УДК 32:323

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POLITICAL CULTURE AND NATIONALITY IN UKRAINE

An article contains the research of political culture in Ukraine, ethno-political and historical aspects of its development. The author emphasizes the existence of unique political culture, investigates its features formed in the context of other states formations influence.

Until recently, studies of Ukrainian political culture as a nationally specific set of values and motor of social behavior were all but extinct. Academic institutions of the Ukrainian SSR understandably could not go far beyond the standard critiques of the ((Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism)). Simple positing of the question of separate trends and features in the Ukrainian 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 a 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.

Independence opened a floodgate for numerous works on the ((Ukrainian national idea», ethos, spirituality, and unique indigenous traditions of economic and political life [2]. This time, Ukraine's political culture could not fail to draw scholarly attention [3]. However, these studies often lacked in historical depth and were mostly speculative in nature. Sociological surveys that touched upon the question of political culture, though oriented toward positive data, have frequently responded to political needs of the moment. A need remains, therefore, to address the issue by integrating history-oriented studies of the Ukrainian political culture with the analysis on the basis of modern political science methodology. This essay will attempt to delineate certain themes for such a multidisciplinary research.

Ethno-political Background

Ukrainian ethnos belongs to the Eastern Slavic group of peoples, which also includes Russians and Belarusians (Belorussians). Among Eastern Slavs, Ukrainians follow Russians in population and the size of ethnic homeland. Ukraine is the second populous of the post-Soviet states, and the third (after Russia and Kazakhstan) in territory. Ukrainian language forms a part of the Eastern Slavic group of the Indo-European family of languages. Ukrainian and Russian are mutually comprehensible and almost identical in their basic grammar structures; so are Belarasian and Ukrainian. Ukrainian is closer to the Western Slavic languages than either Russian or Belarasian; the distance between Ukrainian and Polish or Ukrainian and Slovak is probably not bigger than that between Spanish and Portuguese languages. Ukrainian language harbors several local dialects, concentrated mostly in the western part of the country and in the adjacent East European states. The other language of continuous use is Russian.

The ethnic composition of the Ukrainian nation is complex. In addition to the titular nationality, Ukrainians, it includes also Russians (22,1 percent of all population), Jews (near one percent), Belarusians (0,9 percent), Moldavians (0,6 percent), Bulgarians, Poles, Crimean Tatars, Romanians, Hungarians, Greeks, Germans, Slovaks, and others. Most of these had settled at least several centuries ago, while some of them, including local Russians of the northeastern Ukraine and Belarusians of the northwes-

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[2] E. g., *I. S. Koropeckyj,* cd., Ukrainian Economic History: Interpretive Essays (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1991); *0. I. Semkiv,* ed., Politolohiia (Lviv: Svit, 1994); *Oleksandr Shmorhun,* Ukraiina: shliakh vidrozhennia (Kiev: Fundatsiia im. Olzhycha, 1994); *V. M. Tkachenko,* Ukraina; istoriosofiia samoorganizatsii (Kiev: Instytut Istorii Ukrainy, 1994); *F. M Kyryliuk,* ed., Ukraińska politolohiia: výtoky ta evoliutsiia (Kiev: Varta, 1995); *I. S. Dziubka* et al, Politolohiia (Kiev: Vyshcha shkola, 1998).

[3] Cf. *E. I. Golovakha, N. V. Panina, Yu. N. Pakhomov* et al. Politichcskaia kul'tura nasclcniia Ukrainy (Kiev: Náuková dumka, 1993); *Bohdan Tsymbalistyi,* Tavro bczderzhavnosty; Politychna kul'tura ukraintsiv (Kiev: Vyd-vo Ukrainskoi vsesvitnioi koordynatsiinoi rady, 1994); *Volodymyr Polokhalo,* ed., The political analysis of postcommunism: Understanding postcommunist Ukraine (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997); S. *H. Riabov,* Politolohiia - slovnyk poniať i terminiv (Kiev: KMA, 2001); *Mikhail A. Molchanov,* Politicai culture and national identity in Russian-Ukrainian relations (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002).

tern 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 [29, *51-81*]. A sizable part of the population was brought in by modem migrations of the late imperial, Soviet and post-Soviet eras.

The Ukrainian state in its modern format is a phenomenon of the twentieth century. Ukraine has never known a history of fully independent statehood before 1917. Quick succession of nationalist governments in 1917-1920 was interrupted by Soviet quasi-federalism. World War II saw a botched attempt by the Ukrainian nationalists to create a semi-autonomous province under the German Nazi occupation. The real history of the Ukrainian state and nation building started, in earnest, after the December 1991 referendum.

Political Culture of a Stateless Nation

The notion of political culture usually refers to the national traditions of governance. How to apply it to the country that, through the most of its history, was governed from outside? If only state and quasi-state existence of the nation is of interest, we are faced with punctuated history of the Cossack Hetmanate - nationalist governments of 1917—1919 — Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic - contemporaiy Ukrainian state. Variations in the degree of «stateness» preclude a meaningful comparison of these periods. Additionally, these state formations and their respective histories are not equally «owned» by all parts of the nation. Different parts of the country were exposed to different and sometimes mutually exclusive culture influences through centuries. «Because of the vast size of the country and its central position at the intersection of the Catholic, Byzantine, and Muslim worlds, Ukraine only partially meets the definition of a nation» [27, *104*]. A punctuated and regionally divided history has brought about differences in political culture models between the East and West of the country.

A new state is better off if it may claim certain political traditions to build upon. In the case of Ukraine, these traditions are scarce. Most of the approximately one hundred years of history of the Cossack Hetmanate transpired under the conditions of rather precarious authority of the hetmans, whose

power was progressively supplanted by the czarist government [13]. The more recent tradition of the Ukrainian SSR is ideologically dubious, and its national credentials are disputed. Although Ukrainians were unquestionably present in the corridors of power, the ultimate locus of control at the time lied with Moscow. The Soviet government in Ukraine could not behave as a government of the independent state until 1991. In addition, Soviet political traditions, although present and even nationalized to some extent in today's Ukraine, are not unique to this country. And finally, two of the twentieth-century nationalist regimes were established under the German occupation and, therefore, should be regarded properly as puppet formations. The locus of authority lied, once again, elsewhere, while the national elites, whatever their motivations were, served as auxiliaries and proxies of the occupiers.

If anything, history of the Ukrainian statehood, or the lack thereof, betrays profound shortage of political will on the part of the Ukrainian statesmen and would-be-rulers. The fact that the Ukrainian state failed to develop at an earlier time has much to do with a number of factors, like prolonged history of foreign domination, precarious geopolitical location, prevalence of household economy over trade and manufactory, and so on. Yet, several historical junctures presented important «Windows of opportunity» for the Ukrainian state to take off. Even before the Khmelnytskyi uprising, the oligarchic republic of Rzech Pospolita was loose enough for any concerted secessionist effort to bring its fruit. The Ukrainian aristocrats never tried. Later, Khmelnytskyi's successors could move on toward a fully independent state, but also failed.

The first Ukrainian government of intellectuals was hesitant in assuming full responsibility for running the country. Political aspirations of the Central Rada initially did not go beyond securing some degree of autonomy for Ukraine within a larger Russian Federation. According to the Rada's Third Universal, autonomous-federalist arrangements were accepted as a satisfactory model for building future relationships between Ukraine and Russia [39, *73*]. This option was closed only by what the nationalists saw as the unfortunate «experiments» of the Bolshevik government in Petrograd. By December 1917, the Rada oriented itself toward full independence from the Bolshevik Russia. In a similar pattern of indecisiveness, the wait-and-see reaction to the August 1991 putsch in Moscow was demonstrated by the postcommunist government of Leonid Kravchuk[4]. Only when

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[4] *Alexander J. Motyl,* Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine after Totalitarianism (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993); *Taras Kuzio and Andrew Wilson,* Ukraine: Perestroika to Independence (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), and numerous local accounts in both Ukraine and Russia.

the putschists were defeated, did Kiev make its move. Ukraine's foreign policy orientations toward Europe, USA, Russia, Europe again have been rightly characterized as chaotic and vacillating. The stigma of the prolonged statelessness has significantly defined political culture of a newly independent nation [37].

The origins of the elite's political anomie are sometimes found in the «successive generations of conquest, be it Polish, Russian, or Soviet». [27, *104*]. Foreign conquest brings demise or denationalization of the domestic elite, teaching survivors to obey the foreign ruler. However, a conquest is never complete, if not supported through incorporation of local notables. The strategy of incorporation was used by most 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 [5]. 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 elites 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 then not at once. Accommodation appears as an important strategy in power games played out by Ukraine's political classes.

Strategies of Accommodation

Predominantly risk-averse behavior of the Ukrainian political elites 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 those cases, when key economic and social interests of local elite were not jeopardized by extraneous overlordship, which was in most instances true for both Grand Duchy of Lithuania and, later, the Russian Empire. The case of Poland was more specific because of the price Ukrainian nobles and educated classes in gen-

eral had to pay for being accepted as equals: Catholization. Next came Polonization, and complete loss of a 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 VoIynia and along the Dnieper [11, *194*].

Catholization 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 higher among the clerics. While landed aristocracy could consider a change of faith a small loss, comparing to the guarantes of power and privileges, the Orthodox clergy sometimes preferred to fight for their symbolic capital: control over the spiritual domain of the nation.

The important thing, however, is that both factions sought external protection 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 Polish *szlachta,* while the Orthodox bishops from Ukraine greatly influenced religious, cultural, and even political development of Russia, especially following their mass recruitment to prominent state positions by Peter the Great. Linguistic proximity of Ukrainian to both Russian and Polish languages substantially facilitated easy adaptation of Ukrainian elites 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 - *dvorianstvo* and *dukhovenstvo* - was extensive. In this respect, Ukrainian elite was hardly surpassed by the elite groups of any of the other nationalities. In fact, czarist administration had never treated Ukrainians as a minority and never discriminated against Ukrainian culture and language until the second half of the nineteenth century. In Valéry Tishkov's observation, 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 16th century. All these subjects acted according to one set of laws and regulations [36, *45-46*].

This situation changed, when external events - European revolutions of 1848 and the 1863 nationalist uprising in Poland - forced imperial bureaucracy

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[5] 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.

to address the threat of local separatism more seriously than before. Official nationalism of the Russian empire, which could afford ignoring manifold manifestations of local national and cultural specificity until recently, acquired geopolitical sensitivity, went on defensive and became chauvinistic. The *ukases* restricting the use of the Ukrainian language provoked 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» [34, *25*]. Here, Ukrainian entrepreneurs, never treated as *inorodtsy*, were at the forefront. Ukraine was the fastest growing region of the Russian Empire. Shielded by the protective tariffs from foreign competition, while simultaneously enjoying free access to the vast Russian market, local entrepreneurs were in the vanguard of industrialization, contributing up to 22 percent of Russia's manufacturing output at the turn of the century. Imperial protection gave 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» [32, *272-273; 275*].

The period from the 1917 Revolution to the December 1991 referendum saw several governments in Kiev. 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-a-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 *Vermacht* 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, Symon Petliura and the exile government of the Ukrainian People's Republic had not hesitated to trade in excess of 100,000 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 General Anton Denikin, who had no interest in Ukrainian sovereignty whatsoever [6].

The Ukrainian SSR is not infrequently treated as a case of token statehood. One of the key arguments in support of this proposition is the regime's abuse of its subjects. Yet, history is full of self-inflicted tragedies, and Ukraine is no exception. Ukrainians constituted a large part of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In the last decades of the Soviet rule, they made up to two thirds of the Communist Party of Ukraine [22, *51*][7]. Ukrainians, Ukrainian-born Jews and Ukrainian-born Russians were admitted to the very top of the Stalinist leadership, where they played most active role in policy design and implementation. The Bolshevik cells in Ukraine appeared earlier than in most Russian provinces. The first Soviet government in Ukraine relied as much on local support as it did on the help from Petrograd and Moscow [40]. Most communist bosses in the Ukrainian SSR were locally born or educated. All Soviet policies in the country were carried out by Ukrainians themselves or with their substantial participation. Throughout most of 1960s, the Communist Party of Ukraine grew at a higher relative rate than the CPSU itself. By the early seventies, Ukraine's Politburo and the Secretariat of the CPU Central Committee were virtually one hundred percent Ukrainian in ethnic composition [8]. The First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi, a CPSU Politburo voting member since 1971, raised up in ranks to become one of the most influential and long-serving members of the Brezhnev administration. Soviet communism had woven itself into the Ukrainian political tradition [9].

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[6] *L. G. Melnyketa X.,* Istorila Ukrainy: Kurs lektsii, Kn. 2, XX stolittia (Kiev: Lybiď, 1992), chaps. *l-9; Aima Procyk,* Russian Nationalism and Ukraine: The Nationality Policy of the Volunteer Army During the Civil War (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1995).

[7] Table 2.

[8] *Gerhard Simon,* Nationalism and Policy Toward the Nationalities in the Soviet Union: From Totalitarian Dictatorship to Post-Stalinist Society (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991); *Yaroslav Bilinsky.* The Communist Party of Ukraine After 1966. In *Peter J. Potichnyj,* ed., Ukraine in the Seventies (Oakville, Ont.: Mosaic Press, 1975), p. 258, Table 1; *Borys Lewytzkyi.* The Ruling Party Organs of Ukraine. In ibid., pp. 277-79.

[9] 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. See *Ivan L. Rudnytsky.* Essays in Modern Ukrainian History (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 91-122.

Political culture of accommodation was largely a function of a precarious situation of the Ukrainian political elites, squeezed between powerful external interests. 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 in the Russian-Swedish war (1709), the nation building efforts of 1918-1919, the rebellious «Ukrainian trend» within the Communist Party of Ukraine [14, *38-42*] and the prolonged guerilla warfare against the Soviets in 1944-1949. However, all of these belonged to the culture of a minority. There is little doubt that survivalist behavior, or tactics of the day-to-day accommodation to generally adverse, foreign-dominated environment 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 GKChP is only one of the better-known episodes of this character. Another is the Massandra episode in the Russo-Ukrainian negotiations on the status of the Black Sea Fleet. In 1991, it was the democratic Russia's willingness to let Ukraine (and all the others) go that predetermined ultimate collapse of the Soviet power. Several accounts of the Belovezhe talks, including Kravchuk's own interviews, draw a picture of careful negotiations between the republican bosses equally unhappy with the «center», rather than that of a stand-off between free-loving Ukraine and uncompromising Russian «centralizers».

In a similar vein, Kravchuk's successor Kuchma preferred a conciliatory line of behavior with Russia and the West alike. Kuchma has won the post by taking the cause of the pro-Russian opposition to the nationality policies of the Kravchuk administration. Once sympathies of the Russian constituency were secured, he promptly turned to the West. 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 democratic and market reforms, Kuchma has once again rediscovered his hidden Russian sympathies. In 1998, agreed to coordinate Ukraine's foreign policies with those of Russia. In 2000, he authorised a joint exercise of the Ukrainian navy with the Russian Black Sea Fleet, which signalled a move toward closer military collaboration [18]. The February 2001 summit in Dnipropetrovsk brought not only an agreement to link the two countries' energy grids together, but also another one for cooperation in the space industry and the officially denied talks on further expanding military and military-industrial ties.

Parallel to that, the State Program of Cooperation of Ukraine with NATO was adopted in 1998 and subsequently renewed till 2004. 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» [35]. A test run of the suggested comprehensive «interoperability» between Ukraine's and NATO's infrastructures was given in June 1999, when Ukraine denied the use of its airspace to the Russian planes headed for Kosovo's Pristina airport. However, the permission was soon granted, thus making the move yet another indication of what an analyst called «Ukraine's multiple personality disorder» [20], 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. A swing toward Moscow was repeated with the start of the electoral campaign of 1999, and again, when the president's positions were weakened amidst the «Kuchmagate» scandal in 2000-2001. More recent allegations of the sale of the «kolchuha» radar systems to Iraq have had a predictable effect of strengthening the president's resolve to deepen relations with Russia and China, so as to balance against less than fully supportive America.

Ukraine's foreign policy pendulum is well known by now. While modeling itself on Europe, Ukraine may not escape its own grim reality of underdevelopment, dependence 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 imaginary and real, or between the Russian/Soviet past and the still distant European future. However, U-turns in foreign policy have also other function to perform, the function of accommodation, or appeasement of Ukraine's powerful partners and regulators abroad and important constituencies at home. So obsessed is Ukrainian leadership with *zlahoda,* the ideal of peace and harmony of irreconcilables, that it appears unable to adopt any unambiguous course in either domestic or foreign policy and to stick to it for more than a couple of years. It prefers to sacrifice dynamics of development for an illusion of peace and tranquillity that covers deteriorating economy, uncertain politics and the looming perspective of a loss of international reputation.

Fragmented Polity

Late ethnogenesis, prolonged absence of the national statehood and the history of country's division in multiple zones of domination have all contributed

to inconsistent and fragmented nature of the Ukrainian political culture. Some sociological studies refer to this culture as «ambivalent-conformist», with a potential to grow into «ambivalent-nihilist» [10, 750]. The first term captures the tendency to embrace contradictory choices simultaneously. The 1991 polls on preservation of the Soviet Union (March) and 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 two mutually exclusive ideas. The «yes» - «yes» responses are also given to capitalism and the state tutelage, privatization and full employment, freedom of movement and residence permits (*«propyska»),* human rights and 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 may show itself in total rejection of all given options, and even of the very necessity to make any choice whatsoever. In political practice, «ambivalent nihilism» corresponds to either spontaneous outbursts of anarchy or, to the contrary, to absolute passivity and conscious withdrawal from any from of participation. Ukrainian history has known both sleepy periods of tranquility and apparent absence of any far-going ambitions on the part of the elite, and the periods of mass rebellions, pogroms and anarchy. After all, Nestor Makhno was a Ukrainian, and the regime he established in southern Ukraine during the Civil War could have been probably characterized as «ambivalent nihilist».

A tradition of political ambivalence in Ukraine can be attributed to a number of things. One of the prominent factors in the Ukrainian political life before and after the proclamation of independence has been its regionally fragmented character. The differences between the West and the East and South are many. Historically, the West of Ukraine was dominated by Poland and the Habsburg Empire, while the East experienced several centuries of Russian domination. 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 [15]. The West, which at the time was beyond the reach of Soviets, continued with its old ways and remained largely agricultural as late as the 1980s. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, significant part of the West Ukrainian population could re-orient its economic activities toward the bordering countries of East Central Europe. The East did not have a similar option and remained tied to the Russian market.

Regional divide remains a standing feature of the contemporary Ukrainian politics. Most of those who support nationalist parties and politicians are concentrated in the West, while the East harbors pro-Russian sentiments. Industrialized Eastern *oblasti* of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk have significant leftist constituencies: the Communist Party of Ukraine, the more moderate Socialist Party of Ukraine and the more radical Progressive Socialist Party all gain the largest share of their votes here. The West Ukrainian lands, on the contrary, keep allegiance to the ideals of entrepreneurship and private property [26, *6, 9-12*]. If the West Ukrainian voters accept the idea of state activism in the economy, they usually justify it by the «national interests», rather than by more common on the left considerations of «social justice» and «equality».

Regionalism is supplemented and reinforced by the religious divide. Its geography only imperfectly maps upon the contours of the regions. Religious divide in Ukraine complicates political development of the country, as political pressure on the Ukrainian government to take sides in interconfessional disputes continues [33]. The pro-Russian orientation of the UOC-MP (canonically a part of the Russian Orthodox Church) and the Russian Orthodox parishes in Ukraine is balanced by 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 are divided in their sympathies, the leadership of the Church (Filaret and his circle) made a conscious stake on Ukrainian nationalism. The inside tensions sometimes burst in open, as in the case when several formerly pro-Filaret bishops departed the UOC-ICP to join its rival, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, led by Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan).

As Ukrainian political reality is fragmented into several regional, religious and ethnocultural «pièces», so is Ukrainian political culture. Most of the political fragments of today have deep historical roots. Some of them can trace their origins through several centuries of history. The seniority of these phenomena makes them look primordial, and therefore, «naturally» incompatible with their opposite numbers. Contemporary ethnolinguistic division is the most obvious aspirant to such a «fundamental» status. Regionalism comes close, and the religious divide follows. Party cleavages are often mapped on these presumably essential divides.

When language is taken naturalistically, as given, as something that is «just there», linguistic division between Ukrainophones and Russophones gets per-

ceived as, potentially, a basis for political cleavages. However, this view is one-sided. All 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 administrative standardization of vernaculars [2]. When certain language was promoted as official language of the state, all other local 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 acquired political significance.

Linguistic differences in Ukraine became politicized in a similar way. In the former Soviet Union, Russian was the (unofficial) language of the state, though Ukrainian was widely spoken by population and the «indigenous» bureaucracy of the Ukrainian SSR. The 1989 Law on Languages and the Constitution of Ukraine (1996) made Ukrainian the state language. Following that, Russian was practically eschewed from central bureaucracy, media and academia. Producers for the Ukrainian «reading class» made headlong careers to the top of the political establishment. Poets became ambassadors, journalists chaired political parties, and entertainers took their seats in the parliament. The campaign for «purification» of the Ukrainian language targeted speakers of the substandard Ukrainian, the *surzhik*. All efforts were undertaken to further distance Ukrainian from Russian. Words from the diaspora Ukrainian, local dialects, and the archaic Ukrainian were used to reconstruct a «trae» language. Russophone intellectuals had to switch to the Ukrainian or accept inevitable professional «ghettoization». Finally, with the dominant status of the Ukrainian language ensured, language politics became a somewhat lesser issue than before.

Language politics in Ukraine has never reached a height of tension demonstrated by the Baltic states, Moldova, or Kasakhstan. As traditional Ukrainian elites had to be flexible in the face of foreign domination, contemporary Ukrainian elite learns 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 to the government master the art of compromise. As a result, Ukraine succeeded in managing potential conflicts in the regions. Crimean separatism was contained, and the brewing conflicts over the language use in Lviv oblast' and several eastern oblasti was resolved mainly by local administrations. What was perceived as inescapable weakness of the Ukrainian polity, its divided and fragmented character, proved a source of strength and viability [10].

The Ukrainian case corroborates the idea that «fragmentation and identity politics inevitably finds expression in the democratic process; arguably, democracy and democratization even encourage fragmentation and identity politics» [12, *11*]. Fragmentation should not be regarded as an intrinsically bad thing. In certain cases, fragmentation itself, if it fits well within 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 can emerge. This is the case of Ukraine, which is divided roughly half in half between the West and the East, the Ukrainophones and the Russophones. Neither side can overwhelm the other.

If a viable bipartisan system is ever to take root in Ukraine, it may well be based on this historical and ethnocultural division. 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, political process is detached from any sound foundation in social structure. Class politics is simply absent. Mechanistic application of the 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 37.5 percent of the electorate do not belong to any confession, while another 16.2 percent cannot give a definite answer to the question [11]. 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 just one Christian Democratic Party when there are several nationally competing Christian Churches.

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[10] 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. In *Carol R. Saivetz* and *Anthony Jones,* eds., In Search of Pluralism: Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics (Boulder, Colo.: Wcstvicw, 1994).

[11] A Political Portrait of Ukraine 4 (1994), p. 43; Politychnyi portret Ukrainy 9 (1994), p. 33.

Geopolitical orientations, together with regional loyalties, outweigh other issues.

Political significance of the ethnic factor is reduced by the imperfect correlation between ethnic Ukrainians and Ukrainophones, ethnic Russians and Russophones [4, *81-91*]. 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 characteristics of the nationally conscious Ukrainians and sometimes even enter the ranks of the Ukrainian nationalist elite. A diligent study of the problem shows that socio-historical, regional and cultural differences are more important than ethnic divisions.

Fragmented constitution of the Ukrainian polity influences political culture. One cannot avoid questioning 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 East - West split of the country? Though this would certainly be an option, the gap between the regions is not an insurmountable one. A number of unifying themes weave fragments of the Ukrainian polity together. A 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 intra-regional and subregional politics as well. 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

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, a preoccupation for the elite and common folk alike. Elites learned to switch their allegiances quickly. Common people struggled to isolate themselves from adversarial environment by limiting their social interaction to parochial communities that, in the process, grew in self-sufficient local lifeworlds. Escape was another option, and sheer numbers of the world-scattered Ukrainian diaspora witness to its popularity. Finally, revolt was a choice of dismayed, but also a form of political entrepreneurship for some members of the upper class.

Survivalism contributed to individualist and localist trends in Ukrainian political culture. It necessitated low levels of social trust and prevented formation of social capital that went into the foundation of civil society in Western Europe. Ukraine developed differently. In the pre-modern Ukrainian society, where the survivalist attitude originated, a commoner had an access to the three mutually intersecting fields of practices: one structured by his or her individual capacities, another centered on the family, and the last one revolving around the neighborhood/locality. Relative preponderance of one of these over the other created different strategies of getting along.

Self-centered individuals could build their life 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. Thus, farmership was disturbed by foreign invasions, local lords' rivalry and natural misfortunes. Creeping enserfment of the peasantry had finally eliminated this option from a register of freely chosen activities. Trade was often harmed by foreign controls over the country. Self-reliant male commoners had to choose basically between the war-like occupation and the long travel abroad. Some of the freelance warriors and bandits went on to become the Cossacks. This voluntary association prefigured, in the opinion of some scholars, an early beginning of the Ukrainian libertarian tradition [12]. Looked at a different angle, it might be also counted among the early manifestations of indigenous anarchism [13]. As anarchism radicalizes certain 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 the self-reliant male individual. Of course, Cossacks had families, too. However, the principal, war-making activities of the Cossacks 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, child-rearing, and trade. Ukrainian family communes were drastically different from their land-equalizing Russian counterparts. As noted by a historian, ... by the last part of the eighteenth century most peasant households were the permanent possessors of their holdings. At this point the Little Russian experience

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[12] See *Oleksandr Shmorhun,* Ukraiina: shliakh vidrodzhennia (Kiev: Fundatsiia im. Olzhycha, 1994).

[13] See more in *Hrushevsky;* History of Ukraine; also TV. *I. Ulianov,* Proiskhozhdcnic ukrainskogo separatizma (Moscow: Indrik, 1996).

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 [5, *522-23*].

Ukrainian «peasant individualism» 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 (1920-1921) in Tambov and Voronezh *gubernia,* 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 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 [7, *169*].

Peaceful family orientation and self-isolation of the Ukrainian «peasant individualism» supported mostly passive forms of resistance. However, they could also result in quite militant behavior. Sporadic outbursts in response to the external threat may be regarded as another, though extreme, case of survivalist activities. It must be also noted that post-revolutionary politics, regime's cruelty in particular, immobilized active opposition to the regime after the end of the Civil War.

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, 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 protective interface in dealing with external authorities, a fence against the tide of oppression. Unfortunately, it also hampered development and fostered dependence.

This complex of dependency is still very much in place. It feeds into such different phenomena as neo-communism, regionalism and nationalism. Multiple

dependency is a single most 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 post-communist rulers, or the underdevelopment of market economy. Ukrainian localism has probably contributed to each of these causes.

Personal and social dependency is a flip side of parochialism. Medieval parochialism in Ukraine was revived with introduction of the «second serfdom», which similarly delayed development of other East European countries [6]. The Stalinist regime in Ukraine eliminated remaining vestiges of private initiative, thus adding new dimensions to the inherited patterns of dependency. After the end of communism, political culture of multiple dependency persisted. On the elite level, it showed up in «nomenklatura privatization» and 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 one's own well-being; the rest expected the state to solve all the problems [24].

However, as the state continues to fail its citizens, dependency finds new poles of attachment. Regionalist and clannish politics shapes competition for scarce resources and subsumes political divisions, which in Ukraine are often less than fully meaningful [14]. Regionally based political-administrative and economic «clans» determine postcommunist realignment of forces, while weak and dependent parties can offer little more than symbolic representation of interests [23]. In the impoverished economy, politics follows money's lead with much less reservation than in more prosperous countries. Politicians court industrialists and financiers, provincial governments and local administrations, not to mention those in control of the state budget money, which frequently determines the outcome of elections. Support of the regional political-economic networks is indispensable. In the meantime, politically disengaged folk learns to adjust traditional schemes of localist dependency to the regional patterns of distribution.

Continuing implosion of the state brings new forms of social and political fragmentation on the top of the old ones. Regional division of the Ukrainian lands, though taking a completely new meaning after the collapse of communism, develops within the established pattern. Competition among industries and sectors of the economy, each vying for a privileged

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[14] A joint socialist-nationalist attack on the president during the «Kuchmagate» 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, show that the left - right differences in Ukraine can be successfully mitigated.

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-size 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 remaining ties between interest groups and the state. It has been argued that corporatist policies «may... help to resolve possible conflicts between an emerging capital-based élite and labour» [16, *31*]. More importantly, 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 entry into the market. It tries to keep social unrest to a minimum by giving 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 basically ignored as «labor masses» in service of the new proprietors, an arrangement that mirrors the elite-mass relationship previously fostered by the communist *nomenklatura* [15].

Conclusion

Does Ukraine have a unique political culture? I think it does, though the country did not have much of 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 is 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 directly and indirectly political relations of power and authority, survival and accommodation. The proprietary classes in Ukraine were in constant communication with domestic and foreign rulers of the land. The lower classes had to take into account the ongoing power relations, since those eventually targeted common folk as a revenue source for the power holders. Both

mass and 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 circumstances of the action together with action patterns and conscious designs. Thus, fragmentation of the Ukrainian polity could not but become reflected in 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 East of the country from its West. Russian political culture, on the other hand, though more holistic on the surface, has been fundamentally controversial in its basic structure.

We have 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 schemes, for example, the classic 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 on redistributing state, regional «clans», ethnolinguistic communes and corporate entities. Though we must not neglect important advances in individual freedom and new forms of participation that arose after the collapse of communism, the culture of individual survivalism and accommodation prevails.

It is fair to say that, at the moment, Ukraine still lacks 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, the sense of community and the bonds of solidarity are underdeveloped throughout. Historical fragmentation of the Ukrainian polity and society did not stop at the regional level; it went deeper than that. The remnants of traditional community were ruined by communism. After the communism, egotism became exonerated as a strategy of adjustment to the market environment, naively understood as free-for-all and survival of the fittest. The «lonesome warrior» mentality that ensued could not support genuine social consolidation.

Due to these developments, a «pillarized», consociational democracy in Ukraine, though desired, is

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[15] For an interesting discussion of related issues see *E. T. Gaidar,* Gosudarstvo i evoliutsiia (Moscow: Evraziia, 1995).

barely possible now [16]. The attempts to make a nation on the basis of the predominant ethnicity are bound to continue. Relatively mild character of these attempts witnesses to inescapable reality of the divided nation and its historically fragmented political culture. In Ukraine, official nationalism of the state is a consciously constructed phenomenon, rather than manifestation of the primordial longing of the masses. In a long row of European model and modular nationalisms [2], Ukrainian nationalism belongs closer to the end. As a state platform, it has made a relatively recent appearance and repeatedly failed to enlist mass support. More than a decade after the postcommunist nomenklatura had decided to jump on the nationalist bandwagon, mass response to its efforts is still less than overwhelming.

Ukrainian society remains regionally and corporately fragmented, ethnolinguistically divided, and highly dependent on exogenous sources of power and stability - be it an authoritative paternalist state of its own, the «fraternal» Russia, the Ukrainian diaspora in the West, USA, NATO, or the European Union. In their preoccupation with stability and survival, both Ukrainian rulers and Ukrainian people contribute to the lack of decisive political action or vision for the future. The «Ukrainian way» in the economy proved stillborn, but seems satisfactory to those who prefer social peace of stagnation to the unknowns of economic restructuring [3, *342-346;* 40]. Ukrainian ethnonationalism failed to unify the nation, but is still being encouraged by the state. On the other side, collective cultural rights of the vast Russophone community remain unacknowledged, yet the community itself has failed to mobilize along the default lines of language and ethnicity. Although bad for the community's cultural survival, it gives ground to a hope that ethnic peace in Ukraine may be preserved even while the state-sponsored assimilation of Russians gains momentum. All in all, political culture of accommodation has helped to moderate internal conflicts. Whether or not it can help to develop democracy, free market economy, and the climate of unconditional respect to human rights remains to be seen.

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ПОЛІТИЧНА КУЛЬТУРА
ТА НАЦІОНАЛЬНІСТЬ В УКРАЇНІ

У статті розглянуто особливості політичної культури в Україні, етнополітичний та історичний аспекти питання. Автор вказує на унікальність української політичної культури, досліджує її у контексті розгляду впливу інших державних утворень, відсутності протягом тривалого періоду української державності.