

IMAGINING MODERN UKRAINE

In my presentation I would like to speak about Ukraine *today*. But, importantly, I will focus how this today is influenced and affected by Ukraine's north-east neighbor with contemporary global ambitions and historical imperial legacy. I am going to identify a number of different factors that make Ukraine in its attempt at self-determination dependent or even vulnerable on Russia's attitude. It will be also instructive briefly to compare approaches of Russia and Poland in their vision of new Ukraine. We will be able to point out to striking differences in this regard between Ukraine's two most prominent East European historical neighbors. As we turn to the question what Ukraine is able to do to secure its future as a sovereign people with distinct culture and identity, I will try to describe transitional challenges that Ukraine experiences as it struggles to transform itself into a modern country and define itself as an independent state.

Ukraine's diversity

Historically speaking, modern Ukraine took shape as territories belonging to different political, economic, and cultural areas were brought together under the appeal toward ethno-national unity (see maps). Contemporary Ukraine inherited state borders from the Soviet Ukraine. These were finally constituted in the present shape in 1954 when the peninsula Crimea was transferred to the Soviet Ukraine on the occasion of the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the so-called 'reunification of Ukraine with Russia' in the Pereiaslav agreement. Moreover, Ukraine and its particular lands has been a borderland not only of different state formations but also of different civilizational and cultural zones. To mention only the most well-known facts, Ukraine was a border zone between the Eurasian steppe lands and the settled forest regions. Ukraine also finds itself on the border between Eastern and Western Christendom. No wonder, centuries of borderland existence contributed to the fragmentation of Ukrainian identity. But this 'being on the edge' also exposed Ukraine to numerous cross-border cultural contacts, economic transactions, ideas

transfers, loyalties and identities negotiations. During centuries until the early modern times, ideas emanating from the Byzantine South and the European West were received and reshaped to fit local religious and cultural traditions and then passed on father east to the Orthodox lands of Muscovy. Ukrainian nobleman of the early modern times epitomized, for example, in the figure of the Kyivan Orthodox Metropolitan Petro Mohyla was a man of many cultural worlds. As we would say now, he had a multilayered identity.

Ukrainian history is very complex and even tragic. Back in 1917, thus at the very beginning of the period between two World Wars when every second Ukrainian man and every fourth Ukrainian woman suffered unnatural death, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, at that time premier of the Ukrainian government, observed that one cannot read Ukrainian history without taking a bromide. But even today, in spite of horrible atrocities, ethnic cleansings and genocides committed on Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, Crimean Tatars, and other populations of Ukraine in the twentieth century, Ukraine remains a multinational country with the population that exhibits multiple identities. Modern Ukraine is not a homogeneous entity. Ukraine has inherited a set of ethnic, linguistic, religious and regional differences – many of which seem to divide the Ukrainians amongst themselves as much as they divide them from others. In fact, there are even some people – not only in Russia but also in Ukraine – in high government positions (e.g. present minister of education of Ukraine) who publicly espouses and even promotes the view that Dnieper Ukrainians and west Ukrainians (Galicians) are entirely different people. In any case, public opinion could really split significantly over the whole set of issues ranging from foreign policy matters and geo-political allegiance to language issues and attitudes toward the Soviet past. Not all divisions are overlapping and there is hardly any all-encompassing divide along which the country might one day split. But the issue of overarching national consensus is really pressing one. It even seems that not only the emergence of an independent Ukrainian state in 1991 came as a great surprise in many governments and academic circles in the West. Ukraine's present persistent integrity generates no less surprise and fascination. Though not everybody finds it easy to adjust to and accept such a reality.

‘Russia’s Ukraine’

I would like to consider in my presentation the question of what is Russia’s role in stabilizing or destabilizing Ukraine’s search for its modern identity. Ukraine has not always been defined by its relationship with Russia, but it is certainly today. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Russians have been more influenced by Ukraine, than vice versa. Over the last two centuries the flow of influence was very much in the other direction. Given particularly the legacy of the Soviet period, Russia continues to exert a huge influence on Ukrainian identity, historical memory, politics, economics and religion. Examples really abound. Let’s take only one of them which for the moment affected heavily Ukraine’s international future.

During NATO’s Bucharest summit in 2008 President Vladimir Putin, being offended by NATO’s commitment to open the door for the Ukrainian membership, warned that Ukraine’s joining NATO will instigate a partition of the country. According to a witness account, Putin told President George Bush that Ukraine was “not a real nation,” that much of its territory had been “given away” by Russia, and that Ukraine would “cease to exist as a state” if it joined NATO. (Kommersant, April 7; Moscow Times, April 8). Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov, who had accompanied Putin, subsequently told journalists that he “did not hear” Putin’s remarks; but he did not disclaim those threats (Interfax, April 7). Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov almost explicitly confirmed Putin’s warnings, recounting them more diplomatically: “Both in Bucharest and in Sochi, Putin recalled how present-day Ukraine, in its current borders, was formed, [recalled] the contradictions between western Ukraine and its eastern and southeastern regions. He said that what was being done to draw Ukraine into NATO would not facilitate the important task of helping Ukraine maintain its unity” (Ekho Moskvyy, April 8). Lavrov proceeded to warn on his account that Russia would do everything possible to prevent Ukraine from moving toward NATO.

It is not my intention here to discuss expediency for Ukraine to join NATO. It is true that public opinion of Ukrainians about their country’s NATO membership is far from being unanimous and positive and must be significantly improved should

Ukraine ever join the Alliance. For the purposes of my presentation, it is instructive, however, to pay close attention to the justification that Putin gives about Russia's interference with Ukrainian affairs and foreign policy. According to former Russian president, there are 17 million Russians living in Ukraine. So, Putin seems to act on the assumption of Russia's obligation to take care about its compatriots in the so-called 'near abroad' and that interests of those people could be best served and represented by the Russian Federation.

In fact, these are more than assumptions. In 2007, a foundation called "Russian World" was established by Putin's decree. This foundation addresses its activity to all those who speak Russian language and belong to Russian culture. It is supposed to encompass not only ethnic Russians, citizens of Russia or Russian diaspora, but also citizens of other countries that speak Russian. Thus 37% of Ukraine's population becomes an object of Russia's special attention and care and, very likely, this group is expected of some *reciprocity*. According to the definition given by Petr Shchedrovitski, one of the ideologues of the 'Russian world' theory, Russian world is "a network structure of big and small communities that think and speak Russian... The more people in other countries need Russia, the stronger Russia's position in the world. Russian statehood which is being formed can and should look for its stability and necessity in the framework of the Russian world, by implementing policy of the development of its global network". One of the recent controversial initiatives of the "Russian World" foundation in Ukraine was its support for drafting a new law on the language use in Ukraine that would actually enable people to dispense with the knowledge of Ukrainian in public life and would induce shrinking of Ukrainian towards its use only as low-status language. The draft of the law was registered in the parliament and brought about bitter split in Ukraine's society.

Now, before we inquire into ideological assumptions of Putin's imagining of Ukraine and Ukrainian people, as manifested in these observations, it is important to take a close look at real challenges for the Ukrainian modern identity that derive from the complex structure of Ukraine's population and its allegiances.

Russian-speaking Ukraine

It is true that Russian speaking Ukrainian citizens constitute 37% of the Ukrainian population. But it is important to note that those who identify themselves in terms of Russian ethnicity are less. There are about 9 million Russians in Ukraine (20%). It is clear that any discussion about the modern Ukrainian nation – whether its unity should be ultimately built on ethnic or civic values – has to take into account the existence and self-perception of the significant population of Ukrainians who do not fit into the ethnic and linguistic pattern of being a Ukrainian.

In summer 2007, the highly reputed Razumkov Center conducted an opinion poll among 10 956 respondents (over age 18) representative of the Russophone population of Ukraine. There are several very fascinating data and conclusions that could be derived from this survey (<http://www.dt.ua/1000/1550/62942/>).

Most importantly, Russian speaking Ukrainians do not imagine themselves as a separate community with very distinct interests and preferences that would sharply distinguish them from other groups of Ukraine's population. It exists as a distinctive group only in the imagination of politicians both domestic and over the border.

The absolute majority (86%) of the Russian speaking citizens perceives Ukraine as their homeland; the overwhelming majority (72%) defines itself as entirely or largely patriots of Ukraine. At the same time, their patriotism does not have anti-Russia character. Different groups in the Russophone population (37-61%) believe that the relationship with Russia should be one of the main priorities of Ukrainian foreign policy. Most of the group (57%) would prefer that the Russian language be recognized as a state language along the Ukrainian. One fourth (25%) would stick to the Ukrainian as only state language while granting the Russian the official status in some regions. The relative majority (44%) of the Russophones prefers the civic rather than ethnic definition of the Ukrainian nation. More than half (53%) do not agree that the existing differences between western and eastern Ukrainians would justify talking about them as two distinct nations. Still a significant part (36%) would agree with this opinion. The overwhelming majority (79%) are not

supportive of the idea of separation of their regions from Ukraine with eventual creation of new independent states or joining any other already existing state.

As we focus on those citizens, who identify themselves as Russians in Ukraine, it becomes also clear that they are rather unwilling to be described as ‘minority’ or ‘diaspora’. A majority of them (57%) were born in Ukraine. Their most typical sentiment is ‘we haven’t moved, the borders have’ (Andrew Wilson). On the other hand, Russians in Ukraine are more likely than other Russophones to be nostalgic for the USSR. On the whole, they also tend to prefer ‘pan-Slavic’ versions of identity.

As we can see, the Russian speaking citizens in their majority are patriots of Ukraine and support its territorial integrity. They would like that the status of their language is raised as well as the more authority and self-governance for their regions is given.

Most importantly, there is no reason to regard the Russian speaking citizens of Ukraine as either sub-ethnos or diaspora of Russian people or part of the above-mentioned ‘Russian world’. For the present, they do not imagine themselves as a group separate from the Ukrainian people or part of other international community. They do not see themselves as a group whose interests and future is primarily connected not with Ukraine, but with Russia.

On the other hand, there is no necessity here. Let me share with you another set of data from the opinion poll conducted in 2006. Among other questions, people in Ukraine were asked “How would you vote in the referendum concerning the independence of Ukraine today?”

	General	Ukrainophone Ukrainians	Russophone Ukrainians	Russophone Russians
In favor of independence	53,3	60,3	42,8	22,6
Against independence	22,6	15,7	29,7	45,2
Not voting or difficult to say	24,1	24	27,5	32,2

One can see from these data that the so-called Russian speaking Ukrainians occupy the intermediate position between Ukrainophone Ukrainians and Ukraine’s Russians with respect to the issue of the political independence of Ukraine. The poll also demonstrated the difference of the populations so defined in their attitudes

toward Europe and the former Soviet Union's space as Ukraine's geo-political choice, as well as toward the status of the Russian language in Ukraine.

It is clear that this group of Ukraine's Russian speaking citizens is most vulnerable and susceptible to the attempts at the construction of the new version of imperial identity conspicuous in the program of such structures as "Russian World". That's why Ukraine should approach its Russian speaking citizens with balanced and well thought-out policies.

I am convinced that the establishment of a successful democratic state and civil society would help to strengthen Ukrainians' relatively weak sense of national identity and win support and loyalty of Russophone part of Ukraine's population thus counteracting any imperial temptations of modern Russia.

Imagining modern Ukraine: Russia

Unfortunately, modern Russia's political elite – both in its radical and moderate versions – continues to view Ukraine as belonging unconditionally to all-Russian culture and Slavic Orthodox civilization. It is significant that Russia's liberal and centrist parties make a little or no difference on the Ukrainian issue. Consequently, Russia expects Ukraine's loyalty and solidarity that would require Ukraine giving up any major distinction between two peoples and cultures. It is as if Ukraine is destined to exist in close union with Russia and reunification should remain always an open possibility. It is deemed that there fundamentally exists one Russian nation, which has been unjustifiably divided by post-Soviet borders but will be reunited in the future. Exponents of this paradigmatic perception of Ukraine may only differ as to the form and depth of union: Russian world – Russian civilization – Russian Commonwealth. There is a characteristic Russian tendency to over-'intimatise' relations with Ukraine (the use of metaphors of love, painful divorce, family, brotherhood) and a fixation with the 'Siamese twin' complex (neither can exist without the other).

Describing this Russian-Ukrainian dilemma, Andrew Wilson calls to mind how Paul I, tsar of Russia from 1796 to 1801, characterized the west Ukrainian Greek Catholics, i.e. Ukrainian Catholics of Byzantine rite and Orthodox tradition. "Neither

fish nor fowl”. According to the above-mentioned view, this description, however, could apply equally well to all Ukrainians. For the Romanov authorities there could not possibly be any middle ground between Russian and Pole, as for the today’s Russian Orthodoxy there could not be any intermediary between Orthodox and Roman Catholic. Russia remains frozen in postures of reluctant acceptance of the independent Ukrainian state and distinct Ukrainian culture.

Putin’s remark about 17 million of Russians in Ukraine betrays his view that Ukraine’s Russian speaking population is supposed to give precedence to its linguistic ethnic or cultural loyalty over the political loyalty to the Ukrainian state and territory. Or, at least, it presupposes the idea of the Russian world as comprising all Russophones that are expected to take the overarching identity of linguistic identification as more important than their citizenship in the individual’s hierarchy of identities.

Imagining modern Ukraine: Poland

At this place, I would like to bring into discussion the Polish eastern policy towards Ukraine as it was elaborated by Jerzy Giedroyc and his circle into the so-called *Kultura* eastern program. This program was further complemented and executed by Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Polish foreign minister at the beginning of the 1990s. Against the background of the Polish success in stabilizing the region of Eastern Europe and Poland’s relations with its historical neighbors, the failure of the Russian approach to Ukraine becomes even more telling. In further, I draw substantially from Timothy Snyder’s book *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999*.

It must be mentioned that in 1947 when Giedroyc started its review *Kultura* and set out on redefining Polish eastern program, Ukrainian-Polish relations were far from being friendly. They were marked not only by the centuries of rivalry but were gravely impaired by the recent experience of mutual ethnic cleansing and deportation during and right after the World War II.

Giedroyc was born in Minsk and was a Lithuanian Pole who took a vivid interest in Ukraine. He was fascinated by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi, head of

the Ukrainian Greco Catholic Church. Giedroyc, like Pilsudski, represented a Polish federalist tradition and was repelled by the integral nationalism of the interwar National Democrats which considered Russians and Poles as the only nations between Warsaw and Moscow. Giedroyc was also a pragmatist who placed the highest value in Polish statehood and drew a clear distinction between the Polish nationalism and the interests of the Polish state.

Kultura eastern program assumed that after the break-down of the Soviet Union a sovereign Poland will be a nation state, and that Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus will become nation-states as well. The program rejected the nostalgia for a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth not out of any lack of sympathy for the idea but on the pragmatic grounds that it could be seen as imperialism by Ukrainian or Lithuanian people. These countries now have to be treated as equal nations and states. Moreover, this program argued that it is in the interest of the modern Polish state to renounce any reconsideration of Polish eastern borders as they were formed in 1939 and confirmed by the Yalta agreements of 1945. Giedroyc and his colleagues were prepared to regard Lviv as part of Ukraine and Vilnius as part of Lithuania. As you can imagine, this was not an easy proposal to adjust to. Just remember that Lviv and Vilnius together with Cracow were considered to be cultural and spiritual centers of Poland at least for the last two centuries. No wonder that Giedroyc's program was regarded by many Poles as heretical and treacherous.

Inspired by the *Kultura* program, Krzysztof Skubiszewski in his foreign policy started to implement the program of "European standards" that differed sharply from any previous *Ostpolitik*. Recapitulating the main points of this program, Timothy Snyder argues that it treated rights of Polish 'diaspora' as the cultural rights of citizens of another country. The program emphasized that the fate of minorities is a domestic matter for the sovereign states of which they are citizens. Unlike Russia or Hungary, Poland did not try to extend its political community to Polish populations in Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania. It also excluded territorial resolutions to 'diaspora' problems. This program also aimed at securing friendly state agreements and arrangements before any historical harm done by nations in the region to each other should be put on the agenda. Before new stable political order is built, present state

interests should be given precedence over any historical controversy. In fact, it is difficult to overestimate Poland's contribution to the peaceful transition to a new political order in Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union and to the stabilization of the new independent political entities of Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania.

When one compares this approach with repeated declarations of Russia's highest state officials about Ukraine's territorial abnormality; or, issuing of Russian passports to the citizens of Ukraine in Crimea; or, Russian claim to speak on behalf of Russian-speakers in the "near-abroad" countries; or, the Russian meta-historical presumption that Ukraine is stray "Russian" land because both Russia and Ukraine "descend" from Kyivan Rus', one can really appreciate the modern Polish achievement in Eastern Europe. As Timothy Snyder rightly points out, "if one imagines that 'descent' is relevant to diplomacy, Polish diplomats would have as much right to speak of 'family ties' as Russians", given that "the territories of today's Ukraine and Belarus were known as Rus' within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania or the Commonwealth".

In other words, I would like to finish this section of my story with two observations. Firstly, Ukraine will be the real testing ground for seeing whether Russia renounces its imperial ambitions, albeit in modern form, and develops truly post-imperial relations with the neighboring countries. And, secondly, Russia desperately needs its own Jerzy Giedroyc.

Ukraine's dilemmas

It is important to recognize two opposing paradigms that inform Putin's and Giedroyc's approaches to Ukraine: one is that of common east Slavic origin and continuing common fate, while another is that of recognition of Ukrainian distinction and separate development. In the final part of my presentation, I would like to turn again more closely to Ukraine and review its internal resources that could help stabilize its relations with Russia without compromising its distinct identity.

Ukraine should fully appreciate and draw implications for its practical policies from the insight of the twentieth-century philosopher and historian Viacheslav

Lypynskiy, a Ukrainian of Polish origin, who said that “the basic difference between Ukraine and Muscovy is not the language, nor the tribe, nor the faith, nor the appetite of the peasant for the lord’s estate... but a different political system which had evolved over the centuries, a different ... method of organizing the ruling elite, a different relationship between the upper and lower classes, between the state and society – between those who rule and those who are ruled.” It is important not to lose from the sight a clause “political system which had evolved over the centuries”. Lypynskiy does not espouse essentialism in stating the conspicuous distinction between two entities that would freeze both Ukraine and Russia in eternal opposition to each other. His statement is historical, not metaphysical.

Andrew Wilson, an author of the book “The Ukrainians. Unexpected Nation” seems to agree with Lypynskiy that “It might even be possible to argue, although I would not push the point here, that modern Ukrainian identity was actually founded on an idea – Cossack liberty as opposed to tsarist autocracy – rather than on ethnicity or religion alone”. According to one more Ukrainian political interwar thinker Yuriy Lypa, given its sheer immensity in size Russia quite naturally tends to embrace authoritarian political practices and values.

Lypynskiy’s view transcends the program of the Ukrainian integral nationalism that envisages belonging to a nation as a consequence of purely ethnic and linguistic commonality rather than political identification. Moreover, he wants to emancipate the national discourse from any meta-historical ‘Occidental’ critique of Russia as an inherently ‘Asian’ and imperialist power. According to Dmytro Dontsov, a Ukrainian of Russian origin, the main ideologue of the Ukrainian interwar integral nationalism and main opponent of Lypynskiy, Ukraine’s historical destiny is to save Europe from Russia. These are two essentially antithetical civilizations with opposing political, social and cultural-religious ideals. The intensity of Ukraine’s anti-Russian stance would have to exceed all others in consequence of its front-line position. All of this, of course, has no appeal to many contemporary Ukrainians still with ‘Soviet’ or another ambivalent identity.

It is no wonder that Lypynskiy was more sympathetic rather with Hetman Skoropadskiy’s than with the socialist UNR’s nation-building attempt at short time of

Ukrainian revolution in 1917-1920. The Hetmanate regime tried to introduce a new conception of the Ukrainian nation, founded not on knowledge of the Ukrainian language, but on loyalty to the Ukrainian state. In his memoir Skoropadskyi writes that the difference between him and other Ukrainian leaders is the following: “in loving Ukraine they hate Russia. I do not have such hate. In all the oppression that was so harshly displayed by Russia in relation to all things Ukrainian, it is impossible to accuse the Russian people, it was the system of government; the people took no part.”

Observing the severe limitations of the anti-colonial discourse, some Ukrainian intellectuals and politicians developed an idea of post-colonial Ukraine in that it no longer obsessively opposes the Russia’s imperial power. This scenario would recognize that the concept of colonization could not be applied to Russian-Ukrainian relations in the seventeenth through nineteenth century without reservation. Or, it would challenge the myth of communism as a purely external, Russian-imposed regime. There is a lot of historical evidence that Ukrainian elites were able without any sense of conflict to combine both local ‘Little Russian’ and imperial “all-Russian” identities. They could have occupied high positions in the Romanov and Soviet empires, but of course at the price of progressing assimilation.

Despite its virtue of being more accurate in dealing with historical evidence, this idea of post-colonial Ukraine is persistently deconstructed by Russians in Ukraine who do not see themselves as ‘colonists’, ‘fifth column’, or even a ‘diaspora’. The post-colonial discourse fails to recognize that with urbanization of south-eastern regions in the nineteenth and twentieth century Ukraine became very much different than its early modern counterpart. As Andrew Wilson noted, urbanization reversed the traditional pattern of Ukrainian settlement – a central and western core and a south-eastern periphery. By the 1920s, most of the major urban centers in Ukraine were in the south-east and their culture was Russian”. As Renaissance and Reformation came to Ukraine in Polish kuntasz (Ihor Sevcenko), so modernity came to Ukraine in Russian vestige. An attempt to internalize modernity on the Ukrainian terms in the Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s was never finished and at

the beginning of the 1930s was violently interrupted by Stalin through purges of Ukrainian intelligentsia and genocide of Ukrainian peasants in the Great Famine.

There are other things that make Ukrainians so ambivalent about Russia. To take one more example, Ukrainian political thinker from the nineteenth century Mykhailo Drahomanov pointed out the paradox that Ukraine's two geopolitical problems, namely access to the Black Sea and the problem of the open steppe, were solved on Ukraine's behalf by Russia's final victory against the Crimean Tatars and Ottoman Turks in the eighteenth century. 'Muscovite tsardom', he complained, had 'fulfilled Ukraine's elementary geographical-national task!' However, as Andrew Wilson points out recalling Drahomanov, "the link with Russia provided an ambiguous solution to the third problem, namely securing links to Europe and the wider world... Direct, unmediated access to European and eventually global culture was not possible on Ukraine's own terms."

The distinct feature of Ukraine is its natural and not externally imposed openness to Europe and to the West as opposed to self-isolation tendency of the Russian civilization. Ukraine's openness is manifest in many phenomena of peculiarly Ukrainian cultural synthesis of East and West. The Ukrainian Greco Catholic Church is to name only one example. Ukraine's emancipational discourse is still on its way of fully appreciating the idea of modern Europe for its own sake and not primarily as a reaction to the threat of Russification. For many Ukrainians, Europeanism that follows from opposition to the discourse of Russian dominance is just skin-deep. The idea of Ukraine as a historical bridge for European influence to the whole of the east Slavic world is precisely what makes many Russian nationalists see it as a 'Trojan Horse'.

Mykhailo Drahomanov imagined Ukraine as part of a future European federation and referred to Europe as a space where Ukraine and Russia can solve their problems according to the logic of 'win-win' rather than 'zero-sum' game. Internalizing an attitude of building a political nation and implementing European ethos presupposes a readiness to review Ukraine's historical memory by including other ethnic groups into the Ukrainian national narrative. Currently, not only significant portions of Ukrainian territorial and cultural history are missing, but also

large numbers of ethnic Ukrainians are allotted little space in the mainstream of Ukrainian national history. As Serhii Plokhy convincingly argues, the history of Ukraine could not be equated with that of Cossackdom or peasant population. It should include urban history which was significantly shaped by other populations – Russians, Jews, Poles, and Germans. The mental mapping of Ukraine is also impossible without taking into account the diversity of Ukraine’s regions.

Ukraine’s independence period was not an easy path. Many of its failures forced political thinkers to label Ukraine’s political regime and its structures as a ‘dysfunctional state’, ‘faked democracy’, ‘electoral authoritarianism’. Alexander Motyl continues warning about ‘Zaireisation’ of Ukraine – “the creation of a self-cannibalizing society where corrupt elites feed off their state, their society, and their economy, ultimately driving them all to possible perdition.” Faced with continuous threat of Russian domination to Ukrainian culture, Ukrainian national democracy often is forced into obsession with the ethnic and linguistic issues instead of focusing on modernizing Ukraine and its political culture.

Europe is weary of Ukraine today, of its oscillations between East and West. Europe needs clarity. It is striking that Europe perceives Ukraine as trouble-maker and does not really see that Ukraine today tries to accomplish the principally European dilemma: how to combine heterogeneous cultural traditions and values.

What is possible scenario for Ukraine’s future? Will it succeed to accommodate and even celebrate its heterogeneity, discover a potential source of strength in the ethos of “E pluribus unum”? Or, faced with the option of nationalist versus imperial identity, will Ukraine end up in the Quebecisation turning into its Quebec either Ukrainophone or Russophone enclave, either Galicia or Donbas? Or, may be, the Dnieper Ukrainian tradition as distinct from the Russian but without the radical accentuation of difference characteristic of the Ukrainian Occidentalism discourse with its Orientalization of Russia will still emerge and consolidate the Ukrainian nation? Or, perhaps, the only way for Ukraine to survive in its distinct identity is to follow the Finnish example and strategy after the World War II?

Whatever way independent Ukraine goes in the future, freedom as a political value and its institutionalization in efficient democracy; the idea of political

multiethnic nation and celebration of diversity; the principal openness to Europe and capacity at synthesis of East and West are, in my opinion, those non-negotiable guiding principles that should steer Ukraine in its modern attempt at self-definition and self-determination.