b) had few ethno-national allegiances, and (c) pursued policies that did not and could not privilege one nationality over another. Ukrainians constituted an important part of this exclusive ruling group and shared in all of its failures and victories.

Ukraine's political culture of accommodation was largely a function of the precarious situation of the domestic elite, squeezed between powerful foreign enemies. There were also manifestations of an alternative political culture: the culture of rebellion. More prominent examples include the Cossack uprisings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Hetman

Mazepa's unsuccessful attempt to change sides during the Russian-Swedish war (1709), the nation-building efforts in 1918–19, the rebellious “Ukrainian trend” within the CPU,<sup>34</sup> and the prolonged guerilla warfare against the Soviets from 1944–49. However, all of these belonged to the culture of a minority—a minority in the sense of its smaller numbers and in the sense of its usually subordinate position in existent power structures. The dominant trend of the elite's political behavior differed little from that of the masses: “to pursue a policy of survival, with the understanding that nothing could alter Ukraine's colonial exploitation by superpowers. Most Ukrainians were indeed passive and accepted such a position.”<sup>35</sup> Whether being nonrebellious is tantamount to being passive is a separate question, which I prefer to answer in the negative. However, there is little doubt that a “policy of survival,” of day-to-day tactical and long-term strategic accommodation to generally adverse and foreign-dominated environments, profoundly shaped operational codes of the Ukrainian political culture.

The post-Soviet period witnessed new manifestations of this pattern of behavior. Leonid Kravchuk's generally conciliatory stance toward the putschists' attempt to declare a state of emergency in August, 1991, is only one of the better-known episodes of this character. Although the Ukrainian government announced the country's independence shortly thereafter, it had waited until the Russian democrats' victory was no longer in doubt. Some of Ukraine's democratic activists at the time saw Kravchuk's actions as simply betraying the desire of the Ukrainian *nomenklatura* “to isolate Ukraine from democratic Yeltsin's Russia, rather than to protect it from the old Soviet Union.”<sup>36</sup> As later Russo-Ukrainian negotiations on the status of the Black Sea Fleet revealed, Kravchuk made a rather poor rebel when confronted with a less than yielding opponent. In 1991, it was democratic Russia's willingness to disband the USSR if need be that allowed Ukraine (and all the others) to go their own ways.

Similarly, Kravchuk's successor, Kuchma, preferred a conciliatory line of behavior with Russia and the West alike. Kuchma won the post by taking the cause of the pro-Russian opposition to “nationalizing” policies of the Kravchuk administration. Once the sympathies of the Russian constituency were secured, he promptly turned to the West. Less than two years later, while still arguing that “our line toward strategic partnership and equitable good-neighborly relations with Russia remains unchanged,” Kuchma offered to choose “the European model for our development” in more or less clear contradiction between the Ukrainian path of development and a model pursued by Moscow.<sup>37</sup> The westerly move peaked with the signing of the Ukraine-NATO

Charter on July 9, 1997. However, as Western support became more strictly conditional on implementing the long-overdue economic reform and securing basic political freedoms in the corruption-ridden country, Kuchma moved on to rediscover his hidden Russian sympathies. In 1998, he signed a ten-year program of economic cooperation with Russia and agreed to step up collaboration in the sphere of military technologies. Two years later, at the Dnipropetrovsk summit with Putin, he initialed an equally ambitious program of cooperation between the neighboring regions of the two countries and an agreement to link their national energy grids. In August, 2001, Putin was Kuchma's guest of honor at celebrations of the tenth anniversary of Ukraine's independence.

Not wanting to affront NATO, Kiev adopted the State Program of Cooperation of Ukraine with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on November 4, 1998, and renewed the agreement until 2004 by presidential decree on January 27, 2001. The program postulated Ukraine's view of NATO "as the most effective structure of collective security in Europe" and defined military cooperation with NATO as "a priority for Ukraine's military policy." The main goal of the program is to secure Ukraine's place "in the mechanisms of cooperation between NATO and the invited and potential candidates for membership in this organization."<sup>38</sup> A test run of the suggested comprehensive "interoperability" with NATO structures was made in June, 1999, when Ukraine denied the use of its airspace to Russian planes headed for Kosovo's Pristina airport. However, the permission was soon granted—yet another indication of "Ukraine's multiple personality disorder" and a desire to "deepen relations" with all the good people, without bothering to take a definite side in a dispute or to see the declared policy followed through.<sup>39</sup> A rhetorical shift toward Moscow was registered again during the electoral campaign of 1999 and in the midst of the Gongadze scandal that almost cost Ukraine its membership in the Council of Europe in early 2001.<sup>40</sup> Though refusing to entertain any prospects for the introduction of Ukrainian-Russian double citizenship or an official status for the Russian language in Ukraine, Kuchma nevertheless signaled that Ukraine had moved closer to Russia's vision of the CIS and was prepared to broaden economic, defense, and foreign policy cooperation. Meanwhile, disagreements with Russia over the issue of NATO enlargement remain and were only temporarily softened by both countries' resolve to side with the United States in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on America.

Ukraine's foreign policy pendulum is well known and causes no surprise by now. While modeling itself on Europe, Ukraine may not escape its own grim

reality of underdevelopment, corruption, political intrigue, and inability to reform quickly. In this reality, it belongs to the post-Soviet space controlled by Russia. The pendulum is therefore treading the space between the imaginary and reality and between the Russian/Soviet past and the still-distant European future. Foreign policy reversals reveal a consciously opportunistic mind-set of the elite that is eager to please Ukraine's powerful partners in an effort to maximize its own power base and material rewards. Political maneuvers in Kiev mask a deteriorating economy, an authoritarian state, and the looming possibility of a loss of international reputation. Official nationalism in Ukraine should be regarded as only one more manifestation of this maneuvering.

### EXECUTIVE NATIONALISM

The rise of postcommunist nationalism in Ukraine is variously interpreted as an outcome of a genuine national-democratic revolution, an example of the political opportunism of the old communist elite, or a political awakening prompted by the clear manifestation of popular will. Most of the interpretations, notwithstanding their difference, view the change of political course as a conscious choice, a fully rational decision on the part of the Ukrainian people and/or leadership. Closer analysis of the events shows, however, that Kravchuk was originally forced into the "new course" by the collapse of the Moscow center. The ultimate failure of the central Soviet authorities to provide reliable finance and credit, to enforce contracts between economic subjects in different Soviet republics, or to engineer viable monetary and fiscal policies moved the republican leaders to step into those spheres of activity that heretofore were closed to them. Having found themselves largely on their own as early as 1990, these leaders had little choice but to claim full responsibility over economic (and hence, political) affairs in their republics or to relinquish the authority to someone else.

The Soviet system was organized in such a way that any change in economic management required sweeping political and ideological adjustments.<sup>41</sup> The economic decentralization of 1990–91 ended the particular Soviet form of the state that was federal in form but unitary in its real functioning. Republics stepped in to demand not only economic but also political autonomy. The blueprint for a new political form had been encoded in no other document than the USSR's Constitution, which carried the right of national self-determination (up to secession) as a token reminder of the revolutionary origin of the state and its presumably democratic character. Substituting the principle of national self-determination for the principle of inevitable pro-

gression to a future communist society meant relying on nationalism, not communism, as the state's ideological platform. Given the fact that Kravchuk wanted to keep his power in the republic, he had no other option than to embrace some form of ideology promoting the country's "national interests."

The Ukrainian communists-turned-nationalists had several constituencies to please. First and foremost, postcommunist nationalism was a middle-management response to the collapse of central authority. The accelerating breakup of the Soviet Union had to be stopped at some better-prepared "line of defense." Administrative borders between the republics and autonomies provided ready-made boundaries that could shelter local bosses from the ruinous impact of experimentation conducted in the "center." Hence, the declarations of autonomy that followed perestroika's destructive policy swings. What Gorbachev mockingly called the "parade of sovereignties" was, in essence, nothing more than a reconsolidation of the local oligarchy's grip on power, capital, and resources that they were originally authorized to manage on behalf of the center. Nationalism helped these oligarchs to poison both market reform and democratic transitions, to "disengage themselves from the 'democratic bacchanalia' that all of them, full of panic saw on TV."<sup>42</sup> Nationalism protected the top layers of Ukraine's *nomenklatura* from the "decisive measures of decommunization implemented by the Russian leadership" and renewed their mandate to run the country as they saw fit.<sup>43</sup>

Secondly, both Kravchuk's and Kuchma's presidential administrations had to deal with an organized political opposition. Especially during Leonid Kravchuk's term in office (1991–94), the power of the nationalist opposition, clearly visible in both parliamentary debates and street manifestations, was only barely matched by other opposition factions. Democratization appeared synonymous with Ukrainianization, as even the use of the Russian language in public debate was immediately exposed as a sign of a speaker's "imperial" sympathies. Although half the population used Russian for their day-to-day communication,<sup>44</sup> the concept of the Russophone Ukrainian nation was absent. In this situation, most of the newly formed political parties were keen on proving their Ukrainian credentials. Politics in Ukraine had to be construed as "Ukrainian," which at the time meant fitting it within a rather strict linguistic and ethno-cultural framework, originally devised and championed by the nationalists. New strategies of accommodation developed by the ruling elite could not ignore such an important and vociferous constituency as the nationalist one, which at one time postured as the only true alternative to the communists. The approach chosen by Leonid Kravchuk and his group was to take over a significant part of the nationalist platform,



trying to consciously incorporate it into the policies of a newly independent state.<sup>45</sup> Leonid Kuchma continued using postcommunist nationalism as a power resource and has successfully played it out in several domestic and international arenas.<sup>46</sup>

The third element feeding into postcommunist nationalism in Ukraine is the Ukrainian diaspora in the West. A large number of nationally conscious Ukrainians live in the United States, Canada, and Western countries due to unfortunate encounters they or their ancestors had with Soviet power. Those who fled western Ukraine after its occupation by the Red Army in 1939 and those who fought Stalinism in 1941–49 hardly distinguished between the Soviet regime and its Russophone administrators. The same attitude characterized the dissident nationalist movement of 1960–85, which also brought a significant number of anti-Soviet and anti-Russian refugees to the West. It is no coincidence that many in the diaspora are still connected with radical nationalist, anti-Russian parties that were transplanted back to Ukraine in the early 1990s and now spearhead the so-called national-democratic Right in Parliament.<sup>47</sup>

Although nationalists do not make up the largest part of the Ukrainian diaspora, they are better organized and well financed. They have ready access to the important “hawkish” figures of the Cold War era and exert much effort trying to influence both public opinion and the governments of their respective host countries. Most importantly, they usually serve as an interface between the West and their ethnic homeland as journalists, interpreters, analysts, researchers, advisers, and staff members of international institutions, Western embassies, and business firms active in Ukraine. For many in Ukraine, the West begins with an encounter with one of these persons.

The late-perestroika period and the first phase of independence in Ukraine were distinguished by a rather naïve hope that “the West will assist in some way.”<sup>48</sup> In this perception, the West has taken the place previously occupied by Moscow. In many practical ways, the West, mythologized as a supreme authority, protector, and arbiter of internal and international disputes, came to be personified by representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora. Thus, by pleasing the diaspora, the new Ukrainian elite hoped to please the diaspora’s host countries and what they referred to as the “civilized world” in general. In a process not dissimilar to the one experienced by the Baltic countries, nationalism became a symbolic sign of “Westernization.”<sup>49</sup>

The postcommunist nationalism in Ukraine was, therefore, in no way a revolutionary undertaking. On the contrary, it may serve as a good illustration of what I believe is a persistent feature of the Ukrainian political culture:

recurrent preference Ukrainian political elites give to strategies of accommodation over the strategies of contention. Looking for a powerful regulator who would be able to solve the most pressing problems of domestic governance, Ukrainian political elites historically changed sides between Lithuania and Poland, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Germany. In the newest period, the United States and NATO succeeded in replacing Moscow as the focus of Ukraine's international attention. Ukraine's anti-Russian nationalism and professed "Euro-Atlantic" orientation turned out to be bargaining chips in a complex geopolitical game that Kiev played with Moscow and the West alike.

Ukraine was the first among the Soviet successor states to apply to NATO's Partnership for Peace Program. Ukraine insisted on the Western guarantees of its security as a condition to ascent to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.<sup>50</sup> The Ukraine-NATO charter unequivocally stated Ukraine's approval of "NATO's continuing and active adaptation to meet the changing circumstances of Euro-Atlantic security, and its role . . . in promoting Euro-Atlantic security and fostering a general climate of trust and confidence in Europe."<sup>51</sup> The State Program of Cooperation with NATO for the years 2001–2004 pledges to achieve a "qualitatively new level of relations of a special partnership" between Ukraine and NATO and to prepare "forces and means capable of interacting with armed forces of NATO member-states."<sup>52</sup> At the same time, Ukraine increased its cooperation with Russia in defense industry and arms trade, and continues supplying hundreds of enterprises of Russia's military-industrial complex with details and components. Ten years past independence, Ukraine is as much a part of Russia's sphere of influence as it is an applicant knocking at the doors of Europe. Playing a watchdog role for the West against a potentially resurgent Russia has proven to be a weak foreign policy strategy.

Domestically, the strategy of accommodation has been employed to minimize the elite's turnover as much as possible, even as new power pretenders were smoothly incorporated in the ranks of the postcommunist ruling class. The "party of power," as it was dubbed by the Ukrainian press, had enough space for everyone: yesterday's and continuing communists, new and old nationalists, former dissidents and ideologically indifferent opportunists, free marketers, gradualists, neo-Listians, and those who staunchly opposed any economic reform whatsoever. The only condition imposed upon a power pretender by the gatekeepers was a personally held connection to this or that strategically important resource. The nature of the resource itself was of somewhat lesser importance. Of course, control over financial and other material

assets was most welcome, which should explain prevalence of the “industrial lobby” in the Ukrainian corridors of power. However, political connections, all forms of symbolic capital, links to a powerful constituency or pressure group, and clear regional support were all taken into consideration.

The concrete direction Ukrainian domestic and foreign policies took between 1991 and 2001 was largely determined by the perceived “weight” of a counteragent: be it the Moscow center, domestic opposition, new Russia, or the West. In the majority of cases, the response given to the challenge was reactive rather than proactive. Thus, the Kuchma government started paying attention to the problem of financial stabilization when its Western sponsors made it clear that economic aid would otherwise be terminated. Three Russian-Ukrainian agreements on the status of Sevastopol, the basing rights of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, the use of the coastal infrastructure, and the compensation due to Ukraine were promptly finalized when the burden of Ukraine’s debt to Russia became intolerable. At about the same time, Ukraine had confirmed its acceptance of a “zero option” with regard to the external debts and assets of the former Soviet Union. There are many examples. Do they prove that Ukraine’s strategy of accommodation will be effective in managing the country’s affairs in the dynamic global environment of the twenty-first century? Not hardly. A more creative and engaging approach may be required, and Ukraine’s leaders will have to provide it.

### FRAGMENTED POLITY

Late ethno-genesis, the prolonged absence of national statehood, and its history of division and redivision in multiple zones of domination have all contributed to the inconsistent and fragmented nature of Ukraine’s political culture. Recent studies based upon extensive sociological surveys characterize it as “ambivalent-conformist,” with a potential to grow into “ambivalent-nihilist.”<sup>53</sup> The first label captures the widespread tendency of the population to embrace contradictory choices simultaneously. The 1991 polls on the preservation of the Soviet Union (March) and the proclamation of the Ukrainian sovereignty (December) are good examples of this inconsistency. In both cases, most of the Ukrainian people said “yes,” thus giving their support to mutually exclusive ideas of Ukraine’s independence and its continued stateless (or quasi-state) existence inside the renewed Union. Affirmative responses are also habitually given to capitalism and state tutelage, privatization and full employment, freedom of movement and residence permits (*propyska*), human rights and the death penalty. Since the respondents check all the “good

things,” Ukrainian sociologists describe the prevalent mood of the population as ambivalent and conformist.

The “ambivalent-nihilist” tendency in Ukraine’s political culture, though less evident at the moment, would show itself, according to the above-mentioned authors, in total rejection of all given options, and even of the very necessity to make any choice whatsoever. In terms of political practices, “ambivalent nihilism” corresponds to either spontaneous outbursts of anarchy or, to the contrary, absolute passivity and conscious withdrawal from any form of participation. Of course, what is meant here is not so much a portrait of reality but rather an “ideal-typical” construct in a Weberian sense of the word. However, it is true that Ukrainian history has known both sleepy periods of local tranquility and apparent absence of any far-going ambitions on the part of the elite, and the periods of mass rebellions, Cossack uprisings, peasant wars, pogroms and anarchy. The best-known practical political anarchist of this century, Nestor Makhno, was a Ukrainian, and the regime he established in southern Ukraine during the civil war could probably have been characterized as “ambivalent nihilist” in its lack of clear ideological profile and adamant rejection of all state authority. Recently, an ambivalent-nihilist mood clearly set in following unsuccessful attempt to topple the Kuchma government in the aftermath of the Gongadze scandal.

A tradition of political ambivalence in Ukraine can be attributed to a number of things. One of the prominent factors in Ukrainian political life before and after the proclamation of independence has been its regionally fragmented character. The differences between the “nationally conscious” west and the pro-Russian east and south are many, starting with their profoundly dissimilar histories and ending with specificities in regional patterns of social and economic mobility. Historically speaking, western Ukraine was dominated by Poland and the Habsburg Empire, while the east experienced several centuries of Russian domination. Accordingly, both the language and culture of the respective subject populations became either Polonized or Russified. During the Stalinist “revolution from above,” the eastern Ukrainian oblasti were slotted for rapid industrial development and collectivization, which drastically altered their social structure in favor of urban workers and professionals. The west, which at the time was beyond the reach of Soviets, could continue with the old ways. Consequently, it remained largely agricultural as late as the 1980s. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, a significant part of the western Ukrainian population was able to rather painlessly reorient its economic activities toward the bordering countries of East Central Europe. The east did not have a similar option and remained hostage to its minutely diversified ties to the Russian market.

This regional division remains a standing feature of contemporary Ukrainian politics. Most of those who support nationalist parties and politicians are concentrated in the west, while the east harbors antinationalist, pro-Russian sentiments. Industrialized eastern oblasti of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, and, to a large extent, Dnipropetrovsk have significant leftist constituencies: the reborn CPU, as well as the more moderate Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU) and the more radical Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) all gain the largest share of their votes here. The western Ukrainian lands of Galicia and Volhyn', on the contrary, keep allegiance to the ideals of small entrepreneurship and private property.<sup>54</sup> If west Ukrainian voters accept the idea of state activism in the economy, they usually justify it by the "national interests" dictum, rather than by considerations of "social justice" and "equality," which are more common on the Left. Regional subcultures are realized in different visions of Ukraine's national identity.

Regionalism is supplemented and reinforced by the religious divide. Its geography only imperfectly maps the contours of the regions. The country's religious history is even more complicated, as the example of the Russian Orthodox Church shows. Although the church originated with Vladimir's christening of the Kievan folk, its center subsequently moved to Moscow and stayed there. Since the church includes thousands of parishes in Russia and Ukraine alike, it tends to regard the state separation of Ukraine as something inconsequential. On one hand, this attitude is to be expected, while the mere fact of the continued presence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine can by no means be regarded as a sign of alien influence. On the other hand, the Moscow Patriarchate exhibits no particular interest in Ukrainian independence, and has strong connections to the Russian neonationalist movement. Thus, the faithful of the Ukrainian branch of the church, currently known as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), find themselves, as it were, between a rock and a hard place: rooted in Ukrainian soil and willing to be good Ukrainian citizens, yet clinging to Russia in spiritual life and community relations.

The Greek Catholic Church, though a more recent phenomenon, also embodies several centuries of bitter struggle between Catholics and Orthodox Christians in the western Ukrainian lands. Being itself a product of a compromise achieved by the Union of Brest (1596), the Greek Catholic (also known as the Uniate) Church continues to observe essentially Orthodox rites in its service, although it abides by the supreme authority of the Pope. The church was outlawed as an alleged agent of the West after World War II and stayed underground until 1989–90. Formally rehabilitated by the

perestroika policies, the Uniates launched an impressive campaign demanding restitution from the government. The struggle over property rights with the Orthodox church resulted in a number of temples and other church property changing hands, always to the dissatisfaction of this or that side, which felt victimized in the process.<sup>55</sup> Interconfessional conflicts, which have disproportionately affected western Ukraine and Transcarpathia, though having subsided in intensity by the mid-nineties, may not be regarded as fully resumed even now.

The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was established as a confessional counterpart of the first independent Ukrainian state: the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR). Judging by its origin, this church, more than anything else, is a direct product of political struggle, as interconfessional debates played no role in its conception. Political expediency prompted revival of the church, which was forcefully disbanded in 1930, during the last years of Soviet rule, when ideological preparation to the state independence of Ukraine was in full swing. Apart from the use of Ukrainian rather than Church Slavonic in its liturgy, and the church's self-celebrated autonomy from Moscow (its claim to independence has not been officially resolved by Constantinople), it has no doctrinal issues of dispute with the UOC-MP.

In a similar position of somewhat artificial political appendage to the earlier shaped religious and denominational divide, we find the most recent addition to the picture made by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP). This newest church was created and led by former Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church Filaret (Denysenko), who headed the anti-Moscow revolt of the well-placed separatist clergy on the eve of Ukraine's independence. After asserting control over a significant part of the Russian Orthodox Church's property in Ukraine, Filaret moved on to eliminate political opposition to his personal rule and established the Kiev Patriarchy, which he eventually secured for himself. After being defrocked by the Moscow Patriarchate, Filaret received full support from Leonid Kravchuk, who sponsored separation of the well-controlled national Ukrainian Church from Moscow as a necessary complement to his own state-building efforts. The church enjoys a privileged status with Ukrainian nationalist politicians and pressure groups.

The religious divide in Ukraine complicates the country's political development, as political pressure on the Ukrainian government to take sides in interconfessional disputes continues.<sup>56</sup> The pro-Russian orientation of the UOC-MP (canonically a part of the Russian Orthodox Church) and the Russian Orthodox parishes in Ukraine is well balanced by the traditionally anti-Russian

orientations of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The situation inside the Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Kiev Patriarchate remains inconclusive. While its faithful continue to be divided in their sympathies, the church's leadership (Filaret and his circle) made a conscious stake on Ukrainian nationalism and anti-Russianism in both their clerical and political activities. The inside tensions sometimes expose themselves, as in the case when several formerly pro-Filaret bishops departed the UOC-KP to join the rival UOK-MP, led by Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan). Different orientations of Ukraine's several Christian churches came to the fore markedly during the Pope's visit to Ukraine in 2001.

As Ukrainian political reality is fragmented into several regionally, religiously, and ethno-culturally defined pieces, so is Ukrainian political culture. With the exception of today's official nationalism and the semiofficially promoted autonomous church, most of today's political fragments have deep historical roots. Some of them can trace their origins back several centuries, which legitimizes present conflicts as manifestations of a standing divide. The seniority of the phenomena makes them look primordial, that is, "naturally" incompatible with their opposite numbers. Their preconflictual history remains hidden and is seldom evoked in the present struggles. Thus, certain divisions are perceived as irreconcilable, and become focal points for the aggregation of otherwise poorly related interests. Contemporary ethno-linguistic division is the most obvious aspirant to such a "fundamental" status. Regionalism comes close, and the religious divide follows. Party divides are often mapped on these presumably essential divides.

Since language is taken as a given, as something that is "just there," and presumably was "there" before, linguistic division before Ukrainophones and Russophones is perceived as a serious basis for both current and potential political cleavages in the country. However, this view is one-sided. Historical trends should not be taken to signify only the force of inertia, but the force of change, too. Live politics remains the main vehicle of this change. Consequently, all of the "standing" divisions are, in fact, shifting. Linguistic divide in itself is a constructed phenomenon, as it became significant no sooner than the development of print capitalism and the administrative standardization of vernaculars.<sup>57</sup> When a certain language was promoted as an "official" language of the state, all other locally spoken languages could not but suffer the consequences. Competition between variously anchored "reading classes" pitched not only ethnically different groups, but also bearers of the "standard" and "substandard" variants of the same language against each other.

Since the “right” linguistic identity opened the road for social mobility and was virtually indispensable for a career in bureaucracy, language became a tool of social and political struggles. Linguistic differences thus acquired political significance.

Linguistic differences in Ukraine became politicized in a similar way. In the former Soviet Union, Russian was the state’s (unofficial) language, although Ukrainian was widely spoken by the “indigenous” bureaucracy of the Ukrainian SSR. Even before Ukraine proclaimed its independence, the republican Law on Languages elevated Ukrainian to the status of the official language of the state. The norm has been enshrined in Article 10 of the new Constitution of Ukraine, adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on June 28, 1996. All the regular outcomes expected from such a change in linguistic politics promptly appeared on the scene. First, Russian was eschewed from the central bureaucracy and, consequently, from the central media and academia. Second, previously marginalized producers for the Ukrainian “reading class” made headlong careers to the top of the Ukrainian political establishment. Poets became ambassadors, journalists chaired newly formed political parties, and entertainers took their seats in Parliament. The campaign for “purification” of the Ukrainian language started in earnest, with a heavy onslaught against the bearers of the substandard Ukrainian, the so-called *surzhik*. Russophone intellectuals were left with a choice of either conducting professional activities in Ukrainian or accepting the inevitable “ghettoization” on regional, social, or vocational grounds. All efforts were undertaken to further distance Ukrainian from Russian, by changing the alphabet, the rules of transliteration from foreign languages, and the vocabulary itself. The Ukrainian diaspora, the Polonized western Ukrainian dialects, the archaic Ukrainian, as reflected in nineteenth-century publications, were all drawn upon extensively as presumably better sources for reconstruction of a “true, genuine” Ukrainian language than contemporary books or periodicals, to say nothing about the live speakers of the “endangered” language.

The reaction of the Ukrainian people was best demonstrated by the support given to Leonid Kuchma, who did not speak much Ukrainian before his inauguration ceremony. In 1994–95, the Ukrainianization campaign somewhat lost its zeal, and administrations of several eastern oblasti were able to institute semiofficial bilingualism locally. This situation did not last long, however. By 1997, the government was fully convinced that squeezing Russian out of all spheres of public life rectified “historical injustice” and promoted “renewal of a spiritual gene pool of the Ukrainian people.” The state sponsorship of Ukrainian as “the main means of communication in Ukraine”



was all the rage again.<sup>58</sup> The Constitution of the Crimea, ratified by the Verkhovna Rada on December 23, 1998, proclaimed Ukrainian the only state language of the autonomy, mentioning Russian simply as “the language of the majority of population, permissible for international communication.”<sup>59</sup> Kiev pressed further with the resolution “On Supplementary Measures to Expand the Use of Ukrainian as the State Language,” which threatened to recertify state employees based on their mastery of Ukrainian, to revoke the licenses of private television companies broadcasting in Russian, and to reduce the proportion of Russian schools in the country even further to bring them “into conformity with the ethnic makeup of the population.”<sup>60</sup>

And yet, language politics in Ukraine has never reached a height of tension demonstrated by the Baltic states and their treatment of Russophone communities. As traditional Ukrainian elites had to be flexible in the face of foreign domination, the contemporary Ukrainian elite learned to accommodate various constituencies inside the country. Since no successful politician can disregard the opinion of either Ukrainophone or Russophone parts of the electorate, all candidates must master the art of compromise. As a result, Ukraine succeeded in managing standoffs in regions and in the center without repeating Russian mistakes. Crimean separatism has been contained by legal means, and the prolonged impasse in the executive-legislative relations (1995–96) was resolved without calling upon the army. What was perceived as the inescapable weakness of the Ukrainian polity, its divided and fragmented character, proved a source of strength and viability.<sup>61</sup> It seems that fragmentation should not be regarded as an intrinsically bad thing. In certain cases, fragmentation itself, if well embedded in the national political tradition, may facilitate mutual accommodation and compromise. Tyranny of the majority can be avoided if the nation is fragmented in such a way that no clear majority comes out of this fragmentation. This is the case of Ukraine, which is divided roughly in half between the west and the east, the Ukrainophones and the Russophones. No party can claim lasting superiority over the other.

If a viable bipartisan system is ever to take root in Ukraine, it may well be based on this “natural” (historical and ethno-cultural) division between the east and west. As multiple splits and internal quarrels on both the right and the left flanks of party politics demonstrate, the other cleavages remain poorly shaped and unstable. Since the society is in flux, the political process continues to be detached from any sound foundation in social structure. Class politics is simply absent, and even more noticeable strikes by coal miners cannot substitute for its absence. The mechanistic application of collective action models developed with an eye on Western democracies will not explain much in Ukraine.

Religious cleavages do not provide a basis for political articulation either. It is indicative that no more than five percent of the Ukrainian population support Christian Democrats or other religious groups in politics. The country's pollsters claim that 30.2 percent of the electorate does not belong to any confession, while another 17.9 percent cannot give a definite answer to the question.<sup>62</sup> The rest of the population is divided among several confessions. This sheer multiplicity of religious groups prevents their political consolidation. It is hardly possible to have a single Christian democratic party when several Christian churches vigorously compete with each other on the same national ground. When consolidation or rapprochement does happen, as in the recent drawing together of the UOC-KP and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, it happens along the default lines of the parties' orientation toward Moscow (hostile, in this case). Geopolitical orientations, together with regional and ethno-linguistic loyalties, outweigh other issues.

Regionalism is no less important than ethnic or linguistic affiliation. Ukrainian sociologists, having repeatedly observed stable regional correlations of political behavior, concluded that Russians living in Halychyna reacted to events and evaluated them according to samples dominating there. Ukrainians living in the eastern part of the country and in Crimea reproduce thoughts and actions that are widespread in these regions. Not ethnic membership, but involvement in and subordination to the general atmosphere has become a substantial circumstance, which considerably reduces the meaning of the ethnic factor.<sup>63</sup>

The ethnic factor is further reduced by the imperfect correlation between ethnic Ukrainians and Ukrainophones, ethnic Russians and Russophones.<sup>64</sup> It has been demonstrated more than once that Russified Ukrainians tend to side with ethnic Russians on many issues of political importance. Similarly, Ukrainianized Russians often exhibit all of the characteristics of nationally conscious Ukrainians and sometimes even enter the ranks of the Ukrainian nationalist elite (Khvyliovyi, Shulhyn, Volobuiev, Yefremov et al.). A diligent study of the problem shows that socio-historical and cultural differences are more important than "natural" ethnic divisions.

The fragmented constitution of the Ukrainian polity deeply influences the nation's political culture. Regionalism is an obvious leader in this category. One cannot avoid doubting the validity of the concept of the *national* political culture when it is applied to Ukraine. Could it not be better to discuss *two* political cultures, instead of one, thus taking into account the west-east split in political tradition and contemporary politics of the country? Although this would certainly be an option, the gap between the regions is not an insurmountable one. A number of unifying themes weave the fragments of the

Ukrainian polity together. A deeply ingrained culture of accommodation is one of these underlying features. A loose cohesion among different parts of the body politic is another. When talking about fragmentation in Ukraine, we must go beyond the national level and look not only at relations between major regions, but at the patterns of intraregional and subregional politics as well. Thus, for example, a May, 1994, nationwide poll showed roughly equal figures of supporters and opponents of privatization of large enterprises in western Ukraine (30.6 percent vs. 30 percent, with 39.4 percent undecided). In the east, 20.4 percent of the respondents “completely approved” and 21.4 percent “completely disapproved” development of private entrepreneurship.<sup>65</sup> A September, 1998, poll showed that certain western oblasti were as supportive of the open border with Russia as people in the east, and dramatically differed on this point from their neighbors in Galicia.<sup>66</sup> Regional discrepancies are clearly pronounced in aggregate. However, internal fragmentation of the regions may show itself in rather unexpected parallels on the subregional level.

#### **SURVIVALISM AND DEPENDENCE**

The historical absence of the all-national authority and intergenerational memory of past tragedies affected political and social behavior of Ukrainians. Survival became an overarching goal and a preoccupation for both lower and upper strata of society. The latter learned to switch their allegiances quickly, should the situation press a choice upon them. The former struggled to isolate themselves from adversarial environment, tying most of their social interaction to parochial communities that, in the process, grew in self-sufficient local life-worlds. Escape was another option, and sheer numbers of the world-scattered Ukrainian diaspora witness to its long-lasting popularity. Finally, revolt was a choice of the dismayed, but also a form of political and economic entrepreneurship for underprivileged members of the upper class.

Survivalism contributed to the individualist and localist trends in Ukrainian political culture. It necessitated low levels of trust in anything and anybody and deep spontaneous religiosity. Even if the majority of the population severed formal connections to the church, it is instructive to see how these, formally speaking, unbelievers in overwhelming numbers declared their confidence in God’s wisdom in the most chaotic and mutually distrustful atmosphere of the postcommunist Ukraine.<sup>67</sup> Unstructured piety betrays survivalist doubt underneath. In generally inhospitable environment, relying on one’s own premises and praying to God that things will somehow work out by themselves is not an utterly illogical strategy.<sup>68</sup>

As with any behavioral strategy, survivalism is defined and modified by means and ways available to the agency. In the premodern Ukrainian society where this attitude originated, a commoner had access to the three mutually intersecting fields of practice: one structured by their individual (physical and mental) capacities, another centered on the family, and the last one revolving around the neighborhood or locality. The relative preponderance of one or two of these resulted in different strategies for getting along. Self-centered individuals could build their life on readily available internal resources and on the inherited “capital” of one’s body, mind, and spirit. Whether they chose to invest this capital in farming, trade, war, travel, or family depended on a number of factors, not all of which were under their control. Thus, farmers were disturbed by foreign invasions, local lords’ rivalries, and natural misfortunes. The creeping enserfment of the peasantry finally eliminated this option from a register of freely chosen activities. Trade was harmed by continuous foreign control over the country. Self-reliant male commoners had to choose basically between a warlike occupation and long travel abroad, where they hopefully could engage in more peaceful activities.

Freelance warriors and bandits were responsible for the emergence of the Ukrainian Cossacks as a historical and cultural phenomenon. This voluntary association of freedom-loving individuals prefigured, in the opinion of many contemporary Ukrainian scholars, an early (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) beginning of the Ukrainian libertarian tradition. Looked at from a different angle, it might also be counted among the early manifestations of indigenous anarchism. Several Cossack wars and a string of peasant rebellions of the late-medieval ages lend some credence to such an interpretation. As anarchism ostensibly represents certain radicalization of individualist principles, these two interpretations are not wholly incompatible. Both Ukrainian individualism and anarchism were essentially survivalist strategies, developed within the ego-centered field of available cultural practices. The “family field” excluded many, if not most, of the choices open to self-reliant males. Of course, Cossacks had families, too. Their family allegiances, however, restricted the range of activities at their disposal. They did not organize or structure those activities. The Cossacks’ principal war-making activities were not devised inside the family field of practices.

The instruments of action that the family orientation gave to a commoner were better suited for more peaceful purposes, most notably agricultural activities, childrearing, and trade. Ukrainian family communes were drastically different from their land-equalizing Russian counterparts. As one historian noted: “by the last part of the eighteenth century most peasant households

were the permanent possessors of their holdings. At this point the Little Russian [that is, Ukrainian] experience diverged from that of the North. Instead of going back to communal control and equalization, individual landholding persisted. Each homestead continued in the possession of its specific holding, and no communal efforts were made to achieve equality in the amount of the land held, or to provide landless peasants with holdings.”<sup>69</sup> The famous “peasant individualism” of the Ukrainian people was rooted in economic realities. Its political significance was demonstrated in full strength with the advent of collectivization. After the defeat of Antonov’s peasant uprising (1920–21) in Tambov and the Voronezh *gubernia* of Russia proper, the Soviets could not meet a more powerful opponent to their agricultural policies than Ukrainian farmers. Both economic and political-cultural factors contributed to the fact that “Resistance to collectivization was naturally strongest among those who had the most to lose—the kulaks . . . and the bulk of the peasants in the surplus-producing areas of the Ukraine, southern Russia, and western Siberia, where landlordism and the village commune had been much weaker.”<sup>70</sup> The peaceful family orientation and relative self-isolation of Ukrainian “peasant individualism” supported mostly passive forms of resistance. However, they could also result in quite militant behavior. Sporadic outbursts in response to the outside threat may be regarded as another, though extreme, case of survivalist activities. It must be also noted that structural factors of postrevolutionary politics, the regime’s cruelty in particular, made sustained and active opposition to it hardly possible once the civil war ended.

The neighborhood-oriented field of social interaction yielded what can be named localist strategies of survival. In comparative terms, Ukrainian localism, or parochialism, is not that different from similar manifestations elsewhere. It had worked against centralization, bureaucratic normalization and “rationalization” of social practices, hindered the spread of standardized culture codes, whatever their source, and currently stands in the way of sweeping globalization tendencies that make the national borders look increasingly irrelevant. For Ukrainians, just as for other foreign-dominated people, localist closure created a more or less reliable interface in dealing with external authorities, a kind of a dike against the tide of national and social oppression. Unfortunately, it also hampered development, fostering dependence upon immediate social surroundings. This complex of dependency is still very much in place. Paradoxically, it coexists with manifestations of unbridled egotism and anarchist rejection of authorities. It feeds into such different phenomena as neocommunism, regionalism, and nationalism. Multiple dependency is a powerful factor at work in the Ukrainian polity and society. It is variously

attributed to communist legacies, colonial policies of formerly dominating powers, inaptitude of the postcommunist rulers, or the underdevelopment of market economy. Ukrainian localism has probably contributed to each of these causes.

Personal and social dependency is the flip side of parochialism. Medieval parochialism in Ukraine was revived with introduction of the “second serfdom,” which similarly delayed development of other eastern and east-central European countries.<sup>71</sup> After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Stalinist regime and its command economy eliminated most of the remaining vestiges of private initiative, thus adding new dimensions to the inherited patterns of dependency. As one Ukrainian analyst noted, this was tantamount to the “third enserfment,” which “institutionally and typologically was fully identical to its medieval counterparts.” After the end of communism, a political culture of dependency persisted, thwarting the progress of economic reforms on both the elite and mass levels of society. On the elite level, it showed up in “*nomenklatura* privatization” and the rent-seeking behavior of those power holders who thought they were best served by the existing paternalist state. On the mass level, no more than 25 percent of the Ukrainian population declared their readiness to take responsibility for their own well-being; the rest expected the state to solve all of their problems.<sup>72</sup>

The bloated expectations of help from the central organizations of the state are among the predominant manifestations of this attitude. It is most vividly expressed in the eastern and central regions of the country, where leftist parties have their main electoral bases. If a poll shows an average 79 percent approval rating for the idea that the state “must provide for material well-being of the people,” the figure is 7 percent higher for the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasti and 3 to 5 percent higher for the central oblasti from Zhytomyr to Poltava and from Chernihiv to Kirovohrad. Yet, even in the reform-minded Kiev, where only 6 percent of the polled supported the Socialists and Communists in March, 1995, the majority remained confident that the state should protect its citizens from economic hardships.<sup>73</sup>

However, as the state continues to fail its citizens, dependency finds new poles of attachment. A protracted crisis and clannish infighting in Kiev bring regional interests to the fore. Regionalism naturally shapes competition for scarce resources and subsumes political divisions, which in Ukraine are often less than fully meaningful.<sup>74</sup> Political geography maps itself on the nationalist versus socialist divide via the influence of regionally based power groups known as “clans.” It is these clans that determine postcommunist realignment of political and economic forces, while weak and dependent parties can offer

little more than a symbolic representation of interests.<sup>75</sup> In the impoverished economy, politics follows money's lead directly and with much less reservation than in more prosperous countries. Politicians must court the supportive industrialists and financiers and the provincial governments and local administrations that might be willing to help, not to mention those in control of the state budget money, which frequently determines the outcome of elections. Support of regional political-economic networks is indispensable for anyone with ambitions above the level of locality. In the meantime, politically disengaged people learn to adjust traditional schemes of localist dependency to the regional patterns of distribution. Mass support for Crimean Russian "separatism" or Carpatho-Rusyn "autonomism" are, from this point of view, identical in their etiology: both represent the substitution of regional power bases for the paternalist state that failed its clients.

The continuing implosion of the state brings new forms of social and political fragmentation on the top of the old ones. The regional division of Ukrainian lands, although taking a completely new meaning after the collapse of communism (just as it did when the Soviet regime advanced to cover most of the Ukrainian ethno-demographic territory), develops within the established pattern. Competition among industries and sectors of the economy, each vying for a privileged access to regulators and sponsors in the government is, on the other hand, a comparatively recent development. Industrial and sectional division of power in the postcommunist Ukraine and lingering dependency of *all* large businesses on the state creates a fruitful ground for corporatist mediation of interests.

The post-Soviet society was expected to turn corporatist and oligarchic because of the remaining ties between interest groups and the state and the emerging state-corporatist solutions to the problems of the transition period.<sup>76</sup> Corporate affiliations helped to dissuade potentially dangerous conflicts on the stage of initial property rights' (re)allocation. The postcommunist state legitimizes fast enrichment of some groups and individuals, denying their potential competitors same opportunity to take part in privatization and denationalization of property. It tries to keep social unrest to a minimum by giving the losers' payoff to a more active part of the labor, while simultaneously ignoring less mobilized groups. It attempts to manage the transition from socialism to capitalism by appointing new capitalists from its own ranks and selectively admitting "new rich" to the positions of power. The rest of the population is scorned as "labor masses" in the service of the new proprietors, an arrangement that comes surprisingly close to the elite-mass relationship fostered by the communist *nomenklatura*.

In the post-Soviet oligarchic regime, “labour is virtually completely bypassed on long-term questions such as privatization and structural reform. The marginalization of labour is an important political achievement, especially if one remembers the importance of labour unrest in the Soviet Union in 1989–91.”<sup>77</sup> The Ukrainian government disfranchised the labor movement politically by accepting wage demands from most active unions under the condition that broader political issues should be removed from the agenda. As a result, not only has the labor movement been segmented into privileged and underprivileged groups, but also the whole labor opposition to the government has largely lost its political zeal. The reverse side of this achievement was labor’s renewed dependency on the state, and complementary dependency on the peak professional associations and unions for access to the state’s channels of distribution.

The employers’ groups, such as the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, the Union of Independent Entrepreneurs, or the Union of Small Entrepreneurs, have also failed to disentangle themselves fully from the government.<sup>78</sup> Corporatist dependency on the state and state-licensed bodies of representation is further enforced by the national tradition of localist dependency and by survivalist patterns of behavior. The state, in turn, is weakened through dependency on powerful business interests that it helped create in the first place, and that continue to feed off government coffers as designated dealers and contractors for the state. This parasitic-symbiotic relationship, which is widespread across all segments of Ukrainian society, benefits few and hurts many. The rhetoric of “social peace” that the government uses to promote it hides factually intensified exploitation of labor, pauperization of the population, further debilitation of the Ukrainian body politic, corruption tolerated as a norm, and blatant suppression of democratic freedoms. The Ukrainian state, which is dependent on the lecherous oligarchs masquerading as state patriots (*derzhavnyky*), appears quite independent from the popular will or such “abstract” principles as the supremacy of law or democratic accountability.

## THE UKRAINIAN CAUSE: HISTORY AND PRESENT

The political culture of dependency reveals itself in Ukrainian nationalism. Generally speaking, its etiology repeats that of other known nationalisms around the globe. Its origins are rather recent. Romanticism and modernization have had direct impact on the maturation of would-be Ukrainian nationalist elites. Ukrainian nationalism was also initiated by “professionals of the pen,” and its



first audience was limited to the respective “reading classes.” Both print capitalism and the indigenization of the state bureaucracies were as necessary for its development as they were for the development of other national movements elsewhere. The three stages of nationalist mobilization noted in Hroch’s study of Central and Eastern European countries are also traceable in Ukraine.<sup>79</sup>

Yet, Ukrainian nationalism has been specific in its relatively late appearance and emulation of other cultural models and continued dependence on them. Against a background of European cultural developments, Ukrainian nationalism was a secondary, if not a tertiary, phenomenon. The elite phase of the nationalist mobilization was shaped through the borrowing of relevant culture codes from Central European nations. Those who stood at the beginning of Ukrainian nationalism—historian Kostomarov, novelist and historian Kulish, and poet Shevchenko—could learn from the Poles, Czechs, and Germans, whose national-minded elites were, by then, well engaged in the process of historical mythmaking and nationalist reconstruction of their countries’ “true” legacies. Liberal thought of the Russian Empire, though intrinsically hostile to nationalist narrow-mindedness, infused the forefathers of the Ukrainian movement with modified Slavophilism and rather amorphous libertarian longings. The “official nationalism” of the Russian imperial state, born as a reaction to the Napoleonic wars and the Polish uprising of 1830, created an intellectual climate that sharpened the sense of national awareness of *all*, and not only Russian, members of educated classes of the Empire.<sup>80</sup> Ukrainian nationalism followed in the wake of these developments, and only gradually shaped its political program as a program of fully independent national statehood. This was a particular example of “learning by doing,” when deliberate copying from the nationalist elites in other European countries and mirroring the adversaries (e. g., champions of the Polish or the Russian cause in the Ukrainian lands) strengthened the young movement and gave it its final direction. From this perspective, even the fact of Ukraine’s division between neighboring states may be regarded as instrumental to the rise of the indigenous nationalist movement: “Polish influence in nearly half of Ukrainian ethnic territory served as a counterbalance to Russian domination. Throughout the nineteenth century the western part of Ukraine remained a zone of tension, where Russian and Polish forces competed for supremacy. In the long run, this strengthened Ukrainian self-awareness as a nation distinct from both Poland and Russia.”<sup>81</sup> This gave the movement an early “negative” identity, since the first task of nationalist intellectuals appeared to be proving Ukrainian distinctiveness from both the Russians and the Poles.

The Ukrainian movement entered the stage of patriotic agitation, distinguished by the formulation and advancement of a comprehensive linguistic program, not earlier than the 1860s.<sup>82</sup> Patriotic pursuits in the Left-Bank Ukraine were curtailed by the Russian government that chose to step up its pressure on the Ukrainian “separatists.” A relatively more liberal climate in Habsburg-dominated Galicia enticed a number of important cultural figures to leave Kiev to join forces with western compatriots. This resulted in the “Galicianization” of the Ukrainian movement, which had lost all of its previously detectable pro-Russian sympathies, and opened a gap between the nationalist “avant-garde” in the west and the mass of potential recipients of their message in the “Little Russian” east. As a result, Ukrainian propaganda was locked up in a ghetto of its own making until the end of the century, when newly radicalized groups of intellectuals in both eastern and western Ukraine managed to successfully repeat the “agitation” stage and laid the ground for subsequent national mobilization efforts.

The support given to the Ukrainian cause in elections to the prerevolutionary Russian Duma and during the 1917–18 period in Ukraine’s civil war may indicate the beginnings of the final stage of mass mobilization.<sup>83</sup> However, it was cut short by the Bolsheviks’ military and political success in the industrialized eastern areas of the country. Poland saw an opportunity to simultaneously suppress the national movement in western Ukraine. Subsequently developed as national communism in the Soviet Ukraine versus the so-called integral (fascistic) nationalism under Polish rule, Ukrainian nationalism failed to enlist the masses in both cases. State repression can only partially account for this lack of interest. More important was the fact that by that time social concerns had already prevailed over the romanticized nation-building visions. Many of the Soviet Ukrainians sincerely partook in the “socialist construction” efforts and shared the ideological doctrines of communism. The Communist Party of the Western Ukraine (KPZU) followed this trend. The problems of day-to-day survival occupied disfranchised masses on both sides. Class divisions in Galicia and Volhyn’ under the Polish domination were too obvious for the propaganda of a “single, indivisible” Ukrainian nation to be more than marginally successful. All of this predetermined the Soviets’ ultimate victory in all of Ukraine. Writing down this victory as a mere case of military occupation is tantamount to either a gross oversimplification or a deliberate distortion of the facts.

Contemporary nationalism in Ukraine was born as much, and probably more, of Soviet nationality policies as of the indigenous nationalist movement.<sup>84</sup> The latter was largely confined within the borders of historic Galicia

and Volhyn', the western Ukrainian lands that were retaken from Poland under the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in 1939. Meanwhile, socio-economic developments brought by the success of Soviet modernization and natural filiation of local administrative cadres from the titular nationality of the republic pushed representatives of other ethnic groups aside. Ethnic competition for economic and political privileges ensued, prompting a quiet scramble for resources that would allow a group to maintain and better its standing vis-à-vis other pretenders. Higher education, party membership, and personal connections proved most valuable, pitting such better-endowed groups as Ukrainians, Russians, and Jews against one another. While Russians could draw on the respect accorded to the USSR's founding nation and Jews on educational achievements and personal support networks, Ukrainians might have been left at a disadvantage if not for their sheer numbers and the Soviet variant of affirmative-action policies, which gave Ukrainians administrative jobs on all levels of governance from the collective farm and small-town school board to the provincial *obkom* to the CPU Central Committee. Ukrainian nationality became a career ticket, and the habit of riding it fostered administrative nationalism and gave the natural resentment that the periphery carries against the center an ethno-nationalist flavor.

Ukrainian Soviet bureaucrats in the service of the "empire" supplied the first cadres of the would-be nationalist leadership. Kravchuk's magical reincarnation from being a communist hard-liner charged with fighting "bourgeois nationalism" in Ukraine to the most ardent proponent of the latter inspired mass following. In 1999, Ukraine's former KGB chef, Yevhen Marchuk, chose to run for the presidency under right-wing nationalist banners, and was endorsed by those very people he was obliged to prosecute some ten years before.<sup>85</sup> An originally Russophone Kuchma, though less given to ethno-nationalist myths and hate mongering, kept Kravchuk's policy of gradual ghettoization of the Russian language well on track. Under Kuchma, the policy led to the Constitutional Court's decisions of December 14, 1999, which classified Ukrainian as the "obligatory means of communication on all territory of Ukraine," and of July 12, 2000, which blocked ratification of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages—apparently too liberal a document for Ukraine. Parallels to some postcolonial leaders, often tense with indigenous languages, educated in the west, given access to a public office and even launched into a higher politics by the Westerners, are instructive, even if not fully pertinent. Then as now, nationalist ardor often appeared as the only unbeatable argument in competition with better-

educated, deeper entrenched, and generally more powerful groups of local technocrats, brandished as “imperialist” elites and “collaborators.”

Another group of postcommunist nationalist leaders constitutes the contemporary analogue to the nineteenth-century “pen elite,” since they also make their living through various professional uses of the vernacular. These people have vested interest in broadening the sphere of their pursuit and elevating its status by making vernacular the sole means of professional communication in the country. Since the 1960s, most Soviet dissidents in Ukraine—Chornovil, Lukianenko, the Horyn’ brothers, Sverstiuk, Badzio, Dziuba, and others—belonged to this category. In 1989–91, they were joined by a number of former mainstream Ukrainian Soviet poets and writers, who sponsored the first nationalist organization in late-perestroika Ukraine: the Rukh.<sup>86</sup> For this group of people, “the move from cultural to political nationalism was occasioned by blocked social mobility.”<sup>87</sup> By “blocked social mobility,” in this instance, we should understand both the rather narrow confines of the Ukrainian “reading class,” as it existed at the moment, and the writer’s inability or unwillingness to reach a wider audience. Nationalism presented itself as a convenient status-making tool, often elevating a mediocre literary figure to the scarcely dreamt of height of a popular leader and defender of a “common cause.” If taken by the state and implemented in its policies, nationalism promised the forceful broadening of a heretofore-limited audience and guaranteed its mobilized attention.

The political culture of dependence on the powers that be showed full strength and renewed vigor after the end of communism. Previous attempts at nationalist mobilization in Ukraine failed for no other reason that the state at the time was less than supportive of these attempts (Russia, Austria, Poland) or too weak and limited in its authority to back them with sustained organizational effort (Ukrainian People’s Republic, the Ukrainian Soviet government in the 1930s, and later under Shelest). Now, when the state bureaucracy took full charge of nationalist reeducation of the “Russified” Ukrainians, the Ukrainian movement has finally proceeded to its last stage of long delayed and interrupted mass mobilization. The regionally fragmented nature of the Ukrainian polity predetermined the partial success of these efforts in the west and widespread indifference, if not opposition, in the east and the south.

The state had to steer a precarious course between regional interests, simultaneously defending its independence against Moscow’s renewed attempts at domination. Relying on the exclusionist “integral” nationalism could alienate vast segments of population, including more than 11 million Russians, dozens of other minority groups, and, most importantly, Russophone and culturally

Russianized Ukrainians of the east. However, some ideological barrier against the siren calls for reintegration with Russia was deemed necessary. A new brand of nationalism has used the rhetoric of inclusion to cover policies that effectively promulgated the language and culture of the titular nationality: Ukrainians. Thus, while the formal rights of citizenship have been extended to all ethnic communities, education, culture, and the media have been under constant pressure to employ Ukrainian over the rest of the languages spoken in the country, especially Russian.

These policies have made Ukraine into a typical “nationalizing” state, unsure of its identity and wary of renewed cultural (and political) domination from abroad.<sup>88</sup> The use of Ukrainian is obligatory in all public communication. It is enshrined as the state language in the Ukrainian Constitution and the Law on Languages. Mass media outlets are heavily pressed to switch to Ukrainian and stay that way, even in predominantly Russian areas of the country. Cultural productions in Russian and other languages increasingly have to rely on private sources of support, which are scarce in the impoverished society. Formal education classifies Russian, which is more widely spoken than Ukrainian, as a foreign language. The educational system has been thoroughly Ukrainianized at the elementary, high school, and university levels—everywhere that the local Russian-speaking population did not fight it with sustained mass protests. Ukrainian history was systematically purged of its “Russianized” interpretations and rewritten according to the new canon. Even the orthography has been remodeled with the help of diaspora experts who can presumably help to “purge [the language] of foreign accretions imposed by force.”<sup>89</sup>

To coordinate these measures, and under the pressure of such lobbying groups as the Congress of Ukrainian Intelligentsia and the All-Ukrainian Association “Prosvita,” Ukraine’s Cabinet of Ministers launched several watchdog institutions to execute oversight and control over language use. One of them, the Department for the Implementation of Language Policy, was originally envisaged, in the words of one of its sponsors, as a “vertical [organization] that would penetrate all executive structures down to the district level.”<sup>90</sup> Although falling short of this mandate, the department, created in 1997, nevertheless turned out to be an important unit of the State Committee on Nationalities and Migration. Later that same year, another structure was created at the level of the Cabinet of Ministers and chaired by the vice prime minister in charge of humanitarian policy. Called the Scientific and Expert Council in matters of control over adherence to the norms of the Ukrainian language, this structure monitored implementation of the state program of Integrated

Measures for Comprehensive Development and Functioning of Ukrainian Language. Among other things, the program stipulates that the knowledge and use of the state language constitutes an essential condition for promotion of public servants, culture workers, military officers, teachers and instructors in educational institutions of all levels. Decree no. 1004 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, issued on June 21, 2000, sought the mandatory use of Ukrainian in organs of the state administration and local self-government, Ukrainianization of educational institutions “of all levels and forms of property” and periodic inspections of language use in all of the above, and “also in other spheres of public life.”<sup>91</sup>

At the same time, Kiev claims that the government tolerates a degree of cultural autonomy in localities. The policy, which was promulgated by the now-defunct Ministry for Nationality Affairs, Migration, and Religion, was meant to help ethnic minorities, especially the Russian “superminority,” to realize their cultural potential in full.<sup>92</sup> In predominantly Russophone areas of Ukraine, it sometimes resulted in conservation of the existing language situation, thus clashing with “nationalizing” efforts of the center. In 1996, for example, 93 percent of all radio and television programs in Crimea were still broadcast in Russian; there was only one Ukrainian and one Crimean-Tatar school among almost three hundred schools of the autonomy.<sup>93</sup> Ukrainianization proceeded slower than expected in the east and south, particularly in the heavily industrial and thoroughly Russianized Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, and Odesa oblasti, where between 57 (Kharkiv) and 91 (Donetsk) percent of secondary school students were taught in Russian as of 1998.<sup>94</sup> Encouraged by what they saw as official policies, provincial legislators in the Kharkiv and Donetsk oblasti even voted Russian as the second official language within their respective spheres of jurisdiction in 1996–97. Though Russian-language newspapers and other periodicals published in Ukraine yield their Ukrainian-language competitors in the number of titles, they have exceeded them in both single print and annual print runs.<sup>95</sup> The Russian press dominates the eastern and southern areas of the country, just as Ukrainian publications sway its western and central oblasti. Russian culture in Ukraine endures, with or without government support, which lends certain credibility to this statement by a local observer: “A new state appeared on the territory of the former UkrSSR. Though motley in its ethnic composition, it may be said to incorporate two state-forming nations: the Ukrainians and the Russians. If we are willing to take into account historical development and today’s national situation, the new state should be built on a binational platform, which will also preclude any discrimination against other minorities.”<sup>96</sup>

However, Ukrainianization can hardly be avoided at the moment. The reason is simple: Ukraine lacks a civil society, and, consequently, lacks a developed sense of citizenship that could stand on its own, without falling back on the props of titular ethnicity. Territorial attachment is present, but regionally defined. Political and cultural cohesion is weak, and a sense of community is yet to be developed. The remnants of traditional community were ruined by communism, which added social atomization and pervasive mistrust on top of already existent problems. Now, egoism is widely accepted as a strategy of adjustment to the market environment, naïvely understood as a free-for-all and survival of the fittest. The “lonesome warrior” mentality does not support social or national consolidation.

Due to these developments, a “pillarized,” consociational democracy in Ukraine, though intensely desired, is barely possible now.<sup>97</sup> The attempts to make a nation on the basis of the predominant ethnicity are bound to continue. These attempts will be circumscribed by the inescapable reality of the divided nation and its historically fragmented and inconsistent, though flexible, political culture. The Ukrainian state is neither fully ethnic nor fully civic in its nationalizing efforts. Pushing it along the first path would be suicidal in the country where even ethnic identity of the titular nation is far from uniform. On the other hand, taking the path of de-ethnicized nation building or advancing the idea of the two state-building nations (Ukrainophone and Russophone) is hardly feasible at the moment because of the absence of unifying motifs that would bridge ethnopolitical divisions inherited by the country.

## CONCLUSION

Does Ukraine have a political tradition of its own? I think it does, although the country did not have much of an independent existence prior to 1991. Thinking of the so-called stateless nations and nations in the making, we must not forget that the realm of politics is wider than the realm of the state. Before the state comes into being, politics are conducted on other levels. Ukraine is but one case in point. The arsenal of available means and schemes of political action for the independent Ukrainian state was largely created before it came into existence. Though lacking their own state, Ukrainians nevertheless lived in political space dominated by other state formations. Their day-to-day lives were saturated with direct and indirect political relations of power and authority, survival and accommodation. The proprietary classes in Ukraine were in constant communication with domestic and for-

eign rulers of the land. The lower classes had to take into account the ongoing power relations, since those eventually targeted the common folk as a revenue source for the power holders. Both the mass and the elite political cultures gradually emerged as more or less systemic patterns of collective action that incorporated once-found ad hoc solutions and templates of successful political behavior.

Political culture is a complex entity; it reflects the circumstances of the action together with action patterns and conscious designs. Thus, fragmentation of the Ukrainian polity could not but become reflected in the political culture which, from the very beginning, developed as an amalgam of often inconsistent themes and stories. Inconsistency, however, did not run inside these stories: It was manifested only across the divide that separated the eastern part of the country from the west. Russian political culture, on the other hand, though more holistic on the surface, has been fundamentally controversial in its basic structure.

It has been argued that Ukrainian political culture is a culture of dependency and accommodation. Sure enough, neither the first nor the second feature is uniquely Ukrainian. However, the explanatory value these designations have in the Ukrainian context outweighs, in my view, other traditionally employed models, for example, the Almondian scheme of subject—participant—civic culture progression. Political culture of the postcommunist Ukraine is neither subject nor civic. It combines some participatory elements with new forms of dependency. Although we must not neglect important advances in individual freedom and participation that arose after the collapse of communism, the culture of individual survivalism and accommodation prevails.

One final word on Ukrainian nationalism: I do believe that it is a more or less consciously constructed phenomenon, rather than manifestation of the primordial longing of the masses. In a long row of European model and modular nationalisms, Ukrainian nationalism belongs closer to the end.<sup>98</sup> As a state platform, it has made a relatively recent appearance in the Revolution of 1917. As a program for national *risorgimento*, it repeatedly failed to enlist the widespread support necessary for transition to the crowning phase of mass mobilization. Only when the postcommunist *nomenklatura*, which had inherited the state by default, decided to jump on the nationalist bandwagon, could mobilization commence in earnest. A decade later, it appears that, even with state support, the mass response has been less than overwhelming.

Ukrainian society remains regionally and corporately fragmented, ethno-linguistically divided, and highly dependent on exogenous sources of power and stability—be it an authoritative paternalist state, the “fraternal” Russia,



the Ukrainian diaspora in the West, the United States, NATO, the European Union, or other foreign regulators. In their preoccupation with “stability” and survival, Ukrainians are ill prepared to face the future. Ukrainian ethno-nationalism failed to unify the nation but is still encouraged by the state. On the other side, the vast Russophone community did not mobilize along the default lines of language and ethnicity, which means that ethnic peace in Ukraine may be preserved even while the state-sponsored assimilation of Russians gains momentum. All in all, the political culture of accommodation has largely stalled development, but also moderated conflicts inside the country. Whether or not it can be successfully utilized in foreign relations, especially in Ukraine’s dealings with Russia, we attempt to answer in the next chapter.

# Ukraine's Russian Problem

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After Ukraine gained its independence the problem of its relations with Russia became a major preoccupation of its political establishment. For one thing, both Russia and Ukraine faced uncertain prospects for the future of their heretofore integrated economies. For another, 11.35 million Russians living in Ukraine and 4.36 million Ukrainians living in Russia grew accustomed to what they believed was their larger common home, the USSR. Many in these groups harbored deep reintegrationist sentiments that could be used to justify Russia's intervention in Ukraine's domestic affairs. Most importantly, Russian state officials equivocated on the issue of Ukrainian independence, giving rise to the fear that Russia might attempt to bring Ukraine back under its control, by force if necessary.

As the Ukrainian nation was quite recently forged out of culturally diverse groups and regions that were previously dominated by various powers, the political elite felt insecure.<sup>1</sup> The country faced open territorial claims from Russia and Romania, while Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia could point out that certain parts of the western Ukrainian territories had belonged to them until the end of World War II. Ethnic minorities inhabiting the areas in question could not be relied upon as particularly staunch supporters of Ukrainian independence.

Worse still, identity remained contested from within, not only by local Russians and other minorities, but by Ukrainians themselves. Preserving historical links to Russia or abandoning them in favor of unambiguous self-identification became the focal point of this contention. The idea that Ukraine properly belongs to the East Slavic family of nations and should forge state alliances accordingly has found its admirers in eastern and southern regions of the country. A diametrically opposed view of Russia and

Russians as culturally alien and politically hostile has dominated the thinking of a hodge-podge group of nationalist politicians in the national capital and in the west of the country, most notably the historically detached region of Galicia. The Ukrainian Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, appeared divided on the Russian issue to no less extent than were the regions and regionally based parties. However, the government, though indecisive on economic reform and human rights issues, emerged united in its desire to keep Russia at bay. Drawing closer to Russia could at least potentially erode the power base the Ukrainian oligarchs had secured for themselves and was blocked for that reason.

In this chapter, the problem of culture and identity in Ukrainian-Russian relations is illustrated through the analysis of Ukrainian reactions to the perceived Russian threat. I will delineate the host of disputed issues as seen from the Ukrainian side of the border. A discussion of the role of Ukrainian regions and the regional variety of responses to the Russian challenge will add perspective to the picture of a domestic environment where state and nation building takes place under contending influences of culturally distant anti-Russian and pro-Russian constituencies. An assessment of policies pursued by the Ukrainian government in its quest to move away from Russia and closer to the West, while keeping a proper balance between the considerations of interest and identity, will form the central theme of the discussion.

### **IDENTITY POLITICS AND THE RUSSIAN “ENEMY”**

Ukraine’s scramble to distance itself from Russia resembles similar efforts of the one-time overseas subjects of the British, Portuguese, and other empires.<sup>2</sup> If the imperial analogy is at all applicable to the Soviet Union, a postimperial syndrome was bound to resurface. The fact that the Soviet “empire” was not based on the exploitation of the national peripheries by the metropolitan center (in reality, resources flowed in precisely the opposite direction) may be of lesser importance here than the lopsided structure of Soviet federalism, which generated huge power imbalances between the Moscow center and the republics.<sup>3</sup> The Soviet state, rigidly hierarchical in its composition and principles of functioning, was premised on political domination of the republics by the center, which alone can explain the intensity of the post-Soviet feelings of resentment that some of the ex-peripheries now harbor against the center’s legal heir, Russia. For the nation builders in ex-Russian borderlands, whether the USSR *was* an empire controlled by the Russians is of little or no consequence; the important thing is how it can be represented *now*.

Ukraine has also not been unique in its desire to crystallize a new national identity through opposition to a culturally close and historically dominant community, as other cases of late national mobilization in Europe bear witness. As a rule, the intensity of such an effort does not diminish because of the dense cultural interpenetration between the newly mobilized (outgoing) national communities and their old identity anchors, as the dynamics of Scottish or Irish national mobilizations vis-à-vis the United Kingdom convincingly demonstrate. Ukrainian nationalism differs in that it matured under particularly unfavorable circumstances of suppression and armed struggle with authoritarian (Poland) and totalitarian (USSR) governments during the interwar period. As a brand of clandestine revolution facing an intractable struggle against overwhelming opponents, Ukrainian nationalism grew totalitarian itself. Its most influential doctrine, Dontsov's integral nationalism, heavily borrowed from such sources as Italian fascism and German national socialism.<sup>4</sup> Its proponents affiliated themselves with the ideologically kindred Axis powers and welcomed Hitler's armies as a political opportunity of a lifetime. After swearing allegiance to the "new order" in Nazi-occupied Lviv in 1941, they became active participants in the wartime atrocities, killing Jews, Russians, and Ukrainian Soviet sympathizers as alleged "enemies of the nation."<sup>5</sup> The killings, which also targeted local antifascist resistance, were intended to prepare the ground for the inception of a quasi-independent totalitarian regime under nationalist control. When forced into overseas exile by the Red Army, none of the leading nationalist organizations grew any more tolerant in their views of the Soviet regime or its core nation, the Russians. A democratic alternative to this sort of nationalism could not grow in the USSR either, since prosecution of Ukrainian dissidents, though falling short of mass terror, was nonetheless strong enough to suffocate all civic channels of proindependence discourse.

The only other tradition of lasting importance upon which to build the state was national communism. Although free from the ethno-racial exclusivity of integral nationalism and never really into the cult of heroic leaders that Dontsovites shared with both Stalinists and Hitlerites, Ukrainian national communism could not be accused of excessive democracy either. With these two sources to feed off, postcommunist nationalism in Ukraine showed an early tendency to deviate from its declared liberal-democratic commitments. As long as the government wanted to keep its minorities' record clean, it had to withstand the pressure of an implicitly Russophobic nationalist lobby. An imperial stigma attached to the Russians, the recent prosecution of Ukrainian activists by the Soviets, and continued clashes of material interests both inside

and outside the country go a long way toward explaining why the nationalist construction of the enemy targeted Russia and the Russians.

A typical statement by the “patriotic opposition” laments “centuries of bloodthirsty Russification” and calls to “overcome truly destructive consequences of the prolonged unmerciful, violent, brutal suppression and annihilation of the Ukrainian people’s culture.”<sup>6</sup> This citation from the address “To the Russian-speaking Citizens of Ukraine,” adopted by the self-named “Congress of Ukrainian Intelligentsia,” is representative of nationalist mythology worldwide. It assumes that a separate, fully formed Ukrainian culture flourished for centuries before falling prey to a campaign of ruthless, premeditated extermination by foreigners. It reads the national history primarily as a story of suffering and heroic opposition to outlanders. It also mandates the redress of past injustices, seeing this as a means to reconstruct an idyllic condition of self-contained national existence before the catastrophe. Against the background of a utopian golden age, it judges the nation’s current state as deplorable, and places the blame squarely on the former metropolitan center, which presumably was motivated by a unique hatred of all things Ukrainian.

A nationalist discourse does not distinguish between political causes and the cultural implications of external dominance, between social and national oppression, or between the oppressive regime and “its” nationality. The Russian minority, consisting of 22.1 percent of the population, has been consequently regarded as politically unreliable, “alien elements,” or even “occupiers.” Ukrainian Russophones, who, judging by the language of convenience, make up about 60 percent of the nation, are invited to recognize themselves as “victims of Russification,” and their request for official status for the Russian language in Ukraine is seen as a manifestation of “Russian chauvinism.”<sup>7</sup> Model ethnicization of the state is vigorously defended as a means to secure national independence. The very concept of national statehood becomes a discursive tool of power politics, being defined exclusively through titular ethnicity and its corporate rights, rather than the common legal rights of all citizens. The assimilation of national minorities is generally encouraged as a necessary sacrifice serving the common good.

## **LANGUAGE POLICIES AND MINORITY RIGHTS**

Ukraine’s early legislation on national minorities followed the tradition of European civic nation building. Compared to Latvia and Estonia, Ukraine opted for the inclusive concept of national citizenship. The 1989 Law on Languages designated Ukrainian as the state language, while keeping Russian as

“the language of international communication of the peoples of the USSR.” The 1992 Law on National Minorities in Ukraine guaranteed the national-cultural autonomy of minorities (Article 6) and equal political, social, economic, and cultural rights and freedoms to all citizens of Ukraine irrespective of nationality (Article 1). The Ukrainian Constitution, adopted on June 28, 1996, while reaffirming the state status of the Ukrainian language, once again asserted that the state “guarantees free development, use and protection of Russian, other languages of national minorities of Ukraine” (Article 10).

All these assurances notwithstanding, the state privileging of Ukrainian in “all spheres of public life,” which was perceived as a long-deserved “affirmative action” by one sector of the population, alarmed and discouraged others, who saw it as an attempt to assimilate them and feared it might trample the cultural rights of minorities underfoot. In what scholars following Brubaker call a nationalizing project,<sup>8</sup> the Ukrainian government embarked on a path of cultural streamlining that aimed to transform an essentially bilingual, if not binational, society into the image of one of its founding communities and to transform a modern, civilly united, multiethnic state into a monoethnic nation-state presiding over the benevolent assimilation of its “peripheral” minorities. Proceeding along this route, Ukrainian activists duplicated other nationalizing states’ policies in that “they promote the linguistic and cultural supremacy of the eponymous ethnic community, erecting perceived or actual barriers to the economic and political mobility of national minorities.”<sup>9</sup> So far, these policies have provoked sparse resistance from those affected. However, it would be naïve to assume that this might not change in the future. Whatever the merits of the “affirmative action” arguments, one cannot be oblivious to the fact that “attempts to introduce rapid changes in cultural/linguistic policies and practices run the risk of alienating the sizable non-Ukrainian populations in Ukraine as well as many Russified Ukrainians.”<sup>10</sup>

The issue is particularly sensitive not so much in relations between ethnic groups as in relations between the two largest linguistic communities in the country: Russian and Ukrainian. The language issue in Ukraine is larger than the issue of minorities. In addition to 11.17 million Ukrainian Russians who named Russian as their mother tongue in the 1989 census, 4.6 million ethnic Ukrainians also claimed it as their native language. Among the republic’s sizeable minorities, 90 percent of Jews, 78.8 percent of Greeks, 55.2 percent of Belarusians, and 49 percent of Tatars also claimed Russian as their native tongue.<sup>11</sup> Both Ukrainophone and Russophone communities are multiethnic, though eponymous nationalities for obvious reasons are central to each of them.

Jean Laponce noted that “languages pose to political systems problems involving boundaries that non-linguistic minorities do not pose to the same extent. While non-linguistic minorities will often be satisfied with the granting of territorially transportable individual rights, linguistic minorities will typically want group rights that are territorially grounded.”<sup>12</sup> This makes language “wars” politically charged. Perhaps because of that, the Russian superminority became singled out as a target of nationalist attack. In a number of publications, the minority was pictured as a “fifth column” of the Russian state, its origins were traced to the policies of “bloody Russification” ascribed to czarist and Soviet officials alike, and its “non-indigenous” character was emphasized. Official policies, though eschewing this sort of rhetoric, nevertheless unambiguously sided with the claim of Ukrainians as the sole “indigenous” people in the country: “Regarding Ukraine, we must speak exclusively of a national state, since only the Ukrainians historically inhabit this territory and this is the only place in the world where they could fulfill their right to self-determination. In addition, there are no other similar nations in Ukraine, as representatives of [several other] national groups have their own state formations beyond the borders of Ukraine and have no objective or subjective grounds to shape themselves into a separate specific nation on the territory of Ukraine. The Crimean Tatars make up an exception of [another] indigenous ethnos.”<sup>13</sup>

While prudence dictates that “in a multiethnic society, such as Ukraine, it would be dangerous to base allegiance to the new state upon a language criteria alone,” the state felt it was necessary to support effectively assimilationist policies in education and culture.<sup>14</sup> The task was deemed relevant for foreign policy on the assumption that the less “Russian” Ukraine looked, the more genuine the respect accorded to its national credentials. Domestic policies were in no small part influenced by these considerations. Although the Law on Languages allowed using languages of minorities in the areas of their “compact” settlement, the Russian language was practically purged from schools in western Ukraine and severely restricted in the national capital. By 1996, Kiev’s Russian population (25 percent of the total) was left with only 14 percent of schools offering Russian language instruction. The proportion of first-grade students enrolled in Ukrainian schools in Kiev was five times larger than the proportion of Kievites using Ukrainian at home. In the philology department at Kiev University, students of the Russian language and Ukrainian literature were required to study them in Ukrainian.<sup>15</sup>

Ignoring well-known incongruity between the reported “passport” nationality and actual linguistic preferences of the people, the government ordered

the elimination of “excessive” schools offering Russian language instruction. In less than two years (1994–95), the number of such schools dropped by more than five hundred. Between 1996 and 1998, the proportion of students educated in Russian schools decreased from 41 to 36 percent nationwide, declining by 9 percent in each of the mostly Russophone Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv oblasti and by 12 percent in the nation’s capital. The cuts were particularly drastic in the Vinnytsia, Chernivtsi, Khmelnytsky, and Zhytomyr oblasti and in the city of Kiev, where the end of the two-year period saw from 1.5 to 1.8 times fewer Russian-educated schoolchildren. By 1998, not a single kindergarten or daycare facility continued using Russian in Kiev or in the eight westernmost provinces of the country, while the closure of such facilities in the Odessa and Kharkiv oblasti diminished the number of Russian-educated preschoolers there by 14 and 22 percent respectively. By 1999, the number of Russian schools in Ukraine was cut by more than a third compared to the 1991 school year, which prompted minority activists to protest the government-sponsored “Russophobia” with the Council of Europe. As the number of schools with Russian language instruction was reduced, those that remained became crowded. Average enrollment, a good measure of relative supply and demand, was 212 students per school in schools offering Ukrainian language instruction in 1994. The figures for ethnic minority schools approximated Ukrainian in the Polish, Hungarian, Romanian, and Crimean Tatar cases, each with average enrollment per school between 200 and 300 students. Jewish schools drew 324 students per institution. At the same time, average enrollment in schools with Russian language instruction was three to four times higher than that of the Ukrainian monolingual schools.<sup>16</sup>

In a country where more than half the population considers Russian its native tongue or prefers to use it in day-to-day communication, certain measures of linguistic Ukrainianization appeared prohibitive.<sup>17</sup> Thus, all official communication was to be conducted in Ukrainian. An exam in Ukrainian became the standard admission requirement for entrance into higher education. The number of hours of Russian language instruction has been drastically reduced in schools at all levels.<sup>18</sup> History textbooks that previously depicted Russia as an eternal “brother” and protector of the Ukrainian people were replaced with new ones in which Russia’s role in Ukrainian history was shown as hostile and destructive.<sup>19</sup> Book publishing in the Russian language declined, despite the fact that more people admitted knowing Russian than Ukrainian, and library patrons borrowed 25 percent more books and magazines in Russian than in the language of the titular nation.<sup>20</sup>



Ukrainianization did not limit itself to cultural choices. Analysts noted that “a sharp restriction of opportunities to receive an education and choose a profession for Russian and Russian-speaking youth” would sooner or later translate into an occupational disadvantage.<sup>21</sup> In the army, Russophone conscripts and a large number of officers faced language problems that hindered the adjustment and training of recruits. Cadre changes propelled by considerations of the “right” ethnopolitical identity followed. A number of Russian-speaking professionals lost their jobs in the government, academia, industry, army, security, education, and mass media. The pattern mostly affected privileged and semiprivileged positions throughout western Ukraine, the Lviv oblast in particular.<sup>22</sup>

Relegation of the status of the Russian language contributed to feelings of insecurity among Ukrainian Russians and Russophones. As early as 1991, 59 percent of ethnic Russians residing in western Ukraine (Galicia), 18 percent of those living in the Crimea, and 14 percent of the inhabitants of the central regions noted that attitudes toward Russians had worsened. As many as 82 percent of the Russians in Galicia and 42 percent in Bukovyna reported witnessing ethnic enmity in day-to-day situations. From 11–38 percent in the western regions and from 3–8 percent in the east suffered from antipathy toward Russians expressed by officials working for the government.<sup>23</sup> Nationwide polls in 1994–95 demonstrated that ethnic discrimination against Russians was observed by a growing number of people (9.1–9.6 percent of the total population). In 1995, discrimination was reported by 14.8 percent of Russian respondents.<sup>24</sup>

In search for a way out, some portion of the Russian superminority chose to emigrate, most commonly heading to either the Russian Federation or the West. In 1993, for example, 204,800 of 307,000 emigrants from Ukraine went to Russia. The next year, the runaway mood among all population groups, substantially bolstered by triple-digit inflation, produced a negative migration balance of 143,187, with 93,374 more Russians leaving Ukraine than coming into the country.<sup>25</sup> According to Russian statistical data reported by Galina Vitkovskaia, more than 1.13 million people left Ukraine for Russia from 1992–97 alone.<sup>26</sup> An even larger group—firmly tied to Ukrainian soil with manifold personal investments, jobs, housing, and property—opted for assimilation. In one estimate, recent ethnic reidentification in Ukraine resulted in a 50 percent drop in the number of people reporting their nationality as “Russian,” from 22 percent in 1989 to only 11 percent in 1997.<sup>27</sup> The choice of dual Ukrainian-Russian citizenship has not been an option because Kiev fears Russia might intervene on behalf of its resident citizens in Ukraine.

The political and cultural consequences of nationalizing policies were felt on the institutional and group levels of state-society interaction no less than on the individual level. In interconfessional relations, Ukrainianization could not but bring both direct and indirect losses to the status, prestige, influence, and property of the Russian Orthodox Church, whose regional division under the name of Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Moscow Patriarchate, remains the second-biggest church in the country. In the sphere of political and administrative relations, the policy had implications for local governance and administration in the eastern and southern areas of the country. Bureaucratic centralization, security considerations, and politics of identity were equally at play when Kiev moved in to curtail the autonomous rights of the Crimean Republic, abolishing the Crimean presidency in 1995 and going on to further pressure republican lawmakers into submission on issues ranging from the status of the Russian language to the rights of the local administration.<sup>28</sup> The trauma of bruised identity was felt by as many in Moscow as by the Russian parties in the Crimea itself.

Ukraine's reaction to Russian concerns was that of distancing: Russian critique was rebutted as interference with the domestic affairs of a sovereign state, giving insight to the official attitude toward the minority. The more Ukrainian-Russian relations worsened, the more widespread became the view, reiterated in the nationalist media, that the Russian ethnic minority in Ukraine actually welcomed Moscow's interference on their behalf. Sociological polls showed that Ukrainian Russians saw Ukraine as being primarily responsible for existing interstate tensions.<sup>29</sup> The conclusion that Ukraine's position in negotiations with Russia was weakened through the pressure of Moscow's "fifth column" inside the country was promptly reached. To eliminate the all-important link between the local Russian population and its external homeland, the influence of foreign Russian news media had to be minimized. Nationalist pressure groups stepped up their efforts to make Ukraine "more Ukrainian," arguing that ethno-national consolidation is essential to ensuring the success of democratic transition, economic reform, and foreign policy.<sup>30</sup>

The government responded by curtailing Russian television and radio broadcasts in Ukraine. In Lviv, where 7 percent of the population is Russian, the only Russian-language TV program was terminated by the city administration.<sup>31</sup> The 1994 Law on Television and Radio demanded that all programs had to be at least 50 percent Ukrainian in content. In August, 1995, Kiev ordered that the popular Russian Public Television (ORT) be broadcast on a technically inferior frequency channel. As a result, the station lost one-third

of its Ukrainian audience.<sup>32</sup> The following month, the distribution of the Russian state-owned RTR station's TV programs was reduced even more sharply. According to a decision made by Ukraine's State Committee for Television and Radio, the relay of RTR programs was to be phased out completely, thus making the station practically inaccessible in Ukraine.<sup>33</sup> Explaining the policy, Zynoviy Kulyk, who headed the committee, said: "First, dissemination of television and radio programs, aside from anything else, also pursues propaganda goals. These media are powerful means of ideological influence and, understandably, they are used for appropriate purposes. Second, dissemination of television and radio programs adds an extra source of revenue from commercial advertising. Why should the profits go to ORT alone?"<sup>34</sup>

Whatever the merits of the argument, not everyone in Ukraine was able to duly appreciate it, much less rejoice, because the external criticism of the increasingly authoritarian government was finally silenced. Since the times of perestroika, Ukrainians had grown accustomed to the idea that the freedom to choose one's personal sources of information and entertainment was an essential feature of any democratic society. Now they were learning the limits to this freedom.

Protests by Russian, German, Greek, and other minority groups, as well as appeals by ethnic Ukrainians who insisted on their right to choose between various TV programs, fell on deaf ears in the government.<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile, the postal service raised tariffs levied on Russian periodicals tenfold against the comparable domestic media—a measure that Russian publishers saw as "financial repression caused by [our] attempts at unbiased reporting of the state of affairs in Ukraine."<sup>36</sup> When President Kuchma was asked to clarify the reasons behind the policy, he presented it as retaliation for Russia's cutting down on energy subsidies to Ukraine. Russian activists in Ukraine saw it differently, citing a "deliberate attack on the Russian-speaking population" and an attempt at political censorship as Kiev's most likely goals in what they described as a full-blown information blockade.<sup>37</sup> A Russian periodical observed that Ukraine had not only walled itself off from Russia, "which political considerations might well explain," but from Russian culture and its bearers inside the country.<sup>38</sup>

Ukrainian Russians and Russophone Ukrainians feel a certain injustice in these policies. When the Ministry of Education insists on forcing Ukrainian language instruction on the predominantly Russophone majority in eastern regions of the country, parents' rights to educate their children in their native tongue are violated.<sup>39</sup> A shift to

Ukrainian in higher education, which is mandated by the Law on Languages and subsequent regulations, disadvantages ethnic Russians headed for professional careers, thus pushing social stratification into ethno-linguistic lines of division. The attack on Russian mass media cripples Ukraine's Russian culture. If this trend continues, we might be forced to agree that, "in spite of rhetoric of building a civic rather than a national state, at least some of Ukraine's institutions can be accused of undertaking a nationalizing project."<sup>40</sup>

Partly as a result of complaints raised by conationals, Moscow's position on the Russian ethnic minority in Ukraine changed from cautious neutrality to expressions of concern and readiness to get involved if necessary. By mid-1992, the view that Russia had the right to intervene on behalf of its "compatriots" in the near abroad, initially formulated by the opposition, had made it to the Russian Foreign Ministry. Concern over the status of "compatriots" became a persistent problem for Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and his successors, Evgenii Primakov and Igor Ivanov. A separate agency to deal with the problem, the Commission for Citizenship, was established by Yeltsin's decree, and the Committee for CIS Affairs and Compatriots Abroad appeared in the State Duma soon thereafter. A new military doctrine mentioned protection of Russians abroad as possible justification for military involvement.<sup>41</sup> The "big" Ukrainian-Russian treaty on friendship and cooperation, although ready for signing in 1994, was delayed until 1997 for fear that it would endorse further Ukrainianization. The year and a half that the treaty waited for ratification in the State Duma showed that the "protective" mind-set endured.

Ukraine's reaction was twofold. On one hand, Kiev asserted that, in Kuchma's words, "we are able to protect the Ukrainian Russians ourselves: they are citizens of this state, not Russia."<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, it advanced reciprocal claims on behalf of Russia's Ukrainian ethnic community. The 4,363,000 Ukrainians living in Russia constituted 2.97 percent of that nation's total population in 1989; by 1994, the percentage of Ukrainians living in Russia had dropped to 2.34.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, although there were 2.6 times fewer Ukrainians living in Russia than Russians living in Ukraine, it was still alleged that "there are more citizens of Ukrainian inheritance resident there [in the Russian Federation] than Russians [resident] in Ukraine!"<sup>44</sup> The fact that Russia's Ukrainians, with the exception of a few vocal groups of metropolitan intellectuals,<sup>45</sup> were largely assimilated and did not press cultural demands to the same extent as Ukraine's Russians has been completely ignored. Mean-

while, no more than 5 percent of ethnic Ukrainians in Russia speak the Ukrainian language at home; 94.9 percent report using Russian for family communication.<sup>46</sup> Their self-identification, even if marginally influenced by “passport” nationality, does not substantially deviate from the Russian average. Even so, the long history of Ukrainian settlement in Russia and the Russian authorities’ slow response to locally raised Ukrainian cultural demands remain powerful arguments in the ongoing dispute over minority rights.

### TERRITORIAL CLAIMS

The issue of minorities bears direct relevance to the question of territory. The national identity of any state hinges on a balance between political, spatial, ethnic, and cultural elements, though the relative weight of each component differs from case to case. “Languages and states are both territorial animals,” argues Jean Laponce.<sup>47</sup> Kiev’s desire to speed up the process of the acculturation of local Russians alarmed Moscow, where it was perceived as chipping away at national identity in an area of historical Russian settlement. As often happens in international relations, the preventive measures of one side provoked the very actions the other had sought to prevent in the first place. A drive to “protect” Ukrainian Russians through some mixture of extraterritoriality and local autonomy started as soon as the “nationalizing” direction of Ukraine’s policies became evident.

Practically all of the Russian politicians were in some way invited to formulate a position on the Ukrainian issue. While liberals argued that nation-building policies in the newly independent state must not concern the former metropolitan center, their opponents wanted to make a statement that would be heard in Ukraine. Soon enough, many of the recent liberals were promoted to positions of power and had to embrace traditional Russian statism as an ideology. A campaign to return the Crimea back to Russia by declaring the 1954 act on its transfer to Ukraine null and void started when Ukraine’s independence was still in the making.

Although the “big” treaty is unambiguous in stating that both sides have no territorial claims on each other, Russia’s ability to deliver on its promise has been questioned. After all, the territorial integrity of both countries had been assured in the November, 1990, interstate treaty, which was concluded while the Soviet Union still existed. This, however, did not prevent Yeltsin’s spokesman to declare, less than a year later, Russia’s right to revise its borders with Ukraine should the latter opt for full independence.<sup>48</sup> Immediately after the failure of the August, 1991, putsch, Russian vice president Aleksandr

Rutskoi was dispatched to Kiev with a mandate "to tell the Ukrainian people: if you stay in the Union, we will not make territorial claims."<sup>49</sup> Both Rutskoi and Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet, had been outspoken champions of Russian nationalism and irredentism until their arrest in a crackdown on opposition in October, 1993. The territories of ethnic Russian settlements, Crimea in particular, became a point of contention, and Russian legislators repeatedly claimed them as "legitimately Russian" lands. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and several advisers to the president often went along with this claim, explicitly linking the question of minorities to the question of territories.

Ukrainians could not but feel alarmed with the intensity of Russian preoccupation. The government showed signs of confusion and prevarication in reasserting Ukraine's rights over Crimea. Meanwhile, in May, 1992, the Russian Parliament issued a resolution that called the 1954 decisions to transfer Crimea to Ukraine "without the force of law from the moment they were adopted." Later that same year, Deputy Prime Minister Poltoranin suggested that it would not be long until "Russia, Ukraine, and a number of other republics will be something single." In November, 1994, the State Duma linked the ratification of a friendship treaty to Ukraine's position on the Crimean issue, calling on Kiev to treat "the problems and hopes of the Crimean republic with the same tolerance as were present in Russia's treatment of the establishment of the independent Ukraine."<sup>50</sup> In April, 1995, both Yeltsin and Kozyrev demanded that Kiev show more "respect for the will of the Crimeans" and bemoaned the pressure placed on separatist leaders by the Ukrainian government. Crimea and Crimea-related issues were on the Russian Parliament's agenda in October and December, 1996; before and after the signing of the "big" treaty in May, 1997; and before and after its ratification in December, 1998. Ratification of the interstate treaty in February, 1999, by the upper house of the Russian Parliament, the Federation Council, was specifically conditioned on the continuation of Russia's Black Sea Fleet being moored at Sevastopol and, hence, Russia's continuing military presence in Crimea.<sup>51</sup>

The Ukrainian response to Russian territorial demands followed the logic of interactive nationalism.<sup>52</sup> If interactively generated, nationalist reaction serves to compensate for real and imaginary disadvantages arising from communication with an ethnic other. Thus, a newly independent state may take a staunchly uncompromising stance in negotiations with a formerly dominant power, or a newly sovereign state may ventilate its feeling of relative deprivation in a concerted effort to bring its own minorities in line with officially promulgated policies. However, an immature state is particularly

sensitive to pressure from a former sovereign. Since independence presupposes equal sovereignty of the parties, a less confident state may seek to match claims of the opponent with equally strong claims of its own. This kind of reasoning struck a chord with both the government and the general public in Ukraine. Ukraine's foreign minister, Borys Tarasyuk, recalled that, even before the December, 1991, referendum on independence, Ukrainian diplomats were prepared to meet Russia's territorial claims with reciprocal claims to adjacent territories with a history of Ukrainian settlement: "The Russians were trying to impose their view that the whole area of 'Nova Rossiia' would be a sphere of common interest between Russia and Ukraine. This was a great surprise to us, and certainly it was quite unacceptable to Ukraine—in the corridors there were suggestions to make similar reference to Kuban and other areas in Russia. But fortunately there was enough wisdom on both sides to avoid any references to these issues in bilateral documents."<sup>53</sup>

However, an acute sense of insecurity prompted Ukraine to call on formal and preferably international guarantees of its territorial integrity. Those were given by the United States and Russia in the Trilateral Agreement of January 14, 1994, and reiterated by the Russian Federation in the Budapest Declaration of December 5, 1994. Soon thereafter, Russia explicitly recognized Ukraine's sovereignty over Crimea in a separate protocol to the June 9, 1995, Sochi agreement.

Upon returning from the Sochi summit, Leonid Kuchma expressed his belief that the Crimean question was finally closed.<sup>54</sup> However, nationalist factions in the Duma continued to pursue an agenda of territorial "adjustments" that could not help but provoke reciprocal moves from Ukraine. When the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation unilaterally revoked the 1954 act transferring Crimea to Ukraine, Ukrainian parliamentarians responded with an appeal to the North Atlantic Assembly, which among other things stated:

According to this logic, Ukraine should have demanded abolition of Resolutions of the former Soviet Union 'On Regulation of Borders of the Ukrainian SSR with the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Byelorussian SSR' of October 16, 1925, pursuant to which Ukrainian territories were attached to Russia, including the Gaivoronsky, the Putivlsky and Novooskolsky districts of the Kursk gubernia [region]; the Ostrogozsky, the Bogucharsky, the Birgishensky districts of the Voronezh region; the Taganrogsky district of the Donskaya region; the Temriuksky and the Eiesky districts of the

Kuban region, where the proportion of ethnic Ukrainians amounted to 51% to 90% of the population.

However, this approach would have immediately led to a chain reaction of revision of state boundaries, which would have resulted in catastrophic conflicts in Europe and worldwide.<sup>55</sup>

Having said that, Ukrainian politicians have insisted that Ukraine harbors no territorial pretensions to anyone and would continue to denounce any claims to its territory. The theme of the "lost territories" has faded away from official government documents, although it periodically resurfaces on the pages of nationalist periodicals. Subsequent attempts by the Russian Duma to question the Belovezhe agreements, the status of Sevastopol, and the transfer of Crimea have been met with more a powerful defense that conditioned Ukraine's willingness to meet its obligations on nuclear nonproliferation on the show of respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Over time, Ukrainian ripostes to Russian territorial claims made more extensive use of the diplomatic instruments supplied by Ukraine's membership in the United Nations (since its inception) or the Conference/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Most commonly, they have been coached in a language of "universal norms and principles of international law" and have striven to harness the authority of multilateral bodies (the UN Security Council, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, and the Council of Europe) in defense of sovereignty and the security of Ukraine. References to the bilateral Ukrainian-Russian treaty of November 19, 1990, which recognized the parties' territorial integrity, were also made, though less frequently, as Russians apparently learned to interpret it as a document that did not and could not address the question of the signatories' independence.

Faced with continuing Russian pressure on issues ranging from minority rights to territory to foreign policy and the economy, the Ukrainian political elite have chosen to move away from Russia and closer to the West, particularly when economic reform and security are involved. The move was further propelled by the understanding that Russian leaders were hardly in a position to offer Ukraine any tangible incentives for cooperation, save relatively cheap energy prices. The idea of "dominance without responsibility" preferred by Moscow ran contrary to both Western and Ukrainian views of "responsibility without dominance."<sup>56</sup> This discrepancy, coupled with lingering mistrust of Russia's hidden agenda, compelled Ukrainians to seek both Western guarantees of security and Western guidance (and financial aid) in economic



restructuring. These policy considerations were reinforced by the deeply felt conviction that Ukraine's future lies with Europe, while Russia's European credentials were at best problematic.

### “EUROPE” AND “EURASIA”

The idea that Ukraine properly belongs to Europe, in contrast to “Eurasian” Russia, is an offshoot of the centennial tradition in Ukrainophile scholarship. An early champion of racial exclusivity, Franciszek Duchiniński (1816–93) went to great lengths to underscore the “Asianness” of the Russians, which in his view accounted for both the despotic and subservient propensities of the Russian national character. To emphasize the cultural gap between the Ukrainian and Russian nationalities, he invented a quasi-scientific explanation of the ethnic differences between the two countries, imagining their descent from different and completely unrelated tribes: the “Aryans” in the case of Ukraine and the “Turanians” in the case of Russia: “The Muscovites are neither Slavs nor Christians in the spirit of the [true] Slavs and other Indo-European Christians. They are nomads until this day, and will remain nomads forever.”<sup>57</sup>

The myth of the non-Slavic origin of Russians was enthusiastically embraced by Ukrainian nationalist scholars and has had a certain impact on Western academia.<sup>58</sup> More recently, they staged a not totally unexpected comeback, influencing political and cultural perceptions of certain small right-wing nationalist groups in Ukraine, such as the State Independence of Ukraine Party (DSU), whose political program and statutes are based on the principle of racial exclusivity. Ukrainian nationalist scholars, though not going so far as to deny the Russians Slavic roots, concurred in arguing for Ukrainian primordial uniqueness and early separation from other eastern Slavic tribes. The idea that ethnic differences between the future Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians can be traced back to the times of Scythians and Sarmatians was recently advanced by Ukrainian historian Iaroslav Isaievych.<sup>59</sup>

Differences in the political culture and political identity between Ukrainians and Russians were a subject of Mykola Kostomarov's (1817–85) classic work, “Two Russian Nationalities.” His study was less concerned with the problem of ethnic origins and than the ostensibly observable characteristics of the two people's political and social behavior. He considered Russians to be prone to autocratic rule, and Ukrainians prone to individualism and spontaneous democracy: “The Ukrainians are characterized by individualism, the Great Russians by collectivism. In the political sphere, the Ukrainians were able to create among themselves free forms of society which were controlled

no more than was required for their very existence, and yet they were strong in themselves without infringing on personal liberties. The Great Russians attempted to build on a firm foundation a collective structure permeated by one spirit. [T]he Ukrainians are a democratic people."<sup>60</sup>

These arguments, and their variations, became a staple in the ongoing debate between those who tend to emphasize the political and cultural affinity between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples (in more radical reading the Ukrainian and Russian branches of the "all-Russian" superethnos) and those who visualize Ukrainian identity as wholly separate from and hardly influenced by the identity of the Russian Other. Ukrainian state- and nation-building traditions, presented as democratic antipodes to their Russian counterparts, are said to be an inalienable part of an all-European historical movement toward liberalism and democracy. Russia, on the other hand, remains rhetorically excluded from this movement. From the freedom-loving aristocrats and merchant oligarchs of the Galicia-Volhyn' principality to the egalitarian Cossack bands, fighting against the social and national oppression to the fledgling national democracies of the last century, the mythology of Ukraine's uniquely distinct political and cultural tradition never fails to set it apart from inescapably despotic and imperialist Russia.

Political myths, created through the definitive reinterpretation of history, present the state with an identity profile it cannot afford to decline. Born in the processes of the political and ideological appellation of the national intelligentsia by the nationalizing elite, this newly forged identity feeds back to structure policies of the state. Post-Soviet developments in Ukrainian-Russian relations abound in contradictions that can hardly be explained by traditional theories of international politics.<sup>61</sup> However, the focus on contested identities helps to clarify the seemingly irrational behavior that otherwise could be seen as running contrary to the national interests. Thus, economic cooperation with Russia, potentially beneficial for Ukraine, was undermined by feelings of cultural insecurity and fear that an increased cooperation would jeopardize national sovereignty. Cooperation on the issue of nuclear nonproliferation was achieved only due to U.S. interference and only after international guarantees of Ukrainian sovereignty had been offered. However symbolic, these guarantees were important for a newly independent state that could not assert itself as an equal party to the negotiation of nuclear superpowers.<sup>62</sup> From this point of view, "Ukrainian disarmament was more a question of identity than of military security, where the material issue—nuclear weapons—took a back seat to the symbolic one—sovereignty."<sup>63</sup> Ukraine's national pride was further boosted when the country joined NATO's Partnership for Peace Program and the

Council of Europe, in both cases ahead of Russia and in symbolic defiance of Russia's efforts for reintegration.

Ukrainian Westernizers lauded these moves as an indication of the country's "return" to the path of development befitting a "normal" European state, which they believed Ukraine could have become long ago if not for unfortunate external circumstances. Echoing the passionate "Away from Moscow!" cry of national communist hero Mykola Khvyliovyi, post-Soviet intellectuals pushed the government to sever all ties with Russia in a vain hope that this would somehow automatically transform Ukraine into a liberal democracy. The national communists of the Kravchuk team concurred, although they were probably less moved by considerations of cultural affinity with Europe and more by the pragmatic necessity of protecting offices and office-generated perks from the encroachments of the former center. The group interests of Ukraine's political and cultural elite converged, and both came to support "the link between their prosperity as an elite to the continued vitality of the independent state which defended them against Russian culture and capital."<sup>64</sup> The turn away from Moscow, whatever its justification, promised not only symbolic but also material benefits. Identity symbolism itself became a material resource in both foreign and domestic politics when it proved capable of restructuring practices and fighting political and economic battles.

The policy ramifications of the European versus Eurasian debate are manifold. Brandishing Russia and, by extension, local Russians as culturally inferior "Eurasians" cannot but provoke bitter feelings on the part of the latter. The fact that Ukraine has thus far managed to avoid the escalation of ethnic conflicts must not be taken as a guarantee that such a conflict might not develop in the future. In spite of the appearance of calm, "Russian resistance to perceived Ukrainianization measures appears to be growing," noted researchers of the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board.<sup>65</sup> If relative stability has been unexpectedly helped by the underdevelopment of civil society, a successful transition will remove the present obstacles to ethnic mobilization. As Western "postmaterial" societies have abundantly demonstrated, once the more urgent problems of livelihood are solved, people tend to turn their attention to issues of culture and identity. If this ever happens in Ukraine, the "critical mass" of disgruntled Russians and Russophones can more than negligibly influence both the local and central echelons of administration, thus changing the balance of power in society.<sup>66</sup> If, on the other hand, Ukraine's transition is a failure and leads nowhere but to a cellar of the world's poorest countries, the scornful treatment of disadvantaged minorities becomes a time bomb.

The completely erroneous alternative of "Europe or Russia" understandably dictates only one answer. No nation on the continent would willingly turn its back on what has become a symbol of prosperity and civilization. The idea of European Russian destiny, though traced back to Byzantium, not Rome, is popular even among conservative neo-Slavophiles and reputed Anti-westernizers.<sup>67</sup> As a sheer fact of geography, Ukraine is a European state. It has to court Europe to get financial support, and it needs to trade with Europe to recover economically. It relies on European security arrangements to butter its own security and hopes eventually to be admitted into the European Union. The question is: Does it have to antagonize Russia to achieve this goal?

For many in the Kravchuk administration, the answer was "yes." The course away from Moscow was chosen largely out of necessity, since Russia represented that clear and present danger to Ukrainian sovereignty that no other nation could muster or was willing to demonstrate. Having secured legal rights of inheritance to the former Soviet Union, Russia became a regional hegemony largely with Western blessing. The Ukrainian government felt that national sovereignty remained conditional on Russia's good attitude until Russia retained what amounted to an informal international mandate of military intervention, justified, for example, by the need to secure administrative control over the nuclear missiles sitting in Ukrainian soil.

An early answer to this predicament was to declare Ukraine's neutrality and nonaligned status, which, as a domestic military analyst noted, "have been from the very beginning addressed not to NATO, but to Russia, taking into account the fact that, as a legal heir to the USSR, it was not going to give up its military-political advances on Ukraine."<sup>68</sup> The next step was to take control of the conventional arms and military equipment left in Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ukrainianization of the locally stationed troops and nationalization of the navy followed. The freshly cobbled army took a new oath of loyalty to the Ukrainian state in 1992. That same year, it was equipped with a brand-new Social-Psychological Directorate, whose chief officers started testing the troops' preparedness to fight Russia if needed.<sup>69</sup>

The perceptions of insecurity that the Ukrainian ruling elite shared with nationalist intellectuals were at the bottom of the decision to launch a campaign that demonized Russia as a proven imperialist, aggressor, and oppressor of the Ukrainian people. A typical nationalist account of Ukrainian-Russian relations looked like a litany of the continuous unspeakable suffering of Ukrainians at the hands of various Muscovite regimes, equally barbaric in their viciousness and inhumanity:

If Ukraine returns to the empire, Moscow will implement [its] 1944 order of total physical annihilation of all Ukrainians. It will draw the “iron curtain” on the borders and then it will proceed with its dreadful work, as it had through centuries. First, they will shoot generals and officers of the army, navy, SBU [security forces], militia and intelligentsia. Then, the total deportation of Ukrainians into the concentration camps of Siberia will commence, being organized in such a way that half of the population will die on the way, and the rest—in Siberia. They will start with the western lands of Ukraine bringing in *moskali* [a pejorative for the Russians] to settle these lands.<sup>70</sup>

As a viable threat to Ukraine’s sovereignty, Russia undoubtedly invited the hostile representations. Floating the image of a hostile Russian Other satisfied a number of important social functions. It helped to bolster patriotic feelings and to establish a mass, even if regionally limited, base of support for the first postcommunist government of Ukraine. Of course, certain collateral damage was unavoidable. The anti-Russian campaign in the media, craftily ignored by the government, could not but affect Ukrainian Russians, relegating the status of their language and culture and undermining confidence in the proclaimed civic character of the national identity that was forged in Ukraine.

It must be noted that the Ukrainian people en masse do not come anywhere close to the Manichean picture of a light-versus-darkness opposition that is so dear to the nationalist intellectuals working to throw Ukrainian-Russian differences into ever sharper relief. Ordinary Ukrainians do not see ethnonational streamlining as a priority with which the state should be concerned. As a representative survey indicated, mass attitudes toward ethnic Russian communities in Ukraine are tolerant: “Even on the crucial matter of knowledge of the Ukrainian language, 83 percent of the respondents over all and 52 percent of the respondents in western Ukraine disagreed or disagreed strongly with the proposition that ‘A person who does not know how to speak Ukrainian does not have the right to be a citizen of Ukraine.’”<sup>71</sup> A countrywide poll conducted in 1998 showed that 70 percent favored some official status for the Russian language, and 36 percent favored making Russian a second state language.<sup>72</sup> This corresponds well with other data showing that ordinary people are skeptical about the alleged problem of the Russian threat to Ukrainian statehood. Thus, Ukrainian researchers have found that no more than 2 percent of Ukrainian respondents revealed

hostile feelings toward Russians, while 34 percent viewed them as potential family members, as indicated by a willingness to accept relationships through marriage. Measured on this scale of tolerance, even the Western diaspora Ukrainians were less popular as potential family members.<sup>73</sup> Overall, Ukraine's way to Europe must not be defined in opposition to either Russia or the Russians.

### THE RUSSIAN ISSUE IN UKRAINE'S ELECTORAL CYCLE

Election contenders in Ukraine have to balance between the Russia-averse west and the essentially pro-Russian east in the country, taking into consideration the fact that between 45 and 55 percent of the vote comes from the latter region. Candidates feel obliged to placate Russophile easterners if they want to win the election. However, the western electorate makes a better ally for the incumbent, who must reinforce sovereignty and cannot appear as a Russian client before the world's financial lenders. Pulling in opposite directions, these drives sustain the familiar pendulum of Ukrainian politics: drawing closer to Russia (and the Russian ethnic community at home) before the elections and swinging back when the elections are over. During the first stage of the cycle, the nationalizing agenda is de-emphasized, the support of a local version of multicultural democracy is stressed, and the state is represented as a guarantor of prosperity and interethnic peace in the country. In the second stage, priorities change. Wooing the west and protecting one's power base from both external and internal challenges makes the Russia-averse stance a seemingly better choice for the established government. Promises given to the Russophone electorate are then forgotten, while alliances with the nationalist opposition are sought and won on diametrically opposite grounds.

Because of these dynamics, both winning candidates in the presidential elections of 1991 and 1994 had their patriotic credentials questioned at first, moved closer to the critics when in office, and entered the next elections as proponents of a certifiably "patriotic" agenda. In a similar way, demographic prevalence in the east secured the communists and other leftists' takeover of 38.6 percent of all seats in the parliamentary elections of 1998 but failed to give them more than a conditional mandate to power, thus allowing a pragmatically prowestern majority to oust the Rada's leftist leaders in the January, 2000, crisis. Kuchma's second election campaign also started with an assurance: "There is no rupture with my partner and brother Russia and there never will be," and ended with the pledge of a "continued partnership with

the American people” and an expressed desire “to join the Atlantic community.”<sup>74</sup> An early signal that the government was readying itself for the upcoming parliamentary elections was given by Kuchma in October, 2001, when he criticized overzealous Ukrainianizers in the Ministry of Education.

The “pendulum” pattern of Ukrainian politics, already evident in the first presidential elections in 1991, when the more moderate Leonid Kravchuk won over nationalist contenders Viacheslav Chornovil and Levko Luk’ianenko, was fully revealed in the second presidential elections of 1994. Leonid Kuchma campaigned on a platform of economic reform and strategic partnership with Russia, promising, among other things, to make Russian the country’s second state language. His victory was secured by the vote in the more populous eastern and southern regions. Interestingly, Kuchma was also supported by a politically and culturally amorphous central Ukrainian oblasti that had a much-lesser stake in the identity debate than the mobilized western and eastern areas, not to mention Crimea.<sup>75</sup> Taking into account that Kuchma’s performance as a prime minister with sweeping prerogatives in 1992–93 was a complete disaster, it is reasonable to conclude that nothing other than his reputation as a moderate “antinationalist” and champion of harmony (*zlahoda*) in society had won him the presidency. One of Kuchma’s trusted lieutenants and later head of presidential administration, Volodymyr Lytvyn, attributed this victory to the popular “support of the course of close cooperation and economic union with Russia, and the resolve to wage a determined struggle against corruption and mafia, first of all, in the state apparatus.”<sup>76</sup>

When elected with a 7 percent edge over his opponent Kravchuk, Kuchma initially seemed to honor some of his preelection promises. His inaugural speech called Ukraine a “multinational state” and focused on a Russian-Eurasian direction in foreign policy. The president went on to declare his intention “to request amendments to the current body of laws in order to accord Russian language an official status, while retaining the status of the state language for the Ukrainian.”<sup>77</sup> The president’s most influential adviser, former Deputy Speaker of the parliament Volodymyr Grinev, admitted “the national idea did not work.”<sup>78</sup> Another speech by the president confirmed this statement, declaring that the “Ukrainian national idea did not bring the desired consolidation, primarily because from the very beginning it was not filled with civic, political, or economic contents, but mostly with ethnopolitical contents.”<sup>79</sup> Similarly, liberal internationalism and official bilingualism were favorably juxtaposed to the “western Ukrainian” ideas of an ethnically consolidated statehood by Head of the Administration of the President Dmytro Tabachnyk and senior political adviser Dmytro Vydrin.<sup>80</sup>

A vociferous protest campaign, spearheaded by the Writers' Union of Ukraine and the nationalist opposition in Parliament and supported by the Ukrainian diaspora in the West, made the new elite backtrack on their promises. In international politics, Russia's active stance on a number of issues in bilateral relations became an annoyance. Speaking during the May, 1995, U.S.-Ukrainian summit in Kiev, Kuchma, in a clear reference to Russia, stated his resolute opposition to "imperial ambitions, aggressive separatism and [the] desire to rearrange the political map by force."<sup>81</sup>

Soon, the president who hardly spoke any Ukrainian before the elections found himself falling back on a beaten path of nationalizing policies set forth by his predecessor. Defying his preelection promises, he insisted on faster delimitation and demarcation of the transparent Ukrainian-Russian border and opposed the idea of dual citizenship that would benefit mostly Ukrainian Russians. Crimean autonomy was curtailed, and the Crimean president's post was abolished before the end of his first year in office. The project of the state program for the preservation and support of Russian culture in Ukraine between 1995 and 2000 was scrapped after its developer, the Ministry for Nationality Affairs, was accused of high treason by the nationalist "Prosvita" society for the promotion of the Ukrainian language.<sup>82</sup>

The "rolling back" of Russian language classes continued, despite the protests of the distressed "minorities." In less liberal areas of western Ukraine, it became practically impossible for the children of Russophone parents to have them taught in Russian. People who were affected by these policies in Galicia (the Lviv, Ivano-Frankivs'k, Ternopil' oblasti) created regional "parents committees" and demanded the fulfillment of the professed minority right to educate children in their native tongue. A local correspondent described the attitude of the education authorities in the region as "Russophobic."<sup>83</sup>

A complex situation developed in Crimea, which was hit harder economically than the rest of the country, and the uncertain future of the Crimean autonomy impelled a new wave of emigration to Russia. In 1994-95 alone, 10 percent of the Crimean population, close to 250,000 people, mostly ethnic Russians, left the peninsula for good.<sup>84</sup> By the end of 1997, twenty-three hundred people claiming refugee status fled Ukraine and were given asylum in the Russian Federation. At the beginning of 1998, there were 1,377 pending refugee applications from Ukraine to be determined by the Russian authorities.<sup>85</sup> Meanwhile, Kiev rejected several drafts of the Crimean Constitution in order to bring the document more in line with the centralizing tendencies of a unitary state. Crimean parliamentarians characterized this government policy



as “discrimination.”<sup>86</sup> Attempts to shut down Russian organizations in Crimea (Sevastopol) and Ivano-Frankivsk were undertaken by local bureaucrats who tried to invoke the clause against the “propaganda of inter-ethnic discord” to get the needed court decision. Although both cases ended in failure for the prosecution, Russian communities nationwide were alarmed.<sup>87</sup> Several Russian radio and television stations in Crimea were closed permanently during the 1999 election campaign to shield the president from potentially damaging criticism.

The result of Kuchma’s reassertion of essential continuity with his predecessor’s nationality policies was a dramatic loss of popularity, which the newly elected president experienced primarily in the regions of the country whose support had won him the office. His loss of popularity in the east was paralleled by an equally spectacular growth in the western part of the country. By December, 1995, Kuchma’s popularity rating in Crimea dropped from 64.8 percent to zero, in the southeastern region (Donbas) from 57 percent to 22 percent, in the northeastern region (Kharkiv) from 62.7 percent to 11 percent, and in the north from 42.5 percent to 16.5 percent. At the same time, his popularity rating in western Ukraine rose from 3.5 percent (as measured by votes given to him in the 1994 elections) to 37.7 percent.<sup>88</sup> By early 1996, Kuchma had fully adopted the image of a national-patriotic *derzhavnyk* (supporter of a strong national state), confirming the choice of the French nation-state model for Ukraine’s political development. The lone supporter of official bilingualism in the presidential administration, Counselor for Regional Issues Volodymyr Grinev, found himself in relative isolation.<sup>89</sup> The government was no longer willing to couch the identity debate in terms of language or culture policy. The model of “one nation—one language—one state” continues to guide Ukraine’s nation-building efforts today. As one senior administration official remarked: “to speak of the state without the state language and the state culture is but an empty talk. Support of the Ukrainian language is necessary to develop an independent Ukrainian state.”<sup>90</sup>

## MILITARY POLICY AND SECURITY

The identity debate in Ukraine has been tightly tied to questions of sovereignty and security. There is nothing unusual about this link, especially if one takes into account that Russia gave Ukrainians a number of reasons to be alarmed. Apart from the territorial demands raised by the Supreme Soviet and the State Duma, politicians such as Vice President Rutskoi, Foreign Minister Kozyrev, Defense Minister Grachev, and Security Council secre-

tary Aleksandr Lebed all issued statements on Russia's readiness to intervene in the near abroad if needed. Although Yeltsin regularly moderated and nullified the more militant pronouncements by Russian legislators, his own views on the Ukrainian problem tended to oscillate between more or less conciliatory stances. Thus, Yeltsin's decree number 940, issued on September 14, 1995, put the rights of Russians into the foundation of national security doctrine and forcefully suggested Russia's leading role in the CIS: open "internal" borders within the commonwealth and establishment of a unified defense system along the former Soviet frontiers. The November, 1990, Ukrainian-Russian treaty recognized Ukrainian borders within the USSR pursuant to the 1975 Helsinki agreements signed by the Soviet Union, but not Ukraine or Russia individually. The Russian-preferred formula for the "big treaty" was deliberately vague on the issue of Russo-Ukrainian borders, once again grounding Russia's commitment to the borders' inviolability in the Helsinki document, which Ukrainians saw as a mere political statement, "not legal by its form."<sup>91</sup> Although the question was resolved in Ukraine's favor in the final version of the treaty and ratified by both sides in 1999, the actual delimitation and demarcation of the borders remained frustrated by the Russians' unwillingness to cooperate. Russians preferred to keep the borders open and to regard the Sea of Azov as an internal lake jointly used by the two countries.

Thus, Ukrainians have had some motive to regard Russia as their main security concern. By the end of 1993, 32 percent of respondents in a nationwide poll believed that of all countries, Russia was the most likely candidate for the role of potential adversary.<sup>92</sup> While the figure declined over time, wide segments of the population remained worried over the deterioration of Russian-Ukrainian relations—some because they lamented Ukraine's running away from a friend, and others because they saw the northern neighbor as a standing menace. To counter this half-real, half-imaginary threat, the country had to bolster its defenses and win over important allies in the West, most notably the United States and NATO. These considerations have shaped Ukrainian security policy in the post-Soviet period.

According to Sherman Garnett, "the overarching goal of Ukraine's foreign and security policy is a defensive one: to preserve a favorable external situation that supports, or at least does not interfere with, state-building and internal consolidation."<sup>93</sup> Because all neighboring powers, save Russia and Romania, were quick to recognize Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity, the country's defense policy from 1991–97 had to take into account a potential threat from these two sources. On one hand, it made sense to renegotiate the conventional arms limits imposed on Ukraine by the Conventional Forces in

Europe (CFE) Treaty so as to secure the country's southern flank against potential intervention and ethnic separatism.<sup>94</sup> On the other hand, it was imperative to uphold the image of Ukrainian neutrality in order to stave off plans to draw the country into the CIS Collective Security Treaty (Tashkent treaty), which the Ukrainian government perceived as circumscribing national sovereignty and tying Ukraine to a potentially anti-European alliance.

The declaration of Ukraine's officially neutral status came on par with the assertion of the country's right to maintain independent armed forces. The necessity of an independent national military was visibly demonstrated during the failed August, 1991, putsch in Moscow. The country's declaration of independence on August 24, 1991, was paralleled by the decision to place all Soviet troops in Ukraine under national jurisdiction. By the time the Belovezhe accords sealed the fate of the Soviet Union, Ukraine had "already created the framework for its own military and was the very first state within the CIS to do so."<sup>95</sup> With this move, Russia's hopes to preserve the remnants of the Red Army under the umbrella of the joint CIS forces evaporated, and the Russian Federation had no other option but to develop its own armed forces.

Ukraine's "nationalization" of the ex-Soviet military contingent and installations located on its territory had brought it between 25 and 30 percent of all heavy armaments west of the Urals and in excess of seven hundred thousand personnel. As noted by one Russian author, Moscow let Ukraine inherit all of the armament of the second strategic echelon, which was more than sixty-three hundred of the newest tanks, eight thousand BTR wheeled armored personnel carriers, thirty-seven hundred BMP tracked armored combat vehicles, more than six thousand 100 mm and larger artillery pieces, about fifteen hundred airplanes of various types, and around 330 helicopters.<sup>96</sup> By early 1992, Ukraine's Ministry of Defense controlled 1,380 warplanes, sixty-five hundred tanks, thirty-three hundred large-caliber artillery pieces, seventy-five hundred armored personnel carriers, and five thousand support vehicles.<sup>97</sup> Ukraine's formerly forward position in the Soviet lines of defense was rewarded with a military inheritance that automatically accorded the country the second-largest army in Europe after Russia and the third largest air force in the world.

Although steadily downsized to meet CFE treaty limits, the Ukrainian army (which currently has about 230,000 troops) gave the Kravchuk government enough confidence to first claim Ukraine's "fair share" of the Black Sea Fleet and, only a couple of months later, in April, 1992, the whole of it. Yeltsin reciprocated the next day by ordering the entire fleet under Russian command. The 1992 crisis spawned negotiations that resulted in a series of agree-

ments that divided the fleet between the two sides. Over the years, Ukraine has managed to increase its proportion from the initially envisaged 20–30 percent to 50 percent of the fleet. During the June, 1992, Dagomys meeting in Russia, the presidents agreed to revoke their respective decrees on BSF subordination and put the fleet under joint command for a transitional period until 1995. In June, 1995, Yeltsin and Kuchma met in Sochi and agreed to sell part of the Ukrainian allotment back to Russia as payment for Ukraine's energy debt. Ukraine kept about 18 percent of the vessels and the bulk of the land installations that it currently leases to Russia for further debt forgiveness. The May, 1997, meeting resulted in agreements on the division of the BSF, its status in Ukraine, the compensation that accrues to Ukraine in exchange for a twenty-year lease of the Sevastopol naval facilities to the Russian BSF, and joint use of the Sevastopol aquatory by the two countries' navies. The Verkhovna Rada ratified the agreements in April, 1999.

The problem of the Black Sea Fleet has been solved, for now, on the basis of diplomatic prudence and the understanding of mutual interests. Just as had happened several years earlier, when Ukraine agreed to proceed with nuclear disarmament and become the second (after Kazakhstan) state in the world to willingly forgo nuclear power status, economic rationality prevailed over considerations of inflated national pride and prestige. The major difference was that the BSF problems were finally dealt with in direct bilateral negotiations—a strategy that failed to produce any breakthrough in the Ukrainian-Russian talks over the Soviet nuclear inheritance. It was American involvement, the threat of international ostracism, the provision of multilateral guarantees of Ukraine's security, and the promise of \$350 million in U.S. economic assistance (raised to \$700 million by March, 1994) that secured Ukraine's eventual accession to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and ratification of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) I Treaty as a nonnuclear-weapon state.<sup>98</sup> The BSF agreements, on the other hand, did not require a trilateral or multilateral framework for their successful ratification—an outcome that many international observers failed to anticipate.<sup>99</sup>

The difference between the two cases can be explained by several factors, of which the fleet's relative value, compared to the country's would-be nuclear arsenal, is probably the most important.<sup>100</sup> Russia's increased economic leverage over Ukraine, via accumulated debt that ran at more than \$5 billion by 1996, played a role as well.<sup>101</sup> Least noticeable, but equally significant, was a desire to compromise that had not been present in 1992–94. The 1994–98 elections wrought a certain change in composition of the Ukrainian ruling elite, bringing in pragmatists and contracting the sphere of political influence

of national romantics. The change has enabled Ukraine to pursue its traditional policy of accommodation without fear of the imminent loss of independence. A similar change occurred in Russia after the 1995 elections, with the growth of the so-called systemic opposition in the Parliament and the loss of seats by nationalist critics of the Russian-Ukrainian rapprochement. Primakov's ascension to power between 1996 and 1998, despite initial fears that Russia might redouble its efforts at reintegration with Ukraine, had actually strengthened reserve and moderation in Russian foreign policy.<sup>102</sup> Primakov's successor as foreign minister, Igor Ivanov, continued in his former boss's footsteps: While striving to keep Ukraine within arm's reach, Moscow has stopped short of exercising the sort of rude pressure that characterized the Massandra negotiations on Ukraine's nuclear disarmament and the Black Sea Fleet issue in 1993.

### **ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE**

The end of the Soviet Union resulted in the unraveling of established economic ties. Everyone suspected everyone else of taking more than their fair share from the federal budget. The Balts were among the first to demand budget autonomy for the republic—a demand that not only preceded, but actually propelled their subsequent drive for political independence. The Ukrainian Rukh supported the idea, launching a massive campaign of accusations against the “exploitative,” “imperial” center and frequently equating the later with the Russian Federation as a whole. According to these agitators, all of the longstanding problems of the Ukrainian economy could have been solved had Ukraine broken free from Russia. An idealized image of an independent Ukraine as a would-be land of milk and honey secured the success of the December, 1991, referendum.

Indeed, Moscow could not be absolved of responsibility for the mismanagement and generally chaotic policies of the post-Brezhnev “restructuring.” However, the overcentralized economy of the former Soviet Union prohibited a clean separation into nation-state “chunks,” each full and complete with closed production cycles for essential goods. Reorientation to the world markets was stalled by the low competitiveness of most industries. About three-quarters of Ukraine's economy was firmly integrated into what in the old Soviet parlance was called a “unified economic complex.” Getaway rhetoric failed to appreciate the degree of Ukraine's dependence on Russian oil and gas, timber, paper and paper products, minerals and raw materials, electricity, automobiles, and other machinery. Few people had any idea of the scale of

intra-Union trade commitments, which were tremendous. On the eve of independence, Ukraine's trade with the other Soviet republics accounted for 84 percent of its total exports and 72 percent of its total imports. The bulk of this trade was conducted with the Russian Federation. When the Soviet patronage ended, Russia continued financing up to 22 percent of the Ukrainian GDP with subsidized credits.<sup>103</sup> In a very real sense, Ukraine had nowhere to go, economically speaking, than to the Russian Federation to satisfy most of its export and import needs. Two years later, Ukraine's ex-premier acknowledged that the end of the USSR was the surest way to economic catastrophe.<sup>104</sup>

Such a catastrophe would be even more disastrous if those who wanted Ukraine to gradually phase out its trade with Russia had their way. Fortunately for both countries, this did not happen. In 1994, Russia took 45.3 percent of Ukraine's exports, and accounted for 59.1 percent of imports. The next year, the figures were 43.3 and 51.4 percent respectively. From 1992–95, the cash value of Ukrainian trade with the countries of the former Soviet Union had actually increased, while trade with outside countries showed a decline that was especially pronounced in imports.<sup>105</sup> From 1991–95, support of the Ukrainian economy by Russia and Turkmenistan exceeded disbursements by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank combined.<sup>106</sup> Leonid Kuchma once estimated that more than 60 percent of the Ukrainian economy remained dependent on its eastern neighbor in some way. In 1996, Russia provided 38.7 percent of Ukrainian exports and 50.1 percent of imports. Even the Russia-averse Lviv oblast could not avoid keeping Russia as a main trade partner (41.3 percent of all regional accounts) five years into the transition. By the end of 1998, the year of Russia's precipitous economic plunge, another western Ukrainian oblast, Ivano-Frankiv'sk, reported 67.4 percent import dependence on the Russian Federation and sought ways to promote bilateral economic cooperation.<sup>107</sup>

Judging by economic indicators alone, Russia wields instruments of hegemonic influence throughout the CIS, and Ukraine is no exception.<sup>108</sup> While the Russian share in Ukraine's exports declined from 26.2 percent in 1997 to about 23 percent between 1998 and 2000, the share of imports holds steady at 45–50 percent of the total. Overall, between one-third and one-half of Ukraine's trade is with the Russian Federation.<sup>109</sup> Energy dependence is particularly heavy. From 70–75 percent of annually consumed gas and close to 80 percent of oil comes from Russia.<sup>110</sup> Products of primarily industrial use make up 92 percent of the import structure, which means that a sharp supply reduction could collapse the economy. Dependence is also significant on the export side.

Russia remains Ukraine's primary market for ferrous metals, steel plate and pipes, electric machinery, machine tools and equipment, food, and chemical products. It is a market of hope for Ukraine's high value-added goods, more than nine-tenths of which were tied to the Russian consumer. With its old buyers gone by 1997, Ukraine experienced a 97–99 percent drop in the production of industrial machines with digital control systems, television sets, tape recorders, excavators, cars, and trucks.<sup>111</sup> In spite of the postcommunist slowdown, Russia has come out as the fourth largest investor in the Ukrainian economy—after the United States, Netherlands, and Germany—having contributed \$150.6 million out of \$2.047 billion in direct foreign investment that Ukraine received from all sources by 1998.<sup>112</sup>

The dependence is mutual, however. Ukraine used to be the former Soviet Union's second largest producer and it remains an important provider of industrial and agricultural goods for the Russian Federation. Russia is acutely dependent on Ukraine's transit infrastructure for its export revenues. Russia exports 125 billion cubic meters of gas annually through Ukrainian pipelines, paying 30–32 billion cubic meters in lieu of transit fees.<sup>113</sup> The rail transit of Russian export goods alone amounts to 40 million tons annually. Russia also relies on Ukraine's metallurgy, agriculture, animal farming, food processing, petrochemical, shipbuilding, and aerospace industries for both industrial and individual consumption. The Ukrainian share of Russia's trade with ex-Soviet countries exceeds 50 percent. Ukraine has also appeared as Russia's largest CIS investor. By 1998, Russia had received \$38.2 million in investments from Ukraine, or 30 percent of Ukraine's total capital exports, making it the second largest recipient of Ukraine's capital abroad.<sup>114</sup>

Ukraine's position vis-à-vis Russian consumers has been close to that of a monopolist in certain areas. For example, Ukraine produced 40 percent of all Soviet ships and inherited 60 percent of the former Soviet Union's industrial capacity for building surface ships. Until recently, more than 70 percent of all heavy steel plate used by Russian shipyards came from Ukraine.<sup>115</sup> Ukraine's positions are similarly strong in the market of heavy-cargo and passenger-cargo aircraft of the Antonov family and in the space-booster industry. The collaboration of Ukrainian producers is vital in many other respects, preventing or slowing Russia's own deindustrialization. For example, in the throes of the 1998 crisis, four hundred Ukrainian enterprises continued supplying Russian partners with more than six thousand types of industrial-use components.<sup>116</sup> It was not long before Russians learned to value Ukraine as a supplier of manufactured and agricultural products or as a partner in high-tech and defense industries. The issue of service parts produced on the "wrong" side of the

border has been particularly painful. Ukraine, as a big consumer and principal transit corridor for the export of Russian gas and oil, possesses its own instruments of leverage in energy trade. Perhaps because of that, Russia has been willing to ignore Ukraine's factual default and continued a more or less reliable energy supply in spite of recurring nonpayment and even theft of Russian gas in transit to Europe. The ten-year value of Russia's implicit energy subsidies to Ukraine was estimated at \$12.6 billion.<sup>117</sup> The August, 2001, decision to link the two countries' energy grids showed Russia's preparedness to continue this policy, if need be. Russian interest in equitable economic partnership with Ukraine has been sincere, despite showing a tendency to decline as the gap between the more reformed Russian and less reformed Ukrainian economies widens.

Between 1992 and 1995, Ukraine's share of Russian foreign trade shrank more than twofold. An attempt by the Ukrainian government to stimulate more active Russian investment in the economy foundered because neither the legal nor business environment in Ukraine was deemed sufficiently supportive of foreign entrepreneurship. The idea of binational "financial-industrial groups" (FPGs) stalled amidst disagreements on their proper organization, functioning, and purpose. A variation on the FPG theme, so-called transnational corporations that would unite several technologically linked Ukrainian and Russian firms and research institutions were envisaged in such areas as the production of aluminum and titanium pipes for oil and gas transportation. Kuchma's administration vowed to support FPGs as the only instrument of mutually beneficial economic collaboration with Russia that did not push Ukraine toward acceptance of a unified legal environment. Up to a hundred FPGs were expected to come into being. The 1995 Sochi summit alone gave the green light to more than thirty joint projects that the Ukrainian president said had to be implemented "as soon as possible." However, rent-seeking interests and political demagoguery in the Verkhovna Rada contributed to the failure of several promising deals, most notably a joint venture for transporting Russian gas to Europe.<sup>118</sup>

Following that, Ukraine's position on the issue of closer economic cooperation with Russia remained controversial. On one hand, all but the least rational nationalists agreed that closer economic ties are in Ukraine's best interests. On the other hand, Ukraine shied away from all Russian attempts to institutionalize cooperation with some sort of multilateral arrangement or interstate regime that would include other CIS countries. Ukraine refused to join either the customs or payment union where Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan participated.<sup>119</sup> Its role in the Interstate Economic Committee of the CIS Economic Union proved close to that of an observer. The



patriotic press criticized the very concept of a post-Soviet interstate structure coordinating economic activity of its members, suspecting that it could be used as a vehicle for Moscow's hegemonic aspirations. As former president Kravchuk put it: "orientation toward Russia means loss of statehood, loss of sovereignty tomorrow, if not today. . . . If we agree to a union with Russia and the creation, on the CIS basis, of a 'mighty,' in Yeltsin's words, economical and political union, for Ukraine it means exactly the loss of independence, and nothing else may ever come out of it."<sup>120</sup>

Succumbing to this kind of logic could not induce a breakthrough in the development of interstate economic cooperation between the two countries. Instead, mutual suspicion has been fostered, particularly in such sensitive areas as Ukraine's energy dependence on Russia. An attempt at creation of the Gaztransit joint-stock company with the Russian Gazprom folded because of Ukraine's refusal to contribute its underground gas reservoirs and pipelines as an in-kind share of the would-be firm's capital. "History should have taught us that, if today Russia becomes a co-proprietor of even a part of the Ukrainian property, tomorrow it will seize all of it," went a typical letter of protest by deputies of the Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast Rada.<sup>121</sup>

While the problem of oil deliveries was partially solved by letting private operators deal directly with Russian suppliers, thus easing the burden on the state budget, the gas problem remained acute. By 1998, Ukraine was \$1.5 billion in debt to Gazprom, and Prime Minister Pustovoitenko had to sit at negotiations with the state monopolist's head, Rem Vyakhirev, once again trying to devise a way to restructure debt payments. Against this background, Kuchma's position vis-à-vis Russia was seen as "intricate maneuvering, as he tried to defer payments on Ukraine's numerous debts, drive out the Russian Black Sea Fleet, establish Ukraine's claims to potentially disputed sectors of its border with Russia, and at the same time get Moscow to grant favorable trade terms and support him in the upcoming presidential election."<sup>122</sup> The situation was complicated by the continual large-scale theft of gas from transit pipelines on Ukrainian territory, a theft that the Ukrainian government was either unable or unwilling to stop. About \$4.8 million worth of gas was pumped out without authorization daily, which translated into \$180 million in losses for the Russian exporters in January and February, 1998, alone.<sup>123</sup>

The Ukrainian-Russian gas saga, just as overall dependence of Ukraine on energy imports, is bound to continue. Both the Kravchuk and Kuchma administrations have desperately sought ways to diversify the country's oil and gas supplies, pinning extensive hopes on Turkmen gas and Azeri oil in particular. Ukraine agreed to purchase 20 billion cubic meters of gas from

Turkmenistan in 1999, despite the projected loss of \$10 per thousand cubic meters, as estimated against comparable prices for Russian gas deliveries.<sup>124</sup> Ukrainian leaders believe the energy problem is of strategic importance because it is directly connected to the nation's security and economic stability. In Leonid Kuchma's opinion, the 1998 collapse of the Russian economy has vividly demonstrated that "Ukraine is defenseless on the inside."<sup>125</sup> Hence, the necessity to seek new markets, to diversify in both imports and exports, and to lobby and build alternative routes and infrastructure for the transportation of Caspian oil to Europe—preferably via Ukrainian territory. And yet, "by no means should Ukraine allow itself to lose a promising Russian market," insisted the Ukrainian president, while arguing, "the faster Russia overcomes its financial crisis, the better will it be for everyone."<sup>126</sup>

Ukraine's strategy for countering Russian economic pressure and dependency on external inputs in general might not be as successful as desired until the Ukrainian economy improves. The 1998 Russian crisis had immediate repercussions for Ukraine, which lost important export markets and had to devalue its currency by approximately 50 percent.<sup>127</sup> As a result, Ukraine's per capita GDP (adjusted for purchasing power parity) plummeted to \$2,200, compared to Russia's \$3,500.<sup>128</sup> A huge debt to the northern neighbor substantially qualifies visions of fast economic recovery. Even more importantly, Ukraine's economy remains essentially unreformed, as fiscal discipline does not exist, there is no reliable credit, the government uses privatization to reward personal loyalists, and grassroots entrepreneurship still prefers an "unofficial" economy to its "official" (i.e., fiscally transparent and hence vulnerable) counterpart.<sup>129</sup>

## UKRAINIAN REGIONS

It is impossible to understand Ukraine's current predicament without bearing in mind that the country's deep regional divide continues to influence its daily life. Ukraine's regionalism has been a long-standing fact of geography, history, culture, and politics. The simplest and most commonly used way to approach the problem is to look at the country as being divided roughly in half by its major river, the Dnieper. The Dnieper's Left Bank provisionally includes all of the eastern and southern and about half of the central regions, while the Right Bank accounts for the remaining western, northwestern, and west-central areas.<sup>130</sup> Throughout most of its history, the Left Bank remained closely associated with Russia (medieval Muscovy). Before the rise of Moscow, a good part of these lands, with the exception of the southern "wild steppe," gravitated toward the eastern and northern principalities of the old

Rus' empire. The Right Bank stayed under Lithuanian, Polish, Hungarian, and Ottoman rule from the mid-fourteenth century until the Partitions of Poland, when it was divided between the Romanovs and the Habsburgs. The demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire brought most of western Ukraine back to the fold of a newly created Polish state. Contemporary Ukraine was finally assembled from these disparate pieces at the end of World War II, thus arising as a direct result of the postwar settlement drafted by Stalin. The 1954 transfer of Crimea from the Russian Federation completed the picture.

The political history of eastern and western Ukraine is therefore vastly different. Inside each of these broadly defined parts of the country, internal divisions are sometimes no less important than those separating the Banks. As a rule, historically longer ties to Russia account for lesser anti-Russian feelings today. Thus, within the "nationalist" west of the country, differences between the Galician and Volhynian lands are not negligible, with the three Galician oblasti (Lviv, Ivano-Frankiv'sk, Ternopil) consistently exhibiting more of a "Ukrainian Piedmont" type than their two Volhynian counterparts. The Right-Bank Podillia votes less nationalist than Volhyn', while ethnically heterogeneous Transcarpathia and Bukovyna are separate stories altogether. The Right-Bank Zhytomyr is closer to the left-bank Chernihiv oblast than it is to any of its Right-Bank neighbors to the west.<sup>131</sup>

By the same token, the Left Bank, despite a number of unifying characteristics, demonstrates a remarkable difference in the degree of ethnic Russian mobilization, which is highest in the Crimea; perceptible, but not quite central in the Kharkiv, Odessa, Luhansk, and Donetsk oblasti; somewhat lukewarm in Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv; and close to negligible in Kherson or Zaporizhzhia.<sup>132</sup> As Garnett rightly noted, there is "not one 'divide,' but many" linguistic, political, economic, and social divides clustered together, each of them mapping onto the rest in sometimes reinforcing and sometimes quite idiosyncratic and unpredictable ways.<sup>133</sup> As an example of this inconsistency, the Russian language is dominant in Crimea, the southern and eastern oblasti, and the national capital, while political sympathies of the population, judging by its rejection of ethnic nationalism in favor of multiculturalism of some sort, though following in all other instances, diverge in the case of Kiev.<sup>134</sup> Notwithstanding much of the hype regarding the existence of a robust civil society in Galicia and its apparent underdevelopment in the east, the political values of western Ukrainians appear less liberal and more exclusionary than the values and preferences registered in Donbas and elsewhere in the east.<sup>135</sup> Cossack mythology, so popular among the "nationally conscious" Right-Bank constituency, is fully rooted in the

Left Bank's history, which cannot be completely purged of a long and well-established tradition of Ukrainian Cossack collaboration with the Russian state and empire.<sup>136</sup> The predominant dependence of the Galician oblasti on trade with Russia objectively counters European aspirations of the regional elite. The "pro-Russian" and progressively deindustrializing east, on the contrary, retains enough heavy industry to provoke antidumping suits in Western Europe and the United States. Most of Ukraine's export-competitive industries are concentrated in the east, thus making the region Russia's real-life competitor on the world markets. This includes such sensitive areas as trade in metals and weapons, commercial satellite launches, and the shipbuilding and aerospace industries.

Regional divides are many indeed, and no simplistic picture can account for their complexity.<sup>137</sup> To quote a Ukrainian scholar, historical splits caused a "significant divergence in mental and behavioral stereotypes between population of the west and the east of the republic. These differences are more important than inter-ethnic differences, and they starkly demonstrate themselves in attitudes to the Ukrainian statehood and its future prospects, political sympathies, etc."<sup>138</sup> The Ukrainian east is Russia-oriented, essentially Russophone and leftist in political leanings. The west of the country psychologically orients itself toward Europe, while being also more or less nationalist, Russia-averse, and anticommunist. The Russian language here is marginalized and ousted from public spaces, even if used by a certain proportion of the population, and the model identity is sought in opposition to both the communist past and the "Eurasian" present, presumably lurking behind the possibility of closer integration with Russia. If Russian and Ukrainian-Russian self-identification varies between 34 and 68 percent in eastern regions, it falls below 19 percent in the center-west, and below 10 percent in the west.<sup>139</sup>

Regional reactions to the Russian challenge diverge to the point of diametrical opposition between Galicia and Crimea. In the former, demonstrations under banners reading "Down with Moskals [a pejorative for Russians]" and "Purge Ukrainian schools of the Russian language!" are commonplace,<sup>140</sup> whereas the latter finds it hard to obey the central authorities' demands to open new Ukrainian schools amidst an almost exclusively Russophone population. Numerous sociological polls show that the south and the east exhibit the highest numbers of those who identify themselves primarily with Russia or the former Soviet Union, while the figures in the west are minimal.<sup>141</sup> The west and south (Odessa, Mykolaiv, Kherson oblasti) seem to be more market-oriented than the rest of the country, which also influences foreign policy preferences in these regions.

Overall, Ukrainians tend to support economic cooperation with other former Soviet republics. In 1993, economic integration with the CIS countries was approved by 82 percent of the population, with the Kharkiv-Sumy region accounting for the largest (93 percent) and Galicia for the smallest (36 percent) share of positive responses. At the same time, the prospect of a military-political alliance with Russia generated less than enthusiastic support (13 percent of those polled). Joining the Russia-led CIS military alliance postured as “an alternative to NATO” was ticked by a meager 1 percent of those polled in the west, versus one-fifth of the Crimean respondents. Russia was deemed “partner number one” in the east, while Western Europe was favored in the west, and Kiev appeared neatly divided between the two. Two-thirds of those polled supported economic cooperation with Russia in 1998, with regional figures varying from 44 percent in Galicia to 84 percent in Donbas. In April, 2001, relying on the CIS was popular among 25–37 percent of those polled in the east, but only 16–19 percent in the west.<sup>142</sup>

The 1994 poll conducted in the Russophone southern and eastern regions of the country revealed that a lingering Soviet identity (in 27 percent of the cases) and a primarily regional identification (23 percent) competed with the rather weak political and territorial identification with Ukraine. Just over one-third of those polled counted themselves among the “population of Ukraine,” while almost half would vote against Ukrainian independence “if the referendum were today.”<sup>143</sup> Only 37 percent of respondents identified themselves primarily as Ukrainian citizens in 1998. At the same time, local and regional self-identification prevailed in 40 percent of the cases.<sup>144</sup>

Ukraine’s national identity must bridge available regional and ethno-linguistic identities. One way to do this is to stop the current senseless campaign of ghettoizing the Russian language in Ukraine. It is instructive that provincial Radas in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasti called for local referendums regarding the proposed status of the Russian language as the second state language in Ukraine, the federal versus unitary model of the state, and an attitude toward the prospect of full CIS membership for Ukraine. Positive responses to all of these questions were obtained in 90 percent of the cases.<sup>145</sup> In 1995, the Kharkiv Rada joined with its Donbas counterparts in declaring Russian the *de facto* second official language in the province. Cross-border contacts and agreements on closer regional cooperation with the neighboring Russian oblasti became ubiquitous in 1995–96 and were eventually institutionalized with the establishment of the Council of the Regions, working at the level of the heads of the respective provincial administrations. The government acknowledged the importance of these developments by

proclaiming a new regional policy aimed at giving individual provinces more leeway in managing their internal affairs. The Program of Inter-Regional and Border Cooperation of Ukraine and the Russian Federation for 2001–2007 and the Measures for Its Implementation were signed when the countries' two leaders met in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, in February, 2001.

## CONCLUSION

Can we speak of “Ukraine’s” reactions to the Russian problem, meaning a consistent pattern of policies and behavior attributable to the whole of Ukraine’s population, to its politically active or salient part, or perhaps to the national government? In each of these instances, the answer is “no.” Responses to Russia’s pressure in interstate relations and to the inescapable fact of local Russian presence inside the country have been subject to regional, social, and ethnopolitical variations. The policies of official Kiev oscillated between plain denial of the problem, sporadic flirtation with Moscow, and interactive nationalism that aimed to put as much distance between the two countries as was realistically possible. Given the closely intertwined history and mutual dependency of the two nations, the later task proved particularly difficult. A concerted attack on the Russian language aimed to instill some sense of “otherness” in the people whose culturally Russian allegiances have become, in many instances, at least as potent as their uniquely Ukrainian features.

Ukraine’s nation builders did their best to prevent a very possible “backslide” of the majority of the population into the more or less enthusiastic embrace of the familiar idea of “common destiny” with Russia. Self-preservation instincts of the newly born political and business elite, to no lesser extent than *raison d’etat* and concern for the country’s sovereignty dictated an alliance between nationalists “out of necessity” in the government and more ardent “patriots” among political “wannabes” in and around Parliament. The alliance was in need of intellectual justification, which has been furnished on the basis of the historical revisionism and poorly digested geopolitical doctrines of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A new politics of identity was propelled by instrumental calculations of expediency that the government shared with domestic oligarchs who were understandably fearful of competition with Russia’s tycoons. It was further shaped by the xenophobic Russophobia of aspiring ethnic entrepreneurs and “nationally conscious” underachievers in search of an enemy. This politics of identity, steeped in the typical envy of the West and resentment of the defeated Soviet champion, claims “European” fortunes for Ukraine and denigrates the “Eurasian” ways

of Russia, even as the government struggles to disentangle itself from the web of multiple political and economic dependencies on the country's eastern neighbor.

Identity politics blocks a potentially beneficial relationship. Ukraine's refusal to enter the payment, customs, or monetary unions proposed by Russia or to join the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (until March, 1999) could seem illogical to an external observer. International relations liberals may find it hard to explain this fear of cooperation, especially against the backdrop of generally sympathetic public opinion. In 1997–98, about one-third of the population, including one in four ethnic Ukrainians, believed that the two countries should unite into one, and 57 percent wanted to join the Russia-Belarus Union. Close to two-thirds saw the bilateral Program of Economic Cooperation as “facilitating the expansion of a mutually beneficial, good-neighborly cooperation of the two allied states and peoples.” From 1998–2000, three in ten supported ascent to the CIS military union, two times more than the group of decided NATO supporters. From 1991–96, a majority of respondents were in favor of giving the Russian language official status, a proportion that only slightly declined to 44–46 percent by 2000. A survey conducted in April, 2001, showed that in seven of eleven regions in Ukraine, most people believed that relations with Russia must be given a higher priority than relations with the West.<sup>146</sup>

Different reactions to the Russian issue widen the gap between the elite and masses and between the politically opposite eastern and western regions of the country. National consolidation and democratic development require bringing these differences into an agreement and finding a mutually beneficial mode of coexistence with Russia. The search for such an accommodation, repeatedly undertaken in the course of Ukraine's electoral cycle, is not made easy by the divergence of geopolitical views between the Ukrainian and Russian elites and the continued existence of several potential points of conflict in relations between the two countries. Having been most pronounced in the areas of foreign policy, defense, and security, these hot spots of tension stem, in the end, from fears brought forth by insecure national identities. In the final chapter, we will take a closer look at these fears as they relate to and are manifested in several issues bearing on the future of Ukrainian-Russian relations.

# Fears and Hopes

*Ukraine, Russia, and the West*

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Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukrainian-Russian relations have been determined by several factors whose significance seem to extend beyond the period of post-Soviet bickering and uneasy adjustment to the realities of separate existence. So far, neither Ukraine nor Russia has been able to become fully independent of the other. Despite all the assiduous distancing undertaken by Ukraine, Russia's presence is still very much felt throughout the country. Given that the geography, demography, politics, and economics conspire together to keep these two in a loop of mutual dependence, it is clear that Russia's palpable presence or strategic influence on Ukraine is not going to disappear any time soon. The primary source of this influence is cultural closeness, manifested on a level of national and personal identities, political culture, and popular attitudes and values. Ukraine's Russian soul is not something as alien as nationalists would like us to believe. It is an inseparable part of what constitutes a modern Ukrainian today.

Reciprocally, postcommunist Russia has been definitely much more dependent on Ukraine than its politicians and ideologues are willing to acknowledge. It has been noted more than once that, without Ukraine, Russia cannot reconstitute itself as an empire. The loss of Ukraine understandably represents a constant source of anguish for nationalists and neoimperialists. Perhaps more importantly, without a *friendly*, albeit independent, Ukraine, Russia may not become a great power again. The prospect of Ukraine joining NATO without Russia horrifies not only rabid nationalists but also people of genuine liberal-democratic persuasion. Because Russia's membership in European and Trans-Atlantic structures remains problematic, Ukraine's embrace



of the pro-NATO agenda means nothing less than a security threat to Russia. Given the traditional Russian perceptions of Ukraine as Russia's closest other, alter ego, if not indeed a part of the greater Russian superethnos, the vision of an impermeable border separating the two countries signifies something more than a conventional military challenge. This is the threat that goes to the core of Russian national identity, with its embedded ideas of East Slavic kinship, common destiny, and, at the least, the expected privileged treatment of each other. If Russo-Ukrainian relations become no different than Russia's relations with Poland or Estonia, Russia loses an important part of its national self-image and historical mythology, and, as a result, a great deal of self-respect that could survive even the disastrous Chechen adventure. With the loss of its Ukrainian soul, Russia will cease to be the Russia we knew and it will have to rebuild its identity practically from scratch.

Does this mean that Russia will never acquiesce to Ukrainian independence, as nationalists on both sides seem to believe? Even a quick, unbiased look at the history of interstate relations after the end of communism may convince one that this fear is unwarranted. The politics of Russia's recognition of Ukraine's sovereignty and independence, starting with the 1990 treaty between the republics was confirmed in the 1997 friendship treaty and demonstrated again in Putin's attendance at the tenth anniversary celebration of independence in 2001. For most of the Russian public and politicians alike it is preferable to see Ukraine as a friendly nation rather than a nation subdued by Moscow. A friendly, independent Ukraine still corresponds with a mythology of East Slavic fraternity that has historically developed in Russia and allows the latter to keep up the appearance of a leader of its "own" small community of nations. On the other hand, a Ukraine forcibly brought back in makes little practical sense, and could cause much harm to Russia's cultural and political identity, which is predicated on the idea of East Slavic friendship and Russia's benevolent role in the voluntary union of the three peoples. Thus, it is perhaps a somewhat radical conclusion to see all Russophile mythology as "totally unwilling to concede any of the building blocks of a separate Ukrainian or Belarusian identity."<sup>1</sup> The acknowledgement of a separate but kindred identity grounded in the shared cultural-historical milieu yet playing a unique role in the pursuit of a common goal is not only acceptable but also vital for Russia's ability to overcome its postcommunist anomie and self-inflicted alienation from the "normal" part of humanity. The wholesale negation of one's historical heritage practiced by the Russian liberal internationalists to the detriment of both the liberal cause and the political fortunes of its champions in the country cannot provide a solution to the

problem of Russia's postcommunist identity. Neither can the idea that Russia's fortunes are indeed wholly separate from those of Russia's erstwhile western borderlands.

Although Russians have learned to take Ukraine's independence as a hard fact of history, the process has not been easy or uncomplicated. Moscow politicians and opinion makers continue to muse over the problem of what is acceptable and what is not in Ukraine's domestic and foreign politics. For Ukraine to be considered a friendly country, a "strategic partner" with certain privileges that go beyond conventional diplomatic courtesy and considerations of mutual interest, it has to meet, in Moscow's view, a certain criteria of "belonging." The insistence that Ukraine may never join NATO is among the main conditions that Russia would like to impose. Porous borders, dual citizenship or other arrangements for the special treatment of "compatriots," economic privileges, a joint defense system, and general support of Russia's foreign interests—all of these and a number of related issues tend to resurface in both political discourse and the mass media. The young Ukrainian state, still carrying a full set of birthmarks from its Soviet origins and its traditionally junior position vis-à-vis the central authorities in Moscow or Saint Petersburg, is understandably eager to shake off the slightest reminiscence of this subordinate position. Hence, Russian propositions are looked upon with suspicion, while Russian requests provoke alarmist reactions that are more often than not exaggerated. If Moscow toughens its stance and rhetoric, Ukraine immediately alerts the UN Security Council, the OSCE, NATO, and the United States, first and foremost. In a good pupil/bad pupil manner, any bullying is offset with immediate and diligent reporting to the schoolmaster.

The Ukrainian-Russian relationship is clearly an asymmetrical one: not only in terms of the size or relative power of both sides, but also in terms of their positioning and foci of gravity. Despite the talk of "multipolarity" initiated by the Primakov-Ivanov duo, Russia remains very much centered on itself. Ukraine, on the other hand, looks west even when it eyes Russia as its biggest and, realistically, most accessible economic partner. Russia's communist-nationalist hope of bringing Ukraine back under control—exclusively on the basis of Ukraine's own "voluntarily expressed" (Ziuganov) desire—is the worst nightmare of a good one-third of Ukraine's population, which includes most intellectuals, politicians, and businesspeople. This western-looking part of Ukraine is not different from Poland in its sincere longing to embrace the West either through NATO's gateway, EU membership, or both. For them, the closer they are to Russia, the farther away from the avowed and

cherished goal of “joining with Europe.” Pro-Russian forces contend that joining with Russia first is the only realistic way to spur the country’s development and overcome its backwardness before the dream of Europe can be seriously entertained. These critics argue that until the country has matured enough to deal with the West confidently, its westerly move can only ruin Ukraine’s economy and culture, substituting them with Western surrogates.

Ukraine thus has not one, but two centers of gravity pulling it in opposite directions. What Ukraine’s Russophiles hope for, Westernizers fear, and vice versa. However, there are issues over which a certain consensus has emerged. Preserving Ukraine’s sovereignty and independence is one of those issues. Defending national interest, broadly conceived, from any external party, Western powers included, is another. No one in Ukraine seems to deny the necessity of building a viable national defense or pursuing a sustained course of economic development. Most agree that there may be a legitimate divergence between Ukrainian interests and its neighbors’ interests in this or that area. It is the breadth of this divergence and the particular shape of policies needed to correct or upheld it that is debated.

In this chapter, our concern lies with the recent history of such disputes as they affect Ukrainian-Russian relations, both countries’ geopolitical and cultural perceptions of each other, and the role of the West in the further development of their bilateral relationship. Identity and culture are at stake and figure prominently in practically all areas of mutual concern. To illustrate some of these areas, we will take a closer look at the problem of the Ukrainian “Russian” territory (Crimea) and the continued presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in the Crimean port of Sevastopol. The problem of diverging attitudes in the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States will then be addressed within the broader context of the two countries’ search for international allies and regional associates. The role of NATO in the emerging security infrastructure in Europe and Eurasia and the dissimilarity of Ukrainian and Russian views of the new global role of the West will complete the discussion, which by necessity leaves several other important areas of policy less than adequately covered. Although all of these issues bear the indelible impact of the identity debate, security and foreign policy represent the most obvious choice of cases, since it is here that the Ukrainian-Russian disagreement allows less compromise than in other areas.

The postcommunist history of Russian-Ukrainian relations demonstrates mostly distinct approaches to a number of international, regional, and bilateral issues. Ten years and two presidential administrations after the proclamation of sovereignty, Ukraine has not moved a step closer to what the Russian

vision of Ukraine's proper geopolitical and international position has been all these years. Even with the conclusion of a comprehensive friendship treaty—the Program of Economic Cooperation until 2007, and the 2001 agreement to tie the two countries' energy grids together—Ukraine retained a unique and sometimes less than flexible perspective on key issues in bilateral and international relations. The issue of Crimean autonomy is, by all accounts, one of those.

### **CRIMEA, SEVASTOPOL, AND THE BLACK SEA FLEET**

Ukrainian officials customarily insist that the Crimean issue has never been subject to negotiation with Moscow.<sup>2</sup> One more assertion to that end was made after the Verkhovna Rada voted to ratify the friendship treaty with Russia on January 14, 1998. Soon thereafter, Ukraine's Foreign Ministry declared that a territorial dispute between Moscow and Kiev “never existed and cannot exist.”<sup>3</sup> It was not the first pronouncement of this sort, however. The very insistence on something that “cannot exist,” when repeated a certain number of times, calls the proposition in question. In Ukrainian-Russian relations, something that “never exists” has a bad habit of reappearing, and the more firmly both sides resolve to chase it away for good, the more reason there is to believe that the issue is here to stay.

The wearisome representation of Ukraine as “sovereign,” “independent,” “completely autonomous,” and the like betrays a profound lack of confidence in precisely these things on the part of Ukraine's leadership. Quite similarly, Moscow's tedious rhetoric of “friendship,” “brotherhood,” and “a mutually beneficial relationship” makes one doubt the sincerity or realism of these propositions and, once again, bespeaks the uncertainty and depth of the post-Soviet disorientation. Identity crises in both cases stem from the multiple shocks of the postcommunist transformation that are only partially related to the political separation of the two nations or the question of their national borders. However, borders, which constitute a nation's political space, are perhaps among the most visible and elementary manifestations of its identity. Thus, the substantial reconfiguration of a nation's political space cannot help but affect its identity.

The dispute over territories is best dramatized by the fact that the disputing parties are closely related to each other, each laying claim to the same space as its “homeland.” In this case, the ability to “share” the disputed territory, albeit symbolically, through the reciprocal preferential treatment of minorities, dual citizenship, or nonvisa entrance for the other country's nationals, or the

avoidance of participation in alliances potentially hostile to the other party, is an important instrument of conflict prevention. Should the disputed territory be completely closed or “nationalized” to the decisive exclusion of the neighbor, the dormant conflict may yet flare up. This is where Ukraine and Russia find themselves now, and this is why it would be premature to dismiss the territorial dispute between them as a thing of the past.

Ukraine’s Declaration of Sovereignty (July 16, 1990), though still representing the country as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, a part of the USSR, was firm in proclaiming that “the territory of the Ukrainian SSR in its extant borders is inviolable and cannot be altered or used without its consent. The Ukrainian SSR independently defines the administrative-territorial layout of the Republic and the procedure for the establishment of [its] national-administrative units” (Article 5). The 1990 Ukraine-Russia treaty obliged the contracting parties to “recognize and respect the territorial integrity of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic within their presently existing borders within the USSR.” (Article 6). In Ukraine’s case, those included the Crimean oblast, transferred from Russia by the Khrushchev administration and rubberstamped by the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on February 5, 1954. The Supreme Soviet of the USSR codified the transfer into law on April 26, 1954.

Acting on the premises of these documents, Ukraine has continuously refused to recognize Russian claims to the Crimean peninsula, which had been a part of Russia since its appropriation by Catherine the Great in 1783. The results of the referendum in January, 1991, when 93 percent of Crimeans voted for “reinstatement of the Crimean ASSR as a subject of the federation in the USSR,” were misinterpreted by Kiev as a mere desire for a status upgrade within the existing borders.<sup>4</sup> The law that reinstated the Crimean ASSR as an integral part of the Ukrainian SSR was promptly issued a month later. In a deliberate attempt to change the ethno-demographic composition of the autonomy, thus curbing its pro-Russian sentiment, Kiev encouraged Crimean Tatars, scattered throughout several central Asian republics after their 1944 exile by Stalin, to return to the peninsula. The Tatars indeed returned, raising their share in the local population from 1.6 percent in 1989 to more than 10 percent by 1996.<sup>5</sup> It was not enough, however, to prevent Crimea’s Supreme Soviet from issuing a declaration of the state’s sovereignty in September, 1991. Crimean legislators then opted to join with other republics as an equal party to the Union Treaty, thus demonstratively siding with Moscow at about the same time that Ukraine moved in a diametrically opposite direction with its own declaration of independence.

The split did not pass unnoticed in the Kremlin. The pressure to reassess the 1954 decision to transfer Crimea to Ukraine had been mounting for some time in the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation. If Kiev saw the 1990 treaty as Russia's acknowledgement of Ukraine's sovereign right over all of its territory, Moscow insisted that this acknowledgement was conditional on Ukraine's remaining part of the Soviet Union. This was an official interpretation of the treaty offered by Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev during the question period at the Parliament.<sup>6</sup> Russia's right to renegotiate its borders with the departing republics was reiterated by Yeltsin spokesman Pavel Voschchanov, whose statement to that end has never been officially revoked. Yeltsin's idea of preventing the chaotic collapse of the Union "by means of negotiations, and without any bloodshed" had to be assessed against the notion that Moscow could implement "other measures" if necessary.<sup>7</sup>

At that time, the majority of Russian politicians felt alarmed by the prospect of Ukraine's leaving the Union for good. Ukraine's reassertion of its sovereignty over Crimea was perceived as a loss of "ancestral Russian lands," of something that had been part and parcel of Russia proper for centuries. Crimea's transfer to Ukraine happened during the celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of Ukraine's "reunification" with Russia (the Treaty of Pereiaslav in 1654) and was initiated by the Ukrainian-born Khrushchev. Recalling these facts seemed enough to substantiate the version of Khrushchev's "gift," which, in Vice President Rutskoi's words, was probably triggered by the celebration "hangover." Two ad hoc delegations, one headed by Rutskoi and another by Anatolii Sobchak, a pioneer of Russia's democratic movement, descended on Kiev in a vain attempt to reverse Ukraine's secession.

Kravchuk was unwilling to entertain the idea of Moscow's renewed dominance in the de facto absence of the all-Union center, which imploded after the coup failed in August, 1991. After the coup, Gorbachev had no practical authority to continue with his favorite "Novo-Ogarevo" process of bringing new life to the Union. Yeltsin had long been perceived as an equal, not a superior. All bases of legitimacy linked to Moscow had been destroyed—first by perestroika, then by the coup—while the remaining sources of authority were all found inside the republic. Thus, Russian delegations went home after achieving little but rhetorical assurances. In the aftermath of their visit, preparation for the December, 1991, independence referendum gained momentum, with the state-controlled media and most of the independent press completely dominated by the nationalist imagery of Russians as Ukraine's eternal oppressors.

As the only part of the country where the Russian language unquestionably predominates and ethnic Russians are in the majority (67 percent of the local population), the Crimean Autonomous Republic showed a less enthusiastic response to the idea of independence compared to the rest of Ukraine. If the total proindependence vote was 90 percent of the 80 percent turnout, it was only 54 percent in Crimea. The turnout there was also lower than the country's average. If adjusted for this factor, only 36 percent of Crimean voters actually said "aye." Pro-Russian sentiment in the peninsula has been traditionally strong, and it grew even stronger due to the Soviet policy of restrictions on settlement, which benefited retired *nomenklatura* officials, military officers, and others with privileged ties to the regime. Most of the postwar settlers in the area were either ethnic Russians or Russophones, who had little sympathy for the idea of a separate Ukrainian state.

Encouraged by these considerations, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR authorized an inquiry into the legitimacy of Crimea's transfer to Ukraine. Acting on the basis of this January, 1992, decision, the parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations, together with the Committee on Legislation, prepared a resolution that called for the cancellation of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR's 1954 decision. On May 21, 1992, Parliament acted on the basis of this recommendation, passing a resolution of the Supreme Council "On the Legal Assessment of the Decisions Adopted in 1954 by the Supreme Organs of RSFSR State Power on Changing the Status of Crimea"<sup>8</sup> Although Yeltsin and the government did nothing to make this declaration work and demonstratively regarded it as an exercise in pure parliamentary rhetoric, it sent a signal powerful enough to seriously scare Ukraine's leadership. As the tensions between the executive and legislative branches worsened to the point of decision-making gridlock in Moscow and a de facto dual power situation throughout the country, Ukrainians feared that Russian nationalists might yet prevail.

These fears were bolstered by the Supreme Soviet's July 9, 1993, resolution "On the Status of the City of Sevastopol," which alleged Russia's continued jurisdiction over the city, one of the biggest in Crimea and the main naval base of the former Soviet Union's Black Sea Fleet. Leonid Kravchuk characterized the statement as representing "overt interference with Ukraine's internal affairs" and a challenge to the country's territorial integrity. In his view, "imperial thinking" led to passage of the resolution, which he believed would damage relations between the "brotherly nations." Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada called the decision "unprecedented" and appealed to the "UN Security Council, the Council of Europe, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in

Europe and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council to use their authority to influence Russian lawmakers” to recall the resolution. Ukraine’s foreign minister, Anatoliy Zlenko, pleaded “for the urgent convening of a meeting” of the UN Security Council to address the problem, and warned that Ukraine was ready “to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

Both Kravchuk’s and Zlenko’s letters were circulated among the members of the Security Council, although an official meeting was never called. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to deliver an explanation, which referred to the resolution as “emotional and declaratory” and lamented its departure from “the policy followed by the president and the government of the Russian Federation.” The Security Council duly noted the explanation, reaffirming its “commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine” and declaring the decree of the Russian legislators “without effect.” Ukrainians were not fully satisfied, however, since the question of legality of Crimea’s transfer to Ukraine remained essentially unresolved and, in the absence of an authoritative and binding decision by a mutually recognized international body, Russians could continue pressing related claims in the future. Some experts suggested that the International Court of Justice in The Hague be called upon to arbitrate. However, this idea was rejected for fear that the 1954 Soviet decree gave the Ukrainian claim a rather thin legal foundation and that the result might therefore be discouraging. To bolster international involvement and for the purposes of the on-site monitoring of the situation, Kiev invited the OSCE to establish a permanent observation post in Crimea.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, the local separatist movement intensified. On May 5, 1992, Crimea’s Supreme Council declared state independence of the autonomy, subject to a popular referendum initially scheduled for August of that same year. The next day, a highly assertive Constitution of the Crimean Republic was adopted, featuring a provision for the treaty-based regulation of relations between Crimea and Ukraine. From 1991–94, the Crimeans launched the openly secessionist Republican Movement of Crimea (later renamed the Republican Party of Crimea) and several other pro-Russian parties of more or less openly nationalistic orientation. In addition, Crimean cities hosted regional branches of a number of parties and groups run from Moscow, such as the National Salvation Front and the LDPR. In the local political arena, Russian nationalists competed with each other for voters’ sympathies.<sup>11</sup> The newly elected Supreme Soviet of the autonomous republic issued a series of laws that aimed to further increase its prerogatives vis-à-vis the national government, instituting, among other things, the office of the Crimean President. In 1994–95, Yuri Meshkov, the Republican Party’s (RPK) leader and creator



of the Russia bloc, acting as elected president of the Crimean Autonomous Republic, tried to initiate Crimea's secession from Ukraine and its reunification with Russia. Between February and September, 1994, the Verkhovna Rada found itself busy with denunciation and nullification of dozens of Crimean laws and decrees that were deemed unconstitutional and in contravention of existing Ukrainian legislation, such as the provisions for separate Crimean citizenship, monetary and financial systems, independent military formations, and the like. A showdown was forced between March and April, 1995, when Kiev abolished most of the institutional mainstays of Crimean separatism, including the 1992 constitution, the presidency, and the autonomy referendums. Meshkov went into political exile and never resurfaced as a leader. In spite of that, the pro-Russian movement on the peninsula survived, proving itself independent of the contingent political fortunes of its individual organizers.

The violent end of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation in the president-ordered attack in October, 1993, did little to assuage Ukraine's concerns over the prospects of Russia's involvement in Crimea, since the newly elected Parliament, the State Duma, emerged under a strengthened nationalist influence. The communists campaigned under the slogan of legal annulment of the Belovezhe agreements that brought an end to the Soviet Union. Since the spring of 1994, the CPRF faction in Parliament had been trying to force discussion of the matter on the Duma's agenda. For Ziuganov, Ukraine's independence was tantamount to the "forced partition of the country," which could only be remedied by reviving the Soviet Union. For Zhirinovskiy, the preferred option was "restoration of a unitary state that recognizes only administrative divisions into *gubernii* or regions." Most nationalists agreed with this assessment offered by Zhirinovskiy: "Although Ukraine owes us a huge sum of money, we supply her with energy and pardon her debts, while Ukraine, its government oppresses the Russians who live on the territory of the Crimea. Therefore, we must deny economic support to Ukraine."<sup>12</sup>

A similar logic resounded in the Kremlin on the eve of the September, 1993, Massandra summit, when the supply of Russian gas to Ukraine was cut by 25 percent in a plan to force Ukraine's nuclear disarmament and acquiescence to Russian ownership of the Black Sea Fleet. Although intensely criticized by Parliament and facing the hardly concealed anger of the Ministry of Defense, Kravchuk backtracked on the agreement because he feared Russia would use its economic leverage over Ukraine to pursue its own political and military strategic goals. An immediate response from Ukraine's national-democratic and national-conservative parties was to demand a complete revocation of the Massandra agreements, withdrawal of all

Russian troops “from the territory and territorial waters of Ukraine by late 1994,” and institution of direct presidential rule in Crimea.<sup>13</sup>

The State Duma of the Russian Federation was less than happy with Kiev’s crackdown on Crimean separatists. The statement prepared on this occasion expressed the Duma’s concern “about the prospects for development of Russian-Ukrainian relations” and classified the decision to annul the constitution and the presidency of Crimea as a gross violation of the popular will of Crimeans. The State Duma Committee for CIS Affairs and Ties with Compatriots, chaired by Konstantin Zatulin, held periodic hearings on the issue of Russian-Ukrainian relations, decrying the prospect of the “eventual reduction and dismantlement of Russian presence in Crimea and Sevastopol.” Aleksandr Vengerovsky, the Duma’s deputy speaker, compared the situation to the one that had developed in the former Yugoslavia, saying it was “humiliation to Russia,”<sup>14</sup> and that the urge to “teach Ukraine a lesson” was almost irresistible.

At first, Ukrainian politicians contented themselves with the assumption that “the Duma, which is known for its opposition to the Russian Executive, does not reflect the official position of Russia.”<sup>15</sup> However, Yeltsin’s position was soon evident. “Russia will not sign any serious political agreement with Ukraine until the situation in the Crimea improves,” said the Russian president. “It will be appropriate to sign major political documents between Russia and Ukraine when we are sure that the relations between Simferopol and Kiev do not infringe the interests of the Crimean population and that they meet international human rights standards.”<sup>16</sup> Yeltsin also mentioned that ethnic Russians form the majority of the Crimean population and Russia, having significant interests in and around the peninsula, was rightly concerned with its fortunes. The tensions over the status of the still undivided Black Sea Fleet intensified accordingly.

The Black Sea Fleet problem first emerged when decrees of the Verkhovna Rada issued in August through October, 1991, demanded the republic be given jurisdiction over Soviet troops stationed in Ukraine. During the next several months, most troops agreed to take an oath of loyalty to the Ukrainian state. The move forced Russia to declare the creation of its own armed forces, which it was unwilling to do until May 7, 1992, in a vain hope to secure the country’s defense on the basis of multilateral CIS forces. The 1992 tug-of-war over control of the Black Sea Fleet ended when the Russian-Ukrainian summits in Dagomys and Yalta resulted in the decision that the two countries each be given a share of the fleet. The exact proportion remained subject to further negotiations.

External observers have questioned the operational viability of the BSF. According to Sherman Garnett: “Composed of aging vessels, port, and support facilities (chiefly in Sevastopol), the Black Sea Fleet is less important as a military asset than as a signal of the state of Ukrainian-Russian relations, the viability of Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea, and Russia’s long-term presence and influence on the Black Sea.” The bulk of BSF vessels indeed approach the limit of their operational capacity. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to underestimate the fleet’s fighting potential. As of 1990, the BSF consisted of eighteen submarines, 150 fighting ships, seventy auxiliary vessels, more than four hundred aircraft, nearly a hundred helicopters, and more than sixty thousand troops. It was a naval force larger than that of any other neighboring nation in the Black Sea littoral. During the Cold War years, Crimea was the main naval base for the projection of Soviet forces in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The BSF was a mainstay of that force, and it was still growing and had an as yet unexhausted potential for development by the end of 1991.<sup>17</sup>

Eight years later, the Russian BSF consisted of twenty-five thousand soldiers and about the same number of auxiliary personnel, and had some one hundred warships and supporting vessels, deemed “sufficient to guarantee the security of Russia’s national interests in and around the Black Sea.” At the height of the Kosovo conflict in April-May, 1999, Russian commanders contemplated using the fleet to disrupt NATO’s bombardment of Serbian targets and sent a reconnaissance ship to monitor developments. The West-99 exercise enlisted the BSF to play out the scenario of NATO’s war in the Balkans, practicing respective countermeasures against an all-out attack from the air and from the sea. The exercise, explicitly anti-NATO in character and aimed to prepare the Russian navy for a possible military encounter in the twenty-first century, was lauded as a success by Russian military officials and the president. At the same time, a new role for the fleet was envisioned in northern Caucasus. In preparation for the second war on Chechnya, BSF ships took part in so-called defensive maneuvers in the area.<sup>18</sup>

Whether a military asset or a symbol of sovereignty, the dispute over the BSF, together with Ukraine’s attempt to retain control over inherited nuclear weapons, caused a significant deterioration of Russian-Ukrainian relations from 1992–96. Ukrainians feared the issue was rekindled by Moscow in an attempt to reassert its control over the whole of the Crimean peninsula.<sup>19</sup> Not to be outdone, the Russians accused Kiev of selling Russia’s national interests down the river, alleging, among other things, that “Ukraine’s position on the Black Sea Fleet is largely formulated and guided by the United

States, up to the idea of mediation, which Russia rejects.”<sup>20</sup> Ukraine’s National Security Council secretary, Volodymyr Horbulin, once noted that Russia’s policy on Sevastopol and the BSF betrays the “purposeful escalation of tensions” on the part of the Russians. “For a long time, we preferred to believe that only vexing contingencies stop us from signing an agreement on the division of the Fleet. However, just as the parties approached an agreement on all issues, the State Duma or some other state body of the Russian Federation ‘fired a cannon,’ starting a retreat from the already secured Ukrainian-Russian agreements.”<sup>21</sup>

Before the Agreement on Status and Conditions of the Staying of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation in the Territory of Ukraine was concluded, the fight over the exact wording of the agreement formula (“Russian naval base *in* Sevastopol,” as preferred by the Ukrainian side, versus “Russian naval base—Sevastopol,” advocated by the Russians) revealed the hidden mistrust of the parties. First came the Russian Security Council’s official announcement that “Kiev has shown a tendency to go back on its commitments.” Soon thereafter, Yuriy Luzhkov, a popular Moscow mayor and would-be presidential contender, alleged that when “after a drinking binge,” Khrushchev presented Crimea to Ukraine, “Sevastopol was turned into a separate administrative entity and was not handed over to Ukraine.”<sup>22</sup> Konstantin Zatulin, Luzhkov’s adviser on CIS matters, followed with a series of articles in which he suggested withholding the recognition of Russo-Ukrainian borders until Kiev agreed to sign a federal treaty with Crimea, as well as forcing the former Union republics, mainly Ukraine, back under Russian control, even if it meant the deliberate political destabilization of the domestic political situation in those countries.<sup>23</sup> In response, Kiev declared Zatulin *persona non grata*, specifically barring him from entering Crimea and Sevastopol, even if officially invited by the BSF commander.<sup>24</sup>

At about the same time Yeltsin announced that Russia and Ukraine had passed “the most difficult phase” in their relations, Luzhkov struck again, demanding that Sevastopol “be placed under Russia’s jurisdiction again,” and denouncing what he called the “forced Ukrainization” of ethnic Russians, warning that “relations between Ukraine and Russia will never be transparent or sincerely fraternal if injustice continues with regard to Sevastopol and Crimea.” He argued against ratification of the friendship treaty by Russia’s Federation Council and managed, first, to delay it and, second, to convince other senators to make their approval conditional on Ukraine’s ratification of the three BSF-related agreements. In yet another article on the matter, Zatulin elaborated on the unconstitutionality of

Crimea's transfer to Ukraine, alleged that the 1954 decision on Crimea did not cover Sevastopol, which remained subordinated to Moscow as a special administrative unit, and protested the "ethnic genocide" of Ukrainian Russians. In a related statement, Aleksandr Lebed, governor of Krasnoyarsk, objected to a provision of the treaty that represented Sevastopol as a Ukrainian city, saying it "must belong to Russia." Not to be deterred by the reciprocal ratification of the agreements, Luzhkov reiterated his view that Sevastopol belonged to Russia while attending a joint Russo-Ukrainian navy parade in Sevastopol in 1999, adding that the issue "sooner or later will be resolved as history and justice demands."<sup>25</sup>

These statements could be dismissed were they not more or less openly shared by practically all of the top figures in Moscow and a large segment of the Russian public. A strongly critical opinion of Ukraine was revealed in then-Prime Minister (and presently the Russian ambassador to Ukraine) Viktor Chernomyrdin's dissatisfaction with the country's "increasingly distinctive policy of squeezing out the Russian language and culture." The State Duma, until late 1999 dominated by communists and nationalists, saw people like Sergei Baburin, Georgii Tikhonov, Vladimir Lukin, Ivan Rybkin, Viktor Iliukhin, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, and Aleksei Mitrofanov invariably bringing some combination of territorial, political, and cultural demands to the Ukrainian state or challenging the Ukrainian sovereignty in the matters of policy. Tikhonov, the Duma CIS Affairs Committee chairman, even went so far as to hand the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation a proposal on holding a referendum to reunite the two countries. The Ukrainian delegation in turn characterized the proposal as a "provocation."<sup>26</sup>

The problem is that the Russian public does not see it this way. According to a national survey, 78 percent of Russia's population agreed with Luzhkov's statement that Sevastopol must belong to Russia; only 7 percent regarded the city as "properly" Ukrainian. Almost half of Russians believed that the Federation Council should not have ratified the "big" treaty with Ukraine as long as the division of the BSF, the status of Sevastopol, and Ukraine's debts for Russian oil and gas remained unresolved issues. Meanwhile, Ukrainians tend to disagree with both the idea of continued Russian sovereignty over the Crimean peninsula and the idea that the transfer of Sevastopol had been either hasty or ill conceived. A typical Ukrainian account insists on economic reasons behind the 1954 decision, which was supposed to help Crimea solve its longstanding problems of water and electricity supplies, and argues that, "without a vital link to Ukraine, the peninsula has no future." The 1997 treaty, though proclaiming the mutual obligation of the parties to "respect each other's

territorial integrity” within the currently existing borders, apparently did not end the issue, at least not as far as general public is concerned. That is why, even when official Moscow sees bilateral relations as “fraternal,” Kiev is still worried, in ex-Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk’s words, about the “lack of time to address problems that have piled up as a result of the emergence of new states”—a polite referral to Russia’s unwillingness to deal with the aforementioned problems in a manner satisfactory to Ukraine.<sup>27</sup>

Ukrainians received a clear signal from Russian parliamentarians’ unwillingness to ratify the friendship treaty with no strings attached. Parallel to the discussions that engulfed first the lower and then the upper chamber of the Russian Parliament, most major media outlets kept insisting that the treaty would give Ukraine a one-sided advantage.<sup>28</sup> Several people followed Luzhkov’s lead and argued in favor of delaying ratification until after the new Ukrainian Parliament agreed on the division and stationing of the BSF. It took much effort on the part of such well-known pan-Slavists as Communist Party leader Gennadii Ziuganov and Duma chairman Gennadii Seleznev to press the ratification through. Even then, the Council of the Federation might well have swept the friendship accord under the carpet if not for the crucial intervention of then–Prime Minister Evgenii Primakov and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. After the agreements were signed, opinion makers in Russia, most notably the influential daily *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, continued to lament the loss of Crimea and to question the legal validity of the transfer. Among the usually advanced arguments, the alleged unconstitutionality of the transfer, procedural and institutional irregularities, and Sevastopol’s exempt legal status remained the most commonly reiterated issues.<sup>29</sup>

The 1997 agreements on the division of the BSF and the continuing lease of the Sevastopol base by the Russian navy have failed to exhaust either the military or the political aspects of the issue. According to the Russian press, the future of the agreements is “cloudy.”<sup>30</sup> Article 17 of Ukraine’s Constitution stipulates that there should be no foreign military bases on Ukrainian territory. Ukrainian insistence on the temporary character of the Russian naval presence in Crimea provokes Russian fears that the twenty-year lease agreement may not be renewed when expired. The position of the nationalist right and center-right factions of the Verkhovna Rada, which resolutely opposed the bill’s ratification as ostensibly threatening Ukraine’s national interests, gave Moscow additional cause for concern. However, the position of the Ukrainian executive is the most important issue. After his 1999 reelection for a second five-year term, Leonid Kuchma was unequivocal in proclaiming, on behalf of the Ukrainian people: “They want to join the Atlantic community.”<sup>31</sup>

If Ukraine is indeed on its way to joining NATO, the Russian naval base on its territory should obviously be eliminated. If NATO backs Ukraine on the issue, Russia might be faced with an unpleasant choice between withdrawal (and humiliation) or direct confrontation.<sup>32</sup> The prospects of intensified and fruitful Russia-NATO cooperation that have emerged in their joint response to the threat of global terrorism in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attack on America thus are likely to vaporize, and mutual suspicion return. The only way to prevent this sour scenario from happening is to synchronize Ukraine's moving closer to NATO with Russia's increased participation in Euro-Atlantic processes.

Apart from military developments, Russian politicians are less than happy with the continuing Ukrainianization of the Crimean Autonomous Republic. With the adoption of the Ukrainian constitution in 1996, Crimean autonomy was further curtailed and the proposition of Crimea as an inseparable part of Ukraine was enshrined in state law. The Crimean Constitution ratified by the Verkhovna Rada in December, 1998, proclaimed Ukrainian the sole official language on the peninsula. Russian parties could not present a sustained opposition to these developments, as they no longer commanded the overwhelming majority they wielded in the Crimean Parliament during its 1993–94 political battles with Kiev. The closure of four independent television and radio stations in Crimea, including a popular Black Sea TV station, during the 1999 presidential election campaign, showed that Kiev was still obsessed with a potentially rebellious area.

Though hailed by Leonid Grach, the communist speaker of the Crimean Parliament, as “second in importance after the Constitution of Ukraine,” the Crimean constitution clearly ceded decision-making authority to Kiev. Its failure to secure official status for the Russian language was read in Moscow as Ukraine's determination to deny Crimean Russians any of the special collective rights they were able to secure so far, thus signaling plans for their imminent assimilation.<sup>33</sup> In a related statement, the State Duma decried “discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and language” and warned about the possibility of a “breach of security and peace between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples, and of harmonious coexistence on the territory of Ukraine itself.” Russian parliamentarians protested the application of the term *minority* to Ukrainian Russians, suggesting instead the formula of “two national majorities.” The statement not only reminded Ukraine of Russia's official policy of the “protection of compatriots,” it also extended a demand that “the Russian language would be installed as official throughout the whole of Ukrainian territory.”<sup>34</sup>

If Russia is less than happy with its obviously precarious position in Crimea, Ukraine has also been less than happy with the way Russia has kept its side of the bargain. For one thing, Ukrainians feel that the deal they got in trading part of Ukraine's debt to Russia for BSF leasing rights is not fair. Only about 30 percent of the total \$3.74 billion owed by 1997 was to be signed off by the end of the lease period. Meanwhile, the debt of the Russian BSF to Ukraine is mounting. The Sevastopol city administration periodically demands that the fleet pay its taxes or at least cover its water and energy bills. It has been calculated that the BSF costs the city up to 25 percent of its annual budget. Threats to confiscate the Russian navy's property or to cut off supplies have become routine. In 1998, city authorities deprived Russian sailors of the right to use city transportation free of charge and undertook a number of other measures, protested as "abusive actions" by the BSF commander, Vice Admiral Komoedov. The telephone company Ukrtelecom shut off its lines to the fleet because of unpaid bills totaling some \$146,000. Housing in Sevastopol also remains a serious issue, which the Moscow city government tried to address by financing construction of several apartment blocks for BSF sailors. However, this cash injection has been an exception to the rule. The fleet habitually shirks its obligations, and the only practical solution to this problem, which then-Prime Minister Stepashin offered to his Ukrainian counterpart in 1999, has been the "mutual cancellation of debts and [the continuation of] direct supplies."<sup>35</sup> In view of Ukraine's growing gas debt to Russia, which was close to \$2 billion in 2000, Russia's strategy of financing the BSF by writing off Ukraine's larger gas bill might well prove faultless.<sup>36</sup>

#### **THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES: DEAD OR ALIVE?**

The ideas of Russia as a protector of compatriots throughout the Commonwealth, of the CIS as "primarily a zone of Russia's interests," of porous borders within the CIS and Russia's right to deploy its troops "along the CIS perimeter," advanced as early as 1992 by such politicians as Ruslan Khasbulatov, Yevgenii Ambartsumov, Sergei Stankevich, or Gen. Igor Rodionov, were taken seriously enough by Foreign Minister Kozyrev to substantially modify his earlier "Atlanticist" course and advance in 1993-94 with what came to be known as the Russian "Monroe Doctrine." The latter culminated in the presidential decree "On Adoption of the Strategic Course of the Russian Federation in Relations with the Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States." The document defined the CIS members as a group of post-Soviet



states “pursuing friendly policies toward Russia.” The Russian Federation assumed the self-ascribed role of “the leading force in the creation of a new system of interstate political and economic relations throughout the post-Soviet space.” In a clear rebuke of Ukraine-favored bilateralism, the decree demanded that “bilateral agreements should not allow their participants advantages that are equal (not to mention superior) to those enjoyed by members of the [Russia-led Customs] Union.” The government took it upon itself to secure the continuing hegemony of Russian culture through television and radio broadcasts in the near abroad, through press “advancement into the region,” and through the “restoration of Russia’s position as the main educational center for the post-Soviet space.” The Crimean issue was echoed in the proclamation of Russia’s right to maintain its military installations abroad, applying “a differentiating approach to individual areas of the state border” and never hesitating to discipline a neighbor that might fall behind in the “observance of the rights and interests of Russians [*rossiiian*] on its territory.” The state pledged to “actively facilitate Russians’ adaptation to the new political and socioeconomic realities in the countries of their permanent residence—the former republics of the USSR.”<sup>37</sup>

As Jerzy Kozakiewicz, the Polish ambassador to Ukraine, later recalled, the decree brought with it “a culmination of Russian pressure on Ukraine.” It has been widely seen in Ukrainian political and intellectual circles as the sign of an “undeclared war,” if only a war of words, against Ukrainian independence. Ukrainians were infuriated with such an outspoken pretension in the leadership. “The content of that document has completely disillusioned Ukrainian adherents of a partnership with Russia,” frustrating their “hopes to improve the climate of bilateral Ukrainian-Russian relations.”<sup>38</sup> Russia’s claim went farther than the simple reassertion of a desire to be first among equals. In comparison to the familiar Soviet rhetoric of international brotherhood, this was an undisguised assertion of hegemony. Worse still, it came from a country that continued to exhibit superpower behavior even though it had lost most of the instruments of leverage the old Soviet center used to yield over the republics.

Yeltsin’s decree revealed Russia’s unrelenting desire to use the CIS as something much more than simply an instrument of “civilized divorce,” as Leonid Kravchuk had originally presented it to the Ukrainian public. From the start, Ukraine’s and Russia’s views of the CIS mandate differed. Clearly, there was a shared desire to end the Soviet Union, principally using the Agreement on the Creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States to terminate, in the language of the agreement, the “activity of the institutes

of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the territories of the states belonging to the Commonwealth” (Article 14). An informed analysis of the event shows that “the main goal that had been pursued there was to remove M. Gorbachev and his team from power.”<sup>39</sup> However, Russia wanted to retain its leading role in the newly formed alliance, and the document committed its signatories to “guarantee open borders, and the freedom of movement of citizens and exchange of information within the framework of the Commonwealth” (Article 5). The agreement further provided for cooperation of the CIS members in the areas of politics, economics, culture, and education, obliged the parties “to preserve and support a common military-strategic space under joint command,” and designated foreign economic and customs policies, transportation and communications, migration, and “the struggle with organized crime” as the areas of CIS “joint activity carried out by joint coordinating organs of the Commonwealth” (Articles 4, 6, and 7).

The spirit of the agreement substantially circumscribed both Ukraine’s newly found sovereignty and that of other CIS members. This had been corrected by a declaration issued on December 21, 1991, at the Alma-Ata summit, which emphasized the legal equality of CIS members and unequivocally stated that the CIS “is neither a State nor a supra-State entity.” Still, Kiev continued to exhibit caution and opted for a policy that was scarcely informed by CIS obligations. In the words of Dmytro Pavlychko, one of the Rukh founders, “for Ukraine, the CIS is that ram that hid wise Odysseus under its belly to carry him out of cannibal’s cave.”<sup>40</sup> An official address of the Rukh instructed authorities in Kiev “to organize effective protection of the Ukrainian state border, to draw up formal documents establishing institutions of citizenship, and to terminate Ukraine’s membership in the CIS immediately, since it emerges as a tool of resurrection of the Russian Empire.”<sup>41</sup> A group of deputies in the Verkhovna Rada voiced vehement criticism of the state’s indecisive approach to the problem of national security, reminded Ukraine of its officially nonaligned status, and demanded a speedy breakup with Russia in the area of military and defense policies. Consequently, Ukraine refused to sign the CIS Treaty on Collective Security, which was presented at the 1992 Taskent summit of CIS leaders as a joint Russian-Kazakh proposal. Ukraine was supported by such states as Azerbaijan and Moldova, whose leaders also refrained from joining, in refusing to acknowledge *de facto* Russian military supremacy under the guise of a joint CIS command, which the Tashkent treaty legalized. This was the start of an open split between those CIS members who chose to follow Russia’s aspirations of leadership and those who preferred to oppose Russian hegemony.

The split deepened in subsequent years. A watershed event occurred during the Minsk summit on January 22, 1993, when Russia and its supporters introduced the long-awaited CIS Charter. Among other things, the document contained provisions for the coordination of foreign and security policies (Articles 4 and 11), joint command over border guards and the United Armed Forces (Articles 13 and 31), and the establishment of the Economic Court to oversee the “discharge of economic obligations within the Commonwealth” (Art. 32). Section IV, which addresses conflict prevention and dispute settlement, mentioned that local interethnic and interconfessional conflicts could be made “on a basis of mutual consent,” subject to collective resolution and presumably with the help of CIS peacekeeping forces instituted by Article 11. Several articles were informed by the idea of a clear distinction between the “external” and “internal” frontiers of the CIS. Although the charter allowed individual signatories to make “reservations and declarations” on some of the more touchy issues at the moment of ratification, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Moldova preferred not to sign it at all. Leonid Kravchuk argued that he would not allow the Commonwealth of Independent States “to be transformed into some kind of state entity with its own organs of power and authority.”<sup>42</sup> Ukraine instead insisted on bilateral agreements as the preferred legal instrument of cooperation within the CIS and emphasized economic aspects of cooperation over the rest of the agenda.

Ukraine was extremely cautious about joining the CIS Economic Union, launched on September 24, 1993, in Moscow, with a mandate to coordinate the monetary, fiscal, budget, credit, customs, and currency policies of member states, as well as their foreign economic relations and business legislation. The treaty, which Kiev did not sign, envisioned a customs, payment, and currency union; a singular currency system pegged to the ruble; and the harmonization of fiscal policies. All of these were seen in Ukraine as an attempt at the supranational regulation of the country’s economic policy. After a period of intense debate, Ukraine became an associated member of the Union on April 15, 1994. Although going along with the establishment of the CIS Interstate Economic Committee (IEC) later that same year, Ukraine abstained from full-fledged participation in its activities and clearly indicated that national legislation would have priority over any decisions made by that body.<sup>43</sup> The country also did not join the proposed payment or monetary union within the CIS and pressed for a free trade zone rather than a formal customs union with Russia.<sup>44</sup> Ukraine also did not support the idea of a closer economic and military collaboration that was advanced, in the form of a pro-

posal for a "Eurasian Union" by Nursultan Nazarbaev, president of Kazakhstan. Ukraine's tentative approval of the multilateral Concept of Economic Integration and Development, which has projected creation of a single economic space by 2005, was preconditioned upon a refusal to accede to customs, payment, or currency unions or to accept the Russia-favored idea of a single information space.<sup>45</sup>

Apart from their fear of being caught in a renewed structure of Russian hegemony, Ukrainian leaders were also annoyed by the apparent lack of efficiency of the CIS institutions. During the CIS's first year of existence, more than two hundred agreements governing issues ranging from economy to ecology and from security to social policies were signed. Few have been enforced, let alone implemented.<sup>46</sup> Five years later, the number of signed agreements jumped to six hundred, yet monitoring them remained a "difficult challenge." It is little wonder then, that by the 1995 Almaty summit, Kuchma was quoted as saying, "I am clearly and fully aware that a shapeless organization like the CIS has no future."<sup>47</sup> During the January, 1996, Moscow summit, a Ukrainian leader classified the CIS as purely a "consultative body" and refused to debate ways to improve its structures of multinational coordination. Commentators in Moscow saw Ukraine denigrating the CIS as mere "states of the Eurasian region, on par with states of the Middle East."<sup>48</sup> Arguably, Ukraine's unsympathetic attitude invited precisely that imperial backlash that sovereigntists feared, as Kiev's efforts to obstruct post-Soviet "supranationalism" succeeded in breeding a similarly skeptical attitude toward the Commonwealth in Russia itself. In 1996, attacks on the CIS by a communist faction in the Duma fueled its campaign to demand restoration of the USSR via the mechanism of popular referendums. Having been forced to compete against the communists in the 1996 presidential elections, Yeltsin's team grew much more receptive to a view that "the idea of the CIS has been fully exhausted."<sup>49</sup> Scorning the CIS prompted a search for more direct ways to reassert Russia's dominance in the post-Soviet space.

However, despite its frequently voiced criticisms, Ukraine did not withdraw from the Commonwealth and continued to participate, even if in a limited capacity, in its mostly economic initiatives as well as in a joint air defense system. The principal reason behind this ambiguous stance was and remains Ukraine's dependence on Russia-supplied energy. By the end of 1994, Russia accounted for 60.1 percent of Ukraine's total imports and 39.5 percent of its total exports. The share of Russia in Ukraine's CIS imports reached 78.8 percent. Commenting on these statistics, Kuchma was forced to acknowledge: "For Ukraine, the CIS is first and foremost Russia."<sup>50</sup> In 1995, 42 percent

of Ukraine's exports went to Russia, which also accounted for no less than 50 percent of Ukraine's imports.<sup>51</sup> Turning one's back on such a partner would amount to economic catastrophe.

Signaling a more accommodating approach, on April 12, 1996, Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk signed the CIS economic integration plan for 1996–97, a crime-fighting agreement, and an agreement on scientific and technological cooperation in protection of the state borders. When questioned on integration, he indicated Ukraine's preparedness to come along. At that time, Ukraine's total debt to Russia, principally for gas and oil supplies, exceeded \$5 billion, while seasonal migration from Ukraine to the Russian Federation grew up to 55,100 annually, which accounted for 42.7 percent of all foreign workers employed in the country.<sup>52</sup>

Feeling that friendly rhetoric was not enough to balance the terms of trade, Ukraine started a tax war with its northern neighbor, making, in early 1996, its Russian exports tax-free, while continuing to impose a value-added tax (VAT) on Russian imports. At about the same time, it raised transit fees for the transportation of Russian oil to Europe. Moscow retaliated, slapping a 20 percent VAT on Ukrainian goods and imposing a quota on Ukrainian sugar in October of the same year.<sup>53</sup> In spite of that, and notwithstanding Ukraine's desperate search for alternative energy suppliers, Russia remained Ukraine's largest trade partner, accounting for 47 percent of the country's imports and almost 40 percent of its exports in 1996, 46.7 percent of total imports and 26.2 percent of exports in 1997, and 48.2 percent of imports and 22.7 percent of exports in 1998.<sup>54</sup> By the end of 1997, the parties reached an agreement to lift the VAT on practically all items of bilateral trade, while Moscow also revoked customs duties on Ukrainian sugar.<sup>55</sup>

Against this background, Kuchma's support of Russia's continued leadership of the CIS, revealed on the eve of the March, 1997, Moscow summit, came as little surprise to the participants. On one hand, the Ukrainian president insisted that the CIS must be made a union of equals rather than an organization in which one country (Russia) dominates the rest. On the other hand, he felt that no other country was better prepared to lead the alliance, and indicated Ukraine's support to intensification of CIS activities and further development of its multilateral institutions with an aim to foster closer integration along the "European model." Kuchma appeared similarly equivocal during the next summit in Chisinau. Speaking to a domestic audience, he accused Moscow of conducting a "trade war that Ukraine cannot stop." While at the summit, he exhibited a conciliatory sort of behavior—in sharp contrast to other heads of state, who criticized the CIS, especially Russia.<sup>56</sup>

The Chisinau meeting ranks among the lower points in CIS history. Apart from the renewal of the CIS peacekeepers' mandate in Abkhazia, it failed to produce anything of substance, which Yeltsin blamed on certain members' "groundless fears" that "someone will snatch away part of their sovereignty."<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile, Kiev identified the problem as being chiefly caused by the foreign policy "pragmatism" and "economic rationalism" of the Russian establishment. During his state visit to the Russian Federation in February, 1998, Kuchma argued that "the CIS in its initially devised form—where the emphasis is laid on multilateral relations and a single center, and, of course, where the weaker states are forced to make friends—is declining and is doomed to sink into oblivion."<sup>58</sup> The CIS's future would lie in bilateral economic relations conducted on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit. The signing of the ten-year economic cooperation program with Russia was in line with Ukraine's emphasis on bilateralism and signified the end of the "trade war" that cost both countries \$3 billion over a period of two years.<sup>59</sup>

In the post-Chisinau period, the CIS went into a tailspin that most analysts consider irreversible. The 1998–99 tenure of Russian tycoon Boris Berezovsky as CIS executive secretary, despite his energetic efforts to promote economic consolidation on the basis of a free trade agreement, failed to change the pattern of mostly empty declarations adopted against the background of a growing rift between individual member countries and their regional subgroupings. Among the latter, the Ukraine-led Georgia-Ukraine-Uzbekistan-Azerbaijan-Moldova (GUUAM) coalition gained momentum as a chief opponent of the so-called "Russian Five" (Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan), the countries that formed the core of the CIS customs union and its various collective defense agreements.

Ukraine's decision to formalize non-Russian opposition within the CIS came in the wake of the Chisinau failure and in the midst of a frantic search for alternative energy supplies. With the apparent blessing of the West, Kiev moved on to conclude bilateral agreements with the countries of the southwestern post-Soviet periphery, each with its own grudges against Moscow. Georgia and Moldova were less than happy with CIS peacekeeping operations, Azerbaijan saw Russia favoring the Armenian side in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and Ukraine sought to break its energy dependence on Russian monopolists with Azerbaijan's assistance. All four regarded themselves well positioned to eventually enter the European structures of economic cooperation and security by moving as far away from Russia as possible. All four also felt threatened by Russia's military machine and therefore coordinated their efforts at the Conventional Forces in Europe negotiations to secure

strict limits on Russia's forces positioned near their borders.<sup>60</sup> In a clear allusion to the Russian Five, the 1997 Ukrainian-Georgian "Declaration of Two" stated the need for a "counterbalance to the unions and alliances within the CIS."<sup>61</sup> To the idea of CIS (in effect, Russian) peacekeeping in such zones of conflict as Abkhazia or Transdnister, Ukraine countered with a proposal to send its own peacekeepers on the conditions agreed upon by the Georgian and Moldovan governments respectively. At the April, 1999, summit of CIS presidents, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan withdrew from the Collective Security Treaty, and Uzbekistan formally joined the GUUAM coalition soon afterward. The GUUAM grouping was announced symbolically in Washington during a NATO summit that has historically redefined the mandate of the North Atlantic alliance. Responding to these developments, Vladimir Putin, then acting as secretary of the Russian National Security Council, urged Russian-Belarusian unification as "a strategic task" that must be pursued further.<sup>62</sup>

However, at the January, 2000, meeting of CIS heads of state in Moscow, all of the GUUAM members endorsed Putin's candidacy for chairman of the CIS Heads of State Council. The post, heretofore occupied by Yeltsin, was originally envisioned as subject to rotation among all of the participating countries. Putin's ascent continued the tradition of implied Russian hegemony and indicated the non-Russian states' willingness to endorse it. The meeting adopted a Russia-sought resolution on "international terrorism," jointly moved by Uzbekistan's Karimov and Kazakhstan's Nazarbaev. As an indication of the GUUAM coalition's demise, international observers noted an unexplained cancellation of the group's defense ministers' meeting. According to one analyst, "The events at the summit indicate that CIS member states will place bilateral concerns with Russia above all else, instead of strengthening the one organization that gave them a voice in the CIS." Ukraine's behavior at the summit was in line with a more conciliatory attitude toward Moscow, which had been revealed a year earlier in its decision to join, in March, 1999, the long-scorned CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly.<sup>63</sup>

The CIS's future obviously depends on Russia to a much larger degree than it does on Ukraine. Ukraine's interest in the CIS is primarily economical; this interest is equally well served by bilateral agreements with other CIS members, the GUUAM countries and Russia in particular. Ukraine's pressure for free-trade arrangements with Russia is understandable in view of the country's immense trade dependence on the Russian import and export markets. Russia stands to lose the most from any arrangement of this kind: the Russian Customs Committee estimates that the country may lose around \$800 million if it ratifies the 1994 Free Trade Agreement and the 1999 proto-

col on the agreement adopted by CIS members.<sup>64</sup> While Russia is in no rush to open its markets, Ukraine and other CIS countries excluded from the privileged “five” move forward by preparing themselves for entry to the World Trade Organization and making bilateral deals in the meantime.

Ukraine is certainly less interested in the multilateral defense structures of the CIS: First, because it has officially proclaimed itself a nonaligned state and, second, because it fears that any participation in the Russia-led forces will jeopardize its independence and could potentially alienate the West. Because of the oppositely charged pulls of economic interest and security, Ukraine’s political role in the CIS is ill defined and intrinsically controversial. On one hand, it shies away from signing the CIS Charter and therefore cannot be considered a full-fledged member of the post-Soviet association. On the other hand, it not only reserves the status of an observer and dutifully participates in most heads-of-state and heads-of-government meetings, but has, as of late, stepped up its participation in the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and its council. Ukraine played along with Russia in condemning NATO’s air strikes against Yugoslavia and supporting the antiterrorist resolution in the wake of Russia’s pacifying efforts in Chechnya. Parallel to that, Kiev has never really abandoned its plans to secure the EU and NATO’s backing for the country’s drive “back to Europe.” Thus, while Moscow hopes, as Gennadii Seleznev does, that “today’s Union of Belarus and Russia will grow to embrace Ukraine and Kazakhstan provided this process is not obstructed,” some of Ukraine’s policy makers prioritize joining NATO and the removal of the Russian troops from Crimea.<sup>65</sup> Ukraine’s political establishment insisted on speedier delimitation of the borders with the Russian Federation—a process that started on April 1, 1998, and had not yet been completed by the time of the February, 2001, summit in Dnipropetrovsk. Kiev is willing to take Western guidance in practically all questions of foreign policy and security, and would probably consider abandoning its officially neutral status should an offer to join NATO or the EU be forthcoming. However, Ukraine’s relations with NATO still fall short of an overwhelming success story recited by the enthusiasts of Ukraine’s potential membership in the alliance. As for relations with the European Union, the “hapless, impoverished,” and less than fully open or democratic Ukraine cannot be a welcome applicant.<sup>66</sup>

#### **NATO: A BONE OF CONTENTION**

Ukraine’s attitude toward NATO has undergone certain changes over the course of the past ten years. While adoration of the West and all things Western was



strongly present on the eve of perestroika and immediately thereafter, George H. W. Bush's oft-cited remark on the dangers of "suicidal nationalism," made in Kiev shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union, poured a cold shower over the heads of his Ukrainian audience. As the West was not in a hurry to protect Ukraine's newborn independence, Kravchuk's government did its best to "Ukrainianize" military and security forces inherited from the *ancien régime*. Relations with NATO were strained over Ukraine's backtracking on its earlier commitment to reduce its nuclear stockpile, which prompted a Russia-U.S. marriage of convenience for forcing Kiev's final ascension to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). From 1992–94, Ukrainian nationalists clamored to retain nuclear weapons as the best security guarantee the relatively disadvantaged country could have in relations with its more powerful neighbors. Meanwhile, the West was busy filling up the security vacuum the collapse of the USSR had engendered. Moscow became the choice of necessity, while Ukraine, also out of necessity, was pushed into a corner. "The West and, particularly, the United States belatedly recognized the geopolitical significance of a sovereign Ukraine," lamented Zbigniew Brzezinski. "But by the mid-1990s America and Germany were ardent supporters of the independence of Kiev and the other new states."<sup>67</sup>

Once the nonproliferation issue was settled, America's attitude toward Ukraine changed. The Yeltsin regime, discredited by the October, 1993, attack on Parliament and the war on Chechnya, fell out of grace. Following Brzezinski's criticism of the "premature partnership" with Russia, Western policy establishment started paying significantly more attention to Ukraine, now perceived as a linchpin of European stability.<sup>68</sup> Underlying this change of mood, as Anatol Lieven rightly notes, has been "the desire of some Western thinkers and policy advocates to turn Ukraine into a buffer state against a feared (or presumed) resurgence of Russian imperialism," the desire frequently accompanied by a totally misplaced encouragement of anti-Russian nationalism as presumably instrumental in the country's transformation into a desired *cordon sanitaire*.<sup>69</sup> Ukrainian leaders, seeking to cover the economic mismanagement and direct theft of state assets with the help of international assistance and borrowing, were only happy to oblige. "If the Congress convinces Mr. Clinton of futility to stake all bets on Yeltsin's dying regime and pushes through with redistribution of financial aid in Ukraine's favor, our prospects will be even better," stated one typical account. "Ukraine has all the chances to transform itself from the world's Cinderella into a quite respectable lady."<sup>70</sup> Ukraine's "geopolitical bluff" combines the avowedly prowestern course of the country with the demonstrably anti-Russian position in foreign

policy and the determined “de-Russification” policies at home.<sup>71</sup> The enthusiastic embrace of collaboration with NATO and the country’s allegedly “Western” mentality is pointedly “sold” to the Trans-Atlantic community for a number of material benefits, financial subsidies, aid packages, and loans. On the other hand, Ukraine’s pro-NATO course sends a warning to Russia: Should Moscow curtail its energy subsidies or fall short of Ukraine’s expectations of a “mutually beneficial” policy, Kiev is well prepared to land on the opposite side of the border. The results of this double blackmail were dismal, indeed: “Ten years of generous Western aid have fostered corruption more than change.”<sup>72</sup>

The “Euro-Atlantic” course started in 1994, when Ukraine applied to join NATO’s Partnership for Peace Program (PfP) before Russia and the other CIS states. It has also used its window of opportunity and was accepted into the Council of Europe a year earlier than Russia, whose own application was delayed by the Chechen adventure. Following Leonid Kuchma’s meeting with NATO’s secretary general on June 1, 1995, Ukraine-NATO relations acquired momentum. “NATO must not let Russia determine [its] policy. Membership in the Organization must be decided by NATO members, not by Russia. . . . Ukraine’s status is strategically important for Europe and the whole West from the viewpoint of Ukraine’s opposition to the growing expansionism of Russia,” declared a member of the Ukrainian delegation to the Council of Europe.<sup>73</sup> Three months later, Foreign Minister Udovenko participated in the first “16+1” meeting with the North Atlantic Council, discussing the problems of European security. The following year, Ukraine signed an implementation paper spelling out relations with NATO in the PfP and other areas, and held the first “16+1” consultation at the political committee level. By 1997, Ukraine had established its permanent mission to NATO, and by 1998, a NATO liaison officer had been posted to Kiev to facilitate military cooperation.

Ukraine’s official position has been that, by participating in the PfP, the Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which replaced the latter in 1997, Ukraine reclaims itself as a sovereign European power, a would-be member of the Western community of nations. Initially critical of NATO’s expansion to the east, Kiev quickly changed its position, first, toward pointed indifference, adorned with the proclaimed respect to individual choices of the prospective members and, second, toward support. The endorsement was based on the idea that the alliance would gradually transform itself into a purely political, rather than military-political, body, would not station additional

forces on the territory of incoming members, and would avoid either equipping them with nuclear arms or stationing nuclear weapons in their territory. Ukraine even joined with Russia in calling, at the Fifty-first Session of the UN General Assembly, for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Central and Eastern Europe “from the Black Sea to the Baltics.”<sup>74</sup>

Very soon, however, Ukraine’s support of NATO’s enlargement was freed from conditional clauses. Indications of its desire to trade its nonaligned status for the benefits of NATO membership started to appear in press. Ex-President Kravchuk had long argued that Ukraine was incapable of defending itself. In 1995, Kuchma enigmatically stated, “we do not strive to join NATO because as of today we are not yet expected to be there.” On several other occasions, he mentioned that Ukraine’s nonaligned status should not be regarded as its eternal destiny. Volodymyr Horbulin, the secretary of the National Security Council, and Foreign Ministers Hennadii Udovenko and Borys Tarasyuk made similar remarks. Immediately upon his nomination to the post, Tarasyuk, the former NATO ambassador, said that he would “do everything possible to help integrate Ukraine into European and European-Atlantic structures and strengthen the country’s independence by means of foreign policy.” Horbulin insisted that Ukraine’s moving toward NATO had been mandated by considerations of regional stability and was important for scientific and technological development. The first round of NATO’s expansion prompted him to state that, although it was “too early” for Ukraine to seek NATO membership, it nevertheless remained an option for the future. Kiev has been equally eager to “institutionalize” its relationships with the Western European Union, seeking associate membership in the group, which many see as a “bridge” between the EU and NATO.<sup>75</sup> From the Ukrainian perspective, both political and economic reasoning suggest keeping one’s options open, particularly in view of the rather smooth integration of the Central European entrants and the fast-track prospects of EU (and possibly NATO) membership for Estonia.

Although formally neutral, Ukraine takes every opportunity to demonstrate its no-nonsense approach to defense and military issues. While not taking part in the Russia-dominated CIS peacekeeping operations, Kiev made several offers to send independent Ukrainian peacekeepers to such areas of conflict as Georgia, Tajikistan, and Moldova. In the last case, both sides agreed to accept Ukrainian peacekeepers and the decision to create a joint Ukrainian-Moldovan battalion for peacekeeping purposes was reached in July, 1999. On March 21, 2000, Ukraine announced plans to form a tripartite battalion with GUUAM partners Georgia and Azerbaijan.<sup>76</sup> Ukraine became the sec-

ond, after Russia, post-Soviet country to contribute to a number of peace-keeping missions around the globe. Since 1992, more than seventy-five hundred Ukrainian troops have been dispatched to seven of the UN peace-keeping operations in Angola, Guatemala, Kuwait, Lebanon, Tajikistan, and the former Yugoslavia. Ukrainians have served with the IFOR, SFOR, and KFOR contingents under NATO command in Bosnia and Kosovo.

The country's foreign policy establishment supports the idea of stepping up participation in the PfP programs, especially when joint military exercises with NATO countries are considered. Such participation, according to the prevalent mood, should make the Ukrainian army prepared for field interaction with alliance armies and demonstrate this readiness to Russia. Ukrainian security analysts argue that military cooperation with NATO will serve defense needs of the Ukrainian state while also creating "conditions necessary for the normal advancement of Ukraine toward a Western model of development, regardless of Ukraine's joining the Alliance." It is important, they continue, to create an impression that Ukraine "is not [just] an observer of European events, but an active participant in the construction of a European security architecture."<sup>77</sup> Hence, the State Program for Cooperation with NATO until the year 2001 envisioned "development of interoperability of the command structure, detachments and units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and NATO's Integrated Military Forces in order to ensure their preparedness for collaborative efforts at realization of common goals" (Article 4.2). Interoperability with NATO forces remains a key goal of the State Program of Cooperation with NATO for 2001–2004. The major military base in Yavoriv has been specifically designated to host military maneuvers of the NATO member states, with or without Ukraine's direct participation. The naval maneuvers in the Black Sea and the littoral, as *Sea Breeze 97* convincingly demonstrated, suggest in no uncertain terms that Ukraine is prepared to ask for NATO's assistance in fighting ethnic separatism and civil unrest in the southern area of the country, which is heavily populated by Russians. From 1994–2000, Ukraine's armed forces took part in more than eighty military exercises under the PfP framework. In 2000, three out of ten PfP exercises including Ukrainian forces were held in Ukraine itself. Eight exercises were scheduled in 2001. Ukraine has been quite active in the PfP Planning and Review Process, and in joint training of the Polish-Ukrainian battalion formed under NATO auspices in 1997. Preparations to step up Ukraine's participation in NATO's Combined Joint Task Force were well under way by the end of 2001.<sup>78</sup>

The prospect of Ukraine joining NATO without Russia is not on the list of things likely to make Moscow rejoice. By all indications, such a move

would be counterproductive for all involved—Ukraine, Russia, and NATO itself. In Richard Solomon's opinion, "Ukraine's acceptance of a Western policy of actively pulling Ukraine into NATO would surely sharpen the appearance of an anti-Russian ideology on the part of the Ukrainian government, thereby severely threatening relations not only between Russia and Ukraine, but also between Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine. In other words . . . if Ukraine's value to transatlantic security lies in the country's continued internal stability, such an assertive policy of NATO enlargement in this direction would lead to exactly the kind of result the West wishes most to avoid."<sup>79</sup>

For Moscow, allowing Ukraine to join NATO while excluding Russia would mean the following: a hostile action by the alliance, a continuation of the policy aimed at pushing Russia out of its traditional spheres of influence, and a move that signifies Russia's encirclement with international protectorates or mandate territories of a Bosnia-Kosovo type. With NATO moving closer, Russian generals would be bracing themselves against imminent Western intervention in Chechnya. In a war-ravaged Caucasus, there is no lack of good causes that Western humanitarian intervention could choose to pursue. Another reason for NATO's hostile move in the region may be related, in Russian opinion, to the declared goal of protection of international oil and gas routes and an undeclared power struggle over Caspian oil deposits. Even if more dire predictions failed to materialize, Ukraine's admittance to NATO would automatically spell the end of the Russian military presence in Crimea and would utterly demolish Russian naval potential in the area. The Black Sea Fleet would have to be relocated to a less than adequate base in Novorossiisk, thereby confining it to little more than local patrol duties. A nontransparent border would finally divide the Sea of Azov and terminate the already crippled lines of communication between its Russian and Ukrainian shores. The visa regime of entry would separate millions of people from their relatives, sever business links, and minimize cultural exchange. It is reasonable to expect that Russians in Ukraine would be subjected to even more determined acculturation into the model "Ukrainian" identity, while Russia itself would fall prey to a demonization campaign in the media, most of which would go along with a verdict representing yesterday's friend as today's enemy.

Any Russian politician visualizing such a scenario is forced to take action to prevent it from happening. The scope of the action, dictated by what Moscow perceives as a looming catastrophe, may be inordinate from the Western point of view. Russia, motivated by NATO's enlargement, revised its Concept of National Security to allow for a nuclear first strike "in response to . . . large scale aggression with the use of conventional weapons in situations

that are critical for the national security of the Russian Federation and its allies.” The document reflects the post-Kosovo state of mind of the Russian political establishment, fearful of American military hegemony and keenly defensive, if not alarmist in discussion of the “increased level and scope of military threats,” which are attributed to both internal and external sources.<sup>80</sup> Ukraine’s membership in NATO, because of Ukraine’s intimate connection to Russian politics and society and Ukraine’s crucial proximity to the very sense of Russian national identity, will represent a combustible combination of external and internal threat simultaneously. Russia may start acting irrationally. The “big” treaty with Ukraine may be scrapped, and it might reclaim Crimea. It is doubtful that NATO will ever exhibit the same level of commitment to Ukraine’s defense as is customarily expected should a Western European country run the risk of an armed confrontation. Flirting with NATO membership at Russia’s expense in today’s real-world politics can only reduce Ukraine’s security, not enhance it. Ukraine is a pivotal nation, however. If turned in the wrong direction, it can only jeopardize European and international security as a whole.

Moscow closely scrutinizes Ukraine’s NATO policy. Russia was less than happy that the March, 2000, joint meeting of NATO’s North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the NATO-Ukraine Commission took place in Kiev. It is not the fact that Ukraine implements an ambitious program of cooperation with NATO, or uses its special relationship with the alliance to advance an even more ambitious plan of European integration that worries Russians. What worries them most is that Ukraine pursues this course unilaterally and without much regard to the concerns raised by Moscow. Russians would like to see Ukraine moving toward NATO in tandem with Russia. Ukrainians would like to proceed on their own, as they regard collaboration with NATO as their key leverage in negotiations with the EU and a security hedge against a potentially revisionist Russia. Ukraine sees NATO enlargement as “an enlargement of the zone of security, stability, and democracy in Europe” and “salutes the desire of the countries of East Central Europe to become members of the Alliance.”<sup>81</sup> Russian objections to NATO’s eastward expansion remain rock solid, despite an observable Russia-NATO rapprochement and support of the U.S.-led fight against global terrorism that the Kremlin demonstrated in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on America. If Russians come to believe that the West uses Ukraine and the Ukraine-led GUUAM to debilitate the CIS, or to lock Russia out of the process of European integration, Russia’s currently good relations with both Ukraine and the West may sustain a heavy and not easily reparable blow.

Russia has made it clear that there are limits to Ukrainian freedom of choice in matters of foreign policy. There are several reasons why Moscow sees its concerns as legitimate, of which Ukraine's geostrategic proximity and special geopolitical importance for Russia are important, as are the two nations' closely intertwined history and common political genealogy. The more than 11 million ethnic Russians "straddled" in Ukraine since 1991 and still making up the majority in the Crimean Autonomous Republic (until recently a part of the Russian Federation), are yet another reason.<sup>82</sup> Among the election promises that Vladimir Putin could not fail to deliver was his assurance that "Russia will be more attentively, judiciously, and insistently standing up for the interests of its citizens—both those who reside in Russia and those who have opted to settle in the CIS countries."<sup>83</sup> But perhaps the most intimate cause for Russian sensitivity to everything that happens in and around Ukraine lies in Russia's own immature national identity, which still hinges on the idea of East Slavic togetherness. A recently revived myth of a triadic "superethnos" of Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians, meant to be "forever united" by quasi-familial ties of support and friendship, is only one popular way to express this feeling of mutual belonging. Though the myth of unity need not be translated into imperialist policies, it certainly informs the Russian emphasis on the rights of "compatriots" abroad, concern for the status of the Russian language in Ukraine, and the desire to see Ukraine's foreign policy more closely allied with that of the Russian Federation.<sup>84</sup>

## CONCLUSION

At the start of the twenty-first century, and despite the warming up of relations after the February, 2001, summit in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine's hopes are still Russia's fears, and vice versa. Ukraine still regards Moscow's attempts at multinational coordination of policy as an encroachment on its national sovereignty. However, it does not decry limitations of sovereignty imposed on its domestic and international policies by the international community via such institutions as the IMF, the World Bank, the Council of Europe, or the European Union. Despite apparent internal problems and resistance by hard-line politicians and administrators, Kiev complied with the Council of Europe's requirement to suspend capital punishment and with the Group of Seven (G7) demand to close the Chernobyl power plant by the end of 2000. While the country's constitution prohibits stationing foreign troops on Ukrainian territory, Ukraine's Parliament made an exception for NATO forces, ratifying, in March, 2000, a status of forces agreement legalizing the temporary deployment of NATO troops to Ukraine.

Russia cannot but feel alarmed by this selective interpretation of threats to the national sovereignty. From the Russian point of view, Ukraine allows Westerners to shape the country's policy to a degree that has been undreamed of in Moscow. While pursuing the mirage of would-be EU membership, Kiev continues to rely on the rhetoric of "strategic partnership" with Russia to exploit the latter's natural resources and get away with what has become a policy of running huge energy debts, further exacerbated by the theft of Russian gas in transit. Ukraine's dissatisfaction with Russia's leadership of the Commonwealth led it, with Western encouragement, to launch the GUUAM grouping, which Moscow sees as a disruptive and generally counterproductive influence on the CIS. Last but not least, Ukraine's happy-go-lucky attitude toward Russia's finances might be partially excused, from Moscow's point of view, if Kiev showed somewhat less determination to wipe the Russian cultural presence clean from Ukrainian soil. Statistics showing a steady decline in the number of Russian schools in Ukraine, the all-out assault on the Russian language in public service and the state-controlled media, and unceasing efforts to ethnicize the Ukrainian-Russian identity through the eradication of its Russian component all speak for themselves. Under these circumstances, Moscow may sooner or later be forced to overhaul its Ukrainian policy, most probably by taking a tougher stance on economic issues. Putin's insistence on settling Ukraine's \$1.34 billion gas debt in cash, rather than by barter as Ukrainians hoped, and his recurrent intervention on behalf of Russian businesses willing to take part in Ukraine's lucrative privatization auctions are good indications of the things to come.

From the Ukrainian point of view, Moscow's policy is equally plagued by double standards. Looking at Moscow, Kiev observes much larger subsidies and debt forgiveness measures applied to compliant Belarus than to independent-minded Ukraine. Ukrainians are mostly critical of Moscow's use of force in Chechnya, and find it impossible to visualize Ukraine taking part in a similar police action on such a scale. While common people, especially in the eastern half of the country, feel much sympathy for their Russian brethren, this sympathy rarely extends to the Russian oligarchs. Ukrainians do not want to be part of military adventures of any sort, which does not bode well for CIS security integration efforts.<sup>85</sup> Mooring rights for the Russian Black Sea Fleet have been granted, temporarily, with the condition that Russia pay for its use of naval facilities in Sevastopol. Ukraine, however, has yet to see a stable flow of cash coming from this agreement. Although increased trade with Russia is widely desired and indeed grew by 18 percent, to more than \$9 billion, in 2000, Moscow's selective protectionism and prevarication with the free trade agreement makes Ukraine's enthusiasm wane and reduces the potential for



economic cooperation between the two countries.<sup>86</sup> As far as Russian language rights in Ukraine are concerned, Kiev cannot but observe that hundreds of Russian schools in Ukraine are hardly matched by several dozen Ukrainian schools and classes currently available in Russia.<sup>87</sup>

A stern assessment of the combined weight of these trends and contradictions may lead one to believe that the rivalry noted in Ukrainian-Russian relations still exists.<sup>88</sup> It stands to reason that nationalist mobilization might be the biggest spoiler of the currently good prospects for cooperation. The assertive policies of distancing from Russia continued by the second Kuchma administration in such sensitive areas as security and foreign policy, education, culture, and the media can be perceived in Moscow as threatening to Russian interests in the region. Russia may be tempted to retaliate, particularly by calling in Ukraine's debt, erecting protective walls in interstate trade, or refusing to honor its earlier negotiated commitment to the demarcation of the state border. Should Ukraine negotiate formal NATO membership, Moscow's reaction will be severe. The issue of Crimea may well be reopened, and the Black Sea Fleet may simply refuse to leave once the current lease of the Sevastopol facilities expires.

The West has an important say in these issues. However, Western leverage may prove counterproductive if its current policy of tacitly encouraging Ukraine's Russophobia continues. Instead of giving billions of dollars in aid as a payment for Ukraine's pivotal geostrategic position, the West should condition this aid on genuine acceptance of economic reform, freedom of the press, and principles of democratic governance—something that Kiev sorely lacks at the moment. Handouts to Moscow must be limited to programs that verifiably improve international security, for example, by helping to destroy stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, or encouraging the growth of a civil society independent from state controls. As a matter of principle, the West should help the people, not the governments that proved themselves extremely adept at squandering "free" money.

With regard to the United States and other Western nations' foreign policy goals in the region, encouraging closer contacts between Kiev and Moscow should in fact be made a priority. While Ukraine still has a long way to go to catch up with Poland, it may well start the race by trying to catch up with Russia. Economic cooperation with Russia and other CIS states may prove the only feasible way to improve Ukraine's economy. In terms of politics, Russia's immature democracy and traditional statism are way ahead of Ukraine's current regime of presidential regency on behalf of the oligarchs uncontrollably looting the country. Independent news media, even if assaulted, exists in

Russia as a factor in day-to-day life. Ukraine still has to achieve this state of affairs. As regional security goes, it is simply not possible to maintain it without extensive cooperation and regular consultations between these two neighboring countries, the largest in the area. If Kiev sees Russia as a nuisance and builds the nation by eschewing all things Russian from Ukrainian politics and society, it loses its only chance to give the West the geopolitical service that justifies Ukraine's preferential treatment by the international community.

# Conclusion

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Ukraine's emergence in the international arena as an independent state posed several questions that have not yet been satisfactorily answered. The most important of those concerns Ukraine's role in Europe and the rest of the world. To answer this question, we need to know what Ukraine is and what it is not. In other words, we need to establish Ukraine's international identity. There are various ways to do that. A common, and generally erroneous, approach is to think of Ukraine from the point of view of its usefulness, or functionality, for external actors. While the external projection of interests makes the day-to-day business of foreign policy, it helps us little in understanding what makes Ukraine what it is. We will never learn someone else's true identity if the only thing that we care about is using this someone to further our own agenda. Identity is a combination of external roles and expectations and internal motives of behavior, dispositions, and self-perceptions. International identity is not free from domestic influences either. In fact, it is as much a projection of domestic national identity as a reflection of the unique structure of the international relations system.

Ukraine's national identity in no small part determines its international behavior. It is still in a state of flux, pushed and pulled by both internal and external forces, which often are in conflict. On one side, there is Russia, offering a privileged partnership on the basis of essential historical and cultural affinity, as well as postulated complementarity of interests. On the other side, there is the West, the United States and the European Union in particular, with its own promise of partnership based primarily on considerations of geopolitics and security. Among the domestic determinants of national identity, historical traditions compete with the current political and economic predicament of the country and conscious calculations of national interest—with public

opinion and motivations that may not necessarily be fully rational. Political culture, the historical path of the nation, and the mass perceptions of the collective “we” figure prominently and influence all aspects of the formation of the national identity.

Because Ukraine’s history and genealogy are inseparably intertwined with those of Russia’s, and because the relationship of these ethnic cousins, full of problems as it is, does not allow one to see either side as unambiguously triumphant at the other’s expense, Ukraine may not be considered Russia’s victim, and even less Russia’s antipode in Eastern Europe. Because of the mass perceptions of the collective “we,” Ukraine is not and cannot be used as a western rampart against Russia. Attempting to do so would undermine Ukraine’s prospects for national consolidation, which requires bringing western and eastern Ukrainian images of national identity together in harmony. Just as western Ukrainian sensitivities preclude falling back into Moscow’s embrace, eastern Ukrainian images of identity will never accept the idea of Russia as Ukraine’s Other. Thus, Ukraine is not a part of Russia and it is not a cordon sanitaire separating Russia from Europe. No national identity can be based exclusively on extraneous factors, such as the identity of other states. At the same time, Ukraine’s political culture, until recently a culture of dependence, does require external input, and the country’s self-image is still defined primarily in juxtaposition or counterposition to others.

Ukrainian national identity is therefore malleable, in no small part due to its inherited political culture of survivalism and reliance on external powers. Although this may change in the future, change takes time, and time is a luxury unavailable to Ukraine. Its postcommunist transformation adds new structural constraints that block the development of a new culture of self-reliance and confidence. Ukraine really needs more than one “strategic partner” to make its way from authoritarianism to democracy and from the economy of oligarchic clans and bureaucratic patronage networks to a normally functioning market economy. Working together with Russia on such issues as economic development and social policies, regional cooperation, minority rights, local self-government, antiterrorism and the prevention of crime and corruption will help both countries fight the shadows of their past more successfully and advance toward eventual integration with Europe more rapidly than before.

For Russia, Ukraine remains an alter ego, a mirror image of the self. A true liminar, “at once other and like,” it presents Russia with an opportunity “to constitute itself in reflection upon its identity.”<sup>1</sup> Reciprocally, Russia’s imposing presence and continued attention, even if sometimes resented, opens a

similar path of national self-recognition to Ukraine. While constituting themselves as nation-states, these two may have a chance to part ways with projects that do not serve either's national interests: Russian messianism and gigantomania on one hand, and Russian and Ukrainian ethnic nationalism on the other. An excessive concern with the fate of other nations and periodic infatuation with one's "universal" mission have harmed Russia in the past and must not be repeated in the future. By the same token, the narrow isolationism in the era of globalization cannot be considered a prudent strategy of international behavior by any modern state, much less by a state of Russia's size. Trying to cope with the trauma of transition by tapping into the ethnic sources of patriotism is counterproductive and dangerous for any country's developmental prospects. Since ethnic nationalism undermines cohesion and thwarts the democratic development of a modern multicultural society, seeing state-propelled Ukrainianization as an "affirmative policy" to reverse past Russification serves Ukraine no better than the search for ethnic "Russian power" serves the Russian Federation.

Russia's desire for a privileged partnership with Ukraine should not be confused for a trivial resurgence of imperial thinking. Of course, such recurrences can also be observed among a certain part of nationalist intellectuals and politicians. However, an even broader segment of the Russian political elite has fully come to terms with the reality of Ukrainian sovereignty and has no plans to undermine it. Russia needs a good working relationship with Ukraine as an economic partner of prime importance, as a host state for the largest Russian community outside of Russia proper, and as a potential ally in a variety of international forums. Not least important is that Russia needs Ukraine as a friend. There are not many states left on the world stage today that Russia can address as a friend, and Moscow hopes that Ukraine is still one of them. If Russian political culture plays a role here, it is most certainly a conservative part of it. The two countries were one for too long to pretend they are complete strangers now. Russians simply cannot do it for reasons that have as much to do with intellectual honesty as with Russia's oft-cited immature national identity. The ongoing process of the "maturation" of Russia's new national identity will hardly bring about the purging of the nation's historical memory. The memory remains, and there is so much more in it than a story of common suffering or reciprocally inflicted injuries. Russians believe that the Ukrainian-Russian relationship over the centuries brought more good than harm to both peoples, and they want to preserve the positive potential of this relationship for the future. What particular form Russian-Ukrainian relations will take is less important, from this standpoint, than

their substance, and the substance must be defined on the basis of compatible identities and complementary interests.

Although postcommunist Russia has done close to nothing, occasional political rhetoric excluded, to justify seeing some hidden agenda behind its offer of friendship, nationalist reactions in such a battered country as Ukraine are probably inevitable and will have to run their course before postnationalist visions of identity can reshape the political culture. Moscow's irritation at Ukraine's "treachery" does little more than prove that Russia has not yet overcome its paternalistic syndrome. A strategy of mutually advantageous initiatives or a string of aid projects to support Russian culture in Ukraine would be a more appropriate course of action. In the process, not only would Moscow learn to respect its neighbor's sovereignty, it might even find itself more receptive to the more general notion of sovereignty of the people and put it to better use in Russia. When rhetorical concern for the plight of compatriots in the near abroad is superseded by economic collaboration that takes the needs of the "compatriots" into account, the idea of the government-as-people dissipates, giving way to a more complex picture of civil society that the government is supposed to serve, and thus to a more democratic vision of governmental accountability. That is why, in no small part, Ukraine's independence must be preserved for both countries' benefit—at least until the two have clearly indicated their interest to once again live under a common roof.

Judging by the available evidence, this is not going to happen any time soon. Roughly a third of Ukraine's citizens would be inclined to support reintegration, another third would be prone to denounce it, and the remaining third cannot make up their minds. However, the mass support for the uncompromising agenda of breaking all ties that Ukraine's national democrats tend to share with national conservatives lessens as Ukraine's economy sinks deeper into a morass. The share of those who support orientation toward Russia and the Russia-Belarus Union grows. Yet the net "winners" of this debate, as of other public debates in Ukraine and Russia alike, are those who do not care, the disfranchised and least politically active segments of the population, that part of the people who make for the famous "stability" in domestic affairs, being ready to accommodate about any policy course chosen by the government. Accommodation and survivalism set limits to political violence, but also circumscribe the freedom of political expression, leaving the stage open for the manipulation of public opinion and politics of executive fiat. As for the elite, their interest in "strategic partnership" with Russia is mostly instrumental. The country's important geopolitical position between Russia

and the West is being “sold” to both parties for cash and other benefits that they cannot fail to deliver. As long as the West encourages this state of affairs, it is bound to continue. What analysts call Ukraine’s “dual personality,” “balancing act,” or even “schizophrenic split” is nothing more than the desire of its ruling elite to milk two cash cows simultaneously, dictated by narrow survivalist instincts.

From the real political perspective, there is nothing extraordinary in such a position, which might even be considered prudent, as one that helps to maximize the inflow of “free” or “almost free” resources into the failing economy. However, international rents of this sort have a price of their own, which in Ukraine’s case is vivid in the country’s prestige and tarnished international image. The Russia-NATO tug-of-war over Ukraine, which has not yet reached the stage of pronounced hostility, may still become a problem in the future. Security risks are also looming in the economy: What if both donors find a better use for their money? After all, neither Russia nor the West could implement their declared agendas for Ukraine. The Western agenda of economic restructuring stalled, while the Russian agenda of a “strategic partnership” ran into Kiev’s implacable opposition to the Russian vision of integration.

Yet another type of risk relates to nation building. Cultural walling off a presumably “European” Ukraine from the “Eurasian” Russia, with the implied civility of the former and barbarism of the latter, is not just offensive to one of the external donors, it is divisive and offensive to the country’s own “Eurasians,” including Russians, Crimean Tatars, Tatars, Armenians, Azeris, Gypsies, Gagauz, and others—overall close to one-fourth of the country’s population. Anti-Russianism as the main staple of national identity backfires, running against the grain of the very “European” civility sought, as well as against the conviction of many in the West “that Russia is part and parcel of Europe and not a distant and separate realm on the periphery of the continent.”<sup>2</sup>

Ukraine does differ from Russia, though not necessarily in a sense of being any closer to Europe. Rather it is in a sense of not being burdened with great-power ambitions or an imperial past that continue to exert a profound influence on Russian political and discursive practices. I have argued that the Russian political culture can be analytically structured in two ideal-typical complexes: revolutionary-conservative and developmental-authoritarian. The first complex embraces not only its noted tendency to oscillate between periods of revolutionary upheaval and reactionary stagnation, but also the propensity to seek stability through destruction and the idea that disasters may be effectively prevented by catastrophic means of action. The second complex is centered on the conviction that strong and authoritative power is necessary for the

country's development and is justified, even in the absence of democracy and wide political participation, by the "progressive" results of the rule. In Vladimir Putin's words, "for a Russian, a strong state is not an anomaly, something that has to be fought against, but on the contrary, a source and guarantor of order, an initiator and main driving force of any change."<sup>3</sup> The new Russian nationalism utilizes meaning structures of both types, representing at the same time the conservative longing for a mythologized "bigger" identity and an authoritarian thrust to "organize" social life via the state that should regain its strength and redeem the capacity to lead the nation. The fact that this nationalism is based on the state rather than ethnic allegiances does not implicitly make it any more democratic than its Ukrainian counterpart.

Research into the political-cultural foundations of national identities is still in its infancy. Future studies must go beyond observations of a larger or smaller degree of "civicness" in the national political culture, beyond measuring the current level of acceptance (or rejection) of liberal-democratic values, and toward more thorough examination of cultural archetypes that define how the nation adapts to sweeping social and cultural change. Political culture "optimists" and "pessimists" who restrict themselves to survey research data are unable to satisfactorily explain, first, why Russia rejected communism and embraced liberalism as it did, and, second, why it fell back on the tradition of constrained authoritarianism and state-led development when the first phase of the liberal revolution was over. Optimists can explain the first part, and pessimists can explain the second, but the problem of combining both in a singular conceptual framework remains. At this point, political culture analysts unwilling to dig deeper into the national history and those generally suspicious of hermeneutic methods of inquiry are stuck with a seemingly insoluble dilemma.

The dilemma can be resolved, however, if studies pay more attention to the political-cultural paradigms that Russia has followed for centuries. I believe that more detailed research into the traditions of developmental authoritarianism and revolutionary conservatism can shed more light on the twists and turns in Russia's domestic and international politics. The tradition of authoritarian allocation of resources under the slogans of development has given postcommunist capitalism its recognizably oligarchic face. The revolutionary break with the state-socialist patronage of the people also has been noticeable. The "liberal-democratic" government did not shy away from shell-ing the dissenting Parliament in October, 1993, or fighting separatism in Chechnya with the help of the regular army forces. Yeltsin's liberal "revolution" was also unusually cruel, compared to other East European states, in the



sweeping redistribution of property to favor few at the expense of the many. The negative rate of population growth that Russia maintains since the early 1990s reflects the brutality of the changes.

Since Putin's ascent to power, the conservative end of the cycle has set in. Russia now lives under the illusion of stability, harmony, and corporatist reconciliation of interests. A conservative phase of postrevolutionary reconciliation promises fewer tensions on the international arena: at this juncture, Moscow will surely not attempt to reintegrate the former Soviet republics by force. The prospects for Russian-Ukrainian relations are therefore good at the moment, provided the West does not attempt to topple the fragile balance of interests in the area with a rushed or ill-considered move (such as inviting Ukraine to join NATO, or introducing NATO peacekeepers in Russia's immediate vicinity).

National conservatism in Russia, however uneasy some Western analysts may feel about it, is probably Russia's best bet for political consolidation at home. It also offers the best hope for stabilizing international relations in the region. Thanks to the lingering imperial overtones of Russian national conservatism in particular, it eschews petty vengefulness and paranoid xenophobia typical for ethnic nationalisms of smaller East European states. Foreign observers may find it hard to understand that national conservatism in Russia, if prevented from degenerating into ethno-nationalism pure and simple, carries an embedded moral "economy of scale" within it, thus making a trivial irredentist agenda irrelevant and unnecessary, and revisionist designs toward neighbors unlikely. Its all-embracing reach and state-centeredness may be the closest thing to a civic culture that Russia can develop at the moment.

With national identity centered on the state, Russians have found it hard to make sense of the post-Soviet contraction of homeland and departure of former allies. Ukraine's departure and subsequent policy of distancing dealt a particularly heavy blow, since Ukraine, for many in Russia, remains an integral part of a "triunity" between the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian peoples. Even so, by the late 1990s, the idea of Ukraine's "proper" belonging to Russia had weakened, and Moscow showed signs of readiness to negotiate with Kiev as equals, with an idea of an international alliance, rather than dominion, in mind. Ukraine's position determines whether the recent reincarnation of Russia's perennial Slavophile dream, the idea of Slavic Union, may ever make it to the realm of practical politics. Ukraine is central to the fate of the CIS: Should Kiev decide to entertain plans for broader integration, the CIS might have a chance of growing into something more than the

present loose conglomerate of states with widely differing agendas. Conversely, if the Russia-Ukraine split within the CIS deepens, all attempts at regional integration—whether initiated by Ukraine, or Russia, or a third country—will be incomplete and lopsided, crippled from the moment of their inception. Russia would like to see Ukraine participate in some form of collaborative political and economic project. Should this fail, Moscow would insist, at a minimum, on Ukraine's continuing neutrality and nonparticipation in alliances implicitly siding against Russia.

One such project that Russia believes is achievable now is foreign policy coordination. After ten years of separate existence, there are not many people left who still believe that swift reintegration, let alone the formal merger of the two states, will happen in the near future. Even so, there is no reason why Ukraine and Russia cannot benefit from their current relationship. It is natural to expect that an active and coordinated foreign policy will be called upon to find mutually agreeable solutions to bilateral economic, political, and social-cultural problems. In seriously taking Ukraine as its natural bridge to Europe, Russia serves its own national interests, while helping to expand the zone of stability and security on the continent. On the other hand, Ukraine, either as Europe's aspirant or as Russia's partner or challenger, can only benefit from good relations with its eastern neighbor. According to the Trilateral Agreement, Russia remains one of the guarantors of Ukraine's international security. Geopolitical and military considerations aside, Ukraine is in critical need of Russian assistance in such areas as oil and gas supplies, debt restructuring, and open trade policy. Ukraine's economy cannot be revived in disjuncture from Russian import and export markets, on which it so heavily depends, nor can Ukraine afford sneering at Russia's investment money.

Economic interdependence remains a potent factor necessitating increased cooperation between the two countries. Although Russian investments in Ukraine are modest at the moment, they are not negligible, especially since Russia's recent purchase of controlling interest in the Mykolaiv Alumina plant and the Odessa oil refinery.<sup>4</sup> Now a trickle, Russian investments may become a waterfall should Ukraine agree to allow Russian participation in the management of its gas pipelines and reservoirs.<sup>5</sup> Intensification of bilateral trade is crucial for both countries' economic recovery. It is significant that, even after the reduction of trade in the aftermath of the financial markets' collapse in 1998, Russia's share in Ukrainian exports hovered between 21 and 24 percent, while the proportion of imports was double that amount. The Russian ruble remained one of the three major currencies used to settle Ukraine's accounts

abroad, and Ukraine continued to hold 35.1 percent of its foreign investments in Soviet successor states, Russia first and foremost. Additionally, Russian banks led other countries by the number of corresponding accounts maintained in Ukraine. In 2000, trade turnover between the two countries went up 18 percent, with 44 percent growth in Russian imports from Ukraine.<sup>6</sup>

Given the close cultural, political, and economic proximity between the two countries, not to mention facts of geography, and given the fact that they were able to negotiate their separation on mutually agreeable terms, it could be argued that “Russian-Ukrainian relations, with all their difficulties, would have to be more like those between the United States and Canada . . . and less like the post-1947 relationship between India and Pakistan.”<sup>7</sup> There are two reasons why this has not happened. The first reason concerns divergent vectors of identity politics. The Ukrainian elite wanted to ostracize Russia to constitute Ukraine as a nation. The demarcation of identity preceded and came hand-in-hand with the demarcation of the borders and delineation and separation of the spheres of authority, which, in the eyes of official Kiev, could not be considered safe until completely sealed off from Moscow’s reach. The remaining (and pronounced) elements of Ukraine’s “Russianness” were attacked under the presumption that they made the country vulnerable to external pressure. A completely misconstrued idea of “less Russia—more Europe” did not help to promote better understanding between the two countries. On the other side, Russia has been painfully slow in recognizing Ukraine’s peculiar “postcolonial” syndrome or the direct connection between anti-Russianism and the power interests of the postcommunist elite in Kiev. Russia indeed wanted to become “just like the United States.” However, no one in the Kremlin had the desire or vision to conceive of Ukraine as the United States did Canada. The Russian offer of unity implied a subordinate position that Ukraine could not accept.

The second reason for the less than sanguine state of Russian-Ukrainian relations has to do with Western policies and the role of the West in general. Western perceptions of Russia, especially when it is pictured as a potentially revisionist state, understandably differ from visions of Ukraine. The politics toward postcommunist states is in no small part influenced by perceptions. The rather uncritical pro-Moscow bias that swayed most Western capitals in 1991–93 had been “corrected” by a similarly lopsided critique of Russia’s “resurgent imperialism” and “mafia capitalism” from 1993–99. Ukraine, on the other hand, became the West’s “best friend” in a potentially unstable neighborhood—an image that it retained until the Gongadze scandal in 2000–2001. With the West’s blessing, Ukraine could probably transform itself into

a very considerable obstacle, indeed, a wall separating Russia from the rest of Europe. There is little doubt that many in Kiev would like to see this happen. But would it be in the country's best interests? By more than one count, it would not, at least not at the moment and not at the current level of Western commitment to Ukraine's economic and political development. Even if such a commitment were forthcoming, the price of Russia's estrangement and geopolitical isolation would outweigh the presumed benefits of containment. Ukraine would be the first to pay a price, via decreased security, the loss of economic opportunities, and, last but not least, a significant portion of unhappy public. Ukraine's NATO membership at Russia's expense is but one scenario that would almost certainly diminish international security while seeking to promote it.

The previous analysis of the identity-driven positions of post-Soviet states in the international relations system has had certain implications for the West's East European policy. The Western role in the area must be reformulated on the basis of a profound redefinition of regional opportunities and threats, as well as Western strategies of engagement. Instead of using a totally misplaced image of "Weimar Russia" that does little more than justify NATO's growth for growth's sake, the West might as well concentrate on building up Russia's leadership role vis-à-vis other CIS states and expanding cooperation in other spheres of mutual interest, such as sustainable development or the prevention of terrorism. By advocating the Western encouragement of Russia's larger leadership role on the Eurasian subcontinent, I obviously do not mean that the West should tolerate human rights' abuse in Chechnya and elsewhere, or applaud the Kremlin's attempts to restrict the news media's freedom. However, the Kremlin's bringing oligarchs to order must be both applauded and encouraged to no lesser extent than the activities of nongovernmental organizations critical of the regime. If the West will not help (or perhaps, even push) Putin's anticorruption efforts, more Western aid money will end up being laundered in the overseas accounts of Russian "tough guys" (*krutyie*) with inordinate influence over the government. Cooperation must cover a broader security agenda dictated by the current globalization movement to no lesser extent than by the more traditional considerations of regional stability and balance of power. New threats to regional stability caused by rogue states, aggressive separatism, and international terrorism require broad international involvement with Russia's central participation. Russia's security role in such areas as the Balkans, Transcaucasia, or Central Asia should not be decried, but helped and guided by the UN and OSCE, both of which are able to coordinate peacemaking and peacekeeping missions on the ground.

Similar reasoning may prove useful when applied to the problem of alleged Russian nationalism, as demonstrated by Moscow's heightened sensibility to the plight of ethnic compatriots in the countries of the near abroad. First, it can be noted that there is nothing particularly special or unusual about this concern. No real-world state would remain aloof under the circumstances. The British tend to believe they have legitimate interests and responsibilities of a similar nature in British Commonwealth countries, as do the French with respect to Francophonia. India is concerned about Hindu coreligionists in adjacent Muslim countries, and the United States never hesitates to use military force, if needed, to protect vital American interests worldwide. Although none of these states have recently had a similar proportion of ethnic kinsfolk straddled abroad as *de facto* expatriates after the collapse of their former homeland, Russia's advocacy of collective minority rights for ethnic Russians and Russophones abroad is propelled by essentially similar ethnic, linguistic, spiritual, cultural, and ideological motives.

Second, there is nothing particularly alarming about Russia's policies dictated by these understandable concerns. No irredentist demands have ever been proclaimed as the state's policy, and no attempts to intervene by force of arms on behalf of "compatriots" have ever been commanded by the Kremlin. Third, the problem is nevertheless real, and Russia may not be able to cope with it on its own. Millions of politically alienated and culturally submerged people have already fled the near abroad for Russia, where they have no property, no jobs, and no chances to get either. Millions more may come, pushed by both destitute living conditions and the loss of cultural identity in such countries as Ukraine or Kazakhstan or by the continued denial of citizenship and truncated life chances in the relatively more prosperous Latvia and Estonia. It is in the best interests of both source countries and Russia itself to solve the problem of induced and forced migration through a collaborative effort that would entail the noticeable expansion of Russian minority rights in the countries of their present residence. The West must certainly get involved: first, for humanitarian reasons, second, because Russian exiles from ex-Soviet countries automatically become a major source group for further migration beyond the borders of the former Soviet Union, and third, because in certain cases (e.g., the Baltic states) Western mediation may pay off quickly and to everyone's benefit. To give one example, the Russian concerns over the rights of compatriots can be addressed by the European Union in its assessment of the prospective applicants for membership. Additionally, a positive role played by the OCSE and the Council of Europe in protection of national minorities may well be enhanced further.

Western policy makers are particularly ill advised by those who encourage anti-Russian nationalism as a legitimate nation-building path for former “colonies” of the allegedly “imperialist” USSR. In a peculiar twist of reasoning, ethnic nationalism and xenophobia then become respectable signs of departure from the illiberal ideology and politics of the past. These writers, and those who may uncritically follow their precepts, tend to ignore the intrinsically totalitarian claim of the ethno-nationalist narrative and the danger it poses for both domestic and international publics. When anti-Russianism is encouraged by the additional security benefits it allegedly provides by tying the target country to the Western security community, the danger of ethnic scapegoating is aggravated by the danger of regional destabilization, which must inevitably follow the internationally approved ostracism of the former major player. What makes things worse for a country that is relatively peripheral to the European Union’s concerns, such as Ukraine, is that the sacrifice it makes by ostracizing Russia will never be paid for in full by its Western sponsors. True Ukrainian well-wishers must therefore be opposed to the policy of using Ukraine as a bargaining chip in a big geopolitical game between Russia and the West. Good-neighborly relations with Russia are crucially important for Ukraine’s security and prosperity.

If Russia, Ukraine, or another post-Soviet country is to be successfully engaged by the West, it should be dealt with as a resource and not a drag on resources. The same applies to the Russian-Ukrainian relationship, which, as any other resource, must be cultivated. Given a chance, this relationship may sustain economic growth and maintain stability in the region. A chance that the West should give to Russia is to stop seeing it as an intrinsically hostile Other and discover a potentially valuable partner. It is erroneous to suspect imperialist designs behind Russia’s proposal to create an integrated economic domain with other CIS members, or to read all patriotic allusions to history as reaffirmation of Russia’s autocratic tradition.<sup>8</sup> Few people see NAFTA as an instrument of American imperialism. Nobody is alarmed by official celebrations of the British monarchy. The French praise their revolution for its call for liberty, not for memories of the Terror. We venerate America’s founding fathers, forgetting that some of them were slave owners. All nations take pride in their past achievements, if any, and rely on myths when real history happens to be bleak. Must Russia be any different? Should we push it away because it still has some way to go to become a full-fledged liberal democracy? If the choice is between premature partnership and fully matured containment, complete with the expensive and potentially explosive “star wars” component, the West might well be better off choosing the first. It is equally

important that Ukraine be given a chance to shed its unwelcome role as a buffer separating Russia from Europe. Ukrainian-Russian rapprochement must be encouraged, not obstructed, as a necessary path and precondition for both countries' development—a goal that the West claims to share with its partners worldwide.

International relations are a crucible of national identity. Identities may be constructed and reconstructed, but there are always limits to construction, an anchor in the sand that keeps imagination from degenerating into delusion. While facing the tremendous task of bringing their foreign policies in line with the new realities of global coexistence, post-Soviet states must nevertheless work from the foundation they had in place at the moment of their birth. They simply have no other, and no amount of wishful thinking can change that fact. Hence, as George W. Bush said when speaking in Warsaw, while “the Europe we are building must include Ukraine,” it must “also be open to Russia.”<sup>9</sup> The two countries may enter Europe together, but definitely not one at the expense of the other. Before they are able to do that, however, they will still have to sort certain things out in their own backyard.

# Notes

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## INTRODUCTION

1. Philippe C. Schmitter, with Terry Lynn Karl, "The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Attempt to Go?" *Slavic Review* 53, no. 1 (1994): 173–85.
2. Michel Chossudovsky, *The Globalisation of Poverty: Impacts of IMF and World Bank Reforms*; Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*.
3. Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander Motyl, and Charles Graybow, eds. *Nations in Transit 1998: Civil Society, Democracy and Markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States*.
4. See Andrei Piontkovskii in *Novaia Gazeta*, Apr. 10, 2000, or then First Vice Premier Boris Nemtsov in *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, Mar. 17, 1998.
5. Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime*; Robert C. Tucker, *Political Culture and Leadership in the Soviet Union: From Lenin to Gorbachev*.
6. Ruth Lane, "Political Culture: Residual Category or General Theory?"
7. Donna Bahry, "Comrades into Citizens? Russian Political Culture and Public Support for the Transition"; Harry Eckstein et al., *Can Democracy Take Root in Post-Soviet Russia?: Explorations in State-Society Relations*; Frederic J. Fleron, Jr., "Post-Soviet Political Culture in Russia: An Assessment of Recent Empirical Investigations," *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, no. 2 (1996): 225–60; Arthur H. Miller, William M. Reisinger and Vicki L. Hesli, eds., *Public Opinion and Regime Change: The New Politics of Post-Soviet Societies*; William L. Miller, Stephen White, and Paul Heywood, *Values and Political Change in Postcommunist Europe*; Nicolai N. Petro, *The Rebirth of Russian Democracy: An Interpretation of Political Culture*.
8. Jonathan Steele, *Eternal Russia: Yeltsin, Gorbachev, and the Mirage of Democracy*; Jeffrey W. Hahn, "Continuity and Change in Russian Political Culture."
9. James L. Gibson, "Political and Economic Markets: Changes in the Connections Between Attitudes Toward Political Democracy and a Market Economy Within the Mass Culture of Russia and Ukraine"; William M. Reisinger, Arthur H. Miller, Vicki L. Hesli, and Kristen Hill Maher, "Political Values in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania: Sources and Implications for Democracy."
10. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*.



11. Cf. Guillermo O'Donnell, "Reflections on the Patterns of Change in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State," *Latin American Research Review* 13, no. 1 (1978): 3-38.
12. Cf. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*.
13. Yosef Lapid, "Culture's Ship: Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory," 7.
14. Thomas K. Fitzgerald, *Metaphors of Identity*, 186.
15. More on the security implications of Russian-Ukrainian relations can be found in Tor Bukkvoll, *Ukraine and European Security*; Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe*; Lubomyr A. Hajda, ed., *Ukraine in the World; Studies in the International Relations and Security Structure of a Newly Independent State*; and Taras Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy*.
16. Since Russia's former partners in the Soviet Union—Belarus and, as of recent, Moldova—show parallel interest in the rebuilding of economic and political ties with Russia, it is clear that they see it as a vehicle of *their* national revival as well.
17. Dominique Arel and Valeri Khmelko, "The Russian Factor and Territorial Polarization in Ukraine." Retracing of policy steps first treaded by Moscow has become an established practice of the postcommunist elites in Kiev. Compare the presidential use of referenda to thwart parliamentary opposition, "voucher" privatization and confiscation of savings, the rise of oligarchic clans, manipulation of media and utilization of the "red scare" to beat the communist pretender in presidential elections. Ukrainian nationalist megalomania, as represented by the UNA/UNSO group, uncannily replays the familiar Russian motifs of being a "guardian" for all Slavs, creating an East Slavic empire, and so on.
18. In 1989, Russian language competency among ethnic Ukrainians living in Ukraine stood at 71.7 percent, and close to 35 percent of Ukrainian Russians spoke fluent Ukrainian. Since only 3 percent of Soviet Russians could freely communicate in other languages of the former Soviet Union, the last figure clearly stands out. Cf. Tetiana Rudnytska, *Etnichni spil'noty Ukrainy: tendentsii sotsial'nyh zmin*.
19. Anatol Lieven, *Ukraine and Russia; A Fraternal Rivalry*, 77-78.
20. The role of liminal groups in Russian foreign policy debate and identity construction after communism is touched upon in Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia and Ukraine*, and Henrikki Heikka, "Beyond Neorealism and Conservatism; Desire, Identity, and Russian Foreign Policy," 57-107.
21. In terms of historical and ethnocultural succession, it is at least as plausible to argue that the family relationship between the two should be reversed, with "bigger brother" representing, in fact, a younger branch of the family tree.
22. Andrew Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1990s: A Minority Faith*, 202.
23. James L. Gibson, Raymond M. Duch, and Kent L. Tedin, "Democratic Values and the Transformation of the Soviet Union"; Hahn, "Continuity and Change," 322-24; Miller et al., *Public Opinion and Regime Change*.
24. Viktor L. Vassiliev [First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations], personal interview, New York, Sept. 16, 1996.
25. Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?" 4.
26. Marc Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800*.
27. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*.

**CHAPTER I. POLITICAL CULTURE AND NATIONALITY  
IN SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET STUDIES**

1. Almond, Gabriel A., and Laura Roselle, "Model Fitting in Communism Studies," in Fleron and Hoffmann, eds., *Post-Communist Studies and Political Science*, 27–75.
2. Cf. Valerie Bunce, *Subversive Institutions: The Design and Destruction of Socialism and the State*, to Stephen Welch, *The Concept of Political Culture*.
3. Alfred G. Meyer, "Politics and Methodology in Soviet Studies," 171.
4. Tucker, *Political Culture and Leadership*, 33–50.
5. For the original juxtaposition of "subject" and "civic" cultures, see Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*.
6. Wayne DiFranceisco and Zvi Gitelman, "Soviet Political Culture and 'Covert Participation' in Policy Implementation," *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3 (1984): 603–21.
7. Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience: Politics and History Since 1917*, 5, 21, 51, 67.
8. Hahn, "Continuity and Change," 318.
9. Gibson, Duch, and Tedin, "Democratic Values"; Miller, Reisinger and Hesli, eds., *Public Opinion and Regime Change*; Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*; Reisinger et al., "Political Values"; Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*.
10. Jose Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*; Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.
11. Welch, *Concept of Political Culture*, 90–91.
12. Andrew Arato, "Introduction," 10–20.
13. Nikolai Berdiaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism*.
14. Almond and Roselle, "Model Fitting," 51.
15. Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision; Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*.
16. Frederic J. Fleron Jr., and Erik P. Hoffmann, "Communist Studies and Political Science: Cold War and Peaceful Coexistence," 7.
17. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 213, 51.
18. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 319, 326–40.
19. *Ibid.*, 337, 350.
20. *Ibid.*, 387–88.
21. Peter Reddaway and Dmitri Glinski, *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms: Market Bolshevism Against Democracy*.
22. Alex Inkeles and Raymond A. Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen: Daily Life in a Totalitarian Society*.
23. Meyer, "Politics and Methodology in Soviet Studies," 170.
24. Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule*.
25. H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, eds. *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971); Valerie Bunce and John M. Echols III, "Soviet Politics in the Brezhnev Era: 'Pluralism' or 'Corporatism'," 1–26; Allison, *Essence of Decision*; Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union is Governed*.
26. James R. Millar, "History, Method, and the Problem of Bias," in Fleron and Hoffmann, eds., *Post-Communist Studies*, 187, 186.
27. DiFranceisco and Zvi Gitelman, "Soviet Political Culture," 619, 605, 604.

28. Boris Nemtsov, "Budushchee Rossii: oligarkhiia ili demokratiia?" *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Mar. 17, 1998; Valentyn Yakushyk, Charlotte Watson, James Mace, and Kostiantyn Maleev, "Corruption as Social Phenomenon," *Politychna dumka/Political Thought* 4 (1994): 126-32.
29. Miller et al., *Public Opinion and Regime Change*; Reisinger et al., "Political Values."
30. Gibson, "Political and Economic Markets," 965-66.
31. William M. Reisinger, "Conclusions: Mass Public Opinion and the Study of Post-Soviet Societies," in Miller et al., *Public Opinion and Regime Change*, 274.
32. Welch counts in this camp such scholars as R. Fagen, A. Meyer, L. Pye, R. Solomon, R. Tucker, and S. White. I believe A. Brown's research has strong interpretivist overtones, too. Most political culture "historians" (James H. Billington, C. E. Black, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Alexander Dallin, Edward Keenan, Richard Pipes, Marc Raeff et al.) are essentially interpretivists. Cf. Welch, *The Concept of Political Culture*.
33. Translated as *Signposts: A Collection of Articles on the Russian Intelligentsia*, trans. and ed. Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman. See Raeff, "The People, the Intelligentsia and Russian Political Culture."
34. The trend was noted by Alexander Dallin, who correctly observed that "some of the most vociferous affirmations of historical determinism, which sees the Soviet system as an extrapolation of the Russian past (at times accompanied by the view that 'every nation gets the government it deserves'), have come from persons espousing the most militant and anti-Soviet positions." See his, "The Uses and Abuses of Russian History," 132.
35. Welch, *Concept of Political Culture*, 5.
36. Cf. Mary McAuley, "Political Culture and Communist Politics: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back," 31-32.
37. Welch, *Concept of Political Culture*, 117.
38. John W. Murphy, *Postmodern Social Analysis and Criticism*, 124, 21.
39. Welch, *Concept of Political Culture*, 115.
40. Michael Urban, "The Politics of Identity in Russia's Postcommunist Transition: The Nation Against Itself"; Vladimir A. Zviglianich, *The Morphology of Russian Mentality: A Philosophical Inquiry into Conservatism and Pragmatism*, 75-211; Oleg Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices*. This sort of work should be distinguished from cultural-anthropological accounts, which tend to pay more attention to the objectified, behavioral side of social practices. Phenomenology is less interested with social representations as such and more—with their deciphering by a socially engaged individual.
41. Thomas F. Remington, "Afterword to Part Two: Agendas - Researching the Emerging Political Cultures," in Miller et al., *Public Opinion and Regime Change*, 197.
42. See Dallin, "The Uses and Abuses of Russian History," 140 n 1; Roman Szporluk, *Communism and Nationalism: Karl Marx Versus Friedrich List*, 222, 273.
43. N. Ustrialov, *Pod znakom revoliutsii*, 22, 30.
44. Robert Conquest, *Soviet Nationalities Policy in Practice*, 145.
45. Sakwa, *Russian Politics*, 103-104.
46. Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: Istoriia*, 472-73.
47. Volodymyr Vynnychenko, *Vidrozhennia natsii*, 2:328.
48. Statistics from *USSR Facts and Figures Annual*, ed. Allan P. Pollard, 14:396-98, 400, 405; 15:486-88.
49. Conquest, *Soviet Nationalities Policy*.
50. See Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.
51. For example, Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

52. See works by B. Anderson, E. Gellner, E. J. Hobsbawm, M. Hroch, A. Smith et al. Richard Sakwa suggests such terms as “mismodernization” and “misdevelopment” (*Russian Politics*, 15, 399–400).
53. Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett, and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics: Nations and Theories in a Changing World*, 292.
54. Rolf H. W. Theen and Frank L. Wilson, *Comparative Politics: An Introduction to Seven Countries*, 293.
55. Bunce, *Subversive Institutions*, 109, 121.
56. Louis L. Snyder, *Macro-nationalisms: A History of the Pan-Movements*, 7.
57. John A. Armstrong, “The Ethnic Scene in the Soviet Union,” 3–49.
58. See Mykhailo Hrushevsky, *A History of Ukraine*; Paul R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*; Peter J. Potichnyj, Marc Raeff, Jaroslaw Pelenski and Gleb Zekulin, eds., *Ukraine and Russia in Their Historical Encounter*; “Peoples, Nations, Identities: The Russian-Ukrainian Encounter, Selected Papers from the Fourth Workshop, September 21–23, 1995,” *Harriman Review* 9, nos. 1–2 (1996); Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*; Roman Szporluk, *Russia, Ukraine, and the Breakup of the Soviet Union*.
59. Roman Szporluk, “The Ukraine and Russia,” 161.
60. Subtelny, *Ukraina*.
61. Fouad Ajami, “The End of Pan-Arabism,” 107.
62. Frederick C. Barghoorn, *Soviet Russian Nationalism*; Hans Kohn, *Nationalism in the Soviet Union*.
63. Mark R. Beissinger, “Approaches to the Study of Soviet Nationalities Politics: John Armstrong’s Functionalism and Beyond,” 343.
64. John A. Armstrong, “The Soviet Ethnic Scene: A Quarter Century Later,” 332, 336.
65. Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding: 1930–1954*, 209.
66. Ernest Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism*, 175.
67. John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 10.
68. Vasyl Markus, “Religion and Nationalism in Ukraine,” 59.
69. Eugene Kamenka, “Nationalism: Ambiguous Legacies and Contingent Futures,” 140.
70. Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” 22–49.
71. Markus, “Religion and Nationalism in Ukraine,” 79.
72. The characteristic as ambitious as it is incorrect. Judging by the number of faithful residing in Ukraine and the sum total of its Ukrainian parishes, Russian Orthodox Church and its canonical offshoot, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) might be considered a better candidate for the role. Ukraine’s Christianity at the turn of the millennium was represented by three Orthodox and two Catholic (the Uniate and the Roman) churches, not to mention a score of Protestant denominations. After a series of unsuccessful attempts by the Kravchuk government to style the Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP) as the “national” church, the idea was finally abandoned under Kuchma, who made good on the constitutional promise to keep the state out of the affairs of the church.
73. Markus, “Religion and Nationalism in Ukraine,” 79–80.
74. *Ibid.*
75. Allison, *Essence of Decision*.
76. Ian Bremmer, “Reassessing Soviet Nationalities Theory,” in *Nation and Politics in the Soviet States*, ed. Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras, 12–17.
77. Mary McAuley, “Nationalism and the Soviet Multi-ethnic State,” 60 n 21.
78. McAuley, “Political Culture and Communist Politics”; *idem.*, “Nationalism”; *idem.*, *Russia’s Politics of Uncertainty*.
79. Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*, 39.

80. McAuley, "Nationalism," 51.
81. Jack Snyder, "Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post-Soviet State," 86.
82. Evgenii I. Golovakha, Natalia V. Panina, Yu. N. Pakhomov et al., *Politicheskaia kul'tura naseleniia Ukrainy*, 89–92; Kiev International Institute of Sociology, online report, Jan. 12, 2001, <http://kiis.com.ua/>
83. Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," 116, 115.
84. Roman Szporluk, "Ukraine: From an Imperial Periphery to a Sovereign State."
85. Mikhail A. Molchanov, "Postcommunist Nationalism as a Power Resource: A Russia-Ukraine Comparison."
86. Rogers Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe."
87. Cf. Paul J. D'Anieri, "Nationalism and International Politics: Identity and Sovereignty in the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict"; idem, *Economic Interdependence in Ukrainian-Russian Relations*; Stephen Shulman, "Cultures in Competition: Ukrainian Foreign Policy and the 'Cultural Threat' from Abroad."
88. Cf. John Barber, "Russia: A Crisis of Post-Imperial Viability," *Political Studies* 42 (1994): 34–51.
89. Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy? Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century*, 71.
90. Nadia Diuk and Adrian Karatnycky, *New Nations Rising: The Fall of the Soviets and the Challenge of Independence*; Szporluk, *Russia, Ukraine*; Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, eds., *The End of Empire?: The Transformation of the USSR in Comparative Perspective*.
91. Jeff Chinn and Robert Kaiser, *Russians as the New Minority: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Soviet Successor States*, 65.
92. Barber, "Russia," 37.
93. Diuk and Karatnycky, *New Nations Rising*; Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe*.
94. Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States," 109, 130 (emphasis in original).
95. Rogers Brubaker, "Nationhood and the National Question in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Eurasia: An Institutionalist Account," 69.
96. David D. Laitin, "Language and Nationalism in the Post-Soviet Republics."
97. Olena Horodetska, "Analysis—Little Cheer a Decade after Ukraine's Independence," Reuters, Aug. 23, 2001.
98. Dominique Arel, "A Lurking Cascade of Assimilation in Kiev?" 75.
99. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*.
100. David D. Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*, 102.
101. Dominique Arel, "Language Politics in Independent Ukraine: Towards One or Two State Languages?" 608. Since satellite television is beyond the reach of ordinary Ukrainians, both TV and radio relay depend on the good attitude of authorities, who can switch stations on and off at will.
102. Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*.
103. Taras Kuzio, "'Nationalising States' or Nation-building? A Critical Review of the Theoretical Literature and Empirical Evidence" (paper prepared for the Annual Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, Apr. 15–18, 1999).
104. More on the Russian-Chechen war can be found in Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power*.
105. Bremmer, "Reassessing Soviet Nationalities Theory," passim.

## CHAPTER 2. A HISTORY OF AN UNEASY RELATIONSHIP

1. Gordon Graham, *Ethics and International Relations*.
2. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Eli Kedourie, *Nationalism*.
3. Cf. “Russia: History: From the beginnings to c. 1700: Kiev: Social and political institutions,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, s. v. “Russia,” Britannica.com, Apr. 19, 2001, available from <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=117445&tocid=38494>; “Ukraine: History: Kievan Rus,” *Britannica Online*, s. v. “Ukraine,” Britannica.com, Mar. 5, 2001, available from, <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=115504&tocid=30062#30062.toc>
4. Henryk Paszkiewicz, *The Rise of Moscow’s Power*.
5. Boris A. Rybakov, *Kievskaia Rus’ i russkie kniazhestva XII–XIII vv.*
6. Omeljan Pritsak, cited in Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*, 54.
7. George Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia*, 365.
8. Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*, 21.
9. Cf. Subtelny, *Ukraina*; Nikolai I. Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie ukrainskogo separatizma*.
10. Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia*, chap. 9; cf. Vladimir Weidle, *Zadacha Rossii*.
11. Omeljan Pritsak draws an analogy to the “political structure of the Byzantine empire, which had a patrimonial system of rule of a neo-Hellenistic type.” See his “Kievan Rus’ and Sixteenth-Seventeenth-Century Ukraine,” 1.
12. Cf. Rybakov, *Kievskaia Rus’*.
13. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 3.
14. David Little, *Ukraine: The Legacy of Intolerance*, 7.
15. Subtelny, *Ukraine*, 77.
16. A. I. Baranovich et al., eds., *Vossoedinenie Ukrainy s Rossiei*, 24.
17. Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia*.
18. Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 29.
19. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*.
20. Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 25.
21. Pritsak, “Kievan Rus’,” 10.
22. Baranovich et al., eds., *Vossoedinenie Ukrainy s Rossiei*, 31–43.
23. Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie ukrainskogo separatizma*, 46.
24. Pritsak, “Kievan Rus’,” 17.
25. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 6; A. H. Sliusarenko and M. V. Tomenko, *Istoriia ukrainskoi konstytutsii*, chap. 1.
26. Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie ukrainskogo separatizma*.
27. Little, *Ukraine*, 9–10; Pritsak, “Kievan Rus’,” 19.
28. See *Tezy pro 300-richchia vozz’iednannia Ukrainy z Rosiieiu: 1648–1654 rr.*
29. O. Vasil’iev and A. Kisel’, *Ukrainskaia SSR*, 35, 37.
30. Mykhailo I. Braichevskyi, *Annexation or Reunification: Critical Notes on One Conception*; Zenon E. Kohut, *Russian Centralism and Ukrainian Autonomy: Imperial Absorption of the Hetmanate, 1760s–1830s*, 3, 66.
31. Edward C. Thaden, *Russia’s Western Borderlands, 1710–1870*, chap. 3; idem., *Interpreting History: Collective Essays on Russia’s Relations with Europe*, chap. 11.
32. Roman Szporluk, “The Fall of the Tsarist Empire and the USSR: The Russian Question and Imperial Overextension,” 69.
33. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 86.
34. Zenon E. Kohut, “Problems in Studying the Post-Khmelnytsky Ukrainian Elite,” 103–19.
35. John Hutchinson, *Modern Nationalism*, 41.

36. Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie*, 104–39.
37. Mykola Kostomarov, *Dve russkie narodnosti*.
38. Orest Pelech, “The State and the Ukrainian Triumvirate in the Russian Empire, 1831–47.”
39. Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*.
40. Hutchinson, *Modern Nationalism*, 49.
41. Szporluk, “Ukraine,” 111.
42. *Ibid.*, 105.
43. Ivan L. Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History*, 35 n 4.
44. *Vidrodzhennia natsii*, as quoted in W. E. D. Allen, *The Ukraine: A History*, 281.
45. Subtelny, *Ukraine*.
46. Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*, 501–503.
47. Matthew Stachiw, *Ukraine and Russia: An Outline of History of Political and Military Relations (December 1917–April 1918)*, 185.
48. Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie*, 269.
49. Szporluk, “Fall of the Tsarist Empire.”
50. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 11.
51. Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*, 470.
52. Conquest, *Soviet Nationalities Policy*, 36–37; L. G. Melnyk et al., *Istoriia Ukrainy: Kurs Lektsii, Kn. 2—XX stolittia*, 197–99.
53. Gregory Gleason, *Federalism and Nationalism: The Struggle for Republican Rights in the USSR*, 32.
54. Conquest, *Soviet Nationalities Policy*, 42–44.
55. Cited in H el ene Carr ere d’Encausse, *Decline of an Empire: The Soviet Socialist Republics in Revolt*, 23.
56. Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*.
57. James E. Mace, “The Famine of 1932–1933: A Watershed in the History of Soviet Nationality Policy,” 177.
58. Francine Hirsch, “The Soviet Union as a Work-in-Progress: Ethnographers and the Category Nationality in the 1926, 1937, and 1939 Censuses,” 256.
59. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 160.
60. Dmytro Doroshenko, *History of the Ukraine*, 647.
61. See Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*; Subtelny, *Ukraine*; Jeremy Smith, “The Education of National Minorities: The Early Soviet Experience,” 281–307.
62. Smith, “Education of National Minorities,” 307.
63. Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie*, 269.
64. Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 96.
65. Szporluk, “Fall of the Tsarist Empire,” 78.
66. Mace, “Famine,” 179.
67. Hough and Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed*, 152.
68. Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*, 557.
69. Current estimates range from 4.5 million to 6–7 million famine-related deaths.
70. See Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine*, chap. 14.
71. Roland Gaucher, *Opposition in the U.S.S.R., 1917–1967*, 176–77.
72. Unprecedented Ukrainian suffering in the Famine of 1933 was later laid into the foundation of a nationalist myth of the preplanned genocide of the Ukrainians by the

communist Russians. There is, however, no evidence to buttress the claim. First, as noted, there were plenty of Kazakh, Russian, and other victims of collectivization; Ukrainians were not an exclusive target. In Russia proper, forced requisitions of grain were met with numerous peasant revolts, of which the largest, the 1921 uprising led by A. S. Antonov, was suppressed with massive military force. Second, the famine was less pronounced in Ukraine's urban areas. Indeed, many peasants fled to the cities to survive. Most importantly, there are no signs whatsoever that the famine was designed as an instrument of ethnopolitical regulation, and there are few signs that it was even anticipated as such by the authorities. The famine was caused by the wholesale confiscation of grain and livestock ordered by communist planners bent on blowing up economic reserves needed for the country's industrialization on the eve of World War II. The peasants' refusal to be milked for the purposes of "socialist accumulation" convinced Stalin of intensification of the class struggle in the country, and requisitions continued without any regard to the human price they inflicted. The famine's most hideous aspect—its use for punitive purposes (blacklisting)—was motivated by the ideology of class warfare, not ethnic hatred. All measures associated with the policy, from forced collectivization to food confiscations to the blockade of the blacklisted villages, were carried out with the active participation of local communist cadres, who therefore must be seen as the perpetrators of genocide against their own people. If Ukraine's famine was genocidal, its closest analogy must be sought in Kampuchea, not in the Turkey of 1915. A comparison to the Holocaust is inadmissible. Terrible as it was, "the main cause of the famine was the struggle around the collectivization of agriculture which raged in the countryside in this period. . . . there was no plan to wipe out Ukrainians as a people" (Douglas Tottle, *Fraud, Famine, and Fascism: the Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard*, 92, 96). Cf. Barbara B. Green, "Stalinist Terror and the Question of Genocide: The Great Famine"; Steven Rosefelde, "Stalinism in Post-Communist Perspective: New Evidence on Killings, Forced Labour and Economic Growth in the 1930s," *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, no. 6 (1996): 959–88.

73. Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, 113.
74. See Allen, *Ukraine*, chap. 7.
75. Fainsod, *How Russia Is Ruled*, 104.
76. Hough and Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed*, 152.
77. Conquest, *Harvest of Sorrow*, 156, 304.
78. Ukrainian nationalists of both the Banderite and Melnykite factions espoused a militant doctrine of ethnonational superiority known as integral nationalism. See Alexander J. Motyl, *The Turn to the Right: The Ideological Origins and Development of Ukrainian Nationalism, 1919–1929*.
79. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 123.
80. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 51.
81. M. P. Bazhan et al., eds, *Soviet Ukraine*, 150.
82. Taras Hunczak, "Between Two Leviathans: Ukraine during the Second World War," 103; Peter J. Potichnyj and Yevhen Shtendera, eds. *Political Thought of the Ukrainian Underground, 1943–1951*, xvi.
83. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 52; Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 123.
84. Catherine Andreyev, *Vlasov and the Russian Liberation Movement: Soviet Reality and Émigré Theories*, 200.
85. Cited in Roy Medvedev, *Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism*, 775.



86. Barghoorn, *Soviet Russian Nationalism*, 122.
87. Cf. Andreyev, *Vlasov and the Russian Liberation Movement*.
88. Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia*, 526.
89. See more in Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, chap. 5.
90. Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: A Reassessment*, 456.
91. Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 119–25.
92. Cited in Conquest, *Soviet Nationalities Policy*, 90.
93. Gerhard Simon, *Nationalism and Policy Toward the Nationalities in the Soviet Union: From Totalitarian Dictatorship to Post-Stalinist Society*, 256.
94. Soviet decentralization and recentralization policies between 1954 and 1964 are analyzed in Gleason, *Federalism and Nationalism*, chap. 4, and Simon, *Nationalism and Policy*, 233–58.
95. Gleason, *Federalism and Nationalism*, 7.
96. Simon, *Nationalism and Policy*, 230–33, 418–19.
97. Yu. V. Andropov, “Sixty Years of the USSR,” 14.
98. Dina Rome Spechler, “Russian Nationalism and Soviet Politics,” 294–95, 303 n 83.
99. Donna Bahry, *Outside Moscow: Power, Politics, and Budgetary Policy in the Soviet Republics*, 120.
100. See Bohdan Krawchenko, ed., *Ukraine after Shelest*.
101. John Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*; Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*.
102. Paul A. Goble, “Gorbachev and the Soviet Nationality Problem,” 95–96.
103. *Health Consequences of the Chernobyl Accident*.
104. See Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, chap. 3.
105. Alexander J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine after Totalitarianism*.
106. Szporluk, “Fall of the Tsarist Empire,” 84.

### CHAPTER 3. UKRAINE’S DEPARTURE AND THE CRISIS OF RUSSIAN IDENTITY

1. V. K. Vrublevskiy and V. I. Khoroshkovskiy, *Ukrainskyi shliakh; Nacherky: geopolitychne stanovyshche Ukraïny ta ii natsional’ni interesy*, 67.
2. Gorbachev’s ascent to power was marked by a campaign of purges not seen since Stalin. In his very first year as general secretary of the CPSU, Gorbachev purged eighty-two thousand lower-level cadre, or close to 20 percent of the party bureaucracy (*Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, Mar. 31, 1986, 23). Thousands more were laid off or reassigned between 1987 and 1989.
3. Volodymyr Lytvyn, *Politychna arena Ukraïny: Dijovi osoby ta vykonavtsi*, 280; Serhii Bilokin’, “Ostannii shans? Z istorychnoho dosvidu derzhavotvorennya,” *Literaturna Ukraïna*, Feb. 4, 1993.
4. Cf. Vladimir Shlapentokh, “Early Feudalism—The Best Parallel for Contemporary Russia,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, no. 3 (1996): 393–411.
5. Cf. “Kuchma Can No Longer Back Out of the War on Corruption,” *Kyiv Post*, June 24, 1999; John Thornhill and Charles Clover, “The Robbery of Nations,” *Financial Times*, Aug. 21, 1999; Geoffrey York, “The Mysterious ‘Family’ That Keeps Yeltsin in Power,” *Globe and Mail*, June 15, 1999; Patrick E. Tyler, “From Under a Couch, an Effort to Stop Corruption in Ukraine,” *New York Times*, Feb. 26, 2001; Louise I. Shelley, “Organized Crime and Corruption are Alive and Well in Ukraine,” *Transition Newsletter* 10, no. 1 (1999): 6–7.
6. See also Dominique Arel, “Kuchmagate and the Demise of Ukraine’s ‘Geopolitical Bluff,’” *East European Constitutional Review* 10, nos. 2–3 (2001): 54–59.

7. Cf. Yeltsin's press secretary's remark made on August 26, 1991, that boundaries between ex-Soviet republics were yet to be confirmed and possibly renegotiated.
8. Alex Pravda, "The Politics of Foreign Policy," 214.
9. See more on commonalities between original and postperestroika Eurasianism in Dmitry V. Shlapentokh, "Eurasianism: Past and Present," 129–51.
10. L. N. Gumilev, *Ot Rusi k Rossii: ocherk etnicheskoi istorii*; Aleksandr Dugin, *Misterii Evrazii*; idem., *Osnovy geopolitiki: geopoliticheskoe budushchee Rossii: myslit' prostranstvom*; Sergei G. Kara-Murza, *Intelligentsiia na pepelishche Rossii*; idem., *Opiat' voprosy vozhdiam*.
11. Shlapentokh, "Eurasianism: Past and Present"; Yuri M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture*.
12. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 193.
13. Dmitrii Likhachev, "I Object: What Constitutes the Tragedy of Russian History," 53.
14. Kseniia Mialo, "Mezhdu zapadom i vostokom," 106.
15. Sergei Kortunov, "'Imperskoie' i natsional'noe v rossiiskom soznanii," 21.
16. Gennadii Seleznev, "Podavliaiushchee bol'shinstvo parlamenta podderzhivaet osvobodzhdaiushchiia ot flera romanticheskikh otnoshenii s Zapadom kurs dostoinstva i natsional'nykh interesov Rossii," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'* 4 (1997): 3–13.
17. Kortunov, "'Imperskoie' i natsional'noe," 18.
18. One of the recent attempts to define the notion of a significant other in a study of national identity proceeds from the assumption that we should thus call "another nation or ethnic group that is territorially close to, or indeed within, the national community and threatens, or rather is perceived to threaten, its ethnic and/or cultural purity and/or its independence" (Anna Triandafyllidou, "National Identity and the 'Other'," 600). Though dense ethnocultural contacts do not infrequently engender feelings of insecurity, a significant other may also be distinguished as an object of emulation, a designated "caretaker" for the group, a depository of the group values, and so on. Significant others are construed in a number of ways, of which perception of a threatened identity, however important, is but one.
19. Dmitrii Furman, "Ukraina i my. Natsional'noe samosoznanie i politicheskoe razvitie," *Svobodnaia mysl'* 1 (1995): 69–83.
20. Dmitrii Furman, "Russkie i ukraintsy: trudnye otnosheniia bratiev."
21. Iver B. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe; A Study in Identity and International Relations*, 200.
22. More than one commentator was tempted to link Moscow's problems with non-Russian subjects of the Federation to the Russian policy toward Ukraine. The Chechen adventure in particular contributed to the fears in 1994–95 of an imminent Russo-Ukrainian conflict over Crimea. However, the two disputes are drastically different in terms of structure, history, and especially reciprocal perceptions of the "enemy."
23. Aleksei Pushkov, "Dlia Rossii optimal'nym bylo by ravnovesnoe polozhenie mezhdou osnovnymi tsestrami sily," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'* 3 (1998): 85–88.
24. Vladimir Putin, "The Modern Russia," 231–36.
25. A copy of the concept can be found at <http://www.mid.ru/mid/vpcons.htm>.
26. "Putin in Ukraine amid political storm," CNN.com, Feb. 12, 2001, available at <http://www10.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/europe/02/12/ukraine.putin/>
27. Evgenii M. Primakov, "Rossiia v mirovoi politike," 8.
28. Alexander K. Kislov [Deputy Director of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences], and Yuri V. Andreev [Senior Researcher, same Institute], interview by author, Moscow, Sept. 17, 1998.

29. Igor S. Savolski [Director of the Second Directorate for the CIS Countries of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation] and Valery L. Moussatov [Deputy Director, same Department], interview by author, Moscow, Sept. 16, 1998.
30. *Kyiv Post*, Dec. 29, 1998.
31. Savolski and Moussatov interview.
32. Yu. V. Lebedev, [Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Social and Political Movement "Dukhovnoe Nasledie" and expert for the CPRF Duma faction, Major-Gen.], interview by author, Moscow, Sept. 17, 1998.
33. Aleksei Podberiozkin, "Russkii put': sdelai shag! Nekotorye voprosy russkogo kommunizma," 167.
34. Programma Kommunisticheskoi partii Rossiiskoi Federatsii, *Kommunist* 6 (1997): 15; Rezoliutsia IV S'ezda KPRF, "O 75-letii Soiuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik," *Kommunist* 3 (1997): 121; Predvybornaia platforma kandidata na post Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii Ziuganova Gennadiia Andreevicha, *Kommunist* 4 (1996): 51.
35. Gennadii Ziuganov, *Geografiia pobedy: Osnovy rossiiskoi geopolitiki*, as cited in Solchanyk, "Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS," 23.
36. Sergei Kortunov, "Russia in Search of Allies," *International Affairs* [Moscow] 5 (1996): 156 (emphasis in original).
37. Evgenii M. Primakov, "Rossiia: reformy i vneshniaia politika," 18.
38. Kortunov, "Imperskoe' i natsional'noe," 85, 90.
39. Aleksandr Panarin, "V kakom mire nam predstoit zhit? Geopoliticheskii prognoz," *Moskva* 10 (1997): 147.
40. Cited in Natalia Narochnitskaia, "Rossiia i russkie v mirovoi istorii," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'* 3 (1996): 84.
41. "1996 god. Politika Rossii," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'* 1 (1996): 14.
42. Sergei Fomin, "Razmyshleniia o budushchem Rossii," *Molodaia gvardiia* 7 (1996): 19.
43. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe*, 187.
44. Aleksandr Zinoviev, "I am not one for wild anti-communism," *New Russia* 1 (1993): 18.
45. Narochnitskaia, "Rossiia i russkie," 85.
46. A. K. Glivakovskii, *Samostiinaia Ukraina: istoki predatei'stva*, 54.
47. Marina Burova, "Rossiia i russkie," *Moskva* 1 (1998): 123, 136.
48. Andrei Novikov, "Razdelennaia natsiia," *Moskva* 4 (1998): 6-7.
49. Dmitrii Rogozin, "Russkaia strategiia," *Zavtra* 37 (250), Sept., 1998.
50. Of the 25 million Russians left in the near abroad after disintegration of the Soviet Union, 3.5 million returned to Russia by the end of 1995. See Roger E. Kanet and Susanne M. Birgergson, "The Domestic-Foreign Policy Linkage in Russian Politics: Nationalist Influences on Russian Foreign Policy."
51. Aleksandr V. Kozenko [Head of the Analytical Center of the LDPR faction in the State Duma of the Russian Federation], interview by author, Moscow, Sept. 17, 1998.
52. Vladimir Zhirinovskii, "10 punktov programmy Zhirinovskogo," Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia, 23 May 1999, available at [http://www.ldpr.ru/10\\_punktov\\_vvzh.htm](http://www.ldpr.ru/10_punktov_vvzh.htm).
53. See more on Putin's administrative reform in Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, *Russian Federation Report*, May 17, 2000; *Jamestown Foundation Monitor*, May 25, 2000; Vladimir Razuvaev, "Vremia dlia promezhutochnykh itogov: Regional'naia reforma stala neobratimoi," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Nov. 14, 2000.
54. Aleksei Podberiozkin, "Osobennosti sovremennoi politicheskoi situatsii v Rossii i zadachi Dvizheniia," 18 (emphasis in original).
55. *Segodnya*, Dec. 7, 1998; Yu. A. Yurkov et al., eds., *Rossiiskii statisticheskii ezhegodnik*, 84-85.

56. According to the Russian Federation's State Committee on Statistics, the inflow of migrants from central Asia increased from 57,000 in 1989 to 450,800 in 1992, while migration from Transcaucasia grew from 73,100 to 139,900 a year. In five years (1992–97), the first stream added to 2.61 million migrants, while the second totaled 764,000. The annual figures for Kazakhstan stand close to 200,000 migrants. Ethnic Russian returnees constitute less than two-thirds of all newcomers. See Martha Brill Olcott, Anders Aslund, and Sherman W. Garnett, *Getting It Wrong: Regional Cooperation and the Commonwealth of Independent States*, 228–29; I. B. Orlova, ed., *Sovremennye migratsionnye protsessy v Rossii*, 13; Yurkov et al., eds., *Rossiiskii statisticheskii ezhegodnik*, 97.
57. Cf. Vera Tolz, "Conflicting 'Homeland Myths' and Nation-State Building in Postcommunist Russia," 274–79.
58. The new Russian "whites," named after the leading anti-Bolshevik party in the civil war from 1918–20, include both practical and sentimental monarchists, defenders of the "imperial idea," and the Russian Orthodoxy as an official religion of the state. Although preaching tolerance toward "traditional religions" of the Russian Empire (Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism), they are vehemently opposed to all forms of western and nontraditional proselytizing. A mass offshoot of the postcommunist "white" movement can be seen in the restoration of the Cossacks' institutions, way of life, culture, symbols, and regalia throughout Russian borderlands and in the national capitals.
59. Nikita Fedorovskii, "Rossiiskoe obshchestvo v poiskah samosoznaniia," *Moskva* 2 (1996): 120.
60. Natalia Narochnitskaia, "Russkie na poroge XXI veka," *Nash sovremennik* 4 (1996): 106.
61. Igor R. Shafarevich, *Rusofobiia*.
62. Kara-Murza, *Intelligentsiia na pepelishche Rossii; Opiat' voprosy vozhdiam*.
63. Mikhail Ilyin, "Rus', kuda zhe neseshsia ty?" *Biznes i politika* 2 (1995): 60.
64. Pavel Negretov, "Nado tol'ko obuzdat' natsionalistov," *Druzhba narodov* 5 (1996): 140.
65. Narochnitskaia, "Russkie na poroge XXI veka," 107.
66. Andranik Migranian, as cited in Neil Melvin, *Russians beyond Russia: The Politics of National Identity*, 13.
67. John Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, 277–78.
68. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 39.
69. Melvin, *Russians beyond Russia*, 23.
70. "SNG: Nachalo ili konets istorii?," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, Mar. 26, 1997.
71. "Strategiia dlia Rossii 2," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, May 27, 1994.
72. Solchanyk, "Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS," 21.
73. Tim McDaniel, *The Agony of the Russian Idea*. 51.

#### CHAPTER 4. RUSSIAN POLITICAL CULTURE: RECURRENCE AND REFORMULATION

1. Steven Erlanger, "It's a Tradition: Russian Politics of Fear and Favor," *The New York Times*, Mar. 28, 1993.
2. See Hahn, "Continuity and Change," 318; Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 181.
3. Mialo, "Mezhdu zapadom i vostokom."
4. Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.

5. Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*.
6. Sakwa, *Russian Politics*, 427.
7. Cf. *Signposts: A Collection of Articles on the Russian Intelligentsia*.
8. Ernest Gellner, "Homeland of the Unrevolution," 141-53.
9. Academician D. S. Likhachev and other Russian scholars tend to interpret certain cultural developments of the late-fourteenth to early-sixteenth centuries as witnessing the dawn of the "Pre-Renaissance" epoch. Even if it were so, the premature death of this cultural movement under Ivan IV speaks for itself. See A. D. Sukhov, *Russkaia filosofii: puti razvitiia*, chap. 3.; A. I. Klibanov, *Narodnaia sotsial'naia utopiia v Rossii. Period feodalizma*, chap. 3.
10. A. I. Klibanov, *Reformatsionnye dvizheniia v Rossii v XIV-pervoi polovine XVI vv.*
11. Sukhov, *Russkaia filosofii*, chap. 5.
12. M. Wesley Shoemaker, *Russia, Eurasian States, and Eastern Europe*, 13.
13. Serfdom was repealed earlier in Russia-controlled Poland than in the rest of the Empire.
14. Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime*; idem., "Did the Russian Revolution Have to Happen?" *American Scholar*, 215-38.
15. Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Russia and the United States*, 30.
16. William S. Stewart, *Understanding Politics: The Cultures of Societies and the Structures of Governments*.
17. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, 147, 146.
18. Lilia Shevtsova, "Russia's Post-Communist Politics: Revolution or Continuity?" 21.
19. John W. R. Lepingwell, "The Loyalty of the Russian Military," 81.
20. Note the open disobedience of several military units and the elite antiterrorist group "Alpha."
21. Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 151.
22. *OMRI Daily Digest*, Aug. 2, 1996.
23. "Russian Parliamentary Elections-1993: Official Results," Dec. 5, 2000, available at [http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/2568/e\\_rde93r.html](http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/2568/e_rde93r.html).
24. See Donna Bahry and Brian D. Silver, "Soviet Citizen Participation on the Eve of Democratization," *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 3 (1990): 821-47; Finifter and Mickiewicz, "Redefining the Political System"; Miller et al., *Public Opinion and Regime Change*.
25. Alexander Dallin, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" 259.
26. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, 148.
27. Around that time, 53 percent of respondents in Russia scored above the median on a composite measure of "external nationalism," constructed by averaging affirmative answers to the questions about "our country . . . a colony of the west" and "parts of neighboring countries really should belong to (Russia)" (Miller, White, and Heywood, *Values and Political Change*, 137).
28. Michael McFaul, "Democracy Unfolds in Russia," 320-21.
29. Electoral data from *RFE/RL News Archives*, Dec. 29, 1995; *Current History*, 1996, 5; Lilia Shevtsova, ed., *Rossiia politicheskaia*, 126-27; Russia's Central Electoral Commission, Archives, Mar. 10, 2001, available at <http://www.fci.ru/archive/duma95-3.htm>.
30. *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, June 22, 1996; Karatnycky, Motyl, and Graybow, eds., *Nations in Transit*, 486.
31. Results of the national poll reported by *Kommersant-Daily*, Aug. 29, 1996.
32. Sergei Shelin, "Drama Ziuganova," *Izvestia*, Nov. 27, 1998.
33. Allegations of vote selling by the LDPR are commonplace. On the impeachment turnabout, see Sergei Blagov, "Analysis: Yeltsin wins, political system loses," *Asia*

- Times Online*, May 18, 1999, available at <http://www.atimes.com/c-asia/AE18Ago2.html>.
34. On political change and cultural flexibility, see Harry Eckstein, *Regarding Politics*, 273–74.
  35. The Yeltsin “family” of Kremlin insiders included Yeltsin’s daughter Tatyana Dyachenko; the former head of the presidential administration, Valentin Yumashev; the head of the Kremlin’s facilities directorate, Pavel Borodin; Yeltsin’s chief of staff, Alexander Voloshin; and billionaire businessmen Boris Berezovsky and Roman Abramovich.
  36. Shelin, “Drama Ziuganova.”
  37. The State Duma of the Russian Federation, Deputy Fractions of the State Duma, May 13, 2001, available at <http://www.duma.gov.ru/deputats/fraction.htm>; Russia’s Central Electoral Commission, Federal and Regional Elections, The State Duma Elections of Dec. 19, 1999, Apr. 23, 2001, available at [http://www.fci.ru/gd99/vb99\\_int/default.htm](http://www.fci.ru/gd99/vb99_int/default.htm).
  38. “Russia’s election result is just what the Kremlin wanted,” *Economist*, Dec. 18–24, 1999.
  39. Putin, “Modern Russia,” 232.
  40. VTsIOM, Mar. 13, 2000, available at <http://www.wciom.ru>; Fond “Obshchestvennoe mnenie,” Mar. 13, 2000, available at <http://www.fom.ru>; Leontii Byzov, “Elektoĭnaia situatsiia i vliianie novogo obshchestvennogo zaprosa na politicheskiĭ protsess,” *Election Bulletin* 1 (2000), the Carnegie Moscow Center, May 14, 2000, available at <http://www.ceip.org/programs/ruseuras/Elections/elections.htm>.
  41. Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, chap. 2.
  42. Klibanov, *Narodnaia sotsial’naia utopiia*.
  43. Sorokin, *Russia and the United States*, 12–15.
  44. Klibanov, *Narodnaia sotsial’naia utopiia*, 49.
  45. Raeff, “The People, the Intelligentsia and Russian Political Culture,” 145.
  46. Shoemaker, *Russia, Eurasian States*, 10.
  47. Cf. Daniel Roselle and Anne P. Young, *Our Western Heritage: A Cultural-Analytic History of Europe since 1500*, 129; Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 28–32, passim.
  48. Sukhov, *Russkaia filosofia*, 46.
  49. N. E. Nosov, *Stanovlenie soslovno-predstavitel’nykh uchrezhdenii v Rossii*, 11.
  50. See N. E. Nosov, *Ocherki po istoriĭi mestnogo upravleniia russkogo gosudarstva pervoi poloviny XVI veka*, 305–306.
  51. As cited in Klibanov, *Reformatsionnye dvizheniia*, 337, 342, 274–75, 277.
  52. Klibanov, *Narodnaia sotsial’naia utopiia*, 79.
  53. B. I. Syromiatnikov, “Reguliarnoie” gosudarstvo Petra Pervogo i ego ideologiia. *Chast’ I*, 129–39, 203 n.
  54. *Ibid.*, 130.
  55. Cf. *ibid.*, 203 n.
  56. See James H. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture*; James Cracraft, “Opposition to Peter the Great”; A. N. Medushevskii, *Reformy Petra I i sud’by Rossii*; Marc Raeff, *Imperial Russia, 1682–1825: The Coming of Age of Modern Russia*; S. M. Troitskii, *Russkii absolutizm i dvorianstvo v XVIII v. Formirovanie biurokratii*.
  57. Syromiatnikov, “Reguliarnoie” gosudarstvo; Raeff, *Well-Ordered Police State*.
  58. Cited in I. A. Isaev, *Istoriia gosudarstva i prava Rossii*, 102–103.
  59. Billington, *Icon and the Axe*, 183.
  60. Cracraft, “Opposition to Peter the Great,” 26.

61. Medushevskii, *Reformy Petra I*, 45.
62. See Troitskii, *Russkii absolutizm*, 104–18.
63. Georgii V. Plekhanov, “Peter the Great, an Oriental Despot.”
64. Raeff, *Well-Ordered Police State*, 201.
65. Alexander Gerschenkron, “Russian Mercantilism: A Specific Pattern of Economic Development,” 142.
66. Cited in M. M. Bogoslovskii, “Peter’s Program of Political Reform,” 24.
67. Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 228.
68. Feofan Prokopovich, “Oration at the Funeral of Peter the Great,” 77.
69. Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*; Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above 1928–1941*.
70. See Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism: with Capitalist Civilization*.
71. See more on authoritarian modernization as a tradition of Russian political culture in Peter Reddaway and Dmitri Glinski, *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms: Market Bolshevism Against Democracy*.
72. See Petro, *Rebirth of Russian Democracy*, 73–78; Raeff, “People, the Intelligentsia.”
73. A. A. Danilov, ed., *Iz istorii partii i obshchestvenno-politicheskikh dvizhenii Rossii i SSSR: Mnogopartiinost’ v Rossii: raspad i vrozozhdenie 1917–1992 gg.*
74. Michael McFaul, *Post-Communist Politics: Democratic Prospects in Russia and Eastern Europe*, 64.
75. Politicheskaia deklaratsiia partii “Soiuz Pravyku SiL,” Ruskii liberalnyi manifest, available at <http://www.duma-sps.ru/publication/397233.html> and <http://www.duma-sps.ru/publication/242885.html>.
76. Yegor T. Gaidar, *Gosudarstvo i evoliutsiia*, 27.
77. Leonid I. Abalkin, “The Post-Soviet Economy and the World,” 149.
78. Andrei Illarionov, Richard Layard, and Peter Orszag, “The Conditions of Life,” 128.
79. Diuk and Karatnycky, *New Nations*, 49; Illarionov et al., “Conditions of Life,” 136.
80. Peter Murrell, “What is Shock Therapy? What Did it Do in Poland and Russia?” 112.
81. *OMRI Economic Digest* 1, nos. 1–2 (Nov., 1995).
82. See Richard Rose, “Getting By Without Government: Everyday Life in Russia,” 41–62.
83. Victor Zaslavsky, “From Redistribution to Marketization: Social and Attitudinal Change in Post-Soviet Russia,” 124–26.
84. Anatoly B. Chubais and Maria D. Vishnevskaya, “Privatization in Russia: An Overview,” 94, 97–99.
85. Friedrich A. von Hayek, *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas*, 148.
86. Murrell, “What is Shock Therapy?” 135.
87. Shevtsova, “Russia’s Post-Communist Politics”; Reddaway and Glinski, *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms*.
88. Putin, “Modern Russia,” 231.
89. Gaidar, *Gosudarstvo i evoliutsiia*, 154.
90. Putin, “Modern Russia,” 235. Cf. Simon Johnson, Daniel Kaufmann, and Andrei Shleifer, “The Unofficial Economy in Transition,” 159–221.
91. Gaidar, *Gosudarstvo i evoliutsiia*, 165, 195.
92. Gennadii Ziuganov, *Derzhava*, 68; Gaidar, *Gosudarstvo i evoliutsiia*, 154.
93. Politicheskaia deklaratsiia partii . . . /397233.html.
94. Gaidar, *Gosudarstvo i evoliutsiia*, 164; Politicheskaia deklaratsiia partii . . . /397233.html.
95. As we remember, a not unreasonable answer to that that a Russian liberal might furnish would point out that the “squandering” of the state began well before

perestroika and took threatening proportions due to the large-scale international commitments of ideological nature (support of the “world revolutionary movement”) and the great-power competition with the United States. Domestic corruption, immense waste of the command and control economy, and vehement anti-intellectualism of the communist *nomenklatura* had also weakened the state to the verge of collapse, which Gorbachev’s maneuvering only somewhat accelerated.

96. *Komsomol’skaya Pravda*, Feb. 25, 2000; Putin, “Modern Russia,” 235.
97. Vystuplenie Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii V. V. putina c poslaniem Federalnomu Sobraniuu Rossiiskoi Federatsii, Apr. 3, 2001, available at <http://president.kremlin.ru/events/191.html>.
98. See a discussion of pattern-maintaining change in Eckstein, *Regarding Politics*, 271–73.
99. Paul A. Goble, “Regions, Republics, and Russian Reform: Center-Periphery Relations in the Russian Federation,” 163.
100. Weidle, *Zadacha Rossii*, 82.
101. Cf. Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival*.
102. See Robert J. Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 381.
103. *Ibid.*, 382.
104. Likhachev, “Tragedy of Russian History,” 55–56.
105. Nikolai Berdiaev, *The Russian Idea*.
106. Edward L. Keenan, “On Certain Mystical Beliefs and Russian Behaviors,” 37.
107. See Mikhail A. Molchanov, “Russian Neo-Communism: Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality,” 69–70.
108. *Anderson, Imagined Communities*.
109. Sorokin, *Russia and the United States*, 15.
110. *Ibid.*, 15–16.
111. Jeffrey Klugman, *The New Soviet Elite: How They Think and What They Want*, 14.
112. Sorokin, *Russia and the United States*, 16.
113. See Mikhail A. Molchanov, “K voprosu ob etnicheskikh istokakh totalitarizma v SSSR,” *Filosofskaia i sotsiologicheskaia mys’* 11 (1991): 47–57; *idem.*, “Borders of Identity: Ukraine’s Political and Cultural Significance for Russia,” *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 28, nos. 1–2 (1996): 177–93.
114. See Victor Zaslavsky, “Success and Collapse: Traditional Soviet Nationality Policy.”
115. John Dunlop, “Russia: Confronting a Loss of Empire,” 45.
116. Suny, *Revenge of the Past*, 125.
117. Zaslavsky, “Success and Collapse,” 33–34, 40.
118. Tatiana Mastuygina and Lev Perepelkin, *An Ethnic History of Russia; Pre-Revolutionary Times to the Present*, 69.
119. Gregory Guroff and Alexander Guroff, “The Paradox of Russian National Identity,” 86.
120. See Theodore H. Friedgut, “Nations of the USSR: from Mobilized Participation to Autonomous Diversity,” 219, Table 8.1.
121. Sakwa, *Russian Politics*, 104.
122. Mastuygina and Perepelkin, *Ethnic History*, 62–63.
123. Cf. Bahry, *Outside Moscow*, and Pollard, ed., *USSR Facts and Figures Annual*, 1991, 15:503.
124. See Dunlop, *New Russian Nationalism*; *idem.*, “Russia: Confronting a Loss of Empire.”
125. Cf. Thomas F. Remington, “Representative Power and the Russian State,” 83, Table 3.1; and *OMRI Daily Digest*, Dec. 27, 1995, and Jan. 2, 1996.
126. *Gosudarstvenno-patrioticheskoe ob’edinenie “Dukhovnoe nasledie,”* 192.
127. 1999 Russian Parliamentary Election Results, available at <http://www.rferl.org/elections/russia.99results/>.



128. According to the State Duma official Web site, Sept. 5, 2001, available at <http://www.duma.ru/deputats/list/frmlist.htm>.
129. Ronald J. Hill, "Ideology and the Making of a Nationalities Policy," 68.
130. Gregory Gleason, "The 'National Factor' and the Logic of Sovietology," 5–6, 7.
131. Gellner, "Homeland of the Unrevolution," 146, 147.
132. Putin, "Modern Russia," 234.

## CHAPTER 5. POLITICAL CULTURE AND NATIONALITY IN UKRAINE

1. White, "USSR," 50–51.
2. See, e.g., I. S. Koropec'kyj, ed., *Ukrainian Economic History: Interpretive Essays*; Krawchenko, ed., *Ukrainian Past, Ukrainian Present*; F. M. Kyryliuk, ed., *Ukrainska politolohiia: vytoky ta evoliutsiia*; Yu. V. Pokalchuk, ed., *Demokratiia v Ukraini: mynule i maibutnie*; O. I. Semkiv, ed., *Politolohiia*; Oleksandr Shmorhun, *Ukraina: shliakh vidrozhennia*; V. M. Tkachenko, *Ukraina; istoriosofia samoorganizatsii*; O. S. Zabuzhko, *Filosofia ukrainskoi idei ta ievropeyskyi kontekst: frankivskyi period*.
3. Cf. Golovakha et al., *Politycheskaia kul'tura*; Volodymyr Polokhalo, ed., *The Political Analysis of Postcommunism*; Bohdan Tsymbalistyi, *Tavro bezderzhavnosti; Politychna kul'tura ukraintsv*.
4. Arel and Khmelko, "Russian Factor," 86.
5. Rudnytska, *Etnichni spil'noty Ukrainy*, 51–81.
6. Rex A. Wade, "Ukrainian Nationalism and 'Soviet Power': Kharkiv, 1917," 73.
7. Nikolai Ulianov powerfully argues this view in *Proiskhozhdenie ukrainskogo separatizma*.
8. Zenon E. Kohut, "History as a Battleground: Russian-Ukrainian Relations and Historical Consciousness in Contemporary Ukraine," 138–39.
9. Mykhailo Hrushevsky, *The Traditional Scheme of "Russian" History and the Problem of a Rational Organization of the History of the East Slavs*.
10. More on Duchinski can be found in Rudnytsky, *Essays*, 187–20; Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie*, 231–34.
11. Smith, *Ethnic Origins of Nations*.
12. Likhachev, "Tragedy of Russian History," 52.
13. This is an approach adopted by Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*.
14. Kohut, *Russian Centralism*.
15. Cf. Tsymbalistyi, *Tavro bezderzhavnosti*.
16. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*; Taras Kuzio and Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine: Perestroika to Independence*, and numerous local accounts in both Ukraine and Russia.
17. Ilya Prizel, "The Influence of Ethnicity on Foreign Policy; The Case of Ukraine," 104.
18. A degree of legal equality and cultural autonomy that the Galician Ukrainians enjoyed under the Habsburgs represented a middle-way strategy on the continuum from outright suppression to a limited power sharing and home rule.
19. Hrushevsky, *History of Ukraine*, 194.
20. Valery A. Tishkov, "Inventions and Manifestations of Ethno-Nationalism in and after the Soviet Union," 45–46.
21. Ronald Suny, "State, Civil Society, and Ethnic Cultural Consolidation in the USSR: Roots of the National Question," 25.
22. Martin C. Spechler, "Development of the Ukrainian Economy, 1854–1917: The Imperial View," 272–73, 275.

23. While Soviet historiography saw two revolutions in one and spared no effort to argue a sea change between February and October, 1917, modern historical revisionism denigrates the latter as merely a “Bolshevik takeover.” Properly speaking, there was but one Russian Revolution, which went through successive phases of radicalization from the dethroning of Nicholas II in February through Bolshevization of Soviets in October–December to the prolonged Civil War (1918–21).
24. L. G. Melnyk et al., *Istoriia Ukrainy: Kurs lektii*, vol. 2, *XX stolittia*, chaps. 7–9; Anna Procyk, *Russian Nationalism and Ukraine: The Nationality Policy of the Volunteer Army During the Civil War*.
25. Serhii Pirozhkov, “Population Loss in Ukraine in the 1930s and 1940s,” 89.
26. See Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*.
27. See Mikhail A. Molchanov, “Remembering Chernobyl: The Fallout that Changed a Society and Ruined a System,” 1–2.
28. Alexander J. Motyl, *Will the Non-Russians Rebel? State, Ethnicity, and Stability in the USSR*, 51, Table 2.
29. Wade, “Ukrainian Nationalism and ‘Soviet Power’”; Melnyk et al., *Istoriia Ukrainy*, 2:141–65.
30. See Green, “Stalinist Terror.”
31. Simon, *Nationalism and Policy*; Yaroslav Bilinsky, “The Communist Party of Ukraine After 1966,” 258, Table 1; Borys Lewytzkyi, “The Ruling Party Organs of Ukraine,” 277–79.
32. Rudnytsky, *Essays*, 91–122.
33. Motyl, *Will the Non-Russians Rebel?; Dilemmas of Independence*.
34. For more on this, see Hryhory Kostiuk, *Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine: A Study of the Decade of Mass Terror, 1929–39*, 38–42.
35. Hunczak, “Between Two Leviathans,” 103.
36. Personal interview with members of the Kharkiv branch of the Inter-Regional Deputies’ Group, Oct. 5, 1991.
37. *Uriadovyi Kurier*, Apr. 4, 1996.
38. “The State Program of Cooperation of Ukraine with the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for the Period up to the Year 2001, Endorsed by the Decree of the President of Ukraine on November 4, 1998,” Arts. 1–2, 4.
39. Tammy Lynch, “Who am I?” *The NIS Observed*, June 23, 25 1999, available at <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/digest/vol4/edo410.html>.
40. See Mikhail A. Molchanov, “Watergate, Ukrainian Style,” *Analysis of Current Events*, Feb., 2001, 14–15; Adrian Karatnycky, “Meltdown in Ukraine,” *Foreign Affairs* 80, no. 3 (2001): 73–86.
41. Mikhail A. Molchanov, “Political Culture in Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: The Post-Soviet Case,” *Harriman Review* 9, nos. 1–2 (1996): 43–56.
42. Serhii Bilokin’, “Ostannii shans? Zistorychnoho dosvidy derzhavotvorennia,” *Literaturna Ukraina*, Feb. 4, 1993.
43. Volodymyr Lytvyn, *Politychna arena Ukrainy: diiovi osoby ta vykonavtsi*, 280.
44. Arel and Khmelko, “Russian Factor.”
45. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*.
46. Mikhail A. Molchanov, “Postcommunist Nationalism As a Power Resource: A Russia-Ukraine Comparison,” *Nationalities Papers* 28, no. 2 (2000): 263–88.
47. See Klym Dmytruk, *Without a Homeland*; Wiktor Poliszczuk, *Gorzka Prawda: Zbrodniczosc OUN-UPA: Spowiedz Ukrainca*.
48. David R. Marples, *Ukraine under Perestroika: Ecology, Economics and the Worker’s Revolt*, 223.

49. See Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence*.
50. See more in Trevor Taylor, *European Security and the Former Soviet Union: Dangers, Opportunities and Gambles*, 16–24.
51. *Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine* (Madrid, July 9, 1997), Art. 4.
52. “The State Program of Cooperation of Ukraine with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for the Years 2001–2004,” Arts 1, 3.3.
53. Golovakha et al., *Politycheskaia kul'tura*, 130.
54. *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* II (1995): 6, 9–12.
55. Little, *Ukraine*.
56. See Statement of the President of Ukraine, *Uriadovyi Kurier*, June 12, 1999.
57. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
58. “Integrated Measures for Comprehensive Development and Functioning of the Ukrainian Language,” approved by the Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine, Sept. 8, 1997.
59. Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Arts. 10.1–2, *Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady* 5–6 (1999), Art. 43.
60. *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 52, no. 5 (2000): 20.
61. Cf. a critical view of fragmentation as harmful to genuine pluralism in Theodore H. Friedgut, “Pluralism and Politics in an Urban Soviet: Donetsk, 1990–91.”
62. “Ukrainian Society—1997: An Opinion Poll on the Attitudes and Living Conditions of the Ukrainian Population,” available at [http://www.socd.univ.kiev.ua/DATABANK\\_UKRARCH/index.html](http://www.socd.univ.kiev.ua/DATABANK_UKRARCH/index.html).
63. Svitlana Oksamytna and Serhii Makeev, “Sociological Aspects of the Political Geography of Ukraine,” *A Political Portrait of Ukraine* 5 (1995): 3.
64. Arel and Khmelko, “The Russian Factor.”
65. *A Political Portrait of Ukraine* 5 (1995): 8–9.
66. M. I. Beletskii, M. B. Pogrebinskii, A. K. Tolpygo, “Prezidentskie vybory 1999 goda v Ukraine: regionalnyi aspekt,” available at [http://www.niurr.gov.ua/ukr/publishing/panorama\\_42000/fele12.htm](http://www.niurr.gov.ua/ukr/publishing/panorama_42000/fele12.htm).
67. *A Political Portrait of Ukraine* 4 (1994): 49.
68. Postcommunist religiousness in Ukraine remains superficial. Although two-thirds of those polled in 2000 considered themselves believers, almost half had never attended a church service, and another 25 percent attended church only once a year. See *Sobornost*, Nov. 10, 2000.
69. Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century*, 522–23.
70. Robert V. Daniels, *Russia: The Roots of Confrontation*, 169.
71. Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe: Economics and Politics from the Middle Ages until the Early Twentieth Century*.
72. *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 7 (1994): 4, 34.
73. *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 5 (1993): 15, table 1; *ibid.*, 12 (1995): 58.
74. The joint socialist-nationalist attack on Leonid Kuchma over the Gongadze scandal and the creation, in February, 2001, of the Forum for National Salvation, an umbrella organization for several ideologically diverse groups united in their opposition to the regime, showed that political differences between the left and the right in Ukraine can be successfully mitigated.
75. See Mykola Mykhalchenko, “Vijna za Kyiv: tochka zoru,” *Vechirnyi Kyiv*, July 13, 1996; Andrew Wilson, “Ukraine’s New Virtual Politics,” *East European Constitutional Review* 10, nos. 2–3 (2001): 60–66.

76. Paul Kubicek, "Variations on a Corporatist Theme: Interest Associations in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia."
77. *Ibid.*, 34.
78. Paul Kubicek, *Unbroken Ties: The State, Interest Associations, and Corporatism in Post-Soviet Ukraine*.
79. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hroch, *Social Preconditions*.
80. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Pelech, "Ukrainian Triumvirate."
81. Rudnytsky, *Essays*, 22.
82. Miroslav Hroch, "Linguistic Conflicts in Eastern Europe and their Historical Parallels," 199-208.
83. Rudnytsky, *Essays*, 30, 35 n.
84. Cf. Krawchenko, *Social Change*; Suny, *Revenge of the Past*; Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie*.
85. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*.
86. See more in Kuzio and Wilson, *Ukraine*.
87. John A. Hall, "Nationalisms: Classified and Explained," *Daedalus* 122, no. 3 (1993): 11.
88. Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States."
89. *Slovo i Chas* 3 (1998): 4.
90. *Slovo i Chas* 4-5 (1998): 80-83.
91. Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine no. 1004 from June 21, 2000, "On Introduction of Changes and Additions to the Decree of Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine no. 998 from September 8, 1997."
92. *Regional'na polityka Ukrainy: konceptual'ni zasady, istoriia, perspektyvy*, proceedings of international conference, Nov. 10-11, 1994. The ministry was soon abolished and substituted by the lower-status State Committee on Nationalities and Migration, which in its turn was disbanded by a presidential decree in December, 1999, and its functions dispersed among other ministries.
93. S. Viktorov, "Kogo diskriminiruiut v Krymu?" *Inostranets*, Feb. 21, 1996, 8. The share of students enrolled in schools with the Ukrainian language instruction in Crimea increased threefold by the next academic year (1997-98) and has been growing ever since. By January, 2000, there were also seven functioning schools for the Crimean Tatar children on the peninsula.
94. Overall, 24.6 percent of Ukraine's schools used Russian as of 1998.
95. O. G. Osaulenko, ed., *Statystychnyi shchorichnyk Ukrainy za 1997 rik*, 434; *OMRI Daily Digest*, Mar. 24, 1997; T. Bronitska and O. Zhurba, comps., *Druk Ukrainy (1997): Statystychnyi zbirnyk*, 32, 41.
96. M. Pavlov, "Tretia sila: nastroenie nedeli," *Yug*, Apr. 3, 1996.
97. See more on consociationalism in Arendt Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*.
98. See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

## CHAPTER 6. UKRAINE'S RUSSIAN PROBLEM

1. In Szporluk's opinion, "it is fair to argue that it is only in the twentieth century that the differentiation of the two nations, realized and accepted by the wide masses of people and not only by the intelligentsia, has been accomplished" ("Russians in Ukraine and Problems of Ukrainian Identity in the USSR," 196).
2. Graham Smith, *The Post-Soviet States: Mapping the Politics of Transition*.
3. Motyl, *Will the Non-Russians Rebel?*; *idem.*, "Why Empires Reemerge: Imperial Collapse and Imperial Revival in Comparative Perspective," 127-45.

4. *Turn to the Right*; Iu. I. Rymarenko, *Burzhuaznyi natsionalizm ta ioho "teoriia" natsii*.
5. Cherednychenko, *Anatomy of Treason*; Dmytruk, *Without a Homeland*; Oleksandr Fedrytskyi, *Traitors Unmasked*; Yaroslav Halan, *Lest People Forget*; Pavlo Kowalchuk, *Brown Shadows of the Past*; Poliszczuk, *Gorzka Prawda*; Tottle, *Fraud, Famine, and Fascism*.
6. *Ukrainski visti*, Dec. 31, 1995.
7. *Ukraina i svit*, Aug. 16–22, 1995.
8. Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States"; idem., *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*.
9. Arel, "Ukraine," 158.
10. John Jaworsky, *Ukraine: Stability and Instability*, 20.
11. Rudnytska, *Etnichni spil'noty Ukrainy*, 86–90.
12. Jean A. Laponce, "Language and Politics," 594.
13. Mykola Tomenko, *Ukrainska perspektyva: istoriko-politohichni pidstavy suchasnoi derzhavnoi stratehii*, 62–63.
14. Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy*, 15.
15. Liudmila Chekalenko-Vasil'eva, "Vliianie regionalizma na formirovanie vneshnei politiki Ukrainy," 187; Arel, "Lurking Cascade," 77; idem., *Ukraine: The Situation of Ethnic Minorities*, 10.
16. Osaulenko, ed., *Statystychnyi shchorichnyk*, 429, 434; *The NIS Observed*, Apr. 4, 2000; and calculations from Tomenko, *Ukrainska perspektyva*, 91, App. 2, and Bohdan Kushnir, *Iak nam buty z Rosiieiu?* 81.
17. Arel and Khmelko, "Russian Factor."
18. According to Georgii I. Tikhonov, head of the committee for CIS Affairs of the Russian State Duma, Kiev aired a proposal to limit education in Russian to the first three grades of elementary school, while phasing it out completely from the sphere of higher education. Tikhonov characterized Ukraine's education policies as a "spiritual genocide of the Russian people" (telephone interview with author, Sept. 17, 1998).
19. Even a medieval prince's raid on his relative's fiefdom in Kiev acquired unexpected significance of an early indication of longstanding animosity between future Muscovites and Ukrainians. See the story of Andrei Bogoliubsky in Subtelny, *Ukraina*, pt. 1.
20. Tatiana Marchenko, "The New Social and Cultural Situation and the Ouster of the Russian-Speaking Population from the Former Union Republics."
21. *Ibid.*, 147.
22. See *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Nov. 10, 1995.
23. Golovakha et al., *Politicheskaia kul'tura*, 109–110.
24. Evhen Golovakha, "Public Opinion on Observance of the Rights and Interests of National Groups in Ukraine."
25. Stephen Rapawy, "Ethnic Reidentification in Ukraine," IPC Staff Paper no. 90 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997); also in *Eurasia Bulletin* (U.S. Bureau of the Census, spring, 1998), 2–10, and at <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/ebspr98a.html>.
26. Olcott, Aslund, and Garnett, *Getting It Wrong*, 228.
27. The drop could reflect differences in survey methodology. While the 1989 census simply asked people to indicate their nationality, the World Bank survey questionnaire requested, in an unusually strict manner, that respondents indicate whether they were "completely Russian or Ukrainian." The results of the two surveys are therefore not strictly comparable and the second cannot be considered to have replicated the first. Whether the later survey meets rigorous criteria of reliability cannot be

- established beyond any doubt until the same questionnaire produces similar results in subsequent administrations of the survey. Cf. Rapawy, "Ethnic Reidentification."
28. All efforts by the Crimeans to secure an official status for the Russian language within the autonomy's jurisdiction were blocked by Kiev. The only variant of the Crimean constitution that could pass the Verkhovna Rada proclaimed Ukrainian the sole state language of the de facto Russophone autonomy. It was eventually adopted on December 23, 1998. The prolonged constitutional battle for Crimea is reflected in the Laws of Ukraine "On Cancellation of the Constitution and Certain Laws of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" (1995), "On the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" (1996), and "On the Approval of the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" (1998). See *Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady* II (1995), Art. 67; 24 (1996), Art. 90; 5-6 (1999), Art. 43.
  29. *Chas. Time*, May 15, 1995.
  30. Mykola Zhulynsky drew on the authority of Ernest Gellner to contend that "nowadays, the state that endeavours to develop into a market economy must be national" throughout, in both form and content, and a champion of "its own idea of cultural centralism" (*Ukrainski visti*, Dec. 10, 1995).
  31. Arel, *Ukraine*, 9.
  32. Shulman, "Cultures in Competition," 298.
  33. Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, "Brew of Economics, Language, Sovereignty: Ukraine Shifts ORT, Unleashing Protests," *Post-Soviet Media Law & Policy Newsletter*, Sept. 27, 1995, available at <http://www.vii.org/monroe/issue21/brew.html>.
  34. *Holos Ukrainy*, Jan. 6, 1996.
  35. *Vil'na Ukraina* 12 (June, 1995); *Tovarysh* 25-26 (June, 1995).
  36. *Kommersant-Daily*, May 20, 1995. In May, 1999, Kuchma was named the world's sixth greatest enemy of the press by the U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). "Using tax and libel laws as instruments of his hostility to journalists, Kuchma runs roughshod over any expression of opposition," read the committee's report. Kuchma's alleged involvement in the murder of opposition journalist Heorhii Gongadze returned Kuchma to the list of worst offenders in 2001.
  37. *Komsomolskaya pravda*, June 28, 1995; *Kommersant-Daily*, Aug. 12, 1995.
  38. *Rossia*, Aug. 9-15, 1995, 2.
  39. Cf. Arel, "Language Politics in Independent Ukraine."
  40. Chinn and Kaiser, *Russians as the New Minority*, 156.
  41. Melvin, *Russians beyond Russia*, 10-22.
  42. *Prospekt* 17 (Aug., 1995): 1, 3.
  43. Yurkov et al., eds., *Rossiiskii statisticheskii ezhegodnik*, 72, 74.
  44. Mykola Lytvynenko, "Druha 'derzhavna' mova v Ukraini?" *Vyzvol'nyi shliakh* 51, no. 6 (1998): 675.
  45. Up to two hundred thousand Ukrainians live in Moscow alone.
  46. Yurkov et al., eds., *Rossiiskii statisticheskii ezhegodnik*, 75.
  47. Laponce, "Language and Politics," 600.
  48. *Izvestiia*, Aug. 29, 1991.
  49. Solchanyk, "Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS," 26.
  50. Cited in Mark Webber, *The International Politics of Russia and the Successor States*, 102.
  51. Maria Drohobycky, ed., *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, xxix-liv; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Feb. 18, 1999.
  52. Chinn and Kaiser, *Russians as the New Minority*.
  53. Borys Tarasyuk, "Ukraine in the World," II.

54. *Golos Kryma*, June 23, 1995.
55. “Appeal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the North Atlantic Assembly,” *June 3, 1992*, in Victor Tkachuk et al., eds., *Russia that We*, 125–26.
56. F. Stephen Larrabee and Allen Lynch, *Russia, Ukraine and European Security: Implications for Western Policy*.
57. Cited in Rudnytsky, *Essays*, 189.
58. Cf. Paszkiewicz, *Rise of Moscow’s Power*.
59. E.g., Iaroslav Isaievych, *Ukraina davnia i nova: narod, relihiia, kul’tura*.
60. Cited in Magocsi, *History of Ukraine*, 20.
61. Cf. D’Anieri, “Nationalism and International Politics.”
62. Judging by the sheer quantity of nuclear arms “inherited” by Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it could have been considered a nuclear superpower itself. However, it was technically and politically impossible to wrest operational control of these weapons from Moscow, which made them largely useless for all practical purposes.
63. D’Anieri, “Nationalism and International Politics,” 21.
64. Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 25–26.
65. Arel, *Ukraine*, 9.
66. *Vechirnyi Kyiv*, Mar. 6, 1996.
67. Cf. Mialo, “Mezhdzu zapadom i vostokom.”
68. G. M. Perepelytsia, *Bez’iadernyi status i natsional’na bezpeka Ukrainy*, 7.
69. For more on the controversy that accompanied activities of Gen. Volodymyr Muliava, the first head of the Directorate, see Jaworsky, *Ukraine*, 61–62.
70. *Shliakh peremohy*, Dec. 30, 1995.
71. William Zimmerman, “Is Ukraine a Political Community?” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31, no. 1 (1998): 49.
72. *Kyiv Post*, July 31, 1998.
73. Evgenii Golovakha, Natalia Panina, and Nikolai Churilov, “Russians in Ukraine,” 70.
74. Reuters, May 8, 1999; *Washington Post*, Dec. 8, 1999.
75. *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 11 (1995): 3–5, 11.
76. Lytvyn, *Politychna arena Ukrainy*, 472. Lytvyn’s desire to put an end to the criminal abuse of the office and his portrait of Kuchma as a resolute fighter against corruption may read bitterly ironic in the aftermath of the Gongadze scandal and publication of the Melnychenko tapes implicating both Kuchma and Lytvyn in numerous illegal activities. However, high offices do change people, especially when such offices are less open and publicly accountable.
77. *Holos Ukrainy*, July 21, 1994.
78. *Vseukrainskie vedomosti* 91 (May, 1995).
79. *Novyi shliakh*, Oct. 14, 1995.
80. See Dmytro Vydrin and Dmytro Tabachnyk, *Ukraina na porozi XXI stolittia: politychnyi aspekt*.
81. *Kievskie novosti*, May 19, 1995.
82. *Vechirnyi Kyiv*, May 19, 1995. Minister for Nationality Affairs Dr. Mykola Shulha, who supervised the project, was effectively forced to find a less politically charged occupation in academia.
83. A. Golub, “The Language and Russophobia,” *Pravda*, Aug. 1, 1995.
84. *Trud*, Dec. 27, 1995.
85. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Refugees and Others of Concern to UNHCR—1998 Statistical Overview,” tables I.2, IV.3, May 12, 2000, available at <http://www.unhcr.ch/statist/98oview/intro.htm>.

86. *Kievskie vedomosti*, Feb. 13, 1996.
87. See A. Volkov, "Russians? Disperse and Forbid!" *Prykarpats'ka pravda*, Dec. 23, 1995.
88. *Zerkalo nedeli*, Feb. 24–Mar. 1, 1996.
89. The efforts of the Grinev-led Social-Liberal Union of Ukraine (SLON) to launch a referendum on the issue ended in vain. See *Vyzvol'nyi shliakh* 51, no. 6 (1998): 675.
90. Mykola P. Doroschenko, head of the Department of the Foreign Policy Directorate of the Administration of the President of Ukraine, interview by author, Kiev, Sept. 4, 1998.
91. Tkachuk et al., eds., *Russia that We*, 199.
92. *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 5 (Dec., 1993): 9, 25.
93. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 43.
94. Oleksander O. Horin, counselor at the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations, interview by author, New York, Sept. 16, 1996.
95. Jaworsky, *Ukraine*, 56.
96. *Sovetskaya Rossiia*, Apr. 15, 1999, FBIS-SOV-1999-0425.
97. Bukkvoll, *Ukraine and European Security*, 85; Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy*, 90–91.
98. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 114–24; Yuri Shcherbak, *The Strategic Role of Ukraine: Diplomatic Addresses and Lectures, 1994–1997*, 55–66.
99. Cf. Taras Kuzio, "Why Ukraine and Russia Will Not Sign an Inter-State Treaty," 9–10.
100. Attempts to reassess Ukraine's status as a nonnuclear power are periodically undertaken by the country's military experts and polemicists, reverberating across the political spectrum and echoing in the parliament. Both the December, 1991, Law on Defense, which provides that Ukraine will not hold, accept, produce, or sell nuclear weapons, and the January, 1994, Trilateral Agreement have been questioned as to their suitability in light of anticipated defense tasks in the twenty-first century. A recent attempt to draw attention to the matter was undertaken in the wake of NATO's war on Yugoslavia, which was perceived by many as an indication that the sovereignty of a nonnuclear country remains at best conditional. Cf. *Vechirniy Kyiv*, May 24, 1995; Perepelytsia, *Bez'iadernyi status*; and the Verkhovna Rada resolution on NATO, Apr. 23, 1999, FBIS-SOV-1999-0505.
101. *Kievskie vedomosti*, Mar. 23, 1996.
102. Cf. *Ukrainian Weekly*, Feb. 25, 1996; *Za vil'nu Ukrainu*, Apr. 4, 1996. It is illustrative that Primakov's personal lobbying of Russia's Council of Federation secured smooth ratification of the "big" treaty with Ukraine. See *Izvestiia*, Feb. 18, 1999.
103. Anders Åslund, "Eurasia Letter: Ukraine's Turnaround," *Foreign Policy* 100 (1995): 127.
104. Vitalii Masol, *Upushchenyi shans: nebespristrastnye razmyshleniia eks-prem'era Ukrainy o tom, chto proizoshlo v byvshem Sovetskom Soiuze*.
105. S. I. Pirozhkov and A. I. Sukhorukov, eds., *Eksportnyi potentsial Ukrainy na rosiis'komu vektori: stan i prognoz*, 129; *Transition*, Aug. 9, 1996, 45–46.
106. Calculated from Åslund, "Eurasia Letter," 139.
107. *Komunist*, Jan., 1996, 7; *Robitnycha gazeta Ukrainy*, Feb. 29, 1996; *Vechirniy Kyiv*, Jan. 27, 1996; *Halychyna*, Nov. 14, 1998.
108. On economic dimensions of hegemony see Keohane, *After Hegemony*.
109. The National Institute for Ukrainian-Russian Relations, Apr. 10, 2000, available at [http://niurr.gov.ua/ru/econom/inprog/tabl\\_2.htm](http://niurr.gov.ua/ru/econom/inprog/tabl_2.htm); O. G. Osaulenko, *Ukraina u tsyfrakh u 1999 rotsi*; Derzhavnyi Komitet Statystyky Ukrainy, *Ekspres-dopovid'*, June 6, 2000.
110. RFE/RL Weekday Digest, July 24, 2000; *Problemy neftegazovogo kompleksa Ukrainy (neft')*; Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Briefs*, available at <http://>



- /www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/ukraine.html; Bohdan Klid, "Caspian Sea Oil and Ukraine's Quest for Energy Autonomy," *Geopolitics of Energy* 20, no. 10 (1998): 6-12.
111. Pirozhkov and Sukhorukov, *Eksportnyi potentsial Ukrainy*, 26-27, 140.
112. S. I. Pirozhkov et al., *Ukrains'ko-rosiis'ki vidnosyny: ekonomichnyi aspekt*, 34-35.
113. *Problemy neftegazovogo kompleksa Ukrainy*, 16.
114. In 1996, Ukraine accounted for 35.3 percent of all investments coming to Russia from other CIS countries. It has also been the second-largest target for Russian CIS investments (22.4 percent), together with Kazakhstan making up 95.9 percent of the total. See Yurkov et al., eds., *Rossiiskii statisticheskii ezhegodnik*, 733; Pirozhkov et al., *Ukrains'ko-rosiis'ki vidnosyny*, 34-35.
115. V. M. Begma, *Oboronno-promyslovi komplekxy Ukrainy ta Rosii: spivrobotnytstvo, partnerstvo, konkurentsia*, 110; Pirozhkov et al., *Ukrains'ko-rosiis'ki vidnosyny*, 73; Pirozhkov and Sukhorukov, *Eksportnyi potentsial Ukrainy*, 34.
116. *Slobids'kyi krai*, Nov. 3, 1998.
117. Gregory V. Krasnov and Josef C. Brada, "Implicit Subsidies in Russian-Ukrainian Energy Trade," 837.
118. Arkadii Moshes, "Konfliktnyi potentsial v rossiisko-ukrainskikh otnosheniiah. Vzgljad iz Rossii," 37-42; *Biznes-Donbas*, Apr. 4-10, 1996; *Robitnycha gazeta Ukrainy*, June 28, 1995; *Kievskie vedomosti*, Oct. 10, 1995; *Uriadovyi kur'ier*, July 1, 1995; *Dilo*, Aug. 16-17, 1995.
119. The customs union of these five CIS members (together with Tajikistan) was redesignated the Eurasian Economic Community in 2001.
120. *Vechirniy Kyiv*, Jan. 13 and Oct. 14, 1995.
121. *Halychyna*, May 11, 1995.
122. *Segodnya*, Feb. 23, 1998, as translated in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 50, no. 8 (1998): 20-21.
123. *Kommersant-Daily*, Feb. 28, 1998; *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 50, no. 10 (1998): 17.
124. *Vysokyi Zamok*, Dec. 27, 1998.
125. *Odes'ki visti*, Dec. 22, 1998.
126. *Vechirniy Kyiv*, Nov. 3, 1998.
127. Olcott, Åslund, and Garnett, *Getting It Wrong*, 66-67, 135.
128. *CIA World Factbook*, Nov. 15, 1999, available at <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>; Vladimir V. Putin, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium," the Government of the Russian Federation, Mar. 5, 2000, available at [http://www.pravitelstvo.gov.ru/english/statVP\\_engl\\_1.html](http://www.pravitelstvo.gov.ru/english/statVP_engl_1.html).
129. Johnson, Kaufmann, and Shleifer, "Unofficial Economy in Transition."
130. The Odessa and Mykolaiv regions in the south geographically belong to the Right Bank, but they are grouped together with the Left Bank for the purposes of socio-cultural analysis.
131. Cf. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, maps 5.2, 5.5, 5.6, and passim; Beletskii, Pogrebinskii, Tolpygo, *Prezidentskie vybory 1999 goda v Ukraine*.
132. Kuzio, *Ukraine*; David J. Meyer, "Why Have Donbas Russians Not Ethnically Mobilized Like Crimean Russians Have? An Institutional/Demographic Approach," 317-30.
133. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 18.
134. Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 23, 117-46.
135. Miller, White, and Heywood, *Values and Political Change*.
136. Cf. Serhii M. Plokyh, "Cossack Mythology in the Russian-Ukrainian Border Dispute."
137. See Sarah Birch, "Interpreting the Regional Effect in Ukrainian Politics," *Europe-Asia Studies* 52, no. 6 (2000): 1017-41.

138. Elena Malinovskaia, "Preduprezhdenie mezhnatsional'nykh konfliktov (tsel' i sredstvo gosudarstvennogo stroitel'stva na Ukraine: zakonodatel'naia baza i administrativnaia praktika," 124.
139. M. I. Beletskii and A. K. Tolpygo, "Natsionalno-kulturnye i ideologicheskie orientatsii naseleniia Ukrainy," *Polis* 4 (1998): 76-77.
140. *Tovarysh* 25-26 (June, 1995): 12.
141. It is instructive that 71.5 percent of Russians and 51.4 percent of Ukrainians living in Crimea are in favor of Crimea becoming a part of Russia. Overall, 49.7 percent in eastern Ukraine support unification with Russia in a single state, while only 7.2 percent of those polled in western Ukraine approve of the idea. See FBIS-SOV-1999-0219; A. V. Razumkov, "Mezhethnicheskoe soglasie kak faktor natsionalnoi bezopasnosti Ukrainy," available at <http://www.niurr.gov.ua/ukr/dialog/reports/razumkov.html>.
142. *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 5 (1993); a public opinion poll regarding preparations to sign the Program of Economic Cooperation with Russia until 2007, the Institute of Social and Political Psychology (Kiev), Feb., 1998 (N=2,013, p<0.02); "Public Opinion in Ukraine: April 2001," Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, Occasional Report no. 11, Apr., 2001.
143. *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 9 (1994): 44-45.
144. Richard Rose and Christian Haerpfger, *New Democracies Barometer V: A 12-Nation Survey*, 68, 100.
145. Malinovskaia, "Preduprezhdenie mezhnatsional'nykh konfliktov," 154.
146. Kiev International Institute of Sociology, data file POL-14 (1997-98) and national surveys of Oct., 1998, and Mar., 2000, courtesy of Dr. Valeri Khmelko; *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 20 (1998): 39; *ibid.*, 21 (1998): 80; Institute of Social and Political Psychology of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, national survey, Feb., 1998; E. I. Golovakha and N. V. Panina, "Dvuiazychie v Ukraine: real'noe sostoiianie i perspektivy," *Rossiisko-ukrainskii biulleten'* 6-7 (2000), 142-47; "Public Opinion in Ukraine: April 2001." A recent poll showed 39 percent in favor of the official status of the Russian language in Ukraine, plus 38 percent in favor of its official recognition on a regional/local basis (*Vlast i politika*, Apr. 25, 2000).

## CHAPTER 7. FEARS AND HOPES: UKRAINE, RUSSIA, AND THE WEST

1. Graham Smith et al., *Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities*, 46.
2. Oleksandr V. Razumkov, deputy secretary of Ukraine's Security and Defense Council, interview by author, Kiev, Sept. 12, 1998.
3. ITAR-TASS, Feb. 23, 1998.
4. *Chernomorskii flot, gorod Sevastopol i nekotorye problemy rossiisko-ukrainskikh otnoshenii. Hronika, dokumenty, analiz, mneniia*, 7.
5. Volodymyr Yevtoukh, "The Dynamics of Interethnic relations in Crimea."
6. *Chernomorskii flot*, 23.
7. *Izvestiia*, Aug. 29, 1991.
8. A detailed account of these events can be found in Roman Solchanyk, "Crimea: Between Ukraine and Russia." Most documents referred to in the following discussion are reproduced in *Chernomorskii flot*; Drohobycky, ed., *Crimea*; Hajda, ed., *Ukraine in the World*; Tkachuk et al., eds., *Russia that We*.

9. Tkachuk et al., eds., *Russia that We*, 83–84, 131–32; Drohobycky, ed., *Crimea*, 219–20.
10. Drohobycky, ed., *Crimea*, 223–25; Horin interview.
11. Andrew Wilson, “Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Ukraine: The Issue of Crimea.”
12. Tkachuk et al., eds., *Russia that We*, 41, 55; *Zhirinovskiy and the LDPR Faction in the State Duma*, Information Bulletin no. 5 (May, 1995): 21.
13. Paul D’Anieri, *Economic Interdependence in Ukrainian-Russian Relations*, 78–80; Statement of the Presidium of the Congress of National Democratic Forces (CDNF), Sept. 10, 1993, in Tkachuk et al., *Russia that We*, 167–68.
14. Tkachuk et al., *Russia that We*, 25–28.
15. Shcherbak, *Strategic Role of Ukraine*, 79.
16. BBC, Apr. 15, 1995.
17. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 73; Natalia Belitser and Oleg Bodruk, “Krym kak region potentsial’ nogo konflikta,” 103–106.
18. *Russia Journal*, Apr. 13, 1999; Charles Trueheart, “Russia Orders Ship to Mediterranean,” *Washington Post*, Apr. 1, 1999; *Izvestia*, July 20, 1999; *CDI Russia Weekly*, July 23, 1999; *Moscow Times*, July 9, 1999.
19. Belitser and Bodruk, “Krym kak region potentsial’ nogo konflikta,” 107.
20. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Oct. 22, 1996.
21. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Feb. 5, 1997.
22. *OMRI Daily Digest*, Sept. 10, 1996, and Jan. 20 1997.
23. A former chairman of the State Duma Committee for CIS Affairs (1994–95), currently the director of the Institute of CIS Countries. See, e.g., *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Mar. 28, 1997.
24. *RFE/RL Newslines*, June 25, 1997.
25. *RFE/RL Newslines*, Feb. 23, 1998, and Feb. 11 and July 26, 1999; Julie A. Corwin and Jan Maksymiuk, “Sparring Over Sevastopol,” *RFE/RL online*, Feb. 11, 1999.
26. *RFE/RL Newslines*, May 28, 1997, and Mar. 6, 1998.
27. *Interfax*, Dec. 28, 1996, and Feb. 26, 1999; Volodymyr Serhiichuk, “Chomu Rosiia ‘pozbulasia’ Krymu,” *Uriadovyi kurier*, Feb. 20, 1999; *RFE/RL Newslines*, Oct. 11, 1999.
28. See, e.g., *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Mar. 25, 1998.
29. An original nuance was introduced when the newspaper ventured into the history of diplomacy, arguing that after the Russian withdrawal, it has been Turkey’s legal right to demand the Crimea “back” for itself, according to the terms of the original 1783 Ottoman-Russian agreement. Cf. *RFE/RL Poland, Ukraine, and Belarus Report*, Aug. 31, 1999.
30. *Izvestiia*, Feb. 18, 1999.
31. *Washington Post*, Dec. 8, 1999.
32. Cf. Anatol Lieven, “Russian Opposition to NATO Expansion,” *World Today*, Oct., 1995, 196–99; idem., *Ukraine and Russia*.
33. Pro-Kiev politicians in Simferopol’ were far more optimistic, insisting, as Grach did, that “Crimea has the right to use the Russian language in all spheres. It is a real precedent which must now be expanded, as a minimum, to the whole territory of Ukraine, giving the opportunity to raise the issue of the protection, use and recognition of the Russian language on the whole territory of the post-Soviet space” (*Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Feb. 6, 1999).
34. *Krymskoe vremia*, Nov. 5, 1998.
35. *UNJAR*, Mar. 25, 1999; *Region*, Apr. 23, 1996; *RFE/RL Newslines*, Sept. 18 and Dec. 8, 1998, and July 19, 1999.

36. *The NIS Observed*, Jan. 18, 2000.
37. *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, Sept. 23, 1995.
38. Jerzy Kozakiewicz, *Establishing a New Political Arrangement after the Collapse of the Soviet Union: The Case of Ukraine*, 41.
39. Lytvyn, *Politychna arena Ukrainy*, 300.
40. Dmytro Pavlychko, "Ukraina i svit," *Literaturna Ukraina*, Sept. 3, 1992.
41. *Za vil'nu Ukrainu*, Apr. 15, 1992.
42. *Ukrainian Weekly*, Jan. 24, 1993.
43. Even this rather shallow approval of the idea of IEC "in principle" invited criticism. See Vitalii Karpenko, "MEKaiuchu, sunemo holovu v zashmorh," *Vechirni Kyiv*, Jan. 13, 1995.
44. Ukraine's chief customs official suggested that all union participants must be equal "as in Europe, where there is no such a thing as someone dictating one's terms to the rest" (*Kievskie vedomosti*, May 23, 1995). Ukraine established a separate customs union with Moldova in 1997.
45. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Mar. 28, 1997.
46. Sergei A. Voitovich, "The Commonwealth of Independent States: An Emerging Institutional Model," *European Journal of International Law* 4, no. 3 (1993): 418-29.
47. *OMRI Daily Digest*, Feb. 13, 1995, and May 3, 1996.
48. Sergei Usov, "Kuda napravleny strategicheskie interesy Ukrainy," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Oct. 22, 1996.
49. Nikolai Mekhed, "Rossiisko-ukrainskoe sblizhenie: tsel' opravdyvaet sredstva?" *Vlast'* 8 (1997): 60.
50. Leonid Kuchma, *Richna dopovid' presyidenta Ukrainy Verkhovnii Radi Ukrainy. Ekonomika Ukrainy v 1994 rotsi*, 133.
51. D'Anieri, *Economic Interdependence*, 105.
52. *Zerkalo nedeli*, Apr. 13-19, 1996; *Kievskie vedomosti*, Mar. 23, 1996; *Ukraina i svit*, Nov. 22-28, 1995.
53. Ustina Markus, "Belarus, Ukraine Take Opposite Views," *Transition*, Nov. 15, 1996, 22.
54. The EBRD Ukrainian web site, available at <http://www.ebrd.kiev.ua/part1.html>; Karatnycky, Motyl, and Graybow, eds. *Nations in Transit, 1998*, 632; U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, "Ukrainian Economic and Financial Developments for the Week Ending 15 Jan. 1999," available at <http://www.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/cables/990120up.htm>.
55. *Kommersant-Daily*, Nov. 18, 1997.
56. *OMRI Daily Digest*, Mar. 28, 1997; *Jamestown Monitor*, Oct. 24, 1997.
57. *RFE/RL Newslines*, Oct. 24, 1997.
58. FBIS-SOV-98-060.
59. *Rossiiskie vesti*, Feb. 26, 1998; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Feb. 28, 1998; *RFE/RL Newslines*, Mar. 2, 1998.
60. *Jamestown Monitor*, Nov. 26, 1997.
61. *Izvestiia*, Oct. 29, 1997.
62. Paul A. Goble, "Belarus/Russia: Analysis From Washington—An Increasingly Diverse Union," *RFE/RL Online*, Apr. 28, 1999.
63. *RFE/RL Newslines*, Jan. 26, 2000; Sarah K. Miller, "Going, Going, GUUAM," *The NIS Observed*, Feb. 15, 2000; *Vechirni Kyiv*, Mar. 4, 1999.
64. *The NIS Observed*, Nov. 1, 1999.
65. *Krymskaia pravda*, Mar. 31, 1999. See, e.g., presidential aide Oleg Soskin, according to *Svoboda*, Feb. 13, 1999.
66. *Economist*, Aug. 11, 2001, 43.

67. FBIS-SOV-98-023.
68. John Edwin Mroz and Oleksandr Pavliuk, “Ukraine: Europe’s Linchpin,” 55–62.
69. Lieven, *Ukraine and Russia*, 158; idem., “Against Russophobia,” *World Policy Journal* 17, no. 4 (2001): 25–32.
70. *Rada*, May 18, 1995.
71. Arel, “Kuchmagate,” 54–59.
72. *Economist*, Aug. 11, 2001, 43.
73. Serhii Holovaty, “Kryterii dlia vstupu do ES maie buty iedynyi,” *Holos Ukrainy*, May 18, 1995.
74. *Nezavisimoye voennoye obozrenie*, Sept. 26, 1996.
75. *Vechirnyi Kyiv*, Oct. 14, 1995; *Prospekt* 17 (Aug., 1995); *RFE/RL Newline*, Apr. 20, 1998; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Feb. 5, 1997, and Feb. 28, 1998; *Xinhua*, Mar. 18, 1999.
76. Olcott, Åslund, and Garnett, *Getting It Wrong*, 152 n; *RFE/RL Newline*, Mar. 24, 2000.
77. Oleksandr Belov et al., *Ukraine 2000 and Beyond: Geopolitical Priorities and Scenarios for Development*, 84.
78. “Ukraine’s Cooperation with NATO,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, available at <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/diplomacy/?organization/nato.html>.
79. Richard H. Solomon, “Foreword,” in Lieven, *Ukraine and Russia*, x.
80. *Krasnaya Zvezda*, Oct. 9, 1999; *Nezavisimoye voennoye obozrenie*, Jan. 14, 2000.
81. “Ukraine’s Cooperation with NATO.”
82. The present figure is probably less than 10 million. Ethnic Russians were not the least group of more than a million people that left Ukraine for Russia. Thousands more departed to the west.
83. Baltic News Service, Mar. 24, 2000.
84. The need to grant the Russian language the status of an official language in Ukraine was recently reiterated by Russia’s vice premier, Viktor Khristenko. According to Kristenko, “bilingualism in Ukraine is a historical fact, a symbol of friendship of our people and of partnership.” Khristenko added that it is a sad fact that the Russian language is being discriminated against in Ukraine, where more than 10 million Russians live. See Pravda.Ru, Aug. 1, 2001, available at <http://www.english.pravda.ru/politics/2001/08/01/11499.html>.
85. A nonbelligerent attitude of the people and constitutional neutrality of the country puts definite limits on Ukraine-NATO collaboration as well.
86. On the current state of Russian-Ukrainian economic relations, see S. I. Pirozhkov, B. V. Gubskii, and A. I. Sukhorukov, eds., *Ukraina—Rosii: Problemy ekonomichnoii vzaiemodii*; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, *Factsheet: Russian-Ukrainian Relations*, July 10, 2001.
87. Interventions on behalf of Russia’s Ukrainians now make more sense than before because of the routine seasonal migration of Ukrainian labor to Russia, particularly to the Tiumen and Moscow regions. Up to 5 million Ukrainian citizens are now working in Russia (*RFE/RL Newline*, Aug. 30, 2001). Russia’s long-time settled Ukrainian population is thoroughly acculturated and rarely raises cultural demands. At the same time, the actual demand for Russian schools in Ukraine is deliberately frustrated by the government, as revealed by the classes oversized in comparison to the national average. See the section on language policies and minority rights in chapter 6.
88. Lieven, *Ukraine and Russia*.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Anne Norton, *Reflections on Political Identity*, 54.
2. Daniel Tarschys, "Russia as a European Partner," 143.
3. Vladimir V. Putin, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium," Mar. 5, 2000, available at [http://www.pravitelstvo.gov.ru/english/statVP\\_engl\\_1.html](http://www.pravitelstvo.gov.ru/english/statVP_engl_1.html).
4. *Financial Times*, Mar. 6, 2000.
5. Russian energy businesses, Gazprom in particular, enjoy the government's full support in their bid to acquire certain key elements of Ukraine's gas transit infrastructure: pipelines and/or reservoirs. The idea, first raised in 1995, then died under the criticism of Ukraine's legislature. Should the more ambitious ownership plans fail, Russia's second option is to get the two sides to work together to devise mutually acceptable models of, in Putin's words, "joint exploitation of [Ukraine's] gas pipelines" (BBC, Russian Service, Oct. 16, 2000).
6. "Udel'nyi ves Rossiiskoi Federatsii vo vneshnei torgovle tovarami Ukrainy v 19962000 gg.," The National Institute for Ukrainian-Russian Relations, Ukraine's Security and Defense Council, May 25, 2001, available at [http://niurr.gov.ua/ru/econom/inprog/tab1\\_2.htm](http://niurr.gov.ua/ru/econom/inprog/tab1_2.htm); "Balance of Payments of Ukraine," the National Bank of Ukraine, Apr. 10, 2000, available at <http://www.bank.gov.ua>.
7. Michael Mandelbaum, "Introduction: Russian Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective," in Michael Mandelbaum, ed., *The New Russian Foreign Policy* (New York: The Council on Foreign Relations, 1998), 19.
8. See Kissinger, *Does America Need A Foreign Policy?* chap. 2.
9. "President Bush's Remarks at Warsaw University," American Embassy, London, June 15, 2001, available at <http://www.usembassy.org.uk/Bush46.html>.



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# Index

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- Abkhazia, 122, 268  
Aleksii Mikhailovich, czar, 158  
Alexander II, 72, 118  
Antonov, Aleksandr, 194  
Armenia, 33, 267  
Asia, 58, 80, 127  
Atlanticism, in Russian foreign policy, 98, 99–100  
August 1991 putsch, 129, 133–34, 306n. 20  
Austria-Hungary, 159, 239  
Authoritarianism, 127, 128, 152–55, 157  
Autocracy: in Russia, 63–64; —, constraints on, 142; —, class views of, 146; in Europe, 64  
Azerbaijan, 33, 125, 263, 264, 267, 268, 272
- Baburin, Sergei, 109, 155  
Baltic states, 109, 125, 129; and language politics, 190; and the West, 290  
Bandera, Stepan, 175  
Batu, khan, 62  
Belarus, 33, 59, 109; early history, 101; identity, 246  
Belarusians, 162, 174; modernized, 162; in Ukraine, 211  
Belovezhe agreements, 95–96, 232, 254  
Berdiaev, Nikolai, 22, 27, 119, 158  
Berezovsky, Boris, 119, 267  
Black Sea Fleet, 94, 233, 255–60, 261, 274; division of, 98, 232–33; mooring rights, 277; negotiations, 178, 232
- Bolsheviks: national program of, 76–77; “patrimonial” governance, 131; post-communist assessment, 121; purges, 82; and Revolution, 73–74; and Russian national development, 78–79; in Ukraine, 31, 176  
Bosnia, 122, 274  
Boyars, 144–45  
Brezhnev, Leonid Ilich, 88–90, 91, 177  
Bukovyna, 68, 83, 214, 240  
Bush, George H. W., 270  
Bush, George W., 292
- Catherine the Great, 68  
Caucasus, 81–82, 109, 256, 274  
Central Asia, 80–82, 109, 115  
Central Rada, 73–74, 78, 175; indecisiveness, 172; political program, 168  
Chechnya, 55, 133, 134, 137, 163, 256, 277, 285  
Chernobyl (Chornobyl), 93, 176, 276  
Chernomyrdin, Victor, 152, 155  
Chornovil, Viacheslav, 90, 201, 227  
Chubais, Anatoly, 152, 155  
Clinton, Bill, 270  
Collectivization, 80–82  
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), 16, 107, 236, 242, 275; agreement on creation, 262–63; and armed forces, 255; Charter of, 264, 269; criticism of, 263, 265; and customs union, 321n. 44;



- Commonwealth of Independent States (*cont.*)  
 deficiency of, 106; economic institutions, 237, 264; and Eurasian Economic Community, 318n. 119; and Eurasian Union, 265; "European model," 266; and GUUAM, 267; on international terrorism, 268; Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, 244, 268–69; and military union, 244; 1996 Moscow summit, 265; 1997 Chisinau summit, 266–67; and peacekeeping, 264; and public opinion, 241–42; and rational choice model, 56; Russia's role in, 230, 235, 261, 267–68; Russian views of, 261–62; Tashkent treaty, 231, 263; 2000 Moscow summit, 268; and Ukraine, 265–66
- Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF): conservatism of, 138; evolution of, 55, 137–38; in 1993 elections, 135; in 1995 elections, 137; legislative representation in, 163; on Belovezhe agreements, 107; on Russia-Belarus Union, 107; on Russian-Ukrainian relations, 106–108; statism, 155; "systemic opposition," 138–39
- Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), 88–89; Central Committee of, 89; ethnic representation, 161; national-territorial organization, 161; and Ukraine, 89, 176;
- Communist Party of Ukraine: cadres, 200; ethnic composition, 177; national communism, 178; regional support, 186
- Communist Party of Western Ukraine (KPZU), 199
- Conservatism, Russian: desire for stability, 133–34, 136; origins of, 132; in post-Soviet period, 132–33, 141; as "revolutionary," 157; weakness of, 130
- Constructivism, 6
- Cossacks, 68, 223
- Council of Europe, 223, 252, 271
- Crimea, 117, 241, 253–54, 260; and the Black Sea Fleet, 248; Constitution of, 190, 229, 253, 260, 315n. 28; and Crimean Tatars, 212, 250; and emigration to Russia, 229; history of, 320n. 29; languages in, 203, 240, 260, 313n.93, 320n. 33; and naval base, 256; 1991 referendum in, 250; and Russia, 219–20, 229, 252, 254, 274, 276; and separatism, 190, 253–54; transfer of, 218, 239, 250, 253; and Ukraine, 252, 258
- Culture, 8, 14
- Debt, Soviet, 98, 1848
- Democracy, 11, 128, 134–35
- Democratic Russia party, 151, 163
- Diplomacy, Ukrainian, 220, 238
- Directory, 74, 78, 175
- Donbas, 240, 242
- Dontsov, Dmytro, 209
- Drahomanov, Mykhailo, 175
- Dvorianstvo*, 144, 174
- Duchinski, Franciszek, 169, 222
- Dziuba, Ivan, 90, 201
- East Slavic Union, 108, 109, 112, 116–18
- Eastern Slavs, 4, 169, 207
- Elections: in Russia, 135, 137–38, 163; in Ukraine, 227–28
- Ems *ukaz*, 72, 159, 175
- Estonia, 33, 59, 122, 210, 246, 272, 290
- Eurasianism, 100–102, 115
- Europe, 127, 131, 132, 224, 226, 239–40, 276, 280, 281; Eastern, 285; and Russia, 99, 292; and Ukraine, 292
- European Union (EU), 206, 225, 275; and Estonia, 272; and Ukraine, 269
- Foreign policy, Russian: Atlanticism, 98–100; and CIS, 261–62, 268–69, 276; and communist view, 106–108; and "compatriots," 217, 260, 283, 290; Concept of National Security, 274–75; and Crimea, 218–21, 251, 262; and Eurasianism, 100–101; and European integration, 275; and Kosovo, 179, 256, 275; and liberalism, 103–104; multipolarity of, 247; nationalist view of, 108–110; and peacekeeping, 289; and public debate, 125; and Russia-Belarus Union, 268, 269; and Ukraine, 94, 98–99, 104, 107, 258, 269; and the United States, 108; and the West, 289, 291

- Foreign policy, Ukrainian, 178–80; as “balancing act,” 284; and the CIS, 262, 266–68, 277; denuclearization of, 223, 233, 270; domestic determinants of, 280; “Euro-Atlantic,” 271; and the EU, 269, 275–77; and GUUAM, 267, 272, 277; and IMF, 276; and international peacekeeping, 272–73; and international security, 275; and national identity, 223; and NATO, 245–46, 247, 269–76, 289; as nonaligned, 225, 231, 272; and Partnership for Peace, 273; public opinion in, 242, 283; and Russia, 208, 225, 228, 270, 277, 288–89; strategic partnerships of, 281; and Trilateral Agreement, 220, 287, 317n. 100; and the UN, 247, 272; and the U.S., 247; and the West, 221, 270, 284, 291; and the World Trade Organization, 269
- Gaidar, Yegor, 133, 136, 141, 151–52, 154
- Galicia, 68, 174, 186, 199, 214, 229, 240, 241–42; and the Russians, 207–208
- Galicia-Volhyn', 62–63
- Gazprom, interests in Ukraine, 238, 323n. 5
- Georgia, 33, 90, 125, 161, 267, 268, 272
- Germany, 58, 127, 175, 236; and Austria, 103; in World War II, 83
- GKChP (State Committee for a State of Emergency), 95, 130, 134
- Gongadze, Heorhii, 120, 179, 288, 312n. 74, 316n. 76; and Kuchma, 185; murder of, 315n. 36
- Gorbachev, Mikhail, 13, 116, 129, 133, 142, 155, 163, 251; and collapse of the “center,” 130; and Soviet collapse, 92–93; and Soviet nationality policies, 91–92
- Grach, Leonid, 260, 320n. 33
- Great Famine, 80–81, 82, 176, 300n. 72
- Grinev, Volodymyr, 228, 230
- GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova), 267–68, 272, 275
- Hayek, Friedrich A., 151, 153
- Hetmanate, 67–68, 171
- Horbulin, Volodymyr, 257, 272
- Hrushevs'kyi, Mykhailo, 169
- Identity, 6, 12, 13; and borders, 249; East Slavic, 246; ethnopolitical, 214; history and desire, 14; international, 280; linguistic, 189; national, 244; politics of, 243; postcommunist, 7; Russian, 246; Soviet, 242; —, in Ukraine, 241
- International Monetary Fund (IMF), 151–52, 235
- Ivanov, Igor, 217, 234, 247, 259
- Jews, 161–62, 209; and support networks, 200; in Ukraine, 176, 211
- Karimov, Islam, 268
- Kazakhstan, 33, 122, 233, 265, 268, 290; and Russia, 263
- Khmelnys'kyi, Bohdan, 66–67, 168; successors, 172
- Khristenko, Viktor, 322n. 84
- Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeevich, 87–90; and de-Stalinization, 87–88, 150; and transfer of Crimea, 251
- Khvyliovyi, Mykola, 76, 191, 223
- Kievan Rus, 112; adoption of Christianity in, 61, 170; and Europe, 101; and historiography, 60–61, 169; language of, 170; legal system of, 61; political cultures in, 63
- Korenizatsiia* (indigenization), 77–78, 89
- Kosovo, 109, 179, 256, 275
- Kostomarov, Mykola, 70, 198, 222
- Kotlyarevs'kyi, Ivan, 68
- Kozyrev, Andrei, 97, 155, 217, 219, 230, 251, 261
- Kravchuk, Leonid, 92–93, 95, 232, 252, 272; and August 1991 putsch, 96, 172, 178; and CIS, 237; foreign policy of, 224; ideological turnabout, 180, 200; nationalist opposition to, 181; nationalizing policies, 178; negotiations with Russia, 178; presidential elections, 227; security policy, 270; statesmanship, 251; support of the national Church, 187
- Kuchma, Leonid, 189, 232, 235; authoritarianism, 120; and the CIS, 265–66; election campaigns, 227–28; “enemy of the press,” 315n. 36; financial policy of, 184; foreign policy and diplomacy, 178–79, 238, 259–60; and language policies, 200, 228; and loss of popularity, 229; and NATO, 271–72; opposition to, 181;

- Kuchma, Leonid (*cont.*)  
 relations with Russia, 178–79, 228;  
 second administration, 278
- language: in Baltic states, 190; in Crimea,  
 203, 240, 260; and group competition,  
 188–89; and group rights, 212; in Kievan  
 Rus, 170; and nation building, 230;  
 political significance of, 188–89;  
 Russian, 112, 189, 241; and Ukraine,  
 189–90, 200, 210–13, 226, 228, 242
- Latvia, 33, 210, 290; discrimination of  
 Russian minority in, 59; and NATO  
 application, 59
- Lebed, Aleksandr, 138, 230, 258
- LDPR (Liberal-Democratic Party of  
 Russia): creation of, 150; on federal  
 reform, 114; legislative representation,  
 163; in 1993 elections, 135, 136; in 1995  
 elections, 137; political decline, 141;  
 statism, 155; and “systemic opposition,”  
 139; on Ukraine, 103; and vote selling,  
 306n. 33
- Lenin, Vladimir Ilich, 31, 76, 140; and  
 Soviet nationality policies, 33
- Liberalism, Russian, 38, 150, 154
- Lithuania, 33, 170, 173, 293
- Lukashenko, Aleksandr, 59, 116
- Luk’ianenko, Levko, 90–91, 201, 227
- Luzhkov, Yurii, 140, 155; and Crimea, 257,  
 259; and Sevastopol, 257–58
- Lytvyn, Volodymyr, 228, 316n. 76
- Makhno, Nestor, 185
- Marchuk, Yevhen, 266
- Mazepa, Ivan, 67, 177–78  
 meaning, 27–28
- Melnychenko, Mykola, 316n. 76
- mercantilism, 145, 148
- Meshkov, Yurii, 253–54
- modernization, 122–23, 44
- Moldova, 33, 122, 125, 130, 263, 264, 267,  
 268
- Mongols, 143, 170; and destruction of Kiev,  
 62, 169; and medieval Russia, 101–102;  
 and Novgorod the Great, 63
- Moscow, 82; as Church center, 64; as  
 medieval principality, 63; the “Third  
 Rome,” 143–44
- Muliava, Volodymyr, 316n. 69
- Muscovy, 63, 169, 174; growth of, 63, 65;  
 Mongol domination of, 131; political  
 culture of, 144
- national identity: after communism, 59;  
 construction of, 58, 223, 292; and  
 international relations, 58, 292; and  
 opposition, 209; and political culture,  
 285; as political resource, 224; and  
 significant other, 303n. 18; and social  
 cohesion, 118; and territory, 218; and  
 tradition and innovation, 126
- national identity, Russian: and Atlanticism,  
 99; crisis of, 14, 118, 122, 126; current  
 debates on, 118–19, 122; and East Slavic  
 unity, 15, 116–18, 276; and empire, 7;  
 and Europe, 99, 275; fragmentation of,  
 163; and frontier problems, 111; and  
 liberal internationalism, 246–47;  
 imperial legacy of, 15, 305n. 58; and  
 nation building, 7, 112–14; and  
 political culture, 99–100; and religion,  
 305n. 58; Romantic interpretations of,  
 110; and Russia-Belarus Union, 7; and  
 the Russian language, 112; and Russian-  
 Ukrainian relations, 246; and the Soviet  
 Union, 114–15; and the state, 37, 121,  
 286; and Ukraine, 7–8, 124, 218, 275,  
 276; underdevelopment of, 36–37
- National identity, Ukrainian: conflict  
 potential, 224; crisis of, 7–8; demar-  
 cation of, 288; and ethnicity, 16, 241;  
 and Europe, 221, 182, 284; and national  
 idea, 228; and nation building, 7; post-  
 nationalist, 283; public opinion, 226,  
 242; and Russia, 7–8, 16, 207, 223–24,  
 226, 243, 281; and Russian language,  
 241; and Ukraine’s political culture,  
 281
- Nationalism: anti-Russian, 51; and authori-  
 tarianism, 7; cultural, 70; in East  
 Central Europe, 121; and elite politics,  
 10; ethnic, 121, 291; as interactive, 219,  
 243; in international politics, 45; and  
 international relations theory, 56–57;  
 interpreted, 10; and myth of belonging,  
 61; official, 69, 198; and political culture  
 studies, 6, 30; postcommunist, 6, 10, 41;

- as power resource, 56; realist model, 56; and religion, 41–42, 55–56; and security dilemma, 45; and social competition, 44; and Soviet collapse, 48–49; utility considerations, 44; versus communism, 55
- Nationalism, postcommunist: and development, 165; and irredentism, 122; and Marxism, 165; pluralist explanation of, 56; as political resource, 46; and postcolonialism, 49–50; and rent-seeking behavior, 165; social construction of, 46; in Ukraine, 181
- Nationalism, Russian: and Chechnya, 109; and civil society, 157, 164; and communism, 33–34; and Crimea, 253; cultural and political, 121–22; czarism, 38; late development of, 35, 158–59; and Empire, 68–69; and East Slavic Union, 109; and East Slavic unity, 112; and economic dislocation, 44, 49; and the European Union, 108–109; and Kosovo, 109; and liberalism, 109–10; and localism, 157; and “Moscow as the Third Rome,” 158; masses and elite, 165; mass spread of, 162–63; modern, 36; and 1993 elections, 136; official, 71–72; neohegemonic, 103; and political culture, 157; postcommunist, 93, 125; public opinion, 306n. 27; and religion, 42; and “revolutionary” conservatism, 165; and Russians in the “near abroad,” 109; and Soviet regime, 88, 160–61; and the state, 285; territorial claims of, 218; and Ukraine, 108, 122, 247; as unrealized project, 91; utilization of tradition by, 164; view of the USSR, 102
- Nationalism, Ukrainian: after communism, 180; constructed phenomenon, 205; construction of the enemy, 210; and cult of leaders, 209; dependent character of, 16; doctrine of, 301n. 78; and elite, 70, 180; emulated character of, 198; ethnicization of the state, 210; and foreign policy, 182; historical memories in, 69; in Austria-Hungary, 71; instrumental uses of, 201, 243; international encouragement, 270; leaders of, 200–201; and lobbyists, 202, 229; and mass mobilization, 201; and minorities, 284; mythology of, 169, 222; and Nazism, 209; “negative” identity, 198; and nuclear weapons, 270; origins of, 70–72, 197–98; phases of development of, 198–99; political base, 243; and populism, 71, 73; realist explanation, 44; regional base, 201; and religion, 42; and Romanticism, 70; and Russians, 284; and Russian-Ukrainian relations, 201; Russophobic, 72, 209, 225, 229; and Slavophilism, 198; and socialism, 73; and Soviet leaders, 90; and Soviet nationality policies, 199–200; studies of, 166; territorial claims of, 219–20; as totalitarian, 209; varieties of, 199; and weakness, 205; and western diaspora, 182
- Nationalizing policies, 215–16, 229
- Nationalizing states, 51–55, 211
- NATO, 206, 225, 242, 272, 273–76; and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, 271; North Atlantic Cooperation Council, 253; North Atlantic Council, 275; Partnership for Peace, 223, 271; and Ukraine, 178–79, 271, 273–76
- Nazarbaev, Nursultan, 265, 268
- Nomenklatura*, 196, 252; postcommunist, 136, 154, 205; and privatization of state assets, 152, 154; and rent-seeking, 195; Ukrainian, 96, 178, 181
- Novgorod the Great, 62, 64, 101
- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, 233
- Oligarchs, 142, 197
- organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), 83–85
- Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 252–53
- Pavlychko, Dmytro, 263
- Pereiaslav Treaty, 67–68, 251
- Perestroika, 91, 95, 181
- Peter the Great, 67–68, 143, 147–48
- Petliura, Symon, 74, 175
- Phenomenology, 28–29
- Podberiozkin, Aleksei, 109, 114
- Poland, 83, 127, 170, 172, 174, 207, 246, 247; as authoritarian, 209;

- Poland (*cont.*)  
 Catholicization of Ukrainians, 173;  
 partitions of, 68, 72, 239; relations with  
 Ukraine, 175–76
- Political culture, and ethnicity, 29–30; as  
 action patterns, 205; comparative, 5;  
 constructivist interpretation, 6; defined,  
 6, 10, 14, 171; heterogeneity of, 126, 128;  
 and historical determinism, 5–6, 296n.  
 34; and international relations, 10–11;  
 and meaning, 27–28; and national  
 identity, 6, 10, 281; and pheno-  
 menology, 296n. 40; and political  
 change, 19–20; and Sovietology, 18–30;  
 studies of, 27, 30, 296n. 32
- Political culture, Russian, 5–6, 15, 34, 136,  
 144–45, 156, 158; ambiguity of, 129; as  
 authoritarian, 5, 20, 127, 143, 146, 308n.  
 71; and change and continuity, 21, 34–  
 35, 150, 156; conceptualized, 4–5;  
 conservative, 282, 286; democratic,  
 21, 26; and developmental authori-  
 tarianism, 15, 134, 142–43, 149, 284–85;  
 historicist interpretation of, 127; and  
 ideal-typical complexes, 284; internal  
 contradictions of, 126, 128–29, 149, 205;  
 and Ivan IV “The Terrible,” 144; and  
 liberalism, 150; patrimonialism, 148;  
 perceptions of external threat, 143;  
 and perestroika, 5; and Peter the Great,  
 148; revolutionary conservatism, 15,  
 132–33, 142, 284; statism, 155; studies  
 of, 21, 285; and the West, 128;
- Political culture, Soviet, 20, 25–26, 153
- Political culture, Ukrainian: and accommo-  
 dation, 15, 173–80, 182–83, 192, 205–  
 206; ambivalence of, 184; conformism,  
 184; and dependency, 15, 194–97, 201,  
 205; and elite’s anomie, 173; and  
 external powers, 281; fragmentation,  
 184, 190, 191, 204–205; leftist trends of,  
 177; and localism, 16, 192, 194; as  
 “nationalist,” 6; and nihilism, 184; and  
 rebellion, 177; and regionalism, 171,  
 185–86, 191–92, 205, 240–41; and  
 Russia, 9, 222; studies of, 9, 166, 171;  
 survivalism, 178, 192–94, 205, 283
- Polonization, 173–74
- Posad*, 144, 145–46, 147
- Postcoloniality, and social mobility, 200–  
 201
- Postsocialist transitions: and authori-  
 tarianism, 5, 12–13, 150–55; and change,  
 140; and crisis of identity, 123–24, 249;  
 criticized, 3–4, 19; and democracy, 154;  
 economic liberalization, 152; and  
 freedom of the media, 216; and labor,  
 196–97; and nationalism, 5, 36, 164–65,  
 282; and oligarchs, 197; and political  
 culture, 285; in Russia, 5, 36; situational  
 adaptation, 129; and social anomie, 123;  
 and social atomization, 36, 164, 204;  
 and Western individualism, 123
- Primakov, Evgenii, 140, 155, 217, 233, 247,  
 259; and Putin, 141–42
- Putin, Vladimir, 104–105, 125, 140–41;  
 administrative reform, 114; anti-  
 corruption efforts, 289; and Chechen  
 war, 141; and the CIS, 104, 268;  
 centralizing policy, 114; conservatism,  
 286; developmental authoritarianism,  
 155; and Eurasianists, 155; and “Kursk”  
 tragedy, 119; restoration of Soviet  
 symbols, 164; and Russia-Belarus  
 Union, 268; and Russians abroad, 276;  
 statism, 285; 2001 visit to Kiev, 246; and  
 Ukraine, 104, 179, 277, 323n. 5
- Rational choice theory, 42–43, 56
- Romania, 127, 207; and Ukraine, 231
- Rukh, 93, 201, 234, 263
- Russia, 4–7, 14, 127, 205, 207, 229, 235;  
 administrative-territorial division, 113–  
 14; April 1993 referendum, 133; armed  
 forces, 255; August 1991 putsch, 133–34,  
 306n. 20; and Belarus, 267, 294n. 16;  
 and Central Asia, 115, 289; and  
 Chechnya, 55, 113, 120, 246; and China,  
 132; and the CIS, 262–63, 291; and Civil  
 War, 194; and the Council of Europe,  
 290; czarism and nationalities, 34–35;  
 and Dagestan, 55; declaration of  
 sovereignty, 96; deindustrialization of,  
 236; and democracy, 118; and develop-  
 ment, 123, 131, 132, 157–58; early history  
 of, 101; and East Slavic Union, 116–18,  
 120; and Empire, 173; economy of, 139–  
 40, 154; ethnic territories, 113; and

- Europe, 99–100, 103–104, 128, 284, 290; and federalism, 113–14; historical memory, 282; identity crisis, 7–8; imperial fatigue, 118; and international terrorism, 289; and Japan, 132; and Kazakhstan, 267; and Kyrgyzstan, 267; as “melting pot,” 159; and migration, 115, 305n. 56; minorities in, 113; and modernization, 122–23; and Moldova, 294n. 16; nationalism and traditionalism, 35; nationality policies of, 54–55; and nation building, 93–94, 103–104, 110, 118, 124; and NATO, 62, 117; and “near abroad,” 110, 125; non-Russian peripheries, 110; October 1993 crisis, 133–34; oligarchic capitalism, 119; and OSCE, 289, 290; “othering” of, 59; perceptions in Ukraine, 242, 246, 281; perseverance, 143; and Poland, 306n. 13; political parties, 135–37, 139–41, 155, 163; population of, 115, 286; and postimperial syndrome, 46, 51; post-Soviet borders, 251, 274; pre-Renaissance movements in, 306n. 9; and reformation movements, 130–31; regional leader, 116, 225; and regional security, 289; secession from the Soviet Union, 93; and September 11, 2001, 179; Soviet heir, 208, 225; Soviet republic, 50, 161–62; and Soviet republics, 32–33; and the Soviet Union, 114; subsidies to non-Russian republics, 162; and Tajikistan, 267; territorial expansion, 143; and Transcaucasian states, 115, 289; and Ukraine, 103, 108, 125, 174, 226, 231, 242, 245–46, 281; and the UN, 289; and the United States, 179, 288; unity in diversity, 160; Weimar analogy, 135, 141, 289; and the West, 275
- Russian émigré thinkers, 22, 27
- Russian Liberation Army (ROA), 85–87
- Russian Orthodox Church, 21, 42, 65, 79, 112, 128, 130; Nikonian reform, 131; *raskol*, 131; and Russian national identity, 101–102; in Ukraine, 186–88
- Russian Revolution, 73–75, 131, 175 311n. 23; reactionary backslides, 130; and Ukraine, 73, 205
- Russians: ancestral homeland, 60–62; and Chechens, 87; capitalists, 120; Crimea, 260; denationalization of, 88; discrimination against, 214; economies of subsistence, 152; electoral behavior, 138–38, 163; emigration, 214, Empire, 69; Estonia, 59; forced migration, 290; and Georgians, 117; identity crisis, 51; imperial stigma, 209; intelligentsia, 119; in Latvia, 59; minority, 49, 290; movement entrepreneurs, 139; “near abroad,” 104, 110–11, 122, 124; perceptions of, 226; political status, 200; population decline, 115; post-war patriotism, 87; reidentification, 214; and social status, 161–62; soviet policies, 78–79; and Ukraine, 96–97, 117, 109, 176, 189, 191, 201, 203, 207, 210–12, 218, 224, 274, 322n. 82, 322n. 84; worldview of, 159
- Russian-Ukrainian relations, 8–11, 179, 244; asymmetrical, 247; and the Black Sea Fleet, 232, 255–61, 278; borders, 105, 231, 246, 269, 274; and Chechnya, 269, 303n. 22; and the CIS, 244, 248, 262–63, 286; after communism, 207; and “compatriots” abroad, 217, 277; contested identities, 223; and Crimea, 248, 249–61, 269; cross-border contacts, 242; cultural aspects, 215–16; debt, 233, 261, 277; diplomacy, 238; and East Slavic Union, 286; economy, 106, 234–39, 244, 249, 277, 287–88, 318n. 114, 323n. 5; and elections in Ukraine, 227–28; and elites’ circulation, 233; energy, 235, 236, 249, 254, 265–66, 277; foreign policy coordination, 287; friendship treaty, 105, 249, 258–59; and Great Famine, 300n. 72; industrial competition, 240–41; in Middle Ages, 63; international comparisons, 288; interpretivist approach, 17; labor migration, 266, 322n87; liberal view, 218; mutual learning, 12–13, 294n. 17; and national identities, 281–82; and NATO, 244, 248, 260, 273–75; 1990 Treaty, 250; 1992 Dagomys summit, 232, 255; 1993 Massandra summit, 234, 254–55; 1995 Sochi summit, 220, 232; 1996–97 tax war, 266; 1998 Moscow summit, 106; politics of identity, 243–44; post-

- Russian-Ukrainian relations (*cont.*)  
 communist, 292; power sharing, 173;  
 prospects, 286; public opinion, 226, 241–  
 42, 244, 258; reintegration, 283; and  
 Russian minority, 214–15; security, 16–17,  
 231, 294n. 15; and September 11, 2001,  
 179; and Sevastopol, 278; and the State  
 Duma, 258, 260; strategic partnership,  
 283; subsidies to Ukraine, 234–35, 236;  
 territorial claims, 218–21; trade, 234–39,  
 265–66, 277; 2001 Dnipropetrovsk  
 summit, 106, 242, 269, 276; and  
 Ukraine's independence, 246; and the  
 UN, 253; views of, 221, 247–48, 277,  
 282–83; and the West, 278, 288; and  
 Yugoslavia, 269
- Russification, 68, 112, 161, 175; under  
 Alexander II, 159; under Brezhnev, 88
- Rutskoi, Aleksandr, 133, 218, 230, 251
- Seleznnev, Gennadii, 259, 269
- Serbia, 59, 256
- September 11, 2001: and Russia-NATO  
 cooperation, 260, 275; and Russian-  
 Ukrainian relations, 179; and Russia's  
 solidarity with the U.S., 179, 275
- Sevastopol, 94, 98, 229, 259, 277; and the  
 Black Sea Fleet, 252, 257
- Shafarevich, Igor, 110, 120
- Shcherbyts'kyi, Volodymyr, 90, 177
- Shelest, Petro, 90, 201
- Shevchenko, Taras, 70–71, 198
- Shock therapy, 136, 139, 151–55
- Skoropads'kyi, Pavlo, 74, 175
- Slavophiles, 37
- Sobors*, 145
- Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr, 91, 93, 97, 109–10
- Soviet nationality policies: budget and  
 finances, 162; change and continuity, 30;  
 and ethnic competition, 200; evolution  
 of, 89; and federalism, 160–61; ideologi-  
 cal explanation, 40–41; imperial model  
 of, 45–46; as “national contract,” 50, 89;  
 rational choice model of, 42–43; realist  
 model of, 43–44; results of, 160–61; and  
 Russia, 31, 33–34, 40, 47–50, 78–79, 161–  
 62; and Ukrainian nationalism, 199–200
- Soviet studies: and ahistoricism, 20–21; and  
 behaviorism, 24–27; and bureaucratic  
 politics model, 23; elite bias of, 22;  
 pluralist models of, 25–26; and practical  
 politics, 13; and Russian “Weimar”  
 hypothesis, 14; survey research of, 24–  
 27; and totalitarian model, 21–24
- Soviet Union, 42, 218; budget of, 90,  
 234; collapse of, 48, 87, 96, 181; and  
 decentralization, 180; economy, 234; as  
 “empire,” 46–48, 50–51, 110; ethnic  
 minorities, 110; federal organization,  
 76–77, 160–61, 208, 302n. 94; national  
 elites, 173; restoration of, 108; self-  
 identification with, 241; “squandering”  
 of the state, 308n. 95. *See also* USSR
- Stalin, Joseph, 31, 76, 87; diplomacy, 239;  
 revolution from above, 185
- Stalinism, 85, 87, 118, 176; and cult of  
 leaders, 209; purges, 81, 82; in Russia,  
 80–83; in Ukraine, 79–81, 176–77
- Starshyna* (Cossack seniors), 66, 67, 70
- START-I Treaty, ratification by Ukraine,  
 233
- State Duma: and the Black Sea Fleet, 257;  
 and the Crimean issue, 255, 259, 260;  
 factor of stability, 138; 1993 elections,  
 135–36; 1995 elections, 137; 1999  
 elections, 163; parliamentary blocs, 163;  
 protest vote, 139; territorial claims, 220;  
 and Ukraine, 97, 105
- State-led development, 149, 150, 152
- Stets'ko, Iaroslav, 175
- Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation,  
 252, 254
- survivalism, 193–97
- Tabachnyk, Dmytro, 228
- Tarasyuk, Borys, 219, 259, 272
- totalitarianism, 23–24, 89, 128
- Transcarpathia, 68, 240
- Trans-Dniester, 122, 130, 268
- Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe  
 (CFE), 231–32, 267–68
- Turkmenistan, 235, 264
- Udoenko, Hennadii, 271–72
- Ukraine, 4, 6–7, 33, 82, 125, 198, 241;  
 accommodation of foreign powers, 175;  
 armed forces, 214, 231–32, 255; and  
 Azerbaijan, 238; as borderland, 111;

- borders, 269, 274; “buffer state,” 270, 292; business, 196–97; and CIS, 125, 262–63, 265–66, 268–69, 272, 277; “clans,” 195; cleavages, 190–91; Constitution, 189, 211; corporatism, 196–97; declaration of sovereignty, 250; defense and security, 231–33, 272–75; east, 241; economy, 234–39, 278, 284, 287; education policies, 212–13; emigration from, 322n. 82; energy, 235, 236, 238; ethnicity, 167, 314n. 27; and Europe, 108–109, 226, 247, 269, 287, 288; foreign policy, 182–84, 208; foundation myth, 66; geopolitics, 117, 270–71, 279, 281, 284, 291; and Georgia, 268; government, 202–203, 208, 229, 249; Great Famine, 300n. 69; 300n. 72; historiography, 111, 168–69, 170–71, 314n. 19; history, 101–102, 171–72; identity 7–8, 280; industry, 90, 235–37; labor, 196–197; language policies, 200, 202, 210–11, 212–13, 216; languages, 53, 167, 189, 203, 210, 241, 243, 244, 294n. 18, 314n. 18, 319n. 146; Left Bank, 239–40, 318n. 130; media, 215–16, 298n. 101; military exercises, 273; minorities, 203, 207, 211, 212; and Moldova, 321n. 44; national interest, 248; nationalizing state, 52–54, 202, 211; and NATO, 117, 178–79, 183, 245, 247, 260, 270–76, 278, 317n. 100, 322n. 85; neutrality, 225; 1991 referendum, 129, 175, 234, 251; nuclear weapons, 254, 316n. 62, 317n. 100; in Partnership for Peace, 271; “pendulum” politics, 227–28; political class, 183–84; political culture, 281; political dissent, 90–91; political parties, 312n. 74; population, 167; postcolonial syndrome, 208, 288; postcommunist transitions, 195–97; public opinion, 195, 226, 283, 319n. 146; regions, 185–86, 195–96, 201–202, 207, 234, 235, 239–42, 244; religion, 186–88, 297n. 72, 312n. 68; and resistance to collectivization, 194; Right-Bank, 68, 74, 239–40, 318n. 130; and Russia, 102–103, 120, 183, 238, 241, 245–47, 276, 278–79, 281, 287, 288; and Russia-Belarus Union, 283; Russian language in, 90; Russian minority, 129; sovereignty, 276; in Soviet nationalities policy, 89–90; Soviet republic, 76, 78, 166, 171, 176–77, 199, 250; state and nation building, 167–68, 204, 230, 244, 284, 288; state independence, 93, 95, 96; strategies of accommodation, 183–84; territorial integrity, 207, 220; toponym, 170; and Turkmenistan, 238; and the West, 248, 269–70, 278
- Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), 84–85, 86
- Ukrainianization: as accommodation strategy, 181; as “affirmative policy,” 282; in the army, 225; and Crimea, 260; in education, 202–203; and foreign policy, 212; interconfessional relations, 215; language politics, 189–90; and nation building, 203–204; as power resource, 182; resistance to, 213, 224; and Russian language, 112, 277, and social mobility, 214
- Ukrainian Liberation War, 65–66, 168
- Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR), 175, 201
- Ukrainians: ancestral homeland, 60–62; bourgeoisie, 175; characterizations of, 38–40; elite, 39, 172, 174, 177, 189, 224, 244; “first-order titular nationality”, 43; Galician, 310n18; in Crimea, 191; “Little Russians,” 65; masses, 177, 189, 244; minority, 43; modernized, 162; nomenclatura, 178; oligarchs, 208; “reading classes,” 189; risk-averse behavior, 173; and Russia, 69, 162, 174, 207, 217, 322n. 87; Russophiles and Westernizers, 248; Russophone, 53, 182, 190–91, 201, 203, 210, 229, 241; self-determination, 212; social status, 200; and Soviet Union, 39, 79–80, 89–90, 177; as stateless, 39, 63; and survivalism, 178; and Ukrainophone, 190–91, 204, 211; and Western diaspora, 206
- Union of Brest, 66, 101
- Union of Right-Wing Forces (SPS), 140–41, 151, 163
- United States, 128, 206, 220, 233, 240, 280, 290–91; denuclearization, 97–98; foreign policy, 278; and Russia, 270; and September 11, 2001, 179; and Ukraine’s



- USSR, 108, 114, 225, 235, 270; August, 1991, putsch, 129; Constitution, 76, 180; dissidents, 209; dissolution of, 43, 95, 178; founding Treaty, 76; as “imperialist,” 291; March 1991 referendum, 129; restoration of, 265; totalitarian, 209; and Ukraine, 250; in World War II, 83.  
*See also* Soviet Union
- Uvarov, Sergei Semenovich, Count, 35, 158, 160
- Valuev, Peter A., Count, 72, 159
- Verkhovna Rada, 237, 249, 255, 259, 263, 317n. 100; and Crimea, 254, 315n. 28; January, 2000, crisis, 227–28; left factions, 227; and Russian issue, 208; territorial claims, 220; and the UN, 252
- Vlasov, Andre, 85–87
- Volhyn’, 68, 186, 199, 240
- Vyakhirev, Rem, 238
- Vynnychenko, Volodymyr, 31, 73
- West, 267, 269, 280; developmental assistance, 278; East European policy, 288; and GUUAM, 275; and Russia, 278, 284, 288–89, 291; and Ukraine, 270, 275, 278, 288–89, 291;
- Western European Union (WEU): and Ukraine, 272
- Westernizers, 37–38
- World Trade Organization (WTO), and the CIS, 269
- World War II, 83–87, 176, 209, 239
- Yavlinskii, Grigorii, 138, 140
- Yeltsin, Boris, 92, 129, 163, 217, 232, 270; abuse of power, 119, 135; authoritarianism, 151; and Crimea, 255; dissolution of the Soviet Union, 251; economic policies, 153–54; “family,” 51, 140–41, 307n. 35; health problems, 135; and “liberal revolution,” 285; in 1996 presidential elections, 138; and oligarchic rule, 136; public support for, 133–34; and Putin, 141–42; and State Duma, 104; and Ukraine, 94, 97, 230
- Zaporozhian Cossacks, 65–68; as cultural phenomenon, 193; foundation myth (Ukrainian), 66, 70, 240; and Galicia, 171; registered and non-registered, 66; and Russian Cossacks, 65; self-administration, 68
- Zatulín, Konstantín, 255, 257–58
- Zhirinovskiy, Vladimir, 55, 103, 114, 137, 150, 155, 254; and elections, 135–36, 140
- Zhulynskiy, Mykola, 315n. 30
- Ziuganov, Gennadii, 110, 135, 138–39, 247, 254, 259; in 1996 presidential elections, 138–39; in 2000 presidential elections, 140
- Zlenko, Anatolii, 253

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