

New Europe College Yearbook

Pontica Magna Program

2015-2016

2016-2017



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ANDRIY LYUBKA
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Editor: Irina Vainovski-Mihai

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NEW EUROPE FOUNDATION NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Institute for Advanced Study

New Europe College (NEC) is an independent Romanian institute for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences founded in 1994 by Professor Andrei Pleșu (philosopher, art historian, writer, Romanian Minister of Culture, 1990–1991, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1997–1999) within the framework of the *New Europe Foundation*, established in 1994 as a private foundation subject to Romanian law.

Its impetus was the *New Europe Prize for Higher Education and Research*, awarded in 1993 to Professor Pleșu by a group of six institutes for advanced study (the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, the National Humanities Center, Research Triangle Park, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Humanities and Social Sciences, Wassenaar, the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Uppsala, and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin).

Since 1994, the NEC community of fellows and *alumni* has enlarged to over 700 members. In 1998 New Europe College was awarded the prestigious *Hannah Arendt Prize* for its achievements in setting new standards in research and higher education. New Europe College is officially recognized by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research as an institutional structure for postgraduate studies in the humanities and social sciences, at the level of advanced studies.

Focused primarily on individual research at an advanced level, NEC offers to young Romanian scholars and academics in the fields of humanities and social sciences, and to the foreign scholars invited as fellows appropriate working conditions, and provides an institutional framework with strong international links, acting as a stimulating environment for interdisciplinary

dialogue and critical debates. The academic programs NEC coordinates, and the events it organizes aim at strengthening research in the humanities and social sciences and at promoting contacts between Romanian scholars and their peers worldwide.

Academic programs currently organized and coordinated by NEC:

- ***NEC Fellowships (since 1994)***

Each year, up to ten NEC Fellowships open both to Romanian and international outstanding young scholars in the humanities and social sciences are publicly announced. The Fellows are chosen by the NEC international Academic Advisory Board for the duration of one academic year, or one term. They gather for weekly seminars to discuss the progress of their research, and participate in all the scientific events organized by NEC. The Fellows receive a monthly stipend, and are given the opportunity of a research trip abroad, at a university or research institute of their choice. At the end of their stay, the Fellows submit papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the New Europe College Yearbooks.

- ***Ștefan Odobleja Fellowships (since October 2008)***

The Fellowships given in this program are supported by the National Council of Scientific Research, and are meant to complement and enlarge the core fellowship program. The definition of these fellowships, targeting young Romanian researchers, is identical with those in the NEC Program, in which the *Odobleja* Fellowships are integrated.

- ***The Pontica Magna Fellowship Program (since October 2015)***

This Fellowship Program, supported by the VolkswagenStiftung (Germany), invites young researchers, media professionals, writers and artists from the countries around the Black Sea, but also beyond it (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine), for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice. The program welcomes a wide variety of disciplines in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Besides hosting a number of Fellows,

the College organizes within this program workshops and symposia on topics relevant to the history, present, and prospects of this region. This program is therefore strongly linked to the former *Black Sea Link* Fellowships.

- ***The Pontica Magna Returning Fellows Program (since March 2016)***

In the framework of its *Pontica Magna* Program, New Europe College offers alumni of the *Black Sea Link* and *Pontica Magna* Fellowship Programs the opportunity to apply for a research stay of one or two months in Bucharest. The stay should enable successful applicants to refresh their research experience at NEC, to reconnect with former contacts, and to establish new connections with current Fellows. The *Pontica Magna Returning Fellows* Program targets young researchers, media professionals, writers and artists from the countries around the Black Sea: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

- ***The Gerda Henkel Fellowship Program (since March 2017)***

This Fellowship Program, developed with the support of Gerda Henkel Stiftung (Germany), invites young researchers and academics working in the fields of humanities and social sciences (in particular archaeology, art history, historical Islamic studies, history, history of law, history of science, prehistory and early history) from Afghanistan, Belarus, China (only Tibet and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they will have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice.

- ***How to Teach Europe Fellowship Program (since April 2017)***

This Program, supported by the Robert Bosch Foundation and a Private Foundation from Germany, introduces a new and innovative Fellowship module at the Centre for Advanced Study (CAS), Sofia, and the New Europe College (NEC), Bucharest. Beyond the promotion of outstanding individual researchers, the Program focuses on the intersection of fundamental research and higher education. The joint initiative seeks to identify and bring together bright and motivated young and established university professors from South-eastern Europe to dedicate themselves for a certain amount of time to research work

oriented toward a specific goal: to lend the state-of-the-art theories and methodologies in the humanities and social sciences a pan-European and/or global dimension and to apply these findings in higher education and the transmission of knowledge to wider audiences.

The goal of the proposed program is to use this knowledge to improve the quality of higher education in the humanities and social sciences and to endorse its public relevance. A tangible output will be the conceptualization of a series of new courses or, ultimately and ideally, the development of innovative curricula for the universities of the participating scholars.

- ***The Spiru Haret Fellowship Program (since October 2017)***

The *Spiru Haret* Fellowship Program targets young Romanian researchers/academics in the humanities and social sciences whose projects address questions relating to migration, displacement, diaspora. Candidates are expected to focus on Romanian cases seen in a larger historical, geographical and political context, in thus broadening our understanding of contemporary developments. Such aspects as transnational mobility, the development of communication technologies and of digitization, public policies on migration, ways of employing transnational communities, migrant routes, the migrants' remittances and entrepreneurial capital could be taken into account. NEC also welcomes projects which look at cultural phenomena (in literature, visual arts, music etc.) related to migration and diaspora. The Program is financed through a grant from UEFISCDI (The Romanian Executive Unit for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding).

Other fellowship programs organized since the founding of New Europe College:

- ***RELINK Fellowships (1996–2002)***

The RELINK Program targeted highly qualified young Romanian scholars returning from studies or research stays abroad. Ten RELINK Fellows were selected each year through an open competition; in order to facilitate their reintegration in the local scholarly milieu and to improve their working conditions, a support lasting three years was offered, consisting of: funds for acquiring scholarly literature, an annual

allowance enabling the recipients to make a one-month research trip to a foreign institute of their choice in order to sustain existing scholarly contacts and forge new ones, and the use of a laptop computer and printer. Besides their individual research projects, the RELINK fellows of the last series were also required to organize outreach activities involving their universities, for which they received a monthly stipend. NEC published several volumes comprising individual or group research works of the RELINK Fellows.

- ***The NEC–LINK Program (2003 - 2009)***

Drawing on the experience of its NEC and RELINK Programs in connecting with the Romanian academic milieu, NEC initiated in 2003, with support from HESP, a program that aimed to contribute more consistently to the advancement of higher education in major Romanian academic centers (Bucharest, Cluj–Napoca, Iași, Timișoara). Teams consisting of two academics from different universities in Romania, assisted by a PhD student, offered joint courses for the duration of one semester in a discipline within the fields of humanities and social sciences. The program supported innovative courses, conceived so as to meet the needs of the host universities. The grantees participating in the Program received monthly stipends, a substantial support for ordering literature relevant to their courses, as well as funding for inviting guest lecturers from abroad and for organizing local scientific events.

- ***The GE–NEC I and II Programs (2000 – 2004, and 2004 – 2007)***

New Europe College organized and coordinated two cycles in a program financially supported by the Getty Foundation. Its aim was to strengthen research and education in fields related to visual culture, by inviting leading specialists from all over the world to give lectures and hold seminars for the benefit of Romanian undergraduate and graduate students, young academics and researchers. This program also included 10-month fellowships for Romanian scholars, chosen through the same selection procedures as the NEC Fellows (see above). The GE–NEC Fellows were fully integrated in the life of the College, received a monthly stipend, and were given the opportunity of spending one month abroad on a research trip. At the end of the academic year the Fellows submitted papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the GE–NEC Yearbooks series.

- ***NEC Regional Fellowships (2001 - 2006)***

In 2001 New Europe College introduced a regional dimension to its programs (hitherto dedicated solely to Romanian scholars), by offering fellowships to academics and researchers from South–Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey). This program aimed at integrating into the international academic network scholars from a region whose scientific resources are as yet insufficiently known, and to stimulate and strengthen the intellectual dialogue at a regional level. Regional Fellows received a monthly stipend and were given the opportunity of a one–month research trip abroad. At the end of the grant period, the Fellows were expected to submit papers representing the results of their research, published in the NEC Regional Program Yearbooks series.

- ***The Britannia–NEC Fellowship (2004 - 2007)***

This fellowship (1 opening per academic year) was offered by a private anonymous donor from the U.K. It was in all respects identical to a NEC Fellowship. The contributions of Fellows in this program were included in the NEC Yearbooks.

- ***The Petre Țuțea Fellowships (2006 – 2008, 2009 - 2010)***

In 2006 NEC was offered the opportunity of opening a fellowships program financed the Romanian Government through its Department for Relations with the Romanians Living Abroad. Fellowships are granted to researchers of Romanian descent based abroad, as well as to Romanian researchers, to work on projects that address the cultural heritage of the Romanian *diaspora*. Fellows in this program are fully integrated in the College's community. At the end of the year they submit papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the bilingual series of the *Petre Țuțea* Program publications.

- ***Europa Fellowships (2006 - 2010)***

This fellowship program, financed by the VolkswagenStiftung, proposes to respond, at a different level, to some of the concerns that had inspired our *Regional Program*. Under the general title *Traditions of the New Europe. A Prehistory of European Integration in South-Eastern Europe*,

Fellows work on case studies that attempt to recapture the earlier history of the European integration, as it has been taking shape over the centuries in South–Eastern Europe, thus offering the communitarian Europe some valuable vestiges of its less known past.

- ***Robert Bosch Fellowships (2007 - 2009)***

This fellowship program, funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation, supported young scholars and academics from Western Balkan countries, offering them the opportunity to spend a term at the New Europe College and devote to their research work. Fellows in this program received a monthly stipend, and funds for a one-month study trip to a university/research center in Germany.

- ***The GE-NEC III Fellowships Program (2009 - 2013)***

This program, supported by the Getty Foundation, started in 2009. It proposed a research on, and a reassessment of Romanian art during the interval 1945 – 2000, that is, since the onset of the Communist regime in Romania up to recent times, through contributions coming from young scholars attached to the New Europe College as Fellows. As in the previous programs supported by the Getty Foundation at the NEC, this program also included a number of invited guest lecturers, whose presence was meant to ensure a comparative dimension, and to strengthen the methodological underpinnings of the research conducted by the Fellows.

- ***The Black Sea Link Fellowships Program (2010 - 2015)***

This program, financed by the VolkswagenStiftung, supported young researchers from Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as from other countries within the Black Sea region, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they had the opportunity to work on projects of their choice. The program welcomed a wide variety of disciplines in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Besides hosting a number of Fellows, the College organized within this program workshops and symposia on topics relevant to the history, present, and prospects of the Black Sea region.

- ***The Europe next to Europe Fellowship Program (2013 - 2017)***

This Program, supported by the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Sweden), invites young researchers from European countries that are not yet members of the European Union, or which have a less consolidated position within it, targeting in particular the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia), Turkey, Cyprus, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they will have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice.

New Europe College has been hosting over the years an ongoing series of lectures given by prominent foreign and Romanian scholars, for the benefit of academics, researchers and students, as well as a wider public. The College also organizes international and national events (seminars, workshops, colloquia, symposia, book launches, etc.).

An important component of NEC is its library, consisting of reference works, books and periodicals in the humanities, social and economic sciences. The library holds, in addition, several thousands of books and documents resulting from private donations. It is first and foremost destined to service the fellows, but it is also open to students, academics and researchers from Bucharest and from outside it.

Beside the above-described programs, New Europe Foundation and the College expanded their activities over the last years by administering, or by being involved in the following major projects:

In the past:

- ***The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Religious Studies towards the EU Integration (2001–2005)***

Funding from the Austrian Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft enabled us to select during this interval a number of associate researchers, whose work focused on the sensitive issue of religion related problems in

the Balkans, approached from the viewpoint of the EU integration. Through its activities the institute fostered the dialogue between distinct religious cultures (Christianity, Islam, Judaism), and between different confessions within the same religion, attempting to investigate the sources of antagonisms and to work towards a common ground of tolerance and cooperation. The institute hosted international scholarly events, issued a number of publications, and enlarged its library with publications meant to facilitate informed and up-to-date approaches in this field.

- ***The Septuagint Translation Project (2002 - 2011)***

This project aims at achieving a scientifically reliable translation of the Septuagint into Romanian by a group of very gifted, mostly young, Romanian scholars, attached to the NEC. The financial support is granted by the Romanian foundation *Anonimul*. Seven of the planned nine volumes have already been published by the Polirom Publishing House in Iași.

- ***The Excellency Network Germany – South–Eastern Europe Program (2005 - 2008)***

The aim of this program, financed by the Hertie Foundation, has been to establish and foster contacts between scholars and academics, as well as higher education entities from Germany and South–Eastern Europe, in view of developing a regional scholarly network; it focused preeminently on questions touching upon European integration, such as transnational governance and citizenship. The main activities of the program consisted of hosting at the New Europe College scholars coming from Germany, invited to give lectures at the College and at universities throughout Romania, and organizing international scientific events with German participation.

- ***The ethnoArc Project–Linked European Archives for Ethnomusicological Research***

An European Research Project in the 6th Framework Programme: Information Society Technologies–Access to and Preservation of Cultural and Scientific Resources (2006-2008)

The goal of the *ethnoArc* project (which started in 2005 under the title *From Wax Cylinder to Digital Storage* with funding from the Ernst von

Siemens Music Foundation and the Federal Ministry for Education and Research in Germany) was to contribute to the preservation, accessibility, connectedness and exploitation of some of the most prestigious ethno-musicological archives in Europe (Bucharest, Budapest, Berlin, and Geneva), by providing a linked archive for field collections from different sources, thus enabling access to cultural content for various application and research purposes. The project was run by an international network, which included: the “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute for Ethnography and Folklore, Bucharest; Archives Internationales de Musique Populaire, Geneva; the Ethno-musicological Department of the Ethnologic Museum Berlin (Phonogramm Archiv), Berlin; the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest; Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Coordinator), Berlin; New Europe College, Bucharest; FOKUS Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems, Berlin.

- ***Business Elites in Romania: Their Social and Educational Determinants and their Impact on Economic Performances.*** This is the Romanian contribution to a joint project with the University of Sankt Gallen, entitled ***Markets for Executives and Non-Executives in Western and eastern Europe***, and financed by the National Swiss Fund for the Development of Scientific Research (SCOPES) (December 2009 – November 2012)
- ***The Medicine of the Mind and Natural Philosophy in Early Modern England: A new Interpretation of Francis Bacon*** (A project under the aegis of the European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grants Scheme) – In cooperation with the Warburg Institute, School of Advanced Study, London (December 2009 - November 2014)
- ***The EURIAS Fellowship Program***, a project initiated by NetIAS (Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study), coordinated by the RFIEA (Network of French Institutes for Advanced Study), and co-financed by the European Commission’s 7th Framework Programme - COFUND action. It is an international researcher mobility programme in collaboration with 14 participating Institutes of Advanced Study in Berlin, Bologna, Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Cambridge, Helsinki, Jerusalem, Lyons, Nantes, Paris, Uppsala, Vienna, Wassenaar. (October 2011 – July 2014)

Research programs developed with the financial support of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, through the *Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation – UEFISCDI*):

- ***DOCSOC, Excellency, Innovation and Interdisciplinarity in doctoral and postdoctoral studies in sociology*** (A project in the Development of Human Resources, under the aegis of the National Council of Scientific Research) – in cooperation with the University of Bucharest (2011)
- ***UEFISCCDI – CNCS (PD – Projects): Federalism or Intergovernmentalism? Normative Perspectives on the Democratic Model of the European Union (Dr. Dan LAZEA); The Political Radicalization of the Kantian Idea of Philosophy in a Cosmopolitan Sense (Dr. Áron TELEGDI-CSETRI)*** (August 2010 – July 2012)
- ***Civilization. Identity. Globalism. Social and Human Studies in the Context of European Development*** (A project in the Development of Human Resources, under the aegis of the National Council of Scientific Research) – in cooperation with the Romanian Academy (March 2011 – September 2012)
- ***TE-Project: Critical Foundations of Contemporary Cosmopolitanism***, Team leader: Tamara CĂRĂUȘ, Members of the team: Áron Zsolt TELEGDI-CSETRI, Dan Dorin LAZEA, Camil PÂRVU (October 2011 – October 2014)
- ***PD-Project: Mircea Eliade between Indology and History of Religions. From Yoga to Shamanism and Archaic Religiosity (Livi BORDAȘ)***
Timeframe: May 1, 2013 – October 31, 2015 (2 and ½ years)
- ***IDEI-Project: Models of Producing and Disseminating Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: The Cartesian Framework***
Project Coordinator: Vlad ALEXANDRESCU
(1 Project Coordinator, 2 Researchers, 2 Research Assistants)
Timeframe: January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2016 (5 Years)

- **TE–Project: *Pluralization of the Public Sphere. Art Exhibitions in Romania in the Timeframe 1968-1989***
Project Coordinator: Cristian NAE
(1 Project Coordinator, 1 Researcher, 2 Research Assistants)
Timeframe: October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016 (1 Year)
- **Bilateral Cooperation: *Corruption and Politics in France and Romania (contemporary times)***
Project Coordinator: Silvia MARTON
(1 Project Coordinator, 7 Researchers)
Timeframe: January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016 (2 Years)
- **TE–Project: *Museums and Controversial Collections. Politics and Policies of Heritage Making in Post-colonial and Post-socialist Contexts***
Project Coordinator: Damiana OȚOIU
(1 Project Coordinator, 5 Researchers)
Timeframe: October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2017 (2 Years)
- **TE–Project: *Turning Global: Socialist Experts during the Cold War (1960s-1980s)***
Project Coordinator: Bogdan IACOB
(1 Project Coordinator, 2 Researchers, 2 Research Assistants)
Timeframe: October 1, 2015 – November 30, 2017 (2 Years and 2 Months)

ERC Grants:

- **ERC Starting Grant**
(Grant transferred by the Principal Investigator to the University of Bucharest)
Record-keeping, fiscal reform, and the rise of institutional accountability in late medieval Savoy: a source-oriented approach – Castellany Accounts
Principal Investigator: Ionuț EPURESCU-PASCOVICI
Timeframe at the NEC: May 1, 2015 – March 31, 2017 (1 Year and 10 Months)
Timeframe of the Grant: May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2020 (5 Years)

Ongoing projects:

ERC Grants:

- **ERC Consolidator Grant**

Luxury, fashion and social status in Early Modern South Eastern Europe

Principal Investigator: Constanța VINTILĂ-GHIȚULESCU

(1 Principal Investigator, 8 Researchers)

Timeframe: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020 (5 Years)

Other projects are in the making, often as a result of initiatives coming from fellows and *alumni* of the NEC.

Focus Groups

- *Culture in Murky Times*
- Focus Group on Education and Research
- *New World Disorder*

The Focus Groups are financed by two grants of the *Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation* – UEFISCDI, within the *Prize for Excellence in Research* awarded to Romanian Host Institutions of research projects financed by European Research Council in 2014 – 2016.

Research Groups

- Reflections on the Political History of the 18th and 19th Century in Romania
- The Bible in Linguistic Context: Introduction to the Biblical Hebrew
- The Bible in Linguistic Context: Introduction to the Coptic Language

Present Financial Support

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Landis & Gyr Stiftung, Zug, Switzerland

Private Foundations, Germany

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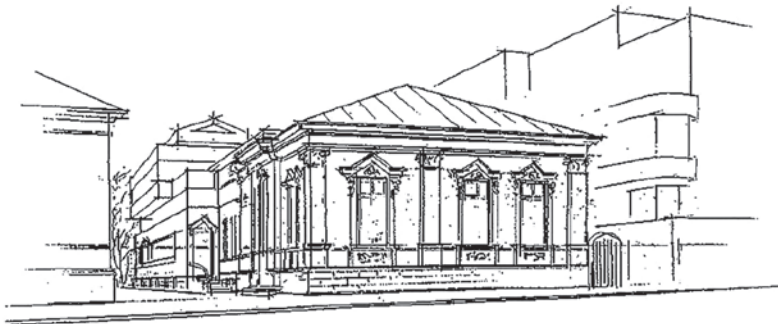
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a rethink?”

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International Visegrad Fund

Coordinator of the project “Bukovyna as a Contact Zone” co-funded by
Swiss Scientific Foundation

Participant and organiser of more than 50 scientific conferences and workshops
in over 20 countries.

WITH/OUT THE EU'S PERSPECTIVE: EUROPEANISATION NARRATIVES IN UKRAINE

Abstract

The Neighbourhood Europeanisation is argued to be instrumental for the diffusion of the European values in Ukraine and increased attachment of the Ukrainian population towards *Europe*. The paper inquires how the *idea of Europe* has evolved and has been perceived in Ukraine since the country's independence. Mixed methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative methods are employed in this paper in order to draw on the theoretical underpinnings of the Europeanisation process and better explore Europeanisation narratives in Ukraine. Based on survey data, the analysis depicts how the *idea of Europe* has acquired legitimacy in the eyes of Ukrainians.

Keywords: Europeanisation process, European integration, *idea of Europe*, European values, Eastern Neighbourhood, EU, Ukraine.

Introduction

Since proclaiming its independence (1991), Ukraine has been searching for a long term political strategy both at the foreign and domestic levels. Such endeavour has meant a permanent vacillation between the European Union (EU) and Russia which, in turn, has generated cleavages within the Ukrainian political establishment. Moreover, it has left a complicated ground for alterations domestically. The resistance of the local elites to take on necessary reforms has weakened Ukraine which found itself blocked at the decision-making levels for most of its post-independence years. Consequently, the European integration perspectives for the Ukrainian state have been relatively vague, whilst the cooperation initiatives between the EU and the Ukrainian state have been far less consistent than the ones offered to the Central Eastern European countries (CEECs). Finally, the lack of a full-fledged membership perspective has significantly thwarted Ukraine's European aspirations.

All the aforementioned factors have, thus, challenged the EU's transformative agenda in post-Soviet Eastern Europe, the so-called Eastern neighbourhood. In the case of Ukraine, the Europeanisation process has probably been the most contested. The *European* perception and feelings are still nascent among Ukrainians. More than half of the population does not perceive itself *European*. However, the attachment towards the *idea of Europe*¹ is slowly but constantly increasing. This shows that gradually the idea of shared European values, principles and norms is taking root in Ukraine.

The present study inquires how the *idea of Europe* has been evolving in Ukraine. The paper argues that the Europeanisation process has been instrumental for the diffusion of the *European values* in Ukraine and for increased attachment of the Ukrainian population towards *Europe*. By focusing on the case of Ukraine, this paper arguably enables us to derive not only country-specific but also basic findings about the transmission mechanisms of the Europeanisation process beyond the EU's border in a country marred by political and economic instability and divergent societal views. In the same vein, the selected case is relevant since Ukraine has been regarded as one of the most compatible countries among the Eastern neighbours able to adopt parts from the EU's sectoral *acquis*.²

This study employs a mixed methods approach where both qualitative and quantitative methods are integrated. The explanatory methodological phase draws on the theoretical underpinnings of the Europeanisation process, particularly with regards to Neighbourhood Europeanisation. For exploring the Europeanisation narratives in Ukraine, this study centralizes the findings of the most recent surveys (2013-2015) conducted in Ukraine by the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) within the project "Region, Nation and Beyond: An Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Reconceptualization of Ukraine"³ and by the Razumkov Centre (Ukraine). Additional evidence has also been obtained from the survey conducted in the Romanian – Ukrainian borderland in May – June 2016 within the project "Bukovyna as a Contact Zone".⁴

The paper is structured around a question-based model developed by Olsen: *what? how? and why?*⁵ Hereby, in order to address the *what*-question a definitional explanation towards the complexity of the contested notion of Europeanisation is made. Exploring the Europeanisation patterns and their competing interpretations allows for better discussing the conceptual frames of the research having Ukraine as a case study. It also investigates *how* the norms and values influence the formation

of identities and construct the *idea of Europe* beyond the EU's border. Afterwards the *why*-section further presents with empirical evidence the circumstances under which the Europeanisation process has unfolded in Ukraine. The question-based sections are followed by concluding remarks and summarizing findings.

Theoretical Reference towards Europeanisation: How European Values and Norms “Cross” the Border

The notion of Europeanisation has become gradually salient in both academic and policy-making circles dealing with EU-related integration processes. Scholars have sought to find superior explanatory ways to understand the impact of the EU's “transformative power” both in the EU member and non-member states. Among the first attempts to delineate the meaning of Europeanisation were made by Ladrech who understood it as “a process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making”.⁶ Ladrech was interested in analysing to what extent state actors are able to restructure the patterns of their internal behaviour to coincide with the EU's norms. Therefore, Europeanisation can be defined as the “domestic impact of Europe and the EU” in the sense that EU members and non-members adapt and change domestic institutions in response to the EU rules and regulations.⁷

According to Featherstone and Radaelli, the notion of Europeanisation can be understood from a multiple perspective: as a historical process; as cultural diffusion; as a process of institutional adaptation; and as adaptation of policy and policy processes to the European norms and standards⁸. Moreover, “it can range over history, culture, politics, society, and economics. It is a process of structural change, variously affecting actors and institutions, ideas and interests. In a maximalist sense, the structural change that it entails must fundamentally be of a phenomenon exhibiting similar attributes to those that predominate in, or are closely identified with, ‘Europe’”.⁹ By and large, the Europeanisation process considers the domestic impact of *Europe* and/or the European integration on subject countries and the degree to which European practices and norms could be adapted and further incorporated into a certain national environment.

Concurrently, Europeanisation is often regarded as a process influencing and constructing identities, both at the national and supranational level.¹⁰

Accordingly, Risse argues that “one would expect different interpretations with regard to what is understood as “European” in the various national contexts”; consequently, *Europe* is incorporated in the national identities in several ways, depending on “how much ideational space there is for “Europe” in given collective identity constructions”.¹¹ Therefore, the process of Europeanisation is regarded as “ideational diffusion and identity construction based on ideas of different origins”.¹²

According to the constructivist approach, the existing of the “other” is an essential prerequisite for any identity construction. In addition, it largely depends on the available boundary.¹³ While traditionally Europeanisation is considered primarily as a process which ranges across space and time,¹⁴ it considerably affects boundaries of values. A “boundary” classifies and demarcates who remains *within* a certain community and who is located *out*. For this reason, boundaries are often used to identify group membership and to regard the ones from the outside as the “other”, therefore, enhancing the feelings of emotional belonging within the given group. According to the literature, “the clearer the boundaries of the communities are, the more “real” its psychological existence becomes in peoples’ self-concepts”.¹⁵ Moreover, the existence of the “other” behind the boundary facilitates a common sense in the “we” group internally and strengthens self-perception within the community. The main differentiation between those who belong to the *in-group* and *out-group* is based on the value judgments and common rights.

The diffusion of values, norms and ideas from one community to another usually makes the boundary porous and less accurate. Moreover, neither borders nor identities are completely stable.¹⁶ They are often fluid and can be characterized as “intermediate spaces of interaction and exchange”.¹⁷ Therefore, whilst the “self” and “other” components can be congruent, the boundaries between them can become less obvious or they can even be further removed. To achieve this, one community (the projector) develops highly attractive norms and values which will be further exported and shared by the other (the recipient).¹⁸ Likewise, the “recipient” should articulate aspiration and be able to adopt certain norms and values of the “projector” who represents “highly developed groups [which]¹⁹ promote unity over large distances through an objectified and standardized culture”.²⁰ It can be embedded in the patterns of behaviour, lifestyle, norms and principles. Provided that the value patterns are attractive to the “recipient” (“outsider”) and the “recipient” is interested in their further implementation into domestic practices, the boundaries

can be gradually eliminated as a result of the integration to “inside”. Afterwards “self” and “other” are acquiring a new semantic system focus and new symbols, and the hierarchy of identities is changing. The line “we – they” / “self – other” is becoming less articulated. Moreover, the “we”-component is becoming more inclusive. The shift in the perceptions vis-à-vis former “other” is enhanced by myths, symbols and institutions which allow developments of “psychological existence” and strengthen the “imagined community”.²¹ According to Hansen, there is a variety of “others” – so-called “degrees of otherness”; divergence can contrast from positive to negative.²² The identities of the “others” can be also comprised as contending or complementary.²³ Therefore, the shift from “we” and “they” is not always possible and depends on a range of initial relationships between two groups/two communities and their advancing.

The boundary line is salient for the literature on the Europeanisation process, which distinguishes between Membership, Accession and Neighbourhood Europeanisation.²⁴ Each new layer of analysis is complementing the theoretical framework of the previous with regard to the developments *on the ground*.

Membership Europeanisation studies the impact of the EU integration process on the EU member-states. It embraces “processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies”.²⁵ Such understanding is compatible with the one offered by Risse, Cowles, and Caporaso, according to whom Europeanisation is interpreted as “emergence and development structures of governance, that is, of political, legal, and social institutions associated with political problem-solving that formalize interactions among the actors, and of policy networks specializing in the creation of authoritative European rules”.²⁶ Furthermore, it can be defined as an institution-building process at the European level²⁷ or as change in the domestic institutions of the member-states.²⁸

Whereas the EU is certainly the most significant actor in the region, the *idea of Europe* “spreads much further than the membership of the EU; and non-European neighbours are in varying ways appended to, or pressures on, these various European arrangements”.²⁹ Therefore, the Europeanisation process is not limited to the countries within the EU’s

borders. The diffusion of policies, values and norms sparked off by the Europeanisation process fosters in the EU's proximity shifts in the narratives and practices of national politics, discourses and identities.

Accession Europeanisation mainly concerns the transfer of the EU's norms, rules and values to the countries outside the EU's borders which are subject to the EU's enlargement policy.³⁰ By and large, Accession Europeanisation discusses to what extent the candidate-countries manage to adjust to the existing European model. For instance, the EU enlargement has significantly influenced the EU's boundary construction in the case of CEECs by bringing them "inside" from the "outside". As Risse argues, when the membership negotiations with the CEECs were launched, the European policy-makers have adopted new identity discourse vis-à-vis CEECs.³¹ Such adoption enabled the CEECs' "return to Europe" as their boundaries have been "(re)drawn" according to the new historical and geopolitical context.³²

Neighbourhood Europeanisation stems from the previous two dimensions, since it has the EU's values and norms at its core. However, it concerns those countries from the EU's vicinity which are neither part of the EU nor subject to the EU enlargement and explores how and under which circumstances the European values and norms are transmitted beyond the EU's border.

Despite not being subject to the EU's enlargement strategy, countries from the Eastern neighbourhood have been offered, instead, different working frameworks premised on enhanced cooperation and closer relations (e.g. the European Neighbourhood Policy launched in 2004 and two initiatives subsequently developed – the Eastern Partnership, in 2009, and the Black Sea Synergy, in 2008). These neighbourhood initiatives have been designed to make the fault lines between EU and non-EU members blurred, since the bordering process can "erase territorial ambiguity and ambivalent identities in order to shape a unique and cohesive order".³³

Unlike the CEECs, however, where the Europeanisation process has been strengthened by the enlargement mechanisms of conditionality, in the neighbourhood countries the changes are induced into the domestic affairs mainly through a process of *socialization*. Primarily based on constructivist approach, *social learning* assumes the adoption of norms and values by the actors and makes them converge towards *Europe*. Schimmelfennig believes that "socialization from the outside" envisages "all EU efforts to "teach" EU policies – as well as the ideas and norms behind them – to outsiders, to persuade outsiders that these policies are appropriate and,

as a consequence, to motivate them to adopt EU policies”.³⁴ In this regard, the process of socialisation is likely to take place through “social learning”, “constructive impact” and “communication”.³⁵ Moreover, it comprises “teaching methods”³⁶ aimed at transferring principles and rules undergirding European governance beyond the EU’s border in the neighbouring countries (figure 1).

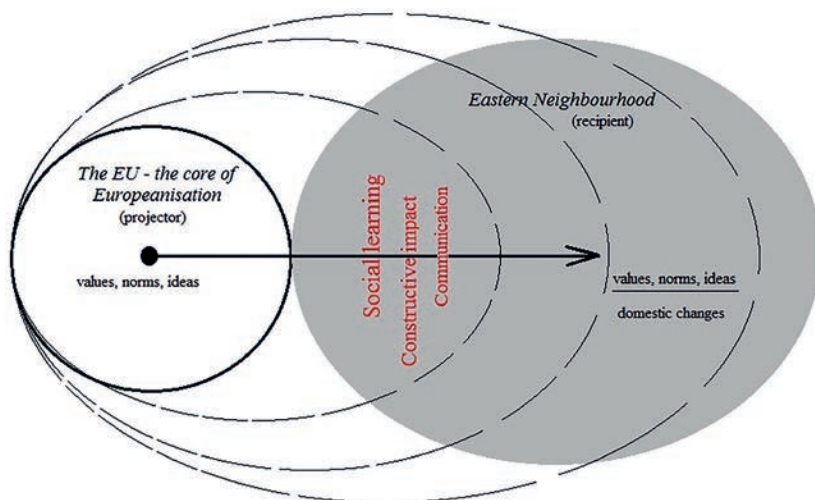


Figure 1. Basic model of Europeanisation process in the Neighbourhood.

Source: Own representation according to Schimmelfennig, F., “Europeanization beyond Europe” in *Living Reviews in European Governance*, 7 (1), 2012, pp. 1–31.

The efficiency of Neighbourhood Europeanisation is not only given by the EU’s impact (namely, external influence), but also by the domestic support for reforms in the neighbouring countries (e.g. positive perception vis-à-vis *Europe* in the subject country).³⁷ The efficiency of transformational changes is influenced by several factors. First, the domestic support for changes is likely higher if the EU’s principles and rules are closer to domestic rules of governing. Second, the process of adaptation is stronger if recipient countries find themselves “in a novel and uncertain environment, identify with and aspire to belong to “Europe”.³⁸ Accordingly, the local actors are likely more committed to the adoption of the EU’s norms –

good governance, democracy, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Constructing Europeanisation Narratives in Ukraine: Main Discourses and Perceptions

Since the first years of its independence, Ukraine has sought to enhance cooperation with the EU. While the EU recognized the Ukrainian state in December 1991, in the first Ukrainian foreign policy document – the Verkhovna Rada Decree “On the Main Directions of Ukraine’s Foreign Policy” – adopted in 1993, increased political, economic, military, cultural, scientific and humanitarian ties with the EU member-states were ranked among the main national strategic priorities. The text mentioned that “strengthening relations with the Western European countries will create conditions for the restoration of Ukraine’s ancient political, economic, cultural, spiritual ties with the European civilization, enhancing democracy, market reforms and national economy”.³⁹ This framework for cooperation has been the core foundation for expanding Ukraine’s engagement with the European structures and institutions. Similarly, the 1993 document expressed Ukraine’s intentions to sign the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)⁴⁰ with the EU aiming at further anchoring Ukraine in *Europe*.

The 1993 Decree was followed by the Strategy and Programme of Ukraine’s integration to the EU signed in 1998 and 2000 respectively. In the 2002 address to Verkhovna Rada, President Kuchma described the European integration as the key national project for the next decade. The need to reform in line with the EU’s principles and norms was again ranked among the top strategic national priorities.

The support for European integration has constantly been offered by the Ukrainian Parliament, for instance while approving the 2002 Decision “On Parliamentary Hearings on the Cooperation of Ukraine and the EU” or the 2007 Declaration “On the Beginning of Negotiations on the New Agreement between Ukraine and the EU”. Before signing the new agreement, the PCA was automatically prolonged based on the mutual decision of both Ukraine and the EU. “Ukraine’s integration in the European political, economic and legal space aiming at obtaining the membership in the European Union” was also defined as national priority in the 2003 Law of Ukraine “On the Foundations of National Security of

Ukraine".⁴¹ Later on the Ukraine's integration aspirations were emphasized in article 11 of the 2010 Law of Ukraine "On the Foundations of Internal and Foreign Policy".

All in all, the development of harmonious relations with the EU has always been in the Ukrainian national political agenda, whilst the declarative aspirations towards *Europe* have always been present in the official discourse of the Ukrainian political establishment. However, the continuous aspiration towards the EU membership has not been always positively correlated with the pace of reforms.

The 2004 "Orange revolution" represented an impetus for domestic reforms. It was expected to conclude Kuchma's era of "integration by declaration".⁴² However, due to the political instability which unfolded in the post-2004 period, reforms have been insufficiently comprehensive and only selectively implemented. According to Melnykovska, "engaged in power struggles, the Ukrainian leadership has little room for implementation of the EU-related reforms"⁴³ as its representatives were more engaged in the strong competition among political groups. Pro-European consensus among Ukrainian politicians could not balance the disagreements upon domestic affairs. Hence, declarative integration was doubled by what Langbein and Wolczuk called "declarative Europeanisation" – regardless of the constant declared support for Ukraine's European integration, the political elite has not sufficiently contributed to advancing it beyond declarations.⁴⁴

Concurrently, Ukraine's expectations did not fully correspond to the EU's vision towards the Eastern neighbourhood. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) envisaged the enhancement of political cooperation and economic integration between the EU and the countries from its proximity.⁴⁵ Since the ENP did not pledge a full-fledged membership to the neighbouring countries, it has not managed to sufficiently incentivize political elites to carry out real EU-oriented reforms. The ENP was subsequently complemented by other regional and multilateral cooperation initiatives: Black Sea Synergy and Eastern Partnership. Despite their ambitious goals, their success has been also limited.

The basic principles of the EU policy towards Ukraine have been determined by the provisions of the Association Agreement (AA) based on the principles of political association and economic integration. The text of the AA was initiated in March 2012 after bilateral negotiations between the EU and Ukraine were completed in December 2011. Since 2012

completing the AA has been Ukraine's main political objective. This step has been regarded not only as a decisive step towards Ukraine's European integration but also as a commitment towards *Europe*. More than half of Ukrainian population has rated the AA primarily as an instrument meant to bring about economic development (52.5%), democracy (51.9%), education, science and technologies (51.4%). In addition, the AA was also perceived as a tool for enhancing infrastructure (49.4%), food quality (46.8%), better administration (41%), anti-corruption mechanisms (38%), employment (37.2%) and environment protection (35.6%).⁴⁶

When the then president of Ukraine V. Yanukovich announced on the eve of the EaP summit in Vilnius the suspension of the preparations for signing the AA, this decision sparked off a wave of massive protests (the events entitled Euromaidan or the Revolution of Dignity). After November 29-30, 2013 when during the night peaceful protestors were dispersed by police from the Square of Independence, the core of the Euromaidan, the focus of the protests was partially shifted. While the call for European integration has become less vocal, what obtained greater salience was the demand for internal political changes and reforms. According to the survey conducted in 2015, the events of EuroMaidan were depicted as "conscious fight of citizens who united to protect their rights" by 46.5% of population, whereas 13.6% of respondents characterized EuroMaidan as spontaneous protests. Concurrently public support towards this movement was expressed by 43.1%.⁴⁷

In March 13, 2014 the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Resolution "On Confirmation of Ukraine's Course towards Integration into the European Union and Priority Measures in this Direction" aimed at keeping Ukraine's European integration aspiration on track. The resolution also stated that Ukraine is a European state which "shares a common history and values with the countries of the European Union, has the right to apply for a membership in the European Union" according to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union.⁴⁸ The 2014 Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada recommended the acting President and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to implement all the necessary steps to meet the European integration aspirations of Ukraine. The process of signing and ratifying of the AA in 2014 launched a new form of relationships between Ukraine and the EU as a result of massive support of Ukrainians manifested during Euromaidan movement. At the ceremony of signing of the AA, president Petro Poroshenko announced that "economic integration and political association with the EU is our [Ukrainian] understanding of

successful development".⁴⁹ He also underlined that Ukraine as a European state shares the same values and "the EU is not just some countries in the union, it is the idea, the answer towards the requirements of today".⁵⁰ The preamble of the AA also affirmed that "Ukraine as a European country shares a common history and common values with the Member States of the European Union (EU) and is committed to promoting those values",⁵¹ while the EU "acknowledges the European aspirations of Ukraine and welcomes its European choice".⁵²

Furthermore, the European Reform Agenda for Ukraine jointly elaborated by the Government of Ukraine, the European Commission and the European External Action Service has included a set of tasks regarding the implementation of fundamental reforms for Ukraine's development. Accordingly, the AA is a strategic benchmark for systemic political and socio-economic reforms in Ukraine, comprehensive adaptation of Ukrainian legislation towards the EU norms and rules.

Alongside with the AA negotiations, the visa-free regime negotiations have been running in parallel. These negotiations have been aimed at facilitating "people to people" contact between Ukraine and the EU. The possibility to travel "visa free" has always been perceived by Ukrainian citizens among the main priorities that could be gained from the association with the EU.⁵³ Visa free regime has been ranked as very important by 22.9%, whereas 33.7% of Ukrainians consider it important.⁵⁴ According to the collected data from the survey visa-facilitation is among the key indicators of *belonging to Europe* in people's perception (figure 4).

It is interesting to notice that public perceptions towards *Europe* have varied during the years. They have often been interrelated with the preferences for the alternative direction of the foreign policy (namely, cooperation with Russia; see figure 2). For instance, according to data provided by Razumkov Centre, in 2006 the cooperation with the EU was mentioned as the most desirable by less than 30% of population (27.2%), whereas relations with Russia scored 43.4%. The reason mainly laid in the public disappointment towards the pro-European "orange" coalition which did not manage to bring about economic development and reforms. Concurrently, the lowest level of the EU support in 2006 coincided with the EU's enlargement that left Ukraine "behind the boundary" in public perception. The decline of Ukrainians' preferences towards the EU in 2003 in comparison with 2002 by more than 5% during one year can be explained by the introducing of so-called "paper wall" – visa requirements for Ukrainian citizens from the countries – candidates for

the EU enlargement. On the contrary, the highest degree of support for the EU perspective of Ukraine appeared in post-EuroMaidan. 52.5% of respondents considered Ukraine's relations with the EU member-states a priority for the country's foreign policy (and only 16.6% opted for cooperation with Russia). However, such preferences were not evenly distributed across the country. The Western regions of Ukraine appeared to be more pro-European than the Eastern ones.⁵⁵

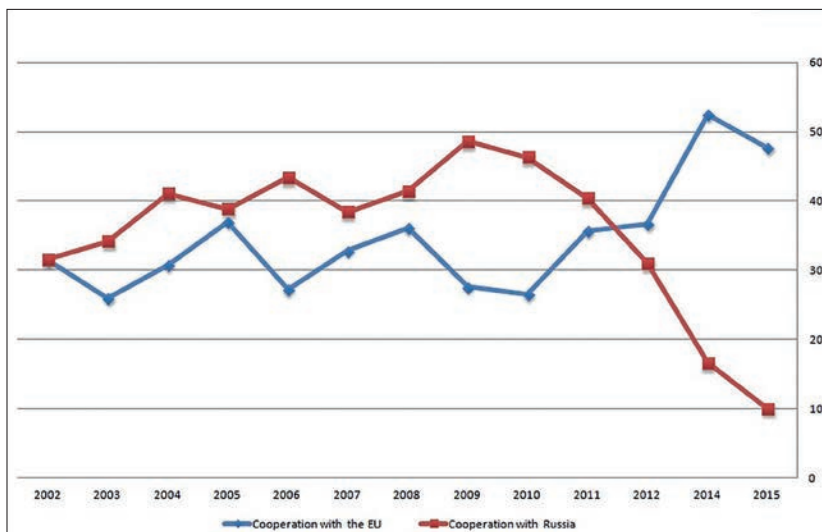


Figure 2. Relations with the EU member-states and Russia as a priority for foreign policy of Ukraine, public perceptions, 2002-2015.

Source: Own representation according to data provided by Razumkov Centre, 2015.⁵⁶

Despite the gradual dynamic of increasing support for the European integration during the recent years, such aspirations can be negatively influenced by the insufficient pace of reforms. In response to the question whether the reforms have progressed well and the authorities have implemented what they were supposed to do, about half of respondents indicated that nothing has been actually done (48.4%). 24.6% believe that only 10% of reforms are progressing well, while only less than 1% of Ukrainian population is satisfied with the progress of reforms.⁵⁷ Not surprisingly, Ukrainians are not optimistic regarding the success of the

reforms referring to the previous experience of their explicitly declarative character (figure 3). However, regardless of all the challenges in the enhancement of domestic reforms, almost 40% of Ukrainian citizens still believe in the EU membership of Ukraine in the future.⁵⁸

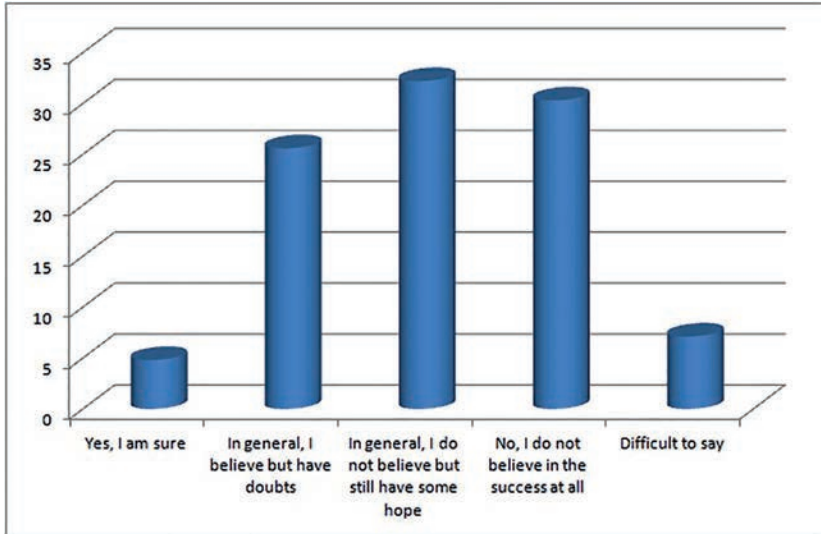


Figure 3. Do you believe in the success of the reforms in Ukraine? 2015.

Source: Own representation according to data provided by Razumkov Centre, 2015.⁵⁹

Furthermore, according to Ukrainian citizens, Ukraine's membership in the EU would enhance the domestic reforms (24%), whereas 22% believe that the EU membership would not bring any advantages. Among the main benefits from the EU membership for Ukraine would be the free movement abroad (38.6%), the improvement of life standards (36.8%), and the free access to the education in the European universities for the youth (33.7%). For 20.8% of the population the EU membership is associated with enhanced security, while for 19.3% it facilitates access towards the European markets. 18.8% of respondents perceived the EU membership of Ukraine as a movement towards the modern European civilization.⁶⁰

When asked about what makes them feel *European*, Ukrainians associated the *idea of Europe* with the following preferences: high life

standards, protection by law, democratic values, freedoms and human rights (figure 4).

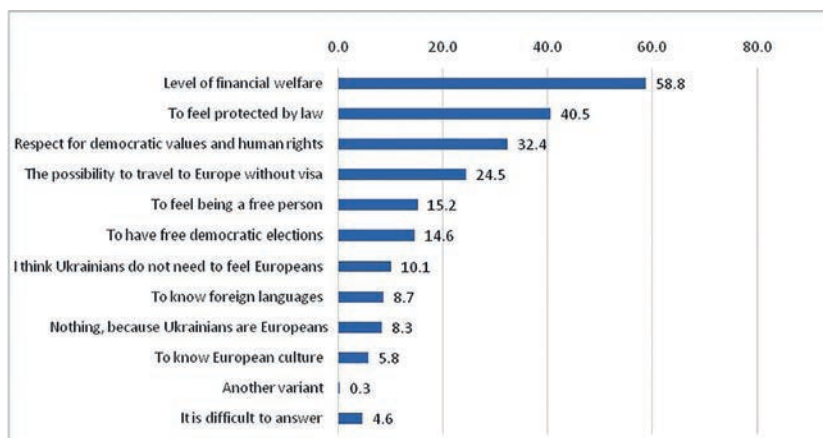


Figure 4. What do you need to feel *European*? 2013.

Source: Own representation according to data provided by Razumkov Centre, 2013.⁶¹

Despite the aforementioned data, more than half of Ukrainians does not have a clear feeling of *being European*. According to the data, the *European feeling* is strongly correlated with the success of domestic reforms, the standard of living and the political (in)stability in the country. While asked whether Ukraine is a European state, Ukrainians consider their country to be *European* in a geographical (76.6%), historical (58.3%) and to a large extent cultural (41.9%) sense, whereas, politically (23.6%), socially (17.1%) and economically (12.7%) Ukraine's *Europeanness* is still minor.⁶²

According to the Razumkov Centre in 2014 only 37.6% of population expressed their European identity⁶³, whereas around 10% of respondents were hesitating about their answer. Similar results were obtained in 2015 during the implementation of the project "Region, Nation and Beyond: An Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Reconceptualization of Ukraine": almost 40% expressed their European self-identification. About 20% of respondents said they did not feel European at all. For almost 25% of Ukrainians it was difficult to decide upon their European attachment.⁶⁴ However, the attachment towards *Europe* is slowly but gradually gaining salience (figure 5). Moreover, the increase of Ukrainians' self-identification

as Europeans is more obvious in comparison to 2008 when *Europeanness* remained even more contested and European identity was exhibited only by 25% of respondents.⁶⁵

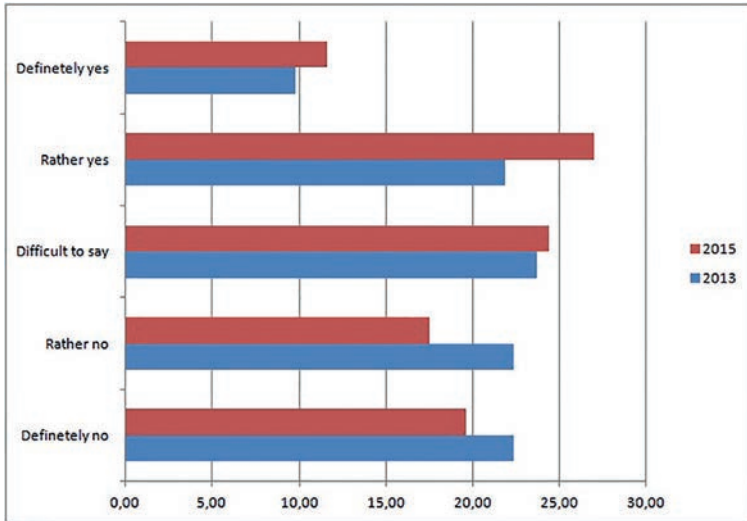


Figure 5. To what extent do you feel *European*? 2013, 2015.

Source: Own representation according to data provided by 2013 and 2015 surveys within the project “Region, Nation and Beyond: An Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Reconceptualization of Ukraine”.

Finally, interesting observations were revealed concerning the “we-Europeans / they-Europeans” dichotomy across the EU border. It is not surprisingly that the survey conducted in the Ukrainian – Romanian borderland showed different perceptions regarding *European* feelings among the population. The non-EU respondents from Ukraine while speaking about Europeans use the word “they” much more often than “we”; whereas respondents from Romanian side of the borderland have a stronger *European* self-perception (for comparison see figure 6).

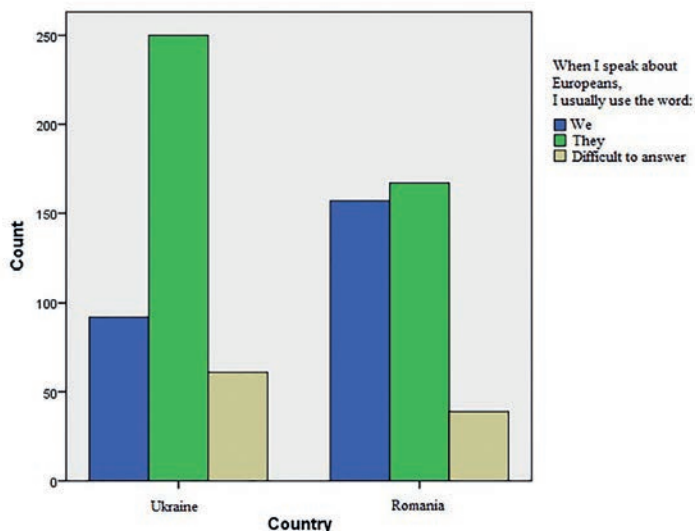


Figure 6. “We – they” component of *Europeaness* across the EU border (case of Romanian – Ukrainian borderland).

Source: Own representation according to data provided by 2016 survey within the project “Bukovyna as a contact zone”.

Conclusions

This paper inquired how the *idea of Europe* has been impacting Ukraine. The findings have signalled that Neighbourhood Europeanisation has generally fostered a significant *European* perception among Ukrainian population. In spite of a nascent *European* feeling among Ukrainians, when perceived as a driver for enhanced democratic values, human rights and reforms, the *idea of Europe* acquires legitimacy in the eyes of Ukrainians with the potential to continuously grow. For instance, Ukrainians often rate positively *Europeaness* of Ukraine from a geographical, historical and cultural perspective, whereas in the economic, political and social fields there is a general feeling that the country is still lagging behind *Europe* in terms of norms, values and standards.

Despite being among the key national strategic priorities emphasized at the official level and actively promoted by political leaders, the European

integration efforts have always been confronted with political, economic and social unrest across the country. Accordingly, the declarative character of the domestic support for the implementation of reforms in line with the European *acquis communautaire* without Ukrainian politicians' sufficient contribution to reforms *on the ground* has limited the efficiency of the Europeanisation process. Ultimately, it is not striking that in people's perception the *Europeanness* of the country largely depends on the progress of domestic transformational changes, since the *idea of Europe* is perceived as the main engine for economic development and for the enhancement of democracy and human rights.

Concurrently, the absence of a clear EU membership perspective from cooperation frameworks envisaged by the EU for Ukraine has also affected the Europeanisation efforts and weakened the leverage of its "transformative power". Therefore, Ukraine's capacity and motivation to comply with the EU model, to transfer parts from the *acquis* into the national legislation, to absorb European norms, values and principles are still lagging behind.

NOTES

- ¹ In the present paper “the idea of Europe” is understood as set of common values – democracy, market economy, respect for the rule of law and human rights – upon which the EU is positioning itself.
- ² More on that in: FREYBURG, T., LAVENEX, S., SCHIMMELFENNIG, F., SKRIPKA, T., WETZEL, A., *Democracy Promotion by Functional Cooperation. The European Union and its Neighbourhood*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- ³ The project is coordinated by the Centre for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen and funded by Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation. 6000 respondents from all the regions of Ukraine participated in the survey.
- ⁴ The project is jointly coordinated by scientific NGO “Quadrivium” (Ukraine), Centre for European Studies of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (Romania) and Center for Governance and Culture in Europe of University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) and funded by Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation. 359 respondents in Romania and 403 respondents in Ukraine participated in the survey conducted in the Ukrainian-Romanian borderland (Bukovyna).
- ⁵ OLSEN, J., “Too Many Faces of Europeanization”, in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40 (5), 2002, pp. 922-925.
- ⁶ LADRECH, R., “The Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France”, in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 32 (1), 1994, p. 69.
- ⁷ BÖRZEL, T., RISSE, T., “From Europeanisation to Diffusion: Introduction”, in *West European Politics*, 35:1, 2012, p. 6.
- ⁸ FEATHERSTONE, K., “Introduction: In the Name of ‘Europe’”, in *The Politics of Europeanization*, ed. by K. Featherstone, C. Radaelli, 2003, retrieved from the link <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/0199252092.001.0001/acprof-9780199252091-chapter-1>
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ E.g.: FEATHERSTONE, K., *Europeanization and the Southern Periphery*, eds. K. Featherstone, G. Kazamias, Frank Cass, London, OR, 2001, p. 262; CHECKEL, J. “The Europeanization of Citizenship?”, in *Transforming Europe and Domestic Change*, ed. by M. Cowles, J. Caporaso and T. Risse, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001.
- ¹¹ RISSE, T., “Europeanization, Nation-State Identities, and Perceived Instrumental Interests: Conceptual Clarifications” in *Transforming Europe and Domestic Change*, ed. by M. Cowles, J. Caporaso and T. Risse, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001, p. 200-203.
- ¹² FLOCKHART, T., “Europeanisation or EU-ization? The Transfer of European Norms across Time and Space”, in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 48 (4), 2010, p. 793.

- 13 CEDERMAN, L.-E., "Political Boundaries and Identity Trade-Offs" in *Construction Europe's Identity. The External Dimension*, ed. by L.-E. Cederman, 2001, p. 1-32; RISSE, T. *A community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010.
- 14 FLOCKHART, T., "Europeanisation or EU-ization? The Transfer of European Norms across Time and Space", in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 48 (4), 2010.
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- 16 N.b.: it is not shared by all the scholars though.
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POST-SOVIET TRANSNATIONAL URBAN COMMUNITIES: INSTITUTIONS, NETWORKS AND DISCOURSES

Abstract

Large groups of emigrants have been leaving former Soviet space since the late 1980s and during almost the entire post-Soviet period, heading for the different EU countries for permanent residence. This wave of emigration led to an increase in the number of so-called Russian-speaking communities in these countries. In the past few years, processes of construction of the transnational urban communities among emigrants from the post-Soviet area have been of an increasingly greater topicality. Now translocal networks emerge too. Thus the paper is focused on the process of transnationalization and translocalization of the post-Soviet Russian-speaking urban communities by the example of Odessites, Leningraders/St. Petersburgers¹ and Bakuvians. The main goal was to understand, explain and describe this process.

Introduction

When studying the specific features of the post-Soviet urban communities (such as *Odessites*, *Leningraders* and *Bakuvians*), whose members are united by a common memory of their daily life in their towns of origin (Odessa, Leningrad/today St. Petersburg and Baku), it is necessary to focus on the very process and practices of their construction (discursive and institutional ones). And also on the process and history of the emergence, and goals behind the construction of urban emigrant clubs as transnational institutions that constitute these communities in emigration. It is important to understand who those people who create city clubs, what meaning they put into their activities, how it is possible to describe those boundaries within the framework of which the natives of Odessa, St. Petersburg and Baku unite and reconstruct urban identity in emigration.

In the context of this approach, I rejected the tradition of studying emigrant and diaspora communities from the perspective of the country of origin and receiving state.² For my informants, local urban identity has a far greater attractiveness, strength and significance than identification with the country of origin or the receiving country or a “historical motherland”.

An approach based on this perspective makes me look for answers to questions that are not directly linked to the phenomena of diaspora communities. What is so special about those towns within the spaces of which fairly stable community can form? Why are there relatively few (not more than a dozen) towns in the post-Soviet area, natives of which construct stable, to some extent or another, group boundaries and transnational networks?

I think that these communities can be described as *post-Soviet transnational urban imagined communities*. No doubt, in order to describe these groups all of the factors listed are important: their common soviet past, the Russian language, and their own vision of the phenomenon of ethnicity. But the most important factor that defines the specifics of these communities is the town in which they were born and socialized. I.e. the specifics of these communities are defined by the specifics of their towns of origin. Urbanization in the Russian Empire was slow. Odessa, Baku, and, certainly, the capital of the empire – Petersburg (called Leningrad in Soviet years) were special towns. They were islands of urban space in the large sea of the rural population of the Empire and the few financial, industrial and cultural centres of the enormous empires (Russian and then Soviet).

Therefore, my research will be dealing with imperial towns, i.e. centres of urban life which were created within the framework of the development of the Russian and Soviet empires and with the aim of servicing imperial goals and requirements. All these towns with their present-day looks are the result of the imperial planning and colonization of lands over which the Russian and then the Soviet empires extended their control.³ However, they were not colonial towns in the sense that we see this in other European empires of that time (Portuguese, French or British). They became even less colonial in the course of the implementation of Soviet national policy.

Transnational urban communities

So, I have identified three urban communities for my research: the Odessites, the Leningraders and the Bakuvians. The selection of these

three clubs presumed a comparative analysis making it possible to describe in a clearer way the specific features of the origin of the communities of Odessites, Leningraders and Bakuvians, to have a better vision of not only common features that these processes have but also the specifics of each individual case, and in this way to focus on the internal diversity of the largely similar processes of construction of post-Soviet transnational urban communities. I.e. also on what makes them different and on the specific features that are common and unite the processes of the construction of those communities.

Each of the three cities within the space of which these communities, which have been transformed into transnational ones in the past 20 years, were constructed, have their own imperial and post-imperial “zest”. All of these cities were very well-known (special) in the Russian Empire and in the USSR, but for different reasons. The population of these cities – the result of the imperial expansion – was noticeably diverse from an ethnic point of view. People that lived in those cities actively emigrated during the collapse of the Soviet Union and in the post-Soviet period, also owing to the major Jewish communities that settled down in them in the late 19th century – early 20th century.

Urban communities in the context of diasporal discourse

To what Brubaker said I should, however, add that *when we talk about ethnicity* we often also talk about diasporas in categories of “groupism”. In the past 20 years, the popularity of the term diaspora kept growing (Brubaker 2005: 1-2; Kosmarskaya 2011: 56-57). It is primarily the Jewish diaspora that is described in categories of diasporaness and groups more often than others. The transformation of the soviet urban communities of Odessa, Leningrad and Baku into post-Soviet transnational ones is caused to a considerable extent (but not completely) by the circumstance that ethnic Jews were a noticeable segment in these urban communities. In Berlin, the urban clubs themselves have also been organized within the framework of the city’s Jewish community which provides resources necessary for it to exist. Therefore I should be talking about a direct link between the transnational urban communities of Odessites, Bakuvians, and Leningraders and the Jewish diaspora. At the same time, also described in categories of the diasporal discourse are ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Azeris, and other emigrants from the post-Soviet area.⁴ Many of them

participate in the construction of the transnational communities of Odessites, Leningraders or Bakuvians. So, although the communities I have studied are not reducible to any one ethnic diaspora, diasporal discourse and theory are important to understand their specifics.

All of my informants are ascriptively described as members of various ethno-national diasporas, mainly the Jewish diaspora, while most others – Russian, Ukrainian or Azeri. Many of my informants also consider themselves members of different diasporas. Literally different. A Bakuvian or Leningrader may be members (or even activists) of two diasporas at the same time. In the first case, the Azeri and Jewish, and in the second – the Jewish and Russian. Almost any Odessite is comfortable as a representative of the Jewish and Ukrainian diasporas. For my informants, even a dual diasporal membership is often only symbolic. Many take part (often an active part) in events held by any post-Soviet diaspora if they are organized by people who are, like themselves, Russian-speaking emigrants from the former USSR. You may hear or read increasingly more often about separate diasporas of Odessites or Bakuvians existing.⁵

Certainly, the Jewish diaspora provides the essential resources that make it possible to set up emigrants' organizational institutes (urban clubs) within the framework of which transnational post-Soviet urban communities are reconstructed. But is that a sufficient basis to describe the communities of Odessites, Bakuvians or Leningraders in diasporal categories? In my view, the example of the Jewish diaspora as a classical one is not relevant in this case. The Odessa, Petersburg/ Leningrad or Baku Jewish communities might be considered as one of those, the history of which does not always fit into the framework of "ideal type" of a Diaspora. Summarize all the foregoing, it should be noted, that it makes sense to focus on the analysis of local specificity of these Jewish communities. With such an approach an appeal to the image of the "ideal"/ "classical" diaspora is not helpful. In my opinion, it is more fruitful an attempt to justify the analysis of the specificity of these communities and their places in more wide city-communities from the perspective offered by Rogers Brubaker:

Rather than speak of 'a diaspora' or 'the diaspora' as an entity, a bounded group, an ethno-demographic or ethno-cultural fact, it may be more fruitful, and certainly more precise, to speak of diasporic stances, projects, claims, idioms, practices, and so on. (Brubaker 2005: 13)

So, concerning the diasporal aspects, I am looking at the Jewish communities of Odessa, Petersburg/Leningrad and Baku from the perspective proposed by Brubaker, and also implying the turnover of forms and practices of the diasporization of the communities of Odessites, Leningraders and Bakuvians. The things that normally face diaspora researchers, such as links between country of origin or construction of diasporal structures, and preservation of culture and religion are not topical in these cases. At the same time, the diasporal specifics can also be observed in the case with these communities, especially in the aspects that have to do with their transnational and translocal nature.

Transnationality and Translocality

In a way, these two ideas can be viewed as mutually exclusive. But I prefer to talk about them as mutually complementing ones, as ones that make it possible to stress the specifics of transnational local links and networks that members of these communities construct, and also the styles of their imagination which are directly linked to a specific place in space, to a specific city. Idea one – transnationalism refers to nation states and, considering the specifics of the communities researched, to ethno-national diasporas as well.

To one or another extent, all of my informants identify themselves with a nation state and an imaginary community. That may be the now former soviet republic of Ukraine or Azerbaijan or the Russian Federation. That may be “historical motherland” – Israel, or their current motherland – the country where they are – Germany. In the context of these feelings and associations they construct transnational networks and spaces, which may imply «relatively stable, lasting and dense sets of ties reaching beyond and across the borders of sovereign states. They consist of combinations of ties and their contents, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that cut across the borders of at least two nation states» (Faist 2004: 3-4). I will actually be viewing urban club as such organizational networks.

It should also be stressed that “this term focuses on people and groups and do not necessary refer to official bodies” (Ben-Rafael & Sternberg 2009: 1). Not only migrants, but wider, residents of Odessa or Baku who did not go anywhere often strive to maintain such links and construct transnational spaces, using to this end their personal and/or group *social*

capital as a resource for constructing and maintaining wide and often very intensive contacts among members of the community scattered across many countries. Nina Glick Schiller proposes using the idea of “transnationalism” to describe these networks and spaces. When this is about “a social process in which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders”. And here we have to talk about transmigrants, who “develop and maintain multiple relations - familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political - that span borders” (Schiller, et. al., 1992: ix). In the context of this approach, the process of construction of transnational networks and spaces can also be looked simultaneously on the local, national and global levels. Glick Schiller, for her part, proposes focusing on the process itself and social relations “rather than on culture, identity, or the ‘functional’ domains of integration within the particular nation-state” (Schiller & Çağlar 2008: 47).

In turn, the idea of *Translocality*, I think, expands the analytical framework and makes it possible to stress the particular attachment (real, symbolic or imaginary) to a specific place in space – the city of origin. The communities of Odessites, Bakuvians or Leningraders are constructed also as contra versa to national communities or ethno-national diasporas. They are larger than many frameworks in which national (ethnic, national, civic) communities are constituted. Simultaneously, they are associated with the more specific local space of one city. However, in the modern context, of importance is not only the presence in that city but activity within transnational networks. For emigrants, the city of origin is a *symbol city* or a *memory city* which in its present-day condition has increasingly less to do with the actual city they lived in. These symbols and memory are important not for preserving a certain urban community but for constructing some kind of a new transnational urban community. In their imagination all members of one community are attached to a specific place – a city. In their reality they are members of transnational networks and communities scattered across dozens of countries and cities. Ulrike Freitag and Achim von Oppen talking about traslocality underline that:

Translocality as a research perspective [...] more generally aims at highlighting the fact that the interactions and connections between places, institutions, actors and concepts have far more diverse, and often even contradictory effects than is commonly assumed. (Freitag & Oppen 2010: 5)

This is the far more diverse situation, which is not reducible to categories of nation state and diasporas or (post)imperial identities, that we can observe in the case with the communities of Odessites, Bakuvians and Leningraders. It is also important to stress that the approach based on this perspective “also situates social actors in translocal and transnational networks as well as in the different local context in which they operate” (Ibid.: 6). These local contexts, in which united transnational communities of Odessites or Bakuvians are constructed, are, in turn, very diverse. The specifics of the process of the transnationalization of these communities have to do with their adaptation to these very different local urban contexts (one city of origin and many other cities of residence), which leave their imprint on the styles in which they are imagined.

The styles in which the post-Soviet city-communities are imagined

In his famous book “Imagined Communities” Benedict Anderson says: “Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/ genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (1998, p. 6). And although Anderson is more focused on describing political imagined communities (nations), his observation is valuable in other cases as well, including in the situation with the construction of transnational and translocal urban communities. My research actually aimed to understand *the style in which they are imagined*. Following Anderson I am also talking in categories of imagination and process of construction of the communities of Odessites, Leningraders and Bakuvians. In my view, the origin of this imagination should be sought in the second half of the 19th century, when these communities just only started to be constructed.

In the case with the communities of Odessites, Leningraders or Bakuvians, we are not talking about imaginary identities which are produced within the spaces of nation states. Certainly, members of the communities of Odessites or Leningraders or Bakuvians may be members of different national communities and take part, to a varying extent of activity, in mobilization projects implemented by Israel, Russia, Ukraine or Azerbaijan. However, while taking part in the activities of network-based transnational urban clubs, they end up outside the boundaries of those mobilization projects. These supra-national specifics also put over the different extents of participation in national projects. For example, the

Bakuvians are more linked with projects run by the Azerbaijani authorities than are Russians or Ukrainians with projects run by the authorities of Ukraine and Russia. Ethnic Jews are more connected with policies implemented by Israel than with Ukraine, Russia or Azerbaijan.

Effectively, speaking about urban communities, we can observe a competition between different projects for construction of imaginary communities. The authorities, in the shape of the Russian and soviet empires and in the shape of the nationalizing post-Soviet nation states, aspire to control and structuralize the life of urban communities. They view them as a component part of large projects for nation construction, aspire to create and maintain different kinds of boundaries – class and religious boundaries under the Russian empire, and cultural and ethnic ones in the years of soviet power and in modern post-Soviet successor states. In the past almost two centuries they have making tireless (albeit often inconsistent) attempts at attributing different kinds of identity to their citizens, and have aspired to construct and actually set styles of (self)imagination of communities and even styles of their everyday life.

These attempts are made with a varying extent of intensiveness and insistence. The soviet regime demonstrated a far greater will to exercise control over citizens' private life than any post-Soviet one. However, under all kinds of authorities and regimes, the inconsistent aspiration to structuralize the (religious, cultural, ethnic and other kinds of) diversity in line with one or another state objective and project, with simultaneous attempts at homogenizing the population (russification, sovietization, nationalization, etc) met with counteraction from "grass roots".

Major cities could actually be those islands where practices of "resistance" to state-run projects accumulated, where it was never possible to firmly set identities, boundaries, norms or rules of everyday behaviour which were imposed by the authorities, where imaginary communities not planned by the state were constructed and where identities and lifestyles imposed by the authorities were either ignored or were interpreted in a different way. Recalling the famous work of James Scott, I can say that when necessary, Odessites, Bakuvians or Leningraders *followed but did not obey the authorities* (Scott 1985). This disobedience did not carry an explicit or implicit underlying political message. No major and/or mass protests against the soviet authorities (especially in the post-war period) took place in those cities (Kozlov 2002). We are also not talking about dissidence as complete non-acceptance of the dominant power and ideology. Those are attempts at adapting to (or cautiously ignoring) the

categories of identity and behavioural norms imposed by the authorities that contradict the “normal” everyday life of the Odessites and Bakuviens. Sometimes, the authorities retreated. Sometimes, townspeople’s behavioural norms adapted and changed. However, these imaginary communities were constructed in the context of a constant *game* that has gone on non-stop for the past 150 years between the authorities and Odessites or the authorities and Leningraders.

The normal everyday resistance could be expressed in very different ways – in the construction of urban place names in the city, which were not only different from the official ones but also ironized them; in a hidden (only among “our people”) irony about people’s compulsory participation in rallies held to mark yet another anniversary of the October Revolution or May Day; in the production of jokes and urban folklore songs; in clandestine parties with banned jazz; in the emergence of spaces within which “western” (or, as people said in the years of the USSR, “made by a firm”) clothing; in the formation of people’s own rules and norms of celebrating those events that townspeople deemed to be more important and topical than official state holidays; and, finally, in the thing that distinguishes these communities – in the construction of discursive boundaries of “our” communities (we are Odessites or we are Bakuviens) which were not planned within the framework of state policy; or, in another way, in the construction of their own imaginary communities different from those that the authorities tried to establish. These cities were (and remain, in a way) special. They were not like most other imperial or soviet cities. They were centres of culture, within the space of which numerous intellectuals and ordinary residents created languages for a (self-) description of their urban imaginary communities. These languages of (self-)description are widely used in literature, poetry, writing, and, finally in the everyday speak of residents of these cities. Every “true” Odessite or Bakuviens is fluent in this language (or discourse) of their home town, owing to their social capital and urban habitus.

Social Capital and Urban Habitus

Attempts to find concepts that could describe the post-Soviet urban transnational imagined communities lead to such categories as social capital and habitus. In my view, these concepts, as they are interpreted by Pierre Bourdieu, allow to conduct a nuanced analysis of the origin of

these communities. To understand the principles of membership in them. Finally, they will help to understand and describe the process of post-Soviet transformation of these communities.⁶ By Pierre Bourdieu's definition:⁷

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group... (Bourdieu 1986: 248-249)⁸

It is the practical and steady state of both material and symbolic exchange that urban communities are in. They are assured of a common name originating from the name of a particular city and socially instituted. As for the post-Soviet situation, this relationship, which urban communities are based on, "also partially irreducible to objective relations of proximity in physical (geographical) space or even in economic and social space" (Ibid.: 249). Stable membership in networks of Odessa, Leningrad and Baku residents are determined by kindred (family), friendly and neighborly, or business (colleagues) relationships during the period (or at the moment) of staying in their hometown (i.e., in a specific geographical and physical space). Stability of the exchange relationships (material and symbolic) often is also linked to *initial* and *secondary socialization* of inhabitants living in one city (Berger & Luckmann 1969: 139-156). It is almost impossible to become a true "Odessite", "Leningrader" or "Bakuvian" without going through these periods of socialization. That is, the circumstances of socialization have an impact on the volume of the social capital of a specific Odessa, Leningrad and Baku resident, and can determine the "size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize" (Bourdieu Ibid.: 249). In other words, the circumstances of socialization affect the size of a network, consisting of urban community members like him/her.

In the post-Soviet situation, membership in a group or networks is less connected with living in a particular physical space of the city. It is transformed into membership in emigrant clubs and, to some extent, into active involvement in a variety of transnational social networks. In a certain sense, clubs "Odessites", "Leningraders" or "Bakuvians" are transformed into clubs for the select few. For those, who have the necessary social capital. But in such a case, family and business relationships often do not seem to play a decisive role anymore. New networks and groups often based on friendly relationships are built. Social capital which is required

for membership in “the clubs for the select few” becomes a common memory of their native city.

It is not just by chance that these clubs are formed in a period when Odessa, Leningrad and Baku residents come into a mass movement. In 1990-1991, when the population of these cities actively emigrate. When the size of the network of connections begins to decrease rapidly. And the decrease is observed in the *hometown* in the first place. Therefore, the city clubs are first set up in Odessa, Baku and Leningrad. And only after a period of time, when it becomes possible to mobilize a new network of connections and to form new groups, in which membership is defined by the common memory of the hometown and experience of emigration - Odessa or Baku city clubs (as institutions constituting these groups in a new situation) are set up in different cities of their current residence. Gradually the transnationalization of these networks and clubs takes place - they are transformed into ‘worldwide’ or *global*.⁹

The benefit of membership in these clubs and transnational networks is an opportunity to participate in the construction of Odessites’, Leningraders’/Petersburgers’ and Bakuvians’ “islets” worldwide. The right to live on these islets for anyone, who has the necessary social capital, determines intergroup solidarity. But this solidarity and membership in groups does not imply their internal homogeneity and opacity of limits. These islets are no longer only for city natives, for the “genuine” Odessites or Bakuvians. In the transnational space, Bakuvians, Odessites and Leningraders/Petersburgers are neighbors, who meet each other and establish friendly relations (or even familial) much more frequently than it was possible in their previous life within the boundaries of a particular physical space. In their hometowns. This neighborhood and frequent meetings, on the one hand, seem to blur the boundaries of imaginary urban communities. All of them (Odessites, Petersburgers and Bakuvians) are emigrants from the former Soviet space. But, on the other hand, this experience leads to more clear understanding of the difference among them. And finally, to the cultivation of this diversity or intergroup boundaries. Each islet is not lost in a vast ocean of migrants. They form an archipelago. Residents of separate islets travel amongst them. They enter into a different kind of relationships with the islanders from other islets. Construct networks based on friendship and kinship. They are often in a fairly steady state of material and symbolic exchange. All the inhabitants of the archipelago have even a common name: they are all former Soviet people – “homo soveticus”.

But, at the same time, they are different. And experience of traveling amongst different islets created by migrants support this diversity. According to Bourdieu, “Manners (bearing, pronunciation, etc.) May be included in social capital insofar as, through the mode of acquisition they point to, they indicate initial membership of a more or less prestigious group” (Ibid.: 256). The difference in manners, a view of themselves, a way to pronounce the same Russian words, to combine them in different ways, sometimes even to put different meanings to the same words, becomes distinct when living in emigration.

And precisely after most of “the genuine Odessites” or “genuine Bakuvians” left their hometowns with their own manners and accent, the difference between the remained (“rooted city-dwellers”) and new migrants in Odessa or St. Petersburg, in turn, becomes even more evident. In this situation of the dispersion that cannot be avoided even with staying in the hometown membership in the group is inevitably perceived as more prestigious. The smaller groups of Odessites or Bakuvians are and the more difficult it is to construct them in a situation of global scattering, the higher their status.

Most migrants, who consider themselves to be Odessites, Leningraders or Bakuvians, are middle-aged and older people – forty-year-old and older. It is too late for them to change their manners and pronunciation. They feel comfortable among emigrants, who came like them from the former Soviet space. In a Russian speaking environment. But this environment is very diverse and heterogeneous. And each of emigrants tries to find or create his/her own group or social network in this heterogeneity. Perceiving these efforts as the desire to restore the usual circle of acquaintances, a comfortable social and cultural atmosphere. Just being around Odessites or Bakuvians like him/her, a migrant from these cities feels really comfortable.

All of them are Odessites or Bakuvians also because they have the right to membership in the groups set up by emigrants from these cities. Or, in other words, they all have social capital required for this membership. They all speak the same language, laugh at the same jokes, listen to the same music, dress in a similar style and prefer a similar range of foods. They all have something to remember. And these memories fill their daily emigrant lives with positive emotions and meaning when they have someone to share them, when there is someone with whom they can discuss the news from their hometown. Memories unite them. These newly established emigrant ties and relationships “are a product of an

endless effort at institution". And these new (transnational and translocal) networks of connections:

the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term. (Ibid.: 249)

Casual contacts among emigrants from Odessa, Baku and Leningrad often degenerate "into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.)" (Ibid.: 249-50). Of course, these relationships may be competitive or even hostile. But these negative relations also take on special significance when established among fellow-townsmen. Emigrants from the same city. This exchange of signs of recognition, respect or competition for status in the group re-produces the group "through the mutual recognition and the recognition of group membership which it implies" (Ibid.: 250).

Rivalry can occur over access to the leadership of the city clubs. However, emergence of these clubs enables to create and maintain "more or less institutionalized forms of delegation" of certain rights to represent emigrants from Odessa or Baku by "small group of agents" (Ibid.: 251). Often these are people more or less known in their communities, who obtain these authorities due to their social capital. These people are usually the intellectuals, activists who are ready to spend their time organizing institutions (clubs) and collective events. Among them may be those whose name was known among townsmen even before emigration. Or even people known in the whole former Soviet space. As president of the Worldwide Club of Odessites Mikhail Zhvanetski, a popular artist and satirist. Or the president of the Worldwide Club of Petersburgers, a famous scientist and director of the Hermitage, the most recognizable Russian Museum in the world, Michael Piotrowski. And in this case the name of the president enables to concentrate social capital within the club. Gives the club a certain weight and/or popularity.

Positions of emigrant club activists and leaders are directly dependent on their achievements over the years of living in their hometown. The more significant their social capital was, the more likely that they would be recognized and/or identified by the largest possible number of emigrants from the same city. The greater their chances of being invited to the

structures that manage the city clubs. This position of a social agent in a network or in a group is also defined by his urban habitus:

systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adopted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (Bourdieu 1990: 53)

Habitus of Odessites, Leningraders or Bakuvians generated by the urban environment, where they were born and lived a significant (or even the most part of their life) determines a similar style of behavior interiorized by these people. More often not reflecting about this style, they demonstrate it in a manner of communication or behavioral habits. Habitus of Odessites, Bakuvians or Leningraders, as a system of firmly acquired dispositions, reproduces rules of behavior that they followed in their hometown when living in emigration. Urban habitus enables to reproduce structures of collective solidarity in the transnational space. It is similar "habitus as social space, as a sense of one's place and a sense of the other's place" (Hiller & Rooksby 2002: 1) that allows emigrant Odessites, Leningraders and Bakuvians to know each other. One can say that urban habitus in this context acts as a form of social capital (Ibid.). Only a "genuine" Bakuvian and Odessite can have this special social capital (or urban habitus). That is, one who was born and socialized in the city. And more importantly, whom the other members of a group or network accept as one who belongs here.¹⁰

"Habitus is thus a sense of one's (and other's) place and role in the world of one's lived environment. [...] habitus is an embodied, as well as a cognitive, sense of place" (Ibid.: 5). As for Odessa, Leningrad and Baku communities, this place is their hometown. Thus, it makes sense to talk in terms of urban habitus. The focus on different cities of origin allows talking about habitus that distinguishes the Odessites from the Bakuvians. Dispositions acquired through living in the space of the same city - that is, the focus on one city - enable to talk about a similar urban habitus. It is important that all members of a group or network have similar habitus. At the same time, they may differ in their social capital. Or in the degree of its concentration. Urban habitus makes for the presence of the past experience of socialization within the urban community in the present.

This experience is re-actualized in the new situation of emigration. Both social capital and urban habitus ensure membership in the urban community and in the situation of dispersion.

In principle, all the Odessites and Bakuvians can be members of the club or be active in transnational networks. But not all are involved in the construction of discourses of Odessites or Bakuvians, or participate in the creation and management of clubs. Intellectuals are generally involved in these processes. And specificity of these communities is largely determined by the high number of Leningraders, Odessites and Bakuvians who have not only similar urban habitus, but also cultural capital of intellectuals. The transnationalization process of Odessites' or Petersburgers' network institutions (i.e. networks of urban clubs) may be considered as an intellectual movement.

Thus, I consider a similar urban habitus, as a product of the history of the construction of these communities that allows to carry out collective practices and to maintain solidarity and social capital as sustainable membership in a group, to be a broad categorical framework enabling to understand and to describe the post-Soviet transnational urban communities. When talking about the special position of social agents, who, in addition to a similar urban habitus and social capital, also have the necessary cultural capital (intellectuals), I focus on a concrete specificity that should be considered in the context of a broad categorical framework.

The only question remains, how much the category 'urban habitus' which refers to the idea of attachment to a certain place can help to describe the process of rapid transnationalization of urban (local) communities. Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant state that:

Habitus is not a fate that some people read into it. Being the product of history, it is an *open system of dispositions* that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 133)

As for the post-Soviet urban communities, we can see how the new dispersion situation forces to look for ways to form new structures, using resources that members of these communities have. Under the new conditions, social capital and urban habitus are those resources that allow reconstructing solidarity groups and networks in a transnational space. In his last work on this topic Bourdieu tries to answer the question of the applicability of the concept of habitus to our fast changing world. He

develops the thesis that habitus should be described as sufficiently open and volatile form of experience and behavior:

the habitus is not something natural, inborn: being a product of history, that is of social experience and education, it may changed by history, that is by new experiences, education or training. (Bourdieu 2002: 29).

Building the network of urban clubs is some kind of response to the new experience gained by Leningraders, Odessites or Bakuvians in the dispersion situation. This is a way of organizing (or structuring) the formerly local community as a transnational network of institutions – clubs. A way of organizing the daily life of emigrants that allows them to create islets of Odessites, Bakuvians and Leningraders worldwide. Their social capital and urban habitus acquired in a specific geographic space give strength and stability to the post-Soviet transnational networks and groups. And the new experience gained when living in emigration enables to use Diaspora resources or capabilities of modern electronic media systems and fast travel to construct a new type of community.

Urban communities and the work of imagination

The daily “work of imagination” of ordinary Odessites, Leningraders/Petersburgers and Bakuvians dispersed through the countries and cities that, according to Arjun Appadurai, draws resources in modern electronic media, among other things, allows reconstructing these communities in the transnational space. Loss of locality in exchange for globality is symbolically reflected in the name of institutions created for constituting these ‘old’ communities in their new, present situation. This is surely the Worldwide Club of Odessites - the most globalized of all post-Soviet local urban communities. And, of course, the *Worldwide Club* of Petersburgers, or a little more modest the International Cultural Club “Bakinets”.

Appadurai’s statement that “few persons in the world today do not have a friend, relative, or coworker who is not on the road to somewhere else or already coming back home, bearing stories and possibilities (Ibid.: 4) is directly related to natives of those cities. A high level of mobility is one of the features of these communities. Jews and their families, using the resource of ethnicity, were actively migrating from these cities in the 1970s. Since 1989, this immigration grows massive.¹¹ Such often-repeated

phrases of different people as “there are almost no ‘geniune’ Bakuvians or ‘geniune’ Leningraders/Petersburgers” reflect this tendency of rapid global scattering. According to Zhvanetski, who finds the most accurate metaphors to describe these urban communities:¹² “the Odessites are smeared in a thin layer on the globe.” The “genuine” Odessites living in Berlin or Los Angeles increasingly watch movies and listen to music glorifying their hometown. They discuss TV shows about Odessa, being away from it. They have their own websites, social networks and online forums. News, newspapers, and books telling about their native city are also widely available through electronic media. As for the Odessites or Bakuvians, we see that, according to Appadurai, “moving images meet deteretorialized viewers” (2005: 3-4).

Members of each of these urban communities consider it unique and there is no doubt that they are. But each of these unique communities has found itself in a very similar situation of rapid scattering of its members. With the subsequent creation of new social networks and institutions to reconstruct urban communities in their present transnational and translocal form. The loss of normal daily routine, which consisted of a complex web of social connections and relationships (family, friendly, official, etc.) was made up in the 2000s with construction of new transnational networks. Relationships among relatives and neighbors, classmates and fellow students, friends and colleagues, which were broken or lost during the process of immigration, are restored. It is possible due to the rapid development of social networks and electronic media.

The modern communication capabilities, rapid dissemination of news and information enable to create conditions under which the mass immigration leads to no less mass process of building new transnational social networks and various groups.¹³ Communities of peoples from the same city that are reconstructed in these networks and groups can be described in different terms with the prefix “trans”. They consist not only of transnational families,¹⁴ but also transnational groups of former classmates or colleagues. It can be *transneighbourly* and *transfriendly* groups. Experience which is a basis of the desire to construct various *transgroups* can be very different. But, in the end, it is about people socialized in the same environment. And if this environment produced people with a particular urban habitus, they easily find ways and reasons to build bridges among different *transgroups* of classmates or former neighbors from among the Odessites and Bakuvians living in immigration.

Paraphrased Appadurai slightly, we can say that when dealing with the construction of transnational and translocal groups and networks of Odessites or Bakuvians, we have a collective work of imagination, which “can become a fuel for action” (Ibid.: 7). Focusing on the aspect of the collective imagination, these communities can be described as a kind of a *community of sentiment* - “a group that begins to imagine and feel things together” (Ibid.: 8). Referring after Appadurai to the thesis of Benedict Anderson, we can say that all members of the Odessan and Baku communities could not have been familiar with each other. However, production of different kinds of texts (printed narratives), played a major role in the creation of these communities. City newspapers, including their modern online versions, political essays (including memoirs), novels and poetry, and finally, radio, movies and TV programs contributed to the creation of this imagined community. To the formation of an urban habitus. Unlike communities of sentiment described by Appadurai, the post-Soviet urban communities are no *less*, but *more* “subject to collectively shared criteria of pleasure, taste, or mutual relevance”. But “Most important”, that “these sodalities are often transnational, even postnational, and they frequently operate beyond the boundaries of the nation” (Ibid.).

Conclusion

Since 1989 and then throughout the 1990s, when the mass immigration of residents from these cities continued, contacts had been maintained and re-established only on the basis of social capital and urban habitus. Migrants built up, step by step, new communication and acquaintance networks in the new cities, where they have moved to. They tried to maintain relationships with family and close friends who remained in their hometown. These relationships were not originally transnational in varying degrees of intensity. But communication capabilities, expanding gradually due to the Internet, lead to actualization of these contacts. They [communication capabilities] make these relationships and contacts virtual but daily. Odessites and Bakuvians begin actively seeking their old friends and classmates, many of whom they have not seen for many years. Contacts cannot only be restored but even expanded. New groups and networks are built. City clubs are created.

Of course, as for my research, it is about the first-generation immigrants. About the people in the middle and older age groups. About those who socialized in Odessa, Baku and Leningrad/St.Petersburg. That is, at least, about those who studied in senior high school, and only after immigrated. About people whose personal memory connects them with the cities of origin. Now it is difficult to predict what the situation with the second and especially the third generation of Odessite and Bakuvian immigrants will be. This is a question of another study. According to the stories of my informants, I can only say that their children (especially those who were born and raised in emigration) show much less interest to participate in networks and clubs of Odessites and Bakuvians.

In the words of Appadurai, communities of Odessites, Bakuvians and Leningraders/Petersburgers appropriate “the materials of modernity differently”. And the transformation of these communities in the past twenty years can be considered as an impressive example of “how locality emerges [or reconstructed] in a globalizing forms” and “how global facts take local form” (Ibid., p. 15, 17-18). According to Appadurai: “Diasporic public spheres, diverse among themselves, are the crucibles of a postnational political order” (Ibid.: 22). Transnational and translocal post-Soviet urban communities, which are similar to these *diasporic public spheres*,¹⁵ are one of the most impressive examples supporting the fact “that the nation-state, as a complex modern political form, is on its last legs” (Ibid.: 19). And, at the same time, one of the most interesting socio-cultural phenomena of the emerging postnational political order.

NOTES

- ¹ I will often use two self-designations at the same time. The simplest explanation is that the city's name has been changed, and, along with it, the name of the communities. But this issue is more complicated and is connected with the change of epochs (from imperial to Soviet and post-Soviet). Much depends on the specific of social and cultural contexts in which a narrator tells his or her life story. The vast majority of my informants often use these names as synonyms, which I will often allow myself. At the same time, the simultaneous use of two names often allows emphasizing the differences in urban discourses. Unlike Odessites and Bakuviens, in the case of Leningraders / Petersburgers, the changes of the city's and community's name are a constant reminder of the connection and discontinuity of the epochs reflected in one biographical narrative.
- ² I reacted the approach which is described in a number of influential theoretical works on the problem of diaspora (see: Safran 1991; Clifford 1994; Sheffer 2003; Cohen 2008).
- ³ All of the three cities were not "core area of the Russian empire" (see: Gorizontov).
- ⁴ The term "diaspora" is widely used in mass media, political discourses in the post-Soviet area and also in academic texts (see Kolstoe 1995; Laitin 1998; Braun 2000; Satzewich 2002; Rumyantsev 2010; Kosmarskaya 2011).
- ⁵ Leningraders/Petersburgers, who do not think about themselves in categories of diaspora.
- ⁶ Researchers often use these categories to describe urban communities, when the transnationalization of a population takes place in their home towns. Links between social capital of urban dwellers and urbanism, or habitus and urbanism. Most often, such works tell about cities in Western Europe and the United States. See, for example: (Dilworth, Ed., 2006; Dirksmeier 2009).
- ⁷ There are different social capital theories. However, as Elinor Ostrom rightly said: "Almost all reflect two basic assumptions: social capital is a resource that is available to members of a social network, and social structure is often the type of capital that all members of a group can access to promote their interests" (Ostrom 2009: 17). I think that the both approaches which are valuable for describing the post Soviet transnational urban communities are reflected to the full extent in the Bourdieu's theory. Thus an appeal to other theoretical conceptions of the social capital is unnecessary. More about other approaches see: (Fine 2010; Häuberer 2011).
- ⁸ Or as John Field tried to sum up the concept of social capital: "Its central thesis can be summed up in two words: relationship matter. [...] Membership of networks, and a set of shared values, are at the heart of the concept of social capital" (Field 2003: 1, 3).

- ⁹ Active emigration of ethnic Jews from these cities started as far back as 1970s. Any networks or communities (expatriate associations) are likely to have appeared before the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- ¹⁰ For a detailed definition of the category 'habitus' see also: (Krais & Gebauer 2002).
- ¹¹ As Larissa Remennick describes these events: "Soviet Jews became effectively the only ethnic group granted the exceptional privilege of mass emigration from the Soviet Empire under the pretext of return to their historic homeland of Israel. Between 1971 and 1981, around 250,000 Jews left the USSR [...] Since 1988, well over 1.6 million Jews from Russia, Ukraine, and other Soviet successor states have emigrated to Israel, the U.S., Canada, Germany, Australia, and a few other Western countries" (Remennick 2007, p. 3-4). These figures include family members who are not ethnic Jews.
- ¹² And, of course, first of all the community to which the satirist belongs - Odessan.
- ¹³ One of the most exciting projects implemented in the former Soviet space is the social networking service 'Odnoklassniki' ('Classmates').
- ¹⁴ See, for example: (Goulbourne, et. al., 2010: 3-15).
- ¹⁵ Representing, at the same time, the socio-cultural phenomenon that does not fit entirely within such spheres.

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SEEKING THE BARBARIANS: ON THE TRAIL OF OVID FROM ODESA TO BALCHIK

Abstract

Publius Ovidius Naso became a peculiar symbol of Eastern Europe after he had been exiled to the very limes of Western civilization by the emperor Octavian Augustus. His impressions from living in Tomis (present-day Constanta) for a long while became the keynote of West-European thought, astonished by the description of the exotic region, where severe barbarians ruled. This research describes stable stereotypes existing on the East-European borders, it is about the neighboring peoples, who we consider to be barbaric for the lack of knowledge about them, and about the frontiers often laid not on the ground but in our heads.

Keywords: Ovid, Tomis, barbarians, border, frontier, literature, stereotypes, western civilization, Eastern Europe.

“What are you transporting?” the Moldavian customs officer asked me on the border in Giurgiulești.

“Nothing,” I replied honestly.

“What’s the purpose of your trip then?” The officer screwed up his eyes slyly as he said this. I could not summon an answer while the public servant set about examining my documents. The border was empty and completely desolate. There was only an indolent dog resting and basking in the sun on the cracked asphalt. Having realized I was not of these parts (not from Odessa) the customs official started examining my papers more meticulously. At some point he even drew out something like a pocket microscope he used to assiduously examine the hologram on the registration certificate of my car.

He could not understand how someone from so far away could cross the frontier here without any significant purpose. I didn’t mention tourism. It would sound totally absurd, since why does one need to drive

430 meters into Moldavian territory? What can one see here? What can one take pictures of? In fact, the border with Romania should have been here, if not Ukraine handing over several hundred meters of its territory to Moldova in 1999, which later built a port at this very location. Its access to the Danube was to make it a near maritime power. In return, Ukraine has received some hundred meters of the highway near Palanka village connecting the northern and southern parts of Odessa region. There was even a talk that this exchange was not advantageous for Ukraine but was done to support Moldova, to give it a significant tool for development and enrichment.

What does Kyiv need such a step for? Can it really be true that Ukraine is such a noble state that while it is unable to develop itself, it keeps supporting other countries? The answer is simple: fortifying Moldova would reduce the chances for this country to join Romania in the nearest future; the idea of “the Great Romania”, of course, could not find adherents apart from Romanians themselves. For this reason Ukraine (or its former Kremlin fathers) has chosen a “divide et impera” strategy. In this way Moldova, elbowing everyone around, just as an old woman on the market, which suddenly shows herself between two stalls and starts to lay out patties for sale, wedged itself in the border between Ukraine and Romania. In this way, all the great geopolitics was reduced here to two villages: Giurgiulești and Palanka, and all this was already worth tourism in totality, but how could I explain that to the officer of Moldavian State Customs Services?

Ten minutes have passed, but the customs officer was still checking my documents, asking something idly or demanding some new papers from time to time. Then I suddenly began to hear some music, it was a sort of Russian criminal songs reaching my ears simply from the air first, but in a few seconds its source – an old smashed Audi – appeared from around the corner, too. Having stopped behind my car, its driver, an obese bold man in a track-suit and a cross over his T-shirt, taking absolutely no notice of me, approached the window of the customs officer and they gladly greeted each other. The latter moved my papers aside and quickly stamped the documents of the newcomer, who, despite his short fat fingers demonstrated wonderous motility as he simultaneously nibbled sunflower seeds with one hand, vigorously turning the bundle of keys on his finger and switching the songs of the record player in his car with the small remote controller. I was standing beside and saw that the customs officer took a 10 Euro bill out of the driver’s passport and moved it to the side of the table. He noticed that I saw this plain fraud and smiled with

satisfaction. This openness was a sign for me – as if the customs officer gave me a hint of how to act. In the next moment, that “Audi” had vanished in the Moldavian side, kicking up the dust, as he drove, while I remained standing next to the window of the checkpoint.

The thing was about money – were I to pay at least a symbolic tribute, I would have already been released. The customs officer nodded to the corner of his cabin and all at once a border guard walked out of it, instantly disproving Darwin’s theory with his expression and way of walking. He ordered me to open all the doors, the bonnet and trunk of my car, then slowly examined my stuff, verifying the car body number, ransacking my suitcase and contemptuously knocking over my books on the back seat. Then he went to the dog, woke it up and led it up to sniff my car all over. Now I had been stuck on this border for more than half an hour already, despite the fact that there was no line. At that very moment I felt sorry not for myself, but for the poor dog that had been vainly dragged out of its quiet slumber.

At the end of the day, I could have paid those guardians of law and frontier, not for the sake of my quick liberation, but to help those two be themselves. Please forgive me the tautology, but I crossed the border here to cross the border, to feel it, to find it. Just that very delay of my passing through, that meticulous papers checkup, a car rummage, the undisguised bribery right in front of my eyes – all this as a whole was the border. The frontier was not a barbed wire but exacting of money, corruption and impudence.

Finally this torture was over, I was set free. For some remaining forty meters I was still driving along the broken Moldavian road with its deep crater-like pits. On the left there was the Danube glistening like silver in the sun, once “described as being a frontier of the known world”.¹ On the right I saw Moldova stretched out, Ukraine remained behind, and Romania was waiting ahead. Some one and a half decades ago a Polish writer Andrzej Stasiuk was crossing the frontier here, he “was looking at the opposite side of the Danube, at the large rusty wharf cranes. That was my Romania – that temporary fraternity of “Mercedes”, gold, porcine stink and tragic industry, the desolation of which was equal only to its magnitude”.² Everything has changed here since that time and I have been quickly let through the Romanian border, with no questions at the customs. I drove out to the high-quality road, and due to the feeling that my car was not shaking madly any longer, my body realized that the border, or, maybe, the *limes* was left behind. The road led me to Constanta,

an ancient Greek harbor Tomis, where two thousand years ago Publius Ovidius Naso underwent his exile.

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Was Ovid crossing the frontier in Giurgiulești? No, and if we still try to imagine him in this place, owing to poet's legal education, he would have rather been a customs officer. After all, his legal practice is still perceptible in the structure of his poems. They are logically constructed, the author is capable of adducing arguments and persuasion, and in the case of need he even manipulates skillfully. Although he still could not succeed in defending himself, due to the wrathful will of Augustus, the Roman emperor, the poet was exiled to the very end of the world, to the *limes* of Western civilization.

What do we know about Ovid? He was born in 43 BC in Sulmona (central Italy) in a well-off family. He received a typical rhetoric education for that time, practiced law for a while but then gave up and fully devoted himself to poetry, he proved to be much better at. He quickly earned fame, one could only be jealous of his social position: he resided in the center of Rome, right near the Capitoline; he had a beloved wife, several friends. In other words, he had an absolutely ordinary biography, until one day an incident had changed Ovid's life for good, which, however, in some sense, was useful for his creative work and literary legacy. So in 8 AD Octavian August became angry with the poet and banished him to the remote Tomis, where Publius Ovidius Naso lived nine long years and where he passed away in 17 AD.

What did the emperor punish the writer for? First, because the ruler was a man of a severe disposition, he enjoyed inflicting penalty (remember that Cicero was violently killed during the reign of Octavian Augustus).³ It is still a question and there is still a debate, but most of the scholars agree to the fact that Ovid could have witnessed adultery or an orgy with Julia, Augustus's granddaughter. And the punishment was so severe, probably, for the sake of the lesson for all others. The era of Augustus's reign is called a Golden Age, owing to the peace and wealth which turned Rome into a truly heavenly place of the untroubled life and hedonism overgrowing into dissoluteness. The emperor grew older and within the flow of the years he started to display more and more concern for morality of his people, leaving behind all those numerous sins he had committed

when he himself was young. And Ovid seemed to be a perfect model for a victim: the poet was describing love, not its most delicate and refined spiritual gusts, but mainly its physical calls. One can find the tips of how to seduce a woman, how to skillfully conceal your love affair and even what cosmetics to use in order to entice more lovers.

A number of more serious works also belong to the writer: the lost drama *Medea* was approvingly accepted in Rome (interesting whether the author had a feeling that he would soon follow in her footsteps, as, according to the myth, it was the Black Sea where Medea has torn her brother to pieces, and the name Tomis comes from Greek word meaning "torn"?),⁴ and the *Metamorphoses* is still considered to be the pearl of world literature. Though, throughout the era of Augustus's reign the author was mostly appreciated for his poems about love and physical pleasure. Using contemporary terms, Ovid could be possibly called a celebrity, a partly scandalous star of his time.

But the thunder crashed and the spoilt child of fortune was sent into exile to Moesia – the extreme province of the Roman Empire. He spent almost nine years there, wrote a few books of *Sorrows* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, in which he first begged the emperor for mercy and to at least revise the place of exile (the poet asked to banish him to some not-so-distant Greek island, so he could live among the civilized people, not among the barbarians in Tomis),⁵ he appealed to his numerous friends and former patrons with requests for protection, he wrote to his wife and imaginary readers. As Claudio Magris mentions in his fundamental book *Danubio*, the place of exile was a tragedy for Ovid, as

he was not a poet of love or sex, but a poet of eroticism. And eroticism requires metropole, mass media, saloon gossiping and publicity. A writer of erotic texts, appreciated by people, as Ovid or D'Annunzio, is a marketing genius, he established a code of behavior, created slogans and advertising devices (D'Annunzio), promoted fashion and cosmetics (Ovid). In order to exist, a writer of eroticism has to stay in the whirlpool of the events, he needs Rome, Byzantine Empire, Paris, New York; practicing literary eroticism in the 19th-century provincial and rather domestic Germany seemed to be too challenging or even impossible; and even harder it seemed to be among the Gets. Those Sarmatian winters must have been truly frosty for Ovid; Augustus was good at choosing vengeance.⁶

So there is nothing strange that the books written in exile were full of bitter complaints about the fate and the place of exile, the author tries

to touch his reader, to evoke compassion. So he was overdrawing much describing the climate, for instance (according to Ovid, Tomis, a Black Sea port, was located almost on the North Pole, that is how rigorous the winters were over there). The poet writes, for example:

*"The snow lies continuously, and once fallen
Neither sun no rains may melt it...
So when an earlier fall is not yet melted
Another has come, and in many places 'tis
Wont to remain for two years".⁷*

Ovid depicts bloodthirsty barbarians attacking the city; he complains that no one speaks Latin, that there are no books, but seems to put up with his fate within the flow of the years: he learned the local language and even wrote several poems in it. He was honored with a tax exemption and a laurel wreath:

*"There is not a book here, not a man to lend ear to me,
to know what my words mean. All places are filled
with barbarism and cries of wild animals, all are filled
with the fear of a hostile sound. I myself, I think,
have already unlearned my Latin, for I have learned how
to speak Getic and Sarmatian..."⁸*

But it was a completely different life, and in his poems from exile the poet tried to convince everyone that he remained to live only in a physical way ever since he had been banished from Rome, that, maybe, he or his spirit, his nature died the night he had left the capital. One of his most beautiful elegies is about that night which became an edge, a boundary, a frontier, on the opposite side of which something he was reluctant to call a real life commenced. A person surmounts the first frontier when he or she is born, he or she crosses the border when passing away, too; the fate, however, prepared one more border for Ovid – the exile, and he crossed it in Rome that ominous night, and remained to live, thinking, though, he's been already dead.

Andriy Sodomora, Ovid's translator into Ukrainian has very neatly indicated a striking difference of the two sides of the frontier, he told us about that night which became an abyss:

The top of poetic glory in magnificent Rome illuminated by the long-awaited peace, a house on the glorious Capitoline Hill, a vast number of friends, a creative leisure in the countryside villa, books – and an absolute absence of everything mentioned above. Were it only the absence – it was the opposite! Mocking at Latin, a foreign for the local citizens language (not to mention the poetry) – instead of glory; extreme coldness and a constant threat of a violent death instead of family warmth, unkempt Gets wearing animal skins, grasping the knives each time when sorting their relationship – instead of educated friends fostered by civilization.⁹

The exile was terrible, but only on the condition that it really took place. A vast amount of information about the Augustus's age has survived to the present day, there are plenty of diligent historical works of that time, but the paradox lies in the fact that none of them tell us about Ovid's exile! No doubt that such a twist of fate of the glorious poet caused a great scandal, but no one set it down on paper. It can be possible that the historians and scholars were afraid of infuriating the emperor, but the point that the exile did not take place should not be fully neglected, too. We learn about Ovid's banishment only from Ovid's literary works. Let's agree to the fact that it is not the most reliable source.

Especially if you thoroughly read the books written by the poet in exile, you will notice that they are rich on many emotional, sorrowful characters, but at the same time, they lack facts. Describing Tomis and the surroundings, the Danube and the Black Sea, the barbarians and the Romans, Ovid is mainly using the stereotypical ideas: according to him the barbarians have overgrown hair, they are bloodthirsty, and are mostly notable for wearing trousers (this detail is very often repeated in his works, the trousers impressed him more than the threat of being violently killed during one of the hostile raids on the port: "Wrapped in skins, and with trousers sewed, they contend with the weather. And their faces alone of the whole body are seen").¹⁰ The Danube and the Black Sea freeze up in winter, the fish freeze up in solid ice, and the barbarians rush across the ice to rob Tomis. It is so cold there, that even wine freezes up and if one breaks the jar, the wine still keeps its shape and so it has to be cleaved into pieces of ice and be consumed suchwise.¹¹

We should have thought that the books of the writer describing his daily routine in a little-known remote place of the world should have become a priceless source of information about the mode of life of local inhabitants, culture, climate, history and even geography; but, as a matter of fact, these books provide us with some scanty and already well-known

data for Ovid's time.¹² It all raises doubts and thoughts that the poet could have simply fabricated his exile as a means of creative technique or an advertising trick, and simply wrote his mournful books not from Tomis surrounded by the barbarians, but from his luxurious countryside villa.

One could play such a game for several months, or, perhaps, a year, but would a serious poet carry on mystifying everyone for a long nine-year period of his life, up to the end of his days? I doubt that. And why wasn't his grave preserved in Rome then? And why isn't there any information about his burial? For these reasons the investigators of Ovid's life and literary accomplishments have almost unanimously accepted the poet's story about his exile. So the writer was banished, he lived among the barbarians on the far Black Sea coast till the very end of his life, wrote ten books there, acquired the local language, and at the end of 17 or at the beginning of 18 AD he passed away. But, as the school literature teachers usually say, the poet has died, but his works remain to live.

And here we must give credit to the exile which was no doubt a tragic event in Ovid's life, but at the same time fortune did him a kindness. There is still one mystery: we are not aware of the reason emperor punished the poet for. This riddle made his biography merely legendary and even after the writer's death, people, for twenty long centuries, have still been looking for the reason and place of exile and later even for the writer's grave.¹³ Not only that the poet managed to touch his addressees from *Epistulae ex Ponto*, but also he proved able to touch a countless number of his readers of future times, who felt for the writer's miserable fate, who sympathized with him, who admired him. There were also those who wished to appropriate Ovid to their literature: for instance, taking a false consideration that the poet was exiled to some place near Odesa, a Ukrainian classic Ivan Franko, who was one of the first investigators of Ovid's creative work and his translator into Ukrainian, suggested a daring assumption that Publius Ovidius Naso can be considered the first Ukrainian poet, a founder of Ukrainian literature.¹⁴

There is a majority of literary critics, who believe that the author's creative work in exile is of worse quality in comparison to his preceding writings. One cannot but agree, as hard life conditions, absence of any contact with cultural life have negatively influenced poet's work. But we should also admit that even though the exile took away a lot (e.g. quality and refinement of his texts), it also brought a valuable present for Ovid.

The exile gave a myth to the poet – a myth of a sufferer, a recluse, a poet, tormented by a tyrant. Who knows if we would rank Ovid's literary

accomplishments alongside with the most important writers of Antiquity today, if it hadn't been for his exile. His biography made him unique, it made him an object of interest for twenty centuries, it made him a legend, a mystery. As they say, if the exile had not existed, it should have been invented.

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But let's start from the very beginning. No, not from Sulmona, Ovid's birthplace, but from Giurgiulești, a Moldavian village between Ukraine and Romania, the very *limes* of the Roman Empire. How on earth did I happen to be there? I wanted to understand Ovid better, as he is my favorite poet. I was naïve to think that once I step on the ground he used to step on, once I see the same landscape, once I breathe in the same sea air, once I take a good look into the eyes of the local citizens, then I will finally start to better and deeper understand his works. And owing to this I will finally feel deeper the whole Eastern Europe, whose symbol is Ovid.

Such thoughts seem to be so well-timed in this Moldavian Giurgiulești, situated between Ukrainian Reni and Romanian Galati. It was two thousand years ago when Roman Emperor Augustus sent Ovid into exile to those lower reaches of the Danube. It was the end of the Empire, the end of the Western civilization on the opposite side of which the barbarians lived. How did Ovid describe it in the *Fasti*?

"For other nations frontiers are fixed:

For Rome, the city and the world are one".¹⁵

2000 years have passed but another frontier runs on this very place – it is a border of the EU and NATO on the one hand, and Ukraine, on the other. We can assume that Ukraine did not become an EU-member, because our Ukrainian riverbank still looks barbaric out of the windows in Brussels. After all it is enough to estimate the quality of roads – which are, in fact, almost absent on the Ukrainian side (local people keep saying there are no roads but visible directions on the ground) and a flat asphalt on the Romanian side – to start believing that the border – the *limes* of Western civilization exists up to this time and it is here. So, here is the truth: Ovid believed the barbarians were residing on the opposite side of the Danube, so when I was driving to Constanta I could not but think I

was the barbarian myself. To understand, to take a look at Publius Ovidius Naso from the barbarian standpoint – this is what I wanted.

But as I was going to cross the Ukrainian border I could not miss the opportunity to visit a small town in the northern part of Odesa region called Ovidiopol. The legend, the myth generated by the exile and poet's death among the barbarians bothered lots of adventurers, who have been looking for Ovid's grave for centuries. It was almost impossible to find the grave, since there was little data even about Tomis. The only thing known was that the emperor chose an ancient port on the Black Sea for exile, where the Danube ends falling onto the sea, but where exactly? The identification of ancient Tomis and present-day Constanta took place not so long ago; so, there is nothing strange that yet in the 18th century the romantic souls were seeking the traces of exile in much of the eastern direction, as Bessarabian steppes across the Danube. Some desperados even managed to find the grave of Publius Ovidius Naso – at least such a presupposition existed at that time.¹⁶ The consequences were instant: in 1795 the empress Catherine II of Russia ordered to rename a small Turkish settling Acidere into Ovidiopol in honor of the poet which was allegedly exiled there. How could I pass by the city with such a name?

Ovidiopol is a small town located by the lake connected with the sea, but not too close to attract the crowds of tourists. It is quiet and provincially calm nook. I have wandered about the central streets in search of the Ovid's statue. But it turned out that the poet had been banished here, too: the monument is situated on the backyard of the local Culture House, over 10 meters away from the lake. I left the car and went all around this, to be completely honest, the monument not of the best esthetic quality. The poet is sitting on the stone block and looks ahead, deep in thought. I would like to say he is looking into the distance, but no, his gaze is directed into the back wall of the Culture House. Maybe that is the reason he has got such a sorrowful look. The emptiness is all around. Only the pier is overrun with fishermen.

And as I am a fishing lover myself I decided to start a conversation with them. After all, there is information that beside the other books written in exile, Ovid wrote a didactic poem *On Fishing* in which he described the fish of the Black Sea and the Danube, so the poet himself was not indifferent to this kind of leisure. And I wanted to make inquiries about Ovid. What do the local inhabitants know about him? What have they read? Do they believe that the poet was really exiled here? But I had to start the conversation by discussing the weather and whimsical fish reluctant

to bite even the best worms. Fishermen are pretty the same everywhere. Often they tell tales when the fish used to bite better and the fish used to be bigger. As it turned out I scored a bull's eye. A fisherman began his story with how he used to catch fish with his bare hands when he was young, not to mention that some 15 years ago he could have never returned home with his hands empty. And today the catch is so small that one doubts whether it should be released back to the lake or to be taken home in the mayonnaise can. Having found the proper moment, I interrupted him with a question: "Who is this monument honoring?" "It's in honor of an unknown soldier," the fisherman blurted out with no shadow of a doubt.

An interesting response, particularly because of the fact that throughout his exile Ovid did have to put on his military attire a few times when the barbarians attacked Tomis. All the inhabitants of the city had to climb up the walls to beat off the enemy. But to call the statue of a man sitting feebly in Roman tag a monument honoring an unknown soviet soldier, it was too much. So I took one more look at the fisherman, suspecting he was mocking me. But no, he was serious, totally concentrated on his cork-float. Then I tried to take advantage of the pause between his grumbling and asked him one more question: "Why is the town called Ovidiopol?" To my surprise, my companion gave me a partially correct answer. He explained that one Roman poet was exiled here and the town is now named after him. "Bessarabia was the same for Rome as Siberia is for Russia" – this is exactly how he put it as if he had learned about severe frosts from Ovid's poems.

Further on into the conversation it became hard to catch up with his thoughts. He tried to illustrate his own concept of the universe, often mentioning the Masons and the Jews and when I finally asked him where he originated from and what his nationality was, he replied he did not know. As here, in Budzhak in Odessa Region, the blood is so mixed that no one can ever be sure about his origin. After all, he called himself a Slav, while I wanted to add that blood is not the primary basis for nationality and identity, that one can choose his/her nationality, views, but was running short, as the fisherman returned to his favorite topic and was now trying to persuade me that we (he and I in particular and all the Slavs in general) are suffering from the Jewish-Mason supremacy. He seemed to believe that Mason is a nationality, too. So, this conversation became annoying. And I would have probably forgotten it if it hadn't been for the phrase my companion blurted out at the end.

"You see," he said puffing his cheap cigarette, "there's a plenty of nationalities that used to live and still continue living here. There's a great multitude of cultures here in Budzhak. There are the Tatars, the Turkish people, the Jews, the Bulgarians, the Ukrainians, the Romanians, the Gypsies, the Russians, the Moldavians, the Greeks, the Germans. And so the sum of all those cultures gives lack of culture. This is the reason why we live so badly."

These words made me feel a chill running up and down my spine. The sum of cultures gives lack of culture! This is the brilliant phrase indeed. In a pretty much similar way the Ukrainian essayist Oleksandr Boychenko has described a multicultural richness of Chernivtsi: some of the European traditions still live here, the multiculturalism is not a mere name here, and for this reason you may still be abused in at least three different languages on the street.¹⁷ All in all, it turned out I had driven 1000 kilometers to hear a brilliant phrase from the fisherman, to see Ovid, this unknown soldier and to stick around the customs window because of my reluctance to bribe the customs officer right on the *limes* of civilization, on the frontier, that has been existing here for more than two thousand years.

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The sum of cultures gives lack of culture. This is what I had to start with instead of Ovid. To start from scratch. As for the books the author and the reader are equally important. When one reads a book, he/she learns both about the author and the text itself. The very act of reading, the act of choosing this very book tells pretty much about oneself. How could it happen that Ovid excited my curiosity? That his words started speaking to me in a special way and left me with nothing but anxiety and made me set out in search of something I could not even shape in my head.

Everything started with the border and a prohibition to cross it. I was born in Latvia, but not abroad. Once again, my parents were the Ukrainians, I was born in soviet Latvia, but they did not consider it abroad. Then I was growing up in the Transcarpathian town called Vynohradiv which is situated several kilometers away from Hungary and Romania. One can feel the border at every step there: in religion, language, in the mode of life. Unfortunately, they are almost non-intersecting. And the fisherman's words can also be applied to my region where people simply don't know anything about people living nearby. They only know some

swear words and sometimes the recipe of some delicious dish can slip past the border and find itself in some absolutely non-traditional cuisine. And this is it about the celebrated multiculturalism. And when you don't know anything about a person living next to you but just across the border, doesn't such a person seem to be a barbarian? When I was a child there was a woman next door, an old Hungarian woman, and didn't her language resemble some ba-ba-ba-babbling?

Thus the multicultural paradise of my childhood could hardly give me any answers, but it taught me to ask the right questions. Bela Bartok, raised in Vynohradiv, he was the most prominent citizen of the town of all time. He spent his childhood and even gave his first concert there. But you won't find a monument honoring the musician anywhere in the city. In fact, there is a bust without a bust itself, because the head goes straight from the pedestal. It is mounted in the yard of the Hungarian school absolutely hidden in the shade of the trees, so you will never notice it from the street if you have no notion about its existence. Why does the city neglect glorifying its most remarkable residents? Why isn't there any statue, any festival named after the musician? Why isn't there any tourist itinerary connected with Bartok's childhood? May it be for the reason he spoke another language? As the primary meaning of the barbarian is "the person speaking a foreign language".¹⁸ And in this context the composer did speak an incomprehensible for the local inhabitants language – irrespectively of their Ukrainian, Hungarian or Romanian origin – he was speaking the language of music and art which, as we may notice, can also be conceived as a barbaric one.

People learned how to take advantage of those borders. For instance, there is a river called Tysa, which starts high in the Carpathian Mountains and serves as the frontier between Ukraine and Romania and later on as a border between Ukraine and Hungary. So the local fishermen learnt how to throw their spinning far across the whirl of the central stream, to the Hungarian side where they are allowed to legally fish, whereas on the Ukrainian side it is forbidden by law. And that is not to mention the smuggling and a load of ways on how to illegally cross the frontier.

When I was fishing on the above-mentioned Tysa in my childhood I always regretted that I was not allowed to cross this international frontier without the necessary documents. The trip abroad seemed very exotic, almost fairylike. Yet I was sitting on the one bank, peering into the opposite one, 70 meters apart from me, and couldn't see anything fairylike there. Everything seemed to be just the same: the trees, pebbles on the river bank,

the birds and even fish in the water. In fact, there should have been (and actually was) the European Union and NATO. Looking at this frontier, separating two absolutely identical banks a thought came into my mind: thank goodness there is a river here. Once it were the field here, it would be very hard to distinguish the EU from non-EU. And how is it possible to differentiate where Poland ends and the Czech Republic begins or where France ends and Belgium starts with no borders in between them? You are just walking across the field or the forest and at some point find yourself in the different country not having the slightest clue about it. So this is a “borderless” stage on the way of European integration which helps us realize that the border is not about the barbed wire or a wall. Peter Brown writes about the boundary between the so-called civilized people and the barbarians:

Looked at from the steppe land of Eurasia, the Roman frontier along the Rhine and Danube was a non-frontier. Both sides of it were green. Up to 400 A.D., two very different social orders faced each other across the Rhine and Danube. But they were not social orders based upon unbridgeable and unchangeable differences in ecology, in technology and even in mindset. For this reason, the contrast between “Romans” and “barbarians” – though it seemed so clear to the imagination of contemporaries – was constantly eroded by the facts of nature. The two groups shared a temperate climate which ensured that both Romans and “barbarians” were settled farmers. Like all great rivers (one thinks of the Rio Grande between Texas and Mexico), the Rhine and the Danube were as much joining places as they were dividing lines.¹⁹

So the border (from the Ovid’s time and up till today) is in our head, our brain and our consciousness lays it. And a barbed wire is only a projection of our worldview onto the landscape.

But did my romance with Ovid start from the frontier? Perhaps, yes, but not from the civilizational one, and not even from the national one but from the internal frontier. I was growing up in a poor family with no father, that is why, when I turned 14, I entered a military school for various personal, family and financial reasons. The youth is a very queer time in an emotional sense, this is the time of extremes and hyperboles, when the personality is being formed. It revolts against society, it perceives its every scar to be unique, its every experience to be special, and it considers solitude in this universe to be infinite. So what I’m driving to...

I mean if it hadn't been for the long nights in casern of military school, I could have never been able to understand Ovid so accurately, to conceive his texts and his fate so closely. Since Publius Ovidius Naso is a founder of solitude in its present-day modern sense. As it has been mentioned before, sent to live among the barbarians in the middle of nowhere, the poet has fallen from the top of his glory and prosperity to the bottom of life. Regardless of that, Ovid lived in the city, in the port, among the crowds of people, he might have even had a servant, he, probably, performed in public feasts and sent his letters by ships to Rome. And, nevertheless, he felt solitary. Isn't it similar to contemporary people living in metropolis and feeling lonesome? Isn't it the feeling forcing us to put on sunglasses and headphones not to notice the millions of people around?

That is why I'm happy I came across the right book at the proper time. I started reading Ovid in that military school. As far as I remember we were to read his *Metamorphoses*, an absolute bore for the young boy. But before I had started to read the text itself, I read the foreword, the poet's biography, I learned about the exile, solitude and death in the middle of nowhere. I do remember that night: I was lying on the upper store of my bunk bed in the middle of the stuffy casern, some more than 50 heads all around me, but I felt as if I were on a desert island. I was lying, I could not fall asleep, I was thinking about Ovid, and that no one can ever understand me in this world. So in such a childish and banal way I realized one of the greatest existential problems of each barbarian: not only that you speak foreign language but no one can understand you. The solitude in metropolis, loneliness amongst the millions of the crowd.

It was a true reason of my love for Ovid, the first impulse to try and gasp the meaning of his texts, to find a soulmate in them. To one day find myself sitting in the car, turning the key, pushing the gas and hitting the road to Constanta, the city surrounded by the barbarians. And if it is really so, then everyone coming here from outside is the barbarian himself.

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Having tried once, I wanted more. Constanta lies at the Black Sea shore, but is still surrounded by land from the other three sides. So, it would be logical to assume, that Tomis was also completely surrounded by the barbarians, except from the seaside. I felt a strong desire to enter the city from those three barbarian directions. I had already entered the

city from Odesa, i.e. from the eastern side. Now it was time to come to Constanta from the West, from Bulgaria. So, I got into the car and headed off to Balchik, a little town on the Bulgarian coastline of the Black Sea. I fell in love with Balchik at first sight, when I saw dozens of pictures of its suburbs in the Romanian National Museum in Bucharest. During the inter-war period Balchik belonged to Romania. The Queen of Romania built a palace there and planted a gorgeous garden to host her visitors, who were the best Romanian artists of that time and those visits had undoubtedly left their mark in Romanian art. There was another significant argument as to why one should go to Balchik: Ovid arrived to Constanta not by sea but by land, so he passed this territory on his way, this is the region, where borders have changed so many times, that such changes couldn't but leave an exceptional imprint on people, their worldviews and their attitude to the Other.

At last, the third reason to go to Balchik was an opportunity to see the town of Ruse on the way from Bucharest. This is the city on the Danube, where Elias Canetti was born and raised. The very fact of his birth in that place means that the lowland of the Danube was a diverse multitude of nationalities and cultures – like during Ovid's time. Canetti grew up in such a 'climate' and, in fact, that region still looks mostly the same. But what a pleasure was to read Canetti's memoir,²⁰ where he described his colorful childhood in the city near the Danube, and to imagine, how only one hundred years ago here, on the border between Romania and Bulgaria, a child, whose first mother tongue was Spanish (because the poet was a Sephardic Jew), the second was German, was growing up. Many years later, he also picked up different words from Bulgarian and Romanian languages and gypsy dialects. At long last, Canetti was born here, this is his native land and, probably, this is the main reason, why he depicts his childhood with such warmth and tenderness. The Other is a magnet for him, which attracts and stimulates interest.

For Ovid the Other is a bloodthirsty barbarian, dangerous and primitive. The poet is only a newcomer, a stranger here. So does the absence/presence of barbarians and worldview depend so much on the birthplace? I wonder, how Publius Ovidius Naso would describe the Danube lowland if he were born there? And how he would perceive the Romans in such case? As barbarians, invaders, murderers and oppressors? Or like noble colonizers, culture bearers, who are expanding the boundaries of Western civilization? "Creation of racial stereotypes and ideas about barbarians was an integral part of colonizers' ideology. So in such a way those who

were the first to discover and conquer new lands, considered themselves not as the invaders and robbers, but as the apostles of culture and the performers of God's will. The Europeans described themselves as the 'civilized' ones, so, obviously, in the newly discovered lands they were meeting the 'barbarians' (people, whose lifestyle, worldview and values differed)",²¹ writes Bozidar Jezernik in his book *Wild Europe: The Balkans in the Gaze of Western Travelers*. And it is hard to disagree with him.

I kept driving to Balchik with all of these thoughts on my mind. For the last several kilometers the road tangles between chalky rocks and hills overgrown with fruit trees. The serpentine of the road twists only 300 meters away from the sea, not visible at this point. As well as the town itself, which suddenly shows up – with its white walls, red tile roofs, chain of buildings, rising from the sea up to the highest hill, two rays of minarets and a church cross in the valley – there it is, Bulgarian Balchik! The hills protect the city from winds, and the shore sinks in sunrays and the diversity of southern flora. The palace, built at the order of Queen Marie of Romania received a neat name "The Quiet Nest". The botanical garden above it, waterfalls and a boundless skyline make it a heavenly place.

There are two mosques in the town. And so on occasion I asked a local resident about the national and religious structure of the population here. He did not like my question. At first he tried to explain, that all people here are Bulgarians and orthodox Christians. And the mosques, according to his words, were simply a historical misunderstanding. When I repeated my question, my companion confessed that one mosque was still valid. Although, only few Turks still live in the city, there are hardly a few scores of them. But the cornerstone of the local Muslim community are the Roma, who, to his mind, erroneously consider themselves to be the Turks or their descendants. He forced himself when talking about the Roma, as if trying to conceal his disgust. I noted to myself, that I was lucky to meet people, like Ovid: first there was a fisherman in Ovidiopol, now this expert of Turkish ethnogenesis. Just like a great Roman poet at his time, all of them blamed the Other and slandered the surrounding people. Would they look whiter and more culturally developed then?

Wasting no more time, I headed off to Constanta. Having got a bit hungry on my way and having noticed a big billboard with mouth-watering pictures of dishes and an advertising slogan in Romanian, I turned to a restaurant. The menu in that restaurant was also in Romanian and the waiter kindly offered to receive payment in Romanian lei. So, in a quite natural way, I asked about the life of local Romanian minority

here, in Bulgaria, some 20 km away from the Romanian border. Having heard my question, the waiter exasperated and started convincing me, that there were no Romanians there, and had never been any, even in the inter-war period, when this region had been a part of Romania, only pure-blood Bulgarians had lived there, even before the Slavs had come to the Balkan Peninsula. The tone of the conversation was so emotional, that I decided not to ask any clarifying questions, for instance, whom do they make advertisement and menu in Romanian for then? So in order not to offend that pure-blood Bulgarian patriot, I decided not to tip him with my Romanian lei.

That day was full of troubles. I got into my car and drove in the direction of Romania and Constanta. The road was empty and straight, spring was beginning to dye the roadside flora green, and the first warmth from the sun was becoming tangible. And, even though the speed was below-average, as I wanted to longer enjoy the picturesque view, still the invisible horse power of my car didn't stop in time as the colorful spot ran out of nowhere and got right under the wheels. It was a bird and I feel terribly sorry that I have to write about it in past tense. Why wasn't it flying? As the one, born to fly, should not run on provincial roads! Maybe, it was meant to become a colorful explosion of scattered feathers; the best impressionist canvas I have ever seen. Yet alive and already dead.

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The tragic myth of a lonely poet attracted not only the wanderers, who wended their way to Constanta both overland and by sea, but also people, who were looking for a poet in their imagination, every time giving him another life in his works. Yet in the 20th century a couple of noticeable novels dedicated to Ovid's life and literary works were written. In his brilliant novel *Poet Ovidius Naso* a Polish writer, Jacek Bocheński, for instance, concentrates mainly on the Roman period of the poet's life. He tries to find reasons of his exile, gives a detailed description of Ovid's social circle, his friends and peculiarities of the social order of that time, pays much attention to love, lyrics, the poet's real or imaginary muse Corinne; and then introduces his own hypothesis concerning the event, that provoked the emperor's disgrace. Needless to say, that the author's imagination was also dazzled by the abyss between Ovid's life in Rome and in Tomis:

Everything testifies, that it was a smart decision to choose Tomis for exile. The convict by no means will be able to drastically affect the commonwealth or be engaged in any kind of sabotage. And considering a complete isolation and language difficulties, only ordinary crimes like murders, rapes or thefts are possible here.²²

Not everybody imagined Ovid in a bed during orgies or among the bloodthirsty barbarians. For some people the poet's life and his tragic exile became a ground to think about faith that gives us strength at difficult times. At the long last, this idea is not new: even in the Middle Ages there was a popular hypothesis, that Publius Ovidius Naso was one of the first Christian preachers, the so-called Ovidius Christianus.²³ It is a very interesting theory, as Ovid and Jesus Christ were coevals and lived at the same time, but we should remember, that Ovid was much more famous than Jesus. Whichever is true, but a potential relation of the poet and Christianity, which was just establishing, was a matter of concern to many.

It is no wonder, that Vintila Horia dedicates his novel *God Was Born in Exile* to the topic of Ovid's conversion to Christianity. This novel is a real pearl of Ovidiana, so we can assume, that the author managed to describe so skillfully the emotional experience of the exile, because his fate was connected with exile as well. As many Romanian intellectuals of the past century, Vintila Horia had to escape from his Motherland after the 2nd World War. He lived as an outcast in Spain and France. It is logical that professor Daniel Rops wrote in the foreword to the first edition of Horia's novel published in France, in exile: "Reading the «Sorrows» and the «Epistulae ex Ponto», the outcast [Horia] recognized himself".²⁴

Vintila Horia went through the war himself and was also seeking faith, that is why his thoughts sound so convincing when he describes Ovid's situation:

The vast plains that spread away beyond the Tyras towards the unknown East swarmed with tribes which were pushing steadily towards our farmlands like insects blindly drawn towards the light. Who could have found the magic word to arrest their advance? Weapons were not enough. But the word, the magic word, would have endowed them with a name and a soul, would have brought them into the community of men, would have taught them to settle down, to pardon each other, to develop a conscience and also to feel the need of a past and future. But that word had not yet been born, and armies were arriving in vain to supply its place, from Spain and Gaul in the west to the Euxine and the Danube in the East.

The Romans were everywhere extending the bounds of Empire by cutting off heads and establishing laws, but they did not suspect that the earth has no boundary and that their enterprise required as many men as all the other men in the world.²⁵

Eventually, Vintila Horia was himself a good object for research about boundaries, primarily as an outcast and wanderer, but also because within the flow of his life he changed dramatically, he crossed the border of himself. The Goncourt Prize was awarded to the writer for his novel *God was Born in Exile*. It was awarded, but not delivered to him. When the journalists started investigating the author's biography, they revealed a scandalous fact that Vintila Horia used to be an active member of the Romanian nationalistic paramilitary organization the Iron Guard. The writer was accused of concealment of his membership and of commitment of military crimes, though his novel was full of fair love to the neighbor, Christian obedience, fate and hope. The impression is that the member of Iron Guard and the author of this kind novel are two absolutely different men with a wall and a border between them.

The last writer belonging to the previous-century plead of those, who wrote novels about Ovid and who I would like to mention here, crosses primarily not spatial, but time frames in his texts. The novel *The Last World* by Austrian author Christoph Ransmayr is a brilliant example of post-modern prose, a text with a nonlinear narrative. An interesting story is connected with it: the publisher asked young Ransmayr to retell the *Metamorphoses* in a more accessible way for a contemporary reader. The writer tackled the problem but shortly after the start he gave up this idea and wrote his own novel. According to its plot, Maxim Cotta, Ovid's friend heads off to Constanta to find the writer's manuscripts. During his search he tells his readers about the poet's fate in exile. And the myths from the *Metamorphoses* are retold in a very innovative way: some man called Cypress arrives to the ancient port of Tomis with the video projector and so he shows the films, the plots of which are the above-mentioned myths.

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I made my last trip to Constanta from Bucharest, which was from the North, also because of a person with camera, who, just as Christoph Ransmayr, was of Austrian origin. The Embassy of Austria was opening an

Honorary Consulate in Constanta, and Austrian Cultural Forum in Romania coincided this event with an opening of an exhibition of the photographic artist Zita Oberwalder. The artist had recently visited Constanta and took a series of photos connected with the contemporary life of the city and the melancholic mood of Ovid's *Epistulae ex Ponto* ("Letters from the Black Sea"). I was to say a few words at the exhibition opening.

So I took the highway from Bucharest and went to Tomis, pardon me, to Constanta, I tried not to miss any detail of the landscape that was changing fast in the windows of my car. I crossed the Danube's bridge and then immediately turned to the nearest gas station, but not because I needed petrol – I was only seeking a place where I could sit and write some notes in calm. I was going to write what I saw during the first part of my trip, mainly about metamorphoses of nature: how plains slowly change into the hills, how hills suddenly become steep riverbanks, and how powerfully the Danube looks from above. I had spent so much time reading everything written by Ovid and about Ovid, so, of course, while crossing the Danube I felt like a barbarian who was rushing on the frozen river to attack the ancient harbor of Tomis. Moreover, when I ordered coffee at that gas station, I noticed that the man working at the cash desk had a really big nose, and the thought flashed in my mind: he is probably the descendent of Ovid, whose family name – Naso – was given because of his ancestors' enormous noses.

After all, I have chosen the best way to fulfill my goal - to see and understand Ovid from the point of view of the barbarian – I chose the road, travelling, as

we must always remember that "barbarian" meant many things; it could mean nothing more than a "foreigner", a vaguely troubling, even fascinating, person from a different culture and language group. For most Greeks and Romans "barbarian" in the strong sense of the word meant, in effect, "nomad". Nomads were seen as human groups placed at the very bottom of the scale of civilized life.²⁶

Now I understand that all the endless travelling was and still is some kind of mania; Ovidomania. It was cold and windy that day in Constanta, and I was recalling more and more quotes from the Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, just trying to make the excursion through the contemporary city using the ancient guidebook. Thanks to the local authorities of Constanta, which forgot about the historical city center and

did no renovations and repairs there, it was not so hard to imagine that I was in some shrinking and deserted ancient harbor, probably immediately after the barbarians attack: nasty weather emptied the streets, and I could hear only whistling of wind and saw wandering dogs, so I went down to the dark ghost of the old casino which, in my imagination, appeared as villa of the Roman governor.

What was I looking for? For Ovid, for traces of his stay here, for the things and landscape that inspired him, and – if to be completely frank – his grave. Since childhood I knew that average trader Heinrich Schliemann discovered the ancient town of Troy by patiently reading *Iliad* by Homer,²⁷ so I also dared to assume that I could discover Ovid's grave by reading his works written during the exile.

There was the only point left in my journey – a small town Ovidiu, located 10 kilometers eastwards from Constanta. There's not much interest in the town itself, but as you drive out of the town, there is the Siutghiol lake separated by a narrow land strip from the sea. And just like in the fairytales from our childhood: there is something in the middle of this lake, and in this "something" another mystery is hidden. So, there is a tiny island on the lake near Constanta, which the locals usually call Ovidiu. There is even a legend, that the poet was buried in this special place and, let's admit, it sounds quite realistic.

Then it turns out, the barbarians took care of Ovid as of the king – not only did they accept him, they also exempted him from taxes, honored him with the laurel wreath and buried him in a special place with all the ceremonials. So why did Ovid himself write so many unpleasant things about those barbarians, who were so hospitable to him? No doubt that he wanted to dramatize a bit, to make his readers feel sorry, to impress the cultural public in Rome with the terrible life conditions of the place he was dispatched to. But the Slovenian anthropologist Božidar Jezernik, is absolutely right saying that such an attitude "says much not only about the object of description, but also about the one who describes. So the contemplation of the other people and their cultures serves as something like a mirror".²⁸

But wouldn't the memoirs of the barbarians sound just as arrogantly and scornfully, if they were written or if they survived? The local inhabitants who Ovid considered to be the barbarians could write that some weirdo arrived from God knows where, who babbles ba-ba-ba in some unknown language and doesn't even wear trousers or skins, who is reluctant to eat local food and is unsatisfied with everything, an idle man, who does not

want and actually is not able to work, doesn't have anything to pay for living but is not rushing for hunting, he just sits in the shadow of the trees and scrapes some incomprehensible and, therefore, barbarian symbols on papyrus. We would hardly sympathize such a person. The view of the "civilized person" does not essentially differ from the reverse view of the barbarian on the "civilized person": both perspectives are defined by much distrust, coming from a simple ignorance of the Other, the stereotypes and own fears directed on the Stranger. After all, the barbarians exist for a reason, they have to exist, as they carry out a number of important functions. First of all, the existence of the barbarians on the opposite side of the border helps the communities and the peoples to understand that they are "better", "more developed", "more civilized". John Drinkwater points out that the existence of the barbarians is also useful for the elites. As the authorities usually create the myth of barbarians to explain high tax rates, to maintain a well-paid army in case of the threat of barbarians' attacks. And the emperor himself receives dividends from the actual or artificial existence of the "barbarians": he can describe himself as a great protector of his people, a leader that defends a high civilization from the primitive, dirty, aggressive tribes.²⁹

So if we believe in exile, described by Ovid, then we have to believe in the legend that had been passed across the generation by the local "barbarians", according to which the poet found his rest here, on this very island. The island Ovidiu is truly very small, as a big yard in area, overgrown with trees, among which a small restaurant takes place. I had parked my car and started to the last destination of my trip. In the same way, the barbarians should have delivered Ovid on the boat to the last point of his life journey. Having wandered about the island and having found nothing worth attention, I took a place on the restaurant terrace and ordered a drink.

It was beautiful and a little bit sad as it always is when you achieve something you have been dreaming about for a long while. I was imaged this island for thousand times, I believed I would come across something important here – an inscription, a thing or at least a sign! But there was nothing. And it was the end, simply the end. A waitress pulled me back from my reflections as she suddenly came to me from behind and started speaking an unknown and, therefore, a barbaric language which might have been Romanian. I might have looked embarrassed as she switched to English in a minute. She asked me if I was going to have lunch only or

I would have a desire to overnight there, as they have a few guest rooms on the second floor.

The idea of spending night on Ovidiu seemed rather appealing. I came upstairs with the waitress to have a look at the room and was impressed by its asceticism: there was only a bed, a bedside table and a tamboured which should have served as a wardrobe. There was a window overlooking the crowns of the trees occupying the island. The island called Ovidiu. Which even for Tomis, Constanta is the end of the world. Here Publius Ovidius Naso crossed his last frontier – life. Everything ended up here.

Or started here. Having examined the room, and having thought for a while that if the island is called Ovidiu, and the restaurant is named just the same, and the town nearby has the same name, too – I have imagined that there would be nothing strange if instead of the Bible inside one of the drawers of the bedside table, there was a book by Ovid, let's say it would be *Epistulae ex Ponto*. A novel could start like this: let's say it is 2016, in the depth of summer a tired traveler arrives to the Romanian Black Sea. But all the costal hotels are overcrowded with tourists and he has no choice but to rent a room on this island. It is growing dusky, the noise of the discotheque is heard from the seaside, the wind stirs the crowns of the trees, the seagulls are shrieking, the man comes up the creaky stairs to his second floor, lies on the bed and then, out of a pure interest, stretches his hand towards the book, starts reading and...

But this is a completely different story.

NOTES

- ¹ *Descriptio Danubii: Maps of the Danube Spanning Four Centuries of Cartography*/ Edited by Ovidiu Dimitru & Adrian Nastase, Bucharest, 2015, 17.
- ² Stasiuk, A. *Dorohoju na Babadag*, Krytyka, Kyjiv, 2007, 158.
- ³ Everitt, Anthony. *Cicero: the life and times of Rome's greatest politician*. New York: Random House, 2001, 33.
- ⁴ In his 9th elegy of the III book of *Tristia* Ovid himself writes "So was this place called Tomis because here, they say, the sister cut to pieces her brother's body", Ovid, *Tristia*, 137.
- ⁵ "But I must gaze upon the Sauromatae in place of Caesar's face, upon a land devoid of peace, and waters in the bonds of frost. Yet if you hear my words, if my voice can reach so far, let your winning influence work to change my abode", Ovid. *Tristia, Ex Ponto*, book II, To Messalinus: verses 71-96, Ibidem, 323.
- ⁶ Magris, C. *Dunaj*, Warszawa, 1999, 381.
- ⁷ Ovid. *Tristia, Ex Ponto* 1996, 137.
- ⁸ Ibidem, 255.
- ⁹ Sodomora, A. *Dvi barvy chasu Publija Ovidija Nazona*, in: Ovidij. Ljubovni elehiji, Mystectvo koxannja, Skorbotni elehiji, Kyjiv, 1999, 23.
- ¹⁰ Ovid. *Tristia, Ex Ponto* 1996, 137.
- ¹¹ "Exposed wine stands upright, retaining the shape of the jar, and they drink, not draughts of wine, but fragments served them!", *Tristia*. Book III, X. The Rigours of Tomis, Ovid 1996, 138.
- ¹² There was even a whole book dedicated to the analysis of Ovid's works concerning the presence of information about Eastern Europe of that time in them. But the investigators admit they did not manage to find much: "The investigation done allows us to conclude that it is impossible to interpret historical facts provided by Ovid as "trustworthy chronicle of the events". The analysis of Ovid as Roman, as a private entity and as a poet, the examination of poetic peculiarity of his works, the influence of the rhetoric and the perception stereotypes of the northern barbaric world on his creative work, makes us conclude about Ovid's poor historical data verification", A. V. Podpsinov, *Ovid's Works as a Historic Source of Information about Eastern Europe and Transcaucasia*, Moscow, Nauka, 1985, 25.
- ¹³ Thibault, J. C., *The Mystery of Ovid's Exile*, Berkeley, Cal., 1964.
- ¹⁴ "Almost being confident that the Gets were members of the tribe, which on the remote lands was later called the Slavs and specifically the ancestors of the southern Rus' (Ukrainian) branch of this tribe we now have the right to call Ovid the first poet who had written a poem in the language, close to the old and modern Ukrainian", Ivan Franko, *Publius Ovidius Naso in Tomis*, volume 9, 411.

- 15 Ovid, *Fasti*, II, 683, 107.
- 16 "While fortifying Ovidiopol, in 1795, a military engineer Francois de Wollant (an aristocrat of Brabant, who joined Russian military service in 1787), came across an ancient grave – a stone box with two harps and human bones inside. There was an assumption that the grave could belong to Ovid. Dr. Matthew Hetry sent three reports about the founding to the London Association of Art & Antiques Dealers. The news about the sensational founding of the Russian soldiers on the Dnister river was covered even by the Parisian newspapers", A. Formozov, *Pushkin and Antiquity. The Outlook of an Archeologist*, Moscow, 41.
- 17 Bojchenko, O. *50 vidsotkiv ratsii/Mezhi tolerantssii*, Chernivtsi, 2016, 60.
- 18 Oxford dictionary: "Middle English (as an adjective used in a derogatory way to denote a person with different speech and customs)", <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/barbarian> (last accessed: July 3, 2016).
- 19 Brown P. *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, AD 200-1000*. 3rd edition, Oxford: B.H. Blackwell, 2013, 14.
- 20 Canetti, Elias. *Chelovek nashogo stoletiya*. Moskva: Progres, 1990, 51.
- 21 Jezernik, B. *Dzika Europa. Balkany w oczach zachodnich podroznikow*, Krakow, 2013, 51.
- 22 Bochenskyj, J. *Ovidij Nazon – poet*, Piramida, Lviv, 2011, 137.
- 23 Sanders, Timothy. *Ovid The Christian*, https://www.academia.edu/2051234/Ovid_the_Christian (last accessed: July 3, 2016).
- 24 Horia, V. *God was born in Exile*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1961, 10.
- 25 Ibidem, 125-126.
- 26 Brown 2013, 43.
- 27 Deuel, Leo. *Memoirs of Heinrich Schliemann: A documentary portrait drawn from his autobiographical writings, letters, and excavation reports*, Harper & Row, 1977, 14.
- 28 Jezernik 2013, 10.
- 29 Drinkwater, J. *The Alamanni and Rome, 213-496 (Caracalla to Clovis)*, Oxford, 2007, 262.

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SCHOOL DOCTORS, HYGIENE AND THE MEDICALIZATION OF EDUCATION IN IMPERIAL MOSCOW, 1889-1914

Abstract

The post-reform decades in imperial Russia witnessed an unprecedented expansion of schooling and the growing involvement of medical professionals in the school life. This article studies medical inspection and the activity of school doctors at Moscow municipal elementary schools between 1889 and 1914. The institutionalization of the school medical control was motivated by sanitary concerns and articulated through the language of hygiene. The article shows that school doctors performed a systematic, highly-valued and well-paid work and influenced legal norms and policy on the city level. It argues that school hygiene was one of the instruments of constructing a “non-coercive classroom” and promoting a more inclusive, fair and humane social policy in imperial Russia.

The post-reform era witnessed an explosion of interest in children in Russian society. Old norms of adults’ unquestionable authority over children, their oppressive treatment and mechanistic teaching were challenged by new concepts of childhood and new ideas of upbringing with their humanistic, child-centered and communicative approaches.¹

The expert discourse on children, their nurture and education developed across a number of professional fields (which were also emerging and struggling to define themselves): pedagogy, hygiene and public health, psychology and psychiatry. New professional experts criticised traditional practices of child-rearing in Russia and tried to formulate and propagate the “proper”, “rational” and “scientific” ways of caring for children. Such expert discourses also helped redefine the parent-child relations and contributed to the appearance of a different idea of parenthood, at least among the educated groups of society. This new parenthood stressed greater engagement of parents (especially mothers), their responsibility for the social and cultural development of children,

and the conscious policy of child-rearing, based on scientific knowledge, intense communication, (self-)observation and (self-)evaluation.²

The post-reform decades were also the time of the first efforts to ensure minimal child welfare and to legally protect them from exploitation and abuse. The factory law of 1882 forbade the employment of children under 12, limited working day for those under 15 and obliged industrialists to provide schools for their child workers. By the turn of the century, child protection within their families also came to the attention of the lawyers. The laws of 1891 and 1902 improved the legal status of children born out of wedlock. The new Criminal Code of 1903 prescribed arrest or removal of parental power for cruel treatment of children under 17, as well as for forcing them into beggary, prostitution or marriage.³

Perhaps nowhere was the change in childhood policy and experience more perceivable than in schooling. The post-reform decades recorded an unprecedented expansion of primary education. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education and the Holy Synod, the number of schools (including urban, *zemstvo* and church-parish schools) grew from about 8,000 in 1856 to over 100,000 in 1911; the number of pupils increased from 450,000 to 6.6 million over the same period. A one-day census of the Ministry of Education in 1911 revealed that out of every 100 children aged between eight and eleven, 58 boys and 24 girls in the countryside and 75 boys and 59 girls in towns were attending school. Of course, there were great regional variations in school availability and the expansion of primary education had to catch up with the substantial population growth of the early twentieth century, but it is nevertheless clear that Russia was gradually moving towards a schooled society.⁴

In the research on the history of educational institutions, a well-known analysis of schools as an apparatus of modern disciplinary power became an obvious point of reference. However, the applicability of Foucauldian ideas to the Russian context is generally a subject of an ongoing historiographical debate, and the history of Russian elementary schooling is a field where alternative visions and interpretations have been convincingly proposed. Thus, Ben Eklof has repeatedly emphasized the distinct schooling culture that emerged in post-reform Russia. This culture, he argued, focused on non-coercive motivation, fostering self-esteem and initiative, and radically differed both from the authoritarian classroom that persisted elsewhere in Europe and from the overall Russian realities. In his words, the existence of such a “child-centered classroom in a coercive, hierarchical authoritarian society is a major paradox.”⁵ Catriona Kelly,

however, suggested that this argument has its limitations, and that the rigorous inspections and penalties by the Ministry of Education, as well as demands of academic curricula, imposed considerable constraints on the “non-coercive” and “child-centered” classroom, especially in secondary schools.⁶

With these discussions in mind, I would like to approach late imperial Russian schooling from a different angle – that of public hygiene. In the 1870s physicians and hygienists joined pedagogues and educators in the debates on schooling and its needs. Educational reformers recognized that school could shape not only the pupils’ minds, knowledge and morality but also their bodies and physical development, and that the two spheres were in fact tightly interconnected and inseparable. This meant that, although the content and style of teaching remained the primary concern, there were now new variables that could determine the results of schooling: the material environment of schools, the temporal and spatial organization of the educational process and its ability to accommodate, adjust to, harm or change the pupils’ bodies.

For public hygienists and community physicians schools presented an excellent source of information and an object of medical-statistical research, as few other institutions offered such a possibility to observe and study patterns of health and disease. The fact that in post-reform Russia the development of community medicine and, to a substantial degree, the expansion of schooling were managed by the same local self-government bodies – *zemstvos* and municipalities – helped the intellectual exchange between the two spheres and opened the way to some synergy of practical efforts.

The practical activity of school doctors in Russia has been largely overlooked by historians or dismissed as a failure. Thus, Andy Byford wrote that

the hygienists’ conceptualization of the school doctor remained only an unrealized ideal. In practice, Russian school doctors were ordinary general practitioners with only a formal link to a few schools in their local area [...] Only very occasionally and entirely as a matter of the individual doctor’s personal initiative would systematic studies of, say, the student’s eyesight, the quality of air in classrooms, or the adequacy of lighting in a school, be carried out. In other words, issues of “school hygiene” were not at all a regular part of doctors’ job description.⁷

For Byford, it was psychology and psychiatry that served as strategic links between medicine and education and promised to empower school physicians, particularly when dealing with “unteachable” or “abnormal” children.⁸

My article aims to revise this view through studying medical inspection and control at Moscow municipal elementary schools between the 1880s and 1910s. I believe that the in-depth analysis of the more systematic, regular and institutionalized forms of medical practices at schools in the last decades of the nineteenth century (that is before the rise of child psychopathology) could offer a different interpretation of the role that medicine played in the changing experience of mass schooling in late imperial Russia.

There are several aspects that make the study of schooling in Moscow particularly interesting. Historians of school education in imperial Russia focused primarily on rural schools, while the phenomenon of urban schools still awaits a thorough and critical study. Despite many common concerns, it is clear that urban and rural education faced different constraints in terms of infrastructure and accessibility, recruitment and attendance as well as the value of literacy and structured education in the communities they were serving. Furthermore, Moscow, unlike many smaller towns or zemstvos, had enough financial, social and infrastructural resources to actually implement at least some of the expert recommendations and to translate scientific debates into practice. Finally and most importantly, Moscow was one of the first cities in Russia to institutionalize medical control in municipal schools through the introduction of school sanitary physicians in 1889 and school outpatient clinics, thus formalizing the “medicalization” of schooling.

School in the eyes of late-imperial hygienists and physicians

“Nowadays there is a widespread opinion that the present organization of schools harms the health of children,” wrote Friedrich Erismann, one of the founders of scientific hygiene in Russia, in his book *The Influence of Schools on the Development of Myopia* (1870).⁹ This was the “first” book in several respects – the first book that Erismann, born and trained in Switzerland, wrote in Russia, the first work in which he moved beyond his initial specialization, ophthalmology, into the domain of public hygiene,

and the first study which applied the ideas of Western European hygienists to study Russian schools.

Erismann's interest in schools and their influence on eyesight was not particularly innovative in itself. In the 1860s a number of European physicians studied the adverse impact that schools had on pupils' health.¹⁰ In 1869, on the request of the Prussian Minister of Education, Rudolph Virchow brought together those scattered accounts into his report *Ueber gewisse die Gesundheit benachtheiligende Einflüsse der Schulen*.¹¹ The report had a significant resonance in Russia as the Deputy Minister of Public Instruction ordered to translate and publish it in the Ministry's official journal. The editors of journal noted that Virchow's valuable observations could be of limited practical interest in Russia where the primary concern was the lack of schools rather than their negative impact, but by 1870 Virchow's report appeared in Russian already in two different translations.¹² These publications, together with Erismann's book, signaled the beginning of the school hygiene in Russia which would develop and institutionalize in the two following decades.

So how exactly did the nineteenth century Russian schools harm the health of their pupils? In the opinion of hygienists, schools could induce various disorders of vision, digestion, blood circulation or skeletal development, most importantly myopia, strabismus and scoliosis. In addition, the organization of space and furniture at school caused constant inconvenience and discomfort to pupils, forcing them to move, turn and fidget and undermining their concentration. Although teachers attributed children's lack of attention and inability to sit straight to their negligence, inadvertence and bad manners, hygienists argued that those problems were in fact a result of inadequate school environment.¹³

Another concern was the weakness and underdevelopment of pupils' chest and ribcage, which at the time was regarded as a predisposition to consumption and other diseases of the lungs. In 1881, a zemstvo sanitary physician Valentin Nagorsky examined pupils of the St. Petersburg zemstvo district and found out that in their physical development, including height, weight and especially chest girth, they yielded not only to pupils from Western European countries, but also to their coevals employed at Russian factories. Was a school, Nagorsky wondered, more dangerous for children's health than a factory? Given the existing hygienic state of schools, he suggested, it was perhaps a blessing that only a minority of children were attending educational institutions, because their benefit for the intellectual development could hardly make up for their damage to health.¹⁴

Hygienists indicated a number of features of Russian schools responsible for their negative impact on children's health. School furniture was one. Erismann noted that in St. Petersburg, where he conducted his first survey on school hygiene, "very little attention was paid to the height of pupils, therefore 10-year old boys often work at the same desks as the 20-year old men, so they cannot reach the floor with their feet and, because of the extremely high position of desks, are forced to lift their shoulders so much that their necks become completely invisible."¹⁵ Too big or too small desks and benches, the impossibility to adjust their position, the lack of backrests and foot stands were both easily identifiable and easily amendable problems. In contrast, a number of other widely acknowledged problems – insufficient lighting of classrooms, poor ventilation, dampness, inadequate heating – were far more difficult to tackle as their resolution required a complete reconstruction and relocation of existing school premises.

In fact, the standards that hygienists set were not so easy to meet. Schools were required to be spacious, dry, well-lit and well-heated, with several rooms, a teacher's apartment and a yard. Erismann's ideal classroom was a 70 sq. m. room with at least 4 m high ceilings, a window on the left side, oak parquet, diffused lighting and independent systems of heating and ventilation. It was meant for a class of 36, or for 18 double desks arranged in three rows. The size of the room was supposed to allow all pupils to see the blackboard and hear the teacher's voice without it being confused by the echo. Instead of standard flat school desks Erismann proposed using slanted desks with an incline of 12-14 degrees (the design later known as Erismann's desk) which he believed to be the most ergonomic and beneficial for pupils' posture and sight.¹⁶

The reality, of course fell short of those hygienic norms. A sanitary engineer Illarion Pavlov observed in 1886 that "although school hygiene is sufficiently developed, although it provides general rational rules of classroom size, lighting, heating, ventilation, etc., until now hygiene was on its own and the reality on its own." In his view, an important reason for this was the failure of engineers and technicians to provide an essential link between the two spheres and to produce projects that took into account both the norms of hygiene and the material possibilities of community schools, especially in the countryside. Pavlov's goal was to prove that school construction according to sanitary norms was not always expensive and difficult and that financial constraints were not necessarily an obstacle to school hygiene. For this he designed a set of projects of simple and cost-effective school buildings, which met the

basic hygienic recommendations but could nevertheless be afforded by poor communities.¹⁷

The material organization of schools was, however, not the only concern of hygienists. In fact, the spheres of school life, which hygienists saw as the domain of their influence, responsibility and intervention, were surprisingly numerous. One such sphere was school discipline and punishment, and on this question the positions of hygienists and reform-minded pedagogues were unanimous. Nikolay Korf, in his famous and very influential handbook for teachers *Russian Elementary School* (1870), which by the turn of the twentieth century went through two dozen editions, called for abandoning the “old” military-like school discipline, based on rods, fear, oppression and boredom, and argued that only warm and loving attitude to children could lead to successful learning, and this view soon became a widespread teaching philosophy.¹⁸ If for progressive educators the rods of the “old” school were pedagogically ineffective, for hygienists they were unhealthy. They opposed not only the obvious forms of corporal punishment such as flogging (which was also forbidden in Russian schools), but any disciplinary measures that involved the body – flicks and slaps, hitting pupils with a ruler, making them kneel or stand, leaving them without a meal, etc. The only acceptable form of punishment was to deprive a pupil of some pleasure, for example, a game, but, as one physician admitted, “there are very few pleasures in school life.”¹⁹

School curriculum was another sphere of intervention for hygienists. They insisted on adjusting schooling to the psychological development of children and easing its strain on their mental and physical health.²⁰ While pedagogues and educators argued for the expansion of schooling, for the possibility to teach more subjects and more classes to more people, especially in primary schools, physicians proposed to limit it. Hygiene, Erismann wrote,

should require the simplification and reduction of school curricula, that is the decrease in the number of subjects, in the number of lessons, especially among younger pupils, the decrease in the quantity of homework and preparation. It is unacceptable that a 14-year old child spends all day with books, at school or at home, and that he does not have time for outdoor movement, for children’s games or for any other physical activity.²¹

To minimize the negative effect of schooling and to keep the balance between the development of the mind and the body, hygienists prescribed

sufficient sleep, long walks and physical exercise. Among the possible types of physical activity, it was not the structured and disciplined training and gymnastics, but outdoor playing that was seen as the healthiest and the most suitable option for school children. In Erismann's words,

our children play very little, and our urban children even do not know how to play. This phenomenon at first seems very strange and its roots are hidden in many natural and practical [естественных и бытовых] circumstances of our home country [...] Children need to play; for any child a game is a necessary condition of its life and normal development. If our society gets used to the idea that active games should not take place in closed premises but, if possible, outdoors, this would create a base for the proper physical development of our younger generations.²²

There were two important consequences of framing the field of hygiene so broadly. First, school hygiene offered a language and tools to criticize schools, even the most "progressive" municipal and zemstvo schools, from a position of child experience (however misinterpreted by hygienists), and not that of academic achievement. This perspective offered an alternative to the excitement about the rapid spread of schooling in the post-reform Russian society. Hygienists were far from denying the need and the value of mass education, but they warned that it had its price. Schooling – even if it promised personal development, social mobility and liberation in the future – still required restraining the body and the freedom of a pupil and condemned him or her to monotonous days in an uncomfortable and unnatural position, often hungry and cold, and at a higher risk of getting a chronic or contagious disease. Therefore, physicians argued, the classroom experience should be minimized, diversified and compensated with sufficient time outside of school and away from educational process.

In their own narrative, the theoreticians of school hygiene saw themselves as protectors of pupils and their bodies against the coercion of the educational system. The question remains, however, whether the lived experience of children outside of schools was better and freer than at school. Ben Eklof's research on Russian rural schools reveals the enthusiasm with which children went to school and the affection they retained for schooling. He also shows that the new child-centered and humanistic pedagogy encountered resistance within the families – parents thought that children were treated too leniently at school, that school was spoiling them, and encouraged teachers not to spare the rod.²³ Given the

harsh family mores among Russia's laboring population, common domestic violence, authoritarian parental power and cruel child-rearing practices, in villages and cities alike, the role of schools for children's physical and psychological health was both restraining and liberating. School could be not only the source of disciplining, physical and mental exhaustion, chronic and contagious disease, but also an escape from widespread violence and oppression, an alternative to hard work at a factory, in a workshop or in the household, that is, a healthier and a safer space for a child's body.

On the other hand, the widest possible delineation of the domain of school hygiene also served as a powerful and often effective justification for the claim for greater authority of physicians in the matters of education and their control over the operation of schools. Erismann clearly welcomed and enhanced such a medicalization of schooling:

The beneficial and desirable development of school affairs in the interests of students will only be possible if teachers and directors of educational institutions take the question of school sanitary conditions seriously and if physicians with special education in hygiene receive a significant influence over the organization of school curricula and over the lessons themselves. In other words, the physical and mental well-being of the youth urgently requires the organization of sanitary control over the state and private educational institutions and the active involvement of hygienists in the decision-making of school councils.²⁴

On the following pages, I will discuss how the processes of medical control of schools evolved and operated in imperial Moscow. I want to show that the involvement of physicians in the questions of education, that gradually happened in the last imperial decades, had many significant, if at first subtle, consequences for the entire experience of schooling in Russia, including school layout and ownership, the form of school curricula and classes taught, eating facilities, school sports and summer camps, the organization of medical care and prevention as well as the evaluation of pupils' abilities and potential. Many of those practices would outlive the imperial classroom and shape the Soviet childhood and schooling for decades to come.

Moscow municipal primary schools and the emergence of the school sanitary control

The involvement of the Moscow City Council in the matters of public education started in the 1860s. Back then, Moscow, a city with a population of ca. 400,000, had only 13 public elementary boys schools – they belonged to the Ministry of Instruction but were subsidized by the City Council. In 1867, to balance this gender disproportion, the city government opened five girls' schools, and those became Moscow's first municipal schools.²⁵

The 1871 report of the inspector of popular schools from the Ministry of Instruction gives a picture of how the first municipal primary schools – five for girls and one for boys, opened in 1870, – were organized and operated. The boys' school had 126 pupils and employed six teachers and two priests. The girls' schools were somewhat smaller in size: each of them had about 100 pupils, one priest and three or four teachers, usually female. In addition, each school also had a (female) trustee (*popechitel'nitsa*), responsible for the supervision and administration of the school. Pupils were divided into three grades according to their abilities, and studied reading and writing, grammar, basic Russian history and geography (*mirovedeniye*), arithmetic, religious instruction (*Zakon Bozhiy*), as well as singing and mechanical drawing (*chercheniye*). The Ministry's inspector was very satisfied with the arrangements at Moscow's municipal schools and their quality of teaching – the success that he attributed to pedagogical courses, organized by the Moscow City Council to prepare school teachers, help them design curricula and introduce them to the effective methods of instruction.²⁶

The municipal primary education was not free, but the tuition fee was set at only 3 rubles per year – compared, for example, to more than 200 rubles per year at a private elementary school in Moscow. However, even that sum was apparently too high for many families and, in fact, as the report reveals, a large proportion of pupils (sometimes, more than a half) studied for free.²⁷ The tuition fees were not meant to pay for the school expenses, which were covered by generous municipal funding (4900 rubles for the boys school and 3000 rubles for each of the girls schools in 1871), but rather allowed schools to accumulate some additional funds; perhaps, that could explain the lenience with collecting the fees.

In 1882, Moscow had 55 municipal elementary schools, including 26 schools for girls, 25 for boys and 4 for both sexes together. That year

the Moscow City Council declared systematic expansion of primary education its priority and set to establish ten new schools a year. Indeed, in the next two years, 18 new schools were opened, and the number of pupils increased from 6,600 in 1882-83 to 8,700 in 1884-1885. In the following decade, however, the school expansion slowed down, until the next boom, connected to the birth of Princess Olga in 1895 and the coronation of Nicholas II in Moscow in 1896, when 27 new schools were opened in one year. After this, the growth of schools continued steadily (see Figure 1). Moscow also took some steps to develop secondary education: in 1885 the first two municipal secondary schools for girls were opened, joined by a secondary school for boys several years later. However, the number of municipal secondary schools remained very small (seven for boys, eight for girls in 1911-1912), and it was in primary education where the municipal efforts concentrated.

In 1909, the Moscow City Council adopted a course towards universal primary schooling. At the same time, the 3-ruble tuition fee was abolished and the length of study at Moscow municipal schools increased from three to four years. By 1911-12 Moscow had already 312 primary schools and all of them had successfully switched to a four-year course. The financial side of this project was helped by a governmental subsidy, resulting from the State Duma's (Russian Parliament that appeared in the course of the 1905 Revolution) decree on sponsoring public education. The Moscow City Council also petitioned the Ministry of Instruction to make primary education in Moscow obligatory; the Ministry, however, replied that the introduction of obligatory primary education could only follow the revision of the general law on primary schools.²⁸

Figure 1. Expansion of municipal schools in Moscow

	1869-70	1879-80	1889-90	1899-1900	1909-1910
Number of schools	5	40	81	150	288
Number of classes	12	119	267	501	1170
Number of pupils	331	4138	10461	19853	43532

Source: I. A. Verder, ed. *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo goroda Moskvyy* (Moscow: 1913).

The primary education in Moscow was separate for boys and for girls, although a small number of mixed schools existed between 1879 and 1893. Importantly, the goal of keeping gender balance, which had been behind the municipal intervention in public schooling in 1860s, never disappeared, as the municipality remained committed to promoting both boys and girls education. Despite the general bias against girls education in Russian society and stronger motivation for boys to finish elementary school (to reduce the term of their military service), the proportions of male and female students remained, respectively, at about 52% to 48%, while the number of girls' schools was, in fact, higher. Furthermore, girls' schools had predominantly female teachers and exclusively female trustees. The existence of trustees, responsible for administration, maintenance, teaching arrangements and personnel decisions at their respective school, was a peculiar policy of Moscow, different, for example, from that in St. Petersburg, where several schools were managed by one district trustee, usually male. In Moscow, the practice of having only female trustees for girls schools meant that more than half of Moscow schools were managed by women. In addition, school trustees were often consulted and invited to attend the meetings of the School Committee of the Moscow City Council, allowing women to take an active role in shaping public education in Moscow.²⁹

Who attended those municipal schools and how? The 1901-1902 report of Moscow primary schools could give some idea of the student profile and attendance. That year, the city had 176 primary schools with 11,824 male and 10,999 female students. Those pupils were rather unevenly distributed across the school grades. The most common size of a first grade was between 45 and 55 pupils – compared to 35-55 in the second and 15-35 in the third grade. This suggests that a number of pupils withdrew without finishing a course (this trend was particularly noticeable in girls schools). About 55% of all pupils belonged to the peasant estate (this group, no doubt, counting many migrant workers at factories and workshops); one third were from the lower urban groups and craftsmen (*meshchane i tsekhovye*), 5% were “soldiers’ children” and 6.5% came from the families of merchants, priests, honorable citizens and other privileged groups. The municipality also kept records on the fate of its pupils after leaving school. Thus, among the 1900-1901 graduates, 25% of boys and 16% of girls continued their general education at grammar schools (*gimnaziya*), municipal secondary schools or seminaries, 22% of boys and 19% of girls went to professional, technical or commercial

schools, another 22% of boys and girls started working, while 29% of boys and 43% of girls remained with their parents.³⁰

The expansion of schooling in Moscow, which went parallel to the establishment of school hygiene in Russia, was bound to raise a question of medical supervision of schools. However, this question did not come up until the late 1880s – the time, when the municipality, under the leadership of the young and extremely active mayor Nikolay Alekseyev, became involved in several public health and sanitation projects. In 1885-1889 it took over the city hospitals, opened the first municipal outpatient and veterinary clinics, reformed the system of venereal disease prevention and constructed a new public abattoir.

The initiative for the introduction of medical supervision at schools came from the schools themselves; however, this initiative fitted well with the general line of municipal activity at the time. In October 1887, Nikolay Richter, the trustee of the boys' elementary school in Prechistinka district, proposed to the Moscow municipal board to appoint a sanitary physician to his institution. "Concerned with the sanitary state of the school and pupils," Richter consulted his acquaintance, a former zemstvo sanitary physician Nikolay Mikhaylov, who agreed to perform medical and sanitary control at his school – and, remarkably, without any compensation for his work.³¹

Mikhaylov was, in fact, an experienced sanitary physician with some name in school hygiene. As a sanitary physician of the Moscow zemstvo, he conducted research and published on the physical development and the morbidity of pupils at rural schools as well as on the sanitary conditions of educational institutions.³² Using his experience of inspecting rural schools, Mikhaylov prepared a draft program of responsibilities of school sanitary physicians, which Richter attached to his letter. The program included medical examination of all children entering schools, smallpox vaccination, biannual measurement of children's growth, control of their health, quarantining and providing basic medical care, issuing certificates of recovery, as well as inspection of sanitary conditions at schools and disinfection.³³ Although Richter's stated goal was to get the Board's approval for his innovative practice, it is plausible that the actual purpose of the letter – and definitely its eventual result – was to attract attention to the matters of health and hygiene at schools.

Richter's letter was received well by the Moscow municipality and raised a question of organizing systematic medical surveillance of the city schools. To discuss the matter, the Teaching commission of the Moscow municipal board convened a meeting of school trustees (both male and

female), municipal representatives and physicians with an experience in inspecting child health. The participants agreed that the establishment of medical surveillance at schools would be a good way to prevent the spread of contagious and the development of chronic diseases, and that it would be easier, cheaper and more convenient to organize such control in a centralized manner. It was proposed to hire six physicians, whose work would be compensated by the municipality from the existing school tuition fees. Views differed, however, as to the exact remuneration of physicians – some suggested that their salary should be 780 rubles per year, like that of physicians at municipal hospitals; others thought that it should be 1080 rubles, like that of sanitary inspectors of doss-houses.³⁴

The purpose of the school medical surveillance was seen not in cure and therapy, but in prevention and stamping out, so that the sick children would be isolated or referred to municipal hospitals and outpatient clinics. The participants of the meeting generally supported the program proposed by Mikhaylov, but added that “because of the novelty of this activity for Moscow, the detailed regulation of the activity of a [school] physician is impossible: it should be left to experience.”³⁵

The Moscow City Council approved the plan and, in fact, agreed to allocate more funding to it than had been initially requested: the salary levels were set at 1080 rubles per year to five regular physicians and 1500 rubles to the chief physician. Importantly, the shape of the medical surveillance at schools was decided not by the governmental bureaucrats or medical scientists, but by the local educational and public health practitioners, who, although perhaps lacking competence in the scholarly debates on child physiology and psychology, had a deep understanding of the actual practice and children’s experience of schooling.

Moscow school doctors and their work

The school medical inspection started its operation from January 1889, and Nikolay Mikhaylov, who stood behind this initiative and was ready to volunteer for it, was appointed the chief school doctor.³⁶ Already as a zemstvo sanitary physician, Mikhaylov advocated the right of women to practice medicine, particularly at Russian elementary schools, otherwise, he wrote, “many aspects of the growth and development of the female body, as well as its morbidity and [disease] aetiology would for a long time stay in the darkness.”³⁷ He remained consistent with this view and

hired two female physicians, Olga Andreyeva and Olga Gortynskaya (who had a Medical Doctor degree and an international professional career) to perform medical surveillance in 30 of the 38 Moscow girls schools. The female physicians worked according to the same rules and for the same salary as their male colleagues.³⁸

Mikhaylov's reasons behind hiring of female physicians included not only women's professional emancipation but also the moral aspects of performing medical control. Considering that in the 1880s the system of public health in Moscow was only emerging, most of the city dwellers had little contact with (and possibly little trust in) the medical profession. Regular preventive inspection, that is, exposing child's body, especially a seemingly healthy one, to the medical gaze and intervention, might encounter parental suspicions and resistance. The examination of a female body by male physicians appeared to be particularly problematic. At the first meeting of school doctors Mikhaylov suggested that

girls should not be examined thoroughly, especially by male physicians – at first it is enough to perform only the examination of neck, arms, upper chest, head, throat and the external eye check. Obviously, such examination gives less information than, for example, the examination of the entire skin surface, but considering that the practice of school sanitary inspection is only beginning and that there can be people who do not understand the tasks of the sanitary inspection and misinterpret them, it is better to initially abstain from the thorough examination of girls. If any of us, school men-physicians, needs to thoroughly examine a girl, for example, when suspecting syphilis, then probably our comrades, school women-physicians, would not refuse to help us.³⁹

Nutrition was another aspect where moral and medical questions conflicted. School doctors observed that a substantial part of pupils at municipal elementary schools suffered from malnutrition. Physicians warned that hunger prevented children from concentrating on their studies and argued that "the organization of the proper nutrition should be one of the main and considerable parts of the general hygienic regime of the school."⁴⁰

However, from the very beginning of inspection it became clear that the medical and parental ideas of the proper child nutrition differed. In spring 1889 the Moscow municipal board received several complaints from parents who objected to physicians recommending ferial food, in particular, milk, to children during the Lent time, when the Orthodox rules forbade the consumption of any meat or dairy products. The head

of the municipal school committee, Ivan Lebedev asked physicians to prescribe ferial food to children only in exceptional, medically justified cases, because, as he put it, “one could not go further without disturbing the religious views of the people” [*ne narushaya religioznye vozzreniya naroda*]. The chief school doctor Mikhaylov replied to this that one cannot deprive physicians of the right to recommend ferial food, especially milk, to weak children, if physicians knew that it was necessary for children’s health. This, perhaps, could suggest that Mikhaylov himself believed that physiological laws prevailed over the specific rules of religious life. However, physicians agreed that religious views should be respected and that any advice on nutrition should be tentative and careful, “in order not to hurt and insult moral and religious feeling” [*nравstvennoye, religioznoye chuvstvo*]. The final decision on child nutrition was delegated to parents, who were also encouraged to consult priests if they doubted the moral propriety of milk consumption by their children.⁴¹

Adequate nutrition at school remained high on the agenda of school doctors for many years. Physicians argued that, according to the contemporary hygienic norms, the interval between meals should not exceed four hours, but children were spending between five and seven hours at schools without any provision for meals. The Moscow municipality recognized its responsibility for school lunches and gave a small allowance for these purposes, but with that money the only food that schools could provide to its pupils was rye bread. School doctors encouraged parents to give their children home-prepared lunches (in particular, milk), but according to their investigation, about a quarter of all families did not follow that recommendation, and especially during the Lent time many children ate only bread. Some schools attempted to improve the situation by providing additional free meals (usually milk, meat broth, or porridge) to the weakest and most malnourished children. In 1902 this was reportedly practiced in 45 percent of schools. The entitlement to that additional meal was need-based, and it was school doctors who decided which children would get it.⁴²

However, school physicians saw the selective need-based support only as a temporary palliative measure. They insisted that warm lunches should be provided to all pupils at municipal schools, regardless of their social background. According to medical recommendations, those lunches should include milk (at least 300 ml per child) and a warm meal, for example cabbage or potato soup with meat, rice or millet porridge, as well as pea soup or buckwheat for the lenten days. The idea of a universal

free warm lunch at the schools generally found support in the Moscow municipality, but the continuously increasing number of pupils made it difficult to procure the necessary resources. The eventual solution implied a 50/50 participation: in 1911, the municipality decided that schools should offer warm lunches to all pupils, but the meals for the needy half would be financed from the city budget while the wealthier families should cover the expenses from their own means. School lunch was also regarded as a model healthy meal – thus, even if children lived nearby and could go home to have lunch there, it was permitted only if parents could prove that the meal at home was better than the meal at school.⁴³

Another major preoccupation of physicians was the organization of school space. Importantly, most of the municipal schools in Moscow were located in rented premises, which were not meant for educational purposes. Opening a municipal school did not imply constructing a specific school building – the scheme that we are used to today. In fact, the link between school as an educational institution and school as a special type of physical space was only emerging: in late-imperial Moscow, school usually occupied only a part of the building, sharing it with private apartments, but when a proper school building existed, it often housed several legally and educationally independent schools.

Finding school premises was a big problem, partially because of the general shortage of adequate properties, partially for the lack of funds and time. It was school doctors who were responsible for inspecting the potential premises and who decided whether those could be converted into schools. In most cases, however, as physicians complained, such decision required a compromise between the hygienic norms and the availability of properties, and they eventually had to choose “the lesser evil.” The fact that rented school premises were all of different quality and design reinforced the role of physicians, because no standard solution could be found and a separate evaluation and decision had to be taken in each case. Physicians mobilized their knowledge and resourcefulness to make the available school space more comfortable for a child’s body and accommodating of its needs. School doctors determined the type of school furniture and its arrangements; they proposed adjustments to the ventilation and heating systems, requested the construction of additional ovens or reorganization of toilets. That activity, however mundane it might seem, no doubt affected the comfort of children at schools and their lived experience of schooling.⁴⁴

Furthermore, constant reports of school physicians on the inadequacy of the rented school premises motivated the municipality to construct its

own proper school buildings. This process developed particularly rapidly in the 1900s, and by 1911 17% of pupils studied in municipal buildings (which were usually shared by several schools). The construction norms for such buildings were developed by architects together with school doctors and reflected many of their previous concerns and recommendations. For example, warm meals for pupils, promoted by physicians, required cooking and eating facilities, and the absence of the latter posed a significant hindrance to the introduction of lunches at school. In their 1904 report on school meals, physicians argued that "a kitchen and a canteen should be recognized as a necessary part of any well-organized school building."⁴⁵ Responding to that medical discussion, the new norms required all school projects to include kitchens and canteens. The construction rules also forbade locating any classrooms in the semi-basement floor and established the proper size of rooms and windows; they stipulated rooms for medical examination as well as ventilation and water-based heating systems, with a possibility to adjust temperature individually in each room. Toilets needed to be heated, naturally lit and equipped with a separate ventilation system and a sufficient number of water-closets and sinks with running water (one per 25 students) – the convenience far above the level that most pupils had at home. Moreover, physicians repeatedly emphasized the importance of games and outdoor activities for schooling, therefore every school project was required to have recreational rooms and outdoor playgrounds.⁴⁶

Apart from creating a hygienic and comfortable environment for children's bodies at school, physicians also interacted with them in a more direct way. School doctors measured and weighed children twice a year, organized smallpox vaccination, conducted regular selective medical checks, revealed and stamped out cases of contagious disease (most commonly, scarlet fever, diphtheria, measles, chicken pox and mumps) and were responsible for the entailing preventive measures, such as quarantine and disinfection. Although the anti-epidemic measures of school doctors somewhat overlapped with the activity of municipal sanitary physicians, the universal examinations helped identify and address also less threatening or endemic diseases, which were beyond the focus the city sanitary inspection, for example, scabies, which, according to Mikhaylov's report, was the most common disease among pupils.⁴⁷

Physicians criticized the practice of detaining or delaying pupils after lessons or during breaks and sharply opposed any type of punishments that involved the body (for example, making delinquent pupils stay on

their knees, which was practiced at some of Moscow's boys schools). Their general approach was that "a child's body needs to be spared." This, however, did not exclude physical exercise. School doctors advocated physical activity, especially outdoor movement games, as well as the introduction of gymnastics classes not only for boys, but also – and especially – for girls. One specific concern of school doctors was that physical education lessons should never have a form of military gymnastics and drilling, taught by soldiers – as it was practiced at imperial military schools and colleges. They argued that instructors of gymnastics need to have a background in pedagogy and be trained to work with children. In 1909, the Moscow City Council commissioned a Conference on physical education. This conference concluded that physical exercise should be made part of the regular school curricula and that instructors for those classes, as for other school subjects, would need a pedagogical training.⁴⁸

From the very beginning, school doctors were discouraged to provide medical care and treatment at schools. Their task was to isolate the sick and refer them to municipal hospitals and outpatient clinics where they could receive free medical care. By the turn of the century, there was a growing demand for the separate medical care for children. It was realized in 1903 with the opening of the first school outpatient clinic, which specialized in dentistry and otolaringology. In 1911, there were already five such outpatient clinics with different specializations which served 12,000 individual patients annually.⁴⁹

One particular dimension of the work of school physicians was selecting children for summer colonies and their supervision there. School summer colonies existed in Moscow since 1890. The idea of school colonies was to give the weakest and poorest pupils a possibility to spend summer in the countryside in a healthy and comfortable environment. As one of the municipal physicians put it,

school summer colonies were a result of realization that the growing children's bodies of the absolute majority of city pupils have to develop in extremely abnormal conditions and of the desire to do at least something to counterbalance those abnormalities, to give the forming children's bodies the opportunity to develop correctly, even if for a short time.⁵⁰

School colonies were not strictly speaking a municipal undertaking. The idea came from the teachers and trustees of municipal schools and was financed from the school funds so that most children could go there

for free. Teachers and trustees successfully mobilized their social networks to minimize the costs of the summer colonies and to get funds to support them. Buildings were always provided to summer colonies free of charge. Usually those were gentry estates, unused summer houses or zemstvo schools in the provinces around Moscow. School money was thus used to cover food, transportation and service expenses. The municipality got directly involved in the organization of summer colonies only after 1904, when the municipal deputy Vasily Bakhrushin donated 12,000 rubles for these purposes. In 1890 there were 3 summer colonies for 91 children altogether, 25 for 445 children in 1898 and 67 with for children in 1911. In 1912 almost 3000 children spent summer in such colonies.⁵¹

In colonies, which usually lasted for two months, children spent their time playing (cricket seemed to be a particularly loved game), bathing, fishing, gardening, walking in the woods, picnicking, handcrafting, drawing or organizing amateur theaters and choirs. All those activities were quite normal for the “dacha” life of the Russian middle-classes, but completely new to the pupils of Moscow municipal schools, half of whom had never previously left Moscow. The diaries of the colonies as well as the reports of their instructors testify that children enjoyed their time there and wanted to come back the following year.⁵²

In colonies, as in schools, nutrition received a particular attention. The board was simple but abundant: milk and bread for breakfast, meat soup and some cereal or vegetable dish for lunch, tea and bread in the afternoon, usually outdoors, cottage cheese or porridge and milk for dinner. There was no restriction in the size of portions, and children could eat as much as they wanted.⁵³

School doctors were very much involved in the project of summer school colonies from the very beginning. They indicated which children should be sent to the colonies, examined and measured them before the departure and often visited colonies to control children’s health. Parents were not always enthusiastic about sending their children away for two months because they needed their help in the household or at work. Therefore, medically defined “weakness” of children was used as an important argument in the negotiations about the children’s rights or needs. Physicians also maintained that at least 15% of all pupils were in need of such summer vacation for health reasons, and this served as a powerful justification for the expansion of the project, giving more and more children the opportunity to spend summer in the countryside in a comfortable and healthy environment.⁵⁴

Instead of conclusion: psychopathology, school hygiene and the medicalization of schooling

In 1908 Moscow opened its first class for “retarded” children. The question of teaching children with mental disabilities and behavioral problems first appeared on the agenda of Moscow municipal institutions in 1902. The problematization of this question was no doubt connected to the rapid expansion of schooling and the discussions on the possible introduction of universal primary education, which meant that even children that had been previously left outside of the schooling system, were now brought in contact with it. However, the practical solution to this question was not implemented until 1908 when Olginsko-Pyatnitskoye school for girls opened the first so-called “auxiliary” class. In 1911-1912 Moscow had 16 such classes with 252 pupils. The potential candidates for those classes were identified by teachers or school doctors and underwent a medical and psychological examination by psychiatrists. Auxiliary classes did not have any standard scheme of teaching but favored a highly individualized approach. The general goal of those classes was to motivate children to study, to teach them to concentrate and to express themselves, and to give them some basic knowledge about the world. The key teaching methods involved games, drawing, clay modelling for visualization of the study material, rhythmic gymnastics for the development of attention and coordination, special speech exercises as well as long walks which were later discussed in classroom.⁵⁵

The opening of the auxiliary classes signaled a new stage in the medicalization of schooling, when psychiatry joined hygiene as the main medical discipline in school life. However, this did not mean any radical transformation of the role of school doctors or school hygiene. The main field of psychiatrists’ activity, however important, remained marginal to the overall educational processes in the city. Although the number of auxiliary classes was expanding, they housed less than one percent of all pupils at municipal schools. In the “ordinary” schools, the cooperation between medicine and pedagogy continued to be expressed primarily through the language of school hygiene.

To conclude, the late imperial decades witnessed a growing involvement of the medical profession in educational life. This involvement, however, happened not so much with the tools of psychiatry and psychology but rather those of school hygiene – which was itself a multi-disciplinary field that combined pediatrics, public and occupational health, epidemiology,

sanitation and nutrition science. Furthermore, the institutionalization of school medical control happened before the rise of psychiatry in Russia; it was motivated primarily by sanitary concerns and had already gained significant experience and authority by the time psychiatry started influencing practical medical activity at schools. The aspiration of Moscow school doctors, as becomes apparent from their discussions and activities, was not only to limit the negative impact of schooling on pupils' health, but rather to construct a comfortable, healthy and safe space for children and to compensate for hardships that they experienced outside of school.

Contrary to the claims of Andy Byford about the low authority of school doctors, their poor remuneration, their weak influence over governmental decisions, sporadic character and general failure of their activities,⁵⁶ the case of Moscow school medical inspection presents a rather different picture. It shows that school doctors had performed systematic, diverse, highly-valued and well-paid work already since the late 1880s. In Moscow, school doctors were full-time municipal employees, with a strictly defined circle of responsibilities, and composed an inherent part of the growing municipal medical organization. The authority of school doctors was strong enough to not only transform the school environment and experience of schooling on the micro-level (that is, in each particular school), but to also affect policy on the level of the city and to prompt changes codified in local legal norms and regulations, even if putting them into practice was interrupted by the First World War and the revolution.

On the other hand, joining the more general discussion about the interpretation of Russian modernity and the role that biomedical sciences played in it, the presented analysis of school hygiene shows how medical discourse was mobilized not to promote greater control and discipline but instead to construct what Ben Eklof called "non-coercive classroom." In fact, within the limits of their domain, physicians went perhaps even further than reform-minded pedagogues, and advocated freedom, rest and comfort which, in their view, could not be sacrificed even for the purposes of education. Indeed, school doctors used medical knowledge to articulate difference, that is to define "weak" and "abnormal" children, – but, before the appearance of auxiliary classes and to a substantial degree also afterwards, this difference was used not to segregate, discriminate or stigmatize, but, on the contrary, to advance a more inclusive, fair and humane social policy.

NOTES

- ¹ These approaches were most famously (although from different positions) advocated by Konstantin Ushinsky, Nikolay Korf and Leo Tolstoy.
- ² Andy Byford, "Roditel', uchitel' i vrach: k istorii ikh vzaimootnosheniy v dele vospitaniya i obrazovniya v dorevolutsionnoy Rossii," *Novye rossiyskiye gumanitarnye issledovniya* (2013) <http://www.nrgumis.ru/articles/276/>, accessed on July 12, 2016.
- ³ Catriona Kelly, *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890-1991* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 26-28.
- ⁴ Ben Eklof, *Russian Peasant Schools: Officialdom, Village Culture, and Popular Pedagogy, 1861-1914* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 287-299. Eklof suggests that the actual number of boys and girls who received some schooling was much higher than the official statistics reported.
- ⁵ Ben Eklof, "Worlds in Conflict: Patriarchal Authority, Discipline and the Russian School, 1861-1914," *Slavic Review*, 50, 4 (Winter 1991), p. 795; Ben Eklof with Nadezhda Petersen, "Laska i Poriadok: The Daily Life of the Rural School in Late Imperial Russia," *The Russian Review*, 69 (January 2010), p. 29.
- ⁶ Kelly, *Children's World*, p. 33.
- ⁷ Andy Byford, "Professional Cross-Dressing: Doctors in Education in Late Imperial Russia (1881-1917)," *The Russian Review*, 65 (October 2008), p. 598.
- ⁸ Ibid, p. 595.
- ⁹ F.F. Erismann, *Vliyaniye shkol na proiskhozhdeniye blizorukosti po nablyudeniyam nad uchashchimisya v uchebnykh zavedeniyakh v Sankt-Peterburge* (St. Petersburg, 1870), p. 1.
- ¹⁰ Hermann Cohn, *Untersuchungen der Augen von 10060 Schulkindern, nebst Vorschlägen zur Verbesserung der den Augen nachtheiligen Schuleinrichtungen: Eine ätiologische Studie* (Leipzig, 1867); Theodor Becker, *Luft und Bewegung zur Gesundheitspflege in den Schulen* (Frankfurt a. M., 1867); Louis Guillaume, *Hygiène scolaire. Considérations sur l'état hygiénique des écoles publiques présentées aux autorités scolaires, aux institutions et aux parents* (Genève, 1864).
- ¹¹ Rudolph Virchow, *Ueber gewisse die Gesundheit benachtheiligende Einflüsse der Schulen: ein Bericht* (Berlin, 1869).
- ¹² Rudolf Virhov, "O vrednykh vliyaniiakh shkoly na zdoroviye", *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya*, vol. 146 (December 1869), part III, pp. 266-287.
- ¹³ Erismann, *Vliyaniye shkol*, p. 80; Idem, *Professional'naya gigiyena umstvennogo i fizicheskogo truda* (St. Petersburg, 1877), p. 29; see also

- A.S. Virenius, *Shkol'nye stoly i skam'yi, ikh ustroystvo i raspredeleniye v uchebnykh zavedeniyakh* (St. Petersburg, 1886).
- 14 V .F. Nagorskiy, *O vliyaniy shkol na fizicheskoye razvitiye detey* (St. Petersburg, 1881), pp. 10, 14, 27-37; on the link between chest girth and predisposition to consumption see I.A. Verner (ed.), *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo goroda Moskvyy* (Moscow, 1913), p. 61.
- 15 Erismann, *Vliyaniye shkol*, p. 98.
- 16 Erismann, *Vliyaniye shkol*; Idem, *Soobrazheniya po ustroystvu obraztsovoy klassnoy komnaty soglasno trebovaniyam sovremennoy gigiyeny* (Moscow, 1888), pp. 4-9; idem, *Soobrazheniya po voprosu o nailuchshem ustroystve klassnoy mebeli* (Moscow, 1894), pp. 3-4. The latter was published in the official circular letter for the Moscow educational district, which suggests that Erismann's recommendations were recognized at the high level.
- 17 I. Pavlov, *Narodnaya shkola. Opyt razrabotki voprosa o narodnoy shkole so storony tekhnicheskoy, gigiyenicheskoy i ekonomicheskoy* (St. Petersburg, 1886), quote from p. 1.
- 18 N.A. Korf, *Russkaya nachal'naya shkola*, 6th edition (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya Hana, 1897), pp. 72-78.
- 19 Yu. I. Zavolzhskaya, *Shkol'naya gigiyena* (St. Petersburg, 1898), p. 82.
- 20 D. Levinson, *Gigiyena shkol* (Odessa, 1872), pp. 19- 23; Erismann, *Professional'naya gigiyena*, p. 30.
- 21 Erismann, *Professional'naya gigiyena*, pp. 30-31.
- 22 S.K. Pavlova, *Sbornik podvizhnykh igr na otkrytom vozdukhe v shkole* (Moscow, 1896), introduction by F. Erismann, pp. 1-2.
- 23 Eklof, "Worlds of Conflict", pp. 796-799.
- 24 Erismann, *Professional'naya gigiyena*, p. 32.
- 25 *Nachal'nye uchilishcha, uchrezhdennyye Moskovskoy Gorodskoy Dumoy* (Moscow, 1882), p. 1
- 26 A. Krasnopevko, "Obzor uchilishch dlya narodnogo obrazovaniya v Moskve", in *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya*, vol 54 (April 1871), part IV, pp. 170-180.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 *Moskovskiy gorodskiy nachal'nye uchilishcha. Statisticheskiy otchet za 1901-1902 g.* (Moscow, 1903), p. 2; *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, pp. 33-36; *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, pp. 36-38.
- 29 *Moskovskiy gorodskiy nachal'nye uchilishcha*, pp. 7-14, 45-46.
- 30 TsGAM (Central State Archive of Moscow, TsGA Moskvyy), 179:56:95:13.
- 31 N.F. Mikhaylov, *Materialy k opredeleniyu fizicheskogo razvitiya i bolezennosti v sel'skikh shkolakh Ruzskogo uyezda Moskovskoy gubernii* (Moscow, 1887); idem, *Obshchaya kharakteristika deyatel'nosti nashikh vospitateleykh domov* (Moscow, 1887).
- 32 TsGAM, 179:56:95:14-15.

- 34 TsGAM, 179:56:105:9-11.
 35 TsGAM, 179:56:105:10.
 36 TsGAM, 179:56:105:14.
 37 Mikhaylov, *Materialy k opredeleniyu*, p. 23.
 38 TsGAM, 179:56:105:47.
 39 TsGAM, 179:56:105:156.
 40 "O zavtrakakh v nachal'nykh uchilishchakh goroda Moskvy," *Izvestiya Moskovskoy Gorodskoy Dumy, Vrachebno-sanitarny otdel* (August 1904), p. 38.
 41 TsGAM, 179:56:105:161.
 42 *Izvestiya Moskovskoy Gorodskoy Dumy, Vrachebno-sanitarny otdel* (March 1903), p. 16.
 43 *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, p. 63-64.
 44 "O sanitarnom sostoyanii pomeshcheniy, vnov nanyatykh dlya nachal'nykh gorodskikh uchilish k nachalu 1902-1903 uchebnogo goda," *Izvestiya Moskovskoy Gorodskoy Dumy, Vrachebno-sanitarny otdel* (February 1903), pp. 20-25; TsGAM, 179:56:105:52, 179:56:119:52-56.
 45 "O zavtrakakh v nachal'nykh uchilishchakh goroda Moskvy," p. 44
 46 *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, pp. 39-40.
 47 TsGAM, 179:56:105:56.
 48 TsGAM, 179:56:119:132-134.
 49 *Izvestiya Moskovskoy Gorodskoy Dumy, Vrachebno-sanitarny otdel* (October 1903), p. 5; *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, p. 133.
 50 TsGAM, 179:56:263:3.
 51 *Letniye kolonii dlya Moskovskikh nachal'nykh gorodskikh uchilishch. Otchet 1890 g.* (Moscow, 1890); p. 12; *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, p.67.
 52 *Letniye kolonii dlya Moskovskikh nachal'nykh gorodskikh uchilishch. Otchet 1890 g.*, pp. 4-12, *Otchet 1891 g.* (Moscow, 1891), pp. 7-13; *Otchet 1893 g.* (Moscow, 1894), p. 20.
 53 *Letniye kolonii. Otchet 1892 g.*, (Moscow, 1892) p. 5; *Otchet 1893 g.*, (Moscow, 1893) p. 13-15.
 54 *Letniye kolonii. Otchet 1890 g.* p. 4; *Otchet 1891 g.*, pp. 16-20; *Otchet 1893 g.*, p. 4; *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, p.67.
 55 *Sovremennoye khozyaystvo*, pp. 71-73.
 56 Byford, "Professional Cross-Dressing," particularly p. 614.



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THE RELIGIOUS FACTOR IN THE SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM

Abstract

The 2014 referendum in Scotland, which brought victory for unionists, was characterised by a high level of involvement of religious organisations. Most Christian Churches chose to be neutral on the referendum dilemma; this was inspired by prevailing viewpoints among the clergy, who objected Scottish independence. Analysing the stance of the Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic Church, Episcopal Church of Scotland, and Free Church of Scotland, I argue in this paper that the chosen path of neutrality played more in favour of unionists. The Churches' influence on the referendum's outcome was far beyond statistical error: had Churches publicly supported independence, it would have been likely that Edinburgh would now be negotiating the terms of "divorce" with London.

Keywords: Churches; Scotland; religion; independence; referendum.

Introduction

The September 2014 referendum in Scotland, where its people were offered to choose between independence and the continuation of the union with the rest of the UK, was, undoubtedly, a landmark event in the life of Scotland and even wider Europe. Indeed, for the first time in the history of the European Union, the issue of secession of a territory from an EU member state was put for the public voting, with the agreement of all major political forces. The negotiations, held among elite circles, led to the signing by the UK and Scottish Governments of Edinburgh Agreement on 15 October 2012. This agreement, praised as "an example of dialogue and conciliation" (Guibernau et al., 2013, p. 3), allowed the Parliament of Scotland to legislate for a single question referendum. The motion to offer to electorate several choices (i.e. to include, as a third option, greater devolution without independence) was decisively rejected by London during negotiations (Casanas Adam 2014). On 18 September 2014, Scots were asked a simple and clear question: "Should Scotland be

an independent country? Yes/No”, allowing them to define their future. A balanced victory of unionists emerged as the referendum’s outcome: they defeated pro-independence camp with 55.3 to 44.7 score, getting majority in most Scottish council areas, apart from Dundee, Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire.

As evident from the increasing number of academic publications, social scientists highlighted their growing interest in the Scottish referendum. The analysis was largely grouped around the involvement of political parties, non-governmental organisations and legal, historical and ideological factors, the presence and influence of which was at times in the heart of debates and was shaping choices and preferences (Tierney 2013, Torrance 2013, Torrance 2014, Hassan 2014, Mullen 2014). In this array of opinions, the religious variables were also visible, although not as bright as one could expect: their presence was seen in the pre-referendum papers (Bonney 2013, Bradley 2014), while post-referendum publications did not produce any substantial study, specifically outlining the role of Churches. Although Eric Stoddart in his article “Public Practical Theology in Scotland: with particular reference to the independence referendum” devoted short sections to the Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic Church and Episcopal Church contributions, these sections were limited to mainly listing some events, organised by Churches and mentioning several papers produced (Stoddart 2014). Such a neglect of the analysis of Churches’ involvement in the Scottish referendum is hardly justifiable, although it is reflective of the general trend of overlooking religious actors, in line with secularisation assumptions. However, even if the secularisation hypothesis for Scotland is true, one needs to bear in mind that the majority of Scots — 53.8 percent -- regard themselves Christian, according to the last (2011) census. Even supposing that for many of them this is more cultural self-identification than the reflection of their regular religious practices, we still need to realise that the voluntary desire to declare such self-identification implies some links with Christian Churches. In addition to this phenomenon, the presence of Churches in the life of Scotland was visible not only in the distant past or at the important events (such as the Act of Union and Disruption), but also consequentially from 1707 to 1999, when:

The Church’s [Church of Scotland] General Assembly was the nearest thing that Scotland had to a parliament, gathering representatives from every parish to consider the wellbeing of the nation and to engage in democratic debate on a number of important public issues of the day. The debates

on the Assembly's Church and Nation Committee's annual report were regularly attended by leading Scottish politicians who sat intently in the gallery (Bradley 2014, p. 169).

True, this central role of the Kirk¹ faded away after the establishment of the Parliament in 1999, but it definitely did not fall to the zero level. Reduced, but still palpable significance of the Kirk as well as the growing importance of the Roman Catholic Church, do not allow to consign religious organisations to limbo. Indeed, in spite of the Church of Scotland's membership decline, there were 32.4 percent of respondents in 2011 census who described themselves as affiliated with this Church, while 15.9 declared their belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. These figures are substantial enough to expect that the involvement of Churches in the Scottish political/societal life, including independence referendum, should be acknowledged appropriately. My main argument is that their influence and participation, partly concealed by the chosen pattern of behaviour (neutrality), was crucial for the campaign and influenced its outcome, even to the substantial degree.

This paper is structured as follows. First, I discuss the theoretical foundations for the Churches' stances on sovereignty and integration. Second, I analyse the involvement in the referendum campaign of main Scottish Churches: Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic Church, Episcopal Church of Scotland and Free Church of Scotland, and several smaller denominations.

Churches and Independence: The Theoretical Approach

First, we need to identify if Churches are in principle willing to take, on their official level, a perspective on the issues of sovereignty and independence. Here, I make a clear distinction between the position of the Church, expressed on the level of appropriate governing body (Synod, General Assembly, Bishops' Council, etc), and the opinions of individual Church members, either lay or ordained. Individuals, especially not belonging to the college of clergy, are free to articulate their views, but these are regarded as their personal opinions, not necessarily reflecting the view of their Church. These private opinions are undoubtedly present and in some cases they proliferate, especially at the times of important political and societal changes, but, as noted earlier, it would be incorrect

to attribute an opinion of, say, “Catholic lawyer” or “Anglican writer” to the official perspective of their denominations.

On the other hand, the decisions on the higher (official) Church level, related to the contested issues of sovereignty, independence and integration are rare. Normally, these decisions are taken during “once a generation opportunity” developments, when both the political establishment and the population en masse wishes to hear the voice of Churches. For instance, Churches expressed their official attitudes towards European integration, as a rule in favour of the uniting Europe (Mudrov 2015). Although entering the European Union required certain reduction of national sovereignty, there was hardly any case of opposing EU membership from mainstream Churches in the candidate countries. Even in the UK, historically one of the most Eurosceptic states, the Church of England favoured integration. Indeed, in 1972, at the first debate of the General Synod of the Church of England on Europe, a special report, “Britain in Europe: Social Responsibility of the Church” was produced, with positive statements on the UK’s forthcoming membership in the European Economic Community:

British membership of a Community which (based as it is on a common understanding of human rights and liberties) counts among its aims the reconciliation of European enmities, the responsible stewardship of European resources and the enrichment of Europe’s contribution to the rest of mankind, is to be welcomed as an opportunity for Christians to work for the achievement of these ends (Church of England 1972).

The Churches’ support was also evident in the major EU enlargements of 2004 (ten new countries) and 2007 (two new countries), when Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants approved their countries’ membership in the Union. The discordant voices coming from certain religious communities and hierarchs were also present, but the official stance, on the level of the governing Church bodies, was clearly in favour of integration. In some cases, there even occurred direct interventions in the debate from high-profile religious leaders. A prominent testimony to that was Pope John Paul II’s request to Poles, before the June 2003 referendum in Poland on the EU membership, to vote in favour of the Union. This intervention from the head of the Catholic Church was met with dissatisfaction by those influential Catholic figures who opposed Polish transfer of sovereignty from the Presidential palace in Warsaw to the European quarters in

Brussels (Mudrov 2015), but the outcome of referendum in Poland was overwhelmingly pro-European.

The pro-EU stance of the Pope was quite in line with the theoretical assumptions that Catholics tend to be more in favour of integration, while Protestants are normally in favour of nation-states. Brent Nelsen and James Guth point out that, for Catholics, “[t]he nation-state has never been the ultimate authority” and “[t]he Church has always preferred a level of governance above the nation-state that united Christians under the Pope’s moral guidance” (Nelsen et al. 2001, p. 201). “The traditional Catholic perception”, according to Ivy Hamerly, is that the “state sovereignty caused strife”, while, in contrast to that, “Protestants see state sovereignty as preserving peaceful diversity in Europe” (Hamerly 2012, p. 217). Overall, Hamerly’s statements are in line with the prevailing assumptions: Protestants “tend to place a higher value on national sovereignty”, but Catholics are more in favour of integration and unification (Hamerly 2012, p. 216).

In the analysis of this religious divide (Protestant/Catholic), the presence of Orthodox Churches was not given similar consideration, although one could expect Orthodox to be more in favour of the unification trend. As a testimony to that, in the Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church—the world’s largest Orthodox Church—one can discover greater appraisal of integration rather than nation-states (The Russian Orthodox Church N.d.). Practically, the Orthodox Churches of Cyprus, Romania and Bulgaria generally supported their countries’ membership in the EU, in spite of some opposition, which continue to exist and even increase in some cases (Archbishop Chrysostomos 2011). No Orthodox Church required on the level of its Synod or Council the withdrawal from the EU, and no similar requirement has ever been articulated by other Christian denominations in Europe, with the exception of some Free Churches, such as the Free Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland.

Overall, it is evident that Churches do express their views on the issues of sovereignty and integration, even if they are reluctant public speakers in this area – at least more reluctant than on the issues of family and protection of life. However, the mainstream perspective on the Catholic-Protestant divide seems now outdated. My argument here will be that, while recognising the historical value of the Protestant versus Catholic attitudes towards sovereignty, one needs to point to a changing pattern: the conceptual shift, in most Christian denominations, in favour of supranational unions. As a testimony to that, most Christian denominations

in the UK spoke in favour of the remaining in the European Union, before the June 2016 referendum on the EU membership.

Churches and the Scottish Referendum: Involvement and Debates

One of the key questions, which is of relevance to the main focus of this paper, is whether the Scottish Government expressed its interest in the religious participation in the independence debates. From what is known, this interest was minimal, and Churches were not specifically invited to contribute to this campaign. Nor were they given any special consideration -- a sharp contrast with the discussion on the future of Scotland in the 17th and 18th centuries, which eventually led to the new status (Union), sought out now to be overturned by the Scottish National Party (SNP). Indeed, three centuries ago arguments for closer union "were often couched in Protestant terms"; unity and divisions were found in faith issues, and "the attempts to impose on Scotland what were perceived as English forms of worship, and English norms of church government (bishops)" provoked the revolution against Charles I (Mason 2013, p.142).

On the surface, this lack of Government's interest might be interpreted as the deliberate downgrading of the Churches' role by those agenda-setters who elaborated the main principles and instruments for the public voting. The principal arguments in favour of independence, articulated by the Scottish Government, did not include reference to religion, even indirectly. The main focus lied elsewhere, in the domain of economic benefits and the desired opportunity not to be governed by "the hands of others":

If we vote No, Scotland stands still. A once in a generation opportunity to follow a different path, and choose a new and better direction for our nation, is lost. Decisions about Scotland would remain in the hands of others <...> With independence we can make Scotland the fairer and more successful country we all know it should be. We can make Scotland's vast wealth and resources work much better for everyone in our country, creating a society that reflects our hopes and ambition. Being independent means we will have a government that we choose – a government that always puts the people of Scotland first (The Scottish Government 2013).

Within the 670 pages of the “Scotland’s future” White Paper, published by the Scottish Government in November 2013, Churches were listed just as civil society organisations, along with “Business philanthropists, co-operatives and mutuals, trade unions, charities and many other organisations and individuals” (The Scottish Government 2013a, pp. 368-369). Religion was scarcely mentioned in the main body of the document, manifested only in the statement that “An independent Scottish Government will promote, and support amongst the Commonwealth States with the Queen as Head of State, a similar measure to remove religious discrimination from the succession rules”² (The Scottish Government 2013a, p.354). An additional remark appeared in the “Questions and Answers” section, where it was declared, in the answer to question 590, that “We propose no change to the legal status of any religion or of Scotland’s churches” (The Scottish Government 2013a, p.564). The request of “Scotland’s diverse faith traditions” to see proper recognition of the “contribution of faith to Scotland’s society” was not granted such an acknowledgement.

However, this ignorance was not necessarily the reflection of the downgrading of religion, although “the lack of detail on the Kirk’s role”, as a former moderator of the Church of Scotland claimed, was indeed noticeable. True, it would have been fairer if the historical role of the Kirk was mentioned, but one has to point, in this case, to another important fact: Scottish Christianity did not start from the Reformation. Bearing in mind multifaith and not exclusively Protestant presence in the history of Scotland, this “lack of detail” could be interpreted as a reflection of more objective and positive stance of the Scottish Government towards different Churches, as well as understanding of the shifting religious preferences. The Kirk is now losing its membership, with the increasing significance, at the same time, of the Roman Catholic and Free Churches, who broaden their base at the expense of the Kirk’s fleeing members and due to the immigrants, coming mainly from the former Communist bloc. David Brown writes about the Catholic Church as “rivalling the established Church of Scotland in terms of active members” (Brown 2014, p.88). Therefore, any provision for a special Kirk’s role in an independent Scotland would look like a bias against other Churches, which, the existing trend prevails, may well assume in the future the role of national Churches, especially in practical/numerical terms. It is not accidental in this context that there were attempts by the SNP and Scottish Government “to gain support among Roman Catholics” (Bonney 2013, p. 483), and the Catholic Church,

according to Norman Bonney, was granted “a disproportionately high involvement” in leading *Time for Reflection*³ in the Scottish Parliament (Bonney 2013, p. 480).

Overall, the immediate pre-referendum history of Scotland does not reveal a clear stance towards Churches. There were cases when the Churches’ opinion was disregarded, and religion-based arguments were ridiculed and marginalised. The most vivid example was the rejection of the Churches’ concern in the process of legalising same-sex marriages. This left Christian Churches, who organised and led “Scotland for marriage” campaign, with a feeling of deep sorrow towards the Government, which pressed hard for this piece of legislation, in spite of the substantial public opposition. John Ross was very critical of the decisions, made after the introduction of the Scottish Parliament:

In the decade following its founding the Scottish Parliament has enacted, or is planning to enact, legislation further divorcing Scotland from its Christian heritage. The judiciary has been secularised, the Christian understanding of marriage repudiated, the integrity of the family endangered, and Christianity’s historical place in the education of Scotland’s children further diminished (Ross 2014, p. 7).

On the other hand, one needs to note that this prevailing secularising trend was not something unique for Scotland: it was visible in the rest of Great Britain and in much of continental Europe. For a balanced assessment of developments, we should also take into account that the SNP Government was willing to respect the rights of those who disagreed with the introduction of same-sex marriages, especially on the grounds of religion and beliefs. The same Government provided some further support for the faith schools in Scotland and, in fact, as a Catholic priest explained, the SNP administration was more open to religion than the previous ones:

After 2007 elections, when SNP took power, Scottish education civil servants, who always kept the Church out (“no, no, we administer all things, you don’t”), were sent out to ask us what our concerns are and what we are interested in, and what they could do for us. This never happened in 100 years and this means openness to religion (Interview with Catholic priest, 2015).

Certainly, the conditions for Churches created by the SNP Government were not the best possible, but these were more favourable than what had been practiced by previous administrations. Somewhat paradoxically (this will be explained later), it was one of the factors which influenced the Churches' decision to abstain from giving an official piece of advice to people on how to vote. In fact, the analysis of the involvement of the main Christian denominations reveals a degree of formality on their part: quite an unusual behaviour in the circumstances, when Scotland was making an extremely important choice, "once in a generation opportunity". This involvement will be discussed below.

Church of Scotland

The decision on neutrality of the Church of Scotland was undoubtful: "the General Assembly has decided to remain impartial with regard to the outcome of the referendum" (Church of Scotland 2014, p.9), and the counter-motion for this -- "Commend aspiration to full nationhood for Scotland" was not put to the General Assembly, while the proposal on neutrality was accepted by 418 to 15 votes. However, this neutrality did not fully correspond with some previous actions of national Church, which "played a critical role in the movement which led to the establishment of the Scottish Parliament" (Church of Scotland N.d.). After the referendum, Church was welcoming further devolution in its submission to the Smith Committee. Also, the Kirk did not hesitate to take a public stance on such a political issue, as the EU membership, advocating Europhile perspective. Revd Dr Angus Morrison, Kirk's Moderator in 2015-2016, commenting on the opening of the blog on the EU membership referendum, stated that "the General Assembly had a long standing view that Britain was better off as part of the European Union", although he admitted that "ministers would not be telling people how to vote from the pulpit" (Life and Work Magazine 2015).

From a theoretical perspective, it had been pertinent to expect that the Church of Scotland would take a clear position and, as a national Church, would promote independence. This did not happen: although the Kirk became a very active participant in the referendum campaign, its slogans were carefully formulated, to keep neutrality. The then Moderator John Chalmers was convinced that Church ministers and members had "much to contribute to the substance of the discussion", but without taking

sides (Life and Work Magazine 2014). The Church's halls were offered for debates for politicians and public figures from various ideological spectrum; the Kirk also "held 32 community consultation events across the nation, reaching more than 900 participants" (Church of Scotland N.d.a). These participants chose values for the future Scotland; the most popular ten values included Equality, Fairness, Justice, Education, Respect, Honesty, Community, Opportunity, Compassion, and Tolerance (Church of Scotland N.d.a). These values, broad and acceptable to most layers of society, did not represent anything specific, provocative or challenging (for instance, there were no family values or sacredness of life), but Sally Foster-Fulton, convener in 2012-2016 of the Church and Society Council, was convinced that:

These values represent the best of human intentions. We can say: these are the things we share; values which are intrinsically Christian. We need to say: we are Christians and we are servants... The only side we were in this debate is a side of the poor (Interview with Foster-Fulton 2015).

One could legitimately ask why the Church, who chose to be "incredibly active" (Interview with Foster-Fulton 2015) at the campaign, kept such a strong attachment to the principles of neutrality and impartiality. The two main explanations, offered by the Church's representatives, were different, but both were hardly fully convincing. Foster-Fulton claimed that "we are a broad church and it was not for the Church to tell people what to think, but it was time for you to think because you had to decide on big thing" (Interview with Foster-Fulton 2015). The Clerk of Dundee Presbytery, Revd James Wilson, suggested that "there was no relevant issue for faith. Poverty is relevant, education is relevant, but independence is irrelevant" (Interview with Wilson 2015). However, the difficulty with these explanations is that, in a similar situation, facing a variety of opinions on EU membership, Church of Scotland refused to be neutral. In May 2016, the General Assembly overwhelmingly voted in favour of the case of the UK remaining in the EU. The suggestion not to put this controversial Leave/Remain dilemma for the Assembly's voting (to maintain the Church's neutrality) was rejected (Church of Scotland 2016). Also, the issues of poverty and education, highlighted by Wilson as "relevant to faith", were, in fact, intertwined with the Scottish independence dilemma, fuelled by socio-economic slogans from both sides.

In fact, the disagreement with somewhat superficial neutrality was visible: in August 2014, 34 serving and retired Kirk ministers published a pro-independence declaration, in a "Sunday Herald" newspaper. The signatories included some prominent figures from the Church of Scotland, such as Andrew McLellan, former moderator of the Church, and Norman Shanks, former convener of the Church and Nation Committee. The main issues the supporters of independence put on the agenda were those of nuclear weapons on the Scottish soil, inability of the Westminster Government to deliver "socially just and equitable society", and enhancing Scotland's contribution "to the wider community of nations" (STV 2014). Douglas Gay, an academic and Church of Scotland minister, while agreeing that many aims were, in principle, reachable without secession -- through further devolution, was firmly convinced in impossibility to remove nuclear weapons if Scotland remains a part of the UK (Interview with Gay 2015). The pro-independence declaration was almost immediately downplayed by Kirk's senior figures: John Chalmers re-assured the public in the Kirk's neutrality. The Moderator admitted that it was "their right" for ministers to sign the Declaration, but recalled their negligible numbers: they represented only 1.8 percent of the Church of Scotland ministers (STV 2014). Even after the referendum, in its 2014 Annual Report, the Church of Scotland highlighted that it was "at the heart of the debate about the future of Scotland" (Church of Scotland 2015, p.19), but further emphasised that it was not done for the promotion of either independence, or union. Instead, "we [the Church] asked ordinary people what they wanted for their country and we challenged the politicians to deliver what they called for" (Church of Scotland 2015, p.19). Norman Shanks, a former convener of the Church and Nation Committee, said that the Church took "a measured middle line", although he thinks "it was a pity". Shanks recounts:

In 1979 there was a first referendum in Scotland. Church took a strong line: there should be a home rule, and appropriate letter was prepared, encouraging people to vote "yes". However, it was prevented by senior figures, because Church of Scotland as a national Church should not take a partisan position. I think it is a very debatable issue. There are issues related to well-being of society, where it is appropriate to come to one side or another. On some issues it is appropriate to be specific; otherwise people in congregations say: they do not speak for me (Interview with Shanks 2015).

This dissatisfaction is reflective of the pro-independence perspective of some Church of Scotland members, although there is no evidence that they represented the majority; even the opposite seems true. Douglas Gay estimated that from 30 to 40 percent of the ministers and members of the Church of Scotland voted “yes” (Interview with Gay 2015), which is below average. According to the post-referendum survey, the number of Protestants who voted “Yes” was 39.9 percent (Fraser 2015), although this is inclusive of other Protestant denominations. The reason why the Kirk chose strong neutrality was, in fact, related to these prevailing attitudes. Indeed, the neutrality was seen as a tool for getting outcome, regarded as more acceptable for Scotland and for the Church of Scotland, which, according to David Chillingworth, was “slightly nervous about its status in an independent country” (Chillingworth 2014).

Roman Catholic Church

The Roman Catholic Church (RCC)—the second and more viable denomination, compared to the Church of Scotland, was in the same niche with the latter on the referendum dilemma: refraining from giving to Scottish people a piece of advice on how to vote. Archbishop Philip Tartaglia, president of the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland, encouraged everyone to vote “with complete freedom of choice and in accordance with their prayerful judgment of what is best for the future” (Harkins 2014). The Church decided to abstain mainly due to the lack of what was characterised as a “moral content” in the referendum, which seemed to offer a purely political choice. Also, bearing in mind the referendum dilemma, the RCC distanced itself from the Church of Scotland, as evident in the article written by Archbishop Leo Cushley:

The Catholic Church is not a national institution in Scotland in the way it was in the middle ages. Nor does it have the place—politically, religiously, numerically—of, say, the Church of Scotland. We do not have the unique, long-standing relationship with the state’s institutions that the Kirk as a national institution with a privileged constitutional status has to consider (Cushley 2014).

For the Catholic Church, the neutrality was indeed more logical and explicable step; and, in fact, its clergy was more disciplined in

observing this neutrality. Few exceptions were noticeable, though. Peter McBride, Parish Priest of St Thomas Catholic Church, Riddrie, Glasgow, openly revealed his pro-independence views, explaining this by a better possibility for “a more equitable distribution of resources and wealth” in an independent Scotland (Bergin 2014). Archbishop Leo Cushley was very careful in choosing his words in a June 2014 “Sunday Times” article, but he was adamant to dismiss what he called the “unfounded fear” of the creation of the ineradicable division by the referendum. This statement, irrespective of the degree of its diplomatic vagueness, would be playing in favour of the “Yes” campaign, since it was the opposite side -- “Better Together” -- who spoke about divisions and disturbing social reaction, as well as “anger and aggression” caused by the referendum (Interview with Keenan 2015). Regarding the most important questions for a “person of faith”, as Archbishop pointed out, such as “the freedom of belief and worship, and freedom of conscience”, there was “little to choose between the Westminster consensus and the Holyrood⁴ consensus—to say nothing of the European consensus” (Cushley 2014). However, most opinions, known to the general public, came from the Catholic laymen, and, typically, did not differ substantially from the concerns, articulated by the Church of Scotland’s people. Clyde Naval Base (Faslane) was there: Rennie McOwan, while not revealing plainly his stance on the referendum dilemma, was adamant to emphasise that “nuclear weapons are evil and immoral and British politicians are very happy about keeping them”; therefore “an independent Scotland could bring this [nuclear-free status] into fact” (McOwan 2014).

In contrast with “Yes” supporters, the arguments of Catholic unionists were at times harsh, encompassing gloomy predictions for the future of independent Scotland, mainly in politico-religious terms. Some spoke about fear of persecution: “a leading Catholic lawyer” Paul McBride claimed that sectarianism could blossom in an independent Scotland and the SNP policy could lead to “very serious consequences” for Catholics (Dunlop N.d.). Similar caution was expressed by Professor Patrick Reilly, a “leading Catholic academic” (according to “Scottish Catholic Observer”), who stated:

I know that some people feel safer being part of the UK, as they feel that England is more tolerant towards them than an independent Scotland might be. I can see why some people would take the view that Scotland would be more divided under independence (Dunlop N.d.).

However, the accusations against “priests and other officers of the Church”, who “campaign[ed] openly for one side in the referendum [for “Yes, Scotland”], sometimes directly from their pulpits” (Thompson 2014) need to be judged with caution. We may only speculate about the number of these priests and officers, and, certainly, cannot claim that they represented a sizable portion. Indeed, as a Catholic priest indicated, there was probably around 1 percent of priests who made their views known—in favour of independence. He also emphasised that he “was not conscious of any who spoke publicly” on the other side of spectrum, for the “Better Together” campaign. Even such a minor involvement of the Catholic clergy was perceived by this priest critically:

They [clergymen] were expressing their personal preferences. The bishops would have preferred they would not do that. In my personal opinion, they acted irresponsibly, because the following Sunday they had to stand before their people who voted one way or another. It’s my opinion that no one should know in my parish how I vote. I am not ordained a priest in the Church to make political choices for my parishioners. I am ordained to teach the teaching of the Church. Maybe the teaching of Church on specific issues: justice and peace, about pro-life—these are the things ... But I think it’s completely wrong to say: you should vote Labour, or SNP, or for independence, or not. I think this is a personal judgement which is not in my competence as a priest. I am not given a platform on Sunday as a citizen; I am given a platform as a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, to teach what the Church teaches, not my personal opinions (Interview with Catholic priest 2015).

According to Bishop Joseph Toal, “one or two priests” in his Diocese of Motherwell made their views known in favour of independence, but this occurrence was exceptional and was negatively perceived by parishioners. As Toal indicated, “people complained about that; people phoned me and said the priests should not be campaigning”. Toal also rejected Tom Gallagher’s assertion about the “covert support” for the “yes” campaign from the Catholic hierarchy. According to him, “we tried to be independent. We thought we should not actually interfere, it was not our place to do” (Interview with Toal 2015). Interestingly, two Catholic bishops whom I interviewed in England and Northern Ireland, also confirmed that they would prefer to stay neutral, had they lived in Scotland, although earlier one of them -- Bishop Noel Treanor from Belfast -- did not hesitate to express publicly his views on the Treaty of Lisbon’s referendum in the

Republic of Ireland (Interview with Treanor 2015; Interview with Arnold 2015). Overall, the Catholic neutrality was quite well-maintained, in spite of the fact that, according to the pre-referendum estimates, Catholics were more likely to vote for independence than the members of the Church of Scotland. This was confirmed by the post-referendum survey, which found that 57.7 percent of Catholics supported separation of Scotland from the rest of UK (Fraser 2015). However, in such hierarchical structure as the Roman Catholic Church, the divisions between priests and laymen in their voting preferences are particularly important, but there is no data to assess these differences properly.

Episcopal Church of Scotland, Free Church of Scotland and Other Denominations

Both Episcopal and Free Churches, as the third and fourth largest denominations in Scotland (although much smaller, compared with the two main denominations) did not violate the general religious consensus on neutrality. David Chillingworth, primus of the Episcopal Church, published an article, where he described his identity as “Irish-British”, putting the Irishness on the first place. But he declined, in a 2015 interview, to reveal his stance on the independence dilemma and dismissed my assumption on how he voted, which I based on the peculiarities of his self-described identity:

I do not want to disclose [my perspective]. I do not think that it's right for you to take a statement of my identity and decide how I vote. It's very dangerous for Churches to be in a position that someone looks—you are from the Roman Catholic Church, or Episcopal Church, therefore you vote at the referendum in that or this way. This gives us the sectarianism, like in Ireland (Interview with Chillingworth 2015).

Most Episcopal clergy took a similar nuanced position, at least publicly. Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney, Robert Gillies, claimed in his article that “There's a strong pull towards Scotland becoming an independent, small nation”, but he immediately stated that there is “[a]n equally strong argument that says all Scotland needs are greater devolved powers within the existing UK” (Gillies 2014). However, there were clergy who openly expressed their views, often via social media, supporting one side or

another. David Chillingworth was critical of that behaviour, even if the statements did not cross the borders of the Internet:

I think it was a mistake. They should not have done that... It's always a difficult question. Where people appear making statements in their role as clergy—it's their mistake. If you are a member of the congregation and you oppose to independence and your priest declares on social media to be in favour—it's difficult. It will affect your relations with the Church. I chose for obvious reasons not to express my personal view -- it's one of the sacrifices you make. It's profoundly dangerous for Churches to take view on what flag flies. Some clergy does not realize this; there is a plenty of sectarianism in Scotland (Interview with Chillingworth 2015)

Although the Free Church of Scotland, the fourth largest denomination, is very different from the Episcopal Church in terms of its doctrine and organisation, its official view was in the same vein: that of neutrality. As David Robertson, Free Church Moderator since 2015, pointed out, "as denomination, we do not hold political views, we hold social and moral views" (Interview with Robertson 2015). However, two perspectives were articulated at the General Assembly in May 2014: for and against independence. John Ross, discussing possible developments in case of the "Yes" vote, noted that, based on the SNP documents, "in an independent Scotland, as a matter of public policy, and for the first time since the Reformation, Christianity will be deprived of state recognition as Scotland's national religion" (Ross 2014, p.8). As Ross underlined in an e-mail correspondence, "one of main concerns was the lack of provision made by the SNP for an adequate state recognition of Presbyterianism equivalent to that which has operated in Scotland since the Reformation" (E-mail correspondence with Ross). On the other hand, Neil MacLeod emphasised that the choice was between secular Scotland and secular Britain, but the "No" vote means "the Church has no voice", while "Yes" vote presupposes positive change, "where the church articulates a clear vision of the place it should have in the nation state; what other rights would we want to see, for example whether the church should advocate for protections for freedom of religion or freedom of worship" (Free Church of Scotland 2014).

It is also worth noting that smaller denominations, such as the Free Presbyterians, the Free Church (Continuing), the Reformed Presbyterians along with some others issued their discussion papers on the referendum

(Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland 2014). These papers highlighted, as Revd John Forbes specified, “many legitimate spiritual concerns”, but largely were left unnoticed. The same happened with Forbes’ deliberations on the nature of the Treaty of Union and its violation by England. Indeed, Forbes was adamant to highlight the concerns that were outside the mainstream economic-political-social domain, since, from his perspective, it had nothing to do with the independence dilemma:

What is absolutely certain is that issues such as the economy, democracy, healthcare and North Sea oil, etc. have nothing whatever to do with the essential principles of Scottish nationhood. Don’t let these be the key issues that make up your mind. If you intend to vote Yes because you think it will bring a more wealthy and democratic Scotland, then you are voting for the wrong reasons. If you intend to vote No because you think you will be more stable and secure remaining within the United Kingdom, then you are also voting for the wrong reasons <...> The only legitimate reason to seek independence is because the Treaty has been violated and you believe independence will give a better opportunity for redress (Forbes 2014).

However, this perspective was indeed marginal and never acquired its proper place in the mainstream debate. Although Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland commended the outcome of the referendum in religious terms (Vogan 2014), major Scottish denominations refrained from using explicitly religious language. The opinion of the Church of Scotland, articulated at the first General Assembly after the referendum, held in May 2015, did not go beyond usual praise for “authentic voice [of the Church] both during the campaign and after it” and “the wide public engagement and high turnout in the 2014 Referendum” (Church of Scotland 2015a; Church of Scotland 2015b). Obviously, smaller Scottish Churches remained isolated in their attempts to bring distinct dimensions to the referendum’s discussions.

Concluding Remarks

The neutral or, in the words of David Chillingworth, “agnostic” perspective of Churches on the referendum dilemma was visible to all participants of the campaign. However, this did not look as something ordinary: as seen previously, Churches were willing to take stance on the issue of independence or integration, even in the circumstances of

divisions in society or the internal divisions among the Church members. The Scottish case was quite distinct in that regard: with a high degree of consensus, most Scottish Churches did not produce any recommendation to their flock on how to vote. Moreover, when some Church ministers or clergy took a public stance, it was normally followed by high-level statements, confirming the official neutrality of the Church.

In my view, such a perspective has the following explanation: Churches in Scotland were predominantly unionist, for number of reasons. First, Church membership is currently composed of older generation, which, as seen from the post-referendum survey, was in favour of the Union (Fraser 2015). Second, there was a degree of dissatisfaction with the absence of the adequate mentioning of Churches in the Scottish Government's White Paper "Scotland's future". This was especially contrasting in light of the arrangements in England (where the existence of the established Church is widely accepted), and of the European Union at large, with the explicit mentioning of religion and Churches in the main EU document—the Treaty of Lisbon (Mudrov 2016). Third, there was a strong historical feeling of unionism in the Church of Scotland: Ian Bradley even claimed that in the first half of the XX century, "the Kirk was a bastion of Unionism" (Bradley 2014, p. 170). Interestingly, before the 1997 devolution referendum, three Church of Scotland ministers became senior members of "Think Twice" campaign, which opposed devolution. There was no similar representation among the leading figures of "Scotland Forward", which played the opposite role, campaigning in favour of devolution and the establishment of Parliament with tax-raising powers. The Kirk was more pro-Union than the Roman Catholic Church, but this division was more visible on the laity level, while clergy was predominantly in favour of the union both in these Churches and most other denominations. Peter Mackenzie, SNP councillor in East Lothian Council, provided the following assessment:

The Churches were overwhelmingly unionist. From my own experience, Church of Scotland, Episcopal, Catholic and Baptist Churches were overwhelmingly against Scottish independence. I spent a lot of time in the advertising in Sunday Herald [in support of independence], phoning a lot of Church of Scotland ministers, asking to support us, and I got some angry replies. The clergy would be overwhelmingly unionist (Interview with Mackenzie 2015).

In spite of this predominant Unionism, it would have been difficult for Churches, bearing in mind the developments in the last decade, to take a unilateral pro-Union stance. The Scottish National Party, advocating independence, was in general more favourable to Churches than other parties; the SNP Government was more favourable than previous administrations. Therefore official anti-independence statements from Churches (had they come) would have looked as a sign of disrespect to the government, which was willing to show a high degree of support to religious organisations. This official neutrality led to some dissatisfaction from the SNP and pro-independence factions in Churches, but this was partly counter-balanced by the launch of the “Christians for Independence” group and by the public statements of some clergy, who often spoke on the “Yes, Scotland” side and were widely circulated in the media. In fact, the launch of “Christians for Independence” was mainly political initiative of the Scottish National Party, supported by some pro-independence factions of several Scottish Churches, especially in the Church of Scotland. Dave Thompson, Member of Scottish Parliament in 2007-2016 and Convener of the Group, emphasised that the group was aiming at “Christian voice to be heard” and “to let Christians know that it is OK to be in favour of independence” (Interview with Thompson 2015). It was the only group of such kind in Scotland; the opposite side—“Better Together”—did not establish anything similar. Most likely, it was a reflection of the SNP strategy to enhance its support among Christians, especially among members of national Church. The SNP felt that the Church of Scotland played more on the unionist side; it was indirectly confirmed by the appraisal of the Kirk’s activity from the “Better Together” campaign. Baroness Annabel Goldie “commended the work the Church of Scotland did pre and post Referendum, working to engage their communities and encourage them to think critically about politics and the communities in which they live” (Goldie 2015). The assumptions that Catholic hierarchy covertly supported “Yes” side also do not seem enough grounded.

One can ask, in this case, why the disobedient -- to the decisions of higher governing Church bodies – voices of clergy were mainly in favour of independence, while supporters of the union preferred to keep silent, following the path of neutrality. Foster-Fulton and Gay suggest that, first, it was due to the nature of “yes” and “no” groups, and, second, the “no” campaign was quite confident in its victory, not expecting their opponents to get more than 30-35 percent of public support. However, there could be one more reason: clergy, being “overwhelmingly unionist”, was satisfied

with the position of neutrality, realising that such stance played more in favour of unionists. Also, it did not want to jeopardise future perspective of their denominations in the unlikely (but still not excluded) event of Scotland eventually gaining independence. While we cannot provide exact assessment (in percentage) of how the stance of Churches shaped the outcome, it is evident that their influence was far beyond statistical errors. Had Churches publicly and fiercely supported independence, it would have been quite possible that Edinburgh would now be negotiating the terms of “divorce” with London, rather than just discussing new waves of devolution.

NOTES

- ¹ This is an informal name for the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, widely used in Scotland.
- ² Currently, the succession rules in the UK do not allow Roman Catholics to assume the monarch's throne.
- ³ This is a special time in the Scottish Parliament, when the representatives of different faith (or non-faith) groups give speeches on various ethical and moral issues. Normally it takes place once a week (during the Parliament's sessions) and lasts no more than 4 minutes.
- ⁴ This metonym is used to refer to the Scottish Parliament. It originates from the name of the area in Edinburgh, where the Parliament building is located.

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L'ENSEIGNEMENT PRIMAIRE DES MINORITÉS ETHNIQUES DANS LES ZONES RURALES DE BESSARABIE ET DE TRANSNISTRIE DANS L'ENTRE-DEUX GUERRES (1918-1940). NATIONALISATION ET INTÉGRATION NATIONALE

Résumé

Cet article cherche à étudier la mise en place de l'enseignement primaire public des minorités ethniques dans les zones rurales de Bessarabie, au cours de l'entre-deux guerres (1918-1940). L'imposition de l'obligation scolaire a fait l'objet d'une relation inégale de pouvoir entre les autorités d'Etat responsables de l'enseignement et la population des villages. Ce processus, réalisé à travers une relation difficile – de conflits et de négociation – entre la population civile et les autorités étatiques, a été déterminant pour l'expansion de l'Etat national dans les zones rurales et la formation du statut de citoyenneté et en même temps de nationalité au sein de la population civile, ethniquement et linguistiquement hétérogène, de cette province roumaine nouvellement intégrée. L'article conclut avec l'ouverture d'une perspective comparative en esquisant le cas de l'enseignement primaire des minorités ethniques comme moyen d'acculturation étatique en Transnistrie soviétique, dans la même période.

Mots-clés : enseignement primaire, Bessarabie, Transnistrie, Grande Roumanie, URSS, éducation élémentaire universelle, zones de contact, population rurale, l'entre-deux guerres, construction étatique, roumanisation, intégration nationale.

Introduction

Dans cet article, je me propose d'étudier la façon dont l'enseignement primaire public a été mis en place durant la période de l'entre-deux guerres en Bessarabie, dans les localités rurales habitées de groupes qualifiées de « minoritaires » du point de vue ethnique et linguistique. Dans cette

ancienne province de l'Empire tsariste (1812-1917), la mise en place et l'expansion de l'enseignement public de masse a été l'un des éléments-clé d'un projet plus vaste de construction nationale et étatique, de même que dans d'autres parties du monde moderne ou en cours de modernisation¹. La population de la Bessarabie a été soumise à des politiques de scolarisation de masse ambitieuses afin de faciliter l'intégration rapide de la province à la nation roumaine. La réalisation de ce projet s'est heurtée à un certain nombre de difficultés et à différentes formes de résistance de la population locale. Les autorités de l'Etat souhaitaient former, par l'Ecole, des citoyens éclairés, disciplinés et loyaux. Le résultat réel, obtenu sur le terrain, de ce processus a été ambigu, contradictoire et souvent décevant pour les autorités. L'école primaire est restée en Bessarabie, mais aussi dans le pays entier, le seul établissement d'enseignement fréquenté par la grande majorité des personnes un tant soit peu instruites², qui représentaient jusqu'en 1930 à peine plus de la moitié de la population générale³.

Cette étude porte sur les minorités ethniques (appelées aussi « hétéroglottes ») dans les zones rurales, sans pour autant négliger le développement de l'enseignement primaire dans son ensemble, y compris dans les zones urbaines. Cette limitation est motivée par des dynamiques différentes du processus de mise en place de l'enseignement public de masse dans les zones rurales, où les taux d'alphabétisation et le niveau d'éducation était beaucoup plus bas que dans les villes, à plus forte raison dans les villages roumanophones⁴. En raison des ambitions modernisatrices et « nationalisantes » des autorités, le degré de coercition et, du même coup, la réponse de la population par rapport à ce projet est plus l'intense dans les villages que dans les villes, où l'Ecole était une institution enracinée depuis plusieurs décennies. Il faut rappeler que la population rurale constitue une majorité absolue en Roumanie de l'entre-deux guerres (79% en 1930⁵) et, à plus forte raison, en Bessarabie (87%⁶). Malgré les discours populistes exaltant les vertus du paysan, cette ruralité dominante est perçue par l'administration roumaine comme un défi dans la l'application du projet de modernisation annoncé⁷. Ce défi est perçu comme d'autant plus difficile dans le cas des communautés rurales « hétéroglottes ».

L'une des hypothèses directrices de cette recherche est que l'institutionnalisation de l'enseignement primaire dans les zones rurales de Bessarabie (et, par extension, dans d'autres régions) a été réalisée à travers la reconnaissance de la légitimité de cette institution au sein des populations locales de la région. Ce processus – difficile et tortueux – se

déploie à travers l'imposition progressive et la reconnaissance de l'*autorité pédagogique* de l'État⁸. Ce processus d'enracinement de l'institution scolaire dans les communautés rurales, mais aussi d'affirmation des habitants comme citoyens loyaux à l'Etat national roumain, ne va pas sans difficultés. Dans ce processus, compris dans cette étude dans la période de l'entre-deux guerres mondiales, une évolution des attitudes et des stratégies de la population par rapport à l'école est à l'œuvre. Le rapport de force entre les deux parties est nettement inégal, le gouvernement usant *in extremis* – par exemple, dans le contexte des soulèvements populaires de Hotin (1919) et de Tatar-Bunar (1924)⁹ – de sa prérogative de *contrainte physique légitime* sur les civils, appliquée parfois jusqu'au bout des conséquences. Ainsi, le processus de mise en place et de reconnaissance de l'enseignement public de masse apparaît comme un élément que les autorités considèrent comme central, inhérent au processus de construction étatique et nationale sur plusieurs dimensions : politique, économique et culturelle¹⁰. Dans cette étude, je cherche à montrer le caractère équivoque des relations de pouvoir dans le processus d'établissement du monopole sur la violence physique (et symbolique) légitime¹¹ par les autorités d'Etat dans les zones rurales de la Bessarabie, province perçue et administrée en grande mesure comme un territoire à statut intermédiaire – une zone « frontalière »¹².

Cet article est donc une tentative de faire la lumière sur le processus de mise en place de l'éducation publique de masse dans une région peu scolarisée et alphabétisée, à travers des relations de pouvoir inégales entre les agents de l'État et la population civile, souvent perçue comme une population « étrangère » du fait de parler peu ou pas le roumain. De cette perspective, l'Ecole et la scolarisation pourraient être considérées comme une « zone de contact »¹³ entre deux mondes jusque-là relativement distincts : d'une part les autorités de l'Etat, représentées à différents niveaux par des institutions impliquées et principalement les écoles et les organes de contrôle (inspectorats scolaires, le Ministère, etc.) et, d'autre part, la population civile des villages, soumise à la scolarité (et à l'alphabétisation), représentée notamment par les enfants d'âge scolaire et leurs parents, mais aussi, en fin de compte, par les communautés rurales dans leur ensemble. La nature de cette « zone de contact » spécifique se révèle dans des contextes de litige entre les deux parties prenantes sur des questions qui sont loin de former un consensus. Ces questions sont, dans le cadre de l'établissement de l'enseignement public, en premier lieu, l'obligation et

l'assiduité scolaire, mais aussi la langue et le contenu de l'enseignement dans les écoles des « minorités » ethniques.

Je vais donc essayer de reconstruire ce processus complexe et souvent ambigu, à travers toutes les voix qui le constituent et lui donnent substance. À cette fin, j'ai consulté les sources plus ou moins officielles, publiées et non publiées, provenant d'institutions et d'agents de divers grades, principalement des livres et des rapports publiés par le Ministère de l'éducation, mais aussi, à un niveau intermédiaire, dans les périodiques subventionnés par le Ministère et les associations de district (*judet*) d'enseignants de la province et d'autres publications pertinentes. Pour mettre en évidence les tenants et les aboutissants bureaucratiques de ce processus, j'ai étudié une grande quantité de documents d'archives des institutions publiques impliquées dans la mise en œuvre de la scolarisation de masse, notamment le Ministère de l'éducation, y compris les archives des inspectorats régionaux et de district (voir la bibliographie). Enfin, l'un des avantages de cette étude est qu'elle dispose d'une quantité importante de témoignages oraux (plus de 40 entretiens approfondis pour la Bessarabie et une quinzaine pour la Transnistrie) avec d'anciens élèves ou personnes non scolarisées dans les zones rurales de Bessarabie et Transnistrie, nées dans les années 1910, 1920 ou 1930. Ces sources orales permettent un regard « par le bas », bien que partiel et indirect, vu le passage du temps et les nombreuses influences sociales et politiques exercées pendant ce temps, sur l'expérience quotidienne de la scolarité ou le manque de cette expérience, dans le cas des enfants non scolarisés, dans la période et les régions étudiées.

La conclusion de cette étude débouchera sur une perspective comparative, soulignant les principaux arguments de cette analyse en comparaison avec la situation de l'enseignement primaire en République Autonome Soviétique Socialiste Moldave (Transnistrie soviétique), pendant la même période, dans le contexte des formations étatiques dans lesquelles ces deux régions étaient intégrées (Roumanie et URSS). Le composant comparatif esquissé ici, ainsi que la corroboration partielle avec des éléments de l'histoire de l'éducation dans le monde et la région, fournira une pertinence plus que locale aux hypothèses et observations de cet article.

L'enseignement primaire en Bessarabie : intégration nationale et « unification des âmes »

Immédiatement après le rattachement de la Bessarabie à la Roumanie en décembre 1918, les élites politiques roumaines mobilisent leurs efforts pour rapprocher et, enfin, unifier le système d'enseignement scolaire dans la province à celui du Pays dans un projet général d'intégration nationale¹⁴. L'unification culturelle est vue comme d'autant plus urgente que la province est considérée, sur la base de données quelque peu dépassées (du recensement de 1897¹⁵), comme la plus arriérée selon le niveau d'alphabétisation de la population, dans un pays qui se situe lui-même au bas du classement en ce sens en Europe et dans la région¹⁶. Aux occasions formelles, ce projet est présenté par des hauts fonctionnaires du Ministère comme une entreprise éminemment idéaliste, une « vocation de l'esprit ». C. Angelescu, dirigeant le Ministère de l'Education entre 1919 et 1937 et l'un des animateurs de ce mouvement, estime que « grâce à cette unification culturelle [il faut] produire une unification des âmes de la nation tout entière, dirigée vers le même but, les mêmes aspirations, le même idéal »¹⁷. Quel est cet idéal est facile à comprendre dans le contexte de l'époque, et le discours du Ministre ne tarde pas de l'explicitier – l'édification d'une nation puissante, coagulée et capable de résister contre les ennemis de l'extérieur et de l'intérieur¹⁸. Les ennemis sont, bien sûr, tous les éléments censés s'opposer à cette « unification des âmes » et l'Ecole est vue comme le moyen le plus approprié pour atteindre cet objectif, qui semble idéaliste à juste raison, étant donné les difficultés, surtout dans cette province récemment intégrée¹⁹.

L'élan dans ce sens s'est manifesté énergiquement dès 1917²⁰. En 1922, la nationalisation et la roumanisation des écoles sont déclarées achevées en Bessarabie²¹. Cette déclaration, de conjoncture, doit être prise avec précaution. La nationalisation implique la transformation des écoles d'enseignement en langue russe en écoles avec enseignement exclusif en roumain ou, dans une moindre mesure, dans la langue des « minorités », selon une proportion statistique estimée, de manière quelque peu biaisée, à 70% la population roumaine²². En fait, ce processus se poursuivra pendant de nombreuses années. Le résultat final serait, comme les agents de contrôle de l'enseignement primaire le suggèrent, l'instauration d'un système scolaire entièrement roumain, même dans le secteur privé et confessionnel²³. Cependant, plusieurs données corroborées mettent en

évidence une évolution beaucoup plus lente et difficile que les autorités roumaines le souhaitent²⁴.

Nationalisation et roumanisation des écoles et à travers les écoles

L'annexion de la Bessarabie, de la Bucovine et de la Transylvanie en décembre 1918 et la Conférence de paix de Paris en 1919 (dans laquelle l'intégration des nouveaux territoires reçoit une large reconnaissance internationale et où la Roumanie se voit obligée de garantir des droits aux minorités ethniques) marquent une relative ouverture de l'administration politique roumaine aux « minorités ethniques ». Selon certaines données, en 1921, en Bessarabie il y a plus de 500 écoles privées et publiques (sur un total d'environ 1700 écoles) pour les minorités ethniques, dont 89 écoles russes, 212 écoles ukrainiennes, 45 écoles juives (avec enseignement en hébreu et yiddish), 50 écoles allemandes, 4 écoles polonaises, 65 écoles bulgares, etc.²⁵ La Loi sur l'enseignement primaire de 1924 maintient le droit des minorités ethniques à l'enseignement en écoles primaires publiques « dans la langue de la population concernée »²⁶. Toutefois, notamment à partir de septembre 1921, le Ministère de l'instruction adopte une série de décisions de nature à restreindre le droit à l'instruction des communautés ethniques dans leur propre langue.

La roumanisation des écoles russes dans la province et l'ouverture d'autres écoles, roumaines, a été reçue avec réticence par la population locale. Au grand dam des fonctionnaires du Royaume de tous les niveaux et des nationalistes locaux, non seulement les « minorités » ethniques, mais également les Moldaves (roumanophones) « sabotent » les nouvelles écoles²⁷. Lorsque la roumanisation des écoles ne fait que démarrer, même les enseignants, qui doivent donner souffle à la scolarisation dans les années à venir, partagent un scepticisme quasi-généralisé. Ainsi, certains se demandent même si le « moldave » (*i.e.* la langue roumaine) était approprié pour l'enseignement²⁸. Ni même les minorités ethniques (sauf certaines communautés allemandes et juives, qui avaient des écoles confessionnelles en allemand et hébreux avant 1914²⁹) n'accueillent pas toutes avec joie la « nationalisation » (à savoir la « judaïsation », la « bulgarisation », etc.) de leurs écoles (qui fonctionnaient en russe avant cette date)³⁰. Pour cette raison, les autorités roumaines proposent la transformation de l'enseignement de l'école dans la langue d'Etat comme seule alternative dans les cas où certaines communautés « minoritaires » préfèrent ne pas « nationaliser » leur école³¹. Mais, comme cela a été dit

précédemment, les griefs sont encore plus évidents dans les cas, fréquents, où les écoles font directement l'objet de la roumanisation.

Un ensemble de mesures vise la « roumanisation » des écoles dans les localités habitées par une population roumaine considérée comme importante, souvent au détriment d'autres groupes ethniques. Les demandes des parents d'ouverture (ou réouverture) d'une école dans la langue maternelle de la communauté ou en russe est souvent interprétée comme un acte d'hostilité contre les autorités roumaines³². Aussi, une activité scolaire ou extrascolaire d'un instituteur dans une langue « minoritaire » suffit pour éveiller le soupçon du personnel de contrôle du Ministère et des agents de la Siguranța (la police politique)³³. Dans de nombreux cas, les habitants « hétéroglottes » (et ne parlant pas le roumain) sont considérés comme Roumains « dénationalisés », raison pour laquelle ils se voient refuser la demande d'école en ukrainien ou en russe³⁴. Pour faciliter la roumanisation, des écoles mixtes roumano-ukrainiennes ou roumano-russes sont ouvertes à titre provisoire, dans le but d'être transformées ensuite en écoles « proprement roumaines »³⁵. Sous prétexte de manque de manuels scolaires ou d'enseignants appropriés pour ces écoles, des écoles initialement « hétéroglottes » sont transformées en écoles avec enseignement en roumain³⁶. En 1923, un arrêté du Ministre décide que les enseignants des écoles « minoritaires » sont obligés de parler seulement en langue roumaine « durant le service et dans l'espace de l'école. »³⁷ Pendant la crise économique de 1929-1933, la basse fréquence devient une raison plausible pour la fermeture des écoles des minorités ethniques avec le transfert des élèves dans les écoles des environs³⁸.

Dans plusieurs cas, les agents de contrôle du Ministère expliquent les mauvais résultats scolaires et la basse fréquentation des écoles des localités par l'origine ethnique (non-roumaine) des élèves et de leurs parents³⁹. Les explications comportent souvent une argumentation essentialiste : « Les habitants du village Tureatca sont des Ruthènes, non convaincus des avantages de l'école (...) »⁴⁰. Cependant, certains rapports admettent aussi une logique – il est vrai, interprétée selon une perspective nationaliste – au faible taux de fréquentation scolaire parmi certaines « minorités » ethniques ; le comportement « réfractaire » serait en fait provoqué plutôt par la politique de « roumanisation » des écoles que par la scolarité en tant que telle⁴¹. La réponse des autorités scolaires à une telle attitude exprimée par certaines communautés est généralement défensive, suggérant des mesures répressives. Les communautés ukrainiennes (et ruthènes) sont souvent considérées avec soupçon par les autorités roumaines, y compris

par celles de l'école⁴². Les émeutes de Hotin (1919) et de Tatar-Bunar (1924), ne font que donner à ces soupçons une base plausible. Source de désaccord de la part de la population « minoritaire », les écoles roumaines ou roumanisées apparaissent, dans les yeux des autorités, comme un impératif et une mesure viable pour contrer les attitudes hostiles envers l'administration roumaine de la part de la population « hétéroglotte ».

Il est vrai que pas toutes les « minorités » sont perçues comme « réfractaires » aux « bénéfices de l'école ». Les écoles juives ou allemandes enregistrent un taux de fréquentation scolaire visiblement supérieur à celui des élèves moldaves des écoles roumaines de la localité⁴³ ; cette différence est encore plus grande entre les écoles des villes et celles des villages⁴⁴. La frustration des inspecteurs scolaires est double dans les cas où la connaissance de la langue roumaine par les élèves des écoles allemandes ou juive est faible, contrairement à la réussite scolaire dans d'autres matières⁴⁵. D'une manière ou d'une autre, tant la faible assiduité des élèves « minoritaires » dans les écoles publiques que l'inscription et la fréquentation élevées dans les écoles privées ou confessionnelles sont également perçues par les autorités scolaires comme une menace au programme de roumanisation⁴⁶. Les deux phénomènes doivent donc être réduits et même, dans le temps, éliminés.

Dans le but de la roumanisation des écoles, les autorités n'épargnent pas ressources et enseignants, dont la valeur est parfois enviée par certains représentants des écoles roumaines de la région⁴⁷. Pour travailler à l'école dans une région « hétéroglotte », les enseignants originaires de l'Ancien Royaume (du territoire roumain d'avant le rattachement des nouvelles provinces en 1918) reçoivent des avantages matériels, y compris une augmentation de salaire jusqu'à 50%⁴⁸. Bien que séduisants en eux-mêmes, ces avantages ne sont pas considérés comme suffisants par certains, qui, au bout d'une période de friction avec leurs collègues d'école ou de l'attitude inamicale des villageois préfèrent retourner à l'école d'où ils avaient été détachés ou transférés⁴⁹. Enseigner le roumain, matière obligatoire à côté de la géographie de la Roumanie et de l'histoire des Roumains dans toutes les écoles « hétéroglottes » (même privées)⁵⁰, est un véritable défi pour les enseignants « du Royaume », dans les cas répandus où ni les enseignants ne connaissent la langue des étudiants, ni les élèves ne parlent – ou très peu – le roumain. Les revues pédagogiques de la région proposent des conseils méthodologiques pour éviter des situations de blocage potentiel dans l'enseignement et la communication⁵¹. Malgré ces difficultés, les inspecteurs louent dans de nombreux cas l'effort

et la réussite des enseignants à faire apprendre le roumain aux élèves « hétéroglottes »⁵².

Selon une opinion largement admise dans les années 1930, les minorités en Roumanie seraient de deux types : « assimilables » (Russes, Ukrainiens, Bulgares, etc.) et « inassimilables » (Juifs, Allemands, Hongrois), en raison notamment de la culture et de la « conscience nationale » fortes de ces dernières⁵³. D'un tel point de vue dérive l'attitude équivoque des agents de contrôle sur la scolarisation des minorités ethniques. D'une part, les inspecteurs ne cachent pas leur mépris pour les communautés ethniques considérées comme « réfractaires » à l'école (en fait, à l'école roumaine), partageant toutefois la confiance et le désir que celles-ci soient « assimilées » dans l'avenir (par l'école)⁵⁴. D'autre part, les inspecteurs scolaires ne cachent pas une certaine considération envers les communautés qui, en l'absence ou l'insuffisance des écoles publiques avec l'enseignement dans leur langue maternelle, ont ouvert leurs propres écoles dans la langue des communautés respectives en leur assurant une assiduité élevée. En même temps, ils expriment la réserve selon laquelle ces minorités esquiveraient ainsi le programme d'assimilation promu par l'école publique roumaine⁵⁵.

L'enseignement primaire et politique nationale en Transnistrie soviétique (1918-1940) : essai d'approche comparative

Au moment de la formation de l'URSS en 1922 et de la République Socialiste Soviétique Autonome Moldave (RASSM) en 1924, le système soviétique d'enseignement se confronte à des problèmes similaires à ceux de l'enseignement roumain en Bessarabie dans la même période, sinon plus graves encore (à la suite de la révolution et de la guerre civile, en plus de la Première Guerre mondiale) : analphabétisme massif⁵⁶, faible taux de scolarisation de la population d'âge scolaire, destruction des infrastructures scolaires⁵⁷. La population rurale manifeste une réticence similaire à la scolarisation⁵⁸. Le niveau de scolarisation est le plus réduit parmi les Moldaves (roumanophones) et surtout chez les habitants des zones rurales, dont surtout les femmes⁵⁹. Le réseau des bâtiments scolaires est élargi au cours des années 1920, mais l'enseignement a connu un essor rapide surtout à partir de 1928, quand une nouvelle loi sur l'enseignement primaire est adoptée, proclamant l'obligation absolue de l'éducation primaire pour tous les enfants d'âge scolaire, garçons et

filles. Cette nouvelle loi est appliquée au pied de la lettre, dans le contexte de la soi-disant « révolution stalinienne », marquée par un programme intensif et étendu d'industrialisation de l'économie et de collectivisation de l'agriculture, à réaliser durant le premier plan quinquennal (1928-1932). Ce programme d'enseignement de masse et d'alphabétisation, appelé ambitieusement « révolution culturelle », est mis en œuvre sous une pression politique exacerbée, comme dans d'autres domaines (par exemple, la collectivisation). Durant l'année scolaire 1930-1931, en dépit de l'insuffisance de l'infrastructure scolaire et des enseignants, l'enseignement primaire universel est déclaré accompli pour tous les enfants âgés entre huit et onze ans⁶⁰. Cependant, les rapports d'inspection scolaire révèlent des lacunes importantes selon le nombre des enseignants et de leur niveau de formation, des locaux scolaires (propres et équipés), des manuels et des fournitures scolaires, etc. De plus, la production des matériels didactiques et les programmes scolaires sont également affectés par les réformes linguistiques périodiques (en 1924, en 1928, en 1932 et en 1938)⁶¹. Au cours des années 1930, certains rapports mettent en évidence dans certaines zones une fréquentation scolaire irrégulière (à 70% des inscriptions), qui jettent le doute sur l'exactitude des bilans officiels⁶².

En RASSM, comme dans d'autres républiques autonomes et fédérées, l'Etat soviétique met en place une politique nationale souple à l'égard de divers minorités ethniques, jusqu'au tournant de 1938 vers une stratégie centrée sur les groupes ethniques dominants au détriment des minorités. Ces groupes ethniques présentent un profil culturel et un niveau d'alphabétisation / d'instruction spécifiques (par exemple, en 1926, la population d'ethnie allemande était alphabétisée en proportion de 66,6%, les Juifs à 62,0%, les Ukrainiens à 36,6%, les Moldaves à seulement 25,8%)⁶³. Les politiques de « nationalisation » et d'« indigénisation », qui prévoient l'ouverture d'écoles et d'institutions culturelles dans la langue des représentants de différents groupes ethniques, ne découlent pas de soi, tant que les élites de tous les niveaux parlent au début très peu la langue des habitants locaux – Ukrainiens ou, encore moins, Moldaves⁶⁴. La scolarisation des minorités ethniques suscite diverses formes de désaccord lors de l'application de la politique d'indigénisation et de nationalisation (par exemple, certaines communautés préfèrent la scolarisation en russe, au détriment de la langue nationale)⁶⁵. En outre, le système d'enseignement des minorités ethniques est radicalement transformé en 1938, lors de la campagne de répression contre les soi-disant « ennemis du peuple », y

compris les « nationalités ennemies », quand les écoles pour les minorités allemande ou polonaise, entre autres nationalités, sont russifiées⁶⁶.

En conclusion, il convient de noter que l'administration soviétique et les autorités roumaines ont fait des efforts considérables pour scolariser la population rurale dans les deux régions (la Bessarabie et la Transnistrie). Les résultats de ces campagnes de scolarisation ont été néanmoins inégaux. Le système d'enseignement soviétique réussit une scolarisation presque complète de toute la population d'âge scolaire (et d'alphabétisation des adultes), en vertu de fortes pressions politiques et d'une application stricte de l'obligation scolaire. De l'autre côté, en Bessarabie, en 1940, près de la moitié de tous les enfants d'âge scolaire ne sont pas encore scolarisés, en raison de l'insuffisance des ressources et de l'infrastructure scolaire et de l'application incohérente de l'obligation scolaire. Dans les deux cas, cependant, les habitants des deux régions ont été impliqués dans le processus éducatif, reconnaissant bon gré mal gré l'« autorité pédagogique » des administrations respectives. Ce processus est marqué en RASSM, dans le contexte soviétique, d'un antagonisme exacerbé entre les autorités d'Etat et la population civile et d'une marge de manœuvre et de capacités de négociation limitées. Le processus d'enseignement en Bessarabie implique, en revanche, une capacité de négociation plus importante entre la population civile et les autorités. Cet exercice, constitutif d'un processus de construction étatique et d'une démocratie émergente, a eu néanmoins pour résultat une scolarisation de la population rurale plus réduite en Bessarabie.

La politique de la scolarisation des « minorités ethniques » dans la République autonome moldave (à côté d'autres républiques) a été plus souple et inclusive qu'en Bessarabie roumaine. De fait, l'Etat soviétique agissait dans les républiques nationales, au moins jusqu'au tournant de la seconde moitié des années 1930, dans le cadre d'un modèle étatique fédératif, alors que l'Etat roumain appliquait une logique « nationalisante » dominante. Dans les deux cas, pourtant, le processus de « nationalisation » des écoles des minorités ethniques s'est heurté à de diverses formes et degrés de résistance passive et active de la part des minorités ethniques visées et par les agents et les institutions censés le mettre en place. La politique de « nationalisation » des écoles des minorités ethno-linguistiques est brusquement interrompue en 1938, en Union soviétique et en Roumanie, dans le contexte de la transformation générale de la politique nationale, axée désormais sur la promotion des groupes ethno-nationaux majoritaires et l'assimilation des « minorités ethniques ».

NOTES

- ¹ Sur le rôle de l'éducation dans les projets nationaux au XIX^e et XX^e siècles voir, entre autres ouvrages, GELLNER, E., *Thought and Change*, University of Chicago Press, 1965 et *Nations and Nationalism*, Cornell University Press, 1983 ; SMITH, A., *Nationalism and modernism: a critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, Londres, Routledge, 1998 ; HEATHORN, S. J., *For Home, Country and Race: Constructing Gender, Class and Englishness in the Elementary School 1880-1914*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2000; Voir aussi WEBER, E., *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914*, Stanford / California, Stanford University Press, 1976. Pour une vue d'ensemble du rôle de l'alphabétisation et de l'éducation dans le développement des nations modernes en Roumanie et dans les Balkans, voir Alex Drace-Francis, *Geneza culturii române moderne. Instituțiile scrisului și dezvoltarea identității naționale 1700-1900*, Iași, Polirom, 2016.
- ² En Roumanie, parmi les personnes instruites, 85,1% avaient seulement une instruction élémentaire. ȘANDRU, D., *Populația rurală a României între cele două războaie*, Iași, Ed. Academiei Române, 1980, p. 182. La majorité absolue des personnes instruites en Bessarabie (87,3% en milieu rural et 57,9% en milieu urbain) avaient seulement des études primaires. ENCIU, N., *Populația rurală a Basarabiei (1918-1940)*, Chișinău, Epigraf, 2002, p. 214.
- ³ Les personnes alphabétisées représentaient en Roumanie 57% en 1930. ȘANDRU, D., *Populația rurală a României între cele două războaie mondiale*, Ed. Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, Iași, 1980, p. 180-182.
- ⁴ Par exemple, en Bessarabie, dans les zones rurales les personnes instruites (alphabétisées) constituaient, en 1930, seulement 39% de la population rurale de la région, tandis que celles-ci représentaient 72,3% dans les villes (population d'âge égal et supérieur à 7 ans). ENCIU, N., *Populația rurală a Basarabiei...*, p. 212.
- ⁵ Cf. ȘANDRU, D., *Populația rurală a României...*, p. 180.
- ⁶ Cf. ENCIU, N., *Populația rurală a Basarabiei...*, p. 14.
- ⁷ Cf. LIVEZEANU, I., *Cultură și naționalism în România Mare*, Bucarest, Humanitas, 1995, p. 111 ; KING, Ch., *Moldovenii, România, Rusia și politica culturală*, Chișinău, Arc, 2002, p. 41-42.
- ⁸ BOURDIEU, P., PASSERON, J.-C., *La Reproduction. Éléments pour une théorie du système d'enseignement*, Paris, Minuit, 1970, p. 32.
- ⁹ Sur les révoltes de Hotin et de Tatar-Bunar (1924), voir ROTARI, L., *Mișcarea subversivă în Basarabia, 1918-1924*, Bucarest, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2004 ; BASCIAN, A., *La Difficile unione...*, p. 122-145, 206-219.
- ¹⁰ Voir aussi : BROCKLISS, L. et SHELDON, N. (dir.), *Mass Education and the Limits of State Building*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.

- 11 Il s'agit ici de la définition de l'Etat donnée par Max Weber, reformulée par Pierre Bourdieu en ajoutant l'élément de la « violence symbolique ». WEBER, M., *Économie et société*, Max Weber, Collection Pocket Agora, 2003, pp. 96-100 et BOURDIEU, P., *La Reproduction*, op. cit.
- 12 Sur les zones frontalières en Europe, dans le cadre de projets « nationalisants », voir BRUBAKER, R., *Nationalism reframed. Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 84-93. Sur la Bessarabie et la Transnistrie comme zones frontalières contestées, voir : ȚURCANU, F., « Roumanie, Bessarabie, Transnistrie. Les représentations d'une frontière contestée », in COEURÉ, S. et DULLIN, S. (dir.), *Frontières du communisme. Mythologies et réalités de la division de l'Europe de la révolution d'Octobre au mur de Berlin*, Paris, La Découverte, 2007.
- 13 Mary Louise Pratt est l'auteure qui a introduit le concept de « zone de contact » dans les études culturelles et sociales. Voici une brève définition de ce terme, donnée par l'auteur même : « J'utilise ce terme pour me référer aux espaces sociaux dans lesquels les cultures se rencontrent, se heurtent et se confrontent, souvent dans un contexte de rapports de force extrêmement asymétriques, comme le colonialisme, l'esclavage ou à la suite de ceux-ci, tels que ces derniers ont eu lieu dans plusieurs parties du monde d'aujourd'hui ». PRATT, M.-L., « *Arts of the Contact Zone* », in *Profession (1991-01-01)*, pp. 33-40.
- 14 Voir sur ce sujet LIVEZEANU, I., *Cultură și naționalism...*, p. 111-156 et MIHALACHE, C., *Copilărie, familie, școală...*, pp. 171-276.
- 15 Le taux d'alphabétisation en Bessarabie était de 19,4% en 1897. ENCIU, G., *Populația rurală a Basarabiei...*, pp. 204. Le taux des personnes sachant lire et écrire était le plus bas en Bessarabie en 1930, de 38%, dans toute la Roumanie le taux de l'alphabétisation étant de 57%. ȘANDRU, D., *Populația rurală a României...*, p. 177.
- 16 ȘANDRU, D., *idem*, p. 180.
- 17 ANGELESCU, C., *Activitatea Ministerului Instrucțiunii*, p. 4.
- 18 ANGELESCU, C., *idem*, p. 6.
- 19 L'expérience d'autres nations plus avancées confirmait la justesse de ce choix. La référence aux pays occidentaux était fréquente dans les discours des élites politique et intellectuelle en Roumanie de l'époque. Voir, par exemple, GABREA, I., *Școala românească. Structura și politica ei. 1921-1932*, București, Tipografia Bucovina, 1933, p. 9, 76; ANGELESCU, I., *Activitatea Ministerului Instrucțiunii*, p. 11; ANGELESCU, I., *Evoluția învățământului primar...*, p. 21; GUSTI, D., „Cuvânt înaină”, in: GUSTI, D., *Un an de activitate la Ministerul Instrucției, Culturii și Artelor. 1932-1933*, Bucarest, Tipografia Bucovina, 1934, p. XVII-XVIII. Il est important de garder en vue le fait que les politiques de transformation des écoles des minorités ethnolinguistiques en écoles avec l'enseignement dans la langue

- d'Etat (nationale) ont été largement mises en œuvre dans le processus de construction et consolidation nationale des Etas-nations occidentaux et de la région. Voir, entre autres sources, sur le cas de la France: WEBER, E., *Peasants into Frenchmen*, pp. 67-104; en Allemagne: LAMBERTI, M., *State, Society, & the Elementary School in Imperial Germany*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1989; dans l'Empire Ottoman et en Turquie: CICEK, N., "The role of Mass Education in Nation-Building in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 1870-1930", in: BROCKLISS, L., et SHELDON, N. (dir.), *Mass Education and the Limits of State Building*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012, pp. 224-250; la Hongrie (1870-1930): BERECH, A., *The Politics of Early Language Teaching: Hungarian in the primary schools of the late Dual Monarchy*, Budapest, Pasts, Inc., Central European University Press, 2013, etc.
- 20 LIVEZEANU, I., *Cultură și naționalism...*, p. 133 ; MIHALACHE, C., *Copilărie, familie, școală...*, p. 198.
- 21 LIVEZEANU, I., *idem*, p. 144.
- 22 Les autres groupes ethniques étaient représentés comme suit : Ukrainiens : 10%, Juifs : 8,6%, Russes: 4,4%, Bulgares: 3,3%. MIHALACHE, C., *idem*, p. 211.
- 23 Cette perception est partagée, sur le terrain, par le personnel de contrôle du Ministère, responsable de l'inspection des écoles en Bessarabie et d'autres provinces nouvellement rattachées. Voir à ce propos le cas des écoles ukrainiennes du district de Briceni et d'autres, dans lesquelles ont été créé des écoles de transition, roumano-ukrainiennes, qui, dans l'avenir proche devaient être transformées, selon l'inspecteur, en des écoles « purement roumaines ». Les Archives Nationales de la Roumanie, le Fond du Ministère de l'Instruction Publique, l'inventaire no. 710, année 1922, dossier no. 11, page 125 (désormais : ANR, FMIP, 710(1922)/11/125) ; FMIP, 710(1922)/11/105.
- 24 Ainsi, dans plusieurs écoles allemandes de la province, les inspections ont montré que ni les enseignants ni les élèves « ne savaient du tout le roumain » : ANR, FMIP, 907(1933)/33/82; voir aussi ANR, FMIP, 909(1935)/15/283. De même, dans le district de Cetatea-Albă, un inspecteur concluait que « les 20 ans de domination roumaine [...] et de nationalisation des villages minoritaires à travers l'école n'ont pas donné de résultats ». LIVEZEANU, I., *Cultură și naționalism...*, p. 145.
- 25 ENCIU, N., *Populația rurală din Basarabia...*, p. 207 (note 37).
- 26 *Lege pentru învățământul primar al statului și învățământul normal-primar*, in *Școala Noastră*, nr. 10 (supplément), septembre 1924, article 7, p. 2.
- 27 Les exemples qui témoignent de la réticence des habitants « minoritaires », mais aussi des Moldaves, face à la roumanisation des écoles abondent dans les rapports du personnel de contrôle (inspecteurs, sous-inspecteurs, etc.) dans les premières années après l'unification. Sur les écoles des villages

- ukrainiens du district d'Orhei (Bessarabie): ANR 710 (1922)/11/ 8-10 ; dans les villages de Bucovine: ANR, FMIP, 710(1922)/11/93-94; sur la population « dénationalisée » du nord de la Bessarabie (district Briceni, etc.) qui ne veut pas d'écoles roumaines: ANR, FMIP, 710(1922)/11/125; ANR, FMIP, 711(1923)/302 ; et dans le district d'Ismail : ANR, FMIP, 2553(1921)/655/628-632.
- 28 LIVEZEANU, I., *op. cit.*, p. 124-125.
- 29 Le 24 décembre 1914, une loi interdisait l'enseignement de l'allemand dans les écoles des colonies allemandes ; en août 1916, une autre loi interdisait l'enseignement de l'allemand dans toutes les institutions d'enseignement dans l'Empire des Tsars. Voir, entre autres, CHERKAZIANOVA, I.V., SMAGINA, G.I., « Nemetskie shkoly i nemetskie uchitelia » [Les écoles allemandes et les enseignants allemands], in « Nemtsy v Rossii » [Les Allemands en Russie], in *Dvorianskii rod Rogge* [La famille des nobles Rogge], page web : <http://www.genrogge.ru/grbook/10.htm> (consultée en juillet 2016). Sur les écoles allemandes en Bessarabie, voir SCHMIDT, U., *Basarabia. Coloniștii germani de la Marea Neagră*, Chișinău, Edit. Cartier, 2014, p. 146-162 ; ENCIU, N., *Populația rurală a Basarabiei...*, p. 206.
- 30 Voir, par exemple, le cas d'une école fréquentée par des élèves d'ethnie bulgare au sud de la Bessarabie: ANR, 711 (1923)/302. Sur la tentative d'« ukrainiser » les écoles du district de Hotin : ANR, FMIP, 2553(1920)/430/7 ; sur le district Ismail, en 1919 : FMIP, 2553(1921)/655-867. Voir DRUȚĂ, Gh., « Un episod din timpul naționalizării școalei în Basarabia », *Școala basarabească*, mai-juin 1938, p. 24-26. Voir aussi MIHALACHE, C., *Copilărie, familie, școală...*, p. 212.
- 31 ANGELESCU, C., *Activitatea Ministerului Instrucțiunii...*, p. 45. MIHALACHE, C., *idem*, p. 213-214 ; LIVEZEANU, I., *idem*, p. 144. Plusieurs écoles minoritaires (non roumaines et non russes) ont été d'abord nationalisées avec l'enseignement dans la langue maternelle des minorités respectives, puis, sous la pression des parents, ont passé au russe comme langue d'enseignement. Plusieurs écoles de ce type ont été roumanisées sur la décision du Ministère. Voir ainsi le cas de l'école de filles d'Ismail, mai 1919 : ANR, FMIP, 2553(1921)/655/867 ; les lycées de Hotin, novembre 1920 : FMIP, 2553(1920)/443/3 ; les écoles d'Ismail, en 1921 : FMIP, 2553(1921)/655/628-632. Il est à noter dans ce contexte que la *Loi de l'enseignement primaire d'Etat* de 1924 n'admet l'enseignement « pour les citoyens d'origine roumaine qui ont perdu leur langue maternelle », qu'en la langue roumaine. Cf. *Lege pentru învățământul primar al statului...*, in *Școala Noastră*, nr. 10 (supplément), septembre 1924, p. 7. Voir aussi ANR, FMIP, 712(1924)/146/10-11.
- 32 Ainsi, selon le rapport d'un inspecteur scolaire de 1923, les instituteurs d'une école « bulgare » du district d'Ismail, même des « Moldaves reniés », « font la propagande pour leur nationalité » et pour la langue russe. ANR,

- FMIP, 711(1923)/302/9. Voir aussi des situations similaires dans les districts de Hotin, 1921 : FMIP, 2553(1921)/655-628-632; Ismail, 1923 : FMIP, 711(1923)/302/11 ; en Bucovine du Nord: FMIP, 2553(1921)/420/332 ; le district de Storoiineț: FMIP(1928)/282/381-384.
- 33 Dans le district d'Ismail, 1923 : ANR, FMIP, 711(1923)/302/11; En Bucovine et en Bessarabie du Nord (le district Hotin), 1920: FMIP, 2553(1920)/430/2 ; à Comrat, 1920: FMIP, 2553(1920)/439/96; la commune Edineț, le district de Hotin, 1921 : FMIP, 2553(1921)/415/1 ; le district de Hotin, 1925: FMIP, 713(1925)/211/319 ; le district de Bălți, 1940 : FMIP, 914(1940)/351/61. En 1935, sur la demande de la Siguranța, un instituteur a été engagé comme inspecteur scolaire pour surveiller, comme agent de la police secrète, les instituteurs « minoritaires » du district de Cetatea-Albă. FMIP, 910(1936)/12/137.
- 34 Voir sur les écoles d'Ismail, en 1921 : FMIP, 2553(1921)/655/628-632 ; le district d'Ismail, 1923, FMIP, 711(1923)/302/9 ; en Bucovine du Nord, 1921 : FMIP, 2553(1921)/420/332 ; le district d'Ismail: FMIP, 2553(1921)/655/628-632.
- 35 Dans le district de Briceni, 1922 : ANR, FMIP, 710(1922)/11/125). Voir aussi MIHALACHE, C., *Copilărie, familie, școală...*, p. 215.
- 36 Voir, par exemple, l'adresse du député I. Cazacu de 1920 sur l'« ukrainisation » des écoles russes dans le district de Hotin, en dépit de la volonté de la population locale (encore attachée au russe) et malgré le manque des ressources nécessaires. Le député propose la révision de cette décision. FMIP, 2553(1920)/430/7. Dans cette situation se trouvent aussi deux lycées de Hotin et un lycée de Chișinău, en 1920 : ANR, FMIP, 2553(1920)/443/3.
- 37 Un ordre du Ministère de l'Instruction Publique limite l'usage de la langue « minoritaire » par les enseignants des écoles « minoritaires » seulement à la communication privée et, dans la communication avec les parents, seulement si celle-ci est indispensable. ANR, FIMP, 711(1923)/ 232/321. De même, selon l'arrêté du Département de l'Instruction Publique de Chisinau, les écoles minoritaires sont obligées à tenir leur documentation en langue roumaine. DJAN, FIRSC, 207(1918)/1/59.
- 38 Ainsi, en octobre 1933, dans le village Zaharovca (habité par une population ukrainienne), le district d'Orhei, une école qui avait fonctionné pendant huit ans a été fermée. Une pétition signée par une vingtaine d'habitants demande la réouverture de l'école. Les autorités décident l'ouverture d'une école à un seul poste d'enseignant. ANR, FMIP, 907(1933)/52/112. De même, un rapport de 1934 témoigne que dans le district de Cahul, durant la crise de 1929-1933, le nombre des écoles a diminué, pour cause de manque de postes et manque de ressources. La fermeture des écoles et la réduction des postes est aussi un problème généralisé pour cette période, non seulement en Bessarabie, mais aussi dans l'Ancien Royaume. Voir BUZATU, Gh., IGNAT,

G., „Unele aspecte privind situația învățământului primar din Moldova în anii crizei economice din 1929-1933”, în *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie*, tome II, 1965, Iași, 1965, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România.

39 Plusieurs rapports rédigés par des inspecteurs scolaires expliquent la basse fréquentation scolaire par l’ethnie (non roumaine) des élèves et de leurs parents, notamment dans les localités et les années suivantes: la commune Târgoviște, district d’Ismail, 1920: ANR, FMIP, 2553(1920)/107/33; com. Tureatca, distr. Dorohoi, 1925 (région Cernăuți): FMIP, 713(1925)/211/2; distr. Tighina, 1930: FMIP, 814(1930)/115/8; village Zaharovca, distr. Orhei: FMIP, 907(1933)/52/112; distr. Cahul, 1935: FMIP, 903(1935)/15/291; com. Maiac, distr. Chilia-Nouă, 1938: FMIP, 912(1938)/28/52; distr. Cetatea-Albă, 1926: FMIP, 714(1926)/14/120; distr. Ismail, 1927: FMIP, 811(1927)/16/71; distr. Cetatea-Albă (y compris com. Tatar-Bunar), 1927: FMIP, 811(1927)/16-/115; com. Călăraș, distr. Lăpușna: FMIP, 811(1927)/155/154; distr. Bălți: FMIP, 811(1927)/273/8; banlieue Natiagailovca, ville de Chilia Nouă, 1928: FMIP, 812(1928)/24/103; distr. Cetatea-Albă, 1928: FMIP, 812(1928)/278/134; distr. Tighina, 1929: FMIP, 813(1929)/7/41-42; distr. Cahul, 1935: FMIP, 909(1935)/15/291.

40 FMIP, 713(1925)/211/2.

41 Voir, par exemple : ANR, FMIP, 811(1927)/16/71 ; FMIP, 814(1930)/115/8 ; 1938: FMIP, 912(1938)/28/52.

42 Ainsi, « Ukrainiens réfractaires » ou « récalcitrants » deviennent à cette époque de vrais lieux communs des rapports d’inspection dans les villages habités par des représentants de la minorité ukrainienne. Voir, entre autres documents : ANR, FMIP, 2553(1920)/430/6; FMIP(1921)/420/332; FMIP, 710(1922)/11/93-94; FMIP, 710(1922)/11/105; FMIP(1923)/302/11; FMIP, 812(1928)/280/270; FMIP, 813(1929)/293/5v; FMIP, 1933/33/379; FMIP, 912(1938)/28/52; FMIP, 912(1938)/28/32.

43 Ainsi, un rapport d’inspection dans les écoles du district Chișinău de septembre 1929 constate que « la fréquentation scolaire, surtout dans les villages (...) est absolument réduite, à l’exception des colonies juives ». ANR, FMIP, 813(1929)/7/163. Dans un rapport d’avril 1930 sur les écoles du district de Tighina, un inspecteur remarque une fréquentation très basse « non seulement dans les écoles minoritaires, où l’on pourrait objecter que les villageois ne veulent pas que leurs enfants apprennent le roumain (à l’exception des écoles allemandes et juives), mais ce qui est plus douloureux est que cette situation est encore plus accentuée dans les villages moldaves. FMIP, 814(1930)/115/8. Lors d’une inspection d’une école primaire complémentaire de la région Lăpușna, un inspecteur constate sur un ton équivoque que les leçons et l’atelier de travail pratique au cours complémentaire sont fréquentés par plus de trente élèves – « Dommage

- seulement que la majorité de ces élèves sont Juifs. » DJAN, FIŞRL, 206(1922)43/1-47.
- 44 Voir ci-dessous dans cet article sur la différence entre les taux d'assiduité entre les écoles rurales et les écoles urbaines.
- 45 Ainsi, dans plusieurs écoles allemandes et juives du district de Cetatea-Albă, l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue roumaine sont considérés insuffisants : ANR, FMIP, 714(1926)/74/119. En 1924, dans le même district (Cetatea-Albă), les enseignants d'une école allemande sont pénalisés, entre autres, pour ne pas avoir fait assez d'efforts à enseigner le roumain. FMIP, 712(1924)/273/346, 359. Dans une école « juive » du district de Bălţi, en 1924, l'inspecteur conclut que « l'enseignement est satisfaisant, mais les enfants s'expriment difficilement en roumain ». FMIP, 712(1924)/275/219. Sur l'enseignement et l'apprentissage insuffisants de la langue roumaine dans les écoles juives et allemandes du district de Cetatea-Albă, en 1925 : FMIP, 714(1926)/14/120. Dans l'école d'enfants allemands de la commune Râşcani, en 1928, la fréquentation est très élevée, mais les enfants ne connaissent pas le roumain : FMIP, 812(1928)/280/31. De même, en 1933, dans le village Borodino, au district Cetatea-Albă : FMIP, 907(1933)/33/82. *Idem*, le village Baimaclia, distr. Cahul, 1935 : FMIP, 909(1935)/15/283.
- 46 Voir notamment ANR, FMIP, 710(1922)/11/125 ; FMIP, 710(1922)/11/105 et MIHALACHE, C., *op. cit.*, p. 215.
- 47 Voir, par exemple, MOLDOVEANU, S., „Mai multă grijă de Moldoveni şi mai puţine de minorităţi”, *Şcoala Basarabiei. Revistă pentru învăţământ şi educaţie naţională*, februarie 1921, p. 216-218.
- 48 A partir de 1918, le gouvernement roumain paie une augmentation au salaire aux enseignants et propagandistes roumains (y compris de Bucovine et de Transylvanie) dans les zones « hétéroglottes » de Bessarabie et d'autres provinces. Voir en ce sens une décision du Gouvernement de 1918 : ANR, FMIP, 2552(1918)/127/16. Cette décision a été entérinée par la Loi de l'enseignement primaire de 1921. Cf. FMIP, 711(1923)/167/11. La Loi de 1924, article 128, maintient cette décision, spécifiant les zones hétéroglottes dans lesquelles cet article est applicable. Cf. FMIP, 712(1924)/146/3. En septembre 1937, l'article 128 de la Loi est abrogé et l'augmentation du salaire est annulée pour les enseignants travaillant dans les villages moldaves (roumanophones). FMIP, 912(1938)/28/83, 97.
- 49 Dès le début du transfert et du détachement des enseignants roumains en Bessarabie, en 1918, plusieurs enseignants se plaignent de conditions difficiles et de la rémunération insuffisante (rapportée aux dépenses). Voir, par exemple, ANR, FMIP, 2553(1918)/127/16. Durant la guerre civile en Russie, plusieurs enseignants « du Royaume » du district de Soroca se sentent menacées par des invasions possibles d'au-delà du Dniestr. Cf. FMIP, 2553(1921)/443/5. Certains déposent demande de démission et de retour au lieu de travail précédent. Voir, par exemple, des demandes de

- démission rédigées en 1918 : FMIP, 2552(1918)/163/50-51. Et en 1919 : FMIP, 2552(1919)/154/55.
- 50 Cf. ANR, FMIP, 2553(1920)/430/21. La décision initiale daterait d'août 1918. Cf. MIHALACHE, C., *Copilărie, familie, școală...*, p. 209.
- 51 MARANEVICI, A., „Școala într-un sat minoritar”, *Cetatea Albă*, anul 1, nr. 7-8, avril-mai 1931, p. 34-37 ; GHIBIRDIC, Șt. „Școală în satele minoritare”, *Cetatea Albă*, nov.-déc. 1937, V/3-4, p. 20-24. ȚANȚU, P., „Predarea limbii românești în școlile cu populație minoritară”, *Școala Basarabiei*, jan.-fév. 1939, p. 16-21.
- 52 Cf. ANR, FMIP, 711(1923)/302/57 ; FMIP, 1926/74/120; FMIP, 1931/11/315.
- 53 Les premières hypostases de cette idée fondatrice du nationalisme et de l'antisémitisme en Roumanie apparaissent chez les intellectuels roumains nationalistes du XIXe siècle, tels que V. Alecsandri, M. Eminescu, B.P. Hasdeu. L'idée a été reprise, développée et radicalisée par des intellectuels nationalistes de l'entre-deux guerres, des plus modérés, tel qu'a été au début S. Manuilă, aux plus radicaux (N : Ionescu ; N. Crainic, A.C. Cuza et d'autres). Je remercie A. Cioflâncă et V. Solonari pour une discussion à ce sujet. Voir aussi, entre autres ouvrages, ORNEA, Z. (1995), SOLONARI, V. (2015), SUGAR, P. (2002). Cette idée a été discutée dans une revue pédagogique de Bessarabie, en 1936 : IVANOV, V., „Colaborare sau antagonism?”, *Cetatea Albă*, sept.-oct. 1936, pp. 18-22.
- 54 Dans la première décennie de l'entre-deux guerres, les minorités russe, bulgare et ukrainienne étaient régulièrement suspectées de séparatisme et de subversion politique. Voir, par exemple : ANR, FMIP, 2553(1920)/430/6; FMIP(1921)/420/332; FMIP, 710(1922)/11/93-94; FMIP, 710(1922)/11/105; FMIP(1923)/302/11. Cependant, dans les années 1930, les conclusions des inspections des écoles de ces minorités sont souvent optimistes, la responsabilité pour la fréquentation basse ou la faible réussite scolaire étant attribuée à l'Etat. Voir, entre autres documents : FMIP, 912(1938)/28/52 ; FMIP, 912(1938)/28/82. Il est révélateur, dans ce sens, qu'un arrêté du Ministère de février 1934 permet l'utilisation des langues bulgare, ukrainienne et russe dans les écoles du district Cetatea-Albă, sur la demande des communautés locales, mais ne dit rien des langues d'autres minorités ethniques (allemande ou juive, par exemple), pourtant habitant cette région « hétéroglotte » dans une proportion non négligeable. FMIP, 908(1934)/90/61.
- 55 Sur la faible connaissance de la langue roumaine dans les écoles allemandes en Bessarabie dans les années 1930 : ANR, FMIP, 907(1933)/33/82 ; voir aussi ANR, FMIP, 909(1935)/15/283. A plusieurs reprises, l'existence d'écoles allemandes est considérée avec insatisfaction par certains inspecteurs et directeurs d'école par rapport aux écoles roumaines, insuffisantes et mal équipées. FMIP, 907(1933)/221/42 ; FMIP, 913(1939)/13/7. Parfois, les demandes des parents et enseignants d'engager un directeur ou un

- enseignant d'ethnie (et de langue) allemande est négligée par les autorités. Voir, par exemple, FMIP, 910(1936)/333/29. Certains articles des revues pédagogiques de la province parlent, sur un ton quelque peu contrarié, de l'infériorité culturelle des habitants moldaves par rapport aux représentants des minorités allemande ou juive. Cf. MOLDOVEANU, S., „Mai multă grijă de Moldoveni și mai puține de minorități”, *Școala Basarabiei*, fév. 1921, p. 216-218 ; IVANOV, V., „Colaborare sau antagonism?”, *Cetatea Albă*, sept.-oct. 1936, pp. 18-22 ; GHIBIRDIC, Șt. „Școala în satele minoritare”, *Cetatea Albă*, nov.-déc. 1937, V/3-4, p. 20-24.
- 56 En 1924, 35% des habitants entre 20 et 60 ans étaient enregistrés comme analphabètes en RASSM. Les Archives des Organisations Socio-Politiques de la République de Moldova, fond 49, inventaire 1, dossier 222, p. 25 (désormais : AOSPRM, 49/1/222/25).
- 57 Sur la mise en place de la scolarisation de masse en URSS, voir EKLOF, B. (1986), FITZPATRICK, Sh. (1978, 1979), BERELOWITCH, V. (1990), EWING, Th. (2002, 2010), HOLMES, L. (1991), KELLY, K. (2007). Sur ce processus en RASSM, voir NEGRU, E., *Politica etnoculturală în RASS Moldovenească (1924-1940)*, Chișinău, Prut Internațional, 2003, pp. 71-82.
- 58 « Les enfants s'inscrivent et viennent à l'école l'hiver, mais ils abandonnent l'école en printemps. » - soulignait G. Buciușcanu, le commissaire du peuple pour l'enseignement public, au II^e Congrès des Soviets du 9-14 mai 1926. NEGRU, E., *op. cit.*, p. 72. En 1928, la scolarisation des enfants de 8 à 11 ans était accomplie à 45,2%. NEGRU, E., *idem*, p. 73, apud AOSPRM, 49/1/1840/62. En 1927/28, les enfants de 8 à 11 ans fréquentaient l'école en proportion de 56%. En 1928/29 - 66% ; en 1929/30. AOSPRM, 49/1/1531/6.
- 59 En 1926/27 les filles représentaient 33,4% des élèves de 8 à 14 ans. AOSPRM, 49/1/1082/ 2. En 1929/30, les filles fréquentant l'école représentaient 42%. AOSPRM, 49/1/1531/9. En 1925, selon un rapport partiel des organes du Parti, l'assiduité scolaire était en moyenne 50% sur la RASSM et 30% dans les districts ruraux. Les Archives Centrales d'Etat des Organisations Publiques d'Ukraine (TsDAGO), 1/20/2144/118.
- 60 Selon certaines données officielles, en 1932/33, les enfants de 8 à 11 ans fréquentaient l'école en proportion de 99,39% et ceux de 12 à 14 ans à 99,09%. Les Archives d'État centrales des autorités supérieures de pouvoir et d'administration de l'Ukraine (TsDAVO), 166/10/1225/9.
- 61 Cf. NEGURĂ, P., „Edificarea națională și culturală în RASSM: premisele unui „naționalism” eşuat”, in *Nici eroi, nici trădători. Scriitorii moldoveni și puterea sovietică în epoca stalinistă*, Chișinău, Cartier, 2014, p. 77-84.
- 62 Ainsi, dans un rapport du chef de la Section pour l'enseignement scolaire du Comité Régional du Parti Communiste d'Ukraine (en RASSM), Zelenciuc, sur la situation des écoles en RASSM à l'attention du Comité Central du Parti Communiste d'Ukraine, de janvier 1938, la fréquentation scolaire variait dans les districts de RASSM entre 75% et 90% (dans certains districts, celle-

ci remontait pourtant à 100%): AOSPRM, 49/1/4292/122. Dans un rapport sur les écoles du district d'Ananiev du 4 octobre 1932, il est mentionné que la fréquentation scolaire était de 61% au 1 septembre 1932, mais elle a augmenté jusqu'à 83% le 24 octobre. TsDAVO, 166/10/1225/61.

⁶³ Cf. NEGRU, E., *op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁶⁴ Cf. AOSPRM, 49/1/2017/36; 49/1/2401, *apud* NEGRU, E., *op. cit.*, p. 21, pp. 53-54. Cette situation de résistance aux politiques de « nationalisation » et d'« indigénisation » des institutions administratives et d'enseignement a été aussi constatée dans la même période (surtout dans les années 1920) dans les républiques ukrainienne et biélorusse, tant de la part de russophones que de la part de certains représentants de la population « autochtone » qui préféraient utiliser la langue russe dans leur communication au jour le jour et surtout dans les cadres formels. Cf. GAUTHIER, C., « Consensus, différends et obstacles pratiques dans l'organisation de l'enseignement primaire en ukrainien et en biélorusse (1920-1927) », in CADIOT, J. ; AREL, D. ; ZAKHAROVA, L. (coord.), *Cacophonies d'empire. Le gouvernement des langues dans l'Empire russe et l'Union soviétique*, Paris, CNRS Editions, 2010, pp. 150-155.

⁶⁵ Voir, par exemple, le cas d'un groupe de parents juifs des élèves d'une école juive de Dubăsari, RASSM, qui demandaient que leurs enfants soient transférés dans des écoles de langue russe. TsDAVO, 166/6/1212/19-20.

⁶⁶ Par une décision de novembre 1938, les écoles nationales « spéciales » (allemandes, bulgares, polonaises, tchèques) ont été transformées en écoles russes ou ukrainiennes. AOSPRM, 49/1/4569/3 ; 49/1/3900/33. Voir la manière dont cette réforme a été appliquée dans plusieurs républiques soviétiques, dont la RASSM : Les Archives Russes d'Etat de la Recherche Sociale et Politique (RGASPI), 17/114/751/38-47 ; 17/114/751/ 27, 28 ; 17/114/751/21-26 ; 17/114/716/110-113 (les copies de ces documents ont été distribuées pour consultation par Juliette Cadiot dans la cadre du séminaire qu'elle a dirigé à l'EHESS, Paris, en 2006-2007). Cette politique de russification s'est intensifiée au milieu des années 1930 (et s'est établie en 1938) dans le but d'unification linguistique du pays, dans le contexte d'une peur croissante des dirigeants soviétiques d'une attaque militaire de l'extérieur. Cf. CADIOT, J., « A grands pas vers le russe : l'égalité des langues dans les années 1920-'30 », in CADIOT, J., *et al.* (dir.), *op. cit.*, pp. 111-133.

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PAINTING AND SCULPTURE AT THE AMERICAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION IN MOSCOW, 1959: DEFINING SUCCESS OF A HOT ART SHOW DURING THE COLD WAR

Abstract

Organized by the United States Information Agency, the 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow, along with consumerist goods from cars to kitchens, introduced contemporary American visual art to millions of Soviet people. By displaying works of abstract artists such as Jackson Pollock, curators sought to showcase freedom of artistic expression in America, which was allegedly unavailable within the framework of Socialist Realism—the only official style in the totalitarian Soviet Union. Exploring diverse novel materials from drafts of the exhibition catalog to original comment books, this essay provides a nuanced account on the curatorial message and the visitors' reception of the art show. Updating dominant narratives on the exhibition, this piece concludes with a discussion of challenges one encounters when evaluating success of the show.

Keywords: American Art, Soviet Union, American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959, Cultural Politics, Cold War

On July 24, 1959, the *American National Exhibition* in Moscow (ANEM) opened in Sokolniki Park, located in northeast Moscow. This six-hundred-hectare area had no major constructions and was suited perfectly for creating a special exhibiting environment. The United States Information Agency (USIA)—a major American official institution in charge of international public policy—organized the show. USIA officer Jack Masey headed the design group, which consisted of recognized architects and designers, among them Buckminster Fuller, George Nelson, and Charles and Ray Eames. The US site in Sokolniki occupied 3.7

ha, where American engineers, supervising Soviet workers, erected the following buildings:

- 1) a Geodesic Dome¹ of 30,000 square feet;
- 2) a 50,000-square-foot Glass Pavilion; and
- 3) three plastic “umbrella” pavilions covering 15,000 square feet.

During the show, the buildings were property of the United States, but upon the closure of the exhibition, the USSR purchased the Dome and the Glass Pavilion for half price, i.e. \$375,000. Although these American buildings passed into Soviet possession, they would remain a prominent architectural spot within the Moscow cityscape, a reminder of the 1959 cultural contact.² It was a unique precedent during the Cold War that Soviet officials gave an American institution permission to occupy such a large territory, just five miles from the Red Square, and to erect several great buildings to display American culture right in the Soviet capital. Why did the Soviets give the Americans such freedom?

Soviet motivation was its eagerness for cultural exchange, a consequence of the Thaw, initiated by Nikita Khrushchev. In addition to declaring peaceful intentions, Khrushchev had a particular pragmatic motivation to become acquainted with technological achievements in the West and to stimulate trade.³ Masey argues that Khrushchev himself initiated the exchange when, in 1957 during an interview on CBS's *Face the Nation*, the First Secretary appealed to the United States and invited the country to engage in academic, scientific, and cultural exchanges.⁴ His initiative was further legitimized with the Lacy-Zarubin agreement of January 27, 1958, which became the framework for American-Soviet reciprocal cultural exchange, including the ANEM and the reciprocal Soviet exhibition in New York.

Lengthy negotiations preceded the two exhibitions. The American side offered for the Soviet exhibition a convenient New York exhibition space, the Coliseum; and the Soviet side could not offer an equally suitable venue, most likely because such ones were not available in Moscow. The Soviet side proposed Gorky Park, but the site did not satisfy the Americans because the facilities were not adequate for large exhibitions. The stairs at the buildings in the park were not able to bear the weight of the anticipated crowds. Finally, the Soviet side offered Sokolniki Park, where Americans could construct the necessary buildings on their own. The Americans accepted this offer because they immediately acknowledged the benefits of creating an exhibiting environment from scratch.⁵ On December 29,

1958, an American-Soviet agreement, outlining the details of the Moscow and New York exhibitions, was reached.

The American side took maximum advantage of the given opportunities. Creating an exhibition environment from scratch, the design group attempted to represent “a realistic and credible image of America to the Soviets through exhibits, displays, films, publications, fine arts, performing arts. . . . In a sense this . . . [was] a ‘corner of America’ in the heart of Moscow.”⁶ The displays of thousands of American goods from furniture to books, events such as jazz concerts and fashion shows, and the engagement of seventy-five Russian-speaking American guides contributed to the overall credibility of this simulation of America, which was to be very much appreciated by the Soviet visitors, who left hundreds of comments in comment books, among them such as: *I have been to America!*

This bridge-building act was shaped as a peaceful undertaking with the officially declared goal to increase a mutual understanding between the people.⁷ However, this narrative of friendship concealed a concrete covert mission. Unlike official releases and catalogs, the secret internal documents of the USIA clearly state this subversive intention. The declassified *Basic Policy Guidance for the U.S. Exhibit* reveals the show’s primary theme was to promote freedom of choice and expression.⁸ The representation of numerous goods unavailable to the Soviet people was to provoke implicit criticism of the Soviet regime.⁹ The show prompted the Soviet people to compare the highly developed consumerist culture and people’s capitalism in the United States with their lives under socialism. The outcomes of this forced comparison are still disputable,¹⁰ but there is a general assertion in the historiography of the ANEM that the intended contrast of the ANEM with Soviet “black-and-white” daily prose was achieved. Irma Weinig, one of the guides at the show, recalls:

[T]he exhibition was a *carnival*: the most *colorful spot* in Moscow. Usually deadly serious and law-abiding, living in a world of clearly marked ‘don’ts’ and ‘do not touch’s,’ they were free to follow their own bent at the exhibit.¹¹ [Italics-mine]

In this paper, I will explore the crucial role American visual art played in establishing this contrast. Whereas the basic history of assembling and displaying art at the ANEM is known,¹² novel sources such as drafts of the exhibition catalog allow shedding new light on the curatorial

message embodied in the art section. Furthermore, analyzing the recently discovered original comment books, I will provide a nuanced account of the Soviet reception of American art. In doing this, I will challenge the adequacy of the binary opposition *favorable/unfavorable* as a framework for an analysis of Soviet people's responses to the ANEM art section. My ultimate goal is to expand the dominant narrative on the ANEM, which treats the art section as an 'ideological subversion.'¹³ Uncovering how American curators applied specific representational techniques to reach specific target audiences in the Soviet Union, I will provide a comprehensive analysis of the goals, failures, and achievements of the 1959 art exhibition.

Assembling Art

Through internal USIA correspondence, Robert Sivard acknowledged the importance of the art section:

The Cultural section will be one of the most important sections of the show, and the one offering the most challenge and opportunity if done correctly. It is never too hard to sell the high standard of American production . . . or standard-of-living. . . . [The Soviet Citizen] is less convinced, however, that America has any culture. . . . [T]he exhibition could go toward convincing him. . . . Intellectual ferment in the Soviet Union centers primarily around a resistance against the oppressive bonds of Socialist Realism. . . . Together with presenting a wide selection of American talent in the cultural field, the entire exhibition should be designed to emphasize freedom of choice and expression in America. This is the most important thing we have which the Soviet citizen is denied, and, as he becomes better educated, increasingly resents denied. In the cultural section, we should point out, just as we should do in the section showing consumer's goods, the wide range of choice which the American 'consumer' had at this disposal. . . . [W]e should suggest the showing of a good exhibition of contemporary American art, which clearly shows the evolution from realism through impressionism, expressionism to abstractionism and surrealism.¹⁴

In order to assemble the art works for the ANEM, the USIA hired a non-governmental commission of professionals from the field of the visual arts, which was headed by Franklin C. Watkins, a painting teacher at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. The jury included Henry R.

Rope, chair of the Fine Arts Department of Indiana University; Theodore Roszak, a sculptor; and Lloyd Goodrich, Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art.¹⁵ The jury selected forty-nine paintings by twentieth-century contemporary artists, from William Glackens' figurative *Soda Fountain* (1938) to Jackson Pollock's abstract canvas *Cathedral* (1947). The display of this collection occupied four cubicles on the second floor of the Glass Pavilion. Twenty-three contemporary sculptures by Gaston Lachaise, Jacques Lipchitz, and other sculptors were placed both in the pavilion and outside in the park.

Edith Halpert, a US dealer of Russian origin and a curator from Downtown Gallery, New York City, traveled to Moscow on her own expense to hang the collection. She served as acting curator and stayed in the USSR for more than three weeks. Upon her arrival, she found the working conditions extremely inappropriate, observing, "[T]he space seemed so inadequate that I was on the verge of tears."¹⁶ The lighting was poor, and the walls were painted in green, orange, and purple, casting a "terrible light"¹⁷ onto the pictures. It took her four days and required the assistance of six preparers from the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts to prepare an adequate environment and hang the collection.

The assembled collection of contemporary art did not escape in-house criticism, which was rather typical for US art exhibitions since the late 1940s. The art section provoked a considerable domestic controversy because the jury's choice had been subject to criticism by the House Un-American Activities Committee. Since many artists such as Pollock and Shahn had formerly had affiliations with communist or socialist organizations, they were treated as subversives.¹⁸ Moreover, the assembled collection consisted only of works of contemporary art. American eighteenth- and nineteenth-century paintings were missing, it was therefore argued that such an exhibition would not be representative of American art. The congressional hearings on the ANEM art section took place on July 1, 1959. However, unlike similar previous cases, and thanks to Eisenhower's personal involvement, none of the works was removed. Instead, an additional group of twenty-eight paintings of realist pre-World War I art were sent to Moscow. This collection of works by John Singleton Copley, Maurice Prendergast, and others was displayed on the first floor of the Glass Pavilion.

Altogether, one hundred works of American art, covering American art history from the eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century, were on display. This was a milestone in the representation of American art in the

USSR, particularly if one considers that, with the exception of figurative art such as by Rockwell Kent and a few other artists, American art had hardly been shown in the USSR by 1959.¹⁹ As a part of the *American National Exhibition in Moscow*, which displayed thousands of items and attracted hundreds of thousands of people, the art section was guaranteed to be well attended. Thus, the art section of the ANEM was an excellent opportunity to deliver a particular perspective on American art to a larger Soviet audience that was practically unaware of it, especially of American modernist art.

Freedom, Diversity, and Peoples' Art on Display

The art exhibition within the ANEM was titled *Contemporary American Art*, and it was a curated show with a specific concept, as can be seen in the catalog and the brochure issued for the show.²⁰ The high-quality ninety-page catalog, edited by Halpert and published with funds raised by the Archives of American Art, included a ten-page introductory text by Lloyd Goodrich and a reproduction of each work exhibited along with a biographical summary and brief comment on each artist's style, written by Halpert.²¹ Most of the reproductions were in black and white, but selected works, among them Jackson Pollock's *Cathedral* (1947) and Yasuo Kuniyoshi's *The Amazing Juggler* (1952) were reproduced as color plates. A smaller version of the catalog, a fourteen-page brochure titled *Contemporary American Art*, including Goodrich's text and several black and white reproductions, was also published.²² This edition included reproductions of only few representational works, most likely because the quality and the size of the publication were by no means adequate for reproducing abstract art.

The catalogs and the brochures were distributed among the visitors. Gretchen Simms, in her PhD thesis dedicated to the artistic reception of the ANEM in the USSR, notes that some 400,000 art catalogs were issued for the show,²³ and the circulation of the brochure is not known. Thus, considering an estimated attendance of around three million people, every seventh visitor would have received a copy.²⁴ Everyone who received a catalog or a brochure would take it home, and most likely, he or she would show it to friends and acquaintances who had not attended the show, thus increasing the number of Soviet people who became acquainted with American art. Like other objects from the ANEM, the catalogs and

brochures would undergo preservation²⁵ and remain in the USSR after the show, thus becoming a valuable source of visual information about American art, which had previously been practically unavailable.

Another factor that contributed to the significance of the catalogs and the brochures was that they included a study of American art that went beyond Marxist-Leninist aesthetics. Thus, a Soviet citizen could look at American art not through the lens of official Soviet negative criticism, but through an article by an American art historian, who delivered his argument with a comparatively low level of distortion because his text was not subject to Soviet censorship. Let us have a closer look at how Goodrich represented American art to a Soviet audience.

The Russian text of the Moscow catalog was not written specially for the ANEM, but a revised version of Goodrich's earlier article "What is American in American Art?"²⁶ published in *Art in America* in 1958. In the summer of 1959, an English version of the text, now revised for the ANEM, was published in *College Art Journal*.²⁷ This article was translated into Russian and then printed in the Russian catalog. In 1963, Goodrich would republish his essay "What is American in American Art?" in *Art in America*.²⁸ Comparing several versions of the text to understand whether Goodrich was consciously adapting his text when writing for a Soviet audience.

The 1958 text from *Art in America* is significantly longer than the consequent versions prepared for the ANEM, it also covers a larger time period: from colonialism to contemporary times, whereas the editions for the ANEM focus mainly on twentieth-century movements. The reasons for omitting the historical part become evident when considering the jury, which wanted to show the Soviet people a cross section of the best works of contemporary art, representing various trends in twentieth-century American art.²⁹

In the opening paragraph of his Russian-language article, Goodrich argues that twentieth-century contemporary American art is a reaction against idealism and academism in the arts, which led artists such as John Sloan or William Glackens to focusing on the social life in the United States.³⁰ He also emphasizes that numerous artists, from Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood to Edward Hopper and Raphael Soyer, were committed to socially critical art.³¹ He furthermore emphasizes that during the Depression era, the Federal Art Project helped many artists by providing them with commissions. Goodrich argues that this activity was entirely socialist because it was an example of the official state

support of the arts in the United States. Throughout the article, Goodrich outlines that there is a particular social aspect in the art of Ben Shahn, Edward Hopper, Jack Levine, and others, and that these artists, within their oeuvre, were concerned with commenting on the social life in the United States. It becomes evident Goodrich was emphasizing whatever *social* there was about American art. Goodrich knew that within Soviet aesthetics, “genuine” art was socially engaged art, it focused on peoples’ lives and was supported by the state and; it was socially critical. Thus, the main strategy was to emphasize similarities between American and Soviet art – a strategy Goodrich followed throughout the article. This strategy of finding commonalities rather than focusing on differences was more adequate for the general idea of the show as a step towards understanding and friendship.

On pages three and four of the Russian-language text, Goodrich introduces modernism. He stresses the contribution of American to the avant-garde movements, and presents American modernism as a successor of European modernism, thus inscribing the United States into the great European tradition. According to Goodrich, artists such as Max Weber, Morris Prendergast, and Joseph Stella significantly contributed to world art. He provides an overview of expressionist art, arguing that discoveries in psychology, such as the discovery of the unconscious mind, showed and opened up new “worlds” and turned the artists’ attention away from portraying the “objective world.” Gorky and Kuniyoshi are presented as influential examples of this trend, since, as Goodrich puts it, these artists began to pay less attention to the “objective world.”

In the following, Goodrich argues that abstraction has become the dominating trend since 1930. He provides a “formalist” definition of abstraction, characterizing it as discarding representation in order to just work with form, color, and language. In his history of American art, he then moves on to American Abstract Expressionism, which became the first world-recognized style of American origin. He concluded his account with Hopper and Wyeth, whom he portrays as contemporary “creative” realists who managed to rethink academism. Goodrich’s variant of the history of American art is followed by a resume stating that American art is rather diverse:

What with representationalism, expressionism, abstraction, and all their variations, contemporary American art is among the most diversified of any nation. . . . We have individuals and whole schools of many

differing viewpoints, all having their measure of validity. This pluralistic character of American art gives the full freedom for individualism and experimentation.³²

According to Goodrich, diversity is an essential trait of American art. He argues that diversity is possible due to the freedom given to artists who can work in any style, be it abstract or figurative. In fact, Goodrich proposes a contrasting scheme according to which realism could co-exist with abstraction within one national art; such a perspective contradicted Soviet ideas of the struggle between realist and not-realist art.

This 1959 Russian text, unlike the English version of the same year, has one extra passage. In this passage, Goodrich claims that there exist various kinds of support for modernism in the United States. He highlights that the people's interest in contemporary modernist art has increased and "contemporary art in the United States receives significant support from various sides."³³ Evidently, this passage about the broad acceptance of modernism in the United States was designed especially for the Soviet readers: they were used to judge art based on its popularity among the people because popular response to art was an important parameter in socialism. Goodrich wanted to show that in the United States, contemporary art, including the displayed at the ANEM modernist works, is the art of the people, not something elitist. Placed at the end of the article and functioning as a second conclusion, this passage provides important evidence on how Goodrich wanted to advance American art among the Soviet people. The latter assumption can be proved once more when comparing the 1959 Russian text with the first 1958 and the last 1963 versions. Ironically, in the English articles written and produced for Americans audiences in *Art in America*, Goodrich makes an opposite claim, there he argues that contemporary art in the United States lacks support:

[O]ur art is still individualistic, produced for private collectors, museums and the art public, with a minimum of official patronage. Whatever vital art is being done is mostly for business and industry.³⁴

The text's rhetoric and revisions show that Goodrich considered the specifics of the Soviet audience and wanted American art to be well received. Attempting to explain modernism, he avoided a possible discussion that might have treated it as idealistic and bourgeois. Instead

he came up with arguments about the similarities between art in the United States and in the USSR. Goodrich also wanted to convince the Soviet audience that the American public was supporting contemporary American art such as on display at the ANEM, including abstract art.

Anticipating the reception of American modernism in the USSR, Goodrich was definitely aware of the general hostile attitude of Soviet art criticism to modernist movements. Since 1932, Socialist Realism was the only acceptable contemporary style in the Soviet Union, and critics accordingly denounced all modernist styles. Goodrich acknowledged this fact and wanted to facilitate Soviet people's reception of American modernism. Thus, unlike in his articles for *Art in America*, he found some parallels between abstract works of art and figurative pieces in the Russian text. He argued that the large canvases of American the abstract expressionists looked like landscapes seen from a bird's eye view, reflecting the "openness and space of America."³⁵ And when speaking about the Morris Graves' expressionistic work *Flight of a Plover*, Goodrich argued that the painting depicts a flock of birds in motion.³⁶ Since the Soviet audience was experienced only in viewing realist art, Goodrich was trying to use it. Such a simplified, naïve, and accessible explanation of contemporary art targeted an average visitor with an anticipated lack of expertise in modernism.

However, the anticipation of a general low level of readiness to encounter American contemporary art among Soviet visitors does not mean that the curators approached their potential audience as a monolithic group. They were conscious that the actual audience of the so-called "classless society" was rather uneven and also included some people who were interested in the visual arts and more ready for modernism. In fact, the curators had an ambiguous approach to the audience. Although the curators undeniably wanted to find a common language with the general public, basically lacking expertise in modernist art, the curators' priority was to introduce contemporary art to the cultural elites. For example, Halpert's lecture and McLanahan's report show that the curators considered the intelligentsia and the cultural establishment as a key audience, more ready for an encounter with modernist art. Advancing the American art within the intelligentsia was strongly desired, the curators even changed the exhibition's daily schedule to satisfy the interests of Soviet artists by providing them with a better access to contemporary American art. One of the measures to do that was to close the gallery from 1–3 p.m. and open it only to artists. By doing this, Halpert wanted to prevent overcrowding of the

art section. The groups were not to exceed two hundred people, and “the Soviet uniformed guards did the screening.”³⁷ People from such groups were handed out the large catalogs that “were intended only for those having a special interest in the arts, which, because of its handsome design, typography, and reproductions was much sought after.”³⁸ Whereas the small brochures were given to most of the visitors, the large, well-printed publication “reached those for who they were specifically intended.”³⁹ To acquire such a catalog, one had to provide a name and an address, so the catalog could be sent by mail. This procedure was to prevent jams of people willing to get a catalog. Also, by sending catalogs directly to concrete people, the organizers sought to prevent the Soviet agitators from having catalogs: the Americans knew that the agitators would get the catalog just to prevent someone else from having it. Eventually, the Soviet authorities prohibited this procedure, and regardless of the American attempts to restore the distribution of the catalogs, many people apparently did not receive a catalog.

This focus on people with a specific interest in the arts went along with the overall USIA public policy on conceptualizing the target audience as a pyramid, with the intellectuals on the top.⁴⁰ Although the USIA attempted to influence a wide audience, there was always a particular focus on the intellectual and cultural elites. The intelligentsia were important to reach because, firstly, they could potentially be more loyal to Western ideas, and, secondly, they could be among the agenda-makers within the USSR: they could potentially influence the mindset in the USSR.

Thus, the art section of the ANEM communicated to both to the general audience and to those potentially more open to contemporary American art the message that contemporary American art was individualistic, pluralistic, socially accepted, and in some ways also socially critical. What were the visitors’ reactions?

Reception and Response

The art exhibition was an extremely popular site, with daily attendance measuring in tens of thousands of visitors, coming up to one million in the end.⁴¹ Due to the jams created by the crowd at the art section on the second floor, Halpert had to set up special rails preventing people from being pushed into the canvases. The official Soviet reception of the show was predictably negative, with numerous articles denouncing the exhibition.

The reviews of the art section were not exempt from hostility. The best example is Kemenov's lengthy overview, "Vystavka sovremennogo iskusstva" ("Exhibition of Contemporary Art"), published in the August 11, 1959, issue of *Sovetskaia Kul'tura*, which parroted traditional negative Marxist-Leninist attitudes towards modernism.

However, the reception should not be assessed by official publications only. Although each source has its limitations, other materials such as comment books, reports of the USIA, recollections, and other forms nevertheless allow for the reconstruction of a detailed account of the responses provoked by the ANEM.

Comment Books

The responses in the comment books were more diverse than the reception in the official newspapers, albeit still with few positive comments against a dominating negative trend. However, the classification and interpretation of comments from the books is a challenge as has already been acknowledged within Cold War studies.⁴²

First, the credibility of the comment books is problematic; it is an open question how adequately the books reflect the Soviet people's attitudes towards the exhibition. The Soviet side influenced the account by sending special agitators to leave "fake" negative comments. Moreover, specially prepared Soviet affiliates stood near the comment books, and their presence provided psychological pressure on visitors willing to leave positive comments. In practice, someone caught leaving a good comment might have encountered further career problems. Spying on "loyal" commentators made visitors suspicious of commenting, and this minimized positive responses. The last page of *Comment Book One*, located at the exit of the ANEM, is valuable proof that positive commentary was a challenge. One can see that a piece of paper was glued onto the book's last page. The text praises American culture and points at the supremacy of capitalism over communism. Most likely, such an "anti-Soviet" comment had been written in advance and had been given to an American guide, thus bypassing Soviet controllers.

Second, comments examined by previous scholars are actually not a "pure" primary source: they are not the original comment books but excerpts. Moreover, most of the comments are translations from Russian into English. Thus, the representativeness of the available NARA II and AAA separate lists, compilations, and other materials has been compromised

by the very fact of their selections by USIA officers (we do not really know the parameters of the selection). Furthermore, one should not ignore the inevitable losses in translation.⁴³

Third, the lists are unreliable in terms of figures because it is impossible to acquire credible statistics from a translated selection and with no access to the complete, original books. The available statistics, created by the USIA, state that art was the second popular subject of commentary, with 7 favorable and 37 (with an additional 5 commentaries regarding sculptures) as unfavorable.⁴⁴ Obviously, these numbers come from an analysis of a translated, selected set of comments, not from the original books, because 49 written comments are a small number for a six-week show with several million visitors.

Last but not least, the commentators' social status is hard to determine and interpret statistically because most comments were unsigned, except few comments signed to identify the author as a "worker" or an "artist." Although it is possible in some cases to speculate on the authorship of unsigned comments depending on the spelling, punctuation, and style of the argumentation, nevertheless, attribution of comments is not available to an extent to make any credible statistics. However, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Aleksei Fominykh,⁴⁵ who retrieved the four original books,⁴⁶ it is now possible to provide some further insights into the visitors' reactions, giving a more detailed account and overcoming some of the difficulties scholars have encountered.

The four discovered books are more credible and a pure source of information. The books were placed at the show's exit⁴⁷ only on the fourth day. The organizers anticipated that the first visitors would be privileged ones, i.e. the Party establishment and not average Soviet citizens. Indeed, officials controlled the distribution of tickets, so well-established people received them first. A guide at the ANEM, John R. Thomas, reported on the first visitors:

In the first week of the Fair, the visitors were heavily weighted on the elite side starting with Khrushchev and Kozlov. This was evident (1) from their dress (among the men many good-quality, pressed suits and white shirts and ties, among the women many tailored suits and fur pieces); (2) from their language (more refined and educated); (3) from other external signs (many sported Orders of Lenin and Red Flag insignias with inscriptions denoting Supreme Soviet deputies); and (4) from the general hostility with which questions were asked and answers received.⁴⁸

Reactions from such privileged visitors were more representative of the Party line than those of the common people; hence, bypassing some of the political elite's comments, the four books are closer to the actual reception of the Soviet people.⁴⁹

The books also provide us with new firsthand quantitative data. Within five weeks, the four books accumulated 1,454 comments (277; 383; 479; 315).⁵⁰ Commentators shared impressions on various aspects of the show, from management to architecture, and 112 comments mention the visual arts.⁵¹ Only 16 comments openly express sympathy for American art. Most of the remaining comments are explicitly negative; and only several comments are neutral because they contain no positive or negative judgment.

Negative Receptions

Negative commentary of art should not be seen as monolithic, and the reader should be skeptical towards the frame *favorable/unfavorable* when speaking about aesthetical judgments. The illustration for the newspaper article regarding the ANEM⁵² evidences that *unfavorable* is rather an umbrella term for several different reactions to be specified. One can see a collage of visitors' photos, which belts the three modernist sculptures from the ANEM. The heading says "The Room of Laughter." That was a popular Soviet attraction where false mirrors distorted a visitor's image, thus making him or her appear to be laughing or scared, depending on the character of distortion. American visual art, like a false mirror, distorted the image, provoking various emotions of anger, surprise, fear, disgust, incomprehension, and other. All photographed reactions can be interpreted as *unfavorable* and the comment books likewise evidence the same diversity of *unfavorable* responses. Let us now focus on the most widespread reactions and patterns of criticism.

Of all the sections of the ANEM, the art section was most frequently denounced. Dozens of commentators emphasized *the only thing (they) disliked* was art. One even compared art *with a toothache in a healthy organism*. Attempting to get a fair overview of the show, visitors wanted to put onto paper their thoughts about both good and bad things to seem objective, and art was commonly said to be the worst part of the ANEM. (Indeed, without vulnerable and provocative art, what could be criticized that easily?) Thirty-seven comments were built upon a contradistinction of the art section to the rest. Such comments reproduced the following

scheme: *I liked/it was great (especially autos), but I disliked art.* For example:

I liked the show very much. Especially autos, household items, and many other things. But your abstract paintings provoke indignation among the majority of visitors. They are not resistant to any criticism. In our understanding, this is extinction [degeneration] of genuine art. And these paintings can be named slapdash. 1/VIII-1959 visitor

Ugly art and beautiful cars were the extremes well grasped by one commentator, who ironically suggested Henry Ford to be elected the President of the Academy of Arts of the United States because Ford, unlike American artists, knew what real beauty was.

The next frequent complaint was that the art works exhibited were not understandable. Not understanding was typical of the overall reception, and not accidentally, Halpert titled her lecture on ANEM as “Chto Eto?”⁵³ At least 22 commentators put it in similar terms as the following one shows:

I have learnt a lot about the life of talented American people having visited this wonderful exhibition. The only thing which produced not too pleasant an effect on me is the section of contemporary American art; it might be that I just do not understand this type of painting. 9.08.1959

This comment is an example of a negative/unfavorable reception because the visitor disliked the art: it produced a “not too pleasant effect.” However, not understanding was not always “negative.” Not all who did not understand art argued it was bad. For example, three commentators claimed *I do not understand art, but I regret this; I wish I could:*

We do not understand abstract art: painting, sculpture. It is hard to understand what an artist wanted to depict. This is also because there is no Russian translation. I wanted very much to learn what abstract art is, what drives abstract artists. . . . [I]t is hard to understand it; that is why it is not surprising that many visitors of the show are very harsh towards it. . . . [W]hy none of the guides could explain it. . . . [I]f organizers wished . . . they could have done more. 14.08.1959

The curators anticipated such troubles of the Soviet people’s encounter with modernism, and they tried to prevent the cognitive dissonance

caused by the lack of an appropriate framework for interpreting abstract art not only by issuing catalogs. For example, Halpert, acting as on-site curator, also tried to soften the Soviet encounter with abstraction. She hung paintings chronologically, from the early 1928 works by William Benton to the later 1958 works by Conrad Marca-Relli, to show some progression. She also interspersed abstract works with figurative ones, so the former would be less striking than if put all together.⁵⁴ After opening the show and receiving multiple complaints about not understanding, Halpert started writing special explanatory labels on specific works of art, and Richard McLanathan eventually started taking over this activity. During the first days of the show, Halpert was giving lectures and answering visitors' questions. The guides turned out to be poorly trained to explain this art (this was also a frequent comment), and during lunch times, McLanathan would instruct them on how to comment on the art.⁵⁵ Moreover, special audio lectures and comments on art were recorded; they were played several times a day for the visitors.⁵⁶ Finally, a series of fifteen-minute explanatory videos on the exhibited works were recorded. The video itself became a great attraction because it was shown on a color television, which was a curiosity in that time.⁵⁷ However, the Soviet reaction to art should not be analyzed by only focusing on the second floor collection and on the activities that took place there.

Insulting Sculpture

Contemporary historiography tends to present art at the ANEM as a collection of paintings, which abstract artists such as Pollock and Rothko dominated. One should not forget the significant collection of twenty-three sculptures on display. Comment books indicate the sculptures were, in some sense, even more provocative than abstract paintings. The sculptures were not only one of the most disliked aspects but also one of the most *insulting* counterparts of the show. We have sixteen negative comments versus one positive comment mentioning sculptures. Here is a typical example:

I do not understand why they show not the beauty, not the grace but the ugliness in the United States? The sculptures motherhood [*Mother and Child* by Lipchitz], woman [*Standing Woman* by Lachaise] and stepping woman [*Walking Figure* by Hugo Robus (1957)] [indecipherable handwriting] – simply offends, insults all women of the world. 30.08.1959

Or,

And one more thing: do you really think that woman deserves such a deriding (glooming) which you show in your sculptures. 7.7.1959 (sic!)

The sculptures' negative attainment was due to the following reasons. First, many sculptures were located outside, and therefore, they were seen by most of the visitors arbitrarily when visiting the ANEM. Second, modernist sculptures such as *Standing Woman* were, in some sense, even a harder violation of "reality" than abstract painting. Abstraction did not really distort the image: Pollock and Rothko did not represent reality but constructed a new one. However, the sculptures "distorted" real prototypes. Paintings broke aesthetic taboos and sculptures of nudes broke certain social and ethical taboos as well as aesthetic ones. The nude body shocked just because of the nudity; moreover, the clothes that should have concealed the beauty were absent, revealing ugliness. Precisely, the sculptures of women at the ANEM insulted the concept of femininity, as it was treated in Soviet culture.⁵⁸

Thus, it becomes clear now why people literally felt indignation (five comments). They were insulted (four comments) by the sculptures that violated not only aesthetical feelings but also ethical taboos. This violation was so strong that it caused much discomfort, making the Soviet visitors uncomfortable with the sculptures, with many commentators asking to have the sculptures removed and not brought back.

Similarly, there were also several requests to remove abstract paintings. Such requests were accompanied by many of the anti-modernist topoi such as art of the insane (five comments), degenerate art (three comments), low-skilled painters (four comments), and other aspects.

Any Good?

Positive comments in the four original comment books were few, but sometimes unexpectedly grand:

In general, I liked the exhibition. It mirrors all the styles, shows the diversity of existing trends in the field of sculpture. I liked the group *Family of the Miner* by Meant Garkovi. This is good in its realism, truthfulness of images, wholeness of the sculpture. Sculpture *Mother and Child* by Jacques Lipchitz is wonderful. This is a very original and mighty monument. Here, everything

has been simplified in the name of the most important. Very expressive, very talking. Also I liked one sculpture—I draw it because there is no tag. A particular mood whiffles from this abstractionist piece; it is well executed, very whole. Finally, I liked, although less, *Adam and Eve* by B. Reider. This seems to be not just a subject from the Bible (or from somewhere else, I do not know for sure) but to be a personification of the “tree of life.” However, this is my personal reception.

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Student of historical faculty⁵⁹

The few positive commentaries in the comment books are only partially indicative of the overall response. In numerous recollections and reports of the show, it is put that frequently, positive comments on art were oral.⁶⁰ Such reactions were especially frequent in conversations with the guides and during the special gallery hours established by Halpert from 1–3 p.m. when only artists were invited. Halpert created a special situation in which people ready for encountering contemporary American art felt free to discuss it and were not afraid to talk about it like they were afraid of leaving comments in the visitors’ book; these discussions would frequently continue in her hotel or in their homes. That may have been the time when the intelligentsia, which had been targeted by the show, would be able to share most freely its thoughts on art and instead of denouncing it. With this variety of responses and reactions to the art, how can one ultimately estimate whether the show was a success?

What Was It?

For the curators, art at the ANEM was an unquestionable success. In his report to Sivard, McLanathan puts it as follows:

The Art Exhibit at the American National Exhibition in Moscow proved to be an especially important part of the whole because the paintings and sculpture(s) provided the most obvious demonstration in the Fair is freedom of expression of choice in America, and the very strangeness to the Russians of some of the more abstract art merely served to emphasize this further. In this the art exhibit was more effective even than the book exhibit.⁶¹

He then argues that the message about freedom in art was well received:

The art exhibition as a dramatic proof of freedom of expression and of choice in America, seemed to be a widely understood and accepted than I could ever have expected. The idea of the great variety of the works shown representing the vitality of American art also seemed to find ready acceptance.⁶²

Finally, refraining from approaching the reception as negative or positive, let us instead preserve a critical distance to the curator's report and try to figure out whether the central message of the show—the idea of a diverse, and hence, free art—was received, as McLanathan argues. My analysis of the four books shows this key message was hardly acknowledged. Only two of several thousand commentators mentioned the diversity and freedom in contemporary American visual art. For most commentators, the whole art section appeared as a show of abstract art, despite the large percentage of various artistic styles on display, i.e., many figurative styles such as Regionalism, Expressionism, Precisionism, etc. Abstract paintings overshadowed the others; the figurative art on the second floor practically went unnoticed, although it hung alongside abstract works. Only a single commentator praised Andrew Wyeth's portrait *Children's Doctor* (1949); and surprisingly, several comments praised Peter Blume's surrealist *Eternal City* (1937), which social anti-fascist agenda overshadowed the painting's modernist style. As for the first floor section with ten realist works by George Caleb Bingham, Childe Hassam, John Singer Sargent, and others—something that must have attracted the Soviet people—it seems to have remained absent from collective memory. Nevertheless, simultaneously, McLanathan's account is not completely false. Indeed, one should not neglect that those who did not leave their written comments but talked to the ANEM staff may have received the ideas of freedom in art. However, generally, the idea was rather overlooked.

What about the general mission of American art to conquer the myth of the United States as a soulless nation? Did the show prove to the audience that Americans were "cultured?" Halpert believes it did because "[t]his show had proved in part that our civilization is not entirely materialistic but that culture holds an important place."⁶³

However, Reid in her analysis of the show puts it that the "art exhibition at ANEM did nothing to mitigate the widespread prejudice that the United States was vulgar, lacking in taste and culture."⁶⁴ With the dominance of negative commentaries in the comment books, Reid's conclusion looks to

be stronger than Halpert's account. Moreover, one should be skeptical of the curators' reports because the authors were naturally prejudiced. Both Halpert and McLanathan were involved in the show and were therefore responsible for its success. Hence, they always had considerable motives to exaggerate the achievements and disregard the failures. Their motives were even stronger because as curators they were under certain pressure in the United States, where American art abroad programs received constant criticism. To some extent, the future of overseas exhibitions and legitimacy of censorship and intrusions depended on the success of the ANEM. With this in mind, enthusiastic reports by Halpert and McLanathan are no surprise.

Nevertheless, the art section should be treated as a success within the ANEM, mainly due to the considerable publicity it received. The dominating negative trend in the reception hardly compromises the show's success. Vice versa, the 'hotness' was a major attraction; it was the reason for its success. Controversial art pushed visitors to react to the show; abstract paintings and modernist sculptures provoked questions, encouraging interaction between Soviet visitors and American guides. Art also triggered harsh disputes between the Soviet visitors who would disagree over abstraction during conversations at the ANEM. Furthermore, even in the comment books, a visitor would comment upon a previous writer's negative or positive commentary on the art; crossed out, the commentators would call each other idiots and other names. Thus, American contemporary art, radically contrasting Soviet art, was challenging the taste of the majority who still disliked it. Simultaneously, contemporary art definitely found a few fans among the cultural intelligentsia who were more ready for modernism.⁶⁵

Last but not least, a crucial reason to treat the show as a success was that for the USIA, the ANEM was a good lesson in organizing overseas exhibitions. The show clearly revealed the potential pros and cons of exhibiting modernism in the USSR. Consequently, the ANEM's positive and negative experiences were considered within other exhibitions, such as *Graphic Arts: USA*, to open in 1963.

NOTES

- ¹ Buckminster Fuller, a prominent American architect and designer, originally developed this type of dome for *The Jeshyn International Fair*, Kabul, Afghanistan, 1956. The out-of-edge Dome has become the face of US international exhibitions since Kabul. Fuller's design bureau was suggested to create a similar dome for the 1959 ANEM but Fuller was unable to do with the set deadline. The Moscow construction required an upgrade so it would be able to withstand the snow, and Fuller could not develop it within seven months. George Nelson, however, took and completed the project. Beverly Payeff-Masey in conversation with the author, Metaform Design International: the Masey Archives, November 21, 2014. Hereafter: The Masey Archives. For more on the history of the dome, see also Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan, *Cold War Confrontations: US Exhibitions and Their Role in the Cultural Cold War* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2008), 170–83.
- ² After the 1970s, the Dome was demolished and the Umbrella pavilions were removed.
- ³ For more on Khrushchev's and Soviet expectations from the show, see Masey and Morgan, *Cold War Confrontations*, 154–155; Susan Emily Reid, "Who Will Beat Whom? Soviet Popular Reception of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6, 4 (2005): 860–65.
- ⁴ Masey and Morgan, *Cold War Confrontations*, 154.
- ⁵ Beverly Payeff-Masey in conversation with the author, the Masey Archives, November 21, 2014.
- ⁶ Facts about the American National Exhibition in Moscow July 25–Sept. 4, 1959 (a report from USIA Office of Public Information), 2. Records of USIA. Record Group 306. Records of Office of Exhibits. Entry: UD-UP 10. Moscow Exhibition. Box 1 (of 1). Folder: Policy Statements on the USSR. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park (NARA II). Hereafter documents from the collection cited as document title, RG 306, entry, box, folder, NARA II.
- ⁷ As it is put on page one of the "Facts About the National Exhibition in Moscow," the purpose is "To strengthen the foundations of world peace by increasing understanding in the Soviet Union of the American people, the land in which they live, and the broad range of American life, including American science, technology and culture." Soviet propaganda used similar rhetoric for statements on the ANEM both in the official documentation and in the press.
- ⁸ *Basic Policy Guidance for the U.S. Exhibit in Moscow in 1959 (secret)*. RG 306. Entry: UD-UP 10. Moscow Exhibition. Box 1 (of 1). Folder: Policy Statements on the USSR. NARA II.

- 9 A sarcastic and telling remark: "The objectives outlined in the memo are good. However, the phrase 'Create in the minds' [create the desire for a wider choice of quality goods and services than are presently available for them] . . . is inaccurate, since the desire . . . is already the most dominant factor in the mind of the average citizen. The first two objectives might be rephrased as follows: (1) The primary aim of the exhibit is to stimulate further aiming the peoples of the Soviet Union their desire for a wider choice of quality goods and services than is presently available to them, thereby creating additional pressure on the regime to bring about modification of its economic plan at the expense of the USSR's aggressive potential." Office Memorandum, from Sivard to Roberts. Comments on your memo on the Gorki Park Exhibition, October 9, 1958. RG 306. Entry: UD-UP 10. Moscow Exhibition. Box 1 (of 1). Folder: USA: 1965. American National Exhibition in Moscow. NARA II. See also the project of the show "US National Exhibit, Gorki Part, Moscow, 1959" located in the same folder.
- 10 For example, Reid challenges the dominant interpretations of the ANEM as of an unquestionably efficient ideological subversion of the Soviet people. Reid argues that the significance of the show is often overstated because Western scholars tend to approach the ANEM "from a standpoint of victors." Reid, "Who will Beat Whom?," 857.
- 11 Cite by: Masey and Morgan, *Cold War Confrontations*, 214.
- 12 For more on the history of the assembling, see Marilyn S. Kushner, "Exhibiting Art at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959. Domestic Politics and Cultural Diplomacy," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 4, 1 (2002): 6–26.
- 13 For the history of the art section in the USSR, see Michael Krenn, *Fall-Out Shelters for the Human Spirit: American Art and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 155–73; Julia Bailey, "The Spectre of Communist Art: American Modernism and the Challenge of Socialist Realism, 1923–1960" (PhD diss., University College London, 2015), 173–92.
- 14 Office Memorandum, from Sivard to Roberts. Comments on your memo on the Gorki Park Exhibition. October 9, 1958. RG 306. Entry: UD-UP 10. Moscow Exhibition. Box 1 (of 1). Folder: USA: 1965. American National Exhibition in Moscow. NARA II.
- 15 Kushner, "Exhibiting Art at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959."
- 16 Edith Gregor Halpert, lecture delivered at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, October 19, 1959, on the 1959 American National Art Exhibition in Moscow. Tape-recorded by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, and transcribed by the Downtown Gallery staff, 4. Downtown Gallery records, 1824-1974, bulk 1926–1969. Separate and Related Materials. AAA. Hereafter: Halpert's lecture, October 19, 1959.
- 17 Ibid.

- 18 For more on the controversy, see Kushner, "Exhibiting Art at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959," 10–17. See also Krenn, *Fall-Out Shelters*, 155–73.
- 19 For a complete account of exhibiting American visual art in the Soviet Union during the 1950s to the 1960s, see my doctoral dissertation, "The Representation of American Visual Art in the USSR during the Cold War (1950s to the late 1960s)" (PhD diss., Jacobs University Bremen, 2016).
- 20 Both the catalog and the brochure were issued for the initial collection of contemporary art, assembled by the jury. Therefore, these issues did not cover the additional pre-World War I paintings. My focus now is on the collection of contemporary American art represented as a conceptual unity.
- 21 *Amerikanskaia zhivopis' i skul'ptura. Amerikanskaia natsional'naia vystavka v Moskve, 25 iulia – 5 sentiabria 1959 goda*, exhibition catalog (Detroit, Arkhiv Amerikanskogo Iskusstva: Meridian, 1959).
- 22 *Sovremennoe amerikanskoe iskusstvo*, brochure for the Art Section of the ANEM, text by Lloyd Goodrich, 1959. Hereafter: *Sovremennoe amerikanskoe iskusstvo* (brochure).
- 23 Gretchen Simms, "The 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow and the Soviet Artistic Reaction to the Abstract Art" (PhD diss., Universität Wien, 2007), 47.
- 24 The report "Facts about the ANEM" estimates the attendance as 3.5 million. The papers from the Masey Archives give 2 million. (US Government Exhibitions Supervised by Jack Masey. The Masey Archives. Hereafter when citing materials from the Masey Archives, I do not specify an exact box number or folder title. I received the documents in a single email from Beverly Payeff-Masey with no exact location specified.) Other USIA reports from RG 306 frequently give around 2.7 million. One can safely assume that the attendance was about 3 million people.
- 25 The souvenirs were highly valued. John R. Thomas, a guide from the show, defines the popularity of souvenirs among the visitors as the "souvenir craze." John R. Thomas. "Report on Service with the American National Exhibition in Moscow. March 15, 1960." Social Science Division. Rand Corporation. P-1859. Reproduced by the RAND Corporation. Santa Monica. California, 24–25. Rand Corporation website, accessed November 14, 2012, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/papers/2008/P1859.pdf>. Vladimir Paperny, who attended the show, recalled that he had preserved the objects from the ANEM, like many other visitors. Vladimir Paperny in a skype-conversation with the author, June 15, 2013.
- 26 Lloyd Goodrich, "What is American in American Art?," *Art in America* 46, 3 (1958): 18–33.
- 27 Lloyd Goodrich, "American Painting and Sculpture 1930–1959: The Moscow Exhibition," *College Art Journal* 18, 4 (1959): 288–301.

- 28 Lloyd Goodrich, "What is American in American Art?," *Art in America* 51, 4 (1963): 24–39. The 1958 and 1963 texts from *Art in America* are identical if not to consider the different illustrations in the articles.
- 29 This primary goal of the exhibition is clearly stated in the opening paragraphs of the Russian-language catalog and brochure. *Sovremennoe amerikanskoe iskusstvo* (brochure), 2.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 When claiming this, Goodrich removes the negative evaluation of Regionalism of Benton and Wood which the author provided in his earlier articles.
- 32 *Sovremennoe amerikanskoe iskusstvo* (brochure), 11–12. The Russian-language version of this passage from the brochure and the English version from *College Art Journal* are nearly the same, except that Goodrich, in the last sentence of the Russian text, does not claim American art to be an expression of "democratic society." He simply puts: "Etot mnozhestvennyi kharakter amerikanskogo iskusstva predstavliaet polnuiu svobodu individualizmu i eksperimentirovaniu." However, in the English version, Goodrich argues: "What with representationalism, expressionism, abstraction, and all their variations, contemporary American art is among the most diversified of any nation. . . . We have individuals and whole schools of many differing viewpoints, all having their measure of validity. This pluralistic character of American art is the appropriate expression of a *democratic society*, giving wide scope to individualism and experimentation [italics–mine]." The omission is significant because it demonstrates that the author had been proofreading the text for the Soviet audience, who would be definitely disturbed by the claim that the United States was a democracy. According to Soviet propaganda, the USSR was the "genuine" democracy. For the English version of the passage, see Lloyd Goodrich, "American Painting and Sculpture 1930–1959: The Moscow Exhibition," *College Art Journal* 18, 4 (1959): 300.
- 33 *Sovremennoe amerikanskoe iskusstvo* (brochure), 12.
- 34 Lloyd Goodrich, "What is American in American Art?," *Art in America* 46, 3 (1958): 33. Lloyd Goodrich, "What is American in American Art?," *Art in America* 51, 4 (1963): 39.
- 35 *Sovremennoe amerikanskoe iskusstvo* (brochure), 7.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Richard McLanathan, "The Art Exhibit at the American National Exhibition in Moscow 1959," 3. Downtown Gallery records, 1824–1974, bulk 1926–969. Box 98. Writings by Others: misc. undated: 1927–1968. Reel 5638. Frame 381–401. AAA. Hereafter: Report by McLanathan.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Ibid.

- 40 Beverly Payeff-Masey in conversation with the author, the Masey Archives,
February 16, 2015.
- 41 More estimates in Report by McLanathan. For more information on the art
section proceedings, see also Halpert's lecture, October 19, 1959.
- 42 Susan Reid was one of the first to discuss the limitations of the ANEM
comment books. See Reid, "Who Will Beat Whom?," 870–76.
- 43 For example, punctuation and spelling can help determining a person's
background. Such errors are normally omitted when translating the comment
books from Russian into English.
- 44 See a reprint of USIA quantified breakdown of comments on specific exhibits
in visitors' books for the ANEM issued in Reid's "Who Will Beat Whom?,"
872.
- 45 I am indebted to Alexei Fominykh for sharing the original comment books
with me. For more on the history of the original comment books, see Aleksei
Fominykh, " 'Pictures at an Exhibition:' Comment Books from the 1959
American Exhibit in Moscow, a Recovered Source (Introduction to the
Archival Publication)," *Ab Imperio* 2 (2010): 151–70. See also a selection of
original comments published in the same issue of *Ab Imperio* (p.187–217).
- 46 In this article, I examine the full four original sources: *Book One*, 118
pages, July 28–August 5; *Book Two*, 146 pages, August 6–15; *Book Three*,
178 pages, August 16–27; *Book Four*, 119 pages, August 27–September 4.
Translations of the comments quoted in this article are mine.
- 47 The location at the exit has benefits for interpretation of the reception of
American art. The books at the exit allow seeing the general reception of
art within the whole show. People leaving the ANEM could potentially
write about any section or exhibit, so their selection of focusing on one or
several topics from dozens represented at the ANEM is important. In addition
to the four books placed at the exit, other comment books were placed at
each section, including art section. However, apparently, they have not
been preserved, except several selections of comments from art section
available in Halpert's papers (Downtown Gallery records, AAA.). Goodrich
papers from AAA also include some of the pages and comments preserved.
Some of the lists are from original Russian comment books whereas others
are translations by the USIA. These papers can't be used for any statistical
conclusion. They also hardly show any trends in reception, other than the
ones found in the full four Russian books central to my research.
- 48 John R. Thomas. "Report on Service with the American National Exhibition,"
4.
- 49 It is an open question how to characterize the audience and to go beyond
a generalization "Soviet visitors." Reid's article "Who Will Beat Whom?"
demonstrates the both geographical and social diversity of the visitors.
However, no social or demographic statistics is available because not all the
comments were signed. My examination of the four original books placed

at the exit allows me to speculate that the majority of the commentators were the working class people. I conclude this from the argumentation of commentators, from the frequent grammatical errors in comments, from the language-usage, and from the vocabulary. Signed comments are rare and show that the exhibition was attended by various professionals from doctors to engineers. Only two visitors indicated in their comments that they were professional artists.

50 A special note on the figures is required. Several comments are unreadable, some comments refer to each other and, therefore, can be thought of being one or two separate comments. Therefore, there is a certain degree of inaccuracy.

51 20 comments in Book One; 35 in Book Two; 29 in Book Three; and 28 in Book Four.

52 "V komnate smekha," *Sovetskaia Kul'tura*, July 30, 1959.

53 Russian phrase meaning, "What is it?"

54 Halpert's lecture, October 19, 1959, 5.

55 Report by McLanathan, 3.

56 Ibid., 2.

57 Ibid., 6.

58 My speculations on how the sculptures of nude females violated the Soviet visitor's taste are inspired by Susan Reid's analysis of the reactions provoked by Robert Falk's nude portrait *Obnazhennaia v kresle* displayed at the infamous exhibition *30 let MOSKh* at the Manege, 1962. Susan Reid, "In the Name of the People: The Manege Affair Revisited," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian History* 6, 4 (2005): 673–716.

59 More similarly sympathetic comments can be found on the disjointed lists from the Downtown Gallery and Goodrich Collections. Intelligentsia—students, artists, and academics—would most frequently write such comments.

60 See, for example, Halpert's lecture, October 19, 1959.

61 Report by McLanathan, 1.

62 Ibid., 5.

63 Edith Halpert, "Moscow Greeting. American Art Arouses Lively Response," *The New York Times*, August 2, 1959.

64 Reid, "Who Will Beat Whom?," 900.

65 For more on the artistic impact of the exhibition, see Gretchen Simms, "The 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow and the Soviet Artistic Reaction to the Abstract Art"; Lola Kantor-Kazovsky, "Vtoroi russkii avangard, ili Vizual'naia kul'tura epokhi kholodnoi voyny," *Artgid*, April 29, 2014, accessed July 7, 2017, <http://artguide.com/posts/583-second-russian-avant-garde>.



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HOW DO WE PRODUCE KNOWLEDGE ON A COUNTRY DURING ARMED CONFLICT? THE CHALLENGES OF RESEARCHING UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXTS OF EUROMAIDAN AND RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Abstract

This paper addresses some of the challenges that Euromaidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine present to the work of researchers who study Ukraine-related issues. Firstly, I explore the considerations of "doing no harm" to the research subjects and avoiding the possible hazards to the researcher themselves. Secondly, I look at the conflict's limiting impact on scholarly writing. Thirdly, I look at potential tensions and splits within research communities that might affect the processes of collaborative production of knowledge. Based upon a series of interviews with scholars of Ukraine, this paper seeks to analyse some of the difficulties facing academics in politically sensitive situations.

Keywords: Ukraine, Euromaidan, production of knowledge, armed conflict, research ethics.

Introduction

Research in the context of large-scale social protests and armed conflicts is fraught with tensions and ethical quandaries which affect the processes of production of analytical knowledge as well as the socio-political processes beyond academia. In a tense and conflict-ridden environment within and across Ukrainian, Russian, and Western societies during the ongoing armed conflict in Donbas, researchers in Ukraine and in other countries have been faced with the need to make ethical decisions. Their complex experiences have so far received little attention, however, they represent a sensitive and potentially distressing issue that requires

a systematic analysis. My focus is on the influence that Euromaidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and the subsequent armed conflict in the East of Ukraine has had on the work of researchers into Ukraine-related topics, as the most dramatic and large-scale recent events in the post-Soviet space that have had a significant impact on politics and societies, international relations and social networks. This is a critical context for improving the understanding of research and knowledge production in politically sensitive situations.

A lot has been written about dangers and challenges in the field, particularly about those faced by anthropologists, as well as social and political scientists, and those (self-) identified as militant or activist researchers. The issues faced by scholars exploring conflict and political tensions are manifold and dependent upon the context of their work, but key questions resonate across disciplinary, geographical, and socio-political fields.

Safety and possible risks to the researcher as well as research participants are fundamental issues particularly relevant to studying politically oppressive or violent environments and during crises (Sluka 1990, Smeltzer 2012, Onuch 2014, Wood 2006). Concerns about access to and exit from the field, security risks, ethics and permissibility of data collection in crisis-affected zones are also accompanied by contemplations on researcher neutrality and applicability of the idea of "objective" research (Goodhand 2000, Helbardt *et al.* 2010). Emotional involvement, empathy and compassion are potentially destabilizing issues in such studies. The value of conflict zone research is stressed as an opportunity to not keep the knowledge about it "stuck at the pre-war level" (Goodhand 2000: 12), as well as giving voice to the affected populations and making the conflicts visible (Helbardt *et al.* 2010: 349). However, recognition of the impact of the messages the researchers are sending with their work as part of the "information economy", and their potentially empowering, but also possibly destabilising, consequences are to be approached with great care (Goodhand 2010). Self-censorship or inability to publish some of the findings, are the likely ethical issues for conflict researchers encountering controversial information (Cramer *et al.* 2011, Sluka 1990).

In addition to the challenges connected with following the imperative of "doing no harm", the risks involved in studying conflicts and protests may include ethical concerns about development of trust and rapport, "uncritical alignment", over-identification with movements, concerns of representation, and tensions of split identities (Juris and Khasnabish 2013,

Routledge 1996). Furthermore, there are particular challenges in studying movements and groups where reciprocity with the researcher is ambiguous or hardly possible (Gillan and Pickerill 2012). Overall, the idea that “in a revolutionary situation, no neutrals are allowed” (Nash 1976: 150) is a recurrent theme in studies of politically unstable situations (Cramer *et al.* 2010, Porter *et al.* 2005, Sluka 1990, Helbardt *et al.* 2010). The balance between being an insider and an outsider has been a topic of much debate in social sciences more generally (Merton 1972, Scheper-Hughes 1995), while in research on conflicts it gains a particular political relevance. But even though neutrality on the researcher’s part is generally perceived as practically unachievable, the careful reconsideration of the ideas of distance and detachment is an issue that needs to be explored in more detail in this context (Candea *et al.* 2015, Malyutina 2016).

Among the multitude of challenges connected with conducting research in (or on) conflict environments and producing knowledge, it makes sense to concentrate on a few that are most relevant to the current context. Due to length constraints, for the purpose of this paper, I outline three main themes that relate, loosely, to some of the main practices academics engage in (undertaking research, writing and publishing, discussing and presenting the results, interacting with colleagues and various audiences).¹ To be more precise, the key concerns of this study are as follows:

Firstly, it is the commonly discussed issue of harm and risk that concerns both the considerations of “doing no harm” to the research subjects and avoiding the possible hazards to the researcher themselves. This does not necessarily or only mean physical harm, as something that one might face while doing research in the actual zone of an ongoing armed conflict. It is understood here more broadly, including the potential threats that the researcher, their subjects, the social structures and institutions they are involved with or focusing on, or even the country’s political system and international relations might face in connection with their research.

Secondly, it is the idea of the potentially destabilising influence of the conflict on some of the routine elements of academic life. In this study, I concentrate on the impact on scholarly writing, both as a process and as a creation of tangible outputs which is a result of this practice.

Thirdly, I focus on the relationships among members of an academic community that may undergo certain changes and suffer from potential tensions and splits that, in turn, might affect the processes of collaborative production of knowledge.

Methods

This study is empirically based upon 15 semi-structured expert interviews with researchers that were conducted via Skype between November 2016 and January 2017. Skype was chosen because the interviewees were geographically dispersed across six different countries, and the easiest way to access them was via this increasingly popular medium for qualitative research that combines a “‘face-to-face’ experience” with the “flexibility and ‘private space’ elements offered via telephone interviews” (Hanna 2012: 241). Respondents were recruited from personal acquaintances and colleagues with elements of snowballing technique: this strategy was considered most appropriate for this study which represents the first stage of a planned more large-scale research. The interviews were conducted in Russian and English languages lasting between 40 minutes and one and a half hour each. They were then transcribed verbatim and analysed using MAXQDA software. The analysis included development of a system of codes and bringing them together in more general categories, which helped identify a number of key themes.

Before describing the sample, a few words need to be said about the methodological particularities of interviewing researchers. Expert interviews are considered to be an efficient and concentrated method of data gathering, especially fruitful in case there is a shared understanding of scientific, social and political relevance of such research, and a high level of the expert’s motivation to participate in research (Bogner *et al.* 2009). The issue of negotiating power relations in a research situation can be characteristic of expert interviews where one might need to “bargain a study” in order to secure control over relationship with a powerful (and also more knowledgeable) research subject, but also to consider the interests and vulnerabilities of both parties (Obelene 2009). This is hardly a unique problem in qualitative research more generally; however, I observed that these issues were less relevant in a situation where both the interviewer and the interviewee, as scholars, share commonalities of expertise and exposure to the same field. Wiles *et al.* (2006: 284) suggest that “studies conducted by academic or professional researchers of their peers raise specific ethical issues that are not *distinct* from those inherent in all research but which arguably place researchers in a situation where they have increased sensitivity to some ethical issues such as confidentiality”. With regard to this study, this sensitivity proved to be beneficial since it promoted mutual understanding in terms of ethical aspects of this research.

My purpose was not only to gain understanding of the various difficulties that researchers may encounter while working in the context of armed conflict, but also to approach my respondents as active and knowledgeable individual subjects who might not want to be described as anonymised “informants”. Indeed, anonymisation in different research situations may be considered patronising, limiting the emancipatory and participatory research potential, decontextualising historical events, or even be impossible to maintain if a research group is unique and well-known (Vainio 2012, van den Hoonaard 2003). Therefore, I suggested to the researchers I interviewed that they decide themselves upon the level of anonymity. Interview transcripts were sent to the interviewees who then informed me if they wanted any parts of them anonymised or not published. Only one person decided to stay completely anonymous.

While approaching my respondents, I intended to keep the sample diverse in terms of disciplinary backgrounds, research interests, and origins of the subjects. The pilot nature of this research phase, time constraints, and concerns about generalisability required the imposition of some limitations, though. For example, the representation of Russian and US scholars is low; the majority of the respondents are based in Western European countries and Ukraine.

Next stages of this research will need to concentrate on these currently underrepresented categories: for example, Russian scholars focusing on Ukraine-related issues during the ongoing armed conflict between the countries are likely to face very specific issues connected with their identity and feelings about the ways in which their positionality² impacts the perception of their work. This was the case among Russian journalists in Ukraine whom I interviewed in late 2015: being a Russian journalist in Ukraine was sometimes connected with (self-)imposed limitations on speaking up about local issues or politically sensitive discussions. These were interpreted as a result of an individual moral choice. At the same time, such a positionality was also sometimes perceived as advantageous, enabling media professionals to employ their skills and characteristics tactically to achieve better professional results. The Maidan and the subsequent events have thus influenced their work ethics and made them particularly sensitive to the ideas of responsibility and journalistic subjectivity (Malyutina, 2017). The ways in which these events could have affected Russian researchers are yet to be researched.

Overall, at the time of the interviews three of my subjects were based in Austria, one in Israel, three in the UK, five in Ukraine, two in France,

and one in the US, working in universities, research centres and think tanks. Not all of them were involved exclusively in academic activity. More than half of them don't live in their countries of origin, which include Ukraine, Russia, the UK, Germany, and Belarus. Two of the Ukrainian respondents are from Crimea and Donbas, and had to either abandon the idea of going to the annexed territory again, or leave the home city when the war started. There were eight women and seven men in the sample. Their disciplinary fields of expertise include sociology, political science, history, literature and culture, philosophy, and policy analysis. Among their research interests are topics as diverse as the far right, memory politics, gender, social movements, migration, ideologies, and cultural memory (to name just the major ones).

Finally, something has to be said about the role of my own researcher positionality in this study. As a scholar who has been working on Ukraine-related themes since the beginning of the Euromaidan (namely, on the topics of Ukrainian migrants' protest activism in London, and the challenges faced by Russian migrant journalists living in Ukraine), and has been involved in some common academic activities (conferences, publications in journal special issues), has been engaged with the Ukrainian communities in London, and has lived in Ukraine for a few months, I felt that this experience provided me enough ground for developing rapport with most of my respondents (many of whom I already knew personally). However, this does not preclude from some issues potentially arising in the future, for example, when interviewing figures who are less known to me personally, or significantly more senior scholars in terms of academic career. Nevertheless, my experience of interviewing researchers as a researcher has proved to be a largely smooth and engaging process.

Framing the Case

The first thoughts on the topic of challenges faced by researchers studying large-scale social protests and armed conflicts arose during Euromaidan itself, the annexation of Crimea, and the first months of the armed conflict in Donbas.

The idea of this research takes its most significant inspiration from a 2014 interview with Vyacheslav Likhachev published in a 2014 issue of *Ab Imperio* in a section titled "Ukraine and the Crisis of 'Russian Studies': Participant Observation of History in the Making" (Likhachev 2014). In an

interview with the historian Andrii Portnov, Likhachev, a Russian historian and political scientist who has lived in Ukraine for over a decade and moved to Israel before the Euromaidan, outlines a number of challenges that he has faced since the beginning of the protests.

Likhachev reflects upon the relationship between “involvement and objective expertise”, and the dynamics of ethical approaches to the politics of writing and expression in the changing political circumstances. He mentions personal issues and the specifics of observing the unfolding events from abroad. The researcher also observes the increasing complexity of recognising one’s positionality as more than simply an “observer” or an “expert”, but also as a “public activist” and a “popular commentator”. Particular methodological concerns that he mentions include “intellectual honesty”, “intonation of texts”, and selection of themes. Furthermore, he describes the ambiguity of the task of presenting balanced accounts between academic and public commentary. Being “unwilling to engage in propaganda” and keen on “saying the truth and only the truth”, but at the same time feeling compelled to counteract the anti-Ukrainian discourse is another important issue. Finding oneself unable to engage in activities or take up jobs that imply promoting ideas running counter one’s political beliefs has become relevant in the context of Euromaidan. The researcher also reflects on the ways in which his research could have affected his research subjects and his concerns about the (potential) risks to some of them (but also to his future career) as related to publishing his work on Ukrainian far right in the context of the political crisis. Finally, he also speaks about the possibilities to influence public opinion by engaging in activities in the information space. Constantly employing reflexivity and critically questioning one’s public position are presented by Likhachev as key imperatives of his work.

My own concerns, as an ethnographer conducting engaged research on Ukrainian migrant street protests and some other activism in London in late 2013-2014, are also connected with the idea of the need to address the complexity of researchers’ experiences in more detail; for example, by examining the role their national/ethnic origin and gender may play in the course of fieldwork (Malyutina 2014, 2016). By analysing the challenges posed by negotiating my own Russian-ness and female-ness as an engaged researcher, I reflect upon the implications of “taking sides” while studying protests, and conclude that distance may be necessary in relationships with the research subjects in order to facilitate critical reflexivity.

Other reflections on the topic that have been published or otherwise articulated by researchers so far are few and not as detailed. It has been noted that fieldwork during protests, in war-affected areas, and with vulnerable populations, has its own problems. Onuch (2014) addresses a number of practical and methodological difficulties encountered while conducting a survey at the Maidan in winter 2013-2014. Galushko and Zorba (2013) mention political risks and concerns about anonymity of expert interviews during the period of political instability. A report on a 2013-2014 study of Maidan and Antimaidan activism in different regions of Ukraine which was conducted by a group of Russian researchers notes that the Russian origin of the interviewers affected their access to the field, and caused respondents from both sides to become suspicious of the interviewers' motives (PS.Lab 2015). Sereda and Mikheieva's 2016 study on displaced persons from Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts lists, among the methodological challenges, difficulties in reaching the affected groups, dealing with respondents' post-traumatic syndrome, and sensitivity of research topics.

The impact of the war on academic communities has been one of the topics addressed by some authors. Zhuk (2014) traces and questions his positionality as framed within (and as opposed to) the Russian-focused historiographical scholarly community in the US. Portnov (2014) mentions the impossibility of viewing the conflict in a detached way because of concerns about colleagues who had to leave the war-affected areas of Donbas. Elsewhere, he argues:

The attitude to these events [the Maidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and war on part of the territories of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts'] and the language of describing these, have turned into an identification mark of political affiliation, even beyond the boundaries of Eastern Europe. Emotional and ideological tension has manifested in academic publications as well: in these, facts are often selected to fit pre-determined conclusions; information sources are often not verified; certain statements in social media are neither contextualised nor called into question; descriptions of a dynamic socio-political situation are frequently static and subject to essentialised categories of "identity"; and serious transnational and transregional comparisons remain rare. (Portnov 2016: 103).

Turkova (2016) reviews the impact of the war on professional connections between Russian and Ukrainian linguists, arguing that "scholars find it impossible to rise above the fray and engage in pure,

disinterested analysis”, which has led to mutual isolation of research communities, and has limited the opportunities for research on linguistic processes during the armed conflict.

Media interviews are another option for researchers to reflect on the challenging aspects of their work. Shukan mentions the inspirational role of the Maidan for her as a sociologist, and speaks about a feeling of uncertainty while doing fieldwork in Donetsk at early stages of the war (“Mir nikogda ne priznaet...” 2015). Mikheieva talks about the limitations imposed by the war on the perspectives of archival research in Donbas, and while discussing the difficulties of life of a displaced person from the East in Western Ukraine from a personal perspective, also notes that analytical skills of a social scientist may be protective against particular disappointments (Kovalenko 2016a, 2016b).

Overall, these and similar observations suggest that a multitude of ethical challenges arose among the researchers since the very beginning of the Euromaidan; however, there has been no systematic attempt so far to disentangle and analyse these in detail. The next sections of this paper are, by no means, able to provide a complete picture; but they present an examination of some of the common issues faced by the scholars, which were outlined in the introductory part of this work.

Avoiding Risks and Harm

The discussion of ethical challenges accompanying the research process, from the start of fieldwork to writing up and disseminating the results, feeds into the idea of developing an ethical research practice as a way of dealing with, overcoming, or mitigating the potentially harmful effects for participants of the research interaction. In this section of the article, I will concentrate on two aspects of this idea: the respondents’ reflections on avoiding potential harm brought about by their research and dissemination of its results; and their thoughts on the various risks that they themselves might face in the process.

“Do no harm”

The idea that research should aim to do no harm to the research subjects is a classic ethical imperative. This applies to conducting research with human subjects, avoiding the risks to their health and safety as well as

emotional condition, and minimising the exploitative potential of research process. Concerns of anonymity and confidentiality can be of particular importance while studying populations that are affected by unstable political situations. However, even if research does not necessarily involve actual interactions with individual subjects and social groups (for example, as an interviewer), the issues of avoiding potential damage brought about by it can still be relevant for some of my respondents.

To start with, some of the obvious challenges of conducting field research are connected with the territories of Russia-annexed Crimea, and the occupied areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. These concern physical safety of respondents, interviewers, and other members of local populations, but also difficulties of access, and, on a more abstract level, the ideas of whether it is morally permissible to do research there. Oksana Mikheieva, an historian and sociologist working at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv (herself originally from Donetsk), reflects upon the differences in perceptions of these territories:

There's this general ethical idea in Ukraine, [Ukrainian researchers] don't go to the territory of Crimea [...] because from the point of view of the Ukrainian sociological community, we came to a conclusion that we cannot provide safety to the interviewers and to the respondents. It is considered immoral to conduct research in the Crimean peninsula now. In terms of doing research in the East [of Ukraine], it is more ambiguous. [...] As far as I know, a number of big sociological agencies are conducting qualitative and quantitative studies in the occupied areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts yet. But I don't know how it will be in future [...]

I heard about problems of research at the Crimean peninsula in 2014, when among those who suffered as a result were not only interviewers and respondents, but also, for example, the owner of the cafe where the interview was conducted. [...] Definitely, we shouldn't get people into trouble, however important such research may seem now.

It is not only studies actually conducted in Crimea and East of Ukraine which can be connected to potential harm. A number of researchers I interviewed have been engaged in projects based upon interviews with social groups that can be considered vulnerable; such as displaced persons who had to leave Crimea and Donbas, (former) combatants, and female participants of the ATO (Anti-Terrorist Operation). Some people have also conducted participant observation and brief interviews at the

Maidan during the protests of 2013-2014, and immediately after that. The traditional concerns of anonymity within social sciences and protection of research subjects' identities apply to the studies conducted by my respondents; according to them: "I promise anonymity to people, and I never had any screw-ups in my whole professional career. This is like the seal of confession to me"; "These are the elementary norms of scientific research, these ethical norms must be followed."³

At the same time, standard procedures of anonymisation do not necessarily ensure that potential risks are eliminated. In other words, research results may bring public attention to social groups and practices, and be used or interpreted in a manipulative way by media, political authorities, and other organisations. According to a scholar who is at an early stage of a study on displaced persons:

As researchers, we are trying to be ethically neutral, or even support the point of view of the vulnerable people. However, from the authorities' point of view, this information about vulnerable people can often be used against them, even if it is presented in very general terms. So I think we might face some difficulties here.

Nevertheless, depending upon the researcher's chosen method and approach to their participants, anonymisation is not used universally. This particularly applies to instances when the scholar is concerned with giving voice to the research subjects and increasing their participatory potential. Thus, Ioulia Shukan, a political scientist from the University Paris-Ouest Nanterre who has been conducting ethnographic research of ordinary citizenship practices at the Maidan and after it, specifically stresses that she did not anonymise her respondents:

I had a different aim. I wanted to [give] anonymous people [...] more publicity as participants in [the Maidan]. [...] At the Maidan, I think I had a different logic. I was communicating with anonymous people, and I wanted to make them non-anonymous.

Empowerment of research participants can be an important concern for researchers whose work correlates with feminist and emancipatory approaches. Another respondent, Tamara Martsenyuk, a sociologist from Kyiv-Mohyla Academy who has been involved in a project on women's participation in ATO military operations in Ukraine (which was also partly

a lobbying project to improve women's situation in Ukrainian armed forces; see Martsenyuk *et al.* 2016), speaks about some of the challenges of maintaining research participants' anonymity, in the case of studying a particular social group:

In our study, *Invisible Battalion*, we interviewed 42 women, and we tried not to include their names [...] just the general socio-demographic information; principally because sometimes they tell us things that might cause them some problems. [...] We understand that some may be identified, for example, because there are not so many female snipers. But some of them have become more public persons, because we also had a photography project, and it's hard to fight when everything is anonymous. [...] It was a nice surprise for me when the women themselves wanted to stand for their rights as ATO participants. There was a huge resonance in the media. The [female respondents] came to the project presentation and spoke there openly.

Apart from protecting the identities of research subjects, more specific issues that researchers frequently come across in their work include dealing with potential emotional damage. In this sense, after the Maidan, many of the researchers seem to have encountered new challenges at this stage of their careers. For example, Anna Colin Lebedev, a political scientist from the University Paris-Ouest Nanterre, recalls:

When I interviewed veterans of the Afghan war, I understood that there was a trauma in their narratives. But this was an old trauma, from 20 years ago, and I didn't have a feeling that I'm evoking something that might harm them. I didn't even think about this aspect at that time, to be honest.

But now I understand, when I'm interviewing the combatants [of the Russia-Ukraine war] who have just returned [from the war], many of them are in a very difficult psychological condition. And I realise that I'm not ready, I'm not ready methodologically, I don't know what to do with them. I was never trained by a psychiatrist who could have told me how to realise when I need to stop. [...] Especially in one interview, I felt very strongly that I might be doing something that can make the person feel radically bad. Although I don't ask hard questions myself, but people sometimes just start talking about these issues.

Although researchers have already been involved in their studies for some time, it seems that still for many of them there is no clear solution on how to deal with difficult situations of talking or otherwise engaging with people who have recently experienced trauma because of the ongoing conflict. Olesya Khromeychuk, an historian from the University of East Anglia, contemplates:

I'm in the position of someone who's asking difficult questions, talking about difficult subjects, like sexual violence, and if my respondents start telling me these painful memories, how do I react to this? I keep thinking about it, and I don't have any clear solutions yet.

In terms of the wider implications of research and its connection with harm, my respondents are not only thinking of it as related to interactions with individual respondents and social groups. It is often described as part of the responsibility of the researcher, particularly in sensitive political situations like the one in Ukraine, to help minimise risks for the society. As argued by Mikhail Minakov, a political philosopher from Kyiv-Mohyla Academy:

Philosophy is an applied discipline, not a theoretical one. [...] its mission is to be therapeutic via critique of ideology. That's what I've been trying to do since 2014 [...] The responsibility of social and political philosophers, sociologists, political scientists increases, in order to produce new ideas for solving conflicts, and to reduce harm.

In this respect, the researcher's task is described as not just exploration and abstract theorizing, but also as something that has a practical value. Vyacheslav Likhachev, an historian and a political scientist, an expert on the far right who worked at the National Minority Rights Monitoring Group and lived in Jerusalem at the time of the interview, stresses:

Of course, there is an ethos of "doing no harm". [...] However, this work has always had a practical meaning. It has never been abstract and speculative, it was for informing society, so that society could make conclusions about movements, political leaders. It was for working with the state authorities in order to monitor xenophobia and hate crimes. [...] I'm exploring something because I'm interested in it for some reason, but I'm also producing something for external purposes, following a particular

purpose – to do something for society, to change something for the better, and of course, to do no harm to anyone.

The topic of the far right in Ukraine has become extremely politicised after the Maidan and frequently exploited by the Russian propagandistic media as well as some Western commentators; this has been underlined by the specialists on this topic whom I interviewed. This has led, on the one hand, to the rapid increase in demand for their expertise as researchers and often as political commentators. On the other hand, the recognition of the importance of careful and qualified expertise on the topic has contributed to some decisions that may be interpreted as attempts to use this expertise in order to counteract manipulation of information, oppose misinterpretations of the role of the far right in the Ukrainian revolution, and thus help minimise the damage to the image of Ukraine (including both the potential future image of it as a democratic country, and the image of the revolution as liberal and pro-European). Anton Shekhovtsov, a political scientist from the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, notes:

Just as I feared, the far right participation in the Maidan has been used by propaganda from different sides to discredit these protests. [...] It didn't make me stop researching the far right. But I started to approach this topic more carefully, meaning that if this theme becomes a weapon of some political forces that are using it just to harm Ukraine, for instance, I would refuse to give interviews to Russian TV channels, or channels that I knew would manipulate my words.

The idea that information, if used unprofessionally or in a manipulative way, may inflict harm upon respondents, colleagues, vulnerable social groups, and even wider society, underscores the concerns of researchers, especially those who regularly engage in public commentary. Andreas Umland, a German political scientist and historian who works at the Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation in Kyiv, argues:

Generally, truth liberates, it has to come out. I see it as a key task of an academic researcher, a journalist, and a good citizen in general, that if you have some truthful information, it should be disseminated, if it is valuable. [...] But there are exceptions to this, not all information should always be shared with everyone. Because it might end up in the hands of those who are less constrained in terms of morality and ethics.

Umland also mentions another topic that is related to concerns about harm and risks, and that, according to him, has emerged as important after the Maidan – namely, particular attention paid to potential risks to colleagues:

For example, if someone goes to the war zone, then you need to keep this information to yourself, to prevent it from getting to the media. Because if someone comes to Ukraine, or goes to Russia, not to mention Donbas, there is a concern: if I announce on Facebook that my colleague went somewhere, some unsavoury people may meet them there.

Thus, the idea of research as potentially connected with (reducing) harm also includes a focus on another social group that may be affected by studying socially and politically relevant issues in the context of the armed conflict: the researchers themselves.

Risks to the researcher

There has been no direct threat of imminent physical violence to most of the researchers of the recent situation in Ukraine, although some of them have been faced with actual threats and speak about some fear for themselves and their families. However, on a broader scale, certain aspects of the ongoing conflict have affected most of the scholars not only in terms of concerns about wellbeing, but also in terms of emotional impact, and risks to professional image and career. My respondents speak about the intensification of some potential risks that have already been present in their work before the Maidan, but they also admit that the situation has brought about some new difficulties.

To start with, risks certainly depend upon the researcher's field of expertise and methods. For example, researchers specialising in the far right speak about their work as traditionally connected with some threats coming from the object of their studies. Likhachev says:

In this sense, nothing has really changed in the context of the Maidan and the war, apart from the intensity of polemics and the volume of public attention drawn to this topic and to the people who study it. Briefly, probably, there is a certain danger, and probably everyone recognises it, at least I do. [...] This is not something that influences what you say or write. [...] These risks have not changed, in essence. They have intensified, yes.

On the other hand, for example, Uilleam Blacker who specialises on literature and culture and works at University College London, notes that his research is much less likely to be connected with risks apart from emotional ones:

I don't know how relevant it is to me, to be honest, because I'm not [...] interviewing people, I'm not doing that kind of stuff. I don't feel any particular risks to myself. [...] I think I'm not controversial enough. [...] Maybe if I was researching fascists or whatever, it would be more risky, but I'm not. Stick to literature, it's a lot safer.

When threats are coming from particular groups, researchers take into consideration the audiences that are reacting to their publications, blog and social media posts, media appearances and talks. Khromeychuk notes:

This is not a safety issue, but when I started writing about gender and war, gender and memory politics I began to receive not only academic critique, but also attacks of personal nature [on social media].

As well, when considering risks, the location of the researcher is taken into account. Three of the researchers who are based in Ukraine explicitly talk about potentially threatening reactions from the public, authorities, and/or activist groups to their work, suggesting that (temporarily) leaving the country, or working in the West is a safer option to produce critical analysis.

A specific and essentially novel set of risks that many have encountered in their professional activity after the Maidan and the annexation of Crimea are connected with Russia. These range from the perceptions of risks related to travel to the country and conducting research there, to "concerns about spoiling relationships with Russia and Russian colleagues". The majority of my respondents (but not all of them) speak about making decisions not to go to Russia for conferences, fieldwork, archival research, or media interviews. These decisions are less frequently explained by physical safety concerns. Often, the motives are described in more psychological terms of feelings of uncertainty and discomfort, increasing difficulties in communicating with research institutions and local scholars, community gatekeepers and potential research subjects.

In general, respondents note that risks that are more related to safety issues and are in this sense more tangible, or quantifiable, can often be

circumvented or minimised. On the other hand, emotional risks are much more difficult to predict and avoid. For example, Khromeychuk wonders:

How do I support myself, having heard all of these things [about women's experiences in the army]? Sometimes they are sharing very difficult experiences with me, and I need to process all this information somehow.

Personal relationships also trigger emotional engagement. There are situations when a researcher's respondents become their friends; or when the armed conflict is also seen through the experiences of someone who has been personally affected by it, or is fighting in the East. But emotional involvement is not just connected with discomfiting consequences of feelings of stress, disappointment, compassion, or anger. It is also described as inevitably influencing the process and the results of the researcher's work. Respondents speak about inability to act as impartial observers and produce a Weberian version of "value-free" research (Christians 2005). Tatiana Zhurzhenko, a political scientist from the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, claims:

[The Maidan and the subsequent events] have tied me to [Ukraine] in a completely new way, and deprived me of the opportunity to stay detached. I've been wallowing in these feelings for a long time, and still am. Because I understand that I will never be able to return to a position of a neutral observer which used to be so comfortable.

Emotional impact of traumatic events in Ukraine and attempts to reconsider the ideas of researcher's distance and involvement can affect the scholar's attitude to their own role as a producer of knowledge in a format of tangible outputs such as publications. Particularly interesting in this respect are the often self-imposed limitations on writing.

(Not) writing

To begin with, the increased political relevance of Ukraine-related topics during and after the Maidan has, according to most of my respondents, contributed to the growth in demand for their expertise; in particular, in terms of increasing their visibility to the non-academic audiences. Topics that previously were of interest to narrow groups of

scholars have gained public attention; issues that used to be discussed to a large extent locally, started to attract wider audiences in the West. Researchers from a number of countries speak about a gap in specialised expert knowledge on Ukraine that was most prominent at the start of the events, and that could not be filled by older generations of sovietologists, Russia experts, or those focusing on geopolitical issues.

However, another trend that seems to have corresponded to the dramatic developments in Ukraine since the Maidan, is reflected in certain challenges to producing outputs in the form of academic writing, policy or other expert commentary. The implications of a particular increased reflexivity regarding one's writing vary in the narratives of my respondents: from a writer's block induced by emotional impact of the traumatic events, to doubts in one's ability and preparedness to write about certain themes, and to ethical dilemmas about the representation of particular groups.

Among my respondents, there are people who at some point consciously decided not to write on particular topics, or take extra care so that their words would not get manipulated by propagandistic media. Such was the situation amongst the researchers of the far right, as I mentioned earlier in this paper. For example, Likhachev recalls:

I had a moment in January-February 2014, approximately after the first death on Hrushevskoho Street, and for about a month afterwards until the victory of the revolution, when I made a decision not to write or say anything about the far right. [...] I was thinking with some trepidation that if the Maidan lost, my characters [the far right] would become political prisoners, or become wanted by the authorities, or just die, and then I would impose on myself a self-declared ban from profession. [...] I understood that I wouldn't be able to do that, that I'm closing this theme for myself. That was a month of a certain self-censorship. Although I was very actively asked to write, and was offered money as well.

However, a number of researchers also speak about feeling unable to write because of the emotional impact of the dramatic events in Ukraine that were rapidly unfolding, often created uncertainty, and on the one hand generated a lot of relevant material for potential research and writing, but on the other hand, made the process of writing difficult. Again, Likhachev says that since the start of the Maidan, he was thinking of writing a book; the war has fuelled this idea. At the same time:

During the period of the most intense combat actions, until spring 2015, I simply couldn't write. I couldn't, and I was unable to write about war, because you're worrying about those held captive, you're following it very closely [...] it concerns people you know personally, and it just shuts you down. [...] I started writing in summer 2015, but I've never ever written any text so painfully and for such a long time. I've been in a kind of stupor [...] This emotional involvement really prevents you from writing. It's not that it creates obstacles, like it's difficult to say something; you're just unable to say anything.

It seems that this kind of destabilising influence of the conflict has not only affected the processes of writing about the war; for instance, Portnov says that the Maidan has significantly postponed his plan to write a book about Dnipro(petrovsk):

I wasn't writing the book [that I previously planned to publish in 2013], I was going to some events, giving some talks. From the point of view of academic writing, it was a lost time. [...] I only made myself write something [after summer-autumn 2014], but the news from Ukraine was still terribly distracting.

Increased reflexivity about the impact and limitations of one's writing often means thinking about the implications of positioning of the self in relation to the conflict, and, consequently, of producing some knowledge as a result of a view from a particular position. In this respect, a researcher is never just a researcher: they are of particular national origin, located in, and observing the developments from a particular country, involved in particular social groups. Distance – either temporal, or geographical, or in terms of personal and emotional engagement – matters significantly for many of my respondents when they reflect on their ability to write. For example, Colin Lebedev notes:

I understand that I'm unable to write a high-quality piece of sociological work, because there's very little distance. Not only temporal distance, but also distance from my respondents. I realise that I need to collect data, be attentive to the interview context, for example, methodology and its side effects, and that the time of a substantial work has not come yet. This is a matter of involvement and distance.

A number of researchers based in Western institutions question their ability to write about, as well as to represent, the events taking place in Ukraine. Khromeychuk speaks about this feeling as a new challenge that has not been felt in her work before the Maidan as strongly as now:

How can I speak about the Maidan if I wasn't there? I only came after it finished, in April. [...] I sometimes feel uncomfortable criticising what's going on in relation to the war, because I don't even live in the country. Previously I was not worried that not living in Ukraine and only coming for research purposes would have an impact on my academic work. [...] Now, I'm concerned that I'm producing some analysis but I don't know it from inside, I don't live there, I've never been to the war zone.

The idea that the Maidan and the war in the East have served as an impediment to writing has been mentioned by a number of respondents as a substantially new, previously inexperienced challenge in their research careers. Indeed, the developments in Ukraine seem to have caught many of the scholars off guard, at least for a while. Moreover, they also made some of them question their role as experts, and reconsider the value of the discourses they may produce. Zhurzhenko reflects:

There was this feeling of a limitation to this role of an expert or an intellectual [...] who is engaged in research and seems to possess some information based on this research, or some particular vision that differs from a vision of an ordinary person. This turned out to be an illusion, because experts, like ordinary people, were not ready for the reality that went totally beyond any expectations or scenarios. [...] That Crimea would be annexed in such a quick and impudent fashion, no one could imagine. When for the first time in 20 years there is a demand on you as an expert [...] you realise that you're not an expert and cannot be such. [...] On the day of the shooting on Institutska Street, I understood that we're also responsible for this blood, not only politicians are, but also people who were creating some discourses, those who wrote that there are two Ukraines and they will never make a whole one. [...] I had a feeling that we all need to fall silent, and ask where our responsibility lies in the horror that is going on. [...] I've been thinking for a long time after that whether I would be able to continue academic research and write anything, because the real value of our words has been revealed.

This narrative also connects the thoughts on the role of the scholar during an armed conflict with another feature of an academic context:

knowledge production is never an individual endeavour, but the effect of the political crisis on a scholarly community may be particularly traumatising and unpredictable.

Research Community

The conflict has, indeed, had a strong impact on the relationships within the field of Ukrainian Studies (and with those beyond it). Both localised and transnational connections have been affected. Politics has seeped into research communities, universities, and conferences. Increasingly militant language has been used to describe the impact of the conflict on academic relationships. On the other hand, ideas of reconciliation and reformatting of problematic relationships amongst researchers seem to be discussed by an increasing number of researchers.

Zhurzhenko argues that the protests, the revolution and the conflict have led to a noticeable fragmentation of the field, where previous contacts and groupings have disappeared, but new coalitions based upon research interests as well as political views have emerged at the same time: “this is not just one frontline”, she stresses. Conflicts and disagreements with those who were previously considered as colleagues or fellow researchers are mentioned by the majority of my respondents. Strikingly often, these are described using a particularly militant language that utilises metaphors like Zhurzhenko’s “frontline”. Shekhovtsov, for one, says:

Many people have quarrelled. When the Yanukovych regime really started to suppress the protesters, it was a watershed moment. I thought that after that people who focus on Ukraine in their research and have lived in Ukraine cannot stay neutral. It does not matter if they were a researcher or an observer. This is a moment when you need to state clearly, if you are for or against something. There’s a need to establish a kind of barricade and to understand who is on which side.

Similarly, Likhachev speaks about the disappearance of a research community where “colleagues stop being colleagues”:

[...] because they are either on one side of the frontline, or on the other.
[...] When colleagues become either companions in arms, or the enemy’s associates, it is the end of a research community.

The “enemy” metaphor is also used by a number of other respondents; “participation in the information war”, “information battlefield”, “battles”, “traitor” are among the others. Even those who do not speak about actually severing ties with other scholars, describe the polarisation within the academic space, where ideological divisions become increasingly prominent, and discourse turns more radical. Ukrainian Studies as a field is criticised by many of my respondents for the increase of such polarised discourse, and intensification of “patriotic” tone: it has “become pro-Ukrainian”, argues Colin Lebedev. Khromeychuk speaks about reluctance to participate in some discussions:

Sometimes I just don’t want to participate in discussions, because it’s impossible, everything is so heated. [...] There’s this dichotomous perception, *zrada-peremoha* [“betrayal-victory”, a Ukrainian meme reflecting the polarisation of public discourse]. If you’re not promoting *peremoha*, you must be part of *zrada*. My research has never fitted into this dichotomy.

In terms of practical implications of splits in the research communities, people talk about “inability” to share common physical space with some (former) colleagues, such as attending the same events together, saying something like: “we could stand next to each other and diligently try not to notice each other”. Colin Lebedev talks about appearance of “non-handsheakable colleagues”: “these are the people who would not get invited to a research seminar, while everyone else would. [...] They have become marginalised”. While conference discussions seem to have become increasingly tense and the space for calm, constructive discussion on politically sensitive topics has narrowed, according to the researchers, quarrels and arguments usually take place in the online social space rather than during personal encounters. Unfriending or banning someone on Facebook is a practice that most of the respondents recall having resorted to.

Relationships of Ukraine- and Western Europe-based scholars with Russian researchers deserve a particular mention: when asked about the impact of the conflict on research relationships, respondents frequently start talking about Russian (ex-)colleagues without being specifically prompted. Stories about actual break-ups and impossibility of further collaboration feature most prominently in the narratives of those whose research concerns contemporary politics. Some seem to question the very

possibility of discussion between Ukrainians and Russians, arguing that the language for dialogue is yet to be elaborated. Concerns have been expressed about the potentially destructive impact of the war on links with Russian academia as such, and the consequent decline in the level of expertise on Russia.

Notably, this does not in all cases mean that the relationships with Russia-based scholars have been affected more or less than those with others (a number of people have not even had serious developed contacts with Russian researchers). Rather, it is telling that for at least half of my respondents, the topic of tensions and divisions in academia that are associated with the Maidan, the annexation of Crimea, and the war, immediately invokes reflections on relationships with Russian colleagues.

The impact of ideological divisions amongst academics can be quite distressing and hampers the processes of collaborative knowledge production and maintenance of cross-border academic connections. However, while respondents speak more about tensions than cooperation, the situation is not described only in negative terms. There are frequent mentions of being “lucky” or “in a fortunate situation” not to lose some of the contacts, or of being pleasantly surprised at Russian colleagues “who have not supported *Krymnash* [‘Crimea is ours’, Russian meme]”. People talk about new and ongoing collaborative research. Where ideological divisions have not emerged amongst scholars, but instead solidarity, this has provided ground for working together. Furthermore, there are also the narratives of the scholars with feminist or left-wing views who present these as a basis for transnational anti-war and anti-oppression solidarity. Finally, there is some rational/moderately optimistic reflection on the future of academic collaboration. Mikheieva says:

All wars end. We are two neighbouring countries, and we will have to develop a dialogue. Completely severed ties would not work to our benefit in the future. We will have to communicate at some point. Obviously, it will be on a different level, from a different point of view, but we have to communicate.

Conclusion

Academic activity encompasses a large variety of practices. In this paper, I sought to explore how large-scale protests and an ongoing armed

conflict have influenced some of these practices of researchers whose work is connected with the affected region. I particularly concentrated on some aspects of conducting research, writing, and communications within a research community (however loosely defined).

Overall, this paper is an attempt to understand and possibly distinguish between the variety of challenges of knowledge production. By no means does it provide a complete account of all the challenges that the researchers of Ukraine-related issues have encountered in the wake of the Euromaidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and military intervention in the Donbas. However, in this brief overview I look at some of the common concerns connected with the usual activities of the scholars in these unusual circumstances.

Has this conflict brought new challenges to the scholars? It certainly has, even though the people I interviewed are already mature researchers, some of them quite established and recognised in their respective fields of expertise, and have had experience studying controversial topics and dealing with vulnerable populations.

Often, it made them particularly sensitive to the issues of "doing no harm" by their work, or think about the possible ways in which their activities can benefit the democratic development and international relations of Ukraine. Previous research experience has reportedly equipped some of them with relevant skills for dealing with vulnerable populations. The increased political relevance of Ukraine-related topics and attention of wider non-academic audiences drawn to their work has made the players more acutely aware of the political significance attached to their words, and, therefore, the sensitivity about the potential impact of academics going beyond academia on public opinion and international diplomacy.

The more a researcher tries to go beyond the "ivory tower" of academic work and engage with wider audiences, the more likely they are to get exposed to various risks. Increased public exposure meant that scholars started to take extra care that the ways in which their comments may be perceived do not put them at risk, from online attacks to actual threats. While risks also depend on the discipline and the political sensitivity of researched topics, emotional engagement, for one, has become particularly important. Another novel kind of impact of the conflict on researchers' lives and work has been reflected in the emergence of self-imposed limitations on writing, questioning one's ability to represent social groups, feeling unprepared to write about the situation which is still developing, and struggling with emotions triggered by the political situation.

The tensions have seriously impacted the relationships among fellow researchers. Polarisation of the academic discourse and research communities is the key novelty here. Increased politicisation of topics like memory politics, the far right, or Russian language in Ukraine has occasionally limited some of the scholars' participation in discussions on the topics. Relationships with Russian scholars and Russian academic institutions seem to have been affected to a large extent, predominantly negatively.

Overall, it seems that the developments in Ukraine since 2014 have had a somewhat paradoxical impact on the production of knowledge on Ukraine-related topics, in Ukraine and Western Europe. On occasions, they have facilitated or stimulated the production of knowledge by the researchers. For example, there has been an increase in public attention to the previously marginal issues that were formerly only interesting to a narrow group of specialists but have rapidly gained political relevance. New research topics meant appearance of new publications, new academic connections, and sometimes new research funding.

At the same time, the events in Ukraine also frequently limited the researchers in their professional activities. Various factors have contributed to some issues not being raised, not discussed in detail, or not criticised by my respondents in their non-academic publications and talks, and, albeit perhaps less frequently, also in academic ones. These range from concerns about safety and wellbeing of those potentially affected by the research to worries about the scholar themselves; from conscious self-censorship and disappointment with the media's manipulative approach to the words of academic commentators to inability to write because of emotional impact of the conflict; and from increasingly complicated relationships with some colleagues to complete severing of some academic contacts.

The work of researchers in the context of an armed conflict, as the current situation in Ukraine suggests, is an increasingly multifaceted endeavour that involves interaction with various audiences and certainly goes beyond the old adage described by one of the respondents as "writing these articles, who reads them anyway? Five people, an editor, a couple of readers, and the author?" This paper has suggested that one of the possible directions for further research is the role of academics beyond academia during the war. Another topic for further exploration is connected with researcher positionality which implies that concerns are manifested in different ways for different researchers. Indeed, would a Ukrainian scholar not be affected by the protests and the conflict in a different way

to a British one, or to a Russian one? How are the challenges different for female researchers as compared to their male colleagues? Can experiences of a literature scholar be compared to those of a political scientist? How would scholars with different political positions perceive events and react to them, and what kinds of splits in the research community may be caused by this? What can be the common issues faced by a feminist advocate of public sociology, and an expert on the far right who has more conservative leanings? It is crucial to consider the various positionalities that are implicated in the processes of studying contentious issues, and to tease out the more specific and more general concerns. These and other themes indicate potential directions for further research that stem from this overview of the challenges faced by academics working against the backdrop of an armed conflict.

NOTES

- ¹ I chose to avoid discussing the practices of teaching and interacting with students in this paper, since not all of my respondents are involved in these. However, these issues were mentioned by some of them, and will be considered in further research.
- ² I approach positionality as a realization of one's particular social location as a relational position and its implications for the resulting knowledge: 'standing on shifting ground makes it clear that every view is a view from somewhere and every act of speaking a speaking from somewhere' (Abu-Lughod 1991: 141).
- ³ The scope of this paper does not allow for more detailed discussion of the institutional approach to research ethics. Some of the respondents were faced with the need to obtain ethical approval from their universities (the UK ones, for example), but not all of them are required to do so. These procedures have been usually described as routine paperwork, rather than connected with actual ethical concerns.

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CONSTRUCTION OF FEMALE AUTHORITY IN THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE AND MEDIEVAL GEORGIA: COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO THE REPRESENTATION OF QUEEN TAMAR (R.1184 –1213) AND BYZANTINE IMPERIAL WOMEN

Abstract

This article concerns the construction of female authority and female power in the Byzantine Empire and Medieval Georgia. In comparative framework, I analyze various communicative mediums by means of which the image and authority of female rulers were constructed and communicated to the audience in Byzantium and Medieval Georgia. After discussing the evolution of female rulership in the Byzantium from eight up to the end of the eleventh century, I move to explore the ideology of queenship in medieval Georgia under Tamar. I try to argue that idealized image of Tamar was constructed as a result of successful court propaganda which utilized to a large extent adopted and adapted Byzantine imperial ideal and rhetorical traditions.

Keywords: Byzantium, Medieval Georgia, imperial ideology, court rhetoric, female power, queenship

The high middle ages witnessed growing number of women who became socially more active, exercised power and participated directly and indirectly in the governance of the states. This change occurred not only in Medieval Western Europe and the Byzantine Empire, but in the distant periphery of the Eastern Christendom, namely in Medieval Georgia.¹ While one can recall a number of influential women in high Medieval West and Byzantium, only one woman stands out in case of Medieval Georgia. This woman is queen Tamar, or we may refer to her

as king Tamar, because this is the way she was known and is known in Georgia. In contrast to high medieval western and Byzantine women, Tamar is believed to rule in her rights and exercise power during her entire reign. Furthermore, queen Tamar is considered as one of the most successful Georgian rulers and architect of Georgian Golden Age. During her reign, Medieval Georgia reached the apex of its military and political power. Soon after her death, Tamar was canonized, and throughout centuries her name was held in high esteem. Consequently, queen Tamar is one of the most celebrated and eulogized Georgian ruler. But how come that female Tamar became so dominant and subject of veneration in masculine and patriarchal society?

This article concerns the construction of female authority and female power in Medieval Georgia and the Byzantine Empire. I decided to take a comparative approach for the following reason. For centuries, Byzantine Empire dominated Eastern Mediterranean and the Caucasus, and consequently, Byzantium had powerful impetus on neighboring people and polities.² Territory of Georgia for a long time was under the political and cultural domination of the Byzantium. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that Byzantine political culture inspired ruling elite of Medieval Georgia. Holistic approach and contextualization of Georgian ideology of rulership may reveal similarities as well as differences between Byzantine and Georgian paradigms of power representation. In this article, I try to argue and demonstrate that Byzantine imperial idea played an important role in the construction of queen Tamar's authority.

The article consists of three parts and proceeds in the following order. Firstly, I will briefly summarize the dynamics of Byzantine-Georgian relations to provide the reader with historical context. Secondly, I discuss the evolution of female rulership in Byzantium and Byzantine visions on female power. In this part, I scrutinize visual and literary representation of Byzantine empresses from the eight up to the second half of the twelfth century. Thirdly, I study female power in Medieval Georgia under queen Tamar. I examine various strategies by means of which female ruler's authority was constructed and negotiated in Georgia. This part will be based on analyzes of Georgian literary texts as well as non-narrative sources. But to maintain comparative context, I will frequently bring in Byzantine examples.

Dynamics of Byzantine-Georgian Relations

Throughout early medieval up to the end of the eleventh century, the western part of Caucasus and significant part of contemporary Georgia was the distant periphery of the Byzantine empire. Byzantine/Eastern Roman emperors claimed the entire Caucasus as their sphere of influence and claimed supreme authority over local rulers. From the Byzantine perspective, local kings and princes were unequal Christian allies of the empire and subordinates of the Byzantine emperors. During the long-term Byzantine-Arab confrontation, the empire lost temporarily grip over strategically important Caucasus. But, the imperial court was trying to re-established its supremacy in the region by securing loyalty and support of local Christian rulers.

By the end of the eighth century the Caucasus became a battlefield between various players; one the one hand, tension intensified between Christian political elite and Arab officials, and on the other hand local Arab officials' aspiration for power erupted into open conflict with central power in Bagdad. Frequent intrusions of Arab punitive armies, which sometimes targeted Christen princes but more often recalcitrant local Arab officials, destabilized the entire region. It is against this background that we should discuss strengthening of Christian identity among local elite. In the destabilized environment, local princely houses, as well as secular and ecclesiastical elite, felt more compelled to embrace their Christian identity. Medieval Georgian literary narratives heavily emphasized clear-cut boundaries between Christian self and Muslim otherness. Furthermore, because of Arab domination, Caucasian rulers started perceiving Byzantine emperor as only authority who could challenge Muslim domination. Destabilization of the eastern Caucasus forced eastern Georgian/Iberian secular and ecclesiastical elite as well as ordinary people to migrate towards southern-western regions of Tao-Klarjeti. By the end of the eighth-century regions of Tao and Klarjeti were distant from Arab power base and seemed relatively safe from incursions. Located at the proximity of the Byzantine empire, Tao-Klarjeti became safe-haven for eastern Georgian emigres. The fact that region bordered Byzantine empire gave hope to migrated populous that they would be better protected.

By the beginning of the ninth century emergence of new political center in Tao-Klarjeti did not go without Byzantine involvement. Local aristocratic family of Bagratids rose in prominence and consolidated power in Tao-Klarjeti with the help of Byzantine emperors' military and political/

ideological support. In subsequent centuries Bagratid rulers became subordinated allies of Byzantine emperors and expressed their power by means of Byzantine imperial language. Affiliation with Byzantium and authoritative Byzantine emperor earned prestige to Bagratid family in the Caucasus. At the end of the tenth century, Bagratid family started executing strategic plan aiming at unifying all Georgian speaking lands under their domination.

From the tenth up to the beginning of the thirteenth century maturation of Georgian kingship ideology was linked to gradual employment of the Byzantine literary and visual concepts of power representation. Large-scale appropriation of Byzantine imperial language for the promotion of Georgian ruler's image took place during the reign of Davit IV (r. 1089–1125). Davit IV was the first Bagratid king to appropriate full extent Byzantine imperial language to model himself equal to Byzantine emperor and openly challenge emperor's authority in the Caucasus. However, it was only during the reign of female Tamar that exploitation of Byzantine paradigms of power reached an ultimate point in Medieval Georgia.

Evolution of the Female Power and Authority in the Byzantine Empire

According to Byzantine conventional belief, women were not supposed to rule and exercise power. Instead, they were expected to be good mothers, exceptional wives and practice piety and devotion to the family. Byzantine norms valorized women's seclusion and reticent. John Chrysostom (c. 349–407) was one of the vehement spokesmen against the women. Chrysostom represented women as cruel, uncertain and of contemptible nature.³ In contrast to the established believes, however, long history of Byzantine Empire remembers number of the influential empresses/imperial women who actively participated in the governance of the empire and exercised power. These Byzantine women usually had access to power through their male partners, or as regents of young emperors, but rarely they ruled in their own rights and as sole rulers.

When discussing powerful and ambitious Byzantine women one cannot avoid mentioning empress Irene (780–802). Eirene was not a member of ruling Isaurian imperial dynasty (717–802) and could claim legitimacy only as the wife of emperor Leo IV (r.775–780) and mother of emperor Constantine VI (r. 780–797). After her husband, Leo IV's death

(780) Irene started exercising power as regent and participated in the governance of the empire. Furthermore, Irene succeeded in usurping the imperial throne from her son emperor Constantine VI whom she had ordered to blind. After she disqualified the only male heir to the imperial throne, Irene asserted power and ruled the empire as sole ruler for five years (797-802).⁴ To emphasize her new position Irene minted golden coin in this way becoming the first Byzantine woman to issue coin in her capacity as sole ruler. Both sides of empress Irene's gold *nomisma* depicts her portraits in full power.⁵ She is dressed in emperor's consular dress and holds imperial regalia: scepter and *globus cruciger*. *Globus cruciger* was important imperial regalia which symbolized Byzantine emperor's earthly domination.⁶ The legend on both sides of Irene's golden coin celebrates her as *eirene basilissa* (i.e., Empress Irene). It is important to bear in mind that in the Byzantine empire coinage often mirrored existed political reality, and coinage was one of the mediums that communicated rulers image to the audience. While golden coin celebrated Irene with the female imperial title of *basilissa* (empress), the contrary case is demonstrated in her imperial charters (chrysobuls). In imperial charters, Irene adopted the male title of *basileus* (emperor) to communicate her power and authority to high echelons of Byzantine society. In the long history of Byzantine state, empress Irene is considered to be the only female ruler to adopt the title of *basileus* (emperor). However, Irene refrained herself from using male imperial title extensively and choose words carefully when addressing a wide audience.

During her sole reign empress Irene faced multiple challenges: coup attempts and rebellions. However, for five years Irene successfully handled the matters; she managed to keep her foes divided and to forge a network of alliances with reliable social groups. Irene surrounded herself with powerful eunuchs. Empress was perfectly aware that eunuchs could never aspire for the imperial throne because of their physical deficiency. Furthermore, eunuchs for their benefits would be interested in keeping Irene's powerful position intact. However, patriarchal and male-centered Byzantine society did not tolerate sole rule of a woman for a long time. In 802 Irene was deposed and banished to the Lesbos island.⁷

Throughout centuries Byzantine world kept ambivalent attitude towards empress Irene's personality. On the one hand she was remembered as a mother who blinded her own son Constantine, and on the other hand, she was revered because of her central role in the convocation of the seventh ecumenical council in 787. The church council of 787 ended the first

period of iconoclasm and reiterated veneration of Icons. Without doubt Irene's sole reign and ambition to rule in her own rights set a precedent in Byzantine empire. Her example paved the way for subsequent generations of Byzantine women to be more engaged in the governance of the empire.

Empress Theodora (842–855) is another example of the ambitious Byzantine woman who attempted to keep a grip on power.⁸ After the death of her husband emperor Theophilos I (r.813–842), Theodora acted as regent to her son Michael III, the legitimate heir to the imperial throne. Like Irene, Theodora tried to marginalize her son Michael and govern empire in her own rights. Coinage of Theodora from the period of her regency demonstrates well her political ambitions. On the obverse of golden coin image of empress Theodora comes to the fore. She is garbed in imperial dress and wears a crown. In the right hand, she holds *globus cruciger* and in the left one *labarum*. The circular inscription above her image hails her as *Theodora basilisa* (i.e., Empress Theodora). It is noteworthy that Theodora's portrait is depicted on the obverse of the coin, whereas the legitimate heir to the imperial throne Michael III's appears with his sister Tecla on the reverse. In accordance with Byzantine numismatic traditions, a senior ruler was depicted on the obverse of the coin. Besides, on the coin, only Theodora is referred with imperial title.

In 843 Theodora—most probably emulating empress Irene—initiated convocation of the ecumenical council which ended the second phase of Iconoclasm. Because of her crucial role in the final restoration of icons and triumph of orthodoxy, empress Theodora was canonized. She is still venerated as the saint in the Orthodox world. Theodora, like empress Irene, did not hide her will to rule the empire and communicated her image as powerful woman widely. However, Theodora's ambitions to govern in her own right was challenged. In 856 She was removed from power and exiled to the monastery.⁹ The negative attitude to the sole rule of Theodora was articulated in the comprehensive account of eleventh-century historian Ioannes Skylitzes. In his *synopsis historion*, Skylitzes downgraded Theodora's contribution to the council of 843. Moreover, Skylitzes represents banishment of Theodora from the imperial palace (ca. 856) as a return to the natural, masculine order.¹⁰

From the eleventh century, Byzantine imperial women started to enjoy more political power which was caused by the changed attitude towards women.¹¹ As it has been pointed out, for the most of the eleventh century Byzantine imperial women could express their attitude freely over marriages, and they could be master over their future. Imperial women

in the eleventh century could voluntarily agree on political marriages, believing that it was beneficial for the family interests.¹² New ideology coined in the eleventh century Byzantine empire conferred power and promoted visibility of women.¹³

Promotion of imperial women's image as shareholders of imperial power is associated with emperor Constantine VIII (r. 1025–1028). Before his death, Constantine arranged a marriage between his daughter Zoe and Romanos Argyros. Romanos was legitimized as new emperor through his marriage to Zoe. Even though Zoe was the member of Macedonian imperial dynasty, her husband Romanos marginalized her and limited her access to power. After several years of isolation, Zoe with the help of her lover Michal organized coup d'état and murder Romanos. Zoe married Michael and legitimized him as a new emperor. However, Michael IV followed in footsteps his predecessor and marginalized Zoe. During her lifetime, Zoe the Macedonian married and legitimized four Byzantine emperors, and she never ceased attempts to dominate them and become *de facto* ruler of the empire.¹⁴

Empress Zoe chose a certain strategy to overcome seclusion and increase her public authority. She became an active philanthropist, distributing money and alms in the imperial capital. In Byzantium philanthropy was social act often performed publicly to help person to earn good reputation and prestige. Michael Psellos, one of the eminent Byzantine intellectual and men of letters, admits that Zoe was spending a lot of money on charity and philanthropic activities. Through philanthropic activities, empress Zoe enhanced her legitimacy as a member of the Macedonian dynasty and secured the loyalty of populace of the imperial capital. In 1042 when emperor Michal V exiled Zoe from Constantinople, city population rose in her defense and stormed imperial palace. Emperor and his entourage were probably caught by surprise to uncover that marginalized empress had such support. Zoe was saved from complete isolation because of her well-crafted public image. The events of 1042 demonstrated that empress, with denied access to power and with restricted access to imperial treasury could established unchallenged authority.

After the events of 1042, Zoe believed that she finally got chance to rule. But senate and court officials forced her to share power with her sister Theodora.¹⁵ Furthermore, Zoe had to marry again and legitimize Constantine IX Monomachos (r.1042–1055) as a new emperor of the Byzantine empire. Empress Zoe's wish to govern empire in her own rights never came into being. However, it was Zoe's young sister

Theodora who got chance to govern empire as a sole ruler. After emperor Constantine IX Monomachos' death in 1055, Theodora the last member of the Macedonian dynasty, acted swiftly. She secured the support of the imperial bodyguards and was acclaimed as *autokrator* (emperor).¹⁶ After several years of political isolation, Theodora assumed full power, and she categorically refused to marry to avoid marginalization from a male partner. Theodora was second Byzantine female ruler to adopt male imperial title. Theodora fashioned herself as autokrator on her coinage to emphasize her sole rulership. In this instance, Theodora contrasts empress Irene who never dared to employ male imperial title on coinage.

Contemporary Byzantine narrative sources are critical about Zoe and Theodora. Eleventh-century intellectual Michael Psellos in his historical narrative *Chronographia* expresses his skepticism on female ability to rule. Psellos stated that the Byzantine Empire started to decline after Macedonian sisters, Zoe and Theodora, participated in the governance of the empire. From Psellos' point of view women were not intelligent enough to handle governmental matters, and consequently, empire had to be governed by man. Ioannes Skylitzes, another eleventh-century intellectual and historian, also questioned female ability to rule. He believed that women lacked moral characteristics and self-control of man. In his *synopsis historion*, Skylitzes uses harsh language and characterizes Zoe as Eva and witch. Skylitzes further argues that Zoe had only one virtue, she was a transmitter of imperial blood.¹⁷ Only at one instance Skylitzes praises Zoe, allegedly when empress admits her feminine ineptitude.¹⁸ In order to downgrade Zoe further, Skylitzes omits those episodes of Zoe's life which could have caused sympathy towards her.¹⁹ In Skylitzes *synopsis historion*, Byzantine empresses are represented as an embodiment of Eve, and ambitious women are generally despised. Ioannes Skylitzes was a child of his time and shared conventional stereotypes about women.

It can be argued that Macedonian sisters' struggle for political power and their joint ruler change Byzantine attitude towards those women who fought to have access to power. In all likelihood, Zoe and Theora inspired other eleventh and twelfth century Byzantine imperial women to struggle for their place at imperial court. It is against this background that we should discuss another powerful woman, empress Eudokia Makrembolitissa (1067–1071).

Eudokia is sinning example of the eleventh-century imperial woman who wield power with significant confidence. Eudokia married two Byzantine emperors Constantine X Doukas (r. 1059–67) and Romanos IV

Diogenes (r. 1068–71). She never hid her political ambitions and widely propagated her image as a powerful woman. Eudokia's contemporary visual media demonstrates her strong position. The silver coin specimen of the period depicts images of emperor Constantine X Doukas and empress Eudokia.²⁰ Both images are equal in size. Interestingly image of empress takes the traditional place of honor, to the spectators left.²¹ The imperial couple holds labarum in their hands. The inscription hails imperial couple as *pistois basileis Romaion* (faithful emperors of the Romans). It is noteworthy that designation of Byzantine empress with the male title, while she was not a sole ruler, is an exceptional case. The legend on silver coin implied that Eudokia and Constantine governed the empire on equal bases. When Constantine X was at his death bed in 1067, he entrusted rule of the empire to Eudokia rather to his son Michael who was approximately seventeen years old and perfectly suitable for the rule. The fact that power transfer went smoothly, without objection from senate and high ranking court officials, indicates how well established was Eudokia's authority. After the death of Constantine X Eudokia acted as regent and concentrated all power in her hands. It is even assumed that Eudokia took position of emperor, *basileus autokrator*.²² The fact that Eudokia did not share power with her adult son Michael, legitimate heir to the imperial throne, indicates that woman could govern Byzantium as sole ruler. A new political reality that emerged after 1067 was reflected on the gold coinage. In the Byzantine Empire, golden coin was the main medium of exchange, and unlike silver coin that had pure ceremonial purpose, it circulated widely. Therefore, by means of golden coinage imperial court communicated message to the entire population of the empire. On the obverse of the gold coin, one sees the dominant image of Eudokia who stands in the middle of her two sons.²³ The dominant figure of Eudokia aimed to emphasize her elevated position in contrast to her sons. Coin inscription celebrates all three rulers as 'emperors of the Romans.' Eudokia's wish to be visualized as a sole ruler is reflected on her lead seal as well.²⁴ The seal contains only the image of Eudokia whereas images of her sons are absent. Neither are Eudokia's sons mentioned in lead seal inscription. An ivory panel is another visual media that celebrates and communicates a powerful image of Eudokia. On the ivory, Eudokia is depicted with her second husband emperor Romanos IV.²⁵ Both images are equal in size and both rulers are blessed by Christ. The inscriptions in Greek hails imperial couple as 'Romanos emperor of Romans' and 'Eudokia empress of Romans.'²⁶As it has been pointed out Romanos

Diogenes and Eudokia Makrembolitissa are the only Byzantine couple to rule as 'Romans and Eudokia.'²⁷ It should also be emphasized that in Byzantine visual culture Christ was traditionally blessing emperors and rarely empresses. After marrying Romanos IV, Eudokia did not cease attempt to dominate her second husband. Golden coin issued after their marriage demonstrates Byzantine empresses' strong position. The reverse of the coin depicts images of Eudokia and Romanos in equal size.²⁸ Furthermore, both ruler hold *globus cruciger* (an important imperial symbol that highlighted Byzantine emperor's ecumenical aspirations). The coin inscription hails Eudokia as *basillissa* (i.e., empress) and Romanos as a *despot* (emperor).

It seems however that Eudokia pushed to the extremes her attempts to dominate male partners and rule empire in her own rights. This resulted in her downfall. Eudokia's marginalized son Michael VII with the support of court officials organized *coup d'état* and banished ambitious empress to the monastery. Without a doubt, empress Eudokia's rule had a great impact on subsequent generations of Byzantine imperial women. It is believed that eleventh and twelfth century Byzantine imperial women were inspired by Eudokia's personality.²⁹

Usurpation of imperial power by Komnenoi dynasty (ca. 1081) created fertile ground for Byzantine imperial women to participate more in the administration of the empire. During the Komnenoi rule innovations were introduced not only in representation of emperor but empress/imperial women as well. Under the Komnenian regime, governance of empire became family business. Consequently, male and female members of the dynasty were actively involved in power politics.³⁰ For example, Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118) gave to his mother Anna Dalassene high position in imperial administration and granted her title of *despotina*. Moreover, when Alexios I was going on military campaigns he was leaving Anna in charge of the empire. Eleventh century intellectual and rhetorician Theophylact of Ohrid in his imperial oration characterized shared rule of Alexios and his mother Anna as a perfect division between two suns. Theophylact in his capacity as court rhetorician attempted to persuade the audience that new political configuration was not at odds with the established norm and it did not harm imperial stability. After decades, Anna Komnene, emperor Alexios I's daughter and one of the eminent female Byzantine intellectual, in her historical narrative the *Alexiad* praised Anna Dalassene's governmental skills.

His mother [i.e., Anna], however, was capable of managing not only the Roman Empire, but every other empire under the sun as well ... She had vast experience and a wide understanding ... She was a most persuasive orator ... She was the legislator, the complete organizer and governor ... not only was she a very great credit to her own sex, but to men as well; indeed, she contributed to the glory of the whole human race.

It is believed that powerful and authoritative Anna Dalassene emulated her predecessor Eudokia Makrembolitissa.³¹

I have talked much about Byzantine imperial women in order to demonstrate that each ambitious empress who participated in the governance of empire paved the way for subsequent generations of Byzantine women to be more visible and influential. It goes without saying that if empress Irene and Theodora were not bold in their wish to dominate their male partners most likely, we would not be talking that much about Macedonian sisters (Zoe and Theodora) nor Komnenoi women.

Constructing Female Authority in Medieval Georgia: Idealized Image of Tamar (r. 1184–1213)

Tamar was the only child of king Giorgi III (r. 1156–1184), and in accordance with the established rule of primogeniture, she had right to inherit the throne. But there were certain obvious flaws in Tamar's legitimacy. The first problem was Tamar's sex that disqualified her from ruling in her own rights. Medieval Georgian society was patriarchal, where masculine virtues were valorized. Georgia was traditionally governed by marshal rulers whose authority rested much on their personal charisma. To prove that they were worthy leaders, Georgian rulers had to demonstrate good generalship and gain victories on the battlefields. During coronation ceremony among another royal regalia, Georgian ruler received a sword that symbolized his role as head and leader of the army.

By the end of the twelfth century, Georgia kingdom was one of the dominant powers in the region, surrounded by the belt of dependent and semi-dependent Muslim polities. In an anarchic environment of Caucasus balance of power was fragile, and Georgian royal court had to make efforts to maintain kingdom's dominant position in the region. During the second half of the twelfth century the leaders of the Muslim world had several attempts to challenge the power of Georgian kingdom. Thus,

Tamar's father king Giorgi was successful in his military campaigns and kept Muslim foes in check. Georgian king owed his authority to his military victories. It is not difficult to imagine that when Tamar inherited the royal throne after her father's death, social groups that played a significant role in Georgian power politics had legitimate concerns. From their point of view, kingdom was at a critical juncture. The realm was left without the male leader and army without the nominal commander. It was first time in kingdoms' history that woman aspired for power, who could neither demonstrate her military prowess nor lead an army in the battlefields. Besides, elevation of woman to the throne could have been perceived by Muslim subjects and foes as a sign weakness.

In 1184 Georgian aristocrats and high ranking ecclesiastics might have brought forward another argument that would question Tamar's right for the throne; Namely, the ambiguous legitimacy of Tamar's father Giorgi III. The thing is that Giorgi III usurped the throne from his nephew Demetre, who had far more legitimate right to claim power than Giorgi. After being marginalized and banished from royal court, Demetre decided to strike back and claim the throne for himself. In 1177 Demetre backed by the majority of Georgian influential aristocrats against Giorgi. Giorgi III managed to quell rebellion with difficulties and punished leaders severely; Demetre was blinded and died soon from the injuries. It is not difficult to imagine fury Giorgi's actions caused in high echelons of Georgian society. By this action, Giorgi disqualified only rightful male pretender for the throne and he put the kingdom in dire straits. After the disqualification of Demeter, female Tamar was the only person who could have a legitimate claim for the throne. We do not get a full picture from Georgian narrative sources about the nature of the disagreement between Tamar and her opposition. Neither we learn in details what accusations opposition made against Tamar. But, it is reasonable to believe that denigration of Giorgi as usurper would be a logical strategy of the opposition. Revisiting Giorgi's rights to rule and his posthumous denunciation as usurper directly questioned Tamar's right to govern. By pulling this issue opposition was getting leverage to press Tamar and make her submissive to their demands.

So, by 1184 Tamar had to tackle two major problems; issue of her gender and legitimacy of her father. Tamar was not naive to believe that power transfer would be smooth. Possibly she expected challenge and was ready to strike back. Six years of co-rulership (1178-84) with her father Giorgi gave her insight into power politics, and she likely had plans how to tackle with the problems. It should not go without saying that by 1184

Tamar had her inner circle of supporters and had secured the loyalty of some influential players. A scarcity of sources enables us to identify many of her supporters as well as to elaborate further on their social status. But, it is obvious that a number of Tamar's supporters were members of the second-tier aristocracy as well as intellectuals. Tamar was one of the first Georgine rulers to rely on a number of intellectuals who contributed to the creation of her reputation and crafted her powerful public image.

Scholars take Tamar's reign for granted. They fail to provide in-depth analyzes how she managed to retain a grip on power and rule in male-centered Georgian society. Strategy by means which Tamar legitimized herself and imposed her authority over various strata of society remains un-researched.³² More importantly, there is still no answer to the question as to why Tamar is one of the most celebrated Georgian rulers. Rhetorical texts, both in prose and in verse, dedicated to Tamar and composed by her contemporary intellectuals dwarfs those rhetorical narratives dedicated to Tamar's predecessors and successors. Though being one of the most celebrated Georgian monarchs, Tamar remains enigmatic figure. In what follows, I try to argue and demonstrate that one of the cornerstones of Tamar's reign was carefully staged propaganda of legitimation aiming at persuading Tamar's subjects in her capability to govern. Royal court communicated and negotiated Tamar's authority to the targeted audience by means of following media: Rhetorical narratives, coinage and royal titulature (*intitulatio*).

Blossom of literary activism during Tamar's rule had clear-cut ideological purpose. Rhetorical narratives, namely political poetry and economic historiography, were vehicles for propagating positive image and political authority of female ruler to high echelons of Medieval Georgian society. Namely, court officials, military aristocracy, and high ranking ecclesiastics. During a public performance, rhetoricians by means of rhetorical strategies manipulated public audience and transmitted propagandistic and political messages. In order to understand better social function of literature (rhetorical narrative) in the Medieval Mediterranean, I will allude to the Byzantine examples. In the Byzantine empire power was displayed in performative context, and oral performance of rhetorical compositions had the crucial role in ritualized Byzantine court culture. Rhetorical narratives (imperial panegyrics) had a function of newspaper and the lubricated governmental machinery. They celebrated emperor's persona in a laudatory manner, informed the audience about emperor's achievements and communicated political messages to the audience.

Byzantine intellectuals employed a diverse rhetorical technique to eulogize emperor and persuade audience in emperor's outstanding qualities and virtues. In the Byzantine world rhetoric was honored as an art of persuasive use of language and rhetoric was considered as political discourse. Twelfth-century Byzantine intellectuals argued that rhetoric had ability to transform and manipulate society.³³ I am inclined to believe that Georgian rhetorical texts, like in Byzantium, were composed by Tamar's inner circle and performed orally on special occasions at royal court. The primary goal of these texts was to influence audience and change established ways of viewing reality.

To turn Tamar's sex from disadvantage to advantage, her inner circle pushed to the further extremes and surrounded Tamar's persona with an aura of sacrality. All rhetorical narratives demonstrated and praise in extolled manner Tamar's devotion to Christianity, exceptional piety, chastity, humility, and philanthropy. Further, court rhetoric as expressed in encomiastic narratives asserted Tamar's role as enforcer of divine order and mediator between God and her people. The audience was persuaded that Tamar's permanent practice of royal virtues secured God's benevolence and brought peace and prosperity to her subjects. Tamar was declared as the only person who could guaranty divine benevolence. Georgian court rhetoric probably reflected certain distorted reality. It is reasonable to assume that Tamar adopted and cultivated certain modes of behavior to increase her authority in male-dominated society. Namely, she could have performed her Orthodoxy and pity publicly. The practice of spirituality and performance of personal piety was method often applied by Byzantine imperial women to improve their status and become more visible. One cannot exclude that Byzantine practice was cultivated in Medieval Georgia. If this holds true, Tamar earned the name of a saintly person during her lifetime, which facilitated the development of her personal cult. Cult of Tamar was a powerful tool in the discourse of legitimation and secured obedience and loyalty of her subjects.

In order to understand better the nature of Georgian court rhetoric, it is essential to analyze the strategy and rhetorical technique applied by the authors of these texts. Each text has its strategy of persuasion and focuses on a different aspect of Tamar's life. Thus, apart from a differences, these texts have certain things in common. All these texts narrate idealized image of Tamar, and they make use of Byzantine rhetorical traditions. To be more precise, Georgian men of literature adopted and adapted to their needs Byzantine imperial language.

Anonymous authors concise *Life of King of Kings Tamar* is a generic hybrid that combines features of imperial/royal biography and hagiography. Consequently, the narrative focuses on the representation of Tamar's Christian virtues. In this text, Tamar's authority is buttressed on her practice of virtues such as piety, philanthropy, justice, moderation.³⁴ The author tries to persuade the audience that through the practice of Christian/political virtues Tamar attained perfection and reached saintliness in her lifetime. Unlike Byzantine hagiographical narratives dedicated to women that emphasizes female weakness, *Life of King of Kings Tamar* is free from gendered language. The anonymous author represents Tamar as unconventionally strong and independent woman. Further, in entire narrative, Tamar's stoic calmness and self-control are several times praised. According to medieval believes women were weak as they could not control their emotions. Byzantine authors often represented exuberantly how women fall into panic, burst into tears and lose control of behavior in critical situations. For instance, empress Anna Komnene who constructed the image of powerful women in her *Alexiad* was a victim of her contemporary stereotypes about women. Anna describes her grandmother and mother as intelligent and capable people, who could wisely govern the empire. Thus, they also fall into despair and burst into tears in critical situations. As I have pointed out, *Life of Tamar* demonstrates contrary case. Even in the most critical circumstances, Tamar remains calm and wisely handles the governmental matters. The same rhetoric is maintained in other literary texts dedicated to Tamar. They unanimously extoll her self-control, stoic behavior, and wise judgment.

Another encomiastic text *the Histories and Eulogies of the Sovereigns* applies a different rhetorical strategy for construction of Tamar's image. *Histories and Eulogies* is classicizing history and is focused on warfare. With Homeric fictionalization *Histories and Eulogies* narrates Georgian army's and army leaders' heroic performance on the battlefields. In this narrative, the anonymous author dedicates much space to Tamar's ancestors and buttresses her legitimacy and authority on her noble lineage and sacred progeny. One may think that in this regard, the author of *Histories and Eulogies* followed rhetorical tradition coined by ancient rhetorician Menander Rhetor. Menander in his rhetorical handbook suggested his peer rhetoricians praise emperor's ancestors and noble lineage.³⁵ In the poem *Histories and Eulogies* introduces Tamar as a worthy offspring Old Testament king-prophet David and Solomon.

Like Solomon ... I will blow the trumpet and render 'the praise of praises' to the one, who came from the seed of Solomon, the one, for whom praise of her glory and Olympian grandeur, and even (the gift of) Solomon, would never be adequate. I mean Tamar, famous among the monarchs, and the glory of the first David, a prophet.³⁶

By this statement, the author wanted to remind the audience that Bagratid was sacred dynasty bloodily related to Biblical David and Solomon. Bagratid family formulated their alleged biblical ancestry in the tenth century, and claimed biblical progeny became one of the cornerstones of Bagratid royal propaganda.³⁷ After introducing Tamar in this elevated manner, the narrative describes the ceremony of her coronation. The audience is persuaded that Tamar was sitting on Biblical-David's throne and she received biblical Solomon's seal. At the end of coronation ceremony, Georgian aristocrats acclaimed Tamar as worthy offspring of prophet-king David.³⁸

Typological co-relation between Old Testament and Bagratid kinship is also nourished in *Life of King of Kings Tamar*. The author of narrative states that during coronation queen Tamar was invested with the Old Testament kings' royal insignia. Tamar is claimed to receive the crown and standard of Biblical David. Moreover, the author of *Life of Tamar* goes as far as to state that by Tamar's elevation to the throne biblical David's prophecy came into being: "For her countenance had been glorified in the beginning in the fulfilment of David's words, who has said that the kings and princes would pay homage with prayers and supplications, and the tribes would bring her presents."³⁹ These two episodes are interesting as they point out for the first time that Georgian rulers allegedly possessed the Old Testament royal insignia. It is well known that Byzantine emperors claimed to be in possession of the Old Testament royal insignia, Rod of Moses and Solomon's throne. These relics were kept in the imperial palace of Constantinople and displaced for the audience during important ceremonies.

Apart from Old Testament imagery, *Histories and Eulogies of the Sovereigns* is heavily imbued with solar and astral symbolism. The text frequently sets typological relations between Tamar and sun and light. This hermeneutical strategy aimed to articulate a conception of solar kinship and maintain Tamar's sun-like image in the entire narrative. Metaphors of sun, light and life-giving sun had deep conceptual connotations. The sun and light were symbols of divinity in the ancient world, and after

Christianization of the Roman empire, sun/light started to be associated with Christian God. Christian apologists and theologians frequently used solar symbolism to refer to God. In Byzantine imperial rhetoric emperor was frequently likened to sun and light, and was associated with the sun that brings warmth and light to his subjects.⁴⁰ Allegorization of emperor with light-giving sun aimed to signify his sacredness and likeness to Christ.⁴¹ Employment of sun and light metaphors for celebration of emperor's persona reached its apex during the reign of emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–1180).⁴² Emperor Manuel I's court poet 'Manganeios' Prodromos in his panegyric poetry used extensively sun and light as rhetorical metaphors to highlight emperors sacred and Christ-like nature.⁴³

Christ-oriented kingship was another important theme and intricate aspect developed by Georgian royal propaganda. Rhetorical texts claimed Tamar to be Christ-like figure and deputy of Christ on the earth. These narratives furthermore persuaded the audience that Tamar was constantly imitating Christ through her behavior. Particularly bold in their statements were authors of Georgian panegyric poems (*Abdulmesiani* and *Laudation of Tamar*) who claimed that Tamar like Christ assumed flesh and came on earth from heaven for the salvation of her people. Neither did Georgian literati restrained themselves from calling Tamar a fourth member of holy trinity.⁴⁴ Employment of theological vocabulary for the articulation of ruler's sacredness was no novelty in the Byzantine empire. According to Byzantine imperial ideal emperor was charged with mystical power and acted in his capacity as representative of Christ on earth.⁴⁵ Byzantine imperial rhetoric frequently set co-relation between emperor and Christ and by this token emphasized sacred nature of Byzantine imperial office. The ideal emperor was expected to imitate Christ and follow Christ in footsteps. Thus, Byzantine authors were careful in their statements. We do not have any evidence in Byzantine imperial rhetorical that celebrates emperor either incarnated Christ or fourth member of Trinity. Even when sacralization of emperor's persona reached its apex in the twelfth century Byzantine empire, Byzantine intellectuals never become as bold in their statements as Georgian literati. More importantly, it is impossible to find any literary or visual evidence in Byzantine world that allegorizes Byzantine empress/imperial women with light-giving sun. Neither can we find reference to Byzantine empress as Christ-like figures or earthly representative of Christ. In Byzantine thought, it was only Byzantine emperor-Christian basileus-who represented Christ on earth and whose authority directly came from Christ. One should bear

in mind that Byzantine authors used gendered language when referring to empresses/imperial women, and they maintained a clear cult division between modes of behavior and language applicable to man and women. While Byzantine emperor could be wise, philanthropic, pious, just, brave and moderate, empresses/imperial women were denied the majority of imperial virtues. Moreover, if during court ceremonials emperor was set in typological relation with biblical figures and classical heroes, this privilege was denied to Byzantine empress. For instance, emperor in his capacity as head of church and guaranty of doctrinal purity was perceived as second Constantine.⁴⁶ Furthermore, Byzantine emperor was second Moses, second biblical David, and Solomon. In addition to this, ideal Byzantine emperor was an embodiment of Alexander the Macedonian.

In contrast to Byzantine imperial rhetoric that addresses women, Tamar's contemporary rhetorical narratives explicitly and implicitly set the typological relation between Tamar on the one hand and Christ, biblical David, Solomon, and Moses on the other hand. All these rhetorical texts assert Tamar's role as a head of Church and her key role in matters of faith. Because of her alleged central role in ecclesiastical matters, she is declared to be second Constantine. "In the matter of religion, she was the second Constantine and, like him, she intended to embark on God's work; for she began to whet her two-edged sword to destroy evil at the roots, and desired to convene an assembly to discuss the findings of the great ecumenical councils."⁴⁷

When Georgian rhetorical narratives likened Tamar with biblical and classical figures, they not only ascribed the virtues and modes of behavior of the past heroes to Tamar, but they forged the causal relationship between their own deeds and the deeds of Tamar. For instance, according to the Byzantine imperial ideology, an emperor was expected to merge multiple bodies and personalities by sharing them with his mythical prototypes. Emperor's persona was shaped by participation in the mythical personae of earlier rulers. The Byzantine emperor was a temporal incarnation of hero's image.⁴⁸ Surprisingly, Georgian rhetorical narratives buttressed Tamar's image on characteristics which had long been the cornerstone of ideal Byzantine emperor rather than empress.

Apart from communicative rhetorical narratives, Tamar's powerful image is cast through her bi-lingual (Georgian-Arabic) copper coinage. The coinage asserts Tamar's position of the ruler in her own rights. The first issue coin specimen was minted in the first years of Tamar's sole reign. The obverse of the coin is embellished with Tamar signature which is in

the center of a wreathed frame.⁴⁹ Georgian abbreviated legend reads as follows: In the name of God, this silver piece was struck in the K'oronikon 407 (i.e., 1187). On the reverse of this bi-lingual coin runs Arabic legend in five lines: "The great queen, the glory of the world and faith, Tamar, daughter of Giorgi, champion of the Messiah, May God increase her victories." Circle around and marginal Arabic legend: "May God increase her glory, and lengthen her shadow, and strengthen her prosperity."⁵⁰

The next coin specimen under scrutiny was issued around ca. 1200 (fig. 1). The obverse of the bi-lingual copper coin depicts undefined monogram. On the left side of the monogram is inscribed two letters in Georgian TR (i.e., Tamar). On the right side are inscribed two initials DT (i.e., Davit). This coin was minted during the shared rule of Tamar and her second husband, Davit. However, certain details on the coin highlight Tamar's seniority and Davit's subordinated position. For instance, on the coin senior ruler's name was always inscribed to the spectator's left, whereas co-ruler's to the spectator's right side. Furthermore, the reverse legend in Arabic reiterates Tamar's senior position. The Arabic legend in four lines reads as follows: "Queen of the Queens, glory of the world and faith, Tamar, daughter of Giorgi, champion of the Messiah." As one can see the long inscription on coin reverse omits the name of Tamar's husband Davit. The omission of Davit's name in the main communicative message of the copper coin indicates Georgian royal court's strategy to set a clear-cut boundary between Tamar as a senior ruler and Davit as subordinated one. Besides, adoption of epithet "champion of messiah" which had strong ideological connotation—by the female ruler is indicative. By this epithet, Tamar informed Muslim audience that she was the guardian of faith and defender of Christians. Epithet "sword of messiah/champion of messiah" was adopted by Georgian kings in the second quarter of the twelfth-century when Georgia was on the offensive against Seljuk Turks and neighboring Muslim leaders. Georgian kings thought of themselves to be charged with special the mission as defenders of Christianity and the guardians of Christian-Muslim frontier. Formula "champion of messiah" or "sword of messiah" was predominantly inscribed in Arabic on the reverse of the Georgian kings' bi-lingual coins.

In addition to rhetorical texts and coinage, Tamar's official royal titulature (*intitulatio*) also had communicative function and aimed to negotiated her authority. Mural inscription next to Tamar's fresco from Vardzia monastery refers to her as "King of Kings of the entire east, Tamar, daughter of Giorgi." Tamar is referred with similar titulature from St. John

the Baptist Church mural inscription: “King of Kings Tamar, daughter of the great King of Kings.” In comparison to coinage and epigraphic inscriptions, Tamar’s royal charters offered more space for the articulation of her laudatory *intitulatio*. In a royal charter to the Gelati Monastery (ca. 1193) Tamar boldly models herself as: “by the will of God, Tamar Bagrationi, King and Queen of the Abkhazians, Kartvelians, Ransians, Kaxetians, and Armenians; Sarvansah and Sahansah and Ruler of the entire east and west.” This long titlature reflected Tamar’s ambition to be seen as a great Christian monarch of the East.

Tamar’s royal titlature varied and this was determined by different audience it was destined for. For the Georgian audience, she was king and king of kings. This is the way she was referred in her contemporary rhetorical narratives and mural inscriptions. For the Muslim audience, she was hailed as queen and queen of queens. However, a female title of queen, which Tamar seemed to avoid for the Georgian audience, was strengthened by the formula- “champion of the Messiah.” Through this title, Tamar emphasized her special position in Christendom.

Conclusion

To conclude, it will not be an exaggeration to state that Tamar was exceptional female ruler in the eastern Mediterranean, who wielded power with certain confidence and managed to established her unchallenged authority. Unlike Byzantine empresses who ruled the empire as sole rulers in their capacity as wives and mothers of the emperors, Tamar ruled the kingdom as the only legitimate heir to the throne. Furthermore, Tamar adopted the male royal title of king and king of kings rather than queen to emphasize her elevated position. In this regard, she contrasts with Byzantine empresses who never succeeded in adopting and retaining male imperial titles (*basileus*, *autokrator*). While in long run ambitious Byzantine empresses were either marginalized or banished to the monasteries by their male partners, Tamar maintained domination and visibility during her entire life.

Most probably Tamar emulated Byzantine imperial court tradition. She secured the loyalty of men of literature and turned Georgian royal court into a hub of literary activities. Re-conceptualized Georgian kingship under her reign utilized to full extent Byzantine paradigms of imperial power. Presence of Byzantine imperial language and rhetorical traditions

were particularly visible in panegyric literature and royal imagery. With the help of utilized Byzantine rhetorical language, Georgian panegyric literature created two-natured personae of Tamar who united in herself characteristics and modes of behavior of ideal women and man. Idealized image of Tamar resembled more to Byzantine emperor rather than Byzantine empress.

In the end, it seems likely that well-devised court propaganda succeeded in challenging Medieval Georgian society's conventional believe in female inability to govern and immortalized Tamar as a great ruler. It will not be an exaggeration to state that success of Tamar's contemporary court rhetoric and propaganda was shaped by adopted and reworked Byzantine literary and visual culture of power representation.

NOTES

- ¹ For Medieval See: L. James, *Empresses and Power in Early Byzantium* (London: Leicester University Press, 2001); L. James, ed., *Women, Men and Eunuchs: Gender in Byzantium* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997); Z. Rohr and L. Benz, eds., *Queenship, Gender, and Reputation, in the Medieval and Early Modern West, 1060–1600* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016);
- ² For Byzantine influence of Slavic world see: D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe in 500–1453* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971); See also: G. Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- ³ C. Galatariotou, “Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conception of Gender”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 66
- ⁴ J. Herrin, *Unrivalled Influence: Women and Empire in Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013): 194-204.
- ⁵ For coin image see: <https://www.doaks.org/resources/online-exhibits/byzantine-emperors-on-coins/the-isaurian-and-amorium-dynasties-717-867/solidus-of-irene-797-802>
- ⁶ P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coinage* (Washington, D. C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999), 26-27.
- ⁷ T. Gregory. *A History of Byzantium* (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 202.
- ⁸ M. Vinson. “The *Life of Theodora* and Rhetoric of Byzantine Bride Show”. *JÖB* 49 (1999): 52-63.
- ⁹ T. Gregory. *A History of Byzantium*, 211.
- ¹⁰ E. Strumgell, “The Representation of Augustae in Skylitzes,” in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honor of Roger Scott*, ed. J. Burke (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006), 128.
- ¹¹ B. Hill, *Imperial Women in Byzantium 1025–1204: Power, Patronage and Ideology* (New York: Longman, 1999), 17.
- ¹² B. Hill, *Imperial Women in Byzantium 1025–1204*, 60.
- ¹³ Ibidem., 60.
- ¹⁴ Zoe Macedonian legitimized following emperors: Romanos III Argyros (r. 1028–1034), Michael IV (r. 1034–1041), Michael V (r. 1041–1042) and Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042–1055)
- ¹⁵ T. Gregory. *A History of Byzantium*, 248.
- ¹⁶ L. Garland, *Byzantine Empresses: Women and Power in Byzantium, AD 527–1204* (London: Routledge, 1999), 166.
- ¹⁷ E. Strumgell, The representation of Augustae in Skylitzes, 130.
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HOW CORRUPTION DESTROYS HIGHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

Abstract

This paper addresses the issue of corruption in higher education in Ukraine and its negative impact on universities. This paper discusses factors of external pressure on the higher education sector, which may be found in such areas as changes in higher education finance, research and quality of education, academic corruption, and the standardized testing initiative. The study argues that external pressure on universities comes primarily from the central government and is supported in part by the large scale education corruption. The external pressure experienced by universities manifests the duality of the aspirations for institutional independence with the de facto acknowledgement of financial dependency on the central government.

Keywords: bribery, corruption, fraud, higher education, university, Ukraine

Introduction

Any study of higher education corruption in Ukraine faces the need to describe the ugly world of rat-race, where professors compete for bribegiving students, which is called politely “vibrant off-the-books economies of local universities.”¹ In corruption-riddled Ukrainian universities, under-the-table monetary exchanges between students and faculty are a norm. These exchanges constitute horizontal corruption. In addition to horizontal corruption, there are intensive vertical exchanges between top university administrators and their subordinates. Under the conditions of virtual absence of any punishment or disciplinary action for nepotism and more explicit forms of corruption, public universities are converted into family enterprises, where relatives and family members occupy administrative and faculty positions. Money and favors change hands, while university administrators and faculty members treat students as their clientele. Shadow tutoring is rife and often takes a form of extortion, when students are forced to take tutoring lessons with their professors. In addition to

tutoring fees, there are bribes, gifts, and services extorted from parents by faculty and administrators.

After gaining independence, rampant corruption combined with further massification of higher education resulted in deteriorating quality of university education. It is not unusual for Ukraine's higher education institutions (HEIs) to be called vocational schools for "dummies" and diploma mill universities.² The quality of education determines the amount of human capital the economy is capable to accumulate and the quality of government as well.³ As Oleksiyyenko warns, "the failure of higher education institutions was the underpinning of a failed state."⁴ This paper addresses the problem of higher education corruption in pre-Euromaidan Ukraine, during the consecutive presidencies of Victor Yushchenko⁵ and Victor Yanukovych.⁶ The study focuses on financial aspects of higher education, research and quality of education, higher education corruption, and standardized testing initiative. This paper uses extensively reports on higher education corruption and related issues found in the mass media.

Literature review on education corruption

Thus far, not many scholars have demonstrated the wish to deal with the topic of academic corruption while facing all the difficulties associated with such research. Nevertheless, by now scholars managed to produce a block of literature on educational corruption, mostly in former socialist countries, that offers different approaches to the issue. The problem of corruption in higher education has been addressed in works of Denisova-Schmidt, Huber and Leontyeva,⁷ Graeff, et al,⁸ Kobakhidze,⁹ Liu and Peng,¹⁰ Osipian,¹¹ Ren,¹² Sabic-El-Rayessa,¹³ Sia,¹⁴ Waite and Allen,¹⁵ Whitsel,¹⁶ Williams and Onoshchenko,¹⁷ and Zaloznaya.¹⁸ In all of these works, the authors present a variety of forms of higher education corruption and explain different occurrences of corruption, supported by anecdotal evidence, specific examples, and data collected from surveys and interviews. They aim at such explicit and illegal forms of academic misconduct as bribery, extortion, embezzlement, and fraud.

Different typologies and classifications of higher education corruption are presented in Johnson¹⁹ and Osipian.²⁰ Noah and Eckstein offer a broad informative overview of cheating in examinations in the US and other countries and also address the issue of fraud in education and research.²¹ Chapman names five different forms of misconduct in higher

education: blatantly illegal acts of bribery or fraud, such as fraud in public procurement; actions to secure a modest income by people paid too little or too late, such as illegal fees collected from students; actions taken to get work done in difficult circumstances, such as bribes to get a certificate on time from the university administration; differences in cultural perspectives, including gifts given to teachers; and behavior resulting from incompetence, including misallocation of funds. In this typology, student cheating and academic plagiarism are missing.²²

According to Rumyantseva's taxonomy of educational corruption, it manifests itself in favoritism in procurement and personnel appointments, ghost teachers, selling admissions and grades, private tutoring, and skimming from project grants.²³ The author further delineates corruption on that involving students and not involving students, with corrupt exchanges occurring between students and administrators, students and faculty, and students and staff. The categorization of corruption in higher education proposed by Osipian includes phenomena: what takes place?; means: what means are used in corrupt activities to achieve certain goals?; locus: what are the areas and processes that get corrupted?; and interactions: what are the interactions, relations where corruption takes place?²⁴ Hallak and Poisson suggest level of occurrence, level of education, actors involved, and nature of exchange as the criteria to be used to classify opportunities for corruption within the education sector.²⁵ Zaloznaya presents meticulously developed ethnographic accounts of academic corruption that she discovers in post-Soviet universities.²⁶ By presenting a most interesting written account of bureaucratic corruption, the author manages to look beyond the clichés of administrative corruption and understand a multiplicity of organizational and sectoral twists of corruption in different settings within post-Communist authoritarian regimes, including Ukraine.

Methodological issues

Investigating corruption in Ukrainian universities is, figuratively speaking, a journey to Alice in Wonderland world of post-Soviet higher education, where positive grades are on sale for a fee and professorships are inherited by family members. The importance of the subject of corruption and the need to trace its development makes it surprising that thus far sociologists and scholars representing other social sciences disciplines have paid little attention to this social illness. The multiplicity

of damages that corruption causes in different types of societies warrants more coverage of academic corruption.

It is always a challenge to investigate the delicate issue of corruption, let alone obtain reliable data on corruption in academia. Petrov and Temple point out the unwillingness of potential respondents to talk about corruption in academic settings.²⁷ The major method employed by Zaloznaya in the study based on extensive fieldwork in two former Communist regimes, Belarus and Ukraine, is participant observation.²⁸ Other forms of investigation include interviews, surveys, analyzing discussion forums on social networks, and comparative historical analysis. In fact, the volume offers a wealth of information that comes from personal accounts of those facing corruption in post-Soviet universities. These accounts include experiences of both victims and perpetrators of corrupt activities. Sabic-El-Rayessa and Mansur offer a favour reciprocation model as a basis for an alternative typology of higher education corruption.²⁹ Scholarly literature synthesis is also a form of researching higher education corruption. Based on a most extensive review of literature on higher education corruption, Chapman and Lindner³⁰ present an exhaustive list of all imaginable forms of misconduct that may be met in academia in different parts of the world. Taking into account the specifics of educational industry and taking steps for further understanding of specifics of academic corruption, including its typology and multiplicity of forms, may be necessary. Educational reform in Ukraine,³¹ including its anti-corruption component,³² also attracted attention of the scholars.

Financing higher education

In the Soviet era, higher education was free, but access to some specialties was limited. During the last two decades, more than half of students attended for-tuition programs. Most for-tuition programs are hosted by public HEIs, while private HEIs enroll around twelve percent of all students. While this change seems to be an additional financial burden for students, it offers flexibility and is more appropriate for market-based reform. The government decides which public colleges and universities to fund and to what extent. Since new rules of financing were imposed externally, any adaptation to these rules may be interpreted as a response for university governance. An adequate response may result in generous funding from both the government and the market, while an inadequate

response forces the university to focus on financial survival and develop the academic curricula accordingly.

The issue of decentralization, so acute for Ukraine,³³ includes the need for reform and decentralization of the higher education sector. The existing system of higher education may be characterized as increasingly decentralized in terms of financing and at the same time showing the least institutional autonomy, including in the area of university finance. Only recently universities in Ukraine were allowed to accumulate funds in bank accounts. At the same time, US type endowments, invested in stocks and bonds or directly into other sectors of the economy, are still unheard of. Indeed, such ethical debates as whether Harvard and Yale should be boycotting and divesting from Israel³⁴ or whether Harvard and Vanderbilt's use of hedge funds for "land grabs" in Africa is wrong³⁵ may leave Ukraine's faculty and administrators absolutely confused. Not surprisingly, the reforms that included cuts in governmental funding were not met with great enthusiasm by the academic community, especially at the beginning. The ousted president of Ukraine, Victor Yanukovich, has suggested thinking about giving universities financial autonomy,³⁶ apparently hinting that some universities may receive the right to form their endowments in the future, while at the same time losing most governmental financial support.

Davies comments on the effects of similar financial cuts that took place in the UK: "Psychologically, such 'cuts' were important in creating an atmosphere in institutions which was a confused combination of defensiveness, gloom, suspicion, realism and injured innocence."³⁷ In regard to the new policy of financing and control, Clark notes that,

The UK is currently the outstanding case of maximization of distrust between government and universities; government sends out its agents – deputized academics – to observe teaching and research activities in thousands of departments, rates those activities numerically, and then funds accordingly. Departments soon learn defensive strategies of how to hide their weaknesses and exaggerate their strengths and turn this national exercise into a foolish game laced with cynicism and chicanery.³⁸

Similar games may be played by the government in Ukraine, with a major tool being governmental licensing and accreditation and the major incentive for universities being governmental funding, which is tied to accreditation.

As of 2017, governmental funding of universities continues to decline. In 2009, the Cabinet of Ministers cut in half the governmental order for certain majors, with an overall decline in publically financed studentships of 13 percent.³⁹ In 2011, the Cabinet of Ministers cut the governmental order for certain majors yet again.⁴⁰ The then Minister of Science and Education, Dmytro Tabachnik,⁴¹ gave a prognosis of further reduction in governmental orders for certain majors in HEIs because of low demand on these specialties on the labor market.⁴² There are around seventy public universities in Ukraine that were granted the status of national universities. These are the nation's leading HEIs. Even though now all public HEIs receive governmental funding, in the future most governmental money may well be channeled to leading, i.e. national, universities. Governmental support will reflect governmental priorities in specific fields of knowledge and research, including the need for certain majors and specialists. Selectivity, in its turn, will raise the issue of funds allocation and distribution among public universities.

Research and quality of education

Another key issue on the agenda is the place of research in the higher education sector. Traditionally, most research has been conducted in Science & Research Institutes (SRIs), which are under the auspices of Ukraine's National Academy of Sciences. Due to the lack of funding and a continuous brain drain to the West, research in SRIs has suffered a sharp decline. One idea to raise the level of research and to incorporate research into teaching programs and academic curricula was to attempt a stronger affiliation between SRIs and universities. Presumably, this move should allow increasing the quality of education in universities. This idea is based on the concept of the Humboldtian university, also known as Humboldtian model of higher education, where basic and applied research and higher education are housed under one university roof.⁴³

In Russia, the government is now considering the possibility of a gradual amalgamation of such research institutions with leading public universities, applying holistic approach to knowledge creation and transfer. In Ukraine, such a change is not even at the discussion stage. Instead, the Ministry of Education and Science is more concerned about taking over universities and specialized HEIs, currently under the auspices of other ministries. The Ministry of Education and Science can take over medical

universities, as agreed by the Ministry of Healthcare, but is not ready to take under its control many other sector-related HEIs and SRIs.⁴⁴ Moreover, the role of the Ministry of Education and Science itself has to be redefined. The process of decentralization and growing university autonomy may leave the Ministry with a lesser role than it played before, preserving such functions as coordination, forecasting, and quality control, but not as much funding and direct governance. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education and Science claims the need to take over HEIs that are now under the auspices of other ministries, explaining the need for a unified system of coordination and control, including financial and quality control.

The then Minister of Education and Science, Stanislav Nikolaenko,⁴⁵ voiced the ambitious goal of placing all the public HEIs under one umbrella. His successor, Dmytro Tabachnik, has continued this strategy and has gone even further, suggesting that ninety HEIs would be enough for Ukraine and those weaker HEIs should merge with stronger ones. He believes that some weak HEIs are going to liquidate at their own initiative.⁴⁶ Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and Ostrozhskaya Academy already moved under the governance of the Ministry of Education and Science.⁴⁷ Tabachnik is certain that HEIs will not be worse off after reassignment under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Science. He believes that it will allow for better quality of educational services and standard requirements and procedures in licensing and accreditation, than are already in place.⁴⁸ The Minister claims the monopoly of the Ministry of Education and Science over quality control and adds that even though these HEIs will not receive better funding from the central government, they will not lose financially. Again, such rhetoric manifests the dominance of the central government paradigm, while moving market forces to a position of secondary significance. Governmental control over universities continued through the entire presidency of Yushchenko and tightened under Yanukovych.⁴⁹ There were protests against the dismissal of rectors of leading Ukrainian universities.⁵⁰ These protests included calls from Tabachnik's predecessor, Ivan Vakarchuk.⁵¹ Tabachnik's deputy spread gossip about unreasonably high cost of education at NaUKMA, which he called a "backyard storage space."⁵²

The issues of quality of educational services, number of HEIs in the country, and university autonomy are linked in both media reports and in the minds of government officials and educators. Ukraine's former president, Victor Yanukovych, has talked about the decline in quality of higher education in Ukraine and called for reducing the number of HEIs:

"Do we need such a large number of HEIs, many of which are of a low quality? The answer is obviously no."⁵³ Reflecting the President's demands, the then Minister of Education and Science promised to merge around fifty smaller HEIs with their larger counterparts by the end of the 2010/2011 academic year.⁵⁴ The then Minister Tabachnik says that attending HEIs will become cheaper even without centrally planned and authorized governmental interference, due to market forces and competition between universities. He continues to insist that academically and financially weak HEIs should join stronger ones.⁵⁵ Minister Tabachnik also insists that tuition in universities should be set at a minimum of 8000 to 10000 UAH per year (around \$1000 to \$1200), because at lower levels universities will not be able to offer high quality education.⁵⁶ However, this suggestion would contradict market principles of free pricing and price equilibrium.

The now ousted from power, President Yanukovych was ready to discuss the issue of giving autonomy to universities, as is the case in Europe. He remarked: "Perhaps, it is time for us to give leading universities the right to form their educational programs, define and change their organizational structure."⁵⁷ One of the most significant contributors to the declining quality of higher education in Ukraine is not the large number of HEIs, but rampant corruption. Corruption in Ukraine's higher education sector appears to be a widespread disease that stretches from admissions to publically funded programs to grades, term papers, and diplomas being available for sale. In this context, Yanukovych diverts public attention from the real cause of the problem of low quality. At the same time, his suggestions on giving universities more autonomy can hardly correspond with actions and claims made by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Higher education corruption in Ukraine

External pressures are not limited to those posed by the government and by the market. Governmental interference creates challenges in terms of funding, regulations, and informal control. The market requires revenue diversification and matching the market demand from both businesses or employers and households or consumers of educational services. There are other external challenges as well. Higher education in Ukraine faces a set of challenges similar to those faced by many other European nations, including insufficient funding, changing curriculum, and structural changes. But in addition to the common problems, Ukraine's

higher education is riddled with corruption, including its most explicit forms, such as bribery, extortion, and fraud.⁵⁸

Informal and corrupt exchanges in Ukrainian universities may be linked to the hybrid political regime. Ukraine's ruling regime and the legal and normative landscape in the country are not homogenous. In Zaloznaya's words, "a particularly volatile hybrid regime with high leadership turnover and a non-linear developmental trajectory, Ukraine combines institutional and cultural characteristics that are usually associated with different governance systems."⁵⁹ The creation of private segment in higher education sector along with the chaos of transition made it possible to institutionalize corruption-favorable logic, when short-term profits were made from selling diplomas in economics, management, law, political science, public administration, psychology, foreign languages and international relations. Less visible forms of corruption are hidden behind the curtain of kinship, nepotism, blat, and political pressure. The reciprocity principle dominates academic landscape and guides exchange of favors.

The problem of education corruption is openly discussed in the Ukrainian media and is confirmed based on the results of surveys⁶⁰ and interviews.⁶¹ Leading educators and government officials openly express their opinions on the problem of corruption in universities.⁶² Governmental funding of universities on the one hand and demand of households for "easy" degrees on the other hand, create opportunities for abuse. University faculty and administrators take the opportunity to supplement their formal incomes through illegal means and "feed from the service." Publicly funded studentships are for sale by admission committees, and degrees are for sale to those seeking credentials, not knowledge. Corruption creates additional pressure on university governance.

Students and their parents fall victim of corruption in Ukraine. They decide to engage in illicit exchanges based on their knowledge about the level of corruption in each particular university. Some universities are more susceptible to corrupt exchanges than others, trying to stay free of wide-spread horizontal corruption. Apparently, there is still a difference between outright bribery and extortion on one hand and exchange of favors on the other hand. The existence of nationwide cultures of corruption, frequently attributed to countries in transition, is still a point of discord. There is a variety of corruption-friendly settings in different segments, sectors, and organizations of the higher education sector, and students and their parents make decisions about being involved in corrupt activities

based on their preferences combined with specific corrupt environments. In hybrid regimes, such as that of Ukraine, citizens comply with informal rules of different universities rather than simply demonstrate patterns of deviant behavior.

In 2005, President Yushchenko asked public universities to curtail corruption so endemic to admissions processes and called upon rectors and professors to put a stop to the bribery and cronyism that held sway during entrance exams, a widespread practice that he characterized as “shameful and humiliating.”⁶³ Yushchenko pointed out corruption in education in his address to the students of Shevchenko Kiev National University in March 9, 2006:

We are talking about the way to eradicate corruption in higher education institutions, starting from the entry examinations; how to create an independent system of conducting competitive examinations; how to make it possible for the public funds that now extend to 54 percent of all students in higher education institutions, to support those specialists requested by the government who come through truly transparent and honest competition.⁶⁴

The high level of corruption has led the government to reform the system of higher education.⁶⁵ However, this is not an easy task. Corruption in Ukrainian higher education became endemic, systematic, institutionalized, and so deeply entrenched in academic culture that there is a problem of corrupt hierarchies.⁶⁶ So far, there has been no indication that the level of corruption in Ukraine’s universities is declining.

Despite the anti-corruption pledges that come from the country’s leadership, Ukrainian media continues to report cases of bribery in universities every year. Here are just two of the latest reports. In Donetsk, the stronghold of the former President Yanukovych and one of the largest cities in Ukraine, police reported 30 cases of bribery during the 2012 winter examination session.⁶⁷ In yet another instance, Dean of Odessa Naval Academy was sentenced to four years in prison for a bribe of US \$500.⁶⁸ Civil organizations turn to the authorities and the general public through the media outlets, including roundtables and interviews, with stories about bribes and other problems during the admissions campaign.⁶⁹ These organizations have reminded the Minister of Education about the problem of bribery during examinations.⁷⁰ In response, Minister Tabachnik has blamed students for corruption in universities:

In places, where a corruption mechanism exists, it should be destroyed immediately and promptly. The simplest way is universal: no one pays bribes to anyone. But for this to happen every student should master his/her subject. If you learned your subject matter, then you have nothing to pay for, but if you are a fool and do not want to study, then you are looking for other means.⁷¹

This strong statement by the Minister of Education and Science points to the demand for corruption services that comes from students. The market correlation with corruption is explained by the fact that the general public maintains demand for services, including admissions, grades, and graduation, illicitly obtained from the universities. There is also a strong demand for doctoral degrees. Similar to other former Soviet republics,⁷² Ukraine suffers of corruption in doctoral education.⁷³

Standardized testing

The standardized testing initiative is considered one of the key elements of Ukraine's educational reform, which, in addition to implementing the Bologna Declaration, will help align the country's education sector with education sectors in other European nations. Standardized testing, formally known as standardized external testing, is intended as the sole admissions criterion to all HEIs in the country. In order to cope with corruption in admissions to publicly funded programs, the Ukrainian government introduced a standardized computer-based national test for high school graduates following the example of Russia. The standardized test, introduced nationwide in 2008, when Vakarchuk was the Minister of Education and Science, is intended to replace subjective oral and written examinations run by admissions committees in public universities. The introduction of the test was widely supported by the US development agencies in Ukraine. In fact, they were instrumental in designing and implementing the test, first as a pilot project and then as a nationwide campaign. Universities object to the test, because it threatens their monopoly over admissions decisions to public HEIs and, hence, their discretionary power as a ground for generating illicit benefits. The positive impact of standardized tests on reducing corruption in admissions to universities has remained controversial due primarily to both conceptual flaws and lack of reliable data.⁷⁴

Minister Nikolaenko recognized that some of the rectors refused to acknowledge the leading role of the test in regulating access to higher education and to run test-based admissions. Nikolaenko had to explain to these rectors that if they will not recognize the test and will not agree with the policies of test-based admissions, he will find others who will.⁷⁵ What he meant is that those educational leaders who refuse to comply with the new governmental policies will be dismissed or relieved from their duties. Such an attempt points to the strong governmental position on the issue and the need for strong governmental authority over universities. At the same time Nikolaenko had to negotiate for acceptance of the test as well. Replacement of the rectors would not be an easy task. The former Minister agreed that the tests would not replace entry examinations completely. Some oral examinations were preserved. This *a priori* leaves some space for corruption in college admissions. The newly introduced standardized test would also allow achieving implementation of internationally recognized practices in admissions to HEIs. Overall, international experiences show clearly that test based college admissions do not solve the problem of corruption in universities.

Scholarly work on the issue of standardized testing in Ukraine is limited to a comprehensive, yet largely descriptive, paper by Kovalchuk and Koroliuk⁷⁶ and a book chapter on the clash of global and local imperatives in standardized testing and corruption in admissions to Ukrainian universities by Osipian.⁷⁷ At the same time, media reports on standardized testing and problems associated with it are plentiful. In 2007, Nikolaenko proudly announced the Ministry of Education and Science's intention to introduce independent testing at all levels of higher education training, as well as in secondary schools.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, a year later, right after the nationwide introduction of standardized testing in 2008, the then Speaker of Ukrainian Parliament, Vladimir Litvin, put this practice into doubt. He said that the whole world is now abandoning the practice of standardized testing, while Ukraine is only introducing it, and that this practice is erroneous and regressive. Litvin believed that after a while Ukraine would return to the old system of admissions to universities. He also criticized the concept of standardized testing as the key element in the anti-corruption campaign and said that "one cannot fight against corruption successfully; one can only lead it."⁷⁹ Further developments have shown that Litvin was not alone in his criticism of the new system of knowledge testing and evaluation.

The system of standardized testing has been riddled with scandals and has come under fire from numerous critics since its very inception. In September of 2009, when the university admissions campaign was over, media reported that the Ministry of Education and Science “opened hunting season” on fake students with special needs, threatening to dismiss them from universities which they entered unlawfully.⁸⁰ Applicants who qualify as individuals with special needs, including those with disabilities, victims of the Chernobyl catastrophe, orphans, children of miners, and some other categories, were given preferences in admissions to universities, despite their possibly low scores on the standardized test. What followed was a wave of applicants with special needs or special status, many of whom were allegedly carrying fake or fraudulent medical documents bought from doctors and social workers. Not coincidentally, many applicants became “disabled” right on the eve of the admissions campaign. This nationwide scandal over a possible massive fraud received so much publicity and went so high that the government promised to investigate with the help of the Ministry of Healthcare, the State Security Services, and the Prosecutor General’s Office.

In 2010, media reported results of some surveys, according to which 78 percent of parents of 2009 high school graduates consider the system of granting admissions to universities as corrupted. In 2008, this opinion was shared by only 68 percent of parents. Only 37 percent of Ukrainians supported the independent testing, while 42 percent would prefer the old system of entry examinations run by each individual university.⁸¹ In general, the public remains undetermined regarding the role of standardized testing in the anti-corruption campaign. In the meantime, those aspiring for publically funded studentships in universities use new and more sophisticated ways of achieving their goals.

In 2011, the key word in the admissions campaign became the “Olympiad.” Similar to persons with disabilities, high school students who won an academic Olympiad, administered by the government, were given preferences in admissions. It is exactly in this context that the media reports the fact that the daughter of the Deputy Minister of Education and Science won three academic Olympiads, including the national Olympiad in Ukrainian language, the national Olympiad in jurisprudence, and the city Olympiad in English language. The media assures the reader that normally no one wins more than one Olympiad, leaving the reader to arrive at his/her own conclusions.⁸² It appears that representatives of the central authorities themselves do not believe in the effectiveness of the

standardized test as a major anti-corruption tool. Thus, although the test is portrayed and indeed widely advertised as a strong response to corruption in universities, it may be considered a tool of governmental pressure on university governance.

In August 2012, after another scandalous admissions campaign, the then Minister of Education and Science declared that next year all applicants will submit application materials on-line.⁸³ In 2012, some of the applicants used this system and it went down during the very first day, allegedly due to the overload in sign-ins and applications. While the government promises to continue its efforts in improving the system of standardized testing, more Ukrainians become in favor of the old system of admissions. According to the 2011 post-admissions survey, almost 50 percent of Ukrainians count on money and connections in admissions to HEIs, while being nostalgic for old-fashioned entry examinations. 48 percent of Ukrainians want the return of the old system of entry examinations, while only 28 percent do not think that it is necessary.⁸⁴ Technical difficulties may be declared temporary and superficial, but they repeat year after year. Even during the 2016 university admissions campaign, a significant number of applicants were submitting documents personally at specific universities. The real reasons for cultivating distrust in standardized testing may be different from technical failures.

Underlying causes of the malfunctioning standardized testing in admissions to universities should be sought among the groups of interests. Universities respond to the test as to external and unwanted pressure that comes from the central government, while enjoying the discrediting power of negative media reports. People's reaction to such novelty as standardized test is rather traditional and is expressed in the market based approach of buying what is available, be it through legal venues or with the help of corrupt means. Buying the privileged status of an applicant with special needs was a temporary solution. One further invention was academic Olympiads. This is in line with the traditional approach that comes from the Soviet era and may be formulated as "beat the system." No doubt, there will be further inventions of similar character. Litvin's forecasts that Ukraine will return to an examination system are unlikely to come to fruition. Instead, universities will adapt, as they always do, to the standardized test as to a form of external pressure. Responses of university governance are external in character and direction, while keeping internal changes low profile. Internally is exactly where they adapt to tests and other challenges to the university authority and discretion over admissions decisions.

Conclusion

For the post-Soviet space, higher education corruption is here to stay. Neither Victor Yushchenko nor Victor Yanukovych was able to tackle corruption in universities. And this is despite the central government preserves its control over universities. While there were conversations about the need to delegate more authority to universities, university autonomy remains largely a proclamation rather than a reality. Three ministers of education and science—Nikolaenko, Vakarchuk and Tabachnik—were unable to introduce radical changes in the system of financing higher education and quality control. Although these educational leaders were not in support of each other's actions, they nevertheless demonstrated consistency in advancing the standardized testing initiative. One of the explanations to such a consistency is the strong support of US development agencies in implementing the standardized test. However, this initiative was unable to bring any significant impact on reducing corruption in universities. Moreover, even claims about the reduction of corruption in university admissions due to the externally and independently administered test are arguable. Such claims have yet to be substantiated with data.

Nikolaenko, Vakarchuk and Tabachnik were unable to design a single strategic plan for Ukraine's education. Their consecutive successors, Serhiy Kvit and Lilia Hrynevych, have faced same challenges: problems with equity and efficiency, lack of funding, low quality education, diploma mills, fraudulent doctoral degrees, bribery, embezzlement, and fraud in both horizontal and vertical axes of corruption. This implies that the authority that the Ministers possess is insufficient for radical changes, while national leaders do not go beyond declaratory statements. The stagnant situation with corruption in universities may be explained by the unwillingness of ruling political regimes to change the situation for better. Instead, the central government is interested in exercising external pressure on universities. By these means the ruling political regime maintains its control over HEIs. The official rhetoric about university autonomy is confronted by the unwillingness to have universities independent from the government.

The leading role of the government in radically changing the process of admissions to universities through standardized testing is undeniable. If not for the central government, universities would never willingly externalize their function of selecting prospective students.

The government pressures universities with the test as a strategic tool of external control, while universities employ tactical tools on the ground. In response to the governmentally imposed test, universities manipulate technicalities that allow them to decide who to enroll in order to pursue their own interests. No doubt, new loopholes in rules and regulations will be found for each new annual admissions campaign, and new inventions will surface year after year. The external character of the test as related to university administration is also beyond doubt. It is imposed not only on universities, but on the public as well. Moreover, neither of these two constituent groups supports it en masse. Nevertheless, the standardized testing project continues, which means that it is a form of actively used governmental external pressure.

NOTES

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BEHIND ESTATE: COSSACK PARTICULARISM AND INADEQUACIES OF THE NATIONAL PARADIGM

Abstract

The nineteenth century has long been considered as the age of nationalism during which different societies across Europe and beyond gave up their regional and social class identities in favor of the national ones or adjusted the former to the latter. However, increasingly more historians call this view into question, drawing attention to individual and collective historical actors who did not think of themselves in ethnic or national terms. This article builds upon the recent scholarship on national indifference in search for a new approach to studying the collective identifications of people, whose sense of belonging has always been a subject of discussions—the Cossacks.

Keywords: Cossacks, Russian Empire, Ukraine, Kuban, North Caucasus, nationalism, national indifference.

Introduction

Sometime in the first half of the 1840s, during his trip across the Caucasus, the German traveler and naturalist Moritz Wagner found himself involved in an unusual conversation in the town of Ekaterinodar, the capital of the Black Sea Cossacks. A borderland military outpost rather than a center of urban life, Ekaterinodar was anything but a place to enjoy sophisticated discussions with representatives of the learned society, and Wagner was spending his time with some Cossack officers whose trust he won while drinking glasses of vodka to their health. One day, their talk turned to the question of the Cossacks' origin. Wagner had already had some insight into this matter and was willing to share knowledge with his companions. This knowledge, however, nearly led to a conflict. The traveler naively assured the officers that, according to the renowned philologist Julius Klaproth, the term "Cossack" was a loanword from the Tatar language, where it meant nothing more than a

robber. Such an unpleasant etymological note provoked anger on the part of the Cossacks, and Wagner hastened to defuse the situation by saying that another great scholar, the Russian historian Karamzin, debunked this offensive hypothesis and defended their honorable name. Karamzin proved, as Wagner told them, that “Cossack” meant a volunteer, partisan, daredevil, and that “it was only applied to bold soldiers who bled and died for freedom, country, and faith.” The Cossacks were pleased and went on drinking vodka, resenting Klaproth, and giving Karamzin hearty cheers.¹

Wagner believed that even the Cossack officer stratum had quite a vague understanding of where their name came from and what it meant, but they were fully confident that it signified something valiant, honest, and brave. The word “Cossack,” which comes in English from Ukrainian *kozak* and has a slightly different Russian equivalent *kazak*, was indeed a loanword from the Turkic languages, where, as it has been well established, it signified “a free, independent person, an adventurer, a vagabond.”² The first Cossack communities, which appeared in the sixteenth century along such rivers as the Dnieper, Don, Terek, and Yaik, fully complied with these meanings. They were bands of freebooters, formed from social groups as diverse as runaway serfs and adventurous nobles, whose way of life consisted of forays into either neighboring or more distant territories, be it Muscovy, the Ottoman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, or the communities of the North Caucasus people. The Cossack communities were independent, horizontally organized, and open to all newcomers regardless of their origin. These communities elected their elders through the assemblies and managed their own affairs at the assemblies as well. Gradually, with the expansion of Muscovy, they were absorbed into the tsars’ domains. In the eighteenth century, the Cossack hosts ended up as military communities in the service of the empire, dependent on the will of the tsars.

At the time of the collapse of the tsarist regime, eleven Cossack hosts populated the imperial fringes from the Black Sea steppes to the Pacific coast. These late imperial Cossack communities shared little similarity with the original freebooters of the early modern era and constituted large social organizations of irregular troops employed by the authorities for military purposes and, later, used to suppress demonstrations and popular unrest. Moreover, not all of these hosts existed before the nineteenth century. What place, then, was secured for the Cossacks within the imperial social order? How did the former freebooters manage to survive until the very end of the modernizing empire? The irony was that the existence of the

Cossacks in the late imperial time could hardly be named as a survival. Rather, it was, to a considerable extent, a surprisingly modern phenomenon that owed much to imperial social creativity. In this sense, the Cossack estate had a remarkably close parallel with another example of imperial social engineering—the system of Indian castes, which, as Nicholas Dirks showed, was not “an unchanged survival of ancient India,” but a largely modern innovation, introduced by the colonial British authorities in order to categorize and manage the unfamiliar social reality.³

To a certain degree, the Russian Empire followed a similar pattern. It invented the category of *soslovie* (estate) as a way of organizing the diversity of its population into an easily manageable system. The groups that eluded clear-cut social definition were subsumed under the estate system. The authorities appropriated pre-existing traditions and recast them in a new manner, endowing them with particular rights and responsibilities.⁴ Thus, diverse and heterogeneous social groups became legal categories, among which were the Cossacks and plenty of the so-called *inorodtsy* (literally, “of alien origin”), i.e. colonized imperial people, lumped together into legally defined groups and provided with artificial traditions. In the words of Vladimir Bobrovnikov that echo those of Dirks, they were “constructed in the course of the colonial conquest.”⁵

Cossack hosts, with their various collective experiences, conditions of life, and personal backgrounds, were first ascribed to the *soslovie* category in Mikhail Speranskii’s *Code of Laws* in 1832, but their status was elaborated in detail some years later. At first, it was done so for the Don Cossacks in 1835, and for the rest of the hosts—in the subsequent decade. In its homogenizing endeavor, the state institutionally determined the Cossacks’ way of life from above, cementing their fluid relationships into the static and thereby relatively easily governable construct. The Cossacks were not governed by common imperial law, but were subjected to the regulations of military code, developed by central authorities. Henceforth, Cossacks turned into a privileged part of the population of the Russian Empire, a specific military caste that possessed peculiar rights and obliged to execute specific military duties.⁶

While the relationship between the Cossacks and the state were determined through the concept of estate, it allowed authorities to avoid officially the intricate problem of determining the social nature of the Cossacks in terms of nationality (*narodnostʹ*), which gained currency in the 1830s. However, the question of whether there was something besides the estate principle, and, if so, what it was, preoccupied the minds of

many. Some went as far as to regard the Cossacks as a separate ethnic category within the greater Russian nation. For example, in his work *The Geography of the Russian Empire*, the educator Ivan Pavlovskii listed the Cossacks as one of the most important nations (*narody*) of Russia, along with the Great Russians, Little Russians, and Belarusians. For him, their peculiarity was apparent, but it could not be easily catalogued. As he explained in his survey, "the Cossacks share with the Russians only two common features: faith and language; in all other respects of their folk way of life they differ drastically from the latter, such as by physiognomy, mores, clothes, housings etc."⁷ Other scholars, agreeing with this classification, attached greater importance to such a taxonomy in political terms. The ethnographer Sergei Maksimov contrasted the Belarusians who, as he claimed, were averse to the idea of their separateness and national exclusivity, with the Little Russians, the Cossacks, and the Siberians, who he believed were prone to separatism.⁸ The idea of the Cossacks as a full-fledged and separate member of the all-Russian family could indeed be a banner for some politically engaged Cossack circles, such as a small but conspicuous group of the "Cossack nationalists" (if anything, such was their self-designation), which were active on the Don in the early 1910s.⁹

Views of this kind did not belong to the mainstream. Much of the Russian intelligentsia increasingly viewed the Cossacks as an epitome of all the things Russian. This remarkable, mostly of literary origin, myth had a long-lasting career. It was powerful enough to be able to affect imperial policy towards the Cossacks in the reigns of Alexander III and Nicholas II or, notably, led many anti-Bolshevik officers during the Civil War to believe that Cossack lands were destined to play the major role in crushing the Bolsheviks. However, the late imperial fascination with the Cossacks reveals more about the intelligentsia's beliefs rather than something about the Cossacks themselves.¹⁰

Ethnicity, Nation, or Neither?

In the last decades, a number of scholars attempted to explain the peculiar nature of the Cossacks in terms familiar to social sciences, taking the largest Cossack community, the Don Cossack host, as a model. Since the 1980s, when it became possible to discuss openly Cossack-related themes, Russian historiography has adopted the term *subetnos* (sub-ethnic group) that came into the academic fashion largely due to the influence of

the leading Soviet anthropologist Yulian Bromlei. Despite, or, more likely, thanks to its vagueness, this concept has come into general use among post-Soviet researchers. It contained the notion of ethnicity as a reference point, having the "less than ethnicity" connotation.¹¹

Some scholars attempted to explain the question with the help of analytical categories developed within the Western theories of nations and nationalism. Peter Holquist argued that it was only in the course of the Civil War that the Don Cossacks came to understand themselves as a sort of separate ethnic group, detached from the Russian one, albeit associated with it. The reason for this transformation was the collapse of the social system of the Russian Empire, due to which the very estate categorization died out. It shattered the foundations of the Cossacks existence as an estate, since the Russian imperial order was "the one universally recognized structure that gave form to Cossack identity." Some attempts to formulate the idea of Cossack separateness as either ethnic or national group were undertaken in earlier decades as well, but they were scant. Even during the Civil War, as Holquist stressed, being Cossack meant to participate in the Cossack political allegiance rather than to be of Cossack descent.¹²

If Holquist used the term *ethnos* with regard to the final stage of the collective existence of the Don Cossacks, another historian of the Don Cossack host, Shane O'Rourke, opted for classifying them as a *nation*. While agreeing that the collapse of the empire indeed was the turning point in the Don Cossacks' understanding of themselves, which forced them to resort to the idea of nationhood, he nevertheless contends that long before these events threw the Cossacks into the arms of the nation, they had already constituted a tightly knit community with the firmly secured boundaries. According to him, by 1917 the Don Cossacks had already existed as a distinct group for centuries, while the post-1917 dramatic developments became for the Cossacks the period of transition "from a separate but subordinate community to a nation." Yet the nature of this separateness is unclear. O'Rourke generally avoids using clear-cut definitions but tends to present the Cossacks as an "ethnic group," capable of being compared with the Finns or the Latvians. Their distinctiveness was built on a historical memory about their former statehood, their rootedness in the Don lands, their local institutions and traditions of self-administration, and a powerful sense of cohesiveness, based on some specific kinds of Cossack social relations. All that, in his opinion, "gave them an existence in their own right." However, he applied the term "nation" to the pre-1917 Don Cossack community as well, noting that

the absence of nationally minded intellectuals was an important feature that distinguished the Don Cossacks from other European nations in the making. "Ironically, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been full of intelligentsias looking for a nation," while "the Cossacks were unusual in being a nation in search of an intelligentsia."¹³

Brian Boeck, the author of a comprehensive and sophisticated study of the Don Cossacks in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, advocates for the use of the term *ethnos* for the Don host of the eighteenth century as well. In the late seventeenth century, as he established, the Don Cossack community ceased to accept newcomers to its structure, closing the boundaries of the Cossack corporative body. Eventually this led to the emergence of the self-contained community, closed in on itself.¹⁴ In another article, dedicated to the Kuban Cossacks, the second largest host in the Russian Empire, Boeck is less specific about the limits of the Cossacks' particularism. Stating that "prior to the revolution the Cossacks had clear conceptions of group identity (drawing important distinctions between themselves and their Russian, Ukrainian, and Caucasian neighbors) and zealously guarded the boundaries of their communities against non-Cossacks," he does not specify how far this identity extended.¹⁵ It remains unclear, for instance, whether it embraced exclusively members of the Kuban Cossack community, or it also included the neighboring Don and Terek Cossacks. Without further specifications, one can go as far as to conclude that the rest of the Cossack hosts, separated by thousands of kilometers, shared a more or less common sense of identity regardless of distance, the absence of horizontal communication, and the striking differences in administrative, social, military, economical, and cultural organization of their life.

Thomas Barrett's book about the Terek Cossacks seems to be the only study that shows the irrelevance of the concepts of *nation* and *ethnos* with regard to the Cossack communities. Barrett points out that the Terek Cossacks' identifications were "locally grounded" and were shaped by a very limited set of social interactions, in which they were involved. The Cossacks rarely participated in war campaigns *en masse* and "looked more to their regiments—or their villages, or their part of their villages, even—for a sense of identity." They had some sense of belonging to the empire's Cossackdom, but did not think much about what this belonging actually meant. Barrett cites the words by a contemporary observer that, just like Moritz Wagner's companions, "in most cases they call themselves simply 'Cossacks' not understanding the significance of the word." For Barrett,

generalizing conclusions about the Terek Cossacks' identities would be futile, since "the frontier identities of the Terek Cossacks were as diverse as the people themselves and many, no doubt, combined identities."¹⁶

Such inconsistencies in using definitions may be explained by the difficulties confronting the language of social sciences with its fixation on the national or ethnic identities, but they also raise further important questions. There is an evident over-representation of the Don Cossacks in the studies dealing with the history of the Cossacks in the Russian Empire. Studying this particular Cossack community, historians tend, albeit implicitly, to extrapolate their conclusions to other Cossack hosts. It results in an unwitting essentialization and homogenization of the Cossacks estate, for which reason it is not always clear how broadly the Cossack distinctiveness should be interpreted. If, according to the suggested models, the Cossacks came to see themselves as either an *ethnos* or nation, it is often far from clear, which Cossack hosts "matured" to such degree. Apparently, minor Cossack hosts created by the authorities in the nineteenth century almost from scratch, as was the case of the Ussuri, Amur, or Semirech'e Cossack hosts, could not claim any sort of ethnicity or nationhood for themselves. Yet, even such large hosts that boasted their ancient historical roots as the Kuban or Terek Cossack hosts were in fact aggregations of people of various origin and background, who spoke different languages and were brought together at different times by the state interest. This makes them unlikely candidates for "ethnic" or "national" communities.

The case of the Kuban Cossacks, as the Black Sea Cossacks came to be called after 1860, is particularly illustrative. Nearly half of them spoke in a dialect of Ukrainian, while another half spoke a vernacular form of Russian, and this cultural rupture was an undercurrent of many local developments. The Kuban Cossacks clearly shared a sense of belonging to a Kuban Cossack military organization and differentiated themselves from both Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking non-Cossack settlers that came to live on their land in large numbers. But the processes of self-identification also worked the other way around. With the rise of ethnography as a scientific discipline that relied on language as a or, rather, *the* criterion for categorizing human diversity, local elites and intellectuals acknowledged the Cossacks' cultural affinities with the Little Russians and Great Russians and somehow asserted their belonging partially to the Little Russian people, and partially—to the Great Russian. Yet these "ethnic" loyalties, which rank-and-file Cossacks were not necessarily aware of, were of

secondary importance in comparison to the loyalty to the host. Given these circumstances, can we postulate the awkward social model, according to which two different Cossack “(sub-)ethnic” groups existed within a larger Kuban Cossack “ethnos,” which in turn was subordinate to the larger Ukrainian and Russian ethnic communities at once? Or, if the concept of *ethnos*, let alone *nation*, just did not work, should we nevertheless insist on employing it to better understand this complex social phenomenon?

National Indifference in East-Central Europe

In a number of his works, Rogers Brubaker famously warned against conflating the category of practice, be it either “ethnicity” or “nation”, with the category of analysis. The way of thinking about “ethnic groups and nations as real entities, as communities, as substantial, enduring, internally homogenous and externally bounded collectivities,” so conventional to the social sciences, he argued, led to a major misconception in scholarship, which he referred to as the social ontology of “groupism.”¹⁷ By this, he did not intend to imply that these terms should be discarded from the conceptual apparatus of humanities. Rather, Brubaker called for ultimate caution in their use:

Ethnicity, race, and nation should be conceptualized not as substances or things or entities or organisms or collective individuals—as the imagery of discrete, concrete, tangible, bounded, and enduring “groups” encourages us to do—but rather in relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated terms. This means thinking of ethnicity, race, and nation not in terms of substantial groups or entities but in terms of practical categories, situated actions, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects, and contingent events. It means thinking of ethnicization, racialization, and nationalization as political, social, cultural, and psychological processes. And it means taking as a basic analytical category not the “group” as an entity but groupness as a contextually fluctuating conceptual variable.¹⁸

Indeed, the conceptual apparatus of the social sciences is rooted in the political experience of twentieth-century Europe, which ostensibly ended up as a commonwealth of nation states. It implies that the unavoidable and progressive mass nationalization underlies modern societies and, simultaneously, is the reason for them being modern. According to this

nationalism-cum-modernization template, the advent of nationalism was inevitable as far as societies succeeded in their development. Thus, different societies were advancing, at varying speeds and with varying success, toward the national state of mind. This narrative conflates the arrival point, i.e. national state, with the point of departure that already contains the preassigned vector of movement towards the nation. Such a vantage point on the history of Europe leaves little room for those who might not have been involved in the orbit of nationhood. The omission of people with no precise national belonging or with many non-national ones, thus, is not an oversight of the contemporary scholarship. It stems from the presumption inherent in the social sciences as such. As James Bjork put it,

The virtual absence of such [nationally indifferent] groups in European historiography is not just a “gap,” an unfortunate lacuna in historians’ research agendas. It reflects, rather, a fundamental difficulty in imagining individuals and groups who operate outside of a definite national context, actors whose nationality might provide a useful external perspective for exploring not only the internal engines of nationalization but also the limits of such processes. Part of the challenge of exploring the phenomenon of national indifference, of course, is envisioning whether and where the residents of modern societies could plausibly escape the omnipresence of the nation.¹⁹

The underlying premise of this article proceeds from the assumption that neither *nation* nor *ethnos* should be the measures with which every society should be approached, especially when societies stubbornly resisted being analyzed, described, or explained with the help of these criteria. In other words, one should not keep looking for the “nation” or “ethnos” if one experiences insurmountable difficulties in finding them. As I argue, the Cossacks were but one case of that social reality, where these concepts barely worked.

In her programmatic article “Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis,” Tara Zahra invited historians to reevaluate critically the power of nationalism in both nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Instead of seeing Europe as an arena of nations in the making and communities being imagined, she suggested taking the category of “national indifference” as an analytical tool for studying personal and collective identifications.²⁰ According to her, ambiguous

loyalties were a norm rather than an exception in the pre-1914 era, but even after 1918 exclusive national identities did not gain that much ground as it is universally believed. Outlining the new perspective for historical research, Zahra took stock of the work already done by a collective of scholars to which she herself belongs.

This collective of historians who specialize on the Habsburg monarchy and, more particularly, Bohemia, addressed the issue of non-national allegiances on different levels—from representatives of educated elites, engaged in politics and culture, to “ordinary” people. The pioneering book by Jeremy King, focused on local politics in the Bohemian town of Budweis/Budejovice, provided an in-depth analysis of the city, much of the population of which did not fall exclusively into the categories of either “the Czechs” or “the Germans.” Instead, they constituted a society that comfortably existed somewhere in-between, being overwhelmingly bilingual and choosing one nationally-framed side or another depending on circumstances and transient preferences.²¹

The path-breaking book by Peter Judson has demonstrated the failure of the efforts of national activists in the Habsburg monarchy to win the sympathies of the local population for the national cause. Judson’s book, which concentrates on such regions as South Bohemia, South Styria, and South Tyrol, focuses on a wide range of topics, all of which testify to the unwillingness of the local people to participate in nationalist undertakings. Judson puts into question the very concepts of *frontier* or *border* as ideological tools employed by national activists “as part of a larger strategy to normalize national identities and to eradicate both bilingualism and the alternative loyalties that it represented.” Contrary to the nationalists’ claims, the inhabitants of such areas rarely viewed the territories they lived in as borderlands that separated nations and “did not automatically translate division in language use into divisions of self-identification or even of loyalty.” Developing his argument, Judson suggests that the notion of language frontier, too, should be treated with care since the majority of people who were supposedly divided by language, were in fact bilinguals and easily switched languages depending on situation and their own interests. Remarkably, it was newcomers to these regions, nationally-minded intellectuals, who saw themselves as spokespersons of “real” local interests, “authentic rural insiders with a natural right to set the local agenda.”²²

Tara Zahra, a former Judson’s student, applied his approach to another subject. Her book, devoted to the nationalist struggle in Bohemia to take

control of children's education by establishing schools, orphanages, and organizing the welfare system, also revealed the striking reluctance of largely bilingual commoners to enroll themselves in the exclusive, monolingual national communities.²³

The criticisms against the borderland paradigm are true for not just "weak," unmarked borders, but for "strong" borders as well. Even the ostensibly firm, stable and long-existing "natural" state borders like that between Saxony and Bohemia, which had existed since mid-fifteenth century, as it appears on closer examination, were no less permeable than the shifting language frontiers described by Judson. This is evident from Caitlin Murdock's study of the German and Czech nationalists' struggle with the national ambiguity of the local population on both sides of the Saxon-Bohemian border.²⁴

While these works deal with the Habsburg monarchy, the classic model of supranational empire and, thus, the most likely place to find non-nationals, other important studies demonstrate that national unawareness was not unique to the Habsburg Empire. By the example of Upper Silesia, James E. Bjork demonstrated that in the German Empire there were large numbers of people who continued to think in non-national categories well into the twentieth century. Besides, his work has made it evident that national indifference was characteristic for Central European highly industrialized and modernized regions as well. Proceeding from his analysis of the local electoral politics, census data, and the results of the plebiscite of 1921, he has shown that due to the influence of the Catholic elites, which partially resulted in and partially was reinforced by the nationalists parties' lack of success in rallying people around national cause, a large part of the population of Upper Silesia were ambivalent about their national status.²⁵

Historians of the Ottoman Empire and its successor states have also contributed to the scholarship that breaks with the national and ethnic-centered analytical framework. Nicholas Doumanis proposed to get rid of the national paradigm's "retrospectively ascribed distortions and anachronisms" and to look at the social composition of the late Ottoman Empire as a kaleidoscopic diversity of social solidarities that were not aligned according to the language or religious criteria, but were based upon the notion of locality, where the people jointly lived. Analyzing the testimonies of Greek Orthodox Christians who left Turkey in the course of the "great unmixing of peoples" of 1912-1924, he shows that the violence that occurred in these years was not caused by inter-ethnic tensions. On

the contrary, the violence created the very situation when individuals were forced to choose the side. Moreover, the choice was already made for them by those who spoke on behalf of their assumed national communities.²⁶

In her research of the population exchange and mass migrations between Greece and Bulgaria in the first half of the twentieth century, Theodora Dragostinova has examined the fates of people who were involved in these processes. She has shown that those, whom the governments of both countries counted as Bulgarian Greeks and Greek Bulgarians, i.e. the national minorities that by historical chance found themselves living in a wrong homeland, sought ways to stay in their actual homelands. These people resisted the national ascription from the part of the nationalizing states, even if they adopted the “national language” imposed by the authorities to negotiate more tolerable conditions for themselves.²⁷

The Russian Empire, Ukraine, and National Uncertainty

All these works show that people in East-Central Europe did not necessarily framed the experience of their collective existence in national or ethnic terms. Moreover, they demonstrate that nationalization of the masses met with serious difficulties even in the regions with well-developed nationalist movements, which possessed the means and, as in the case of the Habsburg monarchy, relative freedom of action to propagate their ideal of nation. To what extent are their conclusions applicable to the Russian Empire or the states that emerged across the post-imperial space?

So far, no studies have examined the issue of national uncertainty there in a way comparable to the works described above. Even those works that came close to this problem failed to address it explicitly, which testifies to the resistance of scholarly language to the challenges of this kind. In one of a few monographs written in the genre of local history and dedicated to the borderland area between Ukraine and Russia, Donbass, its author, Hiroaki Kuromiya, admitted that he had begun to explore the history of this region relying on the theory of nations and nationalism suggested by Ernest Gellner, but instead found there “nonnations” and “nonnationalism.” However, he did not make these categories instrumental for his research and proceeded to use more convenient and well-developed framework of references based on national terminology with its clear and non-problematic usage of the designations the “Ukrainians” and the “Russians.”

Moreover, he openly juxtaposed them as adverse communities who lived separately in cities and villages and expressed their mutual hostility by means of physical violence.²⁸

An important exception is Kate Brown's book dedicated to the Soviet ethnic constructivism in the region of Volhynia during the interwar period. Brown has put into the focus of her research the policy toward nationally indifferent Ukrainian and Polish speakers, who were unsure about their ethnic belonging. She points out that the lack of understanding of how to categorize these communities along the ethnic lines caused many difficulties for the Soviet authorities.²⁹

Unlike the early Soviet period, when the authorities required people to be national and used expert knowledge to determine it from above, the Russian Empire did not envision the imperial edifice as a structure divided into national compartments and, just as it was elsewhere, room for non-national allegiances was much broader.³⁰ Some of the historians of the Romanov Empire have long come to realize the need of studying non-nationals. As early as 1985, Alfred Rieber called on historians to hear "the voices of inarticulate," those who associated not with the nation, but primarily with *soslovie* or certain regions.³¹ Andreas Kappeler also came close to putting the feasibility of the nation-related conceptual apparatus into question. He wondered: "Are elites and commoners, townspeople and peasants members of the same nation? Or do they have any national consciousness at all?"³²

These questions have not become a subject of special studies, yet fruitful discussions about ambivalent, multi-dimensional and non-national identifications of imperial subjects did take place. In 2005, in the journal *Ab Imperio*, Mikhail Dolbilov and Darius Staliunas urged for caution in using the concept of "nation" and nationally-loaded terminology with respect to the imperial era because it leads to the imposition of modern-day analytical techniques on the logic of historical actors. Historians, they wrote, must not "lose sight of the differences between today's categories of research and the language of self-description of actors of nation-building (or the language used, for example, by the imperial authorities to describe their activities)."³³ Further elaborating their point in another essay, they argued that the late imperial understanding of the "great Russian nation" (which, apart from Great Russians, included, Little Russians and Belorussians) was rather a "not so consolidated set of ideas and feelings that were compatible with other, non-ethnic definitions of Russianness," in which "the ethnocentric narrative did not play the crucial part."³⁴

The fact that the discussion about non-national allegiances in the Russian Empire was raised around the question of cultural and political loyalties of the population of Ukraine is particularly illustrative, given all the complexities associated with the problem of the identifications of Ukrainian speakers in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Romanov monarchy. While the exclusive Ukrainian identity was shared by a relative minority of national activists, much of rural population and a significant part of educated elites were rather unsure about the boundaries of the community they belonged to. In the same work quoted above, Andreas Kapeller stressed that those individuals with Little Russian allegiances, whom the Ukrainian national activists treated with disdain, retained a powerful sense of local patriotism and devotedness to local traditions, combining it with the loyalty to the emperor and the commitment to Russian culture. Kapeller argued that although with the rise of nationalism people's identifications with the Russian or Ukrainian nations came into conflict, various degrees of mixed identities continued to exist in the minds of many.³⁵

In another study, which continued the discussion in *Ab Imperio* and was focused on imperial identifications of Ukrainian speakers, Ernest Gyidel stressed that even representatives of educated elites always had more than two options as to how to think of themselves. While there were those who considered themselves conscious Ukrainians and those who called themselves members of the Russian nation, space in-between was filled with people that oscillated and combined overlapping allegiances, adhering to several identifications at once.³⁶ A more recent ambitious attempt to approach the issue of Little Russian identifications was undertaken by Faith Hillis in her book on what she called "the Little Russian idea," by which she implied the use of the local patriotism to political ends. Her study sheds light on that part of Ukrainian/Little Russian society that took pride in local cultural and historical peculiarities and tried to adjust these sympathies to the imperial ideology. Hillis invokes the literature on national indifference, specifically the works by Judson and Zahra. However, contrary to the declared intention, she makes far-reaching conclusions about the adherence of Little Russian intellectuals to the modern Russian nationalism, in this way portraying them as ardent Russian nationalists, albeit with local specificity.³⁷

Another approach, proposed recently by Alexei Miller, also draws from the scholarship on national indifference, but, unlike Hillis, it gives nationally indifferent Ukrainian speakers much more agency. Miller

applies the concept of national indifference to Little Russian elites, who opposed being enrolled into either Ukrainian or Russian nation and comfortably felt within non-national imperial environment and military service. In doing so, he suggests seeing Little Russians in line with other examples of nationally indifferent elites of the Russian Empire who put local loyalties above national ones. Such were the Baltic Germans, the gentry of Bessarabia, and the intellectual and political movement of *krajowcy*, who combined Polish, Lithuanian and Belarusian identifications at once (studied in a similar vein by Karsten Brüggemann, Andrei Cușco, and Darius Staliunas).³⁸

* * *

The irrelevance of the analytical language that frames both the Cossacks and Ukrainian speakers in exclusively ethnic or national terms and represents them as more or less coherent groups that had a common ethnocultural “identity” becomes particularly conspicuous when it comes to Ukrainian-speaking Kuban Cossacks. In this case, two difficult research problems overlap, only adding to the complexity of each.

On the level of commoners, who remained aloof from intellectual processes related to contemplation of the Kuban Cossacks’ history, distinctiveness, and their place within the imperial structure, the level of engagement in nation building was negligible. In Kuban, where the Ukrainian national movement was incomparably weaker than in the provinces on the territory of today’s Ukraine, mobilization into the Ukrainian nation had much less chance to gain a stronghold. Just as it was elsewhere, Ukrainian nationalists lamented the lack of national awareness, and it was all the more obvious given that their activities took place clandestinely, in drastically different conditions. On the other hand, we may conclude that the problems that Ukrainian activists faced were not peculiar for the Ukrainian national movement only and that, contrary to the claims of contemporary Kuban researchers of this issue, its weakness was not determined by some unnatural character of Ukrainian nationhood in Kuban and the Kuban Cossacks’ “voluntary convergence with the Russian people.”³⁹

It goes without saying that the persecution of the Ukrainian nationalist activities as well as the ban of the public use of the Ukrainian language in 1863 and then in 1876 by the imperial authorities decisively contributed

to the weakness of the Ukrainian national movement. However, attributing all responsibility for this on the state policies would be erroneous. In the Habsburg Empire, where no such harsh persecutions existed, we can observe similar processes. A recent study by Andriy Zayarnyuk, devoted to Ukrainian speaking peasants of Austrian Galicia, sheds light on national indifference in the region of the Habsburg monarchy where the Ukrainian national movement had much more power in comparison with the Romanov Empire. Zayarnyuk argues that even "by the end of the nineteenth century, the national activists did not succeed in imposing the Ukrainian identity among the masses of villagers." Educated elites, in their turn, often had multiple loyalties and did not see themselves as belonging to an exclusive national community. According to him, it was only in interwar Poland that "the possibility of avoiding the tenets of the national projects came to a close."⁴⁰

The weakness of the Ukrainian national movement in Kuban does not mean, by extension, that the state-led, Russifying nationalization took the upper hand. In Kuban, as in the Little Russian gubernias, the state did not possess enough resources to instill into villagers' consciousness a sense of being Russian nationals. Neither did it elaborate a clear strategy of how to implement it. A number of historians stress that the paucity of state functionaries made the empire an unlikely candidate to enact an effective policy of nationhood. Its weakness determined its eventual failure to, as Stephen Velychenko puts it, "nationalize the Russians, and to russify the non-Russians."⁴¹ According to Alfred Rieber, peasants' encounters with the state representatives were so rare that there were minimal possibilities to intervene into their everyday life. "The state fixed the amount of taxes and the number of recruits that the peasants apportioned and gathered for it. It punished disobedience and rebellion. Beyond that the state had little to do with the peasants in ordinary times; it was a kind of absentee government."⁴² Moreover, the bureaucracy did not carry out any definite, efficient, and assertive policies when it came to nationality issues. Alexei Miller stresses that imperial policy toward the Little Russians did not contain an affirmative agenda and rested instead on restrictive measures. In other words, tsarist bureaucracy knew what to forbid, but had very weak ideas about what to allow, support, and promote. The state did not develop a consistent policy with regard to the Little Russians until the collapse of the empire in 1917. This does not allow us to regard the imperial apparatus as an effective actor in the nationalization of the masses.⁴³ This is particularly true in the case of Kuban, where the state

was utterly underrepresented and the Cossack administration itself ran much of the affairs normally carried out by the state.

While rank-and-file Kuban Cossacks did not belong to any nation or *ethnos sensu stricto*, neither did the Cossack educated elites. They were preoccupied with retaining their privileges and referred to the early modern origins of their community not due to national considerations, but because they strove to secure the status of the host. Here, too, we can make some cautious comparisons with other social groups that existed within the state order that did not demand them to be national. An interesting parallel can be traced with Bohemian nobles, who opposed Habsburg centralism and referred to the ancient historic rights of the Bohemian crown not out of concern for the national self-determination of the Czech people, but rather seeking “to increase their power by strengthening the institutions, local and provincial, in which they retained the most influence.”⁴⁴ As officers who owed everything to their service of the empire, the Cossack elites somewhat resembled Habsburg militaries who defined themselves through their military service, being resistant to the advances of nationalism and having no nationality.⁴⁵

The Cossack elites had parallel attachments to the empire, to Cossackdom, to their region and their host, to their Little Russian or Great Russian distinctiveness, but none of these loyalties was national. It was an intricate mixture of identifications, aptly characterized by Alon Rachamimov as a situation when “a myriad of collective identifications might be simultaneously attractive to an individual, while not presupposing that these were fundamentally different from—or conflictual with—one another.” With all their inconsistencies, as Rachamimov holds, these identifications did not necessarily belong to different categories or possess different strengths, and an individual did not need to be worried that different notions of collectivity would impinge upon one another.⁴⁶

The conclusions, made by historians with respect to other multi-cultural and borderland societies in other parts of the world can prove surprisingly useful for a better and more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon of the late imperial Cossacks and for the acceptance of the complexity of their allegiances, which cannot be easily disentangled with the help of modern-day analytical tools. Instead of pondering how the concepts of *ethnos* or *nation* can help to elucidate the Cossacks’ sense of collectivity, we can ask how the Cossacks can question and challenge these very concepts. In this sense, they can significantly broaden our knowledge about the foundations and limitations of collective coexistence.

NOTES

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- ³ Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 5.
- ⁴ Alexander Etkind, *Internal Colonization: The Russian Imperial Experience* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), 101–4.
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- ⁷ I. Ya Pavlovskii, *Geografiia Rossiiskoi imperii. Chast' I* (Derpt: Tipografiia Shiunmanna, 1843), 93.
- ⁸ L. E. Gorizontov, "'Bol'shaia russkaia natsiia' v imperskoi i regional'noi strategii samodержavii," in B. V. Anan'ich and Barzilov S. I., eds., *Prostranstvo vlasti: Istoricheskii opyt Rossii i vyzovy sovremennosti*, eds. (Moscow: Moskovskii obshchestvennyi nauchnyi fond, 2001), 144–45.
- ⁹ Boris Kornienko, *Pravyi Don: Kazaki i ideologiia natsionalizma (1909-1914)* (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Evropeiskogo universiteta v Sankt-Peterburge, 2013), 194.
- ¹⁰ Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, *The Cossack Hero in Russian Literature: A Study in Cultural Mythology* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992). For the importance of the image of the Cossacks for the White movement, see Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia's Continuum of Crisis, 1914–1921* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2002).
- ¹¹ Yu. V. Bromlei, *Ocherki teorii etnosa* (Moscow: Nauka, 1983), 84.
- ¹² Peter Holquist, "From Estate to Ethnos: The Changing Nature of Cossack Identity in the Twentieth Century," in *Russia at a Crossroads: History, Memory and Political Practice*, ed. Nurit Schleifman (London, Portland, OR.: Frank Cass, 1998), 92, 98.

- 13 Shane O'Rourke, "From Region to Nation: The Don Cossacks 1870-1920," in *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700-1930*, eds. Jane Burbank, Mark von Hagen and A. V. Remnev (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 221–22, 234; Shane O'Rourke, *Warriors and Peasants: The Don Cossacks in Late Imperial Russia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 101, 172.
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- 41 Stephen Velychenko, "The Size of the Imperial Russian Bureaucracy and Army in Comparative Perspective," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 49, no. 3 (2001): 362.

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- ⁴³ Alexei Miller, *The Ukrainian Question: The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2003), 242, 256.
- ⁴⁴ Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 23.
- ⁴⁵ István Deák, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 184. Deák was not the first scholar who drew attention to the non-national character of Habsburg militaries. As early as 1929, Oszkár Jászi stated that Habsburg army's officers "constituted something like an anational caste." See Oszkár Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 144. However, Deák does not presume that such a posture stemmed from officer's non-national background. On the contrary, it was cultivated from above, while ordinary soldiers brought their national consciousness with them while entering into the ranks of the imperial army and did not get out of it during the period of their service since they had "too little time to shed an ethnic identity for a supranational one." See Deák, *Beyond Nationalism*, 4. What is more, he insists on the uniqueness of the case of the Habsburg monarchy's officer corps and contrasts it to the Russian imperial army, which, although multiethnic, was "dominated by the Russian nationality and Eastern Orthodoxy" (*ibid.*, 5).
- ⁴⁶ Alon Rachamimov, "Collective Identifications and Austro-Hungarian Jews: Avigor Hameiri," in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, eds. Laurence Cole and Daniel L. Unowsky (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 183–84.

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A SPRINGBOARD FOR REVOLUTION?: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MOLDOVAN ASSR AND THE COMPETING VISIONS OF ITS INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY ROLE

Abstract

The paper focuses on the struggle between different understandings of nationality policies and the international revolutionary role of the Moldovan ASSR in 1924, in the process of the establishment of the republic and the struggle for power in the region. The paper will trace how a group with a more modest vision of the revolutionary role of the Moldovan ASSR turned out to be successful. It will argue that the role of the Soviet Ukrainian leadership was crucial in the choice of the leading group and the direction of the nationality policies and its international dimension in the Moldovan ASSR.

Keywords: Soviet nationality policies, cross-border ties, struggle over borderlands, Bessarabian question

List of Abbreviations

KP(b)U – Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine
KUNMZ – Communist University of the National Minorities of the West
RKP(b) – Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)
RSFSR – Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
TsK – Central Committee
VUTsVK – All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee

In the 1920s the Bolsheviks nationality policies not only served internal purposes, but also had international implications. Their nationality policies had the borderland dimension. Making use of the fact that frequently culturally similar population lived on both sides of the Soviet border, Soviet authorities attempted to use their treatment of non-Russian nationalities to shift the loyalties of their cultural brethren in the neighboring countries. The case of the Moldovan ASSR is usually seen as the most prominent example of the instrumentalization of nationality policies for foreign purposes.¹ Yet, a careful analysis of process of the establishment of the republic in 1924 and the struggle for power therein suggests that there was no unanimity on the international purposes of the Moldovan ASSR among the involved actors.

This paper focuses on the struggle between different understandings of nationality policies and the international revolutionary role of the Moldovan ASSR in 1924, in the process of the establishment of the republic and the struggle for power in the region. The paper will trace how a group with a more modest vision of the international revolutionary role of the Moldovan ASSR turned out to be successful. It will argue that the role of the Soviet Ukrainian leadership was crucial in the choice of the leading group and the direction of the nationality policies and its international dimension in the Moldovan ASSR.

As is well-known, the Soviet leaders refused to diplomatically recognize the “loss” of Bessarabia to Romania in 1918. Yet, the Bessarabian issue was discussed not only on the diplomatic level in the Soviet Union. In the first half of the 1920s there were two major groups that were debating the Bessarabian issue in the Soviet Union. One consisted mostly of Bessarabian emigres to the Soviet Union, another – of the Romanian emigres.²

In July 1921, the First All-Russian Organizational Meeting of the Communists, Romanians and Bessarabians took place in Moscow. It coincided with the Third Congress of the Comintern. The main goal of the meeting was to unite Bessarabian and Romanian emigres in their common party work on the Bessarabian-Romanian direction. The Meeting itself was mostly the initiative of the Moscow-based Romanian communists led by Ion Dicescu-Dik. Eventually the meeting turned out to be an attempt of the Romanian communists to assert their predominance in the Bessarabian affairs and in the Romanian-Bessarabian Bureau of the Moscow Committee of RKP(b). They succeeded in that attempt, forming the Central Bureau almost exclusively of non-Bessarabians. The minutes of the meeting also suggest that there were a number of conflicts at the proceedings, pointing to the struggle for influence, but also to the differences in understanding of the

Bessarabian-Moldovan issues, which would be exposed later.³ At the same time such approach alienated Bessarabians, and later in the process of the creation of the Moldovan ASSR the personal grievances reinforced the differences in the political and national outlooks. Thus, in a way ostracized from the high politics in Moscow, the majority of Bessarabians returned either to the South-Eastern regions of the Ukrainian SSR to continue their work in the local party committees or to the Bessarabian underground. As a result, a certain division of labor emerged: Romanians communists, stationed in Moscow, involved in mostly large-scale Comintern issues, while Bessarabians mostly concentrated on local problems on both banks of the Dniester.⁴ Later this division would play into the hands of Bessarabians when Ukrainian authorities would prefer to entrust them the political organization of the Moldovan ASSR.

The Establishment of the Moldovan ASSR and the Kharkiv Factor

The "Memorandum on the Necessity of the Creation of the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic," sent to TsK RKP(b) and TsK KP(b)U on 5 February 1924, was largely the product of the Romanian emigre communists,⁵ though the idea was in the air. In his recollections Semion Budennyi mentioned that already in 1923 Grigorii Kotovsky and Mihail Frunze discussed with him at his apartment the establishment of the republic on the left bank of the Dniester.⁶ After the opening of the archives historians have reconstructed in more detail the events that followed the appearance of the Memorandum to the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR and have drawn some important connections.⁷ In the existing historiography the discussion of the Memorandum often confines itself to the statement of its expansionist arbitrary character, embodied in the idea of the spread of the socialist revolution to Europe.⁸ At the same time a more careful look on the members of the so-called "initiative group" provides some hints on the possible explanation of the expansionist character of the document.

The list consisted almost exclusively of the Moscow-based Romanian emigres and Romanian Communists actively involved in the Comintern affairs. It is revealing, indeed, that no major future Soviet Moldovan leader, such as Staryi, Badeev, Grinshtein, signed the document. The Memorandum envisaged that the Moldovan SSR would have two crucial goals. The Moldovan republic was expected to serve cultural and economic needs of the local population:

1. The organization of the Moldovan population in a political and administrative unit would contribute to the growth of economic and cultural levels of the population. The consolidation of the latter one, from the viewpoint of the USSR, is the more necessary, the higher is the possibility of military conflicts taking place sooner or later, during which one requires a secured, satisfied rear area on the borders (*pogranichnyi tyl*).⁹

As the cited passage demonstrates, the cultural development of the local population was not the ultimate aim. It was also important for military and defense purposes in the border region. The other purpose of the proposed Moldovan republic was central in the Memorandum:

2. The Moldovan republic can play the same role of the political and propagandist factor, that of Belarusian Republic in relation to Poland, Karelian – to Finland. It would serve to attract attention and sympathies of the Bessarabian population and would reinforce our claims on the reunification of *Zadnestrov'e* with it.

From this point of view, it is imperative to create namely a socialist republic, not an autonomous region within the Ukrainian SSR. United *Pridnestrov'e* and *Zadnestrov'e* would serve as a strategic wedge of the USSR to the Balkans (through Dobrudja) and to Central Europe (through Bukovina and Galicia), which the Soviet Union could use as a springboard for military and political purposes.¹⁰

Thus, the Moldovan republic was expected to play a key role in the expansion of the Soviet influence to Bessarabia, the Balkans and Central Europe. The authors of the Memorandum apparently hoped that the establishment of the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic would bring the prospects of the socialist revolution in these regions closer. The Memorandum suggested the possibility of border revisions and the unification of *Zadnestrov'e* and *Pridnestrov'e*.

The choice of the term *Zadnestrov'e* instead of Bessarabia is noteworthy. Bessarabia by this time¹¹ was a much more clearly defined region in the symbolic geography with settled geographical borders. *Zadnestrov'e* was a vague and ambiguous concept with unclear boundaries. Some could read it as a synonym of Bessarabia. In most cases, the Memorandum suggests this interpretation to its readers. Yet, one could also understand *Zadnestrov'e* as the territory stretching beyond Bessarabia. Possibly this ambiguity was not accidental. As it became clearer from later discussions,

the Romanian Communist emigres, foremost I. Dik, considered the socialist revolution in Romania, not just Bessarabia, to be the main purpose of the Moldovan SSR. That goal also determined the envisaged strategy of the nationality policies in the republic. Dik believed that an almost total Romanianization should have been carried out on the left bank of the Dniester. In that case the future republic could perform two functions: training of the skilled revolutionaries for the subversive activities all over Romania and propaganda once again targeting Romania as a whole.

Paradoxically, the main authors of the Memorandum, the group of Romanian communists headed by I. Dik, eventually got marginalized from the process of the establishment of the new republic. Their plans for the Romanianizing nationality policies were not introduced, preference being given to the Moldovanization. In my opinion, in many respects it was due to the influence of the Soviet Ukrainian leaders in Kharkiv and their mutually beneficial collaboration with the opponents of the Romanianizers, that is mostly local Transnistrian activists and Bessarabian emigres. Yet, the interference and importance of Kharkiv for the evolution of the Moldovan republic requires at least a short explanation.¹²

Undoubtedly, the Ukrainian SSR occupied a specific position in the Soviet Union. It was a rich by Soviet standards and big republic with a numerous and influential party. Nevertheless, its leaders, while disciplined party officials, had also their own ambitions and aspirations. Therefore, in the mid-1920s, the Moscow officials preferred to not antagonize the Soviet Ukrainian leadership much and on every occasion. They were trying to balance, take into consideration the interests of Kharkiv, and give them certain autonomy in some spheres. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the envisaged international role and importance of the Soviet Moldovan republic the often decisive role of Kharkiv may come as a surprise, since the Soviet foreign policy is usually considered to be the exclusive prerogative of Moscow.

The campaign for the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR coincided with specific period in the Moscow-Kharkiv relations. Exactly at that period Ukrainian SSR and RSFSR articulated mutual border claims. The disputes emerged during the process of *raionirovanie*, the revision of the administrative and territorial divisions which took place in these years. From the early 1920s the territory around Taganrog and Shakhty on the South-Eastern border of the Ukrainian SSR was at the center of mutual claims between Kharkiv and local RSFSR authorities. In February 1924, the positions of the latter were reinforced by the creation of a larger and

more resourceful South-Eastern region of the RSFSR. The leaders of the new region used the opportunity to reiterate their claims on the Shakhty and Taganrog districts, based upon the economic considerations. Starting with April 1924 a special commission was investigating the issue. Kharkiv conceded the possibility of the transfer of the contested districts. Yet, in the same decree Ukrainian leaders requested the annexation of much larger territories of the RSFSR on the Ukrainian North-Eastern border on ethnolinguistic grounds. The issue of the transfer of Shakhty and Taganrog to the South-Eastern region was generally settled in October 1924.¹³ A bit later after long-lasting discussions and jockeying for almost a year, the RSFSR also ceded half of the territory, claimed by Kharkiv. The process of the negotiation was long and still left Kharkiv unsatisfied, since they received only a part of the claimed territories.¹⁴

Exactly in these circumstances of the strong claims on contested Ukrainian territories around Taganrog and Shakhty, the “initiative group” was claiming another part of the Soviet Ukrainian territory for its propaganda and revolutionary project. Not surprisingly it encountered little sympathy in Kharkiv. The perspective of losing one more region even less economically developed could have hardly given rise to enthusiasm. Neither in Kharkiv nor in Moscow there was a uniform perception of the project. Soviet Ukrainian leaders had several reservations about the new Soviet Moldovan republic. In the 1920s, in the Soviet Union the right of any non-Russian nationality for the development of its national culture could hardly be questioned. Yet, Kharkiv was unwilling to delegate significant authority to the new republic in such a sensitive region (especially due to the Bessarabian issue), as the Ukrainian-Romanian border. As the result, even a Soviet historian had to recognize that there was much more centralization in the relations between Ukrainian SSR and Moldovan ASSR than between RSFSR and its respective autonomous republics.¹⁵ The border position of the future republic was another issue of concern. There was a strong fear – Chicherin to some extent also shared it¹⁶ – that in the Moldovan ASSR the Romanian nationalism may prevail and eventually there would be a possibility for the secession of the republic from the Soviet Union.¹⁷ Even in the less radical scenarios, a small and weak Moldovan republic could have been a convenient gate for the foreign influences and infiltrations into the Ukrainian SSR and the Soviet Union.¹⁸ In addition, it was evident from the beginning that the population of the Moldovan ASSR would be ethnically mixed. Therefore, for some of the Soviet Ukrainian

leaders the future fate of the Ukrainian population in the new republic was an issue of concern.

Due to all the above-mentioned considerations among the Ukrainian leadership there was a quite strong group that opposed to the establishment of the Moldovan republic, especially in a full-fledged form. At the same time Moscow was reluctant to press the issue passing the Ukrainian authorities. Already claiming part of the territory of the Ukrainian SSR, they were afraid that another loss of territory would alienate the Soviet Ukrainian leaders, whose loyalty was a priority. That excluded the option of the full-fledged Moldovan republic. Mihail Frunze, who took part in the government both in Moscow and Kharkiv, understood the existing balances of power quite well. Therefore, possibly upon Stalin's request¹⁹ and being the first to react to the initiative, he sent to TsK RKP(b) and TsK KP(b)U his verdict: "I am personally – for [the initiative], so that the Moldovan republic be included in the Ukrainian SSR."²⁰ The choice in favor of the autonomous republic within the Ukrainian SSR, not a full-fledged one, reinforced Kharkiv's key role in the process of the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR. It was almost a *carte blanche* for the Ukrainian authorities on behalf of Moscow.

After the initial phase of internal party discussions in Kharkiv and Moscow, in which Mihail Frunze played a major role, the Ukrainian authorities took first steps in the creation of the Moldovan ASSR. On 6 March 1924, the Odessan section of the KP(b)U passed the resolution on the creation of the Moldovan section of KP(b)U.²¹ Just on the next day already the Politburo of KP(b)U issued a decree that "considered reasonable from the political point of view to delimitate an autonomous Moldovan region as part of the Ukrainian SSR."²² These two decisions officially launched the organizational process of the Moldovan autonomy. Yet, many issues remained unclear and, first of all, the number of the Moldovan population in the region and, consequently, the borders of the future autonomy.

Already on 18 April 1924, the Ukrainian Politburo considered the decision to establish Moldovan SSR inexpedient due to the lack of ethnographic and territorial data. The Politburo still requested further collection of data for the possible creation of the autonomous unit with the Moldovan population.²³ Eventually there were two groups collecting the necessary data: the commission, established by Kharkiv authorities and Grigorii Kotovsky and his cavalry corps who stationed at that moment in Transnistria and voluntarily started his own inquiry and calculations. In July 1924, the report of the territorial commission reached VUTsVK.

The results differed dramatically. While Kotovsky's commission counted 283 398 Moldovans, the Ukrainian commission reported only the number of 170 451.²⁴ Even Kotovsky's figures were far from 500.000-800.000, mentioned in the Memorandum from 12 October 1924. These discrepancies and ambiguities gave the pretext and reinforced the convictions of the Ukrainian authorities to postpone the creation of the Moldovan territorial unit.

At this moment, the Moscow authorities intervened. On 25 July 1924, Mihail Frunze sent to I. Stalin a note, in which he criticized the decision of the Ukrainian authorities:

I consider the last decision of TsK KP(b)U erroneous. I have been to Thansnistria personally numerous times and I can ascertain that to the North of Tiraspol there is a continuous stripe with the predominantly Moldovan population... Finally, one should take into account the international dimension. The establishment of even a small Moldovan republic or region will become a weapon of influence in our hands on the peasant and working masses of Bessarabia in the sense of the strengthening of hopes for the deliverance from the Romanian yoke. I recommend revisiting the issue.²⁵

Four days later the Politburo of RKP(b) decided that it was necessary to create a Moldovan autonomous republic and suggested TsK of KP(b)U to issue the necessary directives.²⁶ There can be several considerations that would explain the insistence of the Moscow authorities. The Ukrainian authorities were discussing the Moldovan issue in several opposing voices. The Moldovan ASSR was crucial for the pressure on Romania, especially after the recently failed negotiations in Vienna. Due to the borderland position of the future republic and significant international attention the Soviet authorities could not simply give up the intent to create a Moldovan republic, when it was already officially announced and a number of meetings occurred in support of the endeavor. The abandonment of the Moldovan project would make a laughingstock out of the Soviet government in the eyes of foreign officials and play into the hands of Romanian diplomats. The decision from 29 July 1924, looks like the last time, when the Moscow authorities decisively intervened in the process of the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR. Basically, they insisted on the creation of the republic, but let Kharkiv decide, how to do it.

Forming the Soviet Moldovan Leadership

Along with the creation of the Moldovan ASSR another important process took place – the establishment and the building of the Moldovan section (*obkom*) of KP(b)U and respectively the choice of the ruling elite of the new republic. The documents suggest that the decision was left largely in the hands of Kharkiv. The Soviet Ukrainian leadership had two options: either to rely on the “initiative group” of the Romanian Communists who by their memorandum triggered the whole affair, or to choose the Bessarabian emigres and Transnistrian party members, who were already for some time working in Ukraine in the local party committees. Kharkiv found common ground with the latter. By extension this choice also favored the Moldovanization policies to the Romanianizing ones and in some respects less ambitious international role of the Moldovan ASSR.

The Ukrainian authorities rejected and even isolated the Romanian “initiative group” for several reasons, even though it could have possibly had more potential and influence to carry out a successful state-building project.²⁷ Yet, its plan for the total Romanianization of the region was an unattractive perspective for Kharkiv, since it was already in spring 1924 clear that future republic would contain sizable Ukrainian population. More importantly, Soviet Ukrainian leaders were afraid to lose control over the politics in the region. The Ukrainian authorities did not have leverage over the Romanian emigres. The latter worked mostly through the channels of the Comintern and appealed directly to Moscow, neglecting Kharkiv. Moreover, their ambitions and projects to create in the region a kind of semi-military training camp demonstrated that the Romanian Communists would hardly accept the strict control of the Ukrainian authorities. Finally, the Romanian communists made a tactical mistake, not understanding the above-described Moscow-Kharkiv balance of power in relation to the Moldovan issue. Dissatisfied with the course of events and preference for the Bessarabian and Transnistrian activists in 1924, the Romanian Communists, particularly Dik, sent their critical notes foremost to Moscow. At the same time, the Moscow authorities preferred not to intervene in Kharkiv’s work on the Moldovan ASSR, unless some vital issues were touched upon. Therefore, the Moscow authorities tended to rely on Kharkiv’s replies on Dik’s notes and memorandums. Not surprisingly, the Ukrainian authorities rejected Dik’s criticism, since one of the main objects of critique were the Ukrainian authorities themselves.²⁸

In light of these considerations local Transnistrians and Bessarabians seemed to suit much better. They were themselves quite suspicious of the Romanian influence. Therefore, the Ukrainian authorities felt more secure for their border areas than in the case of the Romanian emigres. The Bessarabian-Transnistrian group already worked for some time in the local committees of KP(b)U. Hence, they were more familiar to the Soviet Ukrainian authorities, since they made part of the Ukrainian party system. In turn, knowing the Ukrainian party from the inside they knew whom and how to address, when the issue of the Moldovan ASSR emerged. At the same time, the Bessarabians and Transnistrians had few connections in the Soviet top party management. Hence, they could hardly make use of these connections to press some issue directly in Moscow without Kharkiv's consent. On the contrary, the Moldovan group had to rely on Kharkiv in their debate with the Romanian communists, since the Ukrainian authorities had enough political weight, which Bessarabians and Transnistrians lacked, to struggle with Dik's group.

Thus, the choice in favor of the Bessarabian-Transnistrians group was likely some kind of a deal between them and the Ukrainian authorities. Local Bessarabians and Transnistrians assumed the republican party leadership and got the support of the Ukrainian authorities in their struggle with the Romanian group. Kharkiv, in turn, got the guarantees that the future developments in the Moldovan ASSR would be under its control. This control acquired legal status in the Moldovan Constitution which made even such usually autonomous local Commissariats as the Commissariat of Enlightenment subject to strict control by the Ukrainian authorities.²⁹

On 8 August 1924, after the discussion of Moscow's directive on the Moldovan republic, the Politburo of the KP(b)U resolved that Abram Grinshtein would carry out the practical implementation of the establishment of the republic.³⁰ Several days later TsK KP(b)U clarified several central issues, formulated by Grinshtein: "To approve Grinshtein's proposals... To consider it necessary to form the party and Soviet leadership of the MSSR out of reliable Comrades-Moldovans... To recognize that the MSSR should be incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR and should have the federative connection with Ukraine, similar to the relations between autonomous republics with the RSFSR."³¹

This was a key decision. Grinshtein was one of the leaders of the Bessarabian Communist underground after 1917. From the early 1920s he was responsible in the KP(b)U for the Bessarabian and Bukovinian

directions. Grinshtein formed the organizational group from Bessarabian Communists, who were well familiar to him. The committee was established to carry out the preparatory works for the creation of the Moldovan ASSR. The committee consisted of three party officials, Grigorii Staryi, Iosif Badeev and Grinshtein himself. None of them were members of the "initiative group" that signed the Memorandum on 4 February 1924. All three came out originally of the Bessarabian Communist underground and would play major roles in the political and cultural life of the Moldovan ASSR in the 1920s. Yet, as it turned out, they had conflicting views on the directions of Soviet nationality policies in the region. On 22 August 1924, at the second meeting of the committee the views of Staryi concerning language issues clashed with the respective views of Badeev and Grinshtein. The conflict was not solved during the meeting and the participants decided to submit the description of both views in written form to TsK KP(b)U.³² These reports contain the views and argumentation of both sides.

Staryi, who would later be considered one of the leading figures of the "Romanianizers" (*rumynizatory*), stated from the beginning that the scientific linguistic connection between Romanian and Moldovan was not his concern and he was much more interested in practical issues. From the practical point of view, he believed that a peasant from Transnistria or Bessarabia understood quite well his counterpart from Iasi, historical capital of the Moldavian Principality. At the same time, a peasant from Transnistria or Bessarabia would not understand 75-90% of literary Romanian. In his opinion, the "language of the Bessarabian and Transnistrian Moldovans" was "so poor that in pure Moldovan, without the borrowing from other languages, one can hardly give even the most primitive political speech."³³ Therefore, unwilling to spend excessive resources on the creation of almost completely new language, he proposed basing language policies on the Romanian canon and Latin script, which were the closest to and most suitable for the Transnistrian peasants. To his argument, Staryi added that the establishment of the Moldovan republic made sense only in light of the "extension of the republic beyond the Dniester." From this point of view of the future unification of Transnistria and Bessarabia, in which the latter was already being Romanianized by Bucharest, and the problem of the re-education of one of the regions could emerge in the nearby future.³⁴

In turn, Iosif Badeev used the same 75-90% of the literary Romanian, not understood by the "Moldovans from Bessarabia and Transnistria,"

to underscore the distinction between Romanian and Moldovan. He summarized the debate the following way:

Why is the Romanian literary language not understood by Moldovans? Is it only because it is literary and differs from the spoken popular language? Or the Moldovan and Romanian languages are two separate languages, which have common Romance roots, but differ from one another like Russian from Ukrainian and Belarusian.³⁵

Badeev made clear that Staryi and Romanianizers advocated the first option, while he himself stood for the latter one. The parallel with the Russian-Ukrainian-Belarusian case was a strong argument for the Bolsheviks in Kharkiv and Moscow who made the choice in favor of the separate Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian languages, and nationalities despite their similarities. Introducing this parallel in the Moldovan-Romanian case, Badeev suggested a similar resolution of the issue. The language policy should have been based upon the local dialect which due to its poor vocabulary had also incorporated many Slavic words. Badeev argued that there was no need to artificially impose Romanian, in turn filled with borrowings from French. Badeev had also tied the question of language to the question of the existence of the Moldovan nationality: "we can only choose Romanianization of Moldovan, if we adopt the point of view, according to which Moldovans do not exist as a separate nationality, but only a single Romanian people exists, which is passing through the stage of national unification."³⁶ Badeev repudiated this assertion, arguing that "Moldovans, with the exception of a small group of politicians, bought by Romanians, do not consider themselves Romanians and do not manifest any love towards Romanian homeland. A Moldovan considers himself a Moldovan and no more."³⁷ The emphasis on the suspicious or even militant attitude of the Bessarabian and Transnistrian population to everything Romanian would be a recurring argument in favor of the existence of the separate Moldovan nationality and culture. Whatever the scholarly arguments, the advocates of Moldovanization would insist that the resistance to Romanian rule in Bessarabia and to Romanian culture on both sides of the Dniester was a fact that borderland and nationality policies should rely on and exploit.

On 19 September, the Ukrainian Politburo discussed the materials presented by the organizational committee. In the resolution, the Politburo endorsed the views of Grinshtein and Badeev on nationality policies

in the Moldovan republic. The decision stated that the linguistic work should aim at the development of the "Moldovan popular (*narodnyi*) language... making an effort to bring [the language in the republic] as close as possible to the language of the Moldovan population of Bessarabia." The resolution also indicated the necessity of the introduction of "Russian (Cyrillic) script."³⁸

Competing Visions of the International Role of the Moldovan ASSR

Kharkiv's decisions outlined the main contours of the new republic. Moscow's final approval was pending. Dik and his associates attempted to use this break between two decisions in order to influence Moscow's positions. On 22 September 1924, they issued a memorandum. The Romanian Communists reminded that the initiative for the establishment of the republic came from them and restated the goals thereof from their point of view. They found the course taken by the KP(b)U erroneous, "harmful for the national organism in the process of formation." The source of the error Dik and his associates saw the source of the error in the lack of knowledge among the KP(b)U leaders on the situation in Bessarabia and Romania and the influence of the "incompetent Comrades," who prepared the ground for the declaration of the republic.³⁹ More importantly, they highlighted the differences, which they had with the KP(b)U leadership on the international role of the Moldovan republic:

The Moldovan Republic, in our opinion, should not only have the goal of discrediting of the dominance of the Romanian bourgeoisie in Bessarabia, but to follow this goal also in the rest of Romania... We propose and agree that the Moldovan Republic, as a federative state, should in this case be part of the Ukrainian SSR. Nevertheless, if the international situation of the Soviet Union does not allow this, that is the inclusion of Bessarabia in the Moldovan SSR, we consider it necessary that the Moldovan Republic joins the Soviet Union directly with equal rights, in order to acquire a more considerable international weight. This motivation is also underscored by the necessity of considerable financial support for future republic, which the Ukrainian SSR cannot grant by itself... The mistake of the Ukrainian Comrades is that establishing the Moldovan SSR, they attempt to resolve only the Bessarabian question, leaving aside the possibility of the Sovietization of the entire Romania... Our key idea is the agitation among the working-peasant masses of entire contemporary Romania.⁴⁰

Thus, for the Romanian Communists the aim was the socialist revolution in entire Romania, not just in Bessarabia. In that respect, their position differed from Staryi, who also supported the introduction of the Romanian literary norms, but only, since they were also introduced by the Romanian authorities in Bessarabia. Staryi focused on Bessarabia, not on Romania.

The views on the nationality issues, outlined in the memorandum of the Romanian Communists intertwined with the proclaimed goals of the future republic. The document stated that the attempts of the Ukrainian Communists to create a barrier against the influence of the "Romanian bourgeoisie" via the creation of a new language were misdirected. "In our opinion, the struggle will be not between two languages, but between two political systems: Soviet and bourgeois-oligarchic. From the dialectic point of view, the best system will be victorious, that is the Soviet system."⁴¹ The memorandum stated that there was no difference between the languages. According to the authors, the Romanian language was more developed. At the same time "the Russian autocracy strongly denationalized Moldovans from Ukraine, and now in the interests of the revolution, it is necessary to give the Romanian language the possibility to develop, that is to renationalize it."⁴² Similar logic justified the introduction of the Latin script instead of the Cyrillic one. Basically, in this memorandum the Romanian Communist emigres advocated radical and total Romanianization and Latinization of the future republic in order to promote the Soviet system in the entire Romania.

The memorandum is of interest, since it demonstrated explicitly different understandings of the goals of Soviet borderland policies among the Soviet activists. Were the cross-border cultural ties for the Bolsheviks a tool to instigate the unification of the contested borderlands and their population in the neighboring states with their kin Soviet republics? Or was it a window to advance the socialist revolution countrywide? In theory, this did not necessarily and always contradict each other. Some Soviet leaders believed that the secession of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus would destabilize the Polish political regime and open the opportunity for the success of the revolutionary forces in Warsaw. In practice, though, this dilemma necessitated many tough choices. The slogan of the self-determination of national minorities was not popular in the neighboring states and, when proclaimed, undermined the support for the Communist parties in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. In the Bessarabian-Moldovan-Romanian issue, where the borders between

nationalities were more vague and ambiguous than in the Ukrainian-Polish or Polish-Belarusian questions, different interpretations of Soviet borderland policies gave birth, among others, to the conflict between the Romanian Communists and Moldovan party activists, backed by the KP(b) U. Besides the conflicting understandings of the goals of the Moldovan republic and the struggle for key administrative positions, there was a divergence of opinions on the most suitable nationality policies.

Eventually the Ukrainian authorities made the choice in favor of the Moldovanizers' point of view. There were several considerations behind this. In the eyes of Kharkiv, Staryi's point of view was compromised by the position of the Romanian Communist emigres. The Ukrainian authorities were quite suspicious of the radical projects of the Romanian Communist emigres. In this case we can argue that the radical emigres' Romanianizing project created a negative attitude among Ukrainian authorities towards Staryi's more balanced and moderate views. It can also be argued that the radical and uncompromising stance of the Romanian "initiative group" had, in turn, radicalized the position of the Soviet Ukrainian authorities and local Moldovan party officials in favor of the comprehensive Moldovanizing project.

In addition, the choice in favor of Moldovanization can be explained in the all-Union context, specifically in the context of *korenizatsiia*. The project of Moldovanization fit the logic of *korenizatsiia* much better, while the Romanianizing arguments were mostly less convincing in the context of Soviet nationality policies. The orientation towards the needs and culture of local Transnistrian population was much more in line with the purposes of *korenizatsiia*. The arguments of the backwardness of the Moldovan culture and of the necessity to borrow the more advanced Romanian one was hardly convincing at the time when the Soviet authorities were creating and developing the languages and cultures of the peoples of the Russian Far North, who were even more backward by Soviet standards.⁴³ In the circumstances, when the identity of the Transnistrian and Bessarabian population was not clear and strong claims in favor of Moldovanization were voiced, the Soviet authorities preferred not to impose the Romanian culture. In this respect, it should be mentioned that Soviet authorities and the Comintern perceived Greater Romania as a "multinational imperialist state."⁴⁴ Therefore, the idea of the imposition of "imperial" and, moreover, "feudal-bourgeois" culture could have hardly been convincing for the Soviet, especially Ukrainian authorities. For the Bolshevik leaders, the discourse of the Romanian Communist emigres could be reminiscent of

the “Great-state chauvinist” rhetoric, which neglected the interests of small backward nationalities, up to denial of their existence.⁴⁵

Finally, it looks that some of the Ukrainian leaders saw in the Moldovanizing project the possibility to realize their own geopolitical ambitions. Bessarabia was one of the regions, along with Western Ukraine, Transcarpathia, Bukovina and to some extent Ukrainian-inhabited regions of the Soviet Union, which Soviet Ukrainian leaders considered to be within the sphere of their interests. While the majority population in Bessarabia was not Ukrainian, there was a large Ukrainian minority. In the Moldovanizing project, targeted only on Bessarabia and closely controlled by Ukrainian activists, some of them saw the potential to claim additional influence in the territory between the Dniester and the Prut. All the above-mentioned considerations contributed to the eventual choice in favor of the Moldovanization project.

On 25 September 1924, the Moscow Politburo in the presence of Zatonsky, Staryi, Grinshtein, and Dik discussed the issue of the Moldovan Soviet republic. The Politburo endorsed Kharkiv’s decisions. Still, the opponents to the establishment of the republic in Moscow attempted to postpone the final decision till the next Plenum of TsK RKP(b).⁴⁶ There are no records on the outcome of this attempt. Apparently, it failed. As it became to a significant extent a Soviet Ukrainian issue, it was up to Kharkiv’s governing bodies to inaugurate the new administrative unit. On 12 October 1924, the Third Session of VUTsVK officially established the Moldovan ASSR, as an autonomy within the Ukrainian SSR. The leadership of the new republic consisted primarily of the Bessarabian and Transnistrian party activists.

Several days before the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR, on 27 September 1924, on the Fourth Session of the Odessan Gubkom, as the representative of TsK KP(b)U and the Ukrainian government, Zatonsky voiced Kharkiv’s official position in the debate on the nationality of the Moldovan population in Transnistria. In his speech, he named the process of the establishment of the republic as the “movement for the revival of the Moldovan nation,” which, among other nations, lived under the “oppression of Royal Romania.”⁴⁷ In this talk Zatonsky clearly sided with the Moldovanizers, rejecting almost any possible equation of “Moldovan” and “Romanian.” Staryi complied with the decision. Though, his disagreements with Badeev would resurface a number of times during the next several years.

More importantly, the opponents of the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR still attempted to reverse or to alter the decision. In Moscow, there were still internal discussions taking place.⁴⁸ At the same time, the letter of the head of the Odessan gubkom Korniushev from 21 October 1924, highlights the dissatisfaction with the Moldovan ASSR within the KP(b) U ranks. He advocated the subordination of the Moldovan ASSR to the Odessan Gubkom. Korniushev envisaged the Moldovan ASSR as an *okrug* with certain “external autonomy,” which would allow the “elder” (*starosta*) to travel around the republic and agitate among the Moldovan peasantry.⁴⁹ Korniushev was displeased with the “Republican scale (*razmah*)” of the leaders of the Moldovan ASSR and considered the administrative apparatus too cumbersome for such a small republic. Korniushev’s criticism, though, should be interpreted from the point of view of his administrative position. As the head of the Odessan gubkom, he was among those party activists, who had the most to lose with the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR. A significant part of the new republic was carved out of his Odessan gubernia. The organizational commission prepared the groundwork for the new autonomous republic under his supervision. Likely, Korniushev hoped that, despite the loss of the territory to the Moldovan ASSR, he would still preserve some influence on the Moldovan republican leaders. He was quick to notice that this was not the case, even though the Odessan gubkom maintained initially some involvement in the Moldovan ASSR.

The Romanian Communists refused to give up. On 28 October 1924, they sent to TsK RKP(b) and TsK KP(b)U a proposal on a new composition of the governing bodies of the Moldovan ASSR.⁵⁰ They even incorporated the current Soviet Moldovan leaders into the suggested list. Still, the attempt to overtake the leadership was evident. The list suggested Ion Dik, as the secretary of the Moldovan obkom. The list eventually reached the leadership of the Moldovan ASSR. Badeev replied to the list in a letter to TsK KP(b)U. He reiterated that Moldovans were a separate nationality, which developed in close contact with the Slavic culture, while the Romanian one evolved under the French influence. Badeev also added that the Bessarabian economy was linked with Ukraine. In contrast – Badeev claimed – the Romanian Communists considered that Moldovans were a part of the Romanian people and the Bessarabian economy was closely connected to Romania.⁵¹ TsK KP(b)U recognized the existence of two groups and supported the current leadership of the republic.⁵²

The Romanian Communists continued their offensive on other fronts. On 6 December 1924, the article of a student of the Romanian

section of KUNMZ G.Al. Florian, which was most likely written under Dik's supervision, who was a Professor at the University, appeared in the newspaper of the Romanian section of the KUNMZ. The article, developing on the September memorandum of the Romanian communists, claimed that with the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR "we must understand the organization of an outpost for the offensive against Romania. One should restore the more or less Romanian character of the Moldovan republic, so that we can this way juxtapose two regimes of the same people. The peasantry of Bessarabia and Romania will have the opportunity to judge, how their brothers on the other bank of the Dniester live."⁵³ Thus, in both documents the authors (possibly the same one) emphasized that the main purpose of the Moldovan ASSR should be the export of the revolution and from this point of view the orientation towards Romania, as a whole, was needed. Florian's article laid the blame on the Soviet Moldovan and Soviet Ukrainian leadership for the distortion of this intent and undermining the revolutionary potential of the Moldovan ASSR. At the same time, the local Moldovan and Ukrainian Communists led a quite different discourse. In the process of the creation of the Moldovan ASSR one of the founding myths and constant references was the subjugated position of Bessarabia within the Greater Romania. This was common discourse for various local demonstrations⁵⁴ and the Third session (October 8-12, 1924) of the VUTsVK, where the Moldovan ASSR was officially established.⁵⁵ The references to the revolutionary situation in the all-Romanian context were lacking and that represented striking contrast to the projects of the Romanian Communist emigres.

On January 8 1925 I. Dicescu-Dik launched his last attack, sending a memorandum (in 40 copies) to all major Soviet political figures entitled, "On Culture-Building in Soviet Moldova. Against Russifying Deviation under the Soviet Flag." This was also Dik's most comprehensive document in the "Moldovanization vs. Romanianization debate." It could hardly change the established balance. Its main argument centered on the foreign dimension of the Moldovan ASSR. He stated that the Moldovan ASSR had "huge international importance or, to be modest, more international than internal."⁵⁶ He proceeded to the argument that Moldovans and Romanians were the same people. Based on these two points Dik criticized the Moldovan authorities of the newly established Republic for focusing too much on the internal issues and limiting themselves only to Bessarabia on the international level, neglecting the considerations of worldwide revolutionary movement. Therefore, he proposed abandoning the

separation of Moldovans from Romanians and Bessarabia from the rest of Romania. Hence Dik's recipe for nationality policies in the Moldovan ASSR: "We have to take the Romanian culture and Sovietize it."⁵⁷ In many respects the new memorandum was the reiteration of the previous statements of the Romanian "initiative group" in a more detailed form. The innovation was the emphasis on the "Russifying" character of the chosen nationality policies. Thus, Dik evaluated the decision to refute the Romanian language and focus on the local dialects with Slavic influences as the "Russifying" strategy.⁵⁸ He summarized the main problem and dilemma:

Almost every Moldovan village has its own "language," that is their own slang. In fact, only several hundreds of pure Moldovan words remained in use, others are Russian, Ukrainian, or even Jewish.

It is evident, that such language is not appropriate for the development and dissemination of the Moldovan culture. In this situation, we have a single dilemma: further impoverishment of the language, that is its complete Russification or Romanianization of the Moldovan language; its further impoverishment with barbarisms or the elimination of these barbarisms.⁵⁹

Dik likely attempted to make his arguments stronger, stigmatizing his opponents as "Russifiers." In the 1920s in the Soviet Union this was a powerful accusation. Nevertheless, Dik's opponents presented his views as the case of the "Romanian imperialism." The main representative of the "Russifying deviation," in Dik's view was Mykola Skrypnyk. The basis for this assessment was the discussion, which Dik and Skrypnyk had at one of the meetings of the Ukrainian Politburo. According to Dik, Skrypnyk claimed that those who advocate the identity of Romanians and Moldovans were "basically the agents of the Romanian bourgeois ideology... the Romanian Communists are specific imperialists, which aim to exploit the Moldovan people and even anticipate the possibility of the annexation of Soviet Moldova to future Soviet Romania."⁶⁰ Dik's presentation of Skrypnyk as the main "Russifier" is somewhat ironic. Skrypnyk was one of the leaders of Ukrainianization. It is possible that Skrypnyk found the parallels between Dik's pronouncements on Moldovans and "Great-Russian chauvinists" attitudes towards Ukrainians, which prompted the Soviet Ukrainian activist to adopt such a critical stance on the views of the Romanian Communist.

Moldovan Communists had to respond to Dik's accusations. In his response I. Badeev, then the secretary of the Moldovan obkom of the KP(b)U, reiterated his views on the distinctions between the Moldovans and Romanians. He argued:

Since a national movement among Bessarabian and Ukrainian Moldovans exists, then the discussion on whether Moldovans of Bessarabia and Ukraine are the same nation or tribe with the Romanian people is scholasticism, needed and appropriate only to a Romanian professor and not a revolutionary politician, who aspires to get control over the national movement of the nationalities for the organization of the struggle against imperialism.⁶¹

Badeev found in Dik's views the attitude, "impregnated by Great-Russian chauvinism and smacking of sick vestiges of the Romanian social-democracy."⁶² Evidently, the attempt to find in each other the manifestation of the "Great-Russian chauvinism" demonstrated the power of this accusation in the mid-1920s. Badeev alluded several times during the letter to the similarities between Dik's views and the visions of Romanian "imperialism." At the end of the response Badeev asked TsK KP(b)U to pronounce decisively in favor of one of the points of view, in order to stop the constant debates that undermined the government of the Republic. KP(b)U reaffirmed its support for the ruling group and the policies of Moldovanization.⁶³ This decision was more important from another point of view: it clearly targeted the external dimension of the *korenizatsiia* in the Moldovan ASSR exclusively toward Bessarabia and not Romania.⁶⁴ TsK KP(b)U also asked Moscow to intervene and to put an end to the campaign against the leadership of the Moldovan ASSR, carried out in the Romanian section of the KUNMZ. Even after this decision I. Dicescu-Dik continued to press his views in the party circles, but officially the party orientation towards distinct Moldovan language and culture was not questioned until 1931-1932, when the Latinization campaign was launched. Still, even in the period of Latinization the idea of a separate Moldovan nationality persisted.

The vision of the Romanian Communists of the Moldovan Republic presupposed the explicit predominance of the external over the internal dimension in nationality policies. Claiming that the population of the republic was nationally the same as the majority population in the neighboring state Dik's group advocated the necessity of the primarily

political and ideological struggle but not the national one. At the same time within the Moldovanization project of Badeev and Grinstein Moldovans were a separate nationality, different from the Romanian one, and, thus, became a minority within Greater Romania. In certain respects, one may notice similarities with the Ukrainian question. It is possible that the Soviet Moldovan leaders modeled their borderland and nationality policies on the Soviet Ukrainian case. The Bolsheviks expected the Ukrainian SSR to be the point of attraction and reference for the Ukrainian minorities in the neighboring states, first of all in Poland. The Moldovan ASSR was also expected to play similar role for the Moldovan minority in Romania, though the distinction between Moldovans and Romanians was not so evident. Moreover, in the Moldovan case, unlike in the Ukrainian one, the majority of the nationality lived outside the territory of the republic in the neighboring state.

Concluding remarks

Rather than presenting the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR and the choice of the direction of the nationality policies as a top-down, arbitrary process, this paper demonstrated a story of the competition and negotiation between different actors with their own agenda.⁶⁵ Due to the specificities of the Soviet administrative structure and the Moscow-Kharkiv relations at the moment of the establishment of the Moldovan republic, Soviet Ukrainian authorities in many respects acquired a decisive voice in the choice of the governing group of the new autonomy and the direction of nationality policies in the region. The choice of the Bessarabian-Transnistrian group was to mutual advantage of both Kharkiv and the group itself. The struggle for power in the region exposed different understandings of the international revolutionary potential of cross-border cultural ties and the role of the national factor in the revolutionary process in neighboring states. The choices made in the process had significant consequences, since they also favored Moldovanization policies⁶⁶ and more moderate international role of the Moldovan ASSR, than the Romanian emigres envisaged. No less importantly, as the outcome Kharkiv extended its influence in Moldovan and Bessarabian affairs, which would be at display in the following years and have long-lasting consequences.

NOTES

- ¹ Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 36.
- ² This division was not strict and did not have an ethnic dimension. Rather it pointed to the geographical origin of the communist activists. It also followed their denomination and self-denomination in many documents which discussed the division between Romanians and Bessarabians and Transnistrian or Moldovans (presupposed the latter two).
- ³ RGASPI (Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History), f. 17, op. 60, d. 981, l. 7-11.
- ⁴ Oleg Galushchenko, *Bor'ba meĭdu Rumynizatorami i Samobytnikami v Moldavskoi ASSR (20-e gody)* // <http://archive.li/FLrmY> (accessed on July 6, 2017).
- ⁵ The text of the Memorandum can be found in Argentina Gribincea, Mihai Gribincea and Ion Șișcanu (ed), *Politica de Moldovenizare in R.A.S.S. Moldoveneasca: Culegere de Documente si Materiale* (Chișinău: Civitas, 2004), 28-32.
- ⁶ *Obrazovanie Moldavskoi SSR i Sozdanie Kommunisticheskoi Partii Moldavii: Sbornik Dokumentov i Materialov* (Chișinău: 1984), 44-45. This recollection is, though, questionable, since it conveniently was first published in 1964 on the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR.
- ⁷ Oleg Galușchenko, "Crearea Republicii Sovietice Socialiste Moldovenești (R.A.S.S.M.)" *Revista de Istorie a Moldovei*, no. 3-4 (1997); Gheorghe E. Cojocaru, "Studiul," in Gheorghe E. Cojocaru (ed), *Cominternul și Originele "Moldovenismului"* (Chișinău: Civitas, 2009).
- ⁸ For example, Anton Moraru, "Destinul unui Document," *Cugetul*, no 5-6 (1992): 53-54; Ioan Popa, Luiza Popa, *Românii, Basarabia și Transnistria* (București: Editura Fundația Europeană Titulescu, 2009), 53.
- ⁹ *Politica de Moldovenizare*, 30.
- ¹⁰ *Politica de Moldovenizare*, 30.
- ¹¹ The situation was different a century before. On the evolution of the symbolic perception of Bessarabia in the Romanov Empire, see Andrei Cusco and Victor Taki (with the participation of Oleg Grom), *Bessarabia v Sostave Rossiiskoi Imperii (1812-1917)* (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2012).
- ¹² Recently some scholars have pointed to the significant role of Kharkiv in the process of the establishment of the Moldovan ASSR, yet without giving any interpretation on the decisive role of the Ukrainian leaders, Oleg Galushchenko, "Obrazovanie Moldavskoi ASSR: Sovremennyyi Vzgliaĭd Istorika," *Problemy Natsional'noi Strategii*, no. 5 (2014); Cojocaru, *Studiul*.

- 13 lu. Galkin, *Sbornik Dokumentov o Pogranichnom Spore mezhdru Rossiei i Ukrainoi v 1920-1925 gg. za Taganrogsko-Shakhtinskuiu Territoriiu Donskoi Oblasti* (Moscow: Shcherbinskaia Tipografiia, 2007).
- 14 On the Ukrainian-RSFSR border disputes see Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 274-282; Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 155-160.
- 15 A.V. Surilov, ed., *Gosudarstvenno-Pravovye Akty Moldavskoi SSR (1924-1941 gg.)* (Kishinev: Cartea Moldovenească, 1963), 9.
- 16 Cited in Galuschenko, *Crearea Republicii Sovietice Socialiste Moldovenești*, 67.
- 17 On October 11, 1924, a day before the MASSR was officially established, the Chairman of the Ukrainian Sovnarkom V. Ya. Chubar' was giving the speech in which he was explaining the reasons for the establishment of the republic. In the speech, he clearly made a reference to the discontent on the issue among the Ukrainian authorities asserting that MASSR was not a secessionist project. Thus, he was trying to weaken the position of the anti-Moldovan groups, *Alcatuirea Republicii Autonome Sovietice Socialiste Moldovenești: Darea de Seama Stenografica a Sessiei a 3-a a VUTIK-ului, 8-12 Octombrie 1924* (Harkiv: 1924), 9-12.
- 18 For instance, Voroshilov had such concerns, Galushchenko, *Obrazovanie Moldavskoi ASSR*, 210.
- 19 A. Repida, *Obrazovanie Moldavskoi ASSR* (Chisinau: Stiinta, 1974), 91.
- 20 *Obrazovanie Moldavskoi SSR*, 45.
- 21 *Nachalo Bol'shogo Puti. Sbornik Dokumentov i Materialov k 40-letiiu Obrazovaniia Moldavskoi SSR i Sozdaniia Kompartii Moldavii* (Kishinev: 1964), 33.
- 22 TsDAGO (Central State Archive of Public Organisations of Ukraine), f. 1, op. 6, d. 50, l. 59.
- 23 Cited in Oleg Galushchenko, *Naselenie Moldavskoi ASSR (1924-1940 gg.)* (Kishinev: Tipografiia Akademii Nauk, 2001), 7-8.
- 24 *Kul'tura Moldavii za Gody Sovetskoi Vlasti. Sbornik Dokumentov v 4-h Tomah. Tom 2* (Chisinau: 1975-1976), 71-75.
- 25 Cited in *Istoria Partidului Comunist al Moldovei: Studii* (Chișinău: Cartea Moldovenească, 1982), 144-146.
- 26 *Nachalo Bol'shogo Puti*, 33.
- 27 In addition, it could have solved the constant interwar problem of the lack of Moldovan-speaking specialists, turning to a richer Romanian resource base.
- 28 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 2144, l. 128-137.
- 29 "Konstituciia AMSSR," in *Gosudarstvenno-pravovye Akty Moldavskoi SSR*, 38.

- 30 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 16, d. 2, l. 75.
- 31 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 16, d. 2, l. 77.
- 32 AOSPRM (Archive of Socio-Political Organization of the Republic of Moldova), f. 49, inv. 5, d. 5, f. 2.
- 33 AOSPRM, f. 49, inv. 5, d. 5, f. 6.
- 34 AOSPRM, f. 49, inv. 5, d. 5, f. 6-7.
- 35 AOSPRM, f. 49, inv. 5, d. 5, f. 5.
- 36 AOSPRM, f. 49, inv. 5, d. 5, f. 5.
- 37 AOSPRM, f. 49, inv. 5, d. 5, f. 5. On 27 August 1924, in an article in a local newspaper Grinshtein has also publicly stated that Moldovan and Romanian were separate languages, as were the two nationalities, Cojocaru, *Cominternul și Originele "Moldovenismului,"* 155.
- 38 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 16, d. 2, l. 103-104.
- 39 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 1821, l. 7.
- 40 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 1821, l. 7.
- 41 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 1821, l. 8.
- 42 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 1821, l. 8.
- 43 Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirror: Russian and the Small Peoples of the North* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 131-302.
- 44 Already in 1921 the Balkan Communist Conference defined Romania as a multinational, oppressive state, *Natsional'nyi Vopros na Balkanah cherez Prizmu Mirovoi Revoliucii, chast' 1* (Moscow: URSS, 2000), 15. In 1923 the Romanian Communists themselves accepted the Comintern's "multinational, imperialist" definition of the country. Nevertheless, this definition remained a recurring issue in the party debates. Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2003), 53.
- 45 For more on korenizatsiia and its logic, see Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 1-27.
- 46 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 465, l. 1.
- 47 *Nachalo Bol'shogo Puti*, 44-45.
- 48 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 1821, l. 15.
- 49 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 1821, l. 11-12.
- 50 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 1821, l. 17-19.
- 51 RGASPI, f. 495, op. 289, d. 1, l. 20-21.
- 52 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 2144, l. 2.
- 53 AOSPRM, f. 49, inv. 1, d. 177, f. 2.
- 54 *Obrazovanie Moldavskoi SSR*, 58-64.
- 55 *Alcătuirea Republicii Autonome Sovietice Socialiste Moldovenești*.
- 56 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 2144, l. 129.
- 57 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 2144, l. 137.

- 58 Dik's views in some respects have similarities with some of the existing
interpretations in historiography, Cojocaru, *Studiul*; Elena Negru, *Politica*
59 *Etnoculturala in R.A.S.S. Moldoveneasca* (Chisinau: Prut International, 2003).
TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 2144, l. 135-136.
60 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 20, d. 2144, l. 132.
61 *TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b) i Natsional'nyi Vopros. Kniga 1. 1918-1933 gg* (Moscow:
ROSSPEN, 2005), 264.
62 Ibid, 262.
63 TsDAGO, f. 1, op. 6, d. 58, l. 16-17.
64 Roughly at the same time major figure in the Romanian and Ukrainian
affairs Christian Rakovsky, at this moment the Deputy of the People's
Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, reinforced this position: "The
new Moldovan Republic should serve exclusively as the springboard for
the work in Bessarabia." *TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b) i Natsional'nyi Vopros*, 267.
65 For some similar motives of the interplay between groups with competing
views in nationality policies, see Andreas Frings, "Playing Moscow off
Against Kazan: Azerbaijan Maneuvering to Latinization in the Soviet Union,"
Ab Imperio, no. 4 (2009): 249-266.
66 For more on Moldovanization, see Charles King, *The Moldovans: Romania,*
Russia, and the Politics of Culture (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press,
2000), 64-81; Charles King, "The Ambivalence of Authenticity, or How the
Moldovan Language Was Made," *Slavic Review* 58, no. 1 (1999): 117-142.

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