

NATIONALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY OF WESTERN UKRAINE IN THE
POST -SOVIET ERA



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YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY
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ISTANBUL, 2022

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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Ph.D

IN

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

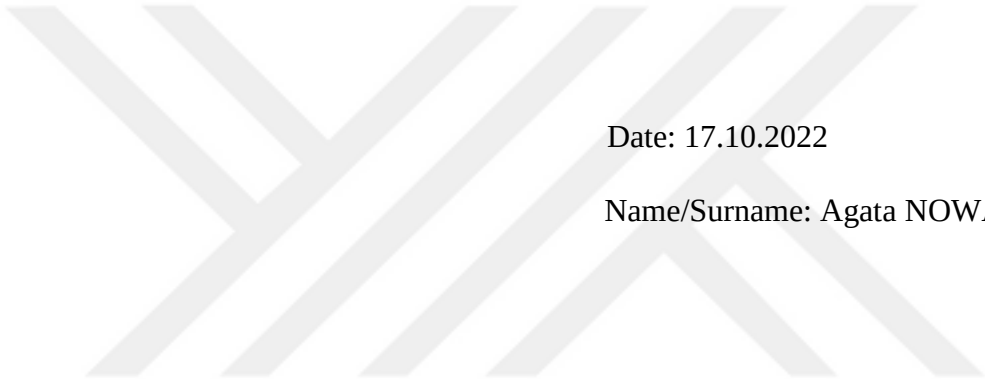
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ISTANBUL, 2022

PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.



Date: 17.10.2022

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ABSTRACT

The research is designed to examine the essence and roots of Ukrainian nationalism of Western Ukraine, categories of identity regarding Ukrainians and to present how modern Ukrainian national identity is constructed. The aim of the study is to understand within the broad context of nationalism the complexity of Ukrainian nationalism that does not fit the commonly used definition of a nation; common language, common religion and common historical memory.

The anthropological fieldwork is based on participant observation and in total 35 in-depth interviews which were conducted mainly in Lviv between 2014-2019.

Moreover, in order to fully explore the notion of Ukrainian nationalism an analysis of national symbols, myths, traditions, and historical memory through its history is evaluated. Furthermore, the study analyzes the role of religion and OUN-UPA activities in shaping Ukrainian nationalism placing it also in the context of current political circumstances. The results of the research indicate that Ukrainian nationalism has its origins in Western Ukraine and then it spread from the West of Ukraine to the eastern parts of the country. As a consequence of the latest events; the Euromaidan Revolution, and the ongoing war with Russia, Ukrainian nationalism is being re-shaped and re-constructed. Those events caused also the resurrection of Stepan Bandera's myth that is associated with Western Ukraine.

Keywords: *anthropology, Bandera, OUN-UPA, nationalism, national identity, Ukrainian nationalism, Ukraine*

ÖZET

Bu araştırma, Batı Ukrayna'da Ukrayna milliyetçiliğinin özünü ve kökenlerini, Ukraynalıların kimlik kategorilerini analiz etmek ve modern ulusal Ukraynalı kimliğinin nasıl inşa edildiğine ışık tutmak üzere tasarlanmıştır. Çalışmanın amacı ortak dil, ortak din ve ortak tarihsel hafıza ile belirlenen yaygın ulus tanımına uymayan karmaşık Ukrayna milliyetçiliğinin daha geniş ulusalcılık bağlamında anlaşılmasını sağlamaktır.

Antropolojik saha çalışması, katılımcı gözlemlerine ve 2014-2019 yılları arasında ağırlıklı olarak Lviv'de gerçekleştirilen toplam 35 derinlemesine görüşmeye dayanmaktadır. Ayrıca, Ukrayna milliyetçiliği kavramını tam olarak keşfetmek için, tarihi boyunca kullanılan ulusal sembollerin, mitlerin, geleneklerin ve tarihsel hafızanın analizleri incelenmiştir. Buna ek olarak, mevcut siyasi koşullar bağlamında dinin ve OUN-UPA faaliyetlerinin Ukrayna milliyetçiliğini şekillendirmedeki rolü de çalışmada analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmanın sonuçları, Ukrayna milliyetçiliğinin kökeninin Batı Ukrayna'da olduğunu ve ardından Ukrayna'nın batısından ülkenin doğu bölgelerine yayıldığını göstermiştir. Öte yandan, Euromaidan Devrimi ve Rusya ile devam eden savaş gibi son gelişmeler, Ukrayna milliyetçiliğini yeniden şekillendirmekte ve inşa etmektedir. Bu gelişmeler ayrıca Batı Ukrayna ile ilişkilendirilen Stepan Bandera efsanesinin de yeniden dirilişine neden olmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: antropoloji, Bandera, OUN-UPA, milliyetçilik, ulusal kimlik, Ukrayna milliyetçiliği, Ukrayna

To my mom Lucyna and my children Arda and Aniela...

Dla mojej ukochanej mamy Lucyny oraz moich dzieci Ardy i Anieli...



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Mesut Hakkı Caşın, who always kept me motivated and never doubted in me, for his guidance, encouragement and feedback throughout the research, as well as my other jury members Assistant Prof. Dr. Ayşe Hilal Tuztaş Horzumlu and Assoc. Prof. Fazilet Ahu Özmen Akalın. Special thanks for valuable assistance and comments to Prof. Dr. Jay Courtney Fikes, Prof. Yaroslav Hrytsak, Prof. Andriy Kozytsky and Ihor Pidkova.

The assistance and proofreading of Dr. Konrad Zasztowt, Cemre Yalçın and my dear friends Dr. Sina Kısacık and Fidan Mirhanoğlu are gratefully acknowledged.

I would like to also thank my Ukrainian friends especially Nataliya, Mrs. Halya and Mr. Bohdan and all of my Ukrainian informants.

Finally, but not least I would like to also present my special thanks to my dear parents Paweł and Lucyna, for their unconditional love, support and motivation. Special thanks to my mom and my dear Jakub who always believed in me and who were looking after my children while I was struggling to complete this dissertation.

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration used in this dissertation is done in accordance with an official English-Ukrainian transliteration system adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in 2010 within the framework of Resolution No. 55 “On Normalization of Transliteration of the Ukrainian Alphabet by Means of the Latin Alphabet”.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUCCRO	All Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations
ATO	Anti-Terrorist Operation Zone
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
DRL	Donetsk People's Republic
LRL	Luhansk People's Republic
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NKVD	People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs
OUN	Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
UGCC	Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church
UE	European Union
UN	United Nations
UAOC	Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church
UOC-KP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church- Kyiv Patriarchate
UOC-MP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church –Moscow Patriarchate
UPA	Ukrainian Insurgent Army
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UVO	Ukrainian Military Organization
WUPR	West Ukrainian People's Republic
WWI	First World War

WWII

Second World War



INTRODUCTION

As the largest country in Eastern Europe, Ukraine has significant geopolitical, geostrategic and economic importance for both Europe and the Russian Federation. The Ukrainian nation is a phenomenon that survived years of oppression and even though did not have a nation-state frame, managed to keep sentiment for Ukrainian national identity. For over 70 years Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union and thus remained under Russian influence. Ukraine gained independence in 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the country entered a challenging stage of transition. It required a number of tools to construct or reconstruct national identity in new circumstances. The country is marked with visible division; the Western part of Ukraine has pro-Western tendencies, whereas the Eastern part pro-Russian. This division is a reflection of Ukraine's complex history. Today, Ukraine is facing the greatest challenge since its independence; war with Russia. Once again, Ukraine has to fight for its sovereignty, freedom and independence.

The research is designed to examine the essence and roots of Ukrainian nationalism of the Western Ukraine, categories of identity regarding Ukrainians and to present how modern Ukrainian national identity is constructed. The aim of the study is to understand within the broad context of nationalism the complexity of Ukrainian nationalism that does not fit the commonly used definition of a nation; common language, common religion and common historical memory. However, Ukrainian state is a type of a state which Alexander Murphy (2002, p.201) defines as nationalism that has historical connotations with a distinctive cultural group identified according to ethnolinguistic properties.

Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 1) advocate that the concept of identity has certain contradictions within itself. In that, it might sometimes bear a broad meaning, while at other times, it might be very limited. In other words, identity may refer to general circumstances, while sometimes it may not be associated with any meaning at all- it may mean too much and nothing at the same time. The authors, in this regard argue that identity implies a very broad meaning, it should not be conceptualize as something that everyone seeks, construct and negotiate. Moreover, they define two specific types of identity: individual and collective, and these identity forms do not present a universal or canonic understanding. Rather, the authors claim that identity must be considered proprietary not putatively universal (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, pp. 6,10).

Moreover, it may be considered as a collective phenomenon that shares notion of sameness among the particular members of a group. Sameness of a group is expressed in common solidarity, language, history and tradition that is visible in common social action by the members of a certain group. Therefore, it can be uttered that identity is often associated with ethnicity and nationalism.

The issue of identity and nationalism is rather complex in the case of Ukraine since it is lacking discussed above, the notion of sameness. In order to fully grasp the case of Ukrainian nationalism it is crucial to present prominent scholars' arguments regarding the definition of a nation. For instance, Anderson (1991) suggests that nations are socio-culturally constructed concepts, while Hobsbawm (1992) correlatively puts forward that national identity is a notion invented and accompanied by shared traditions that a group has been practicing over time. Nevertheless, modern times demonstrate that identity is no more coherent with former practices, while the same applies to culture. As Appadurai (1996, p. 56) claims, identity is more

situational in current times and is shaped by deterritorialization. The above mentioned description can be placed in the Ukrainian context, the reconstruction and recreation of the national symbols, traditions and myth of origin and re-writing Ukrainian national history after the collapse of the Soviet Union and gaining the independence in order to constitute Ukrainian nation.

Since Ukraine remained part of the Soviet Union for 72 years, the Russian influence was felt deeply for a long period of time and the Soviet regime strictly controlled the writing of the national history. Indeed, Soviet authorities constrained public disclosure of certain developments and tended to blame foreign agents for separatist nationalistic sentiments by the use of propaganda and censorship serving their political agenda. One of the challenges of Ukraine that is the result of the Soviet history writing, is the diverse conception of Stepan Bandera and OUN-UPA organizations. In the Soviet rhetoric Bandera was presented as a fascist collaborator, hence in the east of Ukraine where pro-Russian attitude is strong, he is believed to be a fascist, whereas in the west of Ukraine he is a hero and a symbol of a Ukrainian nationalism. Therefore, in Russia and in the East of Ukraine Bandera and his followers called *banderites* (*ukr. Бандерівці*) are believed to be nationalists and fascists, hence the West of Ukraine is often called the land of Stepan Bandera (*ukr. Бандерівщина*). This rhetoric was also used by the Russian president Vladimir Putin as an excuse to declare war against Ukraine in order to clean country from the fascists.

After Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, its history had to be re-written from scratch in order to form a nation with its own unique history. It is believed that modern Ukraine is a descendant of historical Kyivan Rus and modern Ukrainian state has its foundation in Cossack state. In the Soviet historical approach Kyivan Rus was

origin of Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, therefore Russia still presents the idea that those three countries form one nation since they all are descendants of the same Kyivan Rus. First Slavs appeared in the territory of contemporary Ukraine around 3000 years ago (Serczyk, 1979, p. 17). At that time, there were many different Slavic tribes but the biggest one was the tribe of Polans¹ who settled down around Kyiv (Łesiów, 1995, p. 6). In 882 those tribes decided to unite and come together in order to create a single, united country. Thus, Kyivan Rus was founded by the Prince Oleh. It is officially recognized as the establishment of the first Ukrainian² state. In the first centuries Slavs began to divide into two groups: Western and Eastern. Slavic people experienced the division of west and east early in that period, while the tribes in the east began to have separatist movements during the 6th and 7th centuries marking the beginning of Eastern Slavs (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, pp. 10-11; Serczyk, 1979, pp. 18, 21; Łesiów, 1996, p. 8).

It is essential to note, as Serczyk (1979, p.19) indicated that common origin, common language and unified organization were the first elements of Rus identity (Serczyk, 1979, p. 19). The Kyivan Rus was under the political and cultural influence of Byzantium due to the connections and trade relations over the Black Sea.

Therefore, in 988 Volodymyr the Great the Grand Prince of Kyiv³ agreed to accept baptism given by Constantinople that is whole kingdom became Christian. From that moment Kyivan church was under the jurisdiction of Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. It is worth noting that Kyivan Rus was referring to the land where Kyiv was in the center. However, nowadays three nationalities claim their origins

¹ Different from western Polans who are considered as western Slavic tribes, settled around Warta River and are believed to be the founders of Poland.

² According to Russian history, Kyivan Rus is also Russian founding myth.

³Also patron of Ukraine, proclaimed saint and the founder of Volodymyr-Volynsky.

belong to Kyivan Rus; Ukrainians, Russians and Belarusians. However, Ukrainians stress the fact that it is history of Ukraine, not Russia that begins with the establishment of Kyivan Rus and is exclusively Ukrainian (Halushko 2017, 15). During the establishment period, it covered the land between contemporary Polish city Chełm, Pripjat River, Kyiv as the center, Dnieper River, Kolomyia through Vinnitsia, Cherkasy and then up till contemporary Sum Oblast⁴ whereas at the peak it covered a territory stretching from the Carpathian Mountains to the Volga River, and from the Black Sea to the Baltic Sea.

The etymology of a word “Ukraine” - “*Ukraina*” (*ukr. Україна*) is not clear, however scholars assume it may mean “land”, “a piece of land that is cut”, “the end” or “at the edge, end” (Łesiów, 1995, p. 7). Initially Ukraine was considered as a country only with its eastern part, without Galicia.

In 1366 the Kingdom of Poland took over Galicia and Podolia and in 1569 most of the Ukraine was taken under the rule of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Poland was also referred to as *Rzeczpospolita*). *Rzeczpospolita* although considered tolerant caused faster Christianization of Ukraine followed by complicated relationship with Ukraine in terms of politics, ethnicity and religion (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, pp. 12-13). Serczyk (1979, p. 55) pointed out that the affiliation of western Ukrainian territories to Poland only made the distinction between ethnicities larger and increased the process of development of national identity of Ukrainians.

In the 11th century cities were developing and their numbers were rising. Among the inhabitants there were significant differences in their wealth; landowners and peasants, hence there were many revolts. Church ideology was only deepening

⁴ Oblast is an administrative division used in Ukraine; province.

this feudal structure. The richest and the most developed regions were Halych and Volhynia. Mongol invasion changed the rule and history among all Rus states. Thus, all of them became vassals of the Golden Horde⁵. Ukraine was under the Mongol rule for around two hundred years. Before the invasion Ukraine was developing



⁵ The Golden Horde was established in the 13th century. It consisted of Mongols and Turkish tribes who settled down in Rus territories and were called Tatars. Saray-Batu became the capital of the khanate (ibidem, p. 50).

considerably quickly, whereas during this period Ukraine did not develop culturally and became „the periphery of Europe” (Serczyk, 1979, pp. 32, 50). In the 14th century the west of Ukraine was taken under the rule of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth⁶.

Figure 1. *The early 17th century Polish - Lithuanian Commonwealth*



Note: Territory of Ukraine incorporated into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th century.

⁶ Union of Krewa signed on 14 August 1385.

(https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/66luve/the_polishlithuanian_common_wealth_920_838/)

During that period in Ukraine as in the rest of Europe the feudal system was used (Serczyk, 1979, p. 54). Thus, there were many liege lords and at the same time many peasants who did not have personal freedom and a right to own land. Moreover, they were forced to work for the manors; serfdom. In the 15th century two countries neighboring Ukraine got more powerful; Ottoman Empire and Muscovy and what is more Tatar were constantly raiding Ukraine. In 1482 Kyiv was totally burned down, people were kidnapped, hence many in fear of Tatars decided to leave their lands (Serczyk, 1979, p. 63). Furthermore, many people were leaving west of Ukraine due to the serfdom to the east since it was not well inhabited. It was easier to avoid all repressions in the East, hence people began to inhabit land after Dnieper river. According to Serczyk (1979, p. 67) it is possible that it was there where first society was established which in time transformed into large society – Cossacks. It was them who first opposed to feudal system in Ukraine (Serczyk, 1979, p.71). Ukraine already in the 15th -16th centuries in terms of culture was in between the Russian influence and the West.

The Cossacks are one of the most important part of the Ukrainian history and tradition, often considered a real Ukrainian tradition that distinguished them from other neighboring nations and the foundation for the modern Ukrainian state. Traditionally used to inhabit territory in the lower parts of the Dnieper river in the 16th century. Zaporozhia became their territory. Quickly they organized themselves into a well-functioned society (Serczyk, 1979, p. 67). They were many times under attack, however mainly it was them who were constantly raiding others; especially Tatars and Turks. Thus, the Cossacks were under Russian, Polish and Turkish influence (Gibas-

Krzak, 2006, p. 13). It is worth noting that society included mostly people who ran away from serfdom. Often, they were also criminals, adventurers, or soldiers. They were also a mixture of different ethnicities; Poles, Ukrainians, Belarussians, Russians and Tatars (Serczyk, 1979, p. 68).

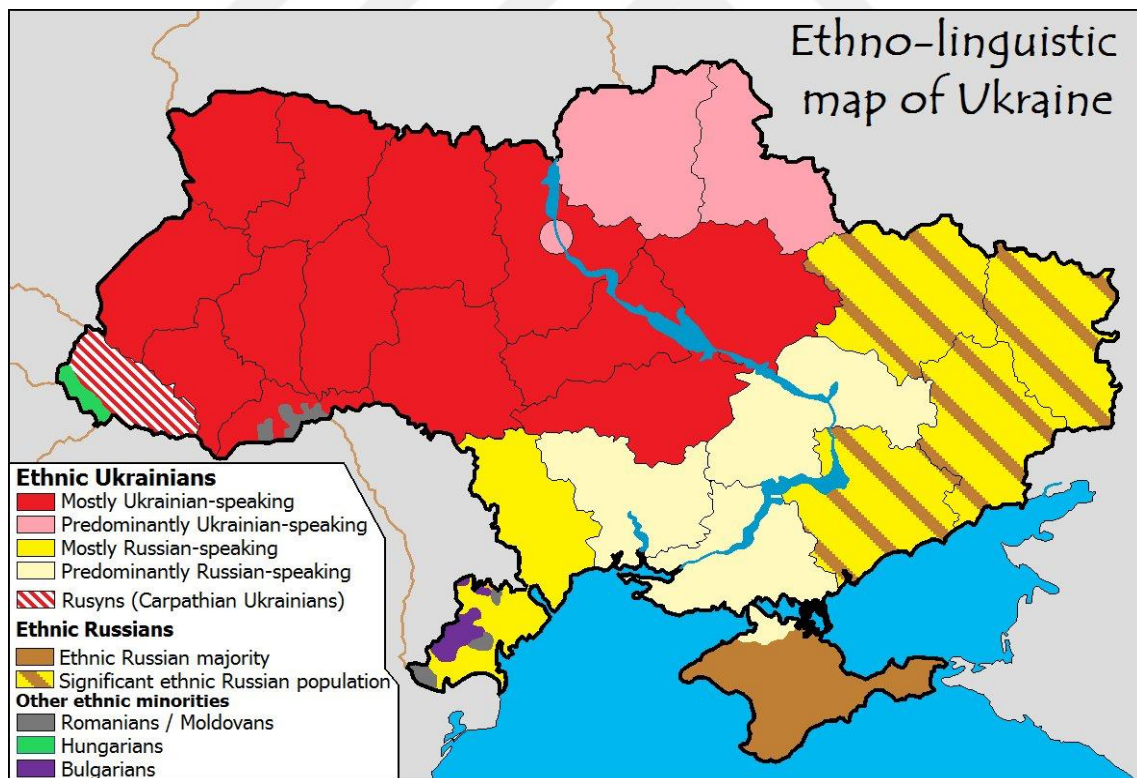
Language and the nation-building

Many scholars put emphasis on a language as an important factor in a formation of a state. Undoubtedly, a national language and literature written in that language have an impact on national feelings (Łesiów, 1996, p. 22). The first alphabet used by Rus was the Glagolitic alphabet, however was not in use since Rus converted to Christianity. Since then, the Cyrillic alphabet was used (Serczyk, 1979, p. 25). Becoming part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the west of Ukraine strongly affected the language used in Western Ukraine. First of all, from now on it was under the influence of Polish and due to the border had less contact with the neighbor; the Muscovy Rus where people spoke the Old East Slavic language (Serczyk, 1979, p. 55; Halushko 2017, p. 11). Therefore, the language started to change and it is considered the first formation of the Ukrainian language that is separate from (the Russian- Church Slavonic). In the 15th century the Old Church Slavonic language was less in use, due to the mixture of influences people started to use many words used in neighboring countries and the language in Ukraine was more likely to become common parlance. In 1566 according to Statutes of Lithuania⁷ when Ukraine was under the Lithuanian rule, it was compulsory to use Church Slavonic language

⁷ Codification of all the rules and regulations in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and later in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th century.

It is believed that the development of contemporary Ukrainian language began with Ivan Kotliarevsky's poem *Eneida* (ukr. *Енеїда*) written in 1798. In parallel to this assumption, Łesiów (1996, p. 32) suggests that language is best expressed in literature as well as folklore and religious archives. Thus, the development of the Ukrainian language can be observed in many of the nation's literary and other sources. However, in 1863 Tsardom of Russia officially forbade printing in Ukrainian language and bringing any books or theatrical performances in Ukrainian language in Russia. Nevertheless, people were still secretly writing and publishing in Ukrainian, which further flourished by the increasing number of printing houses (Łesiów, 1996, p. 31).

Figure 2. *Ukraine's ethno-linguistic map*



Note: The map of Ukraine's ethno-linguistic composition according to the census of 2001. (http://static5.businessinsider.com/image/53121ecc69bedd4c2ff07872-1181-825/ethnolinguistic_map_of_ukraine.png)

Nowadays Ukrainian language according to the Constitution of Ukraine⁸ is the state language but at the same time, there is a paradox where Ukrainian is also the minority language despite the fact that it is the mandatory language to be in use in state-owned schools (Olszański, 2012, p. 43). Nevertheless, the above-mentioned statement is valid in the eastern part of Ukraine, where the Russian language is widely used. It is worth mentioning that the Constitution of Ukraine also states that the Ukrainian nation consists of the multilingual nation which is presented in Figure 2. Moreover, this multilingualism is historically determined issue and certainly is an important Ukrainian heritage (Olszański, 2012, p. 47).

It was mentioned above that the language is one of the components that makes national feelings stronger and in fact, one of Ukraine's major issue is the language. The official language is Ukrainian, however is spoken only by 67,5 % of the population (Derzhavnyy Komitet Statystyky Ukrayiny, n/d; Sakwa, 2015, p. 10). Moreover, Ukrainian is spoken mostly in the Centre and West of Ukraine. Whereas, South and East mostly speak Russian. Nevertheless, as indicated in figure 2 Russian and Ukrainian are not the only languages used in Ukraine, there are also languages of minorities widely used, among others Hungarian, Romanian and Crimean Tatar (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). The Russian aggression caused increase of Ukrainian nationalistic feelings that are also expressed in the language used in Ukraine. President Zelensky is a great example here, although a native Russian speaker, he

⁸ Signed in 28.06.1996.

learned Ukrainian and now communicates with his compatriots only in Ukraine. In the face of war, he uses Russian only when turning to the Russians. That is a great change in Ukrainian's attitude towards the language problem. The Russian aggression caused Ukrainians to want to differentiate themselves from the Russians and don't want to use the language of an aggressor. Nevertheless, some of my interlocutors indicated that they are Russian-speaking Ukrainians with an emphasis on being Ukrainian⁹. The greater emphasis is being put now on teaching, learning and usage of Ukrainian as a national language. In the face of the war the Ukrainian language became a visible symbol of Ukrainian nationalism.

Other studies on Ukrainian nationalism

Studies on Ukrainian nationalism until gaining independence by Ukraine in 1991 were conducted and published only abroad mainly by the Ukrainian diasporas in the USA and Canada. The reason for that is the fact that the Soviet regime imposed censorship and writings had to be compatible with the Soviet rhetoric. Therefore, for instance studies on Ukrainian history had to be written according to the Soviet perspective. Moreover, during the Soviet time, studies on Ukrainian nationalism in Ukraine practically did not exist, same as anthropological and sociological studies in Ukraine concerning the Ukrainian nation. The Ukrainian scholars began to research broadly those topics after 1991 and in accordance with Ukrainian perspective placing it in the newly re-written Ukrainian historiography.

In addition to the current studies on Ukrainian history and nationalism there are many publications. First publications regarding those issues appeared in the 1970s in Canada and the USA where is the largest Ukrainian diaspora. In 1973 Harvard

⁹ Data obtained during author's interviews conducted in March 2022 in Warsaw, Poland.

Ukrainian Research Institute was established and in 1976 Canadian Institute of Ukraine Studies. The leading figures dealing with Ukraine studies are Orest Subtelny, Serhii Plokhii, Paul Robert Magocsi, Serhy Yekelchuk, Bohdan Krawchenko, Roman Szporluk, Taras Kuzio, Andrew Wilson. And in Ukraine prof. Yaroslav Hrytsak, Mykola Shytyuk.

It is notable, that studies of Ukrainian nationalism within the framework of political and military aspects of OUN-UPA received much attention after gaining independence by Ukraine, but considering complexity and importance of this topic for studies on Ukrainian nationalism, there is insufficient number of research (McBride, 2016, p. 653). Publications regarding Stepan Bandera, OUN-UPA and its presentation depends on by whom and when were written; during the Soviet period firstly nothing was published, then only negative interpretation appeared. Ukrainian publications, as Rossoliński- Liebe (2014, p. 443) indicates were often written by OUN-UPA members, therefore cannot be regarded as objective. The Polish and Russian contemporary publications present mostly negative role of Stepan Bandera, whereas Ukrainian historians mostly write in positive manner about him, although there are few Western Ukrainian scholars who do not agree on his heroic attitude (Marynovych, 2009). Nevertheless, majority of Ukrainian scholars claim that research on the above-mentioned topics done by researchers of other nationalities (especially by Polish ones) is quite poor, biased, politically motivated and wrongly interpreted. On the other hand, the majority Ukrainian researchers present approach based on denying evil done by OUN-UPA and justification for mass killings (McBride, 2016, pp. 657, 659).

METHODOLOGY

The research is based mainly on an ethnographic approach. Such an approach allows studying particular culture from its own perspective. The main research method is the participant observation technique and key informant interviews. However, it is not limited only to conducting interviews and observations, it involves also taking fieldnotes, taking pictures, collecting various data (publications, material goods, statistic data), writing a diary, or simply listening (O'reilly, 2005, pp. 84, 99). Therefore, my physical presence in the field was essential (Hastrup & Hervik, 1994, p. 3). I have made multiple short periodic visits to Ukraine, where I stayed one week in Novovolynsk and other visits took place in Lviv and Lviv oblast. The duration of the fieldwork, in order to fully grasp studied culture is important in anthropological research, however unexpected circumstances occurred and my further fieldwork was interrupted by COVID-19 pandemic and outbreak of war (Amit, 2000, p. 1). In given circumstances, I could not be actually present in the field, nevertheless I continued my research by conducting interviews with Ukrainian refugees in Warsaw and online. Nevertheless, I am convinced that those restrictions did not have huge impact on my research since most of my fieldwork took place before those events occurred.

Although this research was primarily designed to investigate Ukrainian nationalism in Western Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it also dwells upon historical analysis of past and contemporary politics, and Ukraine's relations with neighboring countries and the European Union. A preliminary study was set to be limited only to the West of Ukraine, however due to the developing crisis in Ukraine the study describes to a certain extent also other regions of Ukraine.

Taking into consideration complex issues in Ukraine, it makes it a perfect study of nationalism and identity in many different contexts since this is a multidisciplinary study. Therefore, this study is meant to contribute also to the studies on nationalism in general, Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian and East European Studies. Furthermore, it gives an insight into the modern conception of Banderites and analyzes how Ukrainian nationalism was developing over the years in the context of revolutions and the current conflict in Ukraine. Concerning the current events in Ukraine, this study proves that Ukraine is a separate nation with a rich history, tradition, culture and language of its own, and answers the question of what led to the present conflict.

The reason why I have decided to write my doctoral dissertation about Ukraine is the fact that I have often heard that “there is no Ukraine, Ukraine is Russian, it is a made-up country”, Russians often have been considering Ukraine as an inseparable part of their national identities, especially the eastern part of Ukraine. Years of being a part of the Soviet Union and Russian’s policy toward Ukraine resulted in those presumptions. Therefore, I wanted to present that Ukraine is not Russia and should not be associated with it, has its own history and tradition. What is more, my aim was to prove the distinctiveness and uniqueness of Ukrainian nationalism that differentiates and forms the Ukrainian nation. My assumption is that Ukraine is a country that deserves the acknowledgment of its separate from Russian culture and history. Furthermore, the other purpose of this study is to present various interpretations of Stepan Bandera’s figure within Ukrainian society itself. It must be stated, that my aim is not to whitewash or bring an accusation, as the purpose of the study is to record people’s own perceptions of Ukrainian nationalists, organizations,

events and my aim is to analyze their perception. I am aware of the fact that I have chosen a very controversial and risky subject.

The fieldwork was conducted and limited mainly to city of Lviv, since this city and in fact whole Galicia is considered as the „Piedmont”¹⁰ of Ukrainian nationalism. The revival of national consciousness and national movement of the 19th century began there, in Lviv. The national spirit spread from the west towards the east of Ukraine. It was the Galician population who with all their effort tried to reach as many Ukrainians as they could, in order to revive Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian culture and language. Therefore, the research takes place mostly in the city of Lviv. From this point of view investigating Ukrainian nationalism in that region and given current circumstances in particular is of a great significance. My assumption is that the modern Ukrainian nationalism has its roots in Western Ukraine and has direct impact on nationalism in the other parts of Ukraine that is going through a phase of re-construction.

What is more, the fieldwork was also conducted in the Novovolynsk, located in Volyn oblast in the West of Ukraine. The fieldwork was conducted in 2014, 2015, 2018 and 2019. In the following years, it was not possible to conduct fieldwork in Ukraine due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travelling restrictions and then the outbreak of the war in February 2022. Hence, during that period interviews were conducted online and with Ukrainian refugees in Warsaw, Poland.

Moreover, I study and analyze how national symbols were constructed or reconstructed and fit in the current political circumstances. I also pay attention to nationalist symbols that are frequently present in public sphere in Lviv. Following

¹⁰ Cradle of Ukrainian nationalism.

Geertz's (1973, p. 314) understanding of culture which is web of symbols, I studied Ukrainian national and nationalist symbols as an interrelated with each other web. Moreover, participant observation allows me to experience how Ukrainians in the Western part of Ukraine live; what language they use at home and at the public sphere, what TV programs they watch, what are their political views and what is their idea of current political situation in Ukraine. And mainly what they think of OUN-UPA and how they perceive the figure of Stepan Bandera. I also try to understand what shaped the nationalism in the Western Ukraine. In other words, I examine what does it mean to be Ukrainian.

The language used while conducting interviews is Polish and Ukrainian, sometimes with a help of a translator. The research is conducted in Lviv where many Ukrainians speak Polish, many prefer to speak Polish with me as they consider it a chance to practice their Polish. As an anthropologist in the field, I decided to learn the language of a studied group of people, but since I have learned Ukrainian by myself and I consider myself a beginner, (I can understand much of a written text though), sometimes I have difficulties with understanding people speaking fast or using complicated vocabulary, then I ask them either to translate it to Polish or English or I had translated it later on.

O'reilly (2005, p. 85) indicates that in the fieldwork access to certain groups may turn out to be problematic. Therefore, in order to avoid such a problem, I used the snowball sampling technique in order to find informants. I have chosen this method for my fieldwork purpose due to the fact that people often did not want to participate in my interviews when they were explained that I research nationalism and Bandera movement. Scholars agree that this method is useful for studying hard to reach population (Heckathorn, 2011, p. 355). And I found this technique very useful

in given circumstances, as it allowed me to save time and find potential participants without obstacles since most of the time there was asked by their colleagues if they would agree to participate in such interviews. I have made in total 35 in-depth interviews, that are recorded and transcribed.

I have interviewed scholars, intellectuals such as academics, teachers, deputies and entrepreneurs as well as people who did not have an intellectual background; such as drivers, a cook and shop assistants. Initially, I wanted to focus on a limited group of people - the intellectuals, but with time I came to the conclusion that it would not allow me to have full insight into Ukrainian society. The way scholars and intellectuals perceive and distinguish history and reality varies from the understanding of people who are less educated. Moreover, I have interviewed both men and women of various ages, people in their twenties until their seventies.

Following Boasian approach, I present the historiography of Ukraine in order to show a full insight into a problem. Therefore, it is past and history that shape our identity; who we are today and who we will become in the future. History allows us to have a close look at the complex issues that Ukraine faces today. A chapter regarding the history of Ukraine, seemed easy to write at first glimpse, however this impression was very misleading. Quickly I have found out that the history of Ukraine is very long and complicated and I had difficulties with presenting it briefly in this dissertation. Although Ukrainian scholars have suggested compressing it, I did not make it shorter on purpose; I wanted to present full insight on Ukrainian history as a solid background for understanding the Ukrainian struggle for independence to a reader that is not familiar with it. I believe this will allow grasping a full understanding of the current issues taking place in Ukraine. The history also presents

a path that Ukrainian nation had to go through to become modern nationally conscious nation.

Moreover, in order to comprehend the whole notion of Ukrainian nationalism, I also referred to ethno-symbolist approach introduced by Anthony Smith. Thus, this study contains also analysis of common traditions, shared memories and popular ethnic symbols. The approach implemented in this research regarding studying symbols is based on objects of cultural interest and analysis of its meanings. Therefore, in order to study and analyze symbols of Ukrainian culture I referred to Sherry Ortner's (1973, p. 1344) idea of key symbols which are regarded as "objects of attention and cultural respect", they include sacred symbols in the traditional sense and "elaborating symbols that are valued for their contribution to the ordering or "sorting out" of experience".

When I began this research I was planning to conduct it in many places throughout Western Ukraine, hence I have made also few interviews in Novovolynsk in Volhynia region. However, during my further research, I understood that I chose too broad topic that I was planning to cover and that territory I wanted to focus on is also too wide. Therefore, I was forced to limit my research in terms of localization and in terms of the topic. After suggestions I have received from many prominent Ukrainian scholars, I have decided to limit my research mainly to city of Lviv instead of whole Western Ukraine and to pay attention to very touchy subject the rise of the Bandera movement after 2014.

I have found many obstacles during my research. Starting from the hardship of finding time and a balance between writing, working and raising two little kids on my own at the same time being away from my family. That is why, completing this study

would not have happened without the help and support of my parents, especially my mom. The other difficulties I had were during the actual fieldwork. People were eager to help me with my research until I asked them for a permit to record our conversations or to interview them. Most of them tried to explain that they are not specialists in the given topic. The other group of people openly said they are scared to discuss nationalism. Some of them agreed after my reassurance that all interviews are anonymous. For many, it was also suspicious that a Polish is asking about Ukrainian nationalism and Bandera. Especially topic related to Bandera and OUN-UPA was difficult to cover, people simply did not want to talk about it with me. It was difficult to receive answers from my informants on who banderites are in contemporary Ukraine, very often the immediate answer was “there are no banderites in Ukraine”. I am convinced that they did not want to talk about it since I am Polish and Bandera is regarded in Poland very negatively. Immediately they were taking defensive attitude, in my opinion, it is caused because of the negative representation of Bandera/ Ukrainian nationalists both in Poland, Russia and in the Eastern parts of Ukraine due to deeply rooted Soviet propaganda. Perhaps people would be less reluctant and more eager to discuss those topics with a researcher of a different nationality. Therefore, I was suggested by one of the professors to make a sort of controlled experiment, questioning the role and position of the researcher, hence to conduct my research in a different manner. The idea was based on the book “Black like me” which was first published in 1961, written by journalist John Howard Griffin, who pretended he was black in order to receive true answers from his African-American informants, due to various reasons he would not be able to obtain answers if he would reveal his real identity. Therefore, following the idea, in order to obtain full view of Ukrainian nationalism and to confirm my assumptions, I would have some of my interviews

done by a person who would be of different nationality (for instance Turkish) hence could be perceived more neutral by Ukrainian informants, who perhaps would not fear to speak openly about the above-mentioned issues. Moreover, this person would have to hide the truth about the research by not telling it is actually done by a Polish. Nevertheless, this idea was not implemented due to ethical issues. Perhaps such idea would bring interested results but on the other hand, following the principles of professional responsibility of the American Anthropological Association simply it would not be honest regarding my work and my informants (American Anthropological Association, 2012).

In my research I try to answer following questions:

- 1) How Ukrainian nationalism in the West of Ukraine, particularly in Lviv is regarded and how it is expressed?
- 2) Why there is such big difference between West and East of Ukraine?
- 3) What is the essence of Ukrainian nationalism?
- 4) What does it mean to be Ukrainian?
- 5) How the current political issues in Ukraine effect nationalism in the West of Ukraine?
- 6) What has shaped nationalism in the West of Ukraine?
- 7) Why the Ukrainian national feelings are so strong in Western Ukraine?
- 8) What are the international relations of Ukraine with its closest neighbors Russia and Poland and European Union?
- 9) What is the connection between Greek Catholic Church and nationalism in modern Ukraine?
- 10) What is the role of Bandera's followers (banderites) in shaping contemporary nationalist movement in Ukraine?

- 11) What is the perception of Bandera and banderites in contemporary city of Lviv?
- 12) How myth of OUN-UPA is being expressed in the West of Ukraine?
- 13) If and how the revolutions; Orange and Euromaidan affected the spread of nationalism?
- 14) If and how the Euromaidan revolution resurrected the Bandera's myth
- 15) Did the events of 2014 unite the Ukrainian nation?
- 16) What is the reaction of the Ukrainians on the national matters after the outbreak of the war?
- 17) How actions taken by president Zelensky's after the outbreak of the war are being perceived?
- 18) How patriarch Kirill's support for the Russian invasion affected the moods of the Ukrainian believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate?

It must be noted that the Russian invasion on Ukraine on February 24, 2022 has also affected this study and its plan. Some parts of the study had to be changed, due to the fact that some assumptions lost validity.

As an objective researcher I am far from judging and keeping sides in presented in this dissertation disputes between nations and events that took place in the past in particular Polish -Ukrainian views on OUN-UPA activities. What I try to do is to describe historical events without getting into support or condemning anyone involved. My aim is to present different views and diverse perception on those difficult matters.

CHAPTER 1. NATIONALISM, NATIONAL IDENTITY, ETHNICITY AND MEMORY: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FROM THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The concepts of nationalism, ethnicity and collective memory are rather challenging to clearly define as many experts in the field disagree on any fact-based definition. Some argue that these concepts cannot be defined by existing analytical tools, while others even do not attempt to define them (Alonso, 1994, p. 379; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, pp. 5, 12; Lewellen, 2003, p. 204). Thus, there is a lack of a universal political or social theory of nationalism that has consistent components. As a matter of fact, international relations of Ukraine with its two neighbors: Russia and Poland are also quite complicated to put them into a solid framework. Nevertheless, there are certain components that make a nation. Many political scientists believe that shared consciousness is a unique feature of nations. Such consciousness harbors national heroic figures and symbols setting one nation apart from another¹¹. In addition, common language, religious belief, cultural rituals, customs, heritage and shared history contribute to the pure existence of a nation cohabiting in a given territory. These elements as well as the feeling of belonging are argued to bring about national identity for a certain group of people or community. Hence, it can be understood that national identity is far from being individual – it is solely collective. On the other hand, nations can feature people with various ethnic origins, who may still feel a sense of belonging while maintaining their origins. Last

¹¹ For some nations, symbols or heroic figures are more critical compared to other nations, meaning that they attribute greater importance to their national sentiments.

but not least, shared memory is also a critical part of the process of nation-building for a certain group of people, meaning that they must share common history.

1.1 Roots of Nationalism

Since the concept of nationalism is too comprehensive to grasp at a glance, one must evaluate it in a connection with what basically constitutes it: identity, ethnic origins and shared history. Although, nationalism seems to have emerged only at recent times, some experts are in constant dispute over whether it emerged in the 17th or the 18th century depending on certain evident developments (Calhoun, 1993, pp. 212-213). As can be understood from previous assumptions, nationalism is intertwined with the concepts of identity and ethnicity, while these concepts are also related to each other – at a higher degree sometimes and sometimes at a lower degree. In fact, it can be uttered that the relations between these concepts largely depend on cultural, political and socio-economic indicators in a given society.

Despite numerous different definitions of nationalism, there is a limited number of common characteristics attributed to the concept by a large number of political scientists across the world¹²: joint cultural practices, speaking the same language, sharing religious faith and ruled by one single government, as Hume argued.

A prominent theoretician and political scientist, Smith (1971, 173) suggests that nationalism fundamentally refers to a group of people who seek autonomy, cohesion and individuality by the help of ideological movements (Smith and Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 2).

¹² However, not all scholars agree upon most of these definitions.

According to Gellner (1983, p.1), on the other hand, nationalism is indeed a political principle that holds people together and united, while Alonso (1994) points out to the argument of Étienne Balibar arguing that nations share blood, heritage, language and fraternity with an understanding that deems they are “pure” (cited in Alonso 1994, p. 390).

Himka (1999, p. 163), on the other hand, particularly underlines ethnicity in the definition of nation and nationalism, believing that a nation consists of people with the same ethnic origin and continuing their existence throughout history. Ethnicity is what nationhood is referred to as according to the author. In the light of this assumption, it was also claimed in the 18th century that environmental effects such as the climate affected a nation’s characteristics, while David Hume – the influential philosopher, historian and economist – rejected this assumption believing that a nation is solely formed by social, political and ethical drivers. Furthermore, using the same language is also a determining factor of a nation according to him. In this context, Hume advocated that nations can also interact with each other change over time. Thus, it is suggested in geographical context that national characteristics are restricted only to political borderlines not to climatological circumstances (Jensen, 2016, pp. 9-10). On the other hand, Gupta et. al. suggest that culture or boundary-related factors do not necessarily constitute a nation (Gupta & Ferguson, 2006, p. 608). According to this claim, it can be observed that Ukraine has variable nationalist notions in its territory. As boundaries do not clearly define nationalism, Ukraine seems to fit this argument due to the fact that the West of Ukraine has always had strong national sentiments, while the East of Ukraine has had weak or no national commitment by the impact of historical ties to Russia.

As stated before, nationalism is assumed to be only a modern concept emerging by the effect of the rising nationalist revolutionary movements in the 19th century and peaking with the French Revolution – a development often cited as a remarkable game shifter in world politics. In this line, it is important to look at what Gillis 1994, p. 6) suggested as three overlapping stages of the history of the western world: the first is the pre-nation stage before the 18th century; the second is the nation building stage starting from the French Revolution and lasting until the 1960s and the third stage is the post-nation building process coinciding with the modern times.

From this perspective, the second stage is of particular importance since the French Revolution as well as the rise of industrialization and capitalism paved the way for the process of nation-building characterized by liberty, equality fraternity, secular rulers, citizenship rights, judicial power on a recognized piece of land, shared language and culture – although with reservations in language and culture. Although those values had a founding importance initially, nations later abandoned those values in their perception of nationalism¹³ (Lewellen, 2003, p. 204; Tambiah, 1996, pp. 124-127).

In this vein, it is also essential to understand two different approaches to understand nationalism: modernism and traditionalism. Modernist understanding rules that nationalism is a modern cultural and political phenomenon, while traditionalists argue that nationalism is rooted in the French Revolution (Jensen, 2016, pp. 9-10). It can be seen that scholars seem to agree on the latter in recent years. According to Anderson (1991, pp. 37-46), the invention of the printing press gave rise to the first national consciousness, although not necessarily nationalism in its concise form. Yet,

¹³ Authoritarian regimes.

some other authors including Breuilly (1985) advocate that nationalism is a modern political invention and has no roots in history.

As opposed to modernist approaches, traditionalists claim that nations already existed in premodern times, so nationalism is not a modern phenomenon. Indeed, some argue that the sense of national unity can be found in England in the 10th century. In addition, Azar Gat (2012) argues that the origins of nations are visible at the early stages of human history. Such unity, accordingly, can be found first in tribes and communities through kinship later transforming into nation states.

In the book, *“Roots of Nationalism”*, Jensen (2016) advocates that there is a false dichotomy between modernists and traditionalists. She suggests that there is continuity in the notion of nationalism in that pre-modern components have continued their existence while combining with modern developments creating one integral whole phenomenon. Thus, she purports that modern nationalist movements have traces from cultural hints in the pre-modern times. The cultural expression of nationalism has been reinvented and modernized according to contemporary times, according to this assumption. This, she argues, is to ensure that they fit modern perceptions of nationalism¹⁴.

The most influential scholars who contributed to the studies of nationalism include Anthony Smith, Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, John Hutchinson, Hans Kohn, Elie Kedourie, Karl Deutsch and John Breuilly.

The invention of the printing press has had significant impact on both pre-modern and the modern world of societies and politics. Initially, books were only

¹⁴As referred to by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in their book *“The Invention of Traditions”*.

printed in Latin – the sacred Catholic European language. However, there was a limited number of literate people speaking Latin, which was the language of the Church as well as the higher stratum of the social construct. Hence, those who could speak Latin were bilingual and able to read sources while at later times, monoglots also started to read and write in local dialects thanks to the wide use of the printing press.

As people started to use the printing press widely, this paved the way for what Benedict called as print-capitalism, spreading across Europe. Over time, international publishing houses overshadowed national printing houses. Fevbre and Martin (1976, pp. 184, 249) evaluate this development as the formation of mass consumption and globalization. Furthermore, Lewellen (2003, p. 206) believes that the invention of the Internet can be likened to the invention of the printing press in the medieval times as these developments share one significant characteristic, which is to unite or gather people on the same ground.

As it was mentioned above, first books were printed in Latin and for a limited number of readers. Over time, however, publishers endeavored to reach more readers as much as possible in order to increase their profits. In this sense, three facts paved the way for the rise of mass readers as well as the spreading of print-capitalism: first is that less and less people started to speak Latin and this language was removed from the church literature and everyday life¹⁵. The second influential development was the Reformation movement and the translation of Martin Luther's "*Ninety-Five Theses*" in German. Finally, the third development was the use of local dialects or so-called vernaculars unevenly across geographies and this would later serve the future

¹⁵ Introduction of ancient Greek literature had the same impact as well (Benedict, 1991, p. 39).

monarchs for centralization of power, as argued in detail by Benedict (Benedict, 1991, p. 40). Consequently, those factors are considered as direct contributions to the rise of national consciousness.

The print-capitalism laid the foundation for national consciousness with the spread of vernacular languages leading to a unified system of communication. In other words, speakers of the same language could now understand each other in written works. Benedict (1991) points out to the fact that it was a process where people became aware of each other, and they became: “fellow-readers” who could understand each other by means of a nationally imagined community as Benedict refers to. This was indeed an invisible but shared world by readers (p. 44).

A perfect example of an imagined community is Christendom in medieval Europe thanks to which people united as they shared the Latin language to understand the religion. Religious texts, thus, spread rapidly in written works by the effect of this imagined community (Benedict, 1991, pp. 41-42; Jansen, 2016, p. 18).

As can be estimated, written works are often well-preserved and are not vulnerable to change as opposed to oral sources. Thus, written language is a permanent source, one can argue. Hence, print-capitalism has affected national consciousness throughout all times. Furthermore, this has paved the way for the emergence of what is called as the language of power – one that rules politics, and these developments altogether contributed to the emergence of modern European nations by the effects of imagined communities and dominant languages encouraged by printed materials. In this context, it can be uttered that the invention of the printing press also affected the emergence and dissemination of Ukrainian nationalism. In fact, the first book in ancient Ukrainian language or Church Slavonic was published in

1491. Additionally, Ivan Fedorov¹⁶ whose monument stands in Lviv is considered the father of Ukrainian printing activities.

The ideology of nationalism might lead to political movements or conflicts. As per this assumption, Foucault (1975, 1976) suggests that subjective consciousness and body could form a political construct and nationalism. In other words, subjective consciousness leads to the perception of national unity, which is supported by customs, traditions, heritage, common history and symbols among other joint components that bring people together. This gives rise to “body”, as Foucault calls, and this body is well aware of peculiar national characteristics. This completes the process of building national consciousness to bring about a nation state. In the light of these assumptions and according to the arguments of Foucault (1975, 1976) and Althusser (1971), one can note that national consciousness (which later transforms into nationalism in its natural cycle) is conveyed both individually and collectively by the effect or oppressive or otherwise ideological institutions. In fact, Althusser (1971, p. 142-143) refers to such institutions as ideological state apparatuses. Examples of such apparatuses include but are not limited to educational, religious, familial, political, social institutions, trade unions, communication organizations, and the mass media. The state imposes its ideology on individuals through these apparatuses, often in a repressive mood, according to the author. Indeed, the above-mentioned subjective consciousness is also formed by the help of such state apparatuses to create the desired social order (Zake, 2022, p. 219). In the same vein, Foucault (1975, 1982) asserts that states or governments often impose their ideologies and discipline by means of continuous surveillance. In fact, he differently suggests that individuals internalize the state ideology by means of administrative institutions, since these

¹⁶ Born ca. 1525 - died in 1583 in Lviv.

institutions are the power of the state. National subjectivity is thus created by state apparatuses both for societies in general and for individuals at a narrower scope.

Recently, the world has been encountering new and unprecedented challenges by the effect of globalization and technological advancements causing a major shift in cultural and socio-political structures. In this context, the concept of nationalism has had its share from the shift as well. As a matter of fact, some scholars such as Appadurai (1996, pp. 158-177) are of the opinion that nationalism will cease to exist. Instead, it will be replaced by a post-national formation defined by new identities and determining components. In other words, this could be argued to indicate that a post-national political order will overrule in the near future. In this regard, international communities are predicted to disseminate and replace national cultures, which are estimated to lose their significance gradually over time. Multiculturalism seems to overshadow the perceived unity of nations. As a matter of fact, globalization has already been helping people to cross borders relatively easily and revisit the concept of nationalism with a different perspective towards its reflection.

From the same perspective, it is known that Hobsbawm (1992, pp. 1-13) coined the term “invented traditions” in line with imagined communities¹⁷. Therefore, traditions can also be argued to be imagined. They are often reinvented or reconstructed by the effect of the existing conditions in a given setting. Traditions are often repeated in a way that is referred to as ritualization. In addition, it can be observed all across the world that sometimes major changes lead to the emergence of so-called new traditions as a consequence to revolutions, revolts, reforms, so on and so forth. Newly emerging political or ideological movements may also lead to the

¹⁷ An example is a Christmas tree in the Catholic traditions rooted in pre-Christian pagan practices.

formation of new traditions since the former ones will not be applicable again.¹⁸

Although creating new traditions to follow always involves the roots of former rituals or traditions, it can be argued that this is a rather selective process where certain former rituals are conveyed, while others are left behind on purpose (Handler & Linnekin, 1984, p. 280).

In connection with this argument regarding constructing and abandoning certain traditions – which can also relate to the concept of imagined community – it is noteworthy that Abrams (1988) believes the following: state officials often have political experience and the state comes into being implicitly. Later, according to the author, it reifies and gains a visible identity and turns into practice (p. 82).

In state building process, certain national symbols and myths play a significant role. Among them are a national anthem, flag, a national emblem and national holidays. In fact, such symbols are often used to distinguish between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in the context of nations. On top of that, new traditions can be formed or old ones can be modified based on certain masonry activities as well. In accordance with Hobsbawm’s assumptions, people may particularly feel connected to new traditions when they are exposed to existential threats such as war or conflict. In fact, nation’s written histories give space to national traditions in order to revive the feelings of saving or protecting that nation from external threats. Moreover, the above-mentioned comparison between “us” and “them” is often used in political propaganda for the same purpose. As a result, it is unavoidable to agree with Hobsbawm (1992, p. 14) in saying that “invented tradition” can never be neglected when analyzing the concept and practice of nationalism in a given context.

¹⁸An example to creating new traditions is the Republic of Turkey adopting the Latin alphabet to replace Arabic to comply with its new political ideology.

In the same vein, some other scholars underline the role of the so-called intelligentsia or high officials in shaping nationalist sentiments. More specifically, Himka (1999, p. 163) and Kuzio and Wilson (1994) suggest based on Gellner's assumptions that nationalism is a culturally formed phenomenon produced by high officials for a certain purpose – to lead citizens in fulfilling the role of commitment to the state. From this perspective, it can be noted that Ukraine also underwent a process of shift in its policies in the 1980s towards creating a strong sense of nationhood by the effect of their intelligentsia. Indeed, the above scholars define intelligentsia as well as governments as a socially binding factor when it comes to building nation states (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p.2). However, history is also a significant part of this process. It is remarkable that Ukraine did not have any prominent nationalist sentiment other than to Soviets during the rule of the USSR. Yet, other former USSR countries such as the Baltic states, Armenia and Georgia had high national sentiments during those times. They also tried to differ themselves from the Russian culture despite Soviet dominance. In fact, Russians regarded Ukrainians as “younger brothers” as they had closer ties to Russia in cultural and linguistic terms. Nevertheless, the West of Ukraine did harbor nationalistic feelings different from that of Russia – although to a certain extent (Clem, 2014, pp. 226-227).

Cultural nationalism is a concept that is based on the assumption of the development of a unique culture featuring distinctive and shared common language, tradition, history and heritage. It is important to add, that the notion of cultural nationalism does not include mentioned earlier in this chapter the idea of “invented traditions” (Hutchinson, 1999, pp. 392-393). It can be related with the 19th-century Western Ukraine when Ukrainians realized that their culture and language is different

from Poles and Russians as well as ideally fits in the ongoing process of re-shaping modern Ukrainian nationalism reaching back to its historically rooted traditions.

Ukrainian nationalism in comparison with the other post-Soviet republics is different because it did not develop simultaneously throughout the country and as one of the interlocutor emphasized “Ukraine, unlike Poland is not based on monoculture”¹⁹. Ukraine is not homogenous country, it is multi-ethnic with a visible division in the country. The fact that Western Ukraine was under the Austro-Hungarian rule, enabled Ukrainian nationalism to emerge there due to considerably mild and tolerant rule. Whereas the other part of Ukraine remained under the Russian Empire rule where no appropriate conditions were found so that national consciousness could appear (Virág, 2012, p. 623). Therefore, Ukrainian nationalism that has its roots in the Western Ukraine, historically associated with the West and hence, is closer to the European model based on democratic values in comparison with the eastern part of the country. This historical division has reflections in today’s division of the country; linguistic, ethnic, economic, cultural, political and social (Shulman, 2006, p. 250). It is there, in Western Ukraine that national awakening has begun and the first political movement took place. Moreover, the fact that not the whole country was under Russian rule affected how Ukrainian nationalism has shaped throughout the years and it enabled the Ukrainian nation to form its own identity not strictly based on Soviet propaganda. The historical division resulted also in cultural diversity that currently is going through reorganization and being based on homogenous Ukrainian culture throughout the country. Shulman (2006, p. 251) indicates two main camps perfectly reflecting this division between citizens of Ukraine; ethnic Ukrainians in Galicia and ethnic Russians in Donbas. The results of

¹⁹ Data obtained during an interview in Lviv in 2018.

his survey reveals a great cultural diversity between those two regions. This is confirmed in the fieldwork conducted within the framework of this research since informants many times stressed the differences between Western Ukraine and Eastern Ukraine: “people in the East of Ukraine think we are all Banderites here in the west and we eat children”²⁰. This presents different perceptions and how strong the division is set in the stereotypes between those two regions resulting from its historical experience. Such intolerance indeed finds its explanation in the past of the country but it must be noted that the Ukrainian authorities since gaining independence were unable to implement state policies that would reconcile the citizens of Ukraine (Marples, 2007, p. 6). It is the latest events starting from the Orange Revolution until the outbreak of war that seems to bring resolution to this question.

My assumption is that if Ukraine would not remain under different rules, whole Ukraine would be largely affected by the Soviet heritage and it would be more difficult to build a nation state and distinctive Ukrainian identity. What is more, Ukrainian nationalism has entered a phase of re-shaping after the Orange Revolution and due the current circumstances in going through re-invigoration that is primarily based on uniqueness and distinctiveness of Ukrainian language, culture and tradition, creating Ukrainian identity and at the same time placing it as being different and separate from the Russian identity.

Religion cannot go ignored in an analysis of nationalism, which is why Chapter 3 of this study will specifically focus on religion as an aspect of nationalist feelings. In addition, history is a critical part of this analysis for demonstrating developments in the past with a glimpse of social and political perspectives.

²⁰ Data obtained during the fieldwork in Lviv, 2018.

Following the Boasian approach, history is the collective representation of one nation's past. Studying the history in Ukrainian case will allow us to have an insight on how and what influences had an impact on national consciousness and constructing Ukrainian identity. In other words what has shaped Ukrainian nationalism and why nationalism is so strong in the Western Ukraine.

1.2 Identity

The concept of identity is rather confusing and complex and attempts to comprehend it have often lead to different interpretations. As a matter of fact, Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 1) argue that it is both a very narrow and a very broad concept with several differing attributed meanings. The term identity was first coined in the 1950s and later in the 1960s, the term started to be used commonly by the effect of Erik Erickson and his notable works²¹. Getting outstandingly popular by drawing the interest of international scholars, the term identity gradually gained new meanings (Gillis, 1994, p.3). However, when identity was first used, political anthropologists were initially not interested in this term (Lewellen, 2003, p. 193). In the 1970s, however, ethnic and social segregation movements in the US led to the rise of the notion of identity and scholars started to study it in depth. Particularly Erickson, Pierre Bourdieu, Roger Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, Craig Calhoun, Anthony Giddens, Claude Lévi Strauss, Margaret Somers, Charles Tilly, Charles Taylor and Harrison White were influential figures in studying the concept of identity and its ramifications.

²¹ Freud, who studied psychoanalytical context of "the self", was the first scholar to discuss the first form of identity. Thus, the word can be claimed to come from psychological studies. It is worth noting that Erik Erikson was also a psychologist.

In this context, identity can broadly be defined as a sense of belonging to a certain community or group by the help of an individual's self-understanding. According to various psychoanalytical studies, there are three basic theories attempting to analyze identity: primordialism, modernism and constructivism.

The understanding of primordialism²² suggests that identity originates from race, culture and religion with primordial history. Accordingly, identity is a phenomenon naturally embedded in the start of human civilization²³. However, modern anthropologists object to primordial assumptions and argue that identity is a product of constructivism in that both culture and identity as well as religion are constructed over time and identity does not result from those other phenomena (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 29).

According to this notion of constructivism, it can be argued that colonialism was one of the factors that affected the formation of identity for particular groups of people. Other fundamental developments that shifted people's identity [and culture] included the spread of literacy thanks to the printing press, and of course, the Industrial Revolution. Those developments paved the way for the revisiting of identity by means of reconstruction. From this perspective, it can be uttered that identity construction depends on social, political and economic conjuncture. Furthermore,

²² Alternatively referred to as perennialism.

²³ An example is the modern Turkish identity formed after the declaration of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Turkish identity, was indeed, reconstructed by the effect of consecutive revolutions. The aim here was to build a nation state and unify people. Since the society consisted of people with various cultural and religious backgrounds, the task was not simple. People lacked a common background. Therefore, the founders of the Republic of Turkey 'invented' traditions to be shared. Such traditions included the belief that all Turks had their roots in Central Asia.

some forgotten or silenced identities can still be brought to the surface by future generations by means of reconstruction²⁴ (Lewellen, 2003, p. 195).

On the contrary, there are scholars who disagree with the notion of constructed identity. Esman²⁵ (1994) argues that identity is not entirely invented or constructed, and purports that there must be a fundamental cultural basis to confirm identity and lead it towards solidarity among people (p.14).

As can be estimated, everyone has a certain sort of identity in the sense of seeking belonging. Indeed, modern people tend to have more than one identity in their societies. This phenomenon is referred to as “multiphrenia” by Kenneth Gergen (Gillis, 1994, p. 4; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 10). More interestingly, some individuals may not even be aware of the identities they have. Hence, Moore (2006) justifiably argued that identity is no more limited to certain borders. Globalization has changed the notion of identity, as everything else, and it can be now produced and reproduced ubiquitously for both individuals and communities across the world (Moore, 2006, p. 449). In this regard, it can be noted that globalization brings about a wave of cosmopolitanism that has a direct impact on identities that are no longer dependent on a physical place. In other words, identities have gradually been subject to deterritorialization. Said (1979, p. 18) refers to this situation as “general homelessness”. As a matter of fact, mass migrations, as well as mass media contribute to homogenization of cultures in addition to globalization. In this sense, cultures can

²⁴ For example, modern Turkish identity is based on the notion that Turks originate from pre-modern Central Asian lands. Also, another example is Nazis endeavoring to tie their being to the “pure Aryan race”.

²⁵ Milton Esman was a social scientists and a professor of international studies specializing in peace and ethnicities.

be regarded to have become intertwined today at an unprecedented level²⁶. In line with this assumption, Canclini uttered that all cultures and identities are hybrid (Gupta & Ferguson, 2006, p. 611; Canclini, 2005). Yet, this state of hybrid formations is a deep threat against national identities fostered by both globalization and cosmopolitanism and international trends (Gillis, 1994, p. 5).

Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 17) propose that self-understanding is an alternative concept to identity, in the sense of how an individual positions themselves in society. From this perspective, while self-understanding may vary depending on the individual and the setting, identity tends to be fixed across different time periods. Nevertheless, self-representation is subjective and depends only on the respective individual free from the perception of others. In addition, Brubaker and Cooper also suggest that self-identity is not limited by any constraints²⁷, while overall identity is subject to the perceptions of others.

According to the same authors, modern states are rather powerful when it comes to identifying and categorizing various groups (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000, p.15). More concretely, states allocate identity numbers to their citizens, or they grant passports. They can obtain fingerprints or other personal data of citizens. Furthermore, modern states have the power to categorize people according to gender, religion – although controversial nowadays – educational background and healthcare status. As Brubaker and Cooper claim, states own all kinds of sources to “impose categories or classificatory systems” on their citizens, which lays the groundwork for the Foucauldian term known as governmentality.

²⁶E.g. the American culture is spreading in Europe with celebrations such as Halloween or the Valentine's Day. Another example is using English names and titles in foreign languages. Young Polish people use the word “hejt” for “hate” (borrowed from English) or similarly, the word “lajk” for “like”.

²⁷ Brubaker and Cooper emphasize the close connection between the two terms (2000, p. 18).

While it might well be challenging to draw clear lines for identity, there are some universally accepted components of identity. This especially applies to collective identity as it is easier to define this concept with race, gender nationalism, ethnic origin or social movement, although various scholars are constantly debating over the validity of these components. Nevertheless, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) advocate that collective identity is an emotional bond among people with a sense of distinctness from others. Solidarity and unity accompany this sense of belonging against others (Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 19).

As it was mentioned above, collective identity is characterized by three universally applicable components affecting the sense of belonging: commonality (meaning that fellow members share a common character), connectedness (relational ties, groupness) and the overall sense of belonging. All those components combined with emotions have an impact on people as a community that can make them ready to risk their lives in social movements, revolutions or threats against their country.

Discussions around the issue of identity among scholars have recently focused on the fundamental amendments taking place in the 1990s shaped by the sense of belonging to a certain group of people. More specifically, the emergence of globalization tended to eliminate national borders, which in turn, affected the conceptualization of identity. Consequently, a situation called the “identity crisis” broke out within the framework of the tension between common global practices and sense of belonging to local culture and rituals affecting political recognition.

In case of Ukraine two primary ethnic national identities: Eastern Slavic and Ethnic Ukrainian can be distinguished. Those identities are shaped historically and geographically, therefore they much differ in many aspects and in fact causes number

of social and political issues (Clem, 2014, p. 224). Eastern Slavic identity reflects the identity of people inhabiting eastern and south-eastern parts of Ukraine. Slavic identity is associated with more pro-Russian attitude. People have tendency to speak Russian instead of Ukrainian. And culturally are closer to Russia, they are the product of Russian imperialism and legacy of the Soviet Union. What is worth noting is the fact that Eastern Slavic identity accept the situation where one considers himself both Ukrainian and Russian. Meanwhile, it became clear during my fieldwork that in Lviv people believe that it is possible to be Ukrainian and speak Russian but it is not acceptable to share those two identities.

Whereas, the ethnic Ukrainian identity can be found in the West of Ukraine and in the Centre. Culturally they are closer to Europe. Ethnic Ukrainian identity is associated with political liberalism, democratic values and lower support for non-democratic systems (Shulman, 2005, p. 60).

Western part of Ukraine historically has had stronger ties with Europe, for centuries was under the Polish rule and then Austrian, furthermore the West of Ukraine played an important role in awakening and shaping Ukrainian nationalism. Whereas, the Eastern and South-Eastern part of Ukraine was left under the Russian rule, therefore did not establish strong Ukrainian national feelings, did not play an important role in shaping Ukrainian nationalism and the democratic movement at the end of the Soviet era. Therefore, established „weak identities” that are in favor for non-democratic systems (Kuzio, 2001, p.172).

Shulman (2005, p. 83) claims that the Western part of Ukraine has strong support for democracy and capitalism due to the fact that they regard themselves

historically and culturally in close ties to Europe. Simultaneously, if they would have strong ties with Russia, this would also affect their perceptions of political culture.

1.3 Ethnicity

The word “ethnicity” originates from the Greek word “*ethnos*” meaning nation or people and it was first coined by W. Lloyd Warner during World War II. In the aftermath of this coinage, ethnicity quickly attracted attentions similar to the concept of identity. In fact, before this word came to use, scholars were using either “race” or “tribe” instead. Nevertheless, just like the concept of identity, ethnicity also bears certain problems within itself. As a matter of fact, there have been controversies as to its definition among various experts, as well. Thus, some scholars argue that this term should also be left undefined (Sollors, 1996, pp. vii., xi; Lewellen, 2003, p. 198). In reference to RT Smith, Alonso proposes that “ethnicity is like family or marriage: everybody knows what it means but nobody can define it” (Alonso, 1994, p. 379).

In this context, it is necessary to point out to Max Weber, Karl Jung, Karl Mannheim, Georg Simmel, Carl Gustav, William James, Robert and Park, Margaret Mead as the scholars who studied ethnicity thoroughly. Furthermore, David Schneider, Abner Cohen, Fredrik Barth and Herbert Gans are among modern scholars affecting the comprehension of the concept of ethnicity. In this regard, Max Weber can be considered to have provided a deeper background for the definition of ethnicity and its ramifications in that he suggested people associate ethnic origin to physical similarity and share a common practice of social life (1996, pp. 52-66). Furthermore, he suggested that groups of people may have shared historical developments such as being subject to colonization or migration movements, and this fosters a sense of belonging regardless of whether they share blood or not (Weber, 1996, p. 56). For Weber, on the other hand, ethnicity is a mere imagination or artificial as it is based on

people's belief. In that, ethnicity significantly differs from kinship as the latter is associated with specific social actions and ethnic membership to a group is often regarded together with identity. Difference is traditions result from economic or political conditions as well as language or faith. From this perspective, Weber defines ethnicity by the help of two German terms: *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl* (sense of belonging) (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 20; Weber, 1996). These two concepts form the groundwork for the understanding of ethnicity according to his analyses, while Lewellen (2003, p. 199) claims that the most comprehensive definition of the concept is purported by Stanley Tambiah (1996):²⁸ Ethnicity is a sort of identity one is aware of and proudly expresses by certain characteristics such as skin color, language, faith and land, which are assumed to have transferred collectively by legacy from what is called ancestors (Lewellen (2003, p.168).

According to the conceptualization of Tambiah, inheritance, ancestry, territory or place of origin, and sense of kinship are the fundamental components that form ethnicity. In this context, a shared history is also an essential part of ethnic belongingness. Based on an emic evaluation, an ethnic group is considered either by people outside or inside the group. In other words, ethnic groups are defined according to who is and who is not a member to that group. On the other hand, constructivists assume that ethnicity is a phenomenon constructed over time – as identity.- by the effect of social, political and economic circumstances.

²⁸ Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah was a social anthropologist at the Esther and Sidney Rapp Professor of Anthropology at Harvard University, and one of the world's leading figures in sociocultural anthropology specializing in anthropology of religion and politics.

Based on the above theoretical pinpointing of ethnicity, it can be noted that the Soviet Union was diverse in terms of ethnic origins of people with various languages, religious beliefs, cultures and historical backgrounds. Many were not even of Russian origin and that is why Soviet rules tempted to unite people by a primordial ethnos as well as Karl Marx's theory of history and evolution (Banks, 1996, p. 24) in order to prevent any possible separatism movements. Indeed, ethnic minority groups might well get engaged with separatism based on their ethnoterritorial claims to threaten the territorial integrity of a country²⁹ (Clem, 2014, p. 224). The Donbas region was a potential threat in terms of separatist movement, it was place of residence for large Russian ethnic minority and Russia had territorial claims regarding this part of the country since 1992. If an ethnic minority group feels insecure, it will seek to take control in the given state, or will express desire to form a new state or will seek to become a part of the state where they would find themselves secure (Clem, 2014, p. 224). Thus, the Donbas region had a potential threat with possible separatist movements as it was inhabited largely by a Russian ethnic minority. As a matter of fact, Russia has had territorial claims regarding this part of the country since 1992. Often, ethnic minority groups tend to start instigation to separate from the motherland when they feel insecure and aspire to annex to another country they would feel secure (Clem, 2014, p. 224). Yet, it can be said that the Russian ethnic minority in Russia often enjoyed privileges as they could speak both Russian and Ukrainian in public space and they were not predominantly subject to discrimination.

²⁹ Similar examples can be seen in Catalunya and the Basque Country of Spain. Also, separatist tendencies of Scotland in the United Kingdom can be considered in the same regard.

1.4 Collective Memory

Shared memory is another component that shapes the concept of nationalism and is worth to elaborate in this study to better understand the deep meaning of nationalism particularly with regard to Ukraine. Although various scholars analyze the way how people form and lose memories over time, it can be observed that memory in the political and social context has started to lose its significance at recent times. Scholars are mostly interested in individual and collective memory processes, while ignoring its effect on politics and social cohabiting. However, certain political scientists criticize this situation and argue that particularly a collective memory has a major role in shaping a nation's particular preferences. For instances, Gillis (1994, p. 3) argues that collective memory is crucial in forming national identity. Furthermore, the authors suggests that people tend to alter memories to fit their identities. Besides, anthropological theoreticians also believe that memory and particularly collective memory among people is the core of reproducing culture and ensuring the continuity of nationalistic sentiments as well as ethnic belonging. Some argue that memory is objective based on past experience (Lambek & Antze, 1996, pp. XII-XIII), while Pierre Nora (1989) utters that memory is sort of a "site" that people visit just like they visit monuments or historical sites. Thus, he suggests that memory is not an abandoned space, and memory analysis requires a glimpse of social relations, as well as relations with institutions and discourses adopted by the majority of individuals in a society, in addition to the space where a particular memory forms (Lambek & Antze, 1996, p. XIV). Although this study is mostly engaged with the political and social aspects of memory, it might well be of help to first understand what memory is in the world of science: memory is associated with contemplating physical properties such as space, gesture, image, object, or a particular fragrance, according to its

scientific definition (Nora, 1989, p. 9). In this regard, memories can be both individual or social. Yet, history is distinctive in that it simultaneously belongs to everyone and nobody (Nora, 1989, p. 9). From this point of view, it is stated that individual and collective memories cannot be severed since they would otherwise be deprived of their sense. In other words, individual memories are tied to collective memories. Nevertheless, scholars indicate that collective memory is often more powerful than an individual memory as they are more deeply embedded and change-proof, since they go back to times before individual's birth dates (Malikowski, 2004, p. 249). Memory is based both in oral and written language, and all social practices tend to ultimately tie to memories. Also, it is claimed that memories are sometimes used as an instrument to reconstruct history, and language plays the key role in reconstruction social conventions (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 173).

In the same context, Gillis points out that the notion of identity and memory are deeply correlated at a level that reaches interdependence. More specifically, identity can only exist by the act of remembering, and what people remember or commemorate constitute memory (Gillis, 1994, p. 3). According to the notes of Gillis, memory might be formed subjectively and since it is interrelated to identity, it can be claimed that national identities can be reconstructed over time. Halbwachs (1992, pp. 50, 54) notes that in modern societies, individual identity is neglected while there is just the pretension of respecting this concept.

In the same vein, memory affects one's identity based on past experiences. Connerton (1989, p. 3) also suggests that "past factors tend to influence, or distort our experience of the present" (Tonkin, 1995, p. 1). Hence, the present time can only be interpreted based on the knowledge of the past. And when social or collective memory is recorded, it turns into history writing or historiography attempting to

prevent different perceptions of the past memories. History might be represented not only orally but also by rituals, historical sites, symbols or monuments.

National memory, thus, can be understood as historical ties among people despite not knowing each other. It is a kind of social belief constructing collective memories (Gillis, 1994, p. 8). Besides memories, it is also remarkable that what unites people can also be forgetting certain past experiences. Anderson refers to this phenomenon as “collective amnesia” – an act to forget the past to create new and more functional memories – and Renan (cited in Rowlands, 2005, p. 111) proposes that shared memory is a must-have in nation-building. Hence, the act of forgetting certain past experiences is a sort of organized behavior by a group of people. This might be imposed by a dominant power or hegemony for a certain agenda. Often, rulers tend to disregard negative past experiences in their shared history to undermine another weaker nation. From this perspective, social beliefs are likely to differ from shared memories to some extent as they do not necessarily have to be linked to history. They may only refer to the present social practices, ideas or conventions based on the knowledge of only the present time (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 188). In this context, traditions are linked to both the past and the present, with continuous re-interpretation of social practices (Handler & Linnekin, 1984, p. 273). Consequently, it can be said that memories are not constant or fixed, but rather they are subject to remembering, forgetting, altering, disregarding or adding. Therefore, identity is also a concept subject to changes – whether minor or major – over time.

Evaluating collective memory from the perspective of contemporary times, it can be seen that the effects of the French and American Revolutions have been grandeur. In fact, the Western world objected to their past memories and attempted to change those memories. Of course, such change would demand reorganization of the

economic, political and social infrastructures and creating a distance between the past and the present. They needed to leave the past as a blank page, while creating new memories often requires references to the ancient times³⁰. Nevertheless, it is important to add that modern memory does not consist only of a severance from the history or the past: “it goes hand in hand with the contradictions of the past and the present, meaning the various versions of national identity created by different groups ” (Gillis, 1994, p. 10). As a matter of fact, history might be changed due to political agendas or social reasons at the time of history writing. Thus, public representation of the past may be inconvenient for some individuals or social groups (Tonkin, 1995, p. 11). This assumption well applies to the Ukrainian context with regard to the debates over OUN-UPA activities in Volhynia, since the inconvenient truth is being passed over silence by the Ukrainian government (Paź, 2011b, 144).

Lviv is a good example of both collective and individual memory representations in the context of different nationalistic feelings. In fact, it is claimed that the killing of Polish, a Jewish and Ukrainian are perceived differently there (Hrycak, 2020, *Gazeta Wyborcza*). Another fact that points out to how collective memory is critical to nationalism is that Ukrainians have collective memory of OUN-UPA members in western Ukraine surviving Soviet pressures and fighting for freedom and independence.

Although often associated with objects such as historical buildings, monuments, architectural artifacts, heritage is also immaterial: language, customs, traditions or rituals are also heritage. Heritage is important in that it provides the basis

³⁰ This is the same as inventing traditions. An example is the creation of new memories by disregarding the Ottoman past and declaring the Republic of Turkey in 1923 to build a new Turkish identity.

for collective identity based on ancestry and origins (Lowenthal, 1994, p. 44).

Allowing a nation to feel united, heritage is an important concept correlated with shared memory as well as identity. In this line, Lowenthal (1994, p. 50) argues that heritage of tragedy is often more influential than heritage of pride or joy, since negative incidents tend to foster solidarity. Lambek and Antze (1996, p. XXII) also underline the importance of trauma in a nation's heritage, while Ernest Renan (1990), an opposing author, claims that that trauma may jeopardize national unity.

From this perspective, speaking of the past might bring the sense of nostalgia and melancholia (Tonkin, 1995, p. 10). Heritage is a representation of the past that brings vivid memories of the past to those who not necessarily witnessed it. In the same line, Rowlands (2005, p. 106) also stresses that heritage brings of melancholia and nostalgia with a longing for what has been lost. According to this assumption, the Eastern Ukraine is full of melancholia and nostalgia, as Russian speaking nationals are often cited to long for the Soviet times in the polls (Riabchuk, 2002, p. 54).

Memory in the context of Ukraine may be understood as a representation of an instrument. In fact, rulers tend to use it for their political agenda. To be more accurate, it can be said that what is being remembered or forgotten largely depends on the current regime or the ruling political party. When Ukraine was under the Soviet rule, certain developments were vigorously denied although they were still fresh in the collective memory. In fact, those developments were reshaped by the Soviet power-holders. An example to such a case is *Holodomor* – a grave humanitarian tragedy, that was a groundbreaking development since Ukraine would still be under the Russian rule if not for the great reaction shown by the Ukrainian rulers and community. Nonetheless, this tragedy was not given space in history books in the Soviet tenure, while people clearly remembered the Ukrainian nationalists and OUN-UPA with their

extraordinary struggle despite the Soviet pressures accompanied by censorship and propaganda.

All nations need collective memory to have distinctive identity compared to other nations and to self-actualize. As underlined before, that is why history might be reconstructed or reinvented for political goals. This is exactly why the Soviet historiography falls short in understanding Ukraine fully. Motyl (2015) points out that Ukraine had the opportunity to recreate its shared memories and history after 1991 by means of new national narratives free from foreign interference, while they lacked this opportunity during the Soviet oppression. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukrainians made their voice heard by new national narratives which Nora (2002, p. 1) depicts as “recovery of shared memories”. Nevertheless, Ukraine due to strong historical division, Soviet propaganda and lack of proper official policies after 1991 could not overcome the differences in the interpretation of common history, that resulted in emerging two conflicting national myths, both placed in collective memory of residents of those two regions; Western Ukraine and Eastern Ukraine (Virág, 2012, p. 626).

History is an essential and crucial tool in explaining and understanding the phenomenon of Ukrainian nationalism. Moreover, history also enables the understanding of the contemporary crisis that Ukraine is going through. Therefore, the next chapter briefly discusses the history of Ukraine.

CHAPTER 2. THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF UKRAINE

Historians have been disputing over the etymology of the word “Ukraina” (*ukr. Україна*) – in Ukrainian pronounced as [ookraina]. Some scholars assume it means “borderland”, “a land or a country”, “a piece that is cut” or “at the edge, end” (Łesiów, 1995, p.7), while others tend to disagree. The term first appeared in a Kyivan chronicle in the 12th century. In the 16th and 17th centuries, it was referred to as the Cossacks lands, as underlined in the previous chapter of this research with profound background information. What is more, it is believed that the foundations of the modern Ukrainian state in fact have its origins in the Cossack state (Nahaylo, 1999, p. 4; Katchanovski, Kohut, Nebesio & Yurkevich, 2013, p.1,2)

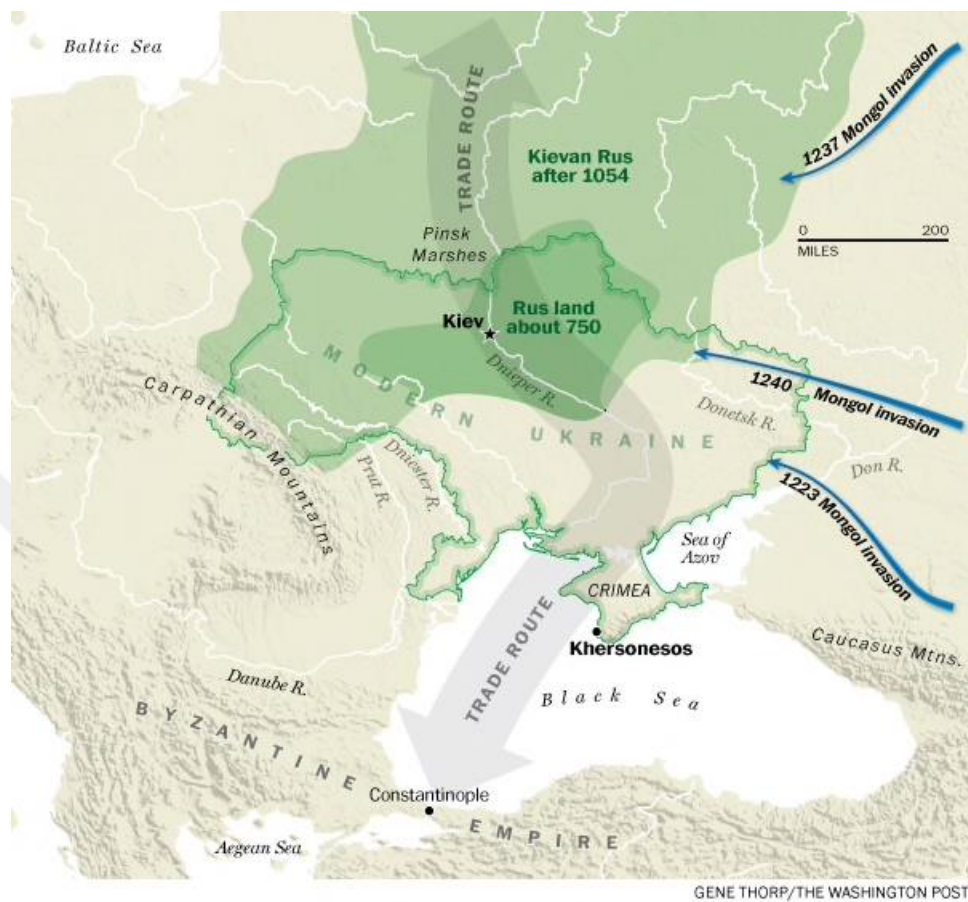
2.1 Kyivan Rus

Established in the 9th century, Kyivan Rus is believed to be the first state of Eastern Slavs, Ukrainians, Russians and Belarusians. It should be noted that Slavs appeared on the said lands around 3000 years ago. This land was inhabited by many different Slavic tribes who decided to unite and settle down around Kyiv in the year 882. The founder of the Kyivan Rus state was Prince Oleh and the territory of Kyivan Rus extended from Chełm³¹ to Kyiv as the heart of their country along the Pripyat River towards Sumy and through Cherkasy, Vinnytsia and Kolomiya in the south. The golden age of Kyivan Rus was during the reign of Volodymyr the Great³² - the Grand Prince of Kyiv and also during the rule of his son, Yaroslav the Wise.

³¹ Modern Poland.

³² Volodymyr Volhynski, a saint, and a patron of Ukraine.

Figure 3. *The expansion of Kyivan Rus and its trade routes*



Note: The map illustrates the expansion of Kyivan Rus lands as well as the trade routes it harbored. Those trade routes allowed contacts with other cultures and the exchange of goods, traditions, beliefs and ideas.

(Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/03/09/maps-how-ukraine-became-ukraine/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.7991f939f878)

In the following years, the Kyivan Rus territory expanded, and reached the largest territory in the early 11th century, stretching from the Black Sea to the Baltic Sea and from the Carpathian Mountains to the Volga River. Kyivan Rus was located

in a strategic position along the Dnieper River enabling trade relations with neighbors. The trade routes started from the Black Sea and continued up to the Baltic Sea, allowing the rulers of Kyivan Rus benefit from exchange of goods as well as ideas. Besides trade and cultural relations with Scandinavia, Persia and Arabic states, Kyivan Rus came especially under the Byzantine cultural and political influence. The Byzantine Empire had a great political and cultural influence and hence, Volodymyr the Great accepted baptism in Chersonesos in Crimea in 988, resulting in the complete conversion of Kyivan Rus into an Orthodox state.³³ The Kyivan church was under the jurisdiction of Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. After Volodymyr the Great's baptism, he married Anna, sister of the Byzantine Emperor Basil II. Afterwards, he demolished all pagan statues and cult sites and began to build many churches. Later he was proclaimed saint and patron of Ukraine.

The new religion in Kyivan Rus meant the use of the new Cyrillic alphabet replacing the Glagolitic alphabet. In 1051, Yaroslav the Wise established the first Kyivan City – Metropolitan Ilarion – paving the way for the independence of Kyivan Rus from Constantinople. Yaroslav the Wise laid the groundwork for their first laws as well, referred to as the - *Ruskaya Pravda*. Serczyk (1979, 32) utters that this law and the introduction of church and monastery property led to the formation of a new feudal structure as classes (landowners and peasantry) had varying amount of wealth. Thus, many revolts took place when the church ideology was only deepening this feudal structure.

After Yaroslav the Wise's death in 1054, the state entered into a period of stagnation due to domestic conflicts over the throne rights by his sons. Consequently,

³³ Before baptism, Kyivan Rus was following Slavic paganism.

the Kyivan Rus lands were divided among his sons and the country became a dynastic confederation rather than a unified state. As for the consequences of this development, new trade routes were established, bypassing Kyiv. This altogether led the state to lose its power gradually and further polarize classes in the society. As a matter of fact, Halych and Volhynia became the richest and the most developed regions. Reign of Volodymyr the Great and his son Yaroslav the Wise resulted in territorial expansion, religious unity and cultural development. Moreover, cities flourished thanks to the opportunities granted by the new trade routes. The aforementioned chronicle mentions Moscow for the first time in reference to those times.

In the following years, Volodymyr Monomakh managed to reunite Kyivan Rus again, however the country was soon invaded by Mongols in 1240. After this invasion, they remained under the rule of the Golden Horde for almost two centuries. During this period, Kyivan Rus started to lose its cultural unique characteristics as it fell to the position of “periphery of Europe” (Serczyk, 1979, p.50). On the other hand, the Mongol invasion had an impact also on eastern Slavs. Many believe that this invasion caused eastern Slavs’ separatist movement and establishment of the Muscovite state. Based on this historical information, it can be understood why Ukrainians, Belorussians and Russians all claim their ancestry tracing back to Kyivan Rus. Meanwhile, the Principality of Halych and Volhynia never fell under the rule of the Golden Horde and were successful in maintaining their deep Kyivan heritage and ethnic origin, which is why Galicia and Volhynia are often referred to as the successors of Kyivan Rus (Serczyk, 1979, pp. 17-50; Nahaylo, 1999, pp. 1-2; Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p.12).

2.2 The Feudal Period and the Cossack Hetmanate

The Kingdom of Poland was located on the eastern border of the Principality of Halych and Volhynia. In the year, 1344, the Kingdom annexed Sanok and Przemyśl to its lands. In 1366, they annexed the whole Halych and a part of Podolia. In 1569, the Kingdom of Poland signed the Union of Lublin with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to found the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. And over the years, the majority of modern Ukraine was annexed to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Serczyk (1979, p. 55) underpins that this historical process led to the rise of a Ukrainian national consciousness as opposition to rule by others. Indeed, Ukrainians soon rejected foreign rule as they believed they had never been like the Polish or Lithuanians in terms of culture, language and religion. They felt their difference to be sharper especially considering Lithuanians, since their culture was significantly dissimilar and they spoke very different languages let alone their ethnic origin. As a matter of fact, Ukrainian is an Eastern Slavic language whereas Lithuanian is a Baltic language, distant to Slavic family of languages. Nevertheless, the cultural and language difference was less evident considering the Polish. Polish is a Western Slavic language and is relatively closer to Ukrainian. The main difference with the Poland was the religion: Poland was a Catholic country, while Ukraine was an Orthodox country. Therefore, Ukrainians identified themselves neither with Poland nor with Lithuania. They actually coined the name “Ukraine” to indicate a country different and separate from its neighbors with all aspects including culture, religion and language (Serczyk, 1979, 56).

On the other hand, people in Muscovy also endeavored to differentiate themselves from Ukrainians with language and other components of early nationalism leading to a form of tension. Besides, Polish King Jagiełło brought in a new Polish

law on their lands in the 15th century. Despite differentiating efforts, this law enabled the upper classes of both Ukrainian and Polish segments to have the same privileges. At those times, people called Ukrainians as Ruthenians and Russians as Muscovites (Nahaylo, 1999, p.2).

In this context, it can be seen from historical record of Ukraine that Ukrainian peasants could not avoid the fences of feudalism, as they were forced into serfdom and deprived of freedom. They were obliged to serve to the elect class of society in fierce conditions, while Ukrainian enlightened people were forced into assimilation by converting into Catholicism (Nahaylo, 1999, p.2).

In the 16th century, some Ukrainians started to settle around lower Dnieper river, although this place was initially poorly inhabited for geographical constraints. Nahaylo (1999, p.3) calls this place as “no man’s land” (located between Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the east, Crimean Tatar Khanate in the south and Muscovy in the west. At first, only the peasantry settled in this area as they had been fleeing from serfdom and repressions. Fugitives, adventurers, and criminals with various ethnic origins joined them over time. Among them were Ukrainian, Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Tatars and Vlachs (Serczyk, 1979, p.67). The settlement quickly began to self-organize and form political and military units. As a result of this well-organization, they soon established the Hetman state also known as Zaporizhian Sich led by hetman/ataman. People of Hetmanate are known today as Cossacks (*ukr. Козакі*)³⁴. Since the word Cossack has military connotations, it can be asserted that Cossacks were great warriors powerful enough to rapidly expand their lands. As proof of this arguments, it can be noted that Cossacks gained semi-autonomy from the

³⁴ The etymology of the word “Cossack” is unknown.

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in a relatively short time. Yet, this was not enough for Cossacks, since they shared a strong desire for full autonomy. Furthermore, they ardently opposed feudal practices introduced by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth leading to fierce confrontations between Cossacks and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, while revolts were often repressed. By virtue of Cossacks' military skills, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth frequently used them in military operations particularly against Tatars, the Ottoman Empire and the Muscovy. Cossacks joining wars and hot wars were officially registered and for this reason, the Polish King guaranteed them personal freedom and a military salary among other privileges. Those Cossacks who were lucky enough to be officially registered managed to accumulate some wealth and sometimes gained the ownership of estates, while a large number of Cossacks sustained their lives in poverty. More concerning what was that the Polish gentry despised those impoverished Cossacks. Additionally, official registration was limited in number, hence Cossacks always demanded incrementing this number of registered Cossacks, while some were able to gain assets by illegal ways such as raids in Tatar lands.

Figure 4. *The Cossack state after 1649*



Note: The map presents the Cossack state after 1649 within the territory of the modern Ukrainian state. The West of Ukraine is not included in the Cossack state.

(Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/03/09/maps-how-ukraine-became-ukraine/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.7991f939f878)

The culture under Cossacks went through undermining developments. New forms of folk culture have a, while folk songs and dumas were³⁵ praising Cossack's bravery. Songs also referred to Turkish captivity or love in addition to geographical characteristics. The culture reflected the location of the state and their influences.

In the 17th century, Cossacks gained more power and began to demand greater freedom, increased military salaries, and official registration. As opposed to those

³⁵ Duma was a sung epic poem originating in the Cossack Hetman state.

demands, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth failed to set a solid foreign policy towards Cossacks with reluctance to meet their pushing demands. They demanded challenging alterations such as autonomy on the grounds that Polish King Władysław IV Vasa promised this autonomy to them in the past. They also aspired for the restoration of the Orthodox hierarchy. As the Polish could not fulfill those demands, Cossacks felt rather disappointed leading to constant conflicts with the Polish gentry. The reason for those specific conflicts was that those elite people deprived Cossacks of equality and equal treatment. This was further instigated by the declining number of official registrations, lack of amnesty for those who joined insurgencies and repugnance by the Polish towards Orthodoxy. All those developments led to polarization and the Cossacks became the arch enemy of the Polish, who always regarded Ukrainians as slaves. Surprisingly, this slavery was enabled by law (Beauvois, 2016, p.16). According to Serczyk (1979, p. 132), the Polish only brought suffering to Ukrainians: even a dog was treated better than an Ukrainian peasant. Therefore, Khmelnytsky – the founder of the Hetmanate – aimed to end the Polish hegemony. He also struggled to protect Orthodoxy from Catholic Poles. The conflicts escalated in 1648 and Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky led a large uprising for the rights of Cossacks. This large-scale movement is today known as the Khmelnytsky Rebellion or the War of Liberation of Ukrainians. Sharing a joint hatred of serfdom and Polish oppression, Cossacks united with Ukrainian peasants and the rebellion featured numerous bloody battles, where Cossacks won. The final battle was the Battle of Berestechko in 1651. The Polish army became victorious in that final battle. Defeated Khmelnytsky turned to Russia in a search for an ally. Although, Khmelnytsky was also considering an ally with the Ottoman Empire or with Tatars. However, Russia seemed a better choice since both the Cossacks and Russians

followed Orthodoxy and were more and more interrelated in terms of economy. As a result, in 1654 Khmelnytsky signed a treaty in Pereyaslav with the Muscovy and the Cossacks fell under Russian supremacy. In the following years, a war broke out between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Muscovy. This war led to the Truce of Andrusovo in 1667 dividing Ukraine into two: Left Bank Ukraine ruled by Muscovy and Right Bank Ukraine ruled by the Polish -Lithuanian Commonwealth. Tsar promised Cossacks to protect their land from Poles, hence Khmelnytsky was hoping that Russia would keep their promise of a Cossack state autonomy but instead the Cossack Hetmanate was divided.

What is more, it turned out that situation of peasants got much worse than under Polish supremacy, instead of feudal suppression there were tsar sanctions. The Cossacks gradually settled down, ceased raids and focused on trade, fishing, hunting and beekeeping (Serczyk, 1979, p. 145). Nevertheless, there were few more attempts to establish an independent Cossack state. The most well-known of such attempts was led by legendary Hetman Ivan Mazepa. However, this attempt only made Russians more powerful, let alone any possibility of victory.

Cossacks under Russian supremacy were under strong Russian influence, especially visible in the written Ukrainian language. Frequent visits to Moscow affected their cultural exchange as well. In 1699, the Polish- Lithuanian Commonwealth decided to abolish Cossacks on the Right Bank, whereas the Cossacks on the Left-Bank were gradually assimilated, many forced into peasantry and the Cossacks' institutions replaced by the Russian ones. In a consequence they have lost tens of their distinct identity. In 1781 Catherine II abolished the last hetman status of Cossacks (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p.18; Nahaylo, 1999, pp. 5-6; Serczyk, 1979, p.177; Gibas-Krzak, 2006, pp.15-16).

It is important to add, Cossacks commenced the efforts to revive Ukrainian Orthodoxy and Ukrainian culture with center once again located in Kyiv. However, Nahaylo (1999, p. 3) indicates their compliance with foreign influences especially Western. Undoubtedly, the location of the Cossacks Hetmanate between Poland, the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire made them vulnerable to the influences of those states. Nevertheless, Cossacks play a very significant role in modern Ukraine's history and shaping the modern Ukrainian state based on Orthodoxy. The Cossack Hetmanate state is now considered the genuine origin of Ukrainian traditions that distinguished them from their neighbors. Thus, it is believed that Cossacks and particularly the Khmelnytsky Rebellion initiated Ukrainian national consciousness and a sense of unity. It was the first time that Ukrainians strived for national independence. Cossack tradition is expressed in large numbers of monuments situated throughout the whole Ukraine commemorating their memory. Moreover, reference to their tradition may be found in objects of common use such as a bottle of vodka.

Figure 5. A bottle of horilka (ukr. Горілка) “A Drunken Cossack” (ukr. козак на підпитку)” in a shape of a Cossack



Note: The traces of Cossacks can be seen in the public space and daily used products.

(Source: the author's own album).

2.3. Galicia and the National Revival

The term Galicia refers to a historical and geographical region that spreads from southeastern Poland to western Ukraine, and it refers also to the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria that was established after the partition of Poland and was administrated by the Austrian Empire. The capital of the kingdom was Lviv³⁶. The name Galicia (*ukr. Halychyna*) comes from the name of the city of Halych that was the capital of the Kingdom of Galicia – Volhynia.

Based on the following assumptions, it is now seen that contemporary Galicia³⁷ in Ukraine, is poorer than the other parts of the country, particularly in comparison to the Donbas region in the east of Ukraine or the cities near the Black Sea³⁸. The reasons for that may be found back in history, in Austrian rule. That part of the country was already poor due to the lack of factories, it did not have good infrastructure (Hrycak, 2000, pp. 33-34). The Austrian Empire did not want to invest in the development of the region due to its military and strategic significance. The only industry led in Galicia was crude oil and earth-wax. According to Hrycak (2000, p. 34) Galicia was poorer than Western Europe due to the fact that Ukrainian people and resources were used by the Austrians and Russians due to their colonial tendencies.

In the 20th century, Austrians divided Galicia into Western (Ukrainian) and Eastern (Polish) Galicia in order to separate and distinguish the two ethnicities

³⁶ *Lemberg* in German.

³⁷ Located both in Poland and Ukraine.

³⁸ Odesa, Kherson or Dnipropetrovsk (Yekaterinoslav).

(Łesiów, 1996, p. 16). Slowly, over time the term “*Ukraina*” became associated with the land of people who differ in terms of language and tradition from their neighbors (Serczyk, 1979, p. 56).

Serczyk (1979, p. 55), pointed out that the annexation of Western Ukraine to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth accelerated the formation of a strong commitment to the Ukrainian ethnicity. In fact, the Ukrainian ethnicity developed gradually throughout the 15th century, when basic differences between Muscovy Rus and Ukrainians could be observed, especially pertaining to language. Due to limited contact with Russian, the language was influenced mostly by Polish because of its close borders. Thus, during that time the term „*Ukraina*” began to be considered in social conscience as distinct land with unique language and culture different from their neighbors (Serczyk, 1979, p. 56; Halushko, 2017, 76).

The word Galicia (*ukr. Галичина*) – pronounced as *Halychyna* – originates from the name of the city of Halych which was the capital city of the Kingdom of Galicia – Volhynia in the 13th century³⁹. The capital was moved to Lviv in the mid-13th century. Afterwards it remained part of the Kingdom of Poland for centuries, while later being annexed to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 1795, for the third time, Poland was divided by three countries: the Kingdom of Prussia, the Russian Empire and Habsburg-Austria. Hence, Galicia (both Polish and Ukrainian parts) became part of the Habsburg-Austria Empire, which established the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. In the aftermath of those events, Austrians restored the former medieval name of Galicia⁴⁰, hence the capital of the kingdom became Lviv⁴¹.

³⁹ Although Magocsi (2002, p.3) claims that Galicia is first associated with the territory, and second with the German name *Galizien* referring to being a part of the Austro-Habsburg Empire.

⁴⁰ Poles used to refer to that land as Red Rus (*Ruś Czerwona*) rather than Galicia.

⁴¹ *Lemberg* in German.

Figure 6. *The Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria.*



Note: The map illustrates the map and division of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria in the 18th century and how it was located within the modern states of Poland and Ukraine. (Source: <https://grypa666.wordpress.com/2017/12/11/glucho-dudnia-echa-e-burd-mgra-inz-jozefa-bizonia/>)

In this context, it is critical to note that the Ukrainian population of Galicia consisted largely of peasants (40% of Galician population) residing in villages, while urban areas were predominantly populated by Poles, Jews and Armenians. The Ukrainian gentry mostly lived in Przemyśl and Sambir areas, however many of them were systematically assimilated by the Polish. The Sian river became an unwritten ethnic border; west of it was inhabited mainly by Poles whereas in the east of Sian river Ukrainians were the majority.

Ukrainian peasants had very rich folk culture that was represented by its own distinctive character remote from „industrial culture” (Hrytsak, 1999, p. 30; Himka,

1999, p.9). While the Poles had close ties to Austrians in both cultural and political terms.

Galicia was part of the Kingdom of Poland since 1352, hence was under Polish influences⁴². The Polish reign was based on a Catholic tradition, whereas Ukrainians followed Orthodoxy. In order to unite people living under the Polish rule, the Pope Gregory XIII initiated union between Roman Catholic church and Orthodox church. As a result, the Union of Brest was signed in 1596. The union was accepted by Kyiv metropolitan, however was not accepted in Galicia until the Cossacks⁴³ revolt in the mid of the 17th century when Poland introduced more control over this territory (Nahaylo, 1999, p. 3; Himka, 1999, p. 6). Ukrainians who have accepted the union - the Uniates and the Greek Catholic Church approved the supremacy of the pope but followed their Orthodox liturgy rite. The Orthodox population had limited access to politics and did not have a right to make free decisions concerning their churches (Łesiów, 1995, p. 54).

Therefore, the Greek Catholic Church took active role in educating the Catholic clergy class as the first educated people in Ukrainian Galicia. Over time those people spark the light for the first-ever Ukrainian national awakening (Himka, 1999, p.7). It must be emphasized that the rules of Austrian Empire were considerably mild back then, and that is the reason why Galician Ukrainians attained favorable conditions for “national awakening” (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p.6). Hrushevsky (1990, p. 515) also argues that Galician Ukrainians had more political freedom as well as movement area for cultural activities, when compared to Ukrainians in Russia. On the

⁴² More information available in Magocsi, P. R. (2002). *The roots of Ukrainian nationalism: Galicia as Ukraine's Piedmont*. University of Toronto Press.

⁴³ Cossacks did not accept Uniatism and followed Orthodoxy.

other hand, it can be understood from the available archives that neither the Polish nor the Austrian government had tolerance for nationalistic movements of Ukrainians. In the same line, John A. Armstrong (1990, p. 11) underlines that the Austrian rulers were not totalitarians and this allowed the continuation of the national struggle for the independence of Galicia as opposed to Soviet rulers who often resorted to oppression to silence Ukrainian enlightened people to curb any potential nationalistic movement that would end up with the division of the lands.

As stated before, Galicia in the 19th century suffered from impoverishment and deprivation of economic activity due to a lack of investments by the Austrian rulers except the processing of crude oil and earth-wax, while Western Europe had more financial opportunities. Galicia further lagged behind due to falling in the hands of Austrian and Russian colonialists.

Presenting a more complicated picture, Ukrainians in the Russian Empire were frequently subject to pressure. As a matter of fact, Tsar Peter I banned any printing activity with the goal of spreading Ukrainian books or any other print materials. Similarly, Tsar Alexander II issued an order in 1876 referred to as the “*Ems Ukaz*” banning speaking Ukrainian. Indeed, the Russian perspective towards Ukrainians can be vividly understood from what then Russian Minister of Interior Petr Valuev stated: “there is no such language, never have been and never will be” (Serczyk, 1979, p. 266; Nahaylo, 1999, p. 6). Nevertheless, people were still secretly writing and publishing in the Ukrainian language. When it came to 1838, Ukrainians in Russia who were following the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were forced to convert to Orthodoxy. This was posed as a hinder before education. In other words, Ukrainians who wanted good quality education had to first learn the Russian language. The aim was to systematically assimilate Ukrainians and to alienate them from their inherited

culture and essence. Thus, Ukrainian language became a language of uneducated peasant, or in some case was used by few educated Ukrainian nationalists as a result of those assimilation policies imposed by Russians (Hrycak, 1999, pp. 83, 107). Furthermore, Galician Ukrainians had very limited contact with Ukrainians residing in the Russian Empire, damaging any possible unification under national Ukrainian sentiments. Besides, it was nearly impossible to unite around a single language and culture leading those Ukrainians living in Russia to gradually lose their sense of national identity (Serczyk, 1979, p. 210; Nahaylo, 1999, p. 6). And unfortunately, there were merely a few enlightened Ukrainians regardless of the place of residence and the majority of the population was peasantry due to the consistent pressure coming from the above (Hrytsak, 1996, 13).

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, Europe had gone through several major political, social and cultural changes including but not limited to the French Revolution, enlightened absolutism, romanticism, the Industrial Revolution and the Spring of Nations. Those developments also impacted the Galicians in that they triggered the national awakening. Therefore, it is officially considered that the Ukrainian national awakening began in Galicia in the second half of the 19th century. Until this period, Ukraine had been under Polish influence to a great extent. That influence, in fact, extended far beyond the territory of Galicia and reached even Kyiv where Polish was considered a language of intellectuals. On the other hand, this had to change when the Polish November Uprising against Russians failed⁴⁴. The revolutions in Europe resulted in the abolition of serfdom in Galicia. The Polish fought for their independence and they aimed to cease subordination to the Russian Tsar. It can be said that this development set an example for Ukrainians to start

⁴⁴ The Polish armed rebellion against Russians in 1830-1831. The Polish were defeated.

struggle for their national independence. Thus, in the 19th century Ukrainians began to refer to themselves as Ukrainians not Ruthenians (Hrycak, 1999, p. 97).

During those times, the Ukrainian-Galician culture was flourishing with academic conferences and cultural events. They started to issue their first newspaper. They formed cultural associations. A leading group promoting Ukrainian nationalism was the secret Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius of Kyiv University. Taras Shevchenko, a poet and a painter who is considered a national Ukrainian figure also belonged to the brotherhood. Many academicians consider the establishment of this community the first stage of building the Ukrainian nation (Serczyk, 1979, p. 228). Another organization worth attention was *Hromada* established by a group of students in Kyiv, who promoted Ukrainian studies and national political movement.

One of the prominent leaders of the Ukrainian national movement was Mikhail Drahomanov, who was followed by many other committed to the Ukrainian national case. The period after 1860 is often referred to as the national literary revival when many outstanding literary work began to be written in Ukrainian. In the literature and culture in general Romanticism was prevailing. One of the impressive literary works was “*Kobzar*” (ukr. *Кобзар*) by Taras Shevchenko, which is regarded “the bible of Ukrainian national movement” (Serczyk, 1979, p. 18). Another example of Ukrainian literary struggle for the national movement was Ivan Kotliarevsky’s poem “*Eneida*” (ukr. *Енеїда*) written in 1798 that significantly influenced the development of the contemporary Ukrainian language. Kotlarevsky and others were often writing about liberation of the Ukrainian nation by combining folk tradition with national elements (Serczyk 1979, p. 228). Authors and artists frequently presented also peasants in their works. Moreover, the development of Ukrainian language and national awareness grew stronger with the spread of printing houses (Łesiów, 1996, p. 31). The first book

on Ukrainian history and modern Ukrainian political thought was “*Istorija Rusow*” (ukr. *Історія Русов*) written by an unknown author. The book depicted Ukrainian history starting from Kyivan Rus and Cossack traditions. And most importantly, it intensified the desires of Ukrainian nationals for an independence. In fact, the book was inarguably a source for Ukrainian nationals in their fight for independence.

Inspired from the depictions of the book and other incentives, a literary group of three students later established the Ruthenian Triad: Yakiv Holovatsky, Markiian Shashkevych and Ivan Vahylevych. They published in the Ukrainian language. In this context, the most critical moment in terms of Ukrainian national movement was the first legal political organization called the Supreme Ruthenian Council (ukr. *Головна Руська Рада*) established in 1848 in Lviv.

Nevertheless, the Ukrainian political movement in Galicia, was in a very difficult position not only due to supremacy of Austria and Poland, but also due to lack of the national elites and uneducated rural population. What is more, they spoke Ukrainian, sung songs in Ukrainian in which they often referred to great Cossack tradition, however they were lacking the national consciousness (Hrycak, 1999, pp. 59, 111).

In 1866, the Poles gained semi-autonomy, however still remained under the Austrian Empire supremacy. Galicia was divided into eastern and western part. Therefore, some Ukrainians lots hope in their national movement and decide to turn towards Russia. This led to the emergence of the two main political factions: pro-Ukrainians known as Ukrainophiles and pro-Russians known as Moscalophiles. The latter were against Polonization, identified themselves with the Russians and Orthodoxy. What is more, often they were even denying the existence of separate

from the Russian, Ukrainian nation (Hrycak, 1999, p. 92). On the other hand, the Polish continued to restrict the political rights of Ukrainians to feed Polish assimilation, while Ukrainians still sustained their national parade with publishing and other activities. In this context, influential authors, Ivan Franko and Mykhailo Pavlyk built the first Ukrainian political party called the Ukrainian Radical Party⁴⁵ (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 20). In this sense, the end of the 19th century was marked by a revival of Ukrainian activism to claim political freedom and social justice (Nahaylo, 1999, p. 6).

By the end of the 19th century, Galicia went through social and cultural transformation. New factories were built, railways connecting Lviv and Vienna, newspapers published in Vienna and increasing standards of life (Himka, 1999, p. 13). However, Galicia was still relatively poor by that time and the countryside was overpopulated. In addition, they did not have sufficient industrial development despite the railway connecting Cracow, Vienna and Lviv. Overall, the country was suffering from economic stagnation. Therefore, many Ukrainians decided to migrate to the United States, Canada or even Brazil. The only industry in Galicia was crude oil and earth-wax as underlined before, yet it was not enough to employ people so that they could make sufficient living. On the other hand, the socio-political changes in Europe started to impact Galicia, as well, leading to the emergence of the Galician bourgeoisie and proletariat. Consequentially, the Galician Ukrainian peasantry became involved in the national movement, as they became literate and learnt about the history, and social and political developments surpassing the country.

⁴⁵ More information available in: Himka, J. P. (1983). *Socialism in Galicia: The emergence of Polish social democracy and Ukrainian radicalism (1860-1890)*. Harvard University Press.

One can claim that those developments paved the way for today's conditions of Galicia in modern Ukraine as it is now the most advanced region in Ukraine in terms of politics, featuring the strongest national and religious claims. Currently, Galicia is made of three oblasts including Lviv, Tarnopol and Ivano-Frankivsk. In all these oblasts, people have traditionally been pro-democratic and as Shulman (2005, p. 62) purported, the Western Ukraine has outstandingly been focused on both political and economic reforms. In this work, Shulman also compares the Western Ukraine to Baltic states, as Galicia was not integrated part of Ukraine.

2.4. Ukrainian Nationalism during World War I and World War II

The socio-political changes in Europe centered on liberal and democratic waves that managed to access the Russian Empire. This ultimately led Russians to make a change in their attitude towards Ukrainians. In 1900, the first Ukrainian political party was established in the Russian Empire under the name of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party. This party also had activities in Galicia, paving the way for Ukrainian activism and other political organizations in the Russian Empire. In 1905, Tsar Nicholas II restored the rights to speak the Ukrainian language, hence people began to write and publish in Ukrainian. The number of Ukrainian periodicals significantly increased and people more often and more openly articulated their political opinions and desire for an independent Ukraine. According to Gibas-Krzak (2000, p. 20), Ukraine was mature in political terms and became capable of forming an independent nation.

However, the Ukrainian struggle for national freedom was interrupted by World War I in 1914. During the course of the war, the Russian army invaded Galicia and enforced Russification on its inhabitants. Ukrainian language was forbidden to use, Polish however was allowed in some private schools. The people had to learn and

speak Russian language. It was compulsory to convert to Orthodoxy and follow Russian culture. The war ended in 1918 and resulted in geopolitical changes as well as radical social, political and economic alterations in Europe, Asia and Africa. In a direct consequence of the war the Austro-Hungarian Empire (the Prussia, the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire were dissolved as well) collapsed and this resulted in emerging new countries such as Poland. In particular, Poland re-gained its independence after 123 years of foreign supremacy and being removed from the European maps. Following those events, Galicia and Volhynia became an integral part of the newly established Polish state. Ukrainians rejected foreign domination as well and proclaimed the independent West Ukrainian People's Republic. However, this led to a war between Poles and Ukrainian Galicians. Poles won this war, and Galicia officially became a part of the Polish Republic. Peace treaty was signed in 1920 in Riga which guaranteed minorities rights such as development of language, religion and culture.

In 1917, the Russian Empire struggled with consecutive revolutions including the February Revolution and the October Revolution led by the Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik Revolution led to overthrowing Tsar Nicholas II of the Russian Romanov dynasty. The Empire endured political turmoil due to the Bolsheviks, later paving the way for the foundation of the future Soviet Union. The turmoil, indeed, gave Ukrainians in Kyiv an opportunity to once again fight for their autonomy. In 1917, the Central Council of Ukraine (The Central Rada) led by a prominent Ukrainian historian, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, was established. Their primary aim was to ensure Ukraine's autonomy and to declare the Ukrainian People's Republic⁴⁶. The Council demanded an autonomy for Ukraine, hence proclaimed the Ukrainian People's

⁴⁶ Volhynia, Kyiv region, Podolia, Poltava region and Chernihov region.

Republic⁴⁷. The republic was recognized by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed by the Central Powers and Russia. Both the Ukrainian People's Republic and the West Ukrainian People's Republic proclaimed the unification of the Ukraine. However, in the following years the Ukraine was seized by the Russian Bolsheviks who established the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR). The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was in fact a part of the United of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

As a result of the war and conflicts, most of the Ukrainian territory became a part of the Soviet Union, while Galicia was a part of Poland, and Bukovyna and Bessarabia came under the rule of Romania. The Carpathian region was annexed to Czechoslovakia. Notwithstanding that, the Ukrainian nation did not give up on their desire for an autonomous, independent Ukraine. Their fight became ever more strenuous during World War II. In 1925 in Lviv the largest Ukrainian political party in Poland was established - the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance which demanded the reunification of the Ukrainian land and autonomy. Moreover, they commenced a legal fight for independence. Therefore, it can be said that Galicia remained "a bastion of Ukrainian nationalism" (Nahaylo 1999. p. 13).

During the interwar period, the Ukrainian minority often was being repressed in the countries where they were forced to be located. Therefore, the Ukrainian fight for the independence was forced (mainly by the Bolsheviks) to move abroad, thus the government of the Ukrainians People's Republic functioned in exile. Many activists and intellectuals were exiled or emigrated, hence many nationalistic organizations were organized outside of the Ukraine; in Prague, Paris and Vienna (Nahaylo, 1999,

⁴⁷ Volhynia, Kyiv region, Podolia, Poltava region and Chernihov region.

p. 9; Serczyk, 1979, p. 386). In 1920, the Military Ukrainian Organization was established in Prague and in 1929, in Vienna it was transformed into the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists played a significant role in the Ukrainian fight for the independence during the World War II. It continued to fight against the Soviet power throughout the Cold War. During the interwar periods also the leftist parties began to appear in the western part of the Ukraine. The antagonism between those two nations began to raise due to the Polish policy towards the Ukrainian minority

What is more, the Polish government limited the rights of Ukrainians to speak their language, reduced the number of Ukrainian schools in other words they tried to assimilate them by treating them as citizens of the second category (Serczyk, 1979, p. 409; Hrycak, 1999, p. 190; Halushko, 2017, p. 104). The anti-Ukrainian policy of the Polish government was one of the trigger, that in fact resulted in strengthening the position of the Ukrainian nationalists (Rossoliński-Liebe, 2015, p. 7).

On August 22, 1939, Russia signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Germany promising non-aggression, while this can be regarded as a secret agreement to invade Poland. Germany attacked Poland on September 1, and the Russian army invaded Galicia on September 17, 1939. Russians tried to justify their aggression towards Galicia on the pretext of protecting Ukrainian people's lives and property (Hrytsak, 1999, p. 217). Merely one month later, western Ukraine was annexed to the USSR. The Russians led the policy of „deceptive Ukrainization”. New publications in Ukrainian began to appear, Ukrainian schools were opened, Polish university of the King John II Casimir was transferred into Ukrainian university of Ivan Franko, the industry began to develop. However, all those actions were deceptive, the Russians were repressing Ukrainian people especially for nationalist activities. Hrytsak (1996,

p. 220) points out to the fact that Russians killed more people in Galicia than the Nazi Germans did. Therefore, the organizations established in the interwar period; the Ukrainian Military Organization and the Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists began to consider the Poles and the Russians their enemies, hence began their anti-Polish and anti-Russian action. Their actions were against both the civil population and the army. The bloodiest and most brutal actions were taken by the OUN led by Bandera, especially against the Polish civil population in Volhynia and Galicia. In 1940, the OUN was divided into two fractions, one led by Bandera and the other one led by Andriy Melnyk. In 1941, Germans invaded the Soviet Union and Ukrainians considered them savior from Communists. Thus, hoping in true German intentions and that they would help Ukrainians to build their autonomous state, Bandera concluded a pact with the Germans. Together with Germans they formed a Nazi unit SS "Galizien". In fact, Germans did not want to help Ukrainians in their struggle, all they wanted was to exploit their resources and people (Walaszczyk, 2007, p. 188).

In 1941, OUN(B)⁴⁸ proclaimed the independence of Ukraine. However, Germans did not recognize it and captured the initiators and leaders of OUN, including Stepan Bandera who were sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The second faction of OUN led by Andriy Melnyk established a partisan unit that joined the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in 1942. OUN and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army fought against Poles, Germans and Russians in addition to pro-Russian Ukrainians (Serczyk, 1979, p. 434). As stated before, though, UPA was accused of ethnic cleansing for the massacres of Poles living in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia⁴⁹. On the other hand, the Ukrainian casualty was quite high as well. Based on these

⁴⁸ Faction led by Bandera.

⁴⁹ The estimated total number of Poles killed by UPA is between 100,000 and 200,000.

arguments, there is still ongoing debate over who to blame for the massacres in Volhynia and Galicia, dividing Ukrainian and Polish politicians today. While Ukrainians claimed Galicia and Volhynia, Poles also claimed that those lands belonged to them. The war ended in 1945, but UPA continued to fight Poles until 1947 when the Polish waged the Operation Vistula as a forced resettlement of Ukrainians living in the south-eastern Poland to the west part of Poland. UPA was officially dissolved in 1949, while continuing their activities illegally until the mid 1950s (Erlacher, 2013, p. 293).

The Yalta Conference of 1945 changed Europe's map, by settling territorial claims. One result of the conference was annexation of Galicia to the Soviet Union. With borderlines shifting, the Polish and Soviets signed a repatriation agreement to control the exchange movements of Polish and Ukrainian populations. In this context, it is argued by Kuzio et. al. that Galicia turned into a region with almost only one ethnic origin after World War II (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 54). As for west of Ukraine, they continued to firmly commit to European values claiming that they were part of European nations (Halushko 2017, p. 92).

2.5 The Soviet Rule

On December, 30 1922 the Russian Empire was re-established in a new form; the Soviet Union. Ukraine was integrated into the Soviet Union the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, that was governed by the Communist Party of Ukraine. In the early stages of the Soviet Union its constitution guaranteed the full Ukrainian autonomy, on the flag there was inscription in both Russian and Ukrainian. The second constitution from 1937 guaranteed the Ukraine right to disaffiliate from the USSR.

Figure 7. *The map of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*



Note: The Union of the Soviet Republics. Its collapse resulted in the emergence of 15 independent states. (Source: <https://www.ribttes.com/ussr-countries/>)

The largest nation in the Soviet Union by numbers were Ukrainians, comprising almost 44% of the entire Soviet population according to data provided by Hrycak (1999, p. 172). In this vein, there were four main periods with major developments during the Soviet reign in the context of Ukrainian nationalism:

- 1) The era of Joseph Stalin (1922-1953)
- 2) The era of Nikita Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1958-1964)
- 3) The era of Petro Shelest, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine (1963-1972)
- 4) The era of Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine (1972-1989)

As it was mentioned before, although Ukrainian cultural and social development seemed to flourish under the Soviet rule by the effect of several opportunities such as education in Ukrainian, this was rather deceptive and Stalin fiercely started to impose Russification on Ukrainians after the year of 1926. This process was marked by oppressive moves, deportations, collectivization, enforcing Russian as the language of instruction at schools, and trampling Ukrainian intelligentsia. The Stalin period is well settled in the Ukrainian history due to the actions and policies that caused the Great Famine (*Holodomor*) of 1932-1933, it was man-made hunger during which millions of Ukrainian people died of starvation. The Holodomor is regarded as genocide.

The Soviet authorities tried to impose on Ukrainian people one, single Soviet identity, they tried to make Ukrainians believe that they are one nation, by emphasizing the fact that they have common roots - Kyivan Rus, therefore the myth of „the Friendship of the Peoples” was created (Erlacher, 2013, p. 291).

Moreover, Joseph Stalin led also an anti-religious campaign, hence in 1946 the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church was abolished in Ukraine. However, it survived as an underground church, often referred to as “a catacomb church”⁵⁰(Nahaylo, 1999, p. 15; Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 59). Moreover, Stalin ordered mass deportation of people from Galicia, and brought in Russian population in support of the Russification efforts. This was supposed to support the Russification of the part of Ukraine where it was the weakest. Thus, numerous Galician Ukrainian national activists were imprisoned, executed or sent to gulags⁵¹.

⁵⁰In the 1930s, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was also banned and brought back to Ukraine by migrants after Ukraine re-gained its independence (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 7).

⁵¹ Labour camp

Therefore, it can be suggested that the Soviet ideology was based on extensive propaganda in both repressive and non-repressive forms. Various Ideological State Apparatuses were used as non-repressive form of propaganda. This covered both public and private domain, reaching every aspect of life of citizens to impose the Soviet ideology via schools, media, churches, work relations, communication as well as censorship (Althusser, 1971, p. 143).

After Stalin's death in 1953, Khrushchov commenced a de-Stalinization campaign and released many of political prisoners. He was rather pro-Ukrainian, allowing the Ukrainian culture to flourish during the course of his tenure. Besides, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine was elected a native Ukrainian⁵². Hence, Ukrainians could serve as communist elites at high positions in the Soviet government. Khrushchov also implemented the next anti-religious campaign, by which almost half of existing Russian Orthodox churches were shut down.

Likewise, the era of Shelest demonstrated a pro-Ukrainian approach allowing Ukrainization of higher education as well as conducting many Ukrainian cultural projects. Besides, Shelest tried to revive the Ukrainian culture and language. In 1966 during Ukrainian Writers' Congress, he was cited to say: "We must treat our beautiful Ukrainian language with great care and respect. It is our treasure, our great heritage..." (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 44). By the end of 1960s and the early 1970s, there was no ban on publishing books or other materials on Ukraine, while the main focus still was the grandeur of the Soviet system.

Contrary to former rulers, Shcherbytsky chose a different path: he internalized the method of heavy Russification of Ukrainian language and culture (causing

⁵² The First Secretary of the Communist Party would always be someone with Russian nationality in the other republics of the Soviet Union.

economic and cultural stagnation). He imposed mass arrests and repressions continued for a long time. In the 1970s, the Soviets launched a campaign against the Ukrainian national awareness and movements in an attempt to shape the collective national memory based on common heritage and ancestry of Ukraine, Belarus and Russia by celebrating the 325th anniversary of the Treaty in Pereyaslav and the 1500th anniversary of Kyiv. The goal was to impose “the Soviet identity” on Ukrainians and Belarusians to replace their national identities (Nahaylo, 1999, p.41; Hrycak, 1999, pp. 291-292). In the 1970s, the world noted violations of human rights by the Soviets, leading to the formation of the Helsinki Monitoring Group. Throughout 1980s, this fashion continued and many other organizations were built to observe both human and national sovereignty rights. Among them was the Lion Society (*ukr. Товариство Лева*) working to bring back and protect Ukrainian culture. Another was the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society that later became the Ridna Nova Society. Additionally, organizations were formed to claim environmental rights following the nuclear disaster in Chornobyl in 1986. One was the Green World Association. Along with the formation of such organizations, Gorbachev’s perestroika and solidarity moves in Poland encouraged Ukrainians to establish political parties and other associations. This ended in building the First Popular Front by the end of the 1980s. This front provided huge support to the Ukrainian social democratic movement. Also, The Coordinating Committee of Patriotic Movements of Peoples of the USSR (established in 1988, Lviv) and Rukh (first organizations in Lviv and Kyiv, 1989) worked for peace and progress for humanity. Those developments led to the formation of the Ukrainian Democratic Union in Kyiv in 1989.

Chmielewski (2007, p. 171) argues that west of Ukraine could not achieve urban development during the Soviet period. Instead, it remained a rural region for a

long time, being less appealing for Russians to apply assimilation. This may well be considered a solid reason for the powerful nationalistic sentiments in Western Ukraine transforming into organized movements particularly in Lviv.

Ukraine managed to produce extensive politics by the end of the 1980s, while it was rather challenging to start a mass movement despite being successful in forming alliances as part of opposition (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 98). Contrary to pressures, Ukrainian political parties managed to join forces to build the so-called Democratic Bloc, and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic held the first democratic elections for parliament in 1990, with the Bloc obtaining the majority of the votes from west Ukraine. Kuzio and Wilson (1994, p. 114) note that Lviv was still the region with the highest national consciousness back then. It was undoubtedly a historic moment for the history of Ukraine considering the efforts for independence. Formerly being a part of the Austrian Partition and the Second Polish Republic, Lviv was highly engaged in democracy and civil society activities (Malikowski, 2004, p. 244).

2.6 Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism and Inventing New Traditions in the Post-Soviet Era

One of the most noteworthy issues in the formation of nationalism is the history writing. What is more, Anthony Smith introduced ethno-symbolist approach. He believes that nationalism should be studied within broader historical perspective; through common traditions, shared memories and popular ethnic symbols. Therefore, analysis of Ukrainian national symbols is crucial here in order to understand the phenomenon of Ukrainian nationalism (Jensen, 2016, p. 12). The approach chosen for the analysis of symbols is based on key symbols where through the summary of the symbols: “where range of questions pertaining to the cultural conversion of complex

ideas into various kinds of relatively undifferentiated commitment” (Ortner, 1973, p. 1344).

In understanding the modern Ukrainian national identity, in the given context, national myths and symbols play a major role, since such symbols tend to reflect a nation’s past. The process of re-construction of national identity is embodied and expressed in nation’s continuity, therefore Ukraine that we see now is a reflection of its past.

The ethnocentric history writing approach has been possessed by the administrations that have been distant toward the ethnocentric nationalisms with the central concern of sustaining the state’s independence rather than ethnic issues (Kuzio, 2006, pp. 418-420). From this perspective, the Ukrainian ethnic identity and Ukrainian traditions were formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union in reference to their origins. At time of forming a new independent state, emphasis was laid on the difference of Ukrainians from Russians, as elaborated in detail in the previous chapters, despite the fact that Ukrainians has always been culturally close to Russians and the two nations’ languages are also very similar (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 5). As opposed to efforts of differentiation, the Ukrainian identity was repressed and weakened throughout the history due to diverse adverse conditions but has never been totally withered away (Hrycak, 2000, p. 12). Therefore, within the milieu of that tradition, when the original history of Ukraine is emphasized, the focus has been on pre-Soviet period namely the far past and has been refrained from developing an anti-Russian approach as far as possible at the same time. Thus, the construction of „others” that is reflected in Russian in the process of Ukrainian identity formation.

However, as the Soviets consistently displaced Ukrainians, their distribution remained without balance on the lands. The total population of Ukraine was 48,4 million, and 37,5 million were Ukrainians and 8,3 million were Russians⁵³ (Derzhavnyy Komitet Statystyky Ukrayiny, 2001, and Olszański, 2012 p. 17).

Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union for 72 years, and during the course of this time, strong Russification was imposed on Ukrainians. Most Ukrainian scholars agree that the Ukrainian nation survived devastating incidents in its short history. Therefore, Hrytsak (2000), points out that Ukraine as a nation does not fit into the definition of a nation since there is no common language, no universal religious denomination and what is more historical memory have been in large part destroyed. As elaborated before, there were only few attempts to write history of Ukraine⁵⁴. In other words, Russians accepted the history of Ukraine as one with theirs.

Therefore, when finally Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, the state was in need of inventing new traditions to better suit the current circumstances, namely to cut the ties with the past and reconstruct the new Ukrainian identity along with fresh national myths and symbols. Moreover, there was a need and a desire to separate Ukrainian history and ethnogenesis from that of Russians.

In evaluating the historiography activities in Ukraine, Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky was a prominent leader in leading the national revival movement in the 20th century Ukraine. He was exiled from the Soviet Union for allegations of being a German spy let alone the accusations for bearing nationalistic ideas. Until Ukraine gained its independence, its history records were not recognized by the Soviet authorities, although written in the early 20th century. Later, though,

⁵³ This census was conducted in 2001 for the first time after gaining independence.

⁵⁴ Hrushevsky and „*Istoriya Rusow*” by an unknown author.

those records were “institutionally recognized” (Motyl, 2015). Following his ideas, the modern Ukrainian history was reconstructed in reference to ancient myths of the motherland (Yapıcı, 2011, pp. 241-242).

Another influential historian regarding Ukrainian national traditions and identity is Orest Subtelny. The difference between Subtelny’s and Hrushevsky’s works is that the former concentrates on the community instead of the state when emphasizing the ancientness. In his approach, Hrushevsky refers to Kyivan Rus as the precursor of the Ukraine state claiming that the heritage of this principedom exclusively belongs to ethnic Ukrainians and Ukraine. As much as the ancientness and motherland myths, the myth of the Golden Age before the Soviets also serves to concretize Ukrainian borders against Russians (Kuzio, 2006, pp. 420-422). Furthermore, the first interpretation seen in the post-Soviet Ukrainian history is based on a similarity between Kyivan Rus and the European states and cultures, explaining the affinity to the West overall. Such an interpretation of the Ukrainian national identity often emphasizes the greatness superiority of Kyivan Rus over other European states cultures, though. For Hrushevsky, Kyivan Rus is a natural component of Europe, not Eurasia. Ukrainian historical archives also draw attention to the greatness of the Kingdom of Galicia -Volhynia and its superiority over the Western Europe. The Kingdom is perceived as the savior of Europe from Mongol-Tatar attacks. In other words, this type of interpretation is used to define Kyiv and Galicia -Volhynia as counterforces to Eurasia. Thus, it can be argued that there were efforts to build the Ukrainian identity based and even beyond Europeanism by reference to the past golden age (Kuzio, 1998, pp. 208-211).

The Ukrainian identity can also be understood via a synthesis of the dialectical relationship between the East and the West in the context of Kyivan Rus (Yapıcı,

2011, p. 245). In fact, this kind of an interpretation came into the forefront especially during the Kuchma period. From the Kyivan Rus period to the contemporary times, Ukraine has been playing the role of bridging Europe and Asia as it is located both in the west and the east. This synthesis seems to completely separate Ukraine from the Russian culture.

In the post-Soviet era, the national myths and national symbols were constructed in reference to ancient roots, motherland and the nation's golden age. Within this framework, the emperors Voldoymyr the Great who ruled Kyivan Rus from 958 until his death in 1015 and his son Yaroslav the Wise who ruled after his father's death until 1054, were both alleged to make Kyivan Rus one of the greatest powers of that period. Volodymyr the Great is also considered an influential figure for bringing about Christianization of Kyivan Rus. He was baptized in 988. In this context, the sculpture of Kyivan prince Volodymyr the Great made in 1853, has been preserved and has reached today. Also, the sculptures of Princess Olha and Yaroslav the Wise were presented to the public with great ceremonies under the leadership of President Kuchma in 1996 and 1997, respectively.

Figure 8. Statues of Yarolsav the Wise and Princess Olha in Kyiv



Note: The myth of origins dating back to Kyivan Rus is available in public space with monuments throughout the country. (Source:

https://www.google.com.tr/search?q=statue+of+princess+olha&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiMlqX58pPYAhUQJOwKHVVwBe8Q_AUICigB&biw=1242&bih=557#imgsrc=kTYN_9PuoUvzbM and

https://www.google.com.tr/search?q=yaroslav+the+wise+monument+kiev&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwji2tTU8pPYAhVHyKQKHAFsA0oQ_AUICigB&biw=1242&bih=557#imgsrc=MIfdyIUamHDxJM).

Mykhailo Hrushevsky is also considered the leader of Ukrainian People's Republic, founded in 1917 (remained independent only until 1920), and accepted as the "Heroine Founder of the State" (Kuzio, 1998, pp. 223-224).

National Ukrainian national mythology also features the tale of Cossacks for political individualism. Cossacks are considered to have built the first autonomous Ukrainian state known as the Cossack Hetmanate in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Cossack territory lied between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Russian Empire. Therefore, they were under the pressure of both the Polish and Russian rule. Cossacks felt used especially by the Polish and thus wanted severance. Bohdan Khmelnytsky was the first Hetman and the leader of the uprising against the Polish rule known as the Khmelnytsky Rebellion (1648-1657). Consequently, the Hetmanate was declared as an autonomous state. The Khmelnytsky Rebellion united people by calling for commitment to unity and solidarity (Hrycak, 2000, p.111; Serczyk, 1979, pp. 124-166).)

On the other hand, Khmelnytsky is considered controversial since he signed the Pereyaslav Agreement with Tsardom Russia in 1654. During the terms of

Kravchuk and Kuchma, Khmelnytsky was considered a great Cossack leader, fighting against the Polish rule. Some claimed that he signed the treaty due to obligations or Tsarist Russia breached the former agreements and pushed him to do so although he never aspired to give concessions from the Cossack independence. This was used to justify the heroine character of Khmelnytsky, while it is still debatable whether Khmelnytsky was a hero or a betrayer. Since Khmelnytsky ensured the East Slavic Union his position is relatively justified, yet in Tsarist, Soviet and modern Russian history records, different evaluations may be found.

Another influential but controversial Cossack was Ivan Mazepa. In order to unite all Ukrainian territory with Swedish and Polish alliance, he signed a secret treaty with the Swedish King Charles XII (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, pp. 15-17). In Tsarist, Soviet and contemporary Russian history records, Mazepa is noted a traitor due to that secret deal against Tsar Peter the Great. However, new history records under the influence of Hrushevsky manifested Mazepa as a national hero through highlighting his efforts to liberate the Ukrainian public from the pressures of the Russian Empire (Kappeler, 2014, p.113). For instance, in the history course book written by Viktor Mysan, Mazepa is defined as a well-educated Ukrainian figure aiming at making Ukraine a great and powerful European state in addition to freeing it from Tsarist pressures. The great Hetmanate era ended in 1781 when Empress Catherine II abolished the Cossack Hetmanate autonomy and partially annexed it to the Russian reign. Despite the fact that the Cossack Hetmanate state did not exist anymore, Ukrainians continued to remember their heroism, contributing to shaping their national identity and culture. Accordingly, the term “*Ukraina*” gained a new meaning around the 14th and the 15th centuries: a separate land with residents of a different language, culture and religion than neighbors (Serczyk, 1979, pp. 56).

The 15th and the 16th centuries, so as the following centuries indicate new developments in the cultural sphere of Ukraine. In 1491, Schweipolt Fiol published the first book written in Old Church Slavonic language. Also new forms of folklore came to being. Those were folk songs or dumas which often praised Cossacks. The centers of this old Ukrainian culture were Lviv, Sambir and Przemyśl⁵⁵ (Serczyk, 1979, pp. 80-116).

Evaluating from this regard, one can assume the 18th and 19th centuries as the Ukrainian Renaissance for national awareness. Armstrong (1990, p. 5) argues in this line that Ukrainian nationalism was forming in a way that imitated others, while also based on a defensive attitude against foreign intervention. Indeed, it was a defensive reaction of Ukrainians against the overwhelming Polish and Russian nationalism. As such, Ukrainian scholars, politicians and writers got engaged in various activities to revive nationalism. A groundbreaking development was the establishment of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius in 1845 at the University of Kyiv under the leadership of Taras Shevchenko, whose works mobilized the nation for an extensive national revival.

⁵⁵ Now based in Poland.

Figure 9. *Monument of Taras Shevchenko in Novovolynsk*



Note: Demonstrating the importance of Taras Shevchenko for the history of Ukraine.

(Source: the author's own album).

Monuments of Taras Shevchenko may be found throughout the whole Ukraine in a number of cities. Ukrainian national consciousness began to be more often expressed in written Ukrainian language. Examples are: Ivan Kotliarevsky and his epic “Eneida” (*ukr. Eneïda*), and the latter featured the ideas of autonomy for the first time against Russian pressure on the Ukrainian nation (Hrycak, 2000, pp. 36-37; Halushko, 2017, p. 70; Serczyk, 1979, 167-238). When Ukrainians were gaining their national identity and consciousness, Russians began to reject it fiercely, though.

The educational-cultural association called Hromada (*ukr. громада*) was established, and one of their main activity was to organize political and national movements. In Galicia, people gradually formed the intelligentsia, and Ruthenian

Triad was organized as a Galician literary group authoring in Ukrainian to disseminate the idea of a nationalistic movement. The group consisted of Markiiian Shashkevych, Yakiv Holovatsky and Ivan Vahylevych (Serczyk 1979, p. 234; Hrycak, 2000, p. 60; Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 18; Himka, 1999, p. 9). Another significant figure in the nationalistic endeavor was Ivan Franko, who together with Mykhailo Pavlyk established the Ruthenian-Ukrainian Radical Party and took many initiatives towards forming the political party system (Beley, 2017, p. 26). In the 20th century Galicia, on the other hand, Ukrainian People's Republic was established, although lasted only until the year 1920, followed by many other formations striving for independence such as the West Ukrainian People's Republic, Ukrainian Galician Army (UHA), Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). Nevertheless, the Soviets strongly reacted against managed to cease all nationalistic efforts by Ukrainians at those times.

It must be emphasized that the Ukrainian national movement started in the contemporary Western Ukraine and mainly in Galicia as the heart of Ukrainian nationalism. Consequentially, Ukrainian nationalism spread from the west to the east (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 31; Halushko 2017, p. 77).

In the aftermath of gaining independence and by the tenures of Kravchuk and Kuchma, an important point of departure for nationalism was the frequent reference to the persecution the nation endured during the Soviet Union. In this sense, the Nationalist Organization of Ukraine and Ukrainian Insurgent Army as its military branches played a leading role in Western Ukraine, fighting against both the Nazis and the Soviets for Ukraine's independence. Meanwhile in the Eastern Ukraine, (and the neighboring Russia), perceived as pro-Hitler and anti-Russian in the Soviet and modern Russian history records. Likewise, Stepan Bandera, the leader of the

Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Western Ukraine was perceived as a national hero, while as a murderer by other states (Katchanovski, 2015, pp. 217-218; Merples, 2006, p. 559).

During the Yushchenko period, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) was regarded as a hero organization for their effort to suppress the Nazis and the Soviets in state-sponsored historical archives (Yurchuk, 2014, p.140). The members of this organization were seen as equal to the veterans of World War II. In Yushchenko's Victory Day Speech on May 9, 2007, he stated that they had gratitude to those who had fought to liberate the motherland from the totalitarian invaders, that they would always remember those who lost their lives to protect Ukraine. Moreover, Yushchenko officially made Stepan Bandera a national hero in this address and named other members of Ukrainian Insurgent Army after "hero warriors" against fascists.

Figure 10. *Stepan Bandera on a 2009 post stamp commemorating the 100th anniversary of his birth*



(Source: <http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2010/02/24/a-fascist-hero-in-democratic-kiev/>).

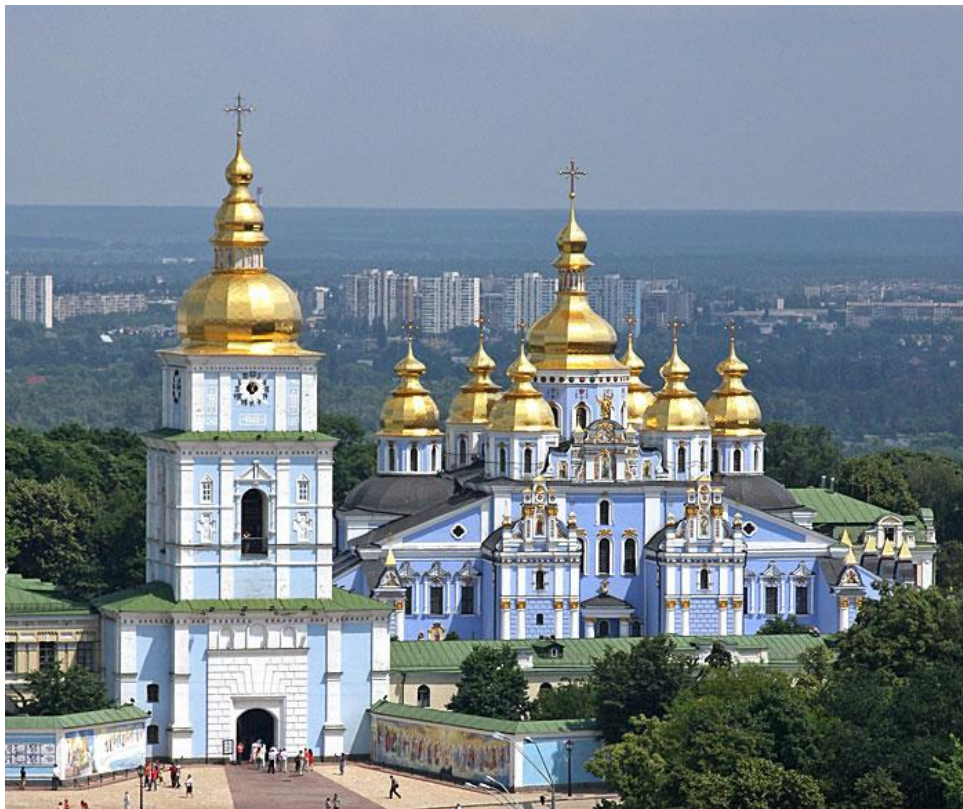
The fact that a post stamp was introduced with Bandera's picture on it manifests the importance of this leader in Ukrainian nationalism. However, his merit for Ukraine can be debated as some claim he was a mere betrayer.

In this line, the Yushchenko period featured important steps in writing the history of Ukraine with a particular focus on the Great Famine or Holodomor between 1932 and 1933 referred to as a genocide. In fact, Kulchutsky hesitated to utter that Holodomor was a genocide. Instead, he said it was a crime against humanity during the terms of Kravchuk and Kuchma. A book was later published on the issue, named after "*The Ukraine 1932-1933 Hunger as Genocide*" (Boryk, 2011, pp.1-3). In the history books of this era, the only victims of famine were ethnic Ukrainians. In November 2006, however, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted the resolution to define Holodomor as genocide with the initiative of Yushchenko, who made several

international initiatives for the recognition of Holodomor as genocide as well. Over ten parliaments including that of Poland, Canada, Baltic states and Georgia recognized Holodomor as genocide. Hence, symbols as reflections of important incidents play a major role in Ukrainian nationalism, as can be observed in historical records in the post-Soviet period accompanied by new symbols that were recreated (Yapıcı, 2011, p. 252).

The ties with Kyivan Rus were also emphasized by means of attributing importance to buildings such as the St. Michael's Golden Domed Cathedral, built where the oldest monastery of Kyivan Rus stood. It was first built by Kyivan Prince Sviatopolk between 1108 and 1113, yet later destroyed by Mongols in 1240. It was reconstructed in 1496, but again was destroyed by the order of Stalin between 1935-1936. This cathedral was rebuilt during the term of Kuchma between 1997-1998.

Figure 11. *St. Michael Cathedral in Kyiv*



(Source: <http://kievis.com/sightseeing.html>).

Myths benefited to trigger Ukrainian nationalism were supported by statues of important Kyivan Rus personalities such as Mykhailo Hrushevsky, Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Ivan Mazepa as founding fathers of Ukrainian historiography in the post-Soviet period. The sculpture of Hrushevsky was made in 1998 and that of Khmelnytsky in 1888. Yet, it was thought that Khmelnytsky made strategic mistakes by seeking compromise with Moscow. Thus, there were also criticisms against him. On the other hand, Ivan Mazepa's sculpture symbolizes new history writing in contrast to the Tsarist and Soviet records. His statue was made in his birthplace, Mazepyntsi village, Kyiv oblast, in 1994.

Figure 12. *The statues of Khmelnytsky and Hrushevsky*

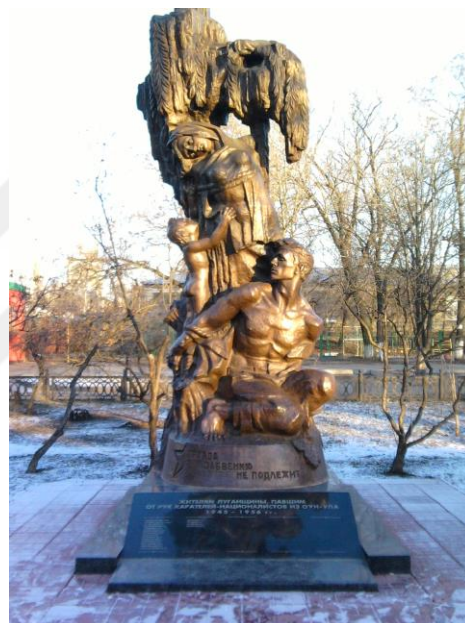


(Source:
http://s124.photobucket.com/user/HeavenlyAngel_05/media/Trip%20to%20Kiev%20Ukraine/P1010228_1-1.jpg.html,
<http://www.mykiev.info/en/dostoprimechatelnosti/pamyatniki/pamyatnik-mihailu-grushevskomu>).

The most concrete reflections of the new interpretation of post-Soviet Ukrainian history writing are the monuments of Ukrainian Nationalist Organization and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Kappeler, 2014, pp.114-115). On the occasion of the 65th anniversary year celebrations, the deputies of Lviv Regional Assembly declared 2008 as the year of Stepan Bandera. In October 2007, Bandera's monument was opened in Lviv. Moreover, several monuments were opened in the mostly Russian

populated cities of Ukraine including Simferopol under the leadership of Russian officials to commemorate the victims of those organizations. Also, the surviving members of the Ukrainian National Organization and Ukrainian Insurgent Army are said to be around 10 000, representing the symbols of the struggle for independence taken up during the term of Yushchenko.

Figure 13. *Memorial of the victims killed by OUN-UPA in Luhansk, and statue of Stepan Bandera in Lviv*



(Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial_for_the_victims_killed_by_OUN-UPA_%28Luhansk%29#/media/File:OUN-UPA_Victims_Memorial_in_Luhansk.jpg ;

<http://globalinterests.org/2015/11/25/ukraine-report-a-look-inside-east-and-west-4/>).

The Holodomor case was another reality turning into a symbol for nationalist feelings. In fact, it was a tragedy subject to legacy as part of Ukrainian history making efforts. In January 2006, a joint decision was issued by the Kyiv City State Administration, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Ukraine, the Ministry of Construction, Architecture and Housing and utility companies to conduct a nationwide open competition for designing a memorial complex to commemorate victims of the famine and this was actualized as shown in the below Figure 14⁵⁶.

Figure 14. *The Holodomor monument in Kyiv*



(Source: <https://johnbryanthompsondotcom.wordpress.com/2015/04/17/holodomor-memorial-kyiv-ukraine/>).

⁵⁶ <http://memorialholodomor.org.ua/>

On November 28, 2006, a law on Holodomor in 1932-1933 was adopted in Ukraine to formally acknowledge the tragedy as genocide of Ukrainians, while also putting effort to building a national memory by forgetting the Soviet legacy. Indeed, many Soviet monuments were demolished at various times in Ukraine.

Figure 15. *Lenin's monument taken down in Kharkiv in 2014.*



(Source: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ukraine-removes-all-1-320-statues-of-lenin-wqsz8b6nh>).

In 2017 Ukraine has removed all 1320 statues of Lenin. Volodymyr Viatrovych, director of the Institute of National Remembrance, confirmed that every Lenin statue had been removed along with 1069 other Soviet monuments. It was president Poroshenko's government decision made in 2015, to remove all Soviet symbols from Ukraine, that is also renaming the streets and cities name. Thus, Lenin

Street in Kalyny located in Transcarpathia, a western region, was renamed to Lennon Street in a tribute to the Beatles.

To ensure the legitimacy of the new Ukraine, the Soviet era was revisited with abandoning monuments remaining from the Soviet Era. Nevertheless, demolishing the Soviet time monuments has just been limited with the Western and Central Ukraine. In Donbas and Crimea many still stand untouched (Lehr & Aponiuk, 2011, pp. 216-217).

In the Glasnost years, when the Lenin monuments perceived as the symbol of Soviet systems were abandoned, a Lenin sculpture was abandoned for a while after the unsuccessful coup occurred in August 1991. But for instance, the Lenin's sculpture in Kharkiv, Eastern Ukraine, has been preserved. In the same vein, Kliment Voroshilov's monument, one of a significant military officer and statesman of the Soviet Union in Luhansk, Eastern Ukraine has not been demolished.

Figure 16. *Statue of Kliment Voroshilov in his birthplace, Luhansk*



(Source: <http://www.apollo-magazine.com/content/uploads/2016/01/DY1BJN-1-e1453984583783.jpg>).

The state symbol and the flag of Ukraine are evaluated among the symbols connecting Ukraine to ancient origins and motherland myths in history writing (Kuzio, 2005, pp. 34-35). Volodymyr the Great was chosen as the state symbol of independent Ukraine in the post-Soviet period. This symbol links contemporary Ukraine to the Cossack Hetmanate, the People's Republic of Western Ukraine and the People's Republic of Ukraine led by Hrushevsky in 1917-1918. In fact, all those three states had used the same symbol. In the same manner, the Ukrainian flag in blue and yellow strips was used in Kyivan Rus in the pre-Christian period and was brought into the official flag of state in the People's Republic of Ukraine.

Figure 17. *The Coat of Arms of Ukraine – tryzub (Тризуб) and the flag of Ukraine*



The national Ukrainian anthem has the lyrics, “*Ukraine has not yet perished*” (ukr. *Ще не вмерли України*) composed by Mykhailo Verbitsky in 1863 and the lyrics were written by Pavlov Chubinsky in 1862. After gaining independence, only

the melody was adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament in 1992. The inclusion of Chubinsky's words into the official national anthem took place in 2003. The declaration of this composition as the national anthem resulted from the efforts to historically connect Ukraine to both Cossacks and the People's Republic of Ukraine.

The changes in the dates of national festivals in the post-Soviet Ukraine forms another example of the endeavors to shape the identity through symbolization. In this regard, several Soviet festival days namely November 7-8, the Great October Revolution Day; October 9, the Constitution Day and February 23, the Soviet Army Day were abolished and they are not celebrated anymore (Litovchenko & Muradyan, 2015, p. 47). However, such changes did not come from the policies of an independent state, but from administrators to balance political power. For instance, in 1997, the Great October Revolution Day and the Soviet Army Day were again declared as official celebration days in the name of the Day of Defending the Motherland. Due to the political power balance. relations, those festivals were removed from the agenda again in 2001. Instead, the rulers declared new national festivals to celebrate the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. In that manner, August 24 is celebrated as the Independence Day of Ukraine, December 1 as the Referendum Day, June 28 as the Constitution Day, and January 22 as the Union Day. On the occasions of the 60th anniversary of 1932-1933 Great Famine, September 12 was declared as the National Mourning Day in 1993. In 2007, Yushchenko announced the second Sunday of May as "The Commemoration of Victims of Political Pressures of the Soviet Regime". Moreover, July 28 was announced as the Orthodox Baptism Festival of Kyiv Princedom in 2008.

Ukraine's national currency is hryvnia⁵⁷ and it was the last state that introduced its national currency among the post-Soviet states (National Bank of Ukraine).⁵⁸ The currency used immediately after gaining independence was *Karbovanets* (some sort of coupon) sustained until the end of 1995 when the new currency, hryvnia (*укр. Гривня*), was formally introduced. Nevertheless, both currencies historically connect the post-Soviet Ukraine to the People's Republic of Ukraine and Kyivan Rus due to their names and the symbols printed on them. Indeed, both these currencies have the symbols that reflect the ancientness myth of Ukraine.

Figure 18. *Karbovanets from 1992*



(Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukrainian_karbovanets#/media/File:UkraineP91a-1000Karbovantsiv-1992-donatedao_f.jpg).

⁵⁷ The pronunciation implies ambiguity, since it is both pronounced as “hryvnia” and “gryvna”. The difference comes from the languages: in Ukrainian it is pronounced “hryvnia” and in Russian “grivna” since in Ukrainian “h” is pronounced differently.

⁵⁸ More information on the history of hryvnia can be found at the National Bank of Ukraine's website: http://www.bank.gov.ua/control/en/publish/article?art_id=37482

Figure 19. *Official national currency of Ukraine: 1 hryvnia and a picture of Volodymyr the Great on it*



The postage stamps used in Ukraine in the post-Soviet period are excellent examples of symbols reflecting the country's history. Most stamps referred to Cossacks and Hrushevsky. In the first years of Ukraine after the independence, one of the most concrete proofs of the marginalization of the Soviet Union was the stamp issued in 1994 for the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Ukraine (Yapıcı, 2011, pp.266).

Figure 20. *Stamp issued in 1994 for the 50th anniversary of Ukraine's liberation*



(Source: <https://colnect.com/en/stamps/stamp/114863-50th-Anniversary-of-Ukraine-Liberation-from-Nazis-Military-Ukraine>)

This postage stamp issued after 1994 represents the end of World War II and Ukraine's severing from the USSR as "liberation". In the Yushchenko period, the use of GUAM's symbol, perceived as an anti-Russian bloc, on postage stamps illustrated the differentiation experienced in the approach of history records compared to Kravchuk and Kuchma. In the independence years after the Soviet Union, growing interest in history can clearly be seen in the increasing number of museums as well. In 1991, there were 202 museums, yet this number rose to 272 in later years. The Great Patriotic War (World War II) Complex, which was opened in 1981 by Brezhnev, was later converted into a national museum in 1996. It can thus be argued that Ukrainians selectively accepted some parts of the Soviet history. During Yushchenko's presidency, new museology activities were initiated for providing myths regarding the Ukrainian history and particularly to refer to the Soviets as invaders. As a matter of fact, the Revolution Museum of Ukraine opened by Yushchenko in 2009 was the consequence of defining the years of 1917-1919 as the revolution period, against Sovietization and the negative consequences of the Bolshevik Revolution in Ukraine.

The Soviet Invasion Museum opened in Kyiv in 2007 presents the Soviet era as the invasion period as well.

The final point that should be mentioned in this context is the changing city and street names remaining from the Soviet era in Ukraine. When Soviets came to power, many cities and streets were named after Soviet leaders. For example, the name of Lugansk was changed into Voroshilovgrad in 1935. Following the Glasnost, that name was changed into Lugansk again. Yet, Ukrainians later translated all names into their language under the leadership of President Kravchuk. By a decree, the name Lugansk was replaced with Luhansk. Other names were also changed into ones with ethnic Ukrainian names to support Ukrainian nationalism through presidential decrees and decisions of municipalities. According to the decision of Kyiv Municipality in 2007, it was decided to rename the 131 street names reflecting the Soviet identity in Kyiv. Many names were changed especially in west of Ukraine. First the names of the streets in Lviv were changed by the Soviets from Polish to Russian and into Ukrainian after Ukraine gained its independence. In 2008, the names of 800 streets in Lviv were changed as well. In this context, nowadays it is not surprising to see street names as George Washington or Abraham Lincoln (Yapıcı, 2011, p. 269).

CHAPTER 3. THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN SHAPING NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Religion and nationalism are closely related with each other and according to Grott (2004, 19-20) are based on three main relations between them. The first type was shaped under the influence of secular values referring to religion or churches only real facts functioning in the social life, culture and in the politics. The second type of nationalism in relation finds justification of its view in the religious values. An example of this type in Europe is so called Christian nationalism. Finally, the third type steadily fights Christianity as well as other monotheistic religions, both as a doctrine and ethical values, rejecting the civilization achievements, which are considered harmful to the development of nations.

3.1 Emergence of Christianity in the Ukraine's Territory

In the 10th century, all neighbors of Ukraine had already converted into Christianity. Thus, the Grand Prince of Kyiv Volodymyr had to make such move in order to sustain political power. Kyivan Rus had led extensive trade relations with the Byzantine Empire, thus they were strongly influenced by its culture and religion. For this reason, Volodymyr the Great was baptized in 988 in Chersonesos and married Anna – sister of Emperor Basil II (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p.12,13; Serczyk, 1979, p. 25). The baptism of the prince is considered the beginning of the Christianization of the entire land.

Since 1569, most of the Ukrainian land was taken under Polish rule. Despite the fact that Rzeczpospolita was quite a tolerant country, Christianization was quite a fast movement. Therefore, in 1596 the Union of Brest took place in the part of Ukraine that was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The union was

initiated by Pope Gregory XIII in order to unite the Catholic Church and with the Orthodox (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 13; Himka, 1999, p. 6; Serczyk, 1979, pp.: 74-75). The Churches were united, however there was no change in Orthodox rituals. As a result, Ukrainian people and Poles were united under the same religion. However, the religion existed without differences in dogma but in two different languages; in Poland it was Latin, whereas in Ukraine it was the Old Church Slavonic (Łesiów, 1996, p. 50, 55).

In this regard, the Patriarch of Constantinople Jeremias II Tranos agreed for Ukrainians to leave and get separated from the Moscow Patriarchate. Nevertheless, many people were against union and tried to get support from Moscow. Followers of the union were mostly from the western parts of Ukraine, whereas the Right-bank Ukraine together with Cossacks did not join the union and remained under the rule of the Moscow Patriarchate. Meanwhile, people who joined the union came under the authority of Pope. Thus, Ukraine featured two opposing religious beliefs: Greek Catholics who looked for support from the Polish government and the Russian Orthodox seeking support from Moscow (Serczyk, 1979, pp. 77, 79).

After unification, the Kyiv Patriarchate was abolished until 1620 when Cossacks opposed the union. However, the Kyiv Patriarchate began to operate again in the 17th century and there were two churches functioning in territory of Ukraine: The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate.

Later on, when partisans of Poland took place the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate was abolished and Ukrainians were left under the authority of Moscow Patriarchate.

Meanwhile in Galicia, the union was still continuing and what is more it got support from the Austrian government who founded many schools both in Vienna and in Lviv, where many Ukrainian priests got their education. As a result of such actions, in Galicia well-educated clergy appeared. Therefore, it was clergy that was the first group who influenced the national movement in Galicia. As a result of the union, Orthodox Ukrainians that is Cossacks and almost all population of Ukraine turned to Russia for support (Serczyk, 1979, p. 79).

Religion certainly is an important part of national culture and it was through the liturgical texts first national movement began to spread since it was easy way to reach a mass of people (Łesiów, 1996, pp. 50, 57).

3.2 Religious Diversity in Modern Ukraine

Ukraine is a secular country, however religion certainly plays an important role in Ukrainian culture. Historically, Ukraine is a Christian Orthodox country with a high level of religious diversity. The first inhabitants of the Ukrainian territory were pagans, however due to extensive trade with the Byzantine Empire, it remained under its strong religious and cultural influence. The social and political revolutions in Europe in the 10th century made the prince of Kyivan Rus abandon paganism and to follow Christianity. Therefore, in 988 Volodymyr the Great, Prince of Kyivan Rus was baptized and afterwards the whole Kyivan Rus accepted Christianity in its Slavonic form under the Patriarch of Constantinople. However, Yaroslav the Wise established the first Kyiv Patriarchate in 1051 which made Kyivan Rus independent from Constantinople. After his death in 1054, a division in the Church occurred, hence the Rus Church became the Eastern Orthodox (Himka, 1999, p.6).

As a consequence of Mongol invasions, in the east of Kyivan Rus, the Muscovy state emerged where the Moscow Patriarchate was established in 1325. Meanwhile, the Kyiv Metropolitan was moved to Volodymyr. After Constantinople was conquered by the Ottomans in 1453, the metropolitan of Kyiv and Moscow were divided and each Church followed its own path. The Moscow Patriarchate declared autocephaly.

In the 14th century, the western part of Ukraine got under the Polish rule. The Poles began their expansion to the east and many settled in Ukraine. Thus, Ukrainian cities were often populated by Polish Catholics, as well as Jews and Armenians who established their own places of prayers. The Polish Kingdom and later the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were quite tolerant states, nevertheless Roman Catholicism was spreading fast. Pope Gregory XIII aspired to unite all inhabitants of commonwealth hence initiated the union of Polish Catholics with Orthodox Ukrainians, which was signed in Brest, in 1596 (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 13; Himka, 1999, p. 6; Serczyk, 1979, pp. 74-75; Łesiów, 1996, p. 55). The Churches were united, however there was no change in Orthodox rituals except the language differences in the religions that people practiced (Łesiów, 1996, p. 50).

The Kyiv Patriarchate began to operate again in the beginning of the 17th century until the Cossacks were abolished and taken under the Muscovy and the Moscow Patriarchate. Later on, when partisan of Poland took place and the Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate were abolished and Ukrainians under the Russian reign were taken under the authority of Moscow Patriarchate. In the following year tsar was more tolerant towards other religions except the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. In order to destroy the Ukrainian Catholic tradition and to increase Russification of the church, it was

forbidden to use Ukrainian language in the church, the Holy Bible was not allowed in Ukrainian until 1908 and many Russian priests were sent to Ukraine to preach (Łesiów, 1995, p. 56).

Nevertheless, the Ukrainian Greek Church in Galicia and Transcarpathia fell under the rule of the Austrian Empire and continued its existence until the Soviets came to power and abolished it. From that moment it was forced to function as an underground church until 1989 when it was again allowed to operate officially. Therefore, the Ukrainian Greek Church remained “a bastion and a heart” of Ukrainian nationalism in the western part of the country (Druzenko, 2014, p. 720; Nahaylo, 1999, p. 13). It is worth noting that, both the Russian Empire and the Soviets⁵⁹ favored the Russian Orthodoxy as their national religion (Łesiów 1996, 57). In 1992, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was subjected to a division into the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p.239)

In modern Ukraine, there are three major Churches and few minor, but there is no predominant institutionalized religion.

There is lack of a predominant institutionalized religion. It is worth noting, that the majority of the Ukrainian population is identifying themselves as Orthodox and many regard Orthodoxy as a national religious tradition (Druzenko, 2014, p. 720). The largest Churches are the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The smallest is the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church largely supported by emigrés (Mankof & Miller, 2018, p. 235). It is important to add

⁵⁹ The Soviets put emphasis on atheism, but ultimately regarded the Russian Orthodoxy as their national religion.

that both, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church⁶⁰ were not recognized as canonical Churches by the world Orthodox leadership (Denysenko, 2014 p. 2).

The Ukraine Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate was the only church operating right after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, meanwhile the Ukraine Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate began its functioning one year later, in 1992. Both claim that they share legacy of the Church established by Volodymyr the Great in 988, hence both believe to be authentic Ukrainian Church (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 235). After the split in 1992 most of the parishes in the east and in the south of Ukraine remained under the auspices of the Moscow Patriarchate. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate has the largest number of parishes and monasteries (Soroka, 2018, p. 92).

Meanwhile in Galicia, only 200 parishes decided to remain under the Moscow Patriarchate. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate is often regarded as the representation of the Ukrainian nation even by presidents Kuchma and Yushchenko. The church was actively participating in ongoing political events such as the Orange Revolution and Euromaidan Revolution (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, pp. 239, 240). Meanwhile the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate was favoured by pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich during his presidency and in turn he received support from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate during the Euromaidan Revolution (Hovorun, 2015, p.8)

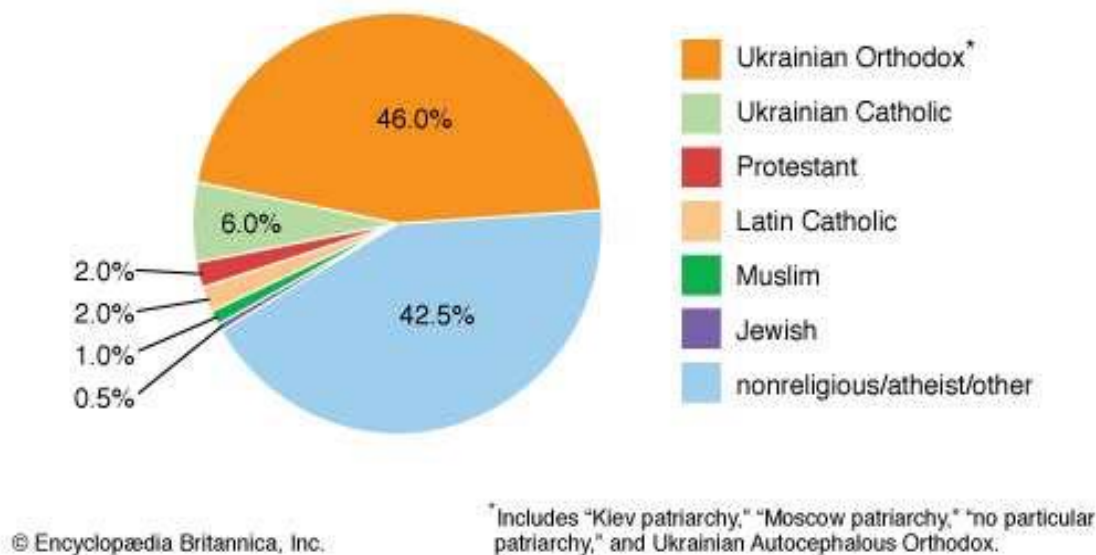
According to the census conducted in 2011, 97% of believers in Ukraine are Christians (Derzhavnyy Komitet Statystyky Ukrayiny, n/d). Half of them follow

⁶⁰ Until the UAOC obtained autocephaly in 2018 by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I.

Orthodoxy and the other half Catholicism (including both Orthodox and Latin rites). In addition, there are also small communities of the Armenian Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant Church, Judaism and Islam. The latter pertains mainly to the Crimean territory. What is more, there are also communities practicing among others Buddhism, Krishnaism and Mormonism (Relihiyno-Informatsiyna Sluzhba Ukrayiny, n/d). Therefore, the Ukrainian national identity was shaped by various religious influences. The Ukrainian nation is believed to be highly religious: between 74,7% and 89,5% consider themselves believers, according to a survey (Druzenko, 2014, p. 719).

Figure 21. *Religious affiliations in Ukraine based on the data collected in 2004*

Religious affiliation (2004)



(Source: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ukraine/Languages>)

In 1996, the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRO) was founded. The organization unites about 90% of the religious

communities in Ukraine. Despite diversity and existence of many different denominations they manage to function in symphony with the state. Nevertheless, the relationship with the state had fluctuated at different periods of Ukrainian history. For instance, during presidency of Leonid Kravchuk, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate was favored by the state, yet this shifted during the tenures of Leonid Kuchma and Viktor Yanukovych (Hovorun, 2015, pp. 4, 6)

The map below (see figure 22) presents the general regional denomination of religions in Ukraine. However, many Orthodox believers state that they do not affiliate with any particular church, whether it is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate or the Ukrainian Orthodox Church- Kyiv Patriarchate (Druzenko, 2014, p. 720). Believers have also tendency to switch between the Churches. As can be observed, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church dominates the former Galician territory, as well as Transcarpathia and Bukovyna.

Figure 22. *Domination of religions in Ukraine by regions*



(Source: https://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/statistics/ukr_2018/70440/)

Druzenko (2014, p. 721) emphasizes the clear -cut between regions especially regarding the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church with the majority of believers in the western part of the Ukrainian territory and the Muslims in the Crimea, whereas the rest of religious denominations is spread throughout the Ukraine with no clear regional differences.

On January 5, 2019 the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church were granted independence that resulted in a historic split from the Russian Orthodox Church. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Patriarch Bartholomew, the head of the world Orthodox Church - signed tomos, a document that officially granted independence to Ukrainian Orthodox Church. However, the independence was not accepted by

Moscow and by the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church (Polski Autokefaliczny Kościół Prawosławny, 2018).

This decision was long awaited by the Ukrainians and after the war in Donbas and annexation of Crimea by Russia, it was right moment for the Patriarch as a leader of Eastern Orthodox church to make a decision, either he could have withheld and leave Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the supervision of the Moscow Patriarchate or to grant autocephaly, nevertheless in given circumstances it seems to be a natural and unambiguous step (Denysenko, 2014, p. 14). This decision was unexpected and a huge shock for the Patriarch Kirill as it destroys his vision of *Russkij Mir* (rus. *Русский мир*). Therefore, certainly, this decision made significant impact on state and nation building of the Ukrainian nation and opens new path for the Ukrainian nation.

3.2 The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Galicia and its Influence on the Ukrainian National Movement

The Greek Catholic Church⁶¹ was established in 1596 by virtue of the Union of Brest. It is believed that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is a descendant of the Christian Church in Kyivan Rus established by Prince Volodymyr the Great (Himka, 1999, p.6). Ukrainians living in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth became Catholics under Pope's supremacy, but their rite has remained, so as traditional Church Slavonic liturgical language instead of Latin and Julian calendar remained as well. Therefore, they were referred to as Uniates until 1774 when Empress Maria Theresa changed their name to the Greek Catholics in order to stress their equal position with Polish Roman Catholics (Himka, 1999, p. 5). Nevertheless, the Ukrainians were reluctant to accept Catholicism, even in the western part of

⁶¹ It was also called Ruthenian Catholic Church.

Ukraine people rejected it until the mid 17th century after the Khmelnytsky Rebellion. However, the majority of Galician Orthodox hierarchs accepted the union (Himka, 1999, p. 6). In the 17th century, the Polish king forbade Uniates to convert to Orthodoxy. (Łesiów, 1995, p.56)

In the following years, between 1772 -1795, the partitions of Poland took place and Galicia and Transcarpathia were taken under the Habsburg Austria rule. The Austrians under Empress Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II revived the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Galicia and Transcarpathia through certain reforms. Also, they amended the hierarchical and administrative structure of the Church and established many divinity schools both in Vienna and in Lviv, a formal higher education became obligatory for future priests. Therefore, the schools for priests paved the way for the emergence of an educated clergy. It is worth noting that previously priests were taught by their fathers, hence their education was limited in terms of knowledge and space. Therefore, establishment of the obligatory schools for future priests resulted in emerging educated clergy. It is worth noting, that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests could get marry, hence their children were the continuation of the educated population and secular intelligentsia who in fact created the first nationally conscious generation. Further, close connection developed between the Greek Catholic clergy and secular Ukrainians, who would later be engaged in the striving for national independence (Łesiów, 1995, p. 57). The above mentioned is a great example of close correlations between nationalism and religion.

In the following years the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church became more powerful and became a stronghold of Western Ukrainians identity and morality. It was the Greek Catholic Church that had enough power to oppose those who did not want to see Ukraine as a distinctive nation. Undoubtedly, it was educated Greek

Catholic clergy who were the first national awakeners in Galicia and in 1848 leaders of Ukrainian political movement. Until 1885 there were two parishes in metropolis: Lviv and Przemyśl, later on, third one was added in Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk now).

As underlined above, in the beginning of the 19th century, a national awakening commenced in Galicia with its main centers located in Przemyśl, Lviv and Vienna - where the seminars and educated population was. During this period the history of Galician Ukraine was rediscovered, the emphasis on local folklore was put and language went through various process of codification and development and clergy added a sort of “ecclesiastical” dimension to the national awakening in Galicia back at that time, as uttered by Himka (1999, p. 9). To add to that, priests were the most influential element of the social composition of Galicia, thus an important role in national awakening and cultural revival also played mentioned in the previous chapter Ruthenian Triad whose members; Iakiv Holovatsky, Markiiian Shashkevych and Ivan Vahylewicz were seminarians in the Greek Catholic Theological Seminary in Lviv. Furthermore, in 1848 Supreme Ruthenian Council (*ukr. Головна Руська Рада*) was established which was the first legal political organization in Galicia. It must be noted that it was led mainly by the Greek Catholic priests; president of the council was bishop of Przemyśl Hryhorii Yakymovych, canon Mykhail Kuzemsky became vice-president and Mykhail Malynovsky a secretary. Therefore, the clergy was one of the largest group involved in national awakening.

However, even among the clergy there was a division between Russophiles and Ukrainophiles. Although the pro-Ukraine group Ukrainophiles were influential, there was a period when Russophiles became a very powerful and dangerous group. Russophiles were emphasizing the similarities with the Russian world. Father Yoann

Naumovych, a fierce Russophile wrote in his *“Glimpse into the Future”* the following: “All Galicians, Hungarians, Kyivans, Muscovites and Tobolskians are the same nation, the Rus, with the same ethnic origin, history, language structure, literature, and religious rituals” (Himka, 1999, p. 26). The Russophile agenda was not only motivated culturally and politically, it was also a religious endeavor. Russophiles believed that the union of churches did not bring positive consequences to Galicia and for that reason, they should follow Orthodoxy just as their Russian brothers.

According to Russophiles, Galicians were being used by Poles who did not treat them equally (Himka, 1999, p. 30). Poles indeed were very influential in the Austrian Empire, and Galician Ukrainians were not treated equally not only by Poles but also by Austrians and Vatican. For instance, they were subjected to economic inequality, since the Roman Catholic priests were paid more than the Greek Catholic priests. Poles often used religion as an instrument to achieve their political goals. In addition, they pretended to be loyal to the Austrian Empire and the Vatican, while showcasing Galician Ukrainians as a group betraying the church and authorities (Himka, 1999, p. 75). According to Father Stefan Kachala, Poles and Galician Ukrainians did not hate each other, however the disputes occurring between those two nations were concerning not having rights that Ukrainians demanded and Poles did not want to grant them. What is more, Galicia was dominated by Poles imposing their hegemony, while Ukrainians were left unprotected, since as Himka (1999, pp. 72,91) utters they had no one either in Austria nor in Vatican who would support them.

Russophile program was supported by Russia who wanted to lessen Polish position, hence more or less actively implemented the process of depolonization and

Russification⁶². Therefore, Russians had small contribution in the Ukrainian national awakening. Pope was afraid that Galicians actually would turn towards Russia and massive conversion to Orthodoxy would occur. This would mean that the Galicia would be lost not only in terms of religion but also politically. Therefore, Vatican, Austrians and Poles aimed to sustain control over the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. They chose each new archbishop cautiously among those who would be loyal to Pope, the Austrian monarchy and Poles (Himka, 1999, p. 46).

On the other hand, there was constant conflict between Vatican, Roman Catholic Poles and the Greek Catholics regarding the rite. As mentioned above Vatican was insisting on Latin rites in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and celibacy of the clergy. The dispute continued concerning the three-barred cross that is associated with Orthodoxy and at the same time rooted in Galician culture and tradition. The head covering worn by priests during the service was another point of disagreement, the Vatican allowed priests to wear a new head covering, however not similar to those used in the Orthodox Church. It is important to note, that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church followed the Orthodox rite, however the Vatican constantly was insisting on initiating Latin rite in the Church; celibacy of priests, abandoning the Julian calendar and Cyrillic alphabet. Lack of celibacy was an important factor of spreading national consciousness, clergy formed one of the first and undoubtedly significant element of Ukrainian intelligentsia and by the fact that they were married and had children allowed them to remain in contact with the rest of the Galician Ukrainian society. The other liturgical aspects of the Ukrainian Greek

⁶² Especially intensive successful Russian actions took place in Chełm, where Russians brought in pro-Russian priests from Galicia which resulted in violent actions that led to conversion of Chełm Eparchy to Orthodoxy and dissolving the Greek Catholic Church in 1875.

Catholic Church appended unique, Galician Ukrainian national character and any interference from outside had an influence on Galician Ukrainian identity.

The opposite camp, Ukrainophiles considered the union of the churches differently than Russophiles did. In that, they believed that the union allowed them contact with the Western culture and brought them education and enlightenment in general. However, they were not fond of the fact that Poles, Vatican and Russians kept on interfering in Galician politics and religious affairs. Thus, they aspired for independence from both the Polish and Russian hegemony. In the 1860s and 1870s the Galician were lacking national unity, there was rather disagreement between those two camps. Therefore, it was clergy who for the sake of Galicia tried to unite Russophile and Ukrainophile. Important figures in finding a common path and developing of Galician Ukrainian identity played Metropolitan Yosyf Sembratovych⁶³ and canon Mykhail Malynovsky. The latter proposed a program for restoring national unity. He suggested teaching Galician-Ruthenian nationality in academic endeavors while trying to avoid political repercussions (Himka, 1999, p. 54).

Himka (1999, p. 76) argues that whole eastern parts of Galicia actually were in favor of schism and some asserted that the idea of unity was imposed by Poles on Orthodox Galician Ukrainians for the purpose of assimilation, underlying that the real faith of Galicians was Orthodoxy.

The Basilian Order monks, once the elite of the Galician Ukrainian clergy, were shattered and were in urgent need of reforms. The Polish Jesuits were chosen to perform those reforms and help the monks. However, this decision divided Galician Ukrainians. Most of them regarded it as polonization and opposed it. Metropolitan

⁶³ Yosyf Sembratovych in 1870 became Metropolitan of Halych and archbishop of Lviv. He was promoted by Poles in favor of their own interests.

Sembratovych wrote in his pastoral letter that soon Poles will occupy all Greek Catholic religious centers in Galicia (Himka, 1999, p. 80). According to him this situation could lead to the destruction of Ukrainian nation in Galicia. Nevertheless, the Vatican could not find anyone else to accomplish this mission. As a result, the Jesuits remained in Galicia for 20 years. The reformed Basilian monks contributed to the further development of Ukrainian national consciousness. The Basilian monks contributed to the further development of Ukrainian national consciousness by means of the reforms. Himka (1999, p. 84) noted that they became an influential group contributing to the Greek Catholic Church by publications and other activities and helped in struggle with Russophiles.

After the partition of Poland, in the part of Ukraine that fell under the rule of the Russian Empire in 1839 the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was united with the Russian Orthodox Church. Tsarist believed that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was deliberately implemented by foreign powers aimed at weakening and dividing the Orthodox Slavs. However, in 1905, Tsar Nicolas II announced freedom of conscience. Yet, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church could not benefit from this, since it was not formally existing. This led over 200,000 people to become Roman Catholics (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, pp. 237-238).

At the end of the 19th century, Sylvester Sembratovych⁶⁴ became Metropolitan Archbishop who was actively engaged in politics. He established a political newspaper titled “*Myr*” and supported the parliamentary elections in 1885. He also strived to end the Polish and Ukrainian conflict and introduced the new period in their relations. His successor, Andrei Sheptytsky is regarded as one of the most

⁶⁴ A nephew of former Metropolitan Archbishop, Yosyf Sembratovych.

important figures in the entire history of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. He advocated for a so-called “neo-Byzantine” understanding free from Russification in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Himka, 1999, p.146). Moreover, he encouraged people to form reading clubs in villages for both religious practice and political goals. He can be argued to have been outstandingly committed to Christianity and “his people”. The Metropolitan Archbishop also believed that one of the most important components of nationalism is unity of people regarding religion, which would also help the nation to gain their national unity. Therefore, he put great efforts to persuade as many people possible to join the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Walaszczyk, 2007, p. 190). As it was explained, Sheptytsky supported the national movement, but he condemned killing of innocent civilians and abandoning Christian values in the fight for the independence (Armstrong, 1990, p. 151).

Many priests of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church supported the national movement in the interwar period, at the same time opposing both powers the Soviets and the Polish. There were priests who were supporting the activities of OUN and UPA, however most clergy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were against OUN-UPA (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 238).

During First World War, Galicia was occupied by Russia, hence large numbers of Ukrainian Greek Catholics converted to Orthodoxy. When Soviets came to power, official data indicate that in the 1930s there were 2190 parishes and 2190 priests of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and the number of believers was nearly 3,5 million (Bociurkiw, 1989, p. 101). The Soviets regarded the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as a threat, since it was closely associated with the Ukrainian national movement it would disturb in achieving set goals by the Soviets, namely the sovietization of that region, known for strong national consciousness unlike the

eastern part of Ukraine. Therefore, in 1946 the Greek Catholic Church was abolished by the Soviet authorities and forced to merge with the Russian Orthodox Church. Persecution of clergy began, many were arrested and catholic schools were also suppressed or under atheization (Bociurkiw, 1989, pp. 102, 104). The Soviet authorities regarded the Greek Catholic Church as a national element that needs to be annihilated. Therefore, priests were replaced by the Orthodox ones brought from Russia (Armstrong, 1990, p. 222). However, the Church survived as an underground church until 1989 when it was officially restored. The Greek Catholic Church together with the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church were the largest in Galicia. Realizing the ties between religion and nationalism, Soviets also attempted to build an Orthodox church under the Moscow Patriarchate to disregard the cultural and national differences between Ukrainians and Russians. They further tried to persuade people to join the Orthodox Church by anti-Polish propaganda. They claimed that the Greek Catholic Church was only a tool in destruction of Ukrainian nation by means of polonization and remaining under the influence of Catholics (Walaszczyk, 2007, pp. 191-192).

During the presidency of Viktor Yanukovich, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church had to endure huge pressure from the government due to church's pro-Western and national attitude. The leadership of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Catholic University were pressured by the pro-Russian Yanukovich's government to support the government and to block anti-government protests.

The Greek Catholic Church provided significant contribution to the Galician Ukrainian national movement. The role of the clergy was not limited to preaching: they were also politically engaged. They published newspapers, and established

reading clubs and other associations for national awakening. In Lviv, as a matter of fact, there was a Ukrainian Catholic University (*ukr. Український Католицький Університет*) affiliated with the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky established the Greek Catholic Theological Academy in 1929 and this university is the continuation of that academy.

Nowadays, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is considered as the largest Eastern Catholic Church in the world. Due to the migration of Galician in the 19th century and after the First and Second World Wars the believers spread all around the world and now the Church is operating also abroad; for instance in Poland, the USA and Canada. In Ukraine, it has 3825 registered organizations including 3646 parishes, in which 2424 clergymen are serving and nearly 4,5 million of believers. However, it is still mainly located in the west of Ukraine. Nevertheless, in the consequence of the events of 2014; the Euromaidan revolution and conflict with Russia the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church managed to reach other parts of Ukraine as well, however it was really long process. In 2002 Donetsk exarchate was established and in 2014 Kharkiv one (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 238).

Figure 23. *Saint George's Cathedral in Lviv of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*



(Source: the author's own album).

Why the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church did not survive in other parts of Ukraine? The Greek Catholic Church survived in Galicia and Transcarpathia due to the fact that it remained under the Austro-Hungarian Empire which allowed it to function freely, whereas in Volhynia, also located in the west of Ukraine, it did not survive because it remained under the Russian Empire reign after the partitions of Poland and in a result the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was abolished in 1875 by tsar.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church clearly demonstrates that religion is undoubtedly an important factor of nationalism. Armstrong (1990, p. 2) argues that religion is one of the factors that in fact stimulated Ukrainian nationalism. People of Western Ukraine were characterized by strong national feelings and this allowed the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to operate firmly in west Ukraine, and hence it managed to survive years underground despite the bans of the authorities. From the same perspective, it can be observed from the overall analyses given so far that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church or had been struggling against foreign influences. On the other hand, the growing nationalistic feelings of Ukrainians prompted the need for uniting Ukrainian churches and to purify them from any outer impact. Such step was finally taken in on the 15th of December 2018 when the historic unification of Ukrainian Orthodox Church took place⁶⁵. The Metropolis of Kyiv was granted autocephaly by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I. First steps towards autocephaly had already been taken in 1991. However, those steps were denied. After a few more failed attempts, the church could finally unify and this development is marked to be of great importance for the Ukrainian nation. Afterwards, similar attempts took place again, for instance during Yushchenko's presidency in 2008⁶⁶ (Denysenko, 2014, pp. 2,4,8). In this vein, for Ukrainians, having the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church was associated with an independent Ukraine (Wanner, 2015a, p. 8). Therefore, the aforementioned unification was considered a critical move towards national independence and liberation from Russian influence. Yet, the unification later instigated other domestic

⁶⁵ Tomos was signed on the 5th of January 2019.

⁶⁶ 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus in Ukraine.

conflicts in Ukraine with debates over right to use religious premises, presenting the picture of the relations between Ukrainians and Russians (Olszański, 2019, pp. 1,5).

3.3 The Euromaidan Revolution and its Ramifications in terms of Religion

Since 1991, Ukraine was affected by a series of developments; the collapse of the Soviet Union, regaining independence, the Orange and the Euromaidan Revolutions, the war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. In 31 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine went through many changes also regarding the religious sphere; the legalisation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, the reincarnation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, the transition of the Exarchate of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine to a Church with broad autonomy, the Kharkiv Council of 1992, the creation of the Kyivan Patriarchate, the implementation of Patriarch Kirill's *Ruskiy Mir* initiative in 2009, then in 2019 granted independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (Denysenko, 2014, pp. 1,2,5)

Religion with its Ukrainian clergy and religious institutions played also an active role during the Euromaidan revolution. Affiliation of prominent politicians to certain churches indicates not only their origins but also political choices. Therefore, religion was also used as a tool in politics and the Revolution of Dignity may be regarded as not only as a social revolution but also through its religious aspect since the revolution also “explained itself in religious terms and articulated its demands through religious symbols” present at the Independence Square. Moreover, this re-created new relationship between Ukrainian society and churches in Ukraine. What is more, relationship of the churches with the state during the Euromaidan Revolution also have shifted, turned out that revolution itself seems to take place of a state as a

partner, a partner which was in the opposition to the previous one. As a consequence of the revolution emergence of the new political subject; the civil society took place (Hovorun, 2015, pp. 3, 9, 10).

During the Euromaidan Revolution, religious services were conducted under the auspices of the All Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations. The prayers were mostly led by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as the most active representatives of Ukrainian clergy during the Euromaidan revolution. The presence and voice of the latter were that much strong that the Minister of Culture threatened the Church with dissolution (Denysenko, 2014, p.9) Parishes close to Independence Square were directly helping those in need during protests. The Maidan Revolution contained many religious symbols. All Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRO) called for a peaceful resolution and a call to the authorities not to use violence by its forces (Mankoff and Miller, 2018, p. 246).

Nevertheless, not all churches in Ukraine played an active role in shaping new relations between Ukrainian society and religion. Some had rather passive roles and were not able to meet the expectations of the Euromaidan Revolution. The first church that accepted this shift in relations was the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and when the revolution took a violent turn, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church- Kyiv Patriarchate distanced itself from the government and started to reinforce the revolution. Although it was underlined that the church was not against the government but was against its use of violence in suppressing the revolution, it was not advocating for government's decision on not signing the EU agreement. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate was actively demanding Yanukovich's resignation and condemned the Russian invasion

(Denysenko, 2014, pp.10-11). The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was also in favor of Association Agreement with the European Union. And its leadership strongly supported the Revolution and it was believed it wasn't a struggle against the government but for basic human rights. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Catholic University which is associated with the latter openly blamed president Yanukovich for unnecessary use of violence against his own people. When the military conflict in Donbas began and after the annexation of Crimean the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church spoke openly on the Russian aggression in Ukraine and abroad calling Ukrainians to fight for their freedom and rights and values Ukrainian nation fought through the Euromaidan Revolution (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 252).

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate maintained quite same relationship with the state as it was before the revolution and during the revolution remained rather uninvolved except for its call for not using violence. Tried to remain apolitical and did not support the Euromaidan Revolution but did regard those events as an involvement of Russian government and its efforts to split Ukraine (Hovorun, 2015, pp. 3,9,10; Mankof & Miller, 2018, pp. 246). However, its neutral attitude was interpreted as pro-Moscow. It is worth noting that the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – MP were also divided, some of them also joined the revolution, whereas the others were against it (Soroka, 2018, pp. 93-94).

Wanner (2015a, p.4) claims that the Euromaidan Revolution created an opportunity for the Church to play an important role in shaping the new order in Ukraine, explaining that the religious institutions in Ukraine shifted their role with the state by abandoning the traditional relations of the Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian state. Wanner (2015, p. 5) further argues that the revolution changed the

meaning of cultural space, state institutions as well as the concept of sovereignty. In this context, the conflict with Russia had a direct impact on how Ukrainians perceived religion and their churches. Until then, many Ukrainians did not pay attention to religion or churches, but rather they chose churches based on political aspirations or national identity. However, after 2014 there was a visible change in people's attitude towards religion. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate began to be regarded as depending on Kremlin, hence people mobilized to switch churches. They mostly opted for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate or the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church – those that were considered to be the most nationally oriented churches. It is remarkable that not only laymen but also priests were abandoning their churches to start attending another one: mostly from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In some cases, even the whole congregations were changing their affiliation. The leaders of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate now openly comment that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate is Kremlin's tool and is interfering in Ukraine's domestic affairs (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, pp. 236, 241).

When the military conflict in Donbas broke out and the annexation of Crimea by Russia took place, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church as members of All Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRO) condemned military actions taken by Russia. They blamed Russia for hostile actions in disrupting the territorial integrity of Ukraine by annexing Crimea. Although the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate was more hesitant, they still condemned the annexation of Crimea (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 251). The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church also supported Ukrainian forces by collecting

supplies for them, therefore was regarded as strongly nationalist. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate took a nationalist stance as well, blaming both the Russian government and the Russian Orthodox Church for sparking the conflict. Similarly to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, it raised funds and provided food aid to Ukrainian military factions. On the other hand, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate faced challenges due to the efforts to balance between Ukrainian people and the Russian Orthodox Church. They tried to stay neutral with careful discourses. They avoided using the word “invasion” for that matter. Only calling for stopping the violent conflicts, and advocating Ukrainian territorial integrity, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church did not seek any conflicts with the Russian Orthodox Church or the Russian government. The remained content with providing humanitarian aid only (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 255), while representatives of churches associated with the Ukrainian national movement were persecuted in the occupied territories. Muslims, Jews, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Protestants were also subject to persecution.

In an interview with Euromaidan Press, Archimandrite Cyril Hovorun (Shandra, 2018) underlined that the Church did not seek to promote national identity. Although Crimea and Donbas were invaded, those regions were at least independent in terms of religion, though, pointing out to the complex relations between religion and politics or nationalist policies. As a matter of fact, the presence of an independent Ukrainian Church is proof of national uniqueness of Ukrainians.

Contrary to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate, the role and importance of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate diminished since it served under the Russian Orthodox Church which had close ties with Kremlin. They in fact share the same mission to bring back traditional values as part of the notion of

Russkiy Mir meaning the Russian world. Patriarch Kirill coined this phrase to claim the values of Orthodox Eastern Slavs of former Kyivan Rus territories. Furthermore, those values oppose deeply the Western world. The Moscow patriarchate advocated for united peoples under the same ethnicity ties. The leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church tried to disseminate the idea of *Russkiy Mir* in an attempt to spread the Orthodox civilization by respecting the sovereignty, borders and territorial integrity of countries. Moreover, the patriarch of Moscow frequently underlined that *Russkiy Mir* should not be associated with the politics of the Kremlin. In 2013, the celebrations of the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus took place in Moscow, then Kyiv and Minsk. President Putin, Yanukovych and Lukashenko attended the festivities promoting the connections between Russia, Ukraine and Belarus and representing unity of those three countries (Denysenko, 2014, p. 7)

In 2014, there was a shift in the discourse towards protecting the Orthodox civilization from the West in support of Kremlin's politics (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, pp. 242-243). The Patriarch of Moscow was thus deemed by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate to cooperate with Vladimir Putin. After the Russian invasion of Crimea, many Ukrainian religious leaders and institutions such as Patriarch Filaret, Metropolitan Onufriy – the Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine, the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organisations wrote a letter to Patriarch Kirill, asking him to influence Putin to withdraw his army from the territory of Crimea (Denysenko, 2014, pp. 11-12).

However, according to a survey conducted by the Razumkov Centre, the number of members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate was gradually increasing after proclaiming independence. This number was recorded as 9,2% in 2000, 23,6% in 2010 and 15% in 2016. As a response to the declining number

of members to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate, the number of Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Kyiv Patriarchate increased: it was 12,1% in 2000 and reached 25% in 2016. It is important to underscore that the number of members of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church remained the same. This can be interpreted as the consequence of the Euromaidan Revolution as well as the armed conflict with Russia, changing the perception of Ukrainians towards the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-MP (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 237). In this context, the latest developments of the war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea by Russia had deep repercussions on the role of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Moscow Patriarchate (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, p. 233). The direct consequence of the Euromaidan Revolution and consecutive developments was emergence of civil society. In addition, the role of churches and their relationships with the state shifted as elaborated above. In fact, the Euromaidan Revolution brought many challenges in different spheres.

Religion absolutely has played a significant role in Ukraine's struggle in defining unique Ukrainian national identity. The conflicts with Russia and the unification of churches seem to present a move towards re-conceptualization of religion in Ukraine – one that must go hand in hand with nationalism. More than other churches, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate lost effect on internal affairs of Ukraine, while the Ukrainian Orthodox Church- Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church gained greater importance. Both of them are considered to be more associated with the notion of Ukrainian nationalism. Nevertheless, it also caused a sort of rivalry between churches for attracting more members and for receiving more financial support for the state. The government do not accommodate any particular church, in fact it is trying to maintain good relations

with representatives of all of the denominations (Mankoff & Miller, 2018, pp. 234-235).

3.4 The Divided Church

This chapter of the study cannot ignore the recent developments with the Russian aggression in the context of the Church's attitudes towards politics. On February 24, 2022, Russia attacked Ukraine, claiming it is not attacking Ukraine, it is just a “military operation” aimed at Nazis in Ukraine and only the military infrastructure. This is the official Kremlin allegation, but it is against the facts. Therefore, everyone was awaiting a reaction from the Moscow Orthodox Church. Meanwhile, Patriarch Kirill surprisingly supported the Russian attack on Ukraine. His decision is against Christian values and proves the allegation of the connection of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Kremlin. Patriarch Kirill remains in close relations with Vladimir Putin. Thus, it can be uttered that Putin is using religion to fulfill his political agenda. From this perspective, Patriarch Kirill's official support may lead to further fracture of the Orthodox Church. During the first day of the invasion, Patriarch Onufriy called President Putin to stop internecine war, although Putin and Patriarch Kirill neglected this call. Instead, the latter performed service in the largest Moscow church saying that the ongoing war has material value and that people in Donbas oppose to the inherited values. For Patriarch Kirill, this war between two civilizations: the East with its traditional Christian values based on the concept of *Russkij Mir* and the morally corrupted West supporting “fascists” in Kyiv (Soroka, 2018, p. 90).

As a result of Patriarch Kirill's attitude towards the aggressive policy of Kremlin, 15 out of 52 bishoprics of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate decided to not to pray in the church for Patriarch Kirill. His name is defamed throughout Ukraine now. Moreover, Kirill's support for Russia's military

invasion in Ukraine caused expats above to abandon the Russian Orthodox Church (Onet, 2022). This is now considered the largest religious opposition to military and political affiliations (Łomanowski, 2022).

Figure 24. *Ukrainians finding shelter in the Orthodox Church in Kharkiv during the Russian shelling*



Note. After the outbreak of the war in February 2022. (Source: <https://wydarzenia.interia.pl/raporty/raport-ukraina-rosja/aktualnosci/news-bunt-wiarnych-przeciw-patriarsze-cyrylowi-sprzeciwiaja-sie-w,nId,5939798>).

During the interviews the Ukrainian interlocutors⁶⁷ found the attitude of Patriarch Kirill hurtful as many of them also belong to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate and now they feel abandoned and betrayed by person

⁶⁷ In- depth interviews conducted in Poland or online after the outbreak of the war.

who they regarded holy. Moreover, Ukrainian interlocutors argued that that Patriarch Kirill showed that the lives of believers belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate never mattered for him. Thus, many Ukrainians hold Patriarch Kirill partially responsible for the calamity in Ukraine. As a result of the war blessed by the patriarch also many churches are destroyed. During my interviews many expressed opinion that patriarch Kirill is partially responsible for what is taking place in Ukraine. Officially autocephaly did not take place yet, however experts indicate that the fact not mentioning the name of patriarch Kirill during the prayers is unambiguous with autocephaly.

Contrary to these developments, one can naturally argue that churches must be liberated from political interference and the clergy especially the highest representation of churches should refrain from expressing political views. Rather, the role of a church is to unite not to divide. Yet, Patriarch Kirill backs Russia's military invasion in Ukraine and causes the severance from the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. Nonetheless, the ongoing crisis within Orthodoxy itself has enabled the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church to position themselves as the religious institutions supporting Ukrainian nationalism (Soroka, 2018, p. 95).

CHAPTER 4. ORGANIZATION OF UKRAINIAN NATIONALISTS AND THE UKRAINIAN INSURGENT ARMY

The figure of Stepan Bandera and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) are the most controversial elements of the Ukrainian nationalism. The phenomenon of Bandera is that his perception is being differently represented within borders of the same country, since in the West of Ukraine he is regarded as a hero, whereas in the East of Ukraine as a traitor.

Discussing issues presented in this chapter requires a distinction between the categories of historical truth and political truth. From this perspective, it should be noted that truth and facts can be distorted to serve a given ideology, thus may be manipulated and distorted. Especially in the history writing during the Soviet regime, political truth was intensively used as a tool for Soviet propaganda (Paź, 2011a, pp. 15-16). This also applies to the case of OUN-UPA and Stepan Bandera as they are presented and interpreted differently according to fitted political truth. On the one hand, Bandera is believed to be a hero, a man who fought for the independence of Ukraine and on the other, he is treated as a traitor and a killer. OUN (B) was involved in killings of many civilians including also Ukrainians who refused to cooperate with them, and who were accused of collaboration with the Germans or the Soviets. What is more, members of OUN(B)-UPA were killing also clergy, including bishops (Armstrong, 1990, pp. 158, 213). Everyone who did not want to cooperate with OUN-UPA was immediately labeled as a traitor to the nation. The Polish and the Soviet officials were also assassinated by them. The punishment for betrayal was most likely death, often a very brutal one. Some scholars indicate on roughness of a given time period where mass executions were regularly committed by both the Nazis and the

Soviets. On the other hand, Ukrainian scholars deny such mass killings and Such course of events is denied by Ukrainian scholars, in order to prove it, Ukraine opened its archives after gaining independence (McBride, 2016, p. 648).

Scholars dispute whether truly objective historical truth really exists. According to the postmodern theory, historical truth should be integrated with political correctness. But whose political correctness? What is accepted to be politically correct in one country not necessarily must be accepted in some other one. Therefore, there are situations when the state authorities try to refrain from political quarrels unless the misuse is too big (Paź, 2011a, p. 39). However, the situation gets more complicated when the same historical events are not fitting in the officially accepted norms of political correctness within the borders of one state. This is the case in Ukraine. On the one hand, there is Eastern Ukraine with its Soviet Union legacy and its propaganda, and on the other hand West Ukraine which perceived same historical events differently, not to say contrary. Uncomfortable part of that period is being neglected and denied by Ukrainian historians and politicians, on the other hand some of Ukrainian scholars indicate the need to accept full dimension of the OUN-UPA activities in the fight for Ukrainian independence, that includes also the dark side of those activities (Pavliv, 2009).

4.1. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Stepan Bandera: A Hero or a Traitor?

The era and the actions of the OUN-UPA members are undeniable part of Ukrainian history. However, the perception of its actions and role differs not only abroad, mainly Poland and Russia, but also throughout Ukraine. A figure that divides both the nation and the politicians: in the Eastern Ukraine Bandera is regarded as a traitor and a fascist who collaborated with Nazis during the WWII, whereas in the

West of Ukraine he is a hero, whose statues are being set up. What is more, he is also a central symbolic figure of Ukrainian nationalists of that period. Considering the fact that he is such a well-known figure as Marples points out (2006, p. 557) there are not enough biographies of Stepan Bandera, further he argues that considering his role there should be more. On the other hand, Hrytsak (Gazeta, 2016), a leading Ukrainian historian claims that since gaining independence by Ukraine there have not been written good biography of Stepan Bandera by Ukrainian scholars. Biographies of Bandera also may present contradictory points of view. How his figure and his actions are presented mainly depends on who wrote it, most of Polish and Russian historians do not write positively about him.

In the history of OUN, there have been three important figures: Yevhen Konovalets, Andriy Melnyk and probably the most influential and the most controversial one is Stepan Bandera. Yevhen Konovalets was the first leader of OUN between 1929-1938 and was a strong fascism enthusiast. He even supported terrorist actions for the so-called national cause. He was assassinated in Rotterdam by an NKVD agent. The Soviet authorities regarded him as a serious threat; hence Stalin personally commended his assassination. His position was filled by Andriy Melnyk when the partition in OUN gradually became more and more evident. A large group of younger members already preferred Bandera as a leader, but he was sentenced to life imprisonment due to assassination of Polish Minister of Interior, Bronisław Pieracki. Bandera was released due to the outbreak of WWII.

Melnyk can be assumed to have a milder stance than that of Konovalets as he firmly opposed any terrorist action. He served for Archbishop Andriy Sheptytsky and became a leader of the Catholic Action of Ukrainian Youth. Nevertheless, he

supported fascism and collaborated with Germans almost throughout the whole WWII.

Disagreement regarding the OUN leadership and differences in conducted activities and nature of those actions led to the division in the OUN into two factions: one led by Melnyk and the other one led by Bandera. Thenceforth, the history of Ukrainian nationalism followed controversial path.

Stepan Bandera was born in 1909 in Ivano-Frankivsk oblast which at that time was under the rule of the Austrian Empire. His father was a Greek-catholic priest serving in the Ukrainian Galician Army and in the Western Ukrainian People's Republic. Bandera served in the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) and the Union of Ukrainian Nationalist Youth in his early ages. In 1929, the Ukrainian national organizations were united under OUN under the leadership of Yevhen Konovalets. In 1933 Bandera became its leader in Western Ukraine. Under his leadership OUN began mass killings and slaughter of each of those accused of treason and those who refused to cooperate with them regardless of their nationality. However, scholars often question his direct influence and responsibility for violence and brutality of OUN-UPA since most of the time of that period he spent in prison (McBride 2016, pp. 650-651). Therefore, many Ukrainians supporting the idea of Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation fell victims of OUN-UPA activities, for instance Ivan Babij, director of Academic Gymnasium who openly criticized the actions taken by them.

A KGB agent assassinated Bandera in 1959 in Munich. He is buried in Munich. Marples (2005, pp. 555-559) suggests that Stepan Bandera remains a

controversial figure as experts seem to be far from any agreement on whether he was a hero or a villain.

4.2 Role of OUN-UPA in Shaping the Ukrainian Identity

The activities of OUN date back to WWI and to the Ukrainian revolution of 1917-1920 when it was fighting for the independence of the Ukrainian state. The organization was formed on frustration that continued for centuries, frustration caused by years of oppressions and constantly denied rights to be treated equally; not acknowledging Ukrainian's rights to education in their own language, often limiting their rights to education in general, regarding Ukrainians as they were a worse sort.

At that time, the organization was led by Yevhen Konovalets who initiated nationalist activities in west of Ukraine (Halushko, 2017, pp. 105, 107; Marples, 2006, p. 559). In this line, Kuzio and Wilson (1994, p. 104) indicate the positive role of OUN in protecting Ukraine from the repressions of the Polish, the Soviets and Germans.

In 1934, the OUN assassinated Bronisław Pieracki, the Polish Minister of the Interior Affairs leading to the arrest of the organization's leaders. Bandera was arrested two days prior to the incident. The Polish authorities initially sentenced OUN leaders to death but later amended the penalty to life prison in order to avoid creating martyrs among Ukrainian nationalist. Hence, the said OUN members were either released or they escaped⁶⁸ due to outbreak of WWII (Marples, 2006, p. 559).

Halushko (2017, p. 104) points out the fact that the understanding of nationalism of the 1930s in Galicia may differ from the modern comprehension as Rossoliński-Liebe (2015, pp. 1-2) claims that the initial Ukrainian nationalism did not demonstrate fascist ideology. Due to geopolitical circumstances and the failure of

⁶⁸ Marples (p. 559) indicates discrepancy in those information, it is not clear when exactly it took place.

establishing the Ukrainian state, as well as the exhaustion from constant political defeat, there was a rise of the anti-Polish, anti-Semitic and anti-Russian attitude. Those facts added fascist elements to Ukrainian nationalism of OUN-UPA and they started to be engaged in mass violence. Armstrong (1999, p. 28) also claims that OUN's ideology was based on what he calls as semi-Fascism. It is worth noting that the original idea of Ukrainian nationalism was not based on ethnic conflicts or racism, while OUN-UPA, according to Rossoliński-Liebe (2015, p. 2), acted on ethnicity and racism.

The organization has also created a number of rituals which were performed during the gatherings. Those rituals were referring to Ukrainian folklore and religion. The OUN adopted a fascist greeting „Slava Ukraini!” (*ukr. Слава Україні!*) which means „Glory to Ukraine!” Which was invented at the beginning of the 1920s by the League of Ukrainian Fascists. In 1941 OUN (B) instructed its members to salute by raising the right arm while saying those words. A move was very similar to the Nazi „Heil Hitler” salute (Rossoliński -Liebe, 2015, p. 30). „Slava Ukraini!” greeting is repeated nowadays in contemporary Ukraine. Its usage was resurrected after the events of 2014. In 2018 president Petro Poroshenko announced it as an official greeting of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. It also became an official greeting of the National Police of Ukraine. However, this slogan is also very controversial. Outside of Ukraine is recognized by many as an ultra- nationalistic greeting.

At the beginning, before the organization became excessively brutal, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was supporting the activities of OUN (Rossoliński -Liebe, 2015, p. 29) as OUN members were receiving a funeral service from the Greek Catholic priests. Often the place where the OUN members were killed or buried were turned into symbolic mounds in order to create symbolic sites and visualize the

struggle, hence the nationalist propaganda was emphasizing their sacrifice for the Ukrainian nation. Moreover, the places where some battles took place were also turned into the symbolic site by raising mounds. Erecting such symbolic sites, creating martyrs and commemorating their death turned out to be very successful OUN propaganda since it made people remember and picture the sacrifice and the commitment to the national liberation. Such means successfully made people transfer their anger towards the oppressors, seeing the graves made people realize how many sacrificed their death for the liberation of the Ukrainian nation.

As it was underscored before, OUN's main goal was to fight against oppression of the Soviet and the Poles (Halushko, 2017, p.104). On February 10, 1940, Bandera was elected the leader of OUN (Marples, 2006, p. 560). Marples (2006, p. 560) says that Bandera in fact did cooperate with Nazis on the promise of independence for Ukraine. Germans helped them to create two military units: Roland and Nachtigal – the arch enemy of the USSR. Additionally, many scholars believe that OUN led by Bandera indicated the collaboration with Nazis in their official status „Akt” which mentioned creating new state under the leadership of Hitler (Marples, 2006, p. 561). Nevertheless, there are many scholars opposing this assumption, alleging that Ukrainian nationalists never collaborated with Nazis. Among such scholars, Serhiichuk (2000) argues that the organization remained to be anti-German. On the contrary many authors sustain that Ukrainians did cooperate with the Germans but only because they genuinely believed they will help them in their struggle for the independence (Walaszczyk, 2007, p. 188).

Despite these allegations, there is evidence based on the accounts of witnesses for UPA's participation in the Lviv pogrom of Jews. The activity of OUN -UPA members is regarded by many as extremely brave in that they fought against more

powerful enemy with greater military capacity, that is the Nazis and the Soviets (Armstrong, 1990, p. 215). In the collective memory of Ukrainians of Western Ukraine the image of OUN-UPA members fighting against two totalitarian regimes; communism and Nazism is deeply rooted, contrary to the Eastern Ukraine where the image of the same organizations represents totally opposite view; traitors who collaborated with the Nazis (Hrycak, 2016).

The last years of the war were challenging for OUN-UPA members as they were forced to stay in hiding, often literally in the underground in dugouts.

After the war, many of them moved to Donbas or fled to Austria or American residences in Germany, while some ardent OUN-UPA members continued their activities until the late 1950s (Armstrong, 1990, pp. 221- 223). In this context, the longstanding resistance of the organization had a direct impact on nationalism in Galicia in response to mass killings and the exodus of western Ukrainians by the Soviets. Also after the end of the war, OUN-UPA members tried to suppress factions that had been cooperating and assisting the Soviets in the west of Ukraine (Armstrong, p. 222-224).

It was mentioned before that in 1940 OUN was divided in two factions as the OUN(B) led by Stepan Bandera and OUN(M) by Andriy Melnyk. OUN(B) is known for more radical methods and its post-war ideology was mostly appealing to young West Ukrainian immigrants. On the other hand, OUN(M) was pro-solidarity finding reflection also among immigrants but diminished the effect of the Ukrainian national cause (Armstrong, 1990, pp. 228-229).

Chapter 3 of this study elaborated on how the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was associated with Ukrainian nationalism. At the beginning of the

establishment of OUN, the ideology of the organization was rather anticlerical, but when the Soviet authorities abolished the Greek Catholic Church and clergy oppression began, it was immediately regarded by the OUN as an act against Ukrainian national traditions. Therefore, OUN-UPA played a role of a defender of Ukrainian nationalism. In this line, Armstrong (1990. p. 35) believes that OUN-UPA activities affected the 1970s intelligentsia in their effort to resist the Soviet oppression. They were forced to secretly conduct activities, while working to promote nationalism by spreading sources in the Ukrainian language.

In this vein, the Soviets initially disregarded OUN and UPA as there had been no mention of them in the Soviet press until the 1970s after their dissolution. Soviets were aware of the powerful symbol of the organizations, but assumed that this would be forgotten, while not underestimating the role of immigrants among OUN-UPA nationalists. However, Soviets were dreading that kind of nationalism and thus involved KGB to dissolve OUN and punish its leaders including those abroad.

Armstrong (1990, p. 235) argues that Ukrainian nationalism of that period was a unique form of nationalism demonstrating the way western Ukrainians reacted to oppression. Resistance and long-term struggle were deeply rooted in this notion of nationalism. However, this perception was interfered by the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the establishment of an independent Ukrainian state. In other words, there emerged a need to reconstruct Ukrainian nationalism by myths or symbols. This could be based on the differences between eastern and western Ukraine, especially with a focus on whether to internalize OUN-UPA activities or not in the new model of Ukrainian nationalism.

The memory⁶⁹ of the OUN-UPA myth has certainly survived and all affected how people in west of Ukraine perceive nationalism today as those memories were used in the history re-writing after gaining independence during the rule of Victor Yushchenko. Simultaneously, Ukrainians started to notice the greater need to construct an anti – Soviet (anti-Russian) national history. In order to break with the Soviet past, there was a need to revisit the period of WWII with giving space to other voices. In other words, there was a need to liberalize the politics of memory. However, that historical period is presented in two different versions (Narvselius, 2012, p. 469) one being pictured as the intention to build a united nation during Yushchenko's presidency.

4.3 Resurrection of the Myth of Stepan Bandera

According to Halushko (2017, p. 108), Bandera simply was just a Ukrainian patriot, who chose radical and extremist methods in the fight for Ukrainian independence. The author goes beyond and compares OUN to Irish IRA. Bandera, in Western Ukraine has been and is regarded as a hero. As a man who fought in the name of an independent Ukraine. It was in the Western Ukraine where OUN- UPA was active and their cult was not obliterated despite the Soviet propaganda

In fact, the Soviet authorities were aware of the strong influence that OUN-UPA ideology had on western Ukrainians, hence took all measures to affiliate him with the so-called evil camp. In 2010, on the other hand, President Yushchenko awarded Stepan Bandera with the highest state award, "Hero of Ukraine". However this have caused protest throughout the country and as well abroad, mainly was

⁶⁹ Galician immigrants kept this memory alive, and this is one of the reasons why this memory and myth have not faded away.

opposed in Poland, Israel, Russia and by the European Parliament. Therefore, later president Yanukovych allowed Donetsk regional court to rescind it.

As underlined before, the interviewees during the research, hesitated to share their views of Bandera, they were deterred when they just heard the name „Bandera”. Many were reluctant to talk about him, for some Ukrainians in Lviv is „like a God” whereas for the others he is „ a traitor and a murderer”.

In 1993, President Kuchma enacted a law that commemorated the German - Soviet war veterans and despite many protests it included people who were UPA members. However, those members were limited only to those who joined the organization during WWII (Marples, 2006, p. 555). In 2018, President Petro Poroshenko signed amendment to this act to consider all OUN-UPA members veterans (Ben, 2018)

In the mid 1990s, many Ukrainian scholars grew interest in studying the era of Bandera (Marples, 2006, p. 557). In 2007, a monument of Stepan Bandera was constructed in Lviv, yet it had to be guarded during the election campaign in 2010 (Snyder, 2010). This expressly demonstrates the division that Bandera has caused in Ukrainian society.

Figure 25. *Stepan Bandera's monument in Lviv*



(Source: the author's own album, 2019).

Today, Stepan Bandera's monuments can be found in many cities in Western Ukraine.

Figure 26. *Stepan Bandera's monument in Sambir*



(Source: the author's own album, 2018).

The fact that OUN-UPA members were killing innocent people seems to be undeniable, while this is a question of historical truth mentioned before. Some interviewees were cited to utter that OUN-UPA members were not engaged in killing civilians, but Soviet or German soldiers disguised themselves as the organization members. This is a clear dichotomy between what historical and political truths are.

While the Soviets propagated against OUN-UPA as traitors and fascists who collaborated with Germans, this did not yield positive ramifications and when Ukraine gained independence, people sought the truth by new history-making efforts based on fresh memories. However, as prof. Hrytsak claims "an objective truth" does not exist⁷⁰. And the Ukrainian case is the best example of this assumption.

According to Armstrong (1990, pp. 212-213), the extreme radical nationalist moves resulted from years of fierce struggle for independence fundamental rights. However, a lot many people denied the fact that Ukrainian nationalists turned to the Polish, Hungarian and Romanian governments with compromising demands. In the light of these assumptions, the roots of the extreme actions can be traced back to what Dmytro Dontsov depicted⁷¹ as a Ukrainian political thinker impacting OUN. As a matter of fact, Rossoliński-Liebe (2015, p. 9) considers him an ideologist giving context to Ukrainian radical nationalism. From this perspective, Dontsov believed that any measure could be taken in the struggle for the Ukrainian national cause, a notion shaped around the teachings of fanaticism and fighting by ignoring laws of war. This

⁷⁰ See the article by Bogusław: Paż *Pojęcie prawdy historycznej-determinanty filozoficzne i polityczne*, In B. Paż (Ed.), *Prawda historyczna a prawda polityczna w badaniach naukowych. Ludobójstwo na Kresach południowo-wschodniej Polski w latach 1939-1946* (pp. 21-63). Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego referred to Prof. Hrytsak's lecture on 29.10.2010 at Wrocław University.

⁷¹ He was born in Zaporizhia Oblast in 1883 and died in Montreal in 1973.

was to confirm and justify any brutality or violence to fulfill the dreams of the Ukrainian nation. This explains the way OUN - UPA activists justified their crimes (Rossoliński - Liebe, 2015, p.11).

The accusations of OUN-UPA collaboration with the Nazi Germans are also questionable for many, as many deny them while others allege no affiliation of OUN-UPA with the Nazis. Also, a number of scholars indicate that OUN-UPA members had to cooperate with Germans to establish an independent Ukrainian state. Hrytsak (1996, p. 225) points out the Ukrainian hopes for limited collaboration. The analysis of Stetsko's autobiography done by Berkhoff and Carynnyk (1999, p. 152) provides deeper understanding of this collaboration, which suggests that OUN-UPA collaborated with Germans as concession to build independence. According to it, Stetsko admitted that OUN-UPA collaborated with the Germans because of such need in the given circumstances, nevertheless the newly formed Ukrainian state would not be anti-German, actually it would be very pro-German

Further, Berkhoff and Carynnyk (1999, p. 153-154) question the authenticity of Stetsko's statement since he was under the German influence at the time of presenting it. The other documents found in archives also criticize the statement.

On the other hand, there are number of scholars who claim that OUN -UPA was intentionally collaborating with the Nazis. For instance, Rossoliński-Liebe (2015) and Armstrong (1990, p. 212) claim that OUN-UPA had fascist aspirations and Armstrong goes further uttering that OUN-UPA nationalists went even beyond the fascist ideology.

It is important to add that Rossoliński-Liebe (2015) does not argue that Ukrainian nationalism is purely fascist. He claims that the circumstances of made

Ukrainian nationalists of OUN-UPA resort to fascist methods. Yet, he says this was a transitional period, although reaching even the furthest stateless Ukrainians. What is more, the Western part of Ukraine namely Galicia and Volhynia were not under the Soviet rule. In the east, OUN-UPA members were demonized whereas the Soviet soldiers were presented as heroes (Ben, 2018). It can be argued that the Soviet authorities were successfully protecting their citizens from the ideology of OUN-UPA, hence it did not spread there. Nevertheless, there were attempts to put Ukrainian nationalism within the framework of fascism. Rossoliński - Liebe (2015, p. 21) also points out to the fact that Ukrainian nationalism of OUN was also based on racism. The ideology of OUN was strongly influenced by the writings of Mykola Mikhnovsky and Stepan Rudnytsky emphasizing the supremacy of the Ukrainian race. They even coined a slogan: "Ukraine is for Ukrainians" (Rossoliński-Liebe, 2015, p. 22). The writings gave also instructions to avoid marrying non-Ukrainian women otherwise children born out of such marriage would also become enemies. The above-mentioned statements ideally reflect the moods of Ukrainians after years of oppressions. What is more, it gives sort of an explanation towards the killings within the families of two different ethnicities. In their understating those were obstacles that stood in a way towards proclaiming an independent Ukrainian state.

The ideology of OUN-UPA of that period was containing another element posing a threat to the existence of the Ukrainian nation – antisemitism. Many scholars especially of Jewish origin argue that although antisemitism had already been present in the Ukrainians mind before World War II, it was not as violent as in the early 20th century. Rossoliński - Liebe (2015, p. 25) postulates that antisemitism has a long history in Ukraine, claiming that antisemitism became a part of Ukrainian nationalism over time. Nevertheless, Jews were regarded as another obstacle towards the

statehood, while Russian imperialism remained the most challenging and pressing issue.

Undoubtedly Ukrainian nationalism of that period was characterized by the struggle for conceptualization but instead of following the fascist ideology Ukrainian nationalists preferred to stress „the uniqueness of Ukrainian nationalism”.

Especially by Mykola Stsiborskyi⁷² who admired Italian fascism in his work titled “*Natiocracy*” was insisting that Ukrainian nationalism was a totally new political system although based on some fascist values (Rossoliński - Liebe 2015, pp. 10, 14,15).

4.4 Banderites in Modern Ukraine

The more sovereignty of Ukraine was threatened by Russia, the more attention was paid to Ukrainian nationalists with incrementing interest in the Bandera movement during Viktor Yushchenko’s presidency. It was president Yushchenko who awarded Bandera with the title of “Hero of Ukraine” in 2010. And in 2013 images of Bandera and OUN-UPA slowly were becoming a landscape of public protests and often in public space, especially in the Western Ukraine.

It can be argued that it was Euromaidan that resurrected Bandera’s cult, then war with Russia in Donbas and invasion of Russians on Crimea only made this cult more widely spread and more referred to by Ukrainians (Wilczak, 2017). During the Euromaidan far right parties began to publicly use and refer to Stepan Bandera in order to promote his positive image. As a result, many participating the Euromaidan Revolution accepted this move and even began to call themselves “banderites” (*ukr. Бандерівці*) in order to express contrary to Russian propaganda (Portnov, 2016). This

⁷² A Ukrainian politician and a member of OUN.

indicates huge shift in the perception of the term banderites since so far it was associated with negative meaning. The West of Ukraine particularly former Galicia is often being referred to as land of banderites (*ukr. бандерівщина*) as the centre of Ukrainian nationalists, often used contemptuously regarding inhabitants of the western Ukraine (Halushko 2017, p. 75).

Figure 27. *A bus stop in Staryi Sambir⁷³ with motive found on vyshyvankas, Tryzub, Ukrainian flag and a flag of Ukrainian nationalists*



⁷³ A city in the Lviv Oblast.



(Source: the author's own album, 2018).

Figure 28. *An empty building of Prosvita in Khyriv with an Ukrainian flag and flag of Ukrainian nationalists*



Note. Khyriv, a town in Staryi Sambir Raion, Lviv Oblast. (Source: the author's own album, 2018).

The symbols of this nature were used against the Russian influence or as contra to Soviet symbols and to distant form the Soviet legacy. President Yushchenko also promoted the use of such symbols to revive nationalistic sentiments (Snyder, 2010).

In this regard, the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance started the process of reshaping the Ukrainian history and presented OUN-UPA as an important and positive element in the battle for Ukrainian independence. However, convincing people on OUN-UPA's positive role was difficult especially in the East and South of Ukraine, where the Soviet propaganda was the strongest. However, it will be succeeded with systematic and constant propaganda of the Ukrainian government as a tool and education system. People of the West of Ukraine are already convinced about

that, in the Centre it will be easily accepted (Olszański, 2017, pp. 5-6). The Russian aggression on Ukraine will certainly have an impact on it.

The decommunization and OUN-UPA glorification is a tool which given the current circumstances enables underlying Ukrainian traditions by presenting anti-Russian connotation. However, there is no consensus in Ukraine on whether Bandera and OUN-UPA should be commemorated or not. According to Portnov (2016) critics of this idea were raised on Soviet propaganda. Whereas supporters come from nationalistic backgrounds.

According to Portnov (2016), critics are affected by the Soviet propaganda while supporters come from nationalistic backgrounds. Portnov (2016) distinguishes a third group that neither criticizes nor supports Stepan Bandera and OUN-UPA. This group does not have any clear ideological view and seems to be confused.

At the end of 2018, the Lviv Regional Council made a decision to celebrate 2019 as the year of Stepan Bandera as 2019 was his 110th birthday anniversary. Every year since 2013, the Svoboda party gathers people on January 1 to celebrate this occasion. On January 1, 2020 a march took place to honor the birth of Stepan Bandera in many cities throughout Ukraine such as capital city Kyiv, Lviv and Dnipro⁷⁴. In Kyiv, around 1000 people marched with torchlights (Radio Free Europe. Radio Liberty, 2020). In Dnipro, around 500 people and city officials, representatives of some political and public organizations laid flowers on Bandera's monument in Lviv (Uawire, 2020a).

On February 20, 2018, the day of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes was officially first time when a flag of Ukrainian nationalists was displayed on the wall of the Lviv

⁷⁴ Formerly Dnipropetrovsk, the name was changed during the de-Communization process.

townhall next to the national Ukrainian flag. Earlier, on February 15, 2020, the City Council of Lviv signed a decree to hang both flags at least 9 times a year for national holidays and other important days for Ukrainians in the west such as the birthday of Stepan Bandera (January 1), establishment of OUN (February 2) and commemoration of Roman Shushkevich, a military leader of UPA. On February 2, 2020 in Tarnopil, another Western Ukrainian city issued a similar decree (Demchyna, 2018). Such actions are believed to reflect the Ukrainian reaction on a planned amendment to the Polish Act on the Institute of National Remembrance. Therefore, celebration of Day of Heroes of Heavenly Hundred in Lviv gathered many people in 2020, and people paid tributes at the Lychakiv Cemetery to their heroes. Both the country flag and the nationalists' flag were hung at the ceremonies (see figure 29).

Figure 29. *Ceremonies commemorating heroes of the Revolution of Dignity –at the Monument of the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundreds and at the Lychakiv Cemetery –*





Note. Held in Lviv on 20.02.2020. (Source: <https://city-adm.lviv.ua/photos/276395-u-lvovi-vshanuvaly-pamiat-heroiv-nebesnoi-sotni>, <https://city-adm.lviv.ua/news/society/public-sector/276367-na-lychakovi-vshanuvaly-pamiat-heroiv-nebesnoi-sotni>).

Moreover, in 2018 the municipalities of city of Lviv and Ternopil made a decision to display a red and black flag, the symbol of OUN-UPA nationalists next to the national flag during the national holidays (Kresy, 2018).

4.5 The Perception of “Banderites’ in Different Settings

History is an „objective” account of events that took place in the past. The Ukraine example particularly history and present position of Lviv show that the same events may be presented from different point of view; the Soviet history writing, the Polish and Ukrainian history writing may discuss the same story, present the same fact however the narratives are different, the causes, results and people participating

varies. Such are the issues related with OUN- UPA and the banderites. It has not also produced different historical narratives depending on political goals but also many stereotypes regarding contemporary Lviv and the Western Ukraine. Therefore, different interpretations of historical events may also result in various perceptions of same facts. Thus, this research also focuses on how the Ukrainian people, mainly inhabitants of the Western part of the country regard activities of Stepan Bandera, OUN-UPA and the banderites. The account is enriched by the discourse apparent in the Polish and the Russian political discourse.

Regarding the OUN-UPA activities, as Marples (2006, p. 562) indicates, it was difficult to distinguish what the truth was. Even today, it is hard to distinguish the facts from falsified information. Hence, it can be observed how easy it is to manipulate the truth. Therefore, Ukraine today still is lacking consensus regarding its history.

Term “banderites” (*ukr. Бандерівці*) derives from Stepan Bandera’s surname and began to be commonly used in the 1960s. At the beginning it was used by the Soviets in their propaganda to indicate people associated with OUN-UPA. Hrytsak (2010) argues that Bandera belongs to the category of „uncomfortable heroes” and politicians undoubtedly should not add fuel to olive in this matter, instead of dividing already divided nation they should leave this matter to professional historians. In addition, he adds that OUN-UPA members who he refers to as „uncomfortable heroes” should be commemorated but „as a symbols of resistance, in the struggle for their own survival and dignity” and „not as symbols of violence over other peoples”.

Banderites refer to Bandera’s political supporters and other OUN-UPA members (Narvselius, 2012, p. 471). According to the interviewed during the research

informants, that name nowadays still has pejorative meaning and indeed is associated with OUN-UPA member and supporters.

Despite wide reference to Bandera during the Euromaidan Revolution, the term in public debate still is never neutral, it is used to offend or to express pride, and undoubtedly still is a controversial matter (Portnov, 2016). Ukrainians also find it challenging to define banderites. Interviewees prefer to disregard the question by replying "there are no banderites here or anymore"⁷⁵. Ukrainians from the East sometimes refer to this term referring to the Western part of Ukraine⁷⁶ "they think we all are banderites here" used in the negative meaning.

Bandera's myth was related to his symbolic importance since he was neither a political thinker nor philosopher. And he played a passive role after 1941 when he was arrested by the Germans. Nevertheless, Bandera is associated with his uncompromising nature and willingness to sacrifice everything for an independent Ukraine. Therefore, it is quite understandable why his myth has never faded away. Ukrainian nationalists turned to his symbolic meaning when Ukraine's independence was once more threatened by "the worst enemy of Ukraine": Russia. OUN-UPA deemed the Soviets its archenemy as well (Marples, 2006, p. 556). After re-gaining independence from the Soviets in 1991, Bandera became a symbol for the fight for national liberation and bravery against much powerful enemies: the Nazis and the Soviets⁷⁷.

The Soviet authorities soon realized the power of the organization despite its abrogation since the myth of Ukrainian nationalists was vivid in people's memory in

⁷⁵ Based on the interview in Lviv, 2019 and fieldwork in Lviv and Novovolynsk between 2018-2019.

⁷⁶ Information received during author's interview in Lviv, 2019.

⁷⁷ OUN-UPA groups were not as well equipped as their enemies, the Nazis and the Soviets.

the Western Ukraine. So, they began to defame OUN and UPA in the late 1970s (Erlacher, 2013, p. 291). Narvselius (2012, p. 474) points out that Ukrainians under the Soviet regime were enslaved, so they adopted Bandera and OUN-UPA as patriotic figures to otherize Russians. This enabled them to have their own peculiar identity. In other words, the OUN-UPA activities are situated in the collective memory of western Ukrainians and play an important role in shaping their identity. Their understanding goes far beyond regarding it as a simple historical fact, turning into a nationally celebrated myth (Armstrong, 1990, p. 219). In west Ukraine, actions of OUN-UPA were considered as heroic struggles for the liberation long time after the war. It was not only remembered and cherished by Ukrainians in the West of Ukraine but mostly it was praised by the émigrés.

In this line, the OUN-UPA myth in the West of Ukraine was associated with strong resistance and suffering. However, the Soviets tried to eliminate this part of Ukrainian history, hence they put emphasis on the Great Patriotic War which was most successfully implemented by the Soviet ideology in the East of Ukraine (Armstrong, 1990, pp. 220, 225), while the strong national feelings of western Ukrainians and underground OUN-UPA activities were apparently threatening the Soviet authorities. Therefore, they tried to use all their means to demonize OUN-UPA and to defame OUN-UPA as a poorly equipped guerrilla band, not an army (Armstrong, 1990, p. 220).

Commitment of Western Ukrainians to the OUN-UPA legacy caused protests and tensions in Ukraine and in the relations with Poland and Israel. Representation of Ukrainian nationalism can be found even in sports activities. In 2021, local

governments of Lviv and Ternopil decided to rename their largest stadiums⁷⁸ after Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych (Filtenborg, 2021; Tymotsko, 2021).

However, the government did not respond to the request of the Lviv local authorities and the names of the stadiums were not changed. Also in 2021, the Lviv Oblast Council made another attempt⁷⁹ to declare the year of 2022 to be the year of Stepan Bandera and applied to Verkhovna Rada, however this request was also rejected.

The developments in 2014 absolutely boosted feelings of Ukrainian nationalism and encouraged them to take action since the balance of voting was disturbed by losing Crimean voters and voters from the Donbas region. West Ukrainian nationalists thus managed to appear in ministries and focus on further spread of Ukrainian nationalistic feelings at administrative level (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). Moreover, Bandera's myth encouraged the Ukrainian nation in another fight for their sovereignty and independence.

⁷⁸ Lviv Arena (*ukr. Арéна Львів*), Roman Shukhevych Ternopil City Stadium (*ukr. Тернопільський міський стадіон імені Романа Шухевича*) located on the Bandera Ave.

⁸¹ Previously taken in 2019.

CHAPTER 5. NATION-BUILDING PROCESS AFTER 1991

The issues that modern Ukraine is dealing with are a reflection of its complex history with unresolved issues. As elaborated in the former chapters, Ukraine was under strong Polish and Russian influence. Modern Western Ukraine had been a part of the Polish- Lithuanian Commonwealth for centuries, whereas Kyiv and the Eastern part had been part of the Russian Empire. It must be noted that Eastern part never came under the Polish influence. Hence, still there is visible division into the western and eastern part of the country, where West of Ukraine has pro-western and anti-Russian attitude whereas East Ukraine is pro-Russian, and more anti-Western but in comparison with the West of Ukraine it is less anti-Polish⁸⁰. Therefore, modern Ukraine is diversified in terms of historical experience, politically and ideologically (Malikowski, 2010, p. 66). This division impacts the political preferences, language and even attitude and behavior of Ukrainian citizens (Boyko, Herron, Sverdau, 2014, p. 294).

Modern Ukraine consists of six different regions with different populations endowed with diverse historical experiences:

1. Volhynia - Polissia
2. Galicia
3. Transcarpathia and Bukovyna
4. Central Ukraine
5. Eastern Ukraine
6. Southern Ukraine

⁸⁰ However, Taras Kuzio (2005, p. 37) opposes such simplified division accepted by politicians and journalists. According to him, Galicia does not reflect the whole west Ukraine and at the same time Donbas does not represent the whole east Ukraine.

Figure 30. *Map of Ukraine, with its internationally recognized borders*



(Source: <https://cdn.britannica.com/15/4815-050-F533DB64/Ukraine.jpg>).

In Ukraine's history, there were three attempts to build a Ukrainian nation; first attempt took place in 1648 during the Cossacks' Zaporizhian Sich, which lasted until the time when Catherine II abolished it in 1781. The second was the attempt during WWI. Ukrainian People's Republic survived between 1917 and 1920. And the final one was the West Ukrainian People's Republic (WUPR) established in 1918, which survived only a year (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p.18).

5.1 Independent Ukraine: The Transition Period of 1991-2004

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine ended up in a transformation process after remaining under the communist rule for 72 years. In other words, after gaining independence in 1991, Ukraine faced numerous difficulties in transition into democracy. First and foremost, the country was burdened with a communist past, was lacking a civil society and as Harasymiw (2005, p. 192) indicates, the country did not have knowledge of the nature of democracy, while modern Ukraine now is a parliamentary-presidential republic.

The communist past has its reflections especially in electoral processes in Ukraine as they tend to be unstable and unsettled. This instability is seen in the whole electoral process from voters, candidates to electoral campaigns (Harasymiw, 2005, p. 192). First presidential elections held in independent Ukraine may not be assumed fully democratic elections. Only basic changes were made especially in the presidential elections in 1991. In addition, both parliamentary and the presidential elections held in 1994 were not fully democratic either, carrying the burden of Soviet legislation.

During the presidential elections in 1994, the votes depended on the origins of the voters, whether the origin was urban or rural. Former Communist party membership was also a criterion no campaign was directed to any particular group of people. People elected not based on ethnicity, rather on economic factors (Harasymiw, 2005, pp. 216-217). Finally, in 1997 a new electoral law was enacted on the basis of the German and Russian models (Harasymiw, 2005, p. 198). Another amendment was made in the electoral law in 2001 as part of the preparation for the general elections in 2002.

Ukraine as an independent country developed liberal democracy state in the 1990s by modelling the West against the Soviet legacy (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). Harasymiw (2005, p. 202) however, draws attention to the instability of the electoral legislation where the consensus between the president and the parliament could not be reached. In 2006, elections radically changed offering more stability in the political scene of the country.

In 2001, there was still instability triggered by domestic turmoil due to the tension between president and the opposition. Corruption was a big issue, as the government was connected to businesses and oligarchs. Industrial production decreased leading to an increase of poverty and a strong division between the society between the poor and the rich. Ukraine began to change its foreign policy focus from the West to the East (Kuzio, 2003, p. 30). As a result, Ukraine struggled with social unrest that led to protests and the highest number of protests took place in west Ukraine.

Ukraine also suffers from the lack of political agreement on the actual constitutional power. Constitution is used as a tool enabling president or Verkhovna Rada (*ukr. Верховна Рада України*) to have more power (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). The reason of that may be found in the Soviet legacy and the idea of centralization. Despite decentralization efforts, this practice was continued until 2017, after reforms were gradually introduced at the initiative of the West. Nevertheless, it is the center that still has the majority of power.

In this regard, Ukrainians see corruption as one of the most pressing issues as indicated in the conducted interviews since the state institutions depended on oligarchs endowed with wealth and assets. Oligarchs were cited to have strong ties with other entities as well: local institutions, networks, media, religious institutions,

enterprises, industrial corporations and international bodies (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018).

All the mentioned above problems arose from the Soviet legacy and regardless who rules the country still could not be successfully solved. The reasons for that may be searched for also outside of Ukrainian borders and the events that took place in the following years have only deepened those problems.

5.2 The Orange Revolution and its Ramifications

The presidential elections at the end of 2004 were a turning point in the history of Ukraine. Two candidates entered the second round: Viktor Yushchenko⁸¹ and Viktor Yanukovich⁸². The latter one, supported by the previous president Leonid Kuchma won the presidential elections. Ukraine was divided between the post-Soviet and pro-European people, represented by the two candidates. Russia was supporting the pro-Russian candidate, Yanukovich. Although born and raised in the east of Ukraine, Yushchenko was supporting integration with the EU and NATO. Yushchenko's supporters spoke Ukrainian at home, were believers of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate. His electoral campaign was not directed only towards Ukrainophiles; he was promising bilingual public services and closer ties with Europe instead of Russia. Moreover, he also promised to withdraw Ukrainian troops from Iraq.

On the other hand, his opponent Viktor Yanukovich presented a pro-Russian attitude and his campaign was directed to Russophiles, especially people living in the

⁸¹ Candidate of the Ukraine Bloc (*ukr. Блок «Наша Україна»*).

⁸² Candidate of the Party of Regions (*ukr. Партія регіонів*).

east and south of Ukraine. In his campaign, he promised introduction of Russian as the official language and dual Russian-Ukrainian citizenship. Yanukovych, contrary to Yushchenko was insisting on closer relations with Russia. Hence, he was against Ukraine becoming a NATO member and building closer ties with the EU, although to a certain extent he was supporting the idea of “Euro-integration” (Harasymiw, 2005, pp. 207-208). Yanukovych’s supporters were speaking Russian and were believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate. It can be understood that regionalism was so dominant for the first time in the history independent Ukraine. Ukraine had a heterogeneous society but its diversity was never more visible. The lack of social cohesion was used by the political parties in order to gain votes while Russia made use of the socio-linguistic differences as an excuse to gain control on the territories inhabited mostly by Russian speakers. On the other hand, Harasymiw (2005, p. 224) indicates that regional differences are not significant in the same degree across the whole country.

In this context, analysis of the 2004 presidential elections shows how historical and cultural ties divided the Ukrainian nation as reflected by two different candidates, one pro-Russian and the other pro-European. It was no surprise that west Ukraine voted for Yushchenko, and east of Ukraine voted for Yanukovych. It is remarkable, though, that there was a large wave of pro-Western tendency (Kowalski & Malicki, 2005, pp. 62-65).

Meanwhile, Yushchenko’s health condition was deteriorating. In Vienna, he was diagnosed with dioxin poisoning. Yanukovych’s victory caused social unrest due to allegation of corrupt elections and this resulted in Yushchenko’s assassination attempt. In turn, waves of protests spread throughout the Ukraine known as the

Orange Revolution named after Yushchenko's election campaign promoted with orange color.

Figure 31. *The protest known as the Orange Revolution*



(Source: <https://www.zsu.gov.ua/year/5fe440852f429b1f88ce9cba>).

The protestants came mainly from Kyiv and the west of Ukraine or former Galicia. The national media did not mention anything about the protests, while Poland backed the Orange Revolution. Polish artists, politicians⁸³ as well as ordinary Polish citizens were engaged in the Ukrainian struggle for democracy.

⁸³ Including the most prominent ones such as former presidents Lech Wałęsa, Aleksander Kwaśniewski (holding the office of the president of that time) Bronisław Komorowski and Lech Kaczyński.

Figure 32. *Former President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Wałęsa in Kyiv during the Orange Revolution*



(Source: <https://wydarzenia.interia.pl/news-walesa-reaktywacja,nId,803295>).

The Polish supported Ukrainians by a large number of publications, discussions, demonstrations and concerts held both in Poland and Ukraine (Urbanowicz, 2005, p. 53). In addition, prominent Polish figures physically attended the protests in Kyiv. According to Korniejenko (2005, p. 87), the engagement of Polish politicians in the revolution caused deeper polarization between pro-Russian and pro-European marked as the beginning of the bipolar geopolitical order in Ukraine.

Under the pressure of the West and the Supreme Court of Ukraine, the second round of the elections was cancelled and another round took place and Viktor Yushchenko won, and elected the third president of an independent Ukraine (Urbanowicz, 2005, p. 7-21).

One of the results of the Orange Revolution is the definite transition from a post-Soviet state to a European state with a deep focus on democracy, civil society and government legitimacy. The Orange Revolution combined three moves into one united effort: national, democratic and anti-corruption (Kuzio, 2005, p. 42).

Moreover, the Orange Revolution made significant contribution to the development of Ukrainian language and literature, promoting the Ukrainian culture (Naydan, 2005, p. 27). The changes that were achieved in Ukraine through the revolution made people believe in democracy, while they became hopeful of Yushchenko's presidency. In other words, people were hoping that Ukraine would finally become a stable, democratic country with a pro-Western democratic leader. The Orange Revolution affected a cultural- ethnic pattern of the country, motivated people for changes in the Ukrainian politics, gave them hope for a better future while it was laying the foundations for the developments that would take place 10 years later.

5.3 Towards the East or the West

Politics in Ukraine tends to have been unstable since regaining independence in 1991. Reforms have been failing and domestic politics as well as foreign policies are giving no positive results for the nation revolutions. Kuzio (2012, p. 396) indicates three phases in Ukraine's relations with the West (the USA, the EU and NATO): disinterest, partnership and disillusionment. A reflection of those phases may be found in Ukraine's political practices.

The relations with the West are based on the cycles of those three phases. Ukraine since the regaining of independence is trying to re-organize and stabilize its both domestic and foreign policies. The first years of being an independent state was on the one hand a search for a direction. On the one hand, it was directed towards the

West, on the other West did not seem to be welcoming, on the other there was Russia that wanted and actually needed⁸⁴ close ties with Ukraine.

There were times during years of being independent when lots of expectation was directed towards cooperation with the West – predominantly European Union and NATO. However, from time to time Ukraine was leaving its pro-Western attitude in favor of Russia. Just after gaining independence Ukraine had western oriented aspirations and in September 1991 president Kuchma paid official visits to Canada, the USA and France which also confirmed international recognition of the country (Nahaylo, 1999, p. 401).

Ukraine's relations with NATO go back to 1994 when Ukraine joined NATO's program known as the Partnership for Peace. In 1997, the Documentation and Information Center was opened in Kyiv and in 2002, President Kuchma was supporting the idea of NATO membership. Particularly after the Orange Revolution, Ukraine was seeking membership to the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP). However, prime minister Yanukovych rejected the idea of joining MAP in 2006-2007, while Yushchenko was insisting on joining NATO MAP. On the other hand, NATO did not take any steps towards accepting Ukrainian membership and NATO member countries were reluctant to follow MAP since it was not effective, while also being considerably confused regarding how to grant Ukrainian membership. Nonetheless, Ukrainian officials underlined that Ukraine had huge contributions to global security by aiding NATO with its forces in peacekeeping operations (Kuzio, 2012, pp. 400-402).

⁸⁴ Russia needed Ukraine for many reasons, such as a gas pipeline, considered Ukraine as part of Russia with so many Russian citizens, close economic and trade relations.

After the Orange Revolution and Yushchenko becoming president, in this line, there emerged great expectations that Ukraine would ally with the West especially with membership to NATO and the EU. As a matter of fact, the European Union's expansion towards the east was one of the reasons for the pro-democracy movement in Ukraine (Caşın, 2015, p. 79)

In the same vein, Kuzio (2012, p. 403) states that post-communist countries first considered NATO membership and then EU membership. Accordingly, the West was ready for negotiations with Ukraine under the leadership of Yushchenko. As part of the developments in this period, the EU established the European Neighborhood Policy in 2005 giving hope to Ukraine as a nation bordering Europe. Disappointing enough, cooperation as part of this policy was not efficient enough. Kuzio (2012, p. 399) indicates that African countries were included in the European Neighborhood Policy as well. In 2009, the cooperation between EU and Ukraine was changed into the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda on initiative of the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council. In that period the relations with the EU improved, meanwhile relations with NATO deteriorated (Kuzio, 2012, p. 399).

Since 2003, Ukraine has followed the Membership Action Plan (MAP) to fulfill the necessary obligations to become a member of NATO, believing that MAP could lead to the actual membership. Despite fulfilling all the requirements of MAP, Ukraine did not become a member of NATO. Nonetheless, neither the EU nor NATO wanted to give up on Ukraine, knowing its geopolitical importance. They were concerned they Ukraine would turn to Russia. When anti-NATO Viktor Yanukovych won the elections in 2010, Westernization gradually declined in Ukraine as opposed to Yanukovych who worked for NATO membership, when serving as President. In April 2010, though, he dissolved the National Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration

and the Euro-Atlantic coordination body under the Cabinet of Ministers due to the Russian pressure on Yanukovych to withdraw from any Western membership and to prefer the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)⁸⁵. Russia also offered cheaper gas to Ukraine in return for those promises (Kuzio, 2012, pp. 407-408). The EU warned Ukraine that the customs union with the CIS countries excludes the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) between EU and Ukraine⁸⁶ and thus, Ukraine has never become a member of the CIS also due to the war in Donbas and the invasion of Crimea by Russia.

The turning point in Yanukovych's presidency and in the relations with the EU and the West was imprisoning Yulia Tymoshenko. Soon after coming to power, Yanukovych applied his own view of foreign policy which was based on closer relation with Russia and abandoning the idea of getting closer with the West. There was no place for NATO or the EU in his foreign policy. He was the only Ukrainian president who rejected the idea of NATO and the EU membership and who was in favor of Russia. What is today known as the "Kharkiv Accord" clearly demonstrates his attitude towards Russia and the West. This treaty allowed Russia to lease military base in Crimea until 2047. That was a huge controversy both in Ukraine and on the international arena and it was loudly criticized (Kuzio, 2012, p 405). Quickly it turned out that Yanukovych is not respecting democratic norms and the country was being dragged into an ever-growing chaos.

Despite the emphasis of democracy from the first stages, practice of democracy has been rather challenging for Ukraine due to lack of stability and sufficient reforms in line with the West. Sometimes, instability turned into reaction

⁸⁵ Together with Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

⁸⁶ Also between Georgia and Moldova.

against the West, and the Western block did not welcome engaging with this country that was surrounded by instability and political turmoil caused by the ambiguity of the executive power divided between President and the parliamentary government. Also, this power was affected by a covetous elite class dominating the political sphere. Furthermore, Ukraine lacked a vibrant civil society that would move the country away from the Soviet heritage (Pridham, 2014, p. 55). To add to that, the country had been tackling with numerous domestic issues as well. With each new presidential term, those problems seemed to be solved or at least actions were taken to solve them, while the problems kept coming back by growing larger each time. That is why partnership with the West lasted only at the beginning of the tenure of pro-Western Yushchenko (Kuzio, 2012, p. 396).

The US presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama were not interested in close cooperation with Ukraine, instead they both preferred to cooperate with Russia. What is more, the EU for nearly 20 years after re-gaining independence also was not interested in cooperation with Ukraine. On the other hand, the year 2008 seems to be critical for Ukraine, since Ukraine and the EU signed an Association Agreement, the country also became a member of the World Trade Organization (Kuzio, 2012, p. 396).

In 2010 another presidential election in Ukraine took place. The main candidates were again Viktor Yanukovich and Yulia Tymoshenko⁸⁷. Yanukovich won the election, despite former accusation of election fraud and suspicious poisoning of Yushchenko. At the beginning of his presidency the West was hoping that this time he will follow democratic values. Despite the alleged pro-Russian orientation, he got

⁸⁷ Prime minister during Viktor Yushchenko's tenure as president.

the credit of trust from Europe, yet soon it revealed that he was not interested in abiding by democratic rules, which worsened the relations with the West. In the meantime, Yanukovych established positive relations with Russia. The former prime minister, opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko was sent to prison for 7 years, and domestic issues in Ukraine remained unsolved.

In the first two decades after re-gaining of independence by Ukraine, policy of the West towards Ukraine was based on disinterest. The geopolitical importance of this country was underestimated. Therefore, the West seemed to be more interested in Ukraine when the situation on the international arena was changing. Kuzio (2012, p. 404) notices that when Obama's administration decided to take a step back so that the EU could establish closer relations with Ukraine and decided to withdraw from geopolitical zone of the part of the world it created an opportunity for Russia to expand its domination on Ukrainian sphere of interest. Which was used by Russia in the upcoming years. In fact, in recent years not only the US administration took very passive attitude regarding Putin's policies both internal and foreign but also the European Union member states. The West did not respond or did minimum regarding many abuses of power by Putin which gave him "green light" in achieving his goals, which he is trying to pursue now in Ukraine.

5.4 The Revolution of Dignity – The Euromaidan

In 2013 we have witnessed another civil revolution in Ukraine that took form of protests which were tried to be violently suppressed, when president Viktor Yanukovych suspended the Association Agreement with European Union, instead he entered together with Russia into the Eurasian Economic Union, people started mass protest and again gathered in Kyiv's main square – Independence Square (*ukr.*

Майдан Незалежності), known also as Maidan (*ukr. Майдан*), thus the revolution is often referred to as Euromaidan⁸⁸ (*ukr. Євромайдан*) or the Revolution of Dignity (*ukr. Революція гідності*). The protest spread quickly throughout the country and turned into mass social movement against the power overuse by the government, the corruption, income inequality, rule and influence of oligarchs on politics and pro-Russian policy of Yanukovich's government, hence also Russian interference with the Ukrainian politics. President Yanukovich's decision only increased disappointment of Ukrainian people who already were dissatisfied with lack of reforms and failure of corrupted government, hence this decision made people even more dissatisfied and made them go to the streets (Grätz, 2013; Onuch & Sasse, 2016, p. 558). The protests began on the 21st of November 2013. It took a very violent turn resulting in over 100 deaths in square (Biersack & O'Lear, 2014, p. 248). People from all over the Ukraine jointly and severally took the streets of Kyiv.

Figure 33. *Ukrainians during the Euromaidan Revolution*

⁸⁸ The name refers to the supporters' demand of closer ties with the European Union.



Note. Ukrainians gathered at Independence Square during the Euromaidan Revolution at the end of 2013. (Source: <https://www.newsweek.pl/swiat/ukraina-protesty-euromajdan-newsweekpl/78n21t0>).

The violence and brutality of the police caused even more anger towards the government and more people joined and supported the revolution. The number of protestors reached over a million (Wanner, 2015a, p. 4). Revolutionists demanded President to sign the EU association treaty. As a slogan, they shouted: “Ukraine is Europe!” Revolutionists also demanded dissolution of the government, resignation of president and judging those responsible for violence at courts. However, president Yanukovych ignored the will of the majority of Ukrainian people and did not sign the association agreement with the EU, let alone any compromise to stop the bloodshed. After the incidents, however, president was overthrown and had to flee the country to Russia. Yet, Ukrainians sieged his residence there, an incident considered unacceptable by the people residing in the eastern parts of Ukraine as supporters of President Yanukovych (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). It is important to add that

Russia was actively spreading its propaganda in the media and portrayed revolutionists as neo-Nazis threatening ethnic Russians in Ukraine (Biersack & O'Lear, 2014, p. 248). Later on, Russia used this rhetoric in justifying its attack in Donbas and the war it waged in 2022.

Viktor Yanukovych was defamed for fraud in the 2004 presidential elections and the suspicious poisoning of his main rival, Viktor Yushchenko. However, in the next presidential elections, Ukrainians so as the West believed that he changed and gave him another chance on the promise to achieve political stability in the country and apply democratic norms. Thus, Yanukovych managed to win the elections in 2010 (Kuzio, 2012, p. 404).

After the president Viktor Yanukovych and his pro-Russian Party of Regions were removed from power, however, Petro Poroshenko became the new President and Arseniy Yatsenyuk was elected new prime minister. The new government was established to apply sociopolitical changes in the society. One of the greatest achievements of president Poroshenko was to sign the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU (Molchanov, 2016, p. 522).

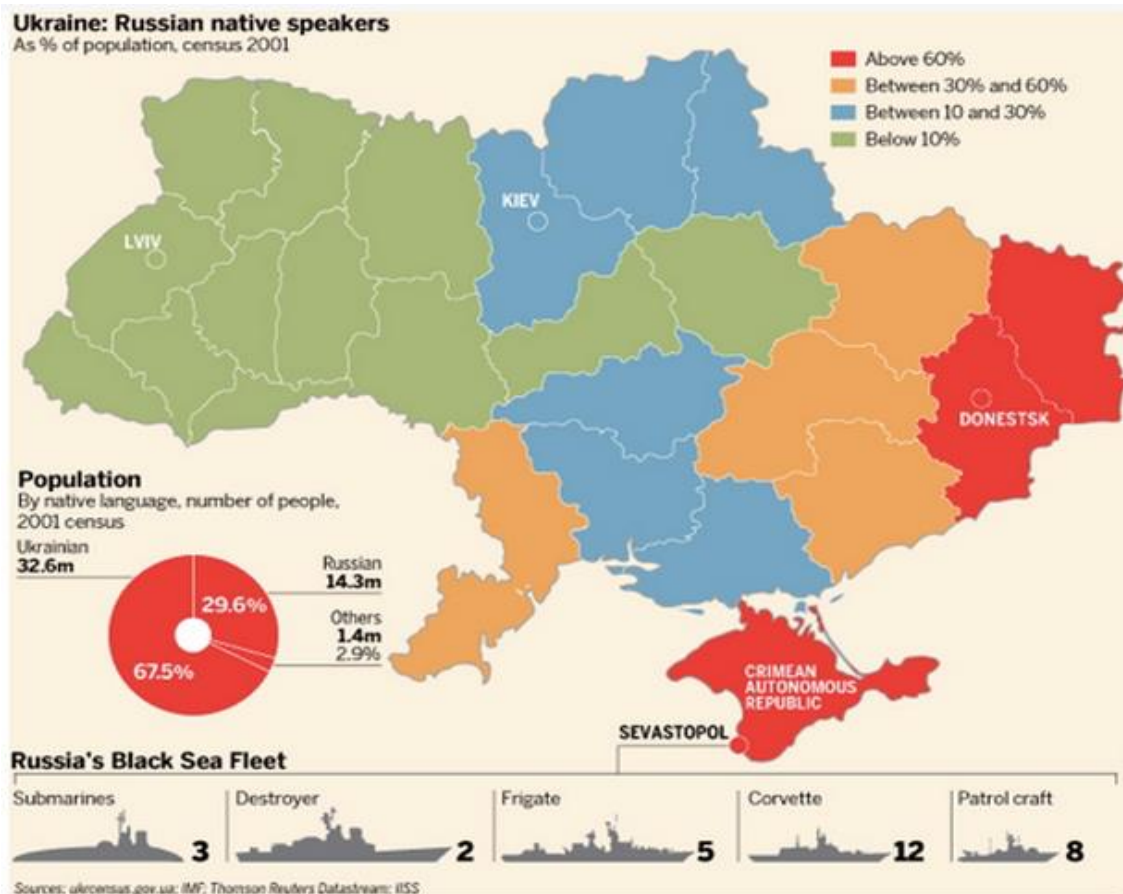
In the Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts, pro-Russian separatist movement began. This was instigated by Russian military support when Ukraine was vulnerable. Therefore, it can be said that the weakness of Ukraine was used deliberately. As a matter of fact, the country was already shaken and destabilized by the revolution when was hit by another. Many Ukrainians of the east condemned the separatist movement and labeled it as betrayal. In this context, the Euromaidan revolution has inflicted the greatest impact on the history of Ukraine starting from its independence.

In his famous book titled “*Clash of Civilizations*” first published in 1996, Huntington (1996, pp. 28, 167) argued that Ukraine is located directly in the middle of two civilizations as the Western Christian world and Muslim and Orthodox people. He uttered that Ukraine would highly face other challenges in the future particularly with reference to conflicts with Russia on the Crimean peninsula. When analyzing the Orange Revolution, Gibas-Krzak (2005, p. 6) proposed a significant question: whether Russia has come to terms with the loss of Ukraine and its imperial role so easily? Further, she continued that it is less likely. Nine years later this question has been answered. Heavily armed men appeared in Ukraine and proclaimed the formation of the self-proclaimed: Donetsk People's Republic (DRL) and the Luhansk People's Republic (LRL). After an armed seizure of key cities in Donbas, they announced a confederation of the two self-proclaimed republics in the Federal Republic of New Russia in May 2014. Separatists took over other main cities in the region, thus the Armed Forces of Ukraine launched an anti-terrorist operation (ATO) targeting the armed separatist groups to annul the self-proclaimed republics in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the conflict remained unresolved, turned into a war and continued until Russia declared a full-fledged war against Ukraine in February 2022 (Smith, 2016, p. 131).

In the aftermath of the incidents on February 27, 2014, unidentified soldiers entered the parliament building of the Autonomous Republic of Crime, while Russia officially rejected all accusations that they were Russian soldiers. However, Russian soldiers took over the airport in Sevastopol the next day and Russian troops spread across the Crimean peninsula. The Russian government held a referendum in Crimea in a short time on separating the peninsula from Ukraine and annexing it to the Russian Federation instead. Although the referendum was widely questioned, Russia

managed to perform the annexation of Crimea (Boyko, Herron & Sverdun, 2014, p. 286). The Crimean issue also remains unsolved until today.

Figure 34. *The percentage of Russian native speakers in particular regions of Ukraine*



(Source: http://www.politicalowl.com/home/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2014-03-02_ukraine.jpg).

It can be argued that there are both political and identity disputes present in the crisis of Crimea, since the Crimean Peninsula is inhabited by ethnic Russians and pro-Ukrainian Crimean Tatars. Russia has had territorial claims on Crimea since the early 1990s on the pretext of the fact that it was illegally annexed to Ukraine in 1954 by the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. The peninsula is of strategic geopolitical importance for Russia's navy, Black Sea Fleet station in Sevastopol, hence it is a fundamental

military base for Russia in the Black Sea for its maritime transportation and natural resources (Caşın, 2015, p.81). Nevertheless, Russia's aggressive actions have been directed against the Ukrainian sovereignty, territorial integrity and the nation state (Clem, 2014, p. 221).

5.5 Radical Changes after the Euromaidan Revolution

The Euromaidan Revolution undoubtedly affected the lives of Ukrainians and brought many direct and indirect consequences. The immediate result was the change of the government. The revolution proved that Ukrainians were in favor of democratic rules ready to fight for it. Years of oligarchs in power, corruption, social injustice made people realize that they did not want oppression anymore. Therefore, civil society was born in Ukraine along with the development of democratization moves. However, the expectations laid on the newly elected government proved wrong despite certain democratic reforms.

As for the questions whether the Euromaidan or the Donbas war united people, some argue that the revolution brought Ukrainians closer, while the war in Donbas was a graver threat from a foreign power. There was the fear that people of Russian ethnic origin residing in Donbas would join Russia in the fight against Ukraine at the beginning of the crisis in 2014, however, contrary to Russia's assumptions, it turned out that majority of them rejected ethnic conflicts. Therefore, Russia failed to mobilize ethnic Russians in the Donbas region. This proved that Ukraine was not in jeopardy due to ethno-nationalist movements (Hrytsak, 1996, p. 246). There was a real, visible danger, an enemy; Russia. In fact, that danger made Ukrainians realize they indeed form a united nation.

During the Euromaidan Revolution and the war, Ukrainians willingly reached for heroes of the Ukrainian history who fought against Russia for the independent of Ukraine. Therefore, many glorified Cossacks and Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Ivan Mazepa and the controversial figure of Stepan Bandera. It was during the Euromaidan revolution that Ukrainian people began to attach deeper meaning to national leading to the revival of the Cossack and Bandera myths. On the other hand, the presence of real Cossack groups in several parts of Ukraine to fight for Ukrainian freedom, integrity and sovereignty only confirmed Ukrainian's contradictions on Ukrainian Cossack traditions. Cossacks were welcomed as the fighters for Ukrainian freedom. Some scholars even found similarities in the organization of the Maidan protests with functioning of the Zaporizhian Sich.

Referring to the Cossack legacy undoubtedly played an important role for the Ukrainian government after re-gaining independence from the Soviets. Zaporizhian Sich is believed to be second after Kyivan Rus⁸⁹ to become independent in Ukraine's history. Cossacks represented same values as people who decided to join the Maidan evolution and they were associated with freedom and independence. The protests revived the national awareness and people resorted to Cossacks when they fell into torture by the police force called Berkut. Cossack Mikhail Gavrilyuk was posted online as well. The Cossack army also used the slogan 'freedom or death' and people started to bring pictures of Bandera and Cossacks to the protest, crying out for 'Glory to Ukraine' in reference to OUN-UPA. Throughout Ukraine, such slogans were visible, and social media was also full of such slogans. Overall, this slogan during the Euromaidan gained various meanings and contexts and became associated with the protest. Many participating in the revolts did not even know it was used by OUN-

⁸⁹ Russia does not agree with this view and considers Kyivan Rus as origin of Russian people.

UPA members. For some, it was just an expression of Ukrainian nationalism, underlying Ukrainian independence especially from Russia (Portnov, 2016)⁹⁰.

Images of Stepan Bandera were widely used during the Euromaidan revolution and this brought another round of controversies over his figure. However, his image acquired new meaning during the revolution. He became not only a symbol of the fight for independence, but also of the resistance against the corrupted Ukrainian government and Russian interference (Portnov, 2016). As underlined before, OUN and Bandera constitute a very controversial and delicate issue for both Ukrainians and foreign scholars. Russia as continuation of the Soviet legacy regards Bandera as a traitor and a bandit, while West of Ukraine respects him as a national hero and OUN-UPA as an organization fighting against occupiers for freedom and independence. Reaching for such controversial symbolism was crucial for Ukrainians in order to present one common Ukrainian identity unlike Cossack symbolism, which is not associated with controversy. As mentioned above, Bandera and OUN-UPA in Ukraine are still open for debates but Ukrainians resorted to them during the protests. In other words, OUN-UPA symbols and references were commonly used and spread during the Euromaidan Revolution despite the controversy, and the negative connotations associated with them were silenced or ignored.

Figure 35. *Picture of Stepan Bandera on the building of the Kyiv City Council during the Euromaidan Revolution*

⁹⁰ Based on the data from the fieldwork in Lviv, in 2019.



(Source: <https://www.rp.pl/historia/art9298851-bandera-i-szuchewycz-znikna-z-mapy-kijowa>).

The Maidan Revolution and the conflict with Russia absolutely had an impact on the revival of the Cossack and Bandera myths. Reference to those figures contributes to the nation building and consolidating national feelings to fight for freedom and resistance.

The Maidan began as a revolution against the government's foreign policy, but when the government decided to use violence against the protestors, it transformed into a revolution against the government itself. People fought against the violence and corruption of the government. Moreover, the revolution enhanced nationwide nationalism. After the Euromaidan Revolution, Ukrainians united through a wave of national solidarity, which further strengthened the sense of belongingness. Ironically for Russia, especially the feeling of belonging to the Ukrainian nation in the parts where it was weak, strengthened, particularly in the Eastern part of Ukraine. The Maidan Revolution and events that took place right afterwards was used by Russia.

The unstable situation in Ukraine was an excuse to fuel separatist feelings among the Russian speaking citizens of Ukraine and later on annexation of Crimea. However, the Maidan Revolution was used by Russia as a counter reaction. The instability in Ukraine was used as an excuse to fuel separatist movements by the Russian speaking citizens of Ukraine.

In order to commemorate those who lost their lives in the 6th anniversary of Russian aggression and annexation of Crimea to Russia on February 26, 2020, Ukraine decided to organize the Forum Age of Crimea. President Volodymyr Zelensky announced it as a new national holiday to grieve for the annexation of Crimea by Russia and to commemorate it as the Day of Resistance to the Occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol. From now on, it will be celebrated annually on February 26 to commemorate the bravery and heroism of the fighters. Zelensky also emphasized that the Crimean issue united the Ukrainian nation (Uawire, 2020). As a result of Russian annexation of Crimea, tens of thousands Ukrainian people lost their lives or were wounded until 2020 and 1,5 million Ukrainians were displaced. In addition, many were forced to remain in the occupied territories where their human rights were severely violated. For example, they were forced to give up their Ukrainian passports in order to receive a Russian one (Ministerstvo Zakordonnykh Sprav Ukrainy, 2020).

Figure 36. A picture published by the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs commemorating 6 years of annexation of Crimea by Russia



Note. Published on 20.02.2020. (Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/UkraineMFA/photos/p.2718315361555700/271831536155700/?type=1&theater>).

In this regard, it may be fairly argued that Ukrainian national feelings revived due to the threats against its independence (from Russia) and sovereignty. Those feelings were particularly expressed with the national symbols and myths. The Maidan revolution, the war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea by Russia further instigated anger among Ukrainians and they became more hostile to Russia, which was not easy for many Ukrainians especially of the Eastern parts of Ukraine since many of them have families residing in Russia but they also joined the protests.

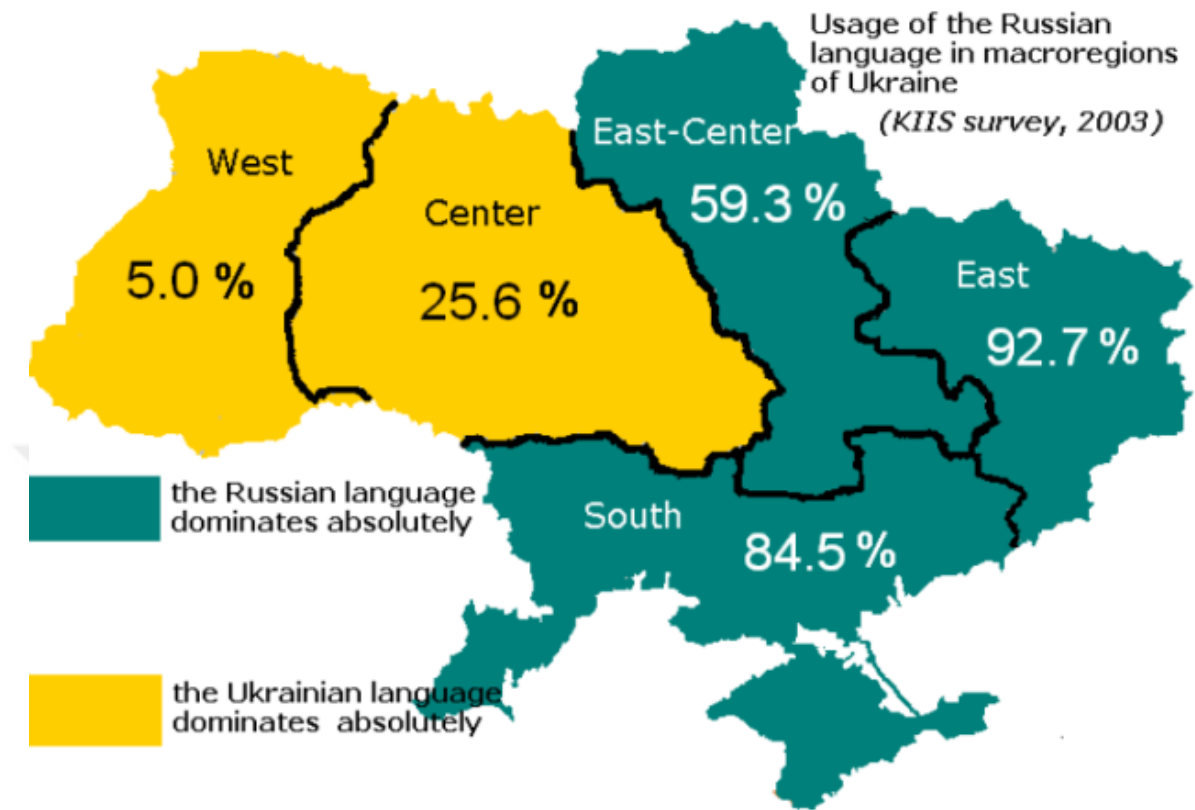
Ethnic Issues in the eastern part of Ukraine

During the Soviet times, the largest number of Russians residing outside the Soviet Russian Federation was in Ukraine⁹¹. There were also people who ethnically were not Russians but speaking Russian. Again, their number was the largest in Ukraine, reaching approximately 5,7 million. Indeed, Russians were and still are the largest minority group residing in contemporary Ukraine. After the collapse of the USSR, the newly formed Ukrainian government decided to give Ukrainian citizenship to all its inhabitants. It seemed the transformation went smoothly but in fact the future conflict was just covered. . It can be seen in how Ukrainians and Russians voted for the Commonwealth of Independent States meanwhile 65 percent of Ukrainians voted against it. Nevertheless, Chmielewski (2007, p. 170) suggests that most Russians in Ukraine wanted to become citizens of Ukraine, and the only exception were the Russians residing in the Crimean peninsula. What is more, Russians enthusiasms decreased as soon as it turned out that they are not a privileged group anymore.

The Ukrainian authorities introduced Ukrainian language as the one and only official language. Russian which used to be dominating in many aspects of life and which was the language of elites, now was becoming on the fringes of the society. The number of schools where subjects were taught in Russian were limited, instead more bilingual schools were established. Russians were not willing to learn Ukrainian which is very similar to Russian. Therefore, many Russians felt alienated due to the language issues.

⁹¹ According to the census in 1959, there were 7.1 million Russians living in Ukraine, and over the years their number increased to 11.4 million.

Figure 37. Map illustrates the regions where Russian and Ukraine languages dominate



(Source: <https://eurasiangeopolitics.com/ukraine-maps/>).

Russia played an active role in this “conflict” since it was involved in the manipulation of linguistic issues (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). Ukrainian attempt to implement language policy was used by Russia claiming that rights of Russian speakers are threatened. According to Russia, the rights of Russian speakers could be protected by creating a separate republic independent from Ukraine. Soon after that separatist movement unofficially supported by Russia, began in Donbas region.

The situation of Russians in Ukraine after the collapse of USSR has changed but did it change drastically? Russian language was still dominating the public space especially in the eastern and southern part of Ukraine. Chmielewski (2007, p. 171)

claims that language issues were causing conflicts based on nationality. There were certain radical nationalistic movement as well leading to an anti-Russian attitude. In other words, the language issue was one of the reasons for the division of the Ukrainian society. That is why Ukrainians have begun to intensively seek de-Sovietization of their language in recent years. Some online posts are asking to write in Ukrainian instead of Russian names. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Ukraine has remained to be a tolerant country in terms of language and religion.

The Results of the Russian Aggression

One of the first and foremost results of the conflict with Russia has been the loss of Ukrainian territory; Ukraine has lost the Donbas region and Crimea.

Figure 38. Map illustrates territories taken over by Russia and separatists in 2014



(Source: <https://www.codastory.com/disinformation/armed-conflict/ukraine-war-town-conflict/>).

The events of 2014 and the ongoing crisis made Ukrainian politicians begin the decommunization process. The decommunization of Ukraine was the direct

consequence of the Revolution of Dignity and its main goal was to clear Ukrainian public space from elements of communist ideology. As a result, Lenin's monuments were removed from some public spaces and they were replaced with the Ukrainian figures fighting for the country during WWII (Molchanov, 2016, p. 523; Ukrayins'kyy Instytut Natsional'noyi Pam'yati 2016). Western Ukraine had been replacing the monuments of Lenin with Bandera's monuments since the 1990s.

In May 2015, President Petro Poroshenko signed four laws regulating the decommunization process in Ukraine. The process officially began in 2015, however for instance in Kyiv Lenin's statue had already been removed in 2013 (Business Ukraine, 2018). The law on the Condemnation of Communism and the National Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes in Ukraine and the Prohibition of Propaganda of Their Symbols was enacted to disapprove of communists and Nazis. In addition, Ukrainians recognized those who fought in the 10th century for their independence: namely OUN and UPA. This also caused to refer to old archives to see Soviet violations of human rights. The law also prohibited any action by the Communist Party and abolished its organization. Also, the names of over 50,000 streets and 800 cities were changed (Ukrayins'kyy Instytut Natsional'noyi Pam'yati, 2016).

Figure 39. *The map shows number of cities and towns which names were changed due to the decommunization process by June 2016*



Note. The number presented in the picture is not the final one. (Source: <http://euromaidanpress.com/2015/06/12/de-sovietization-in-ukraine-871-cities-towns-and-villages-freeing-their-names-from-the-soviet-legacy/>).

The Ukrainian authorities wanted to cut ties with the communist Soviet past and put emphasis on the unique Ukrainian traditions and culture distinguished from Russians. However, this caused another conflict with a neighboring country – Poland, since Ukrainians paid tribute to figures considered by Poles and Jews as bandits such as Stepan Bandera or Roman Shukhevych. The Kyiv City Council wanted to commemorate both of them in Kyiv by changing prospect's name: Moscow Avenue and Vatutin Avenue to Stepan Bandera's and Roman Shukhevych's., hence in 2016 Moscow Avenue became Stepan Bandera's Avenue and in 2017 Vatutin Avenue became Roman Shukhevych's Avenue. Nevertheless, such move was unacceptable by some people, therefore the issue ended up in the court. In 2019 Kyiv District Court has decided that the names should return to the previous ones; Moscow Avenue and

Vatutin Avenue. Mayor of Kyiv, Vitali Klitschko indicated that court's decision was influenced by pro-Russian activists (Szoszyn, 2019). The above-mentioned dispute over the changed names of Kyiv's prospects is a great example of the country's division and its struggle with the Soviet legacy, Russian influence and other internal issues.

There were accusations that de-communization is de facto "banderazation". However, the president of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance Volodymyr Viatrovyh has emphasized that out of 50 000 of changed names only 34 names refer to Stepan Bandera. At the same time, he underlined that 1320 statues of Lenin were removed and only 4 monuments of Bandera were erected (Ukrayins'ka Pravda, 2017). Meanwhile, the dispute over commemoration of OUN-UPA leaders by giving their names to city topography divided the Ukrainian nation. Many Ukrainians did not like the idea of commemorating those controversial figures, therefore in 2019 the Kyiv City District Administrative Court overturned the decision of the Kyiv City Council to change avenues names to the previous ones. Many comments in Ukraine could be heard that decision was influenced by pro-Russian environment which appeared after Zelensky came to power.

In the next step of the decommunization process, Ukraine discontinued referring to World War II as Great Patriotic War in 2015. This move aimed to sever the ties with the Soviet terminology and revisit the understanding of the Ukrainian involvement in the war. In the Soviet rhetoric, only the Soviet soldiers were portrayed as heroes, whereas the OUN-UPA members were either ignored or depicted worse evil.

On February 11, 2015, President Poroshenko signed the “Decree on the Tribute to the Feat of the Participants of the Revolution of Dignity and the Commemoration of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes” declaring February 20 as the Day of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes to celebrate and to defend the ideals of democracy, human rights and freedom. This was an attempt to make Ukraine closer to Europe as well ⁹²(Interfax Ukraine, 2015). By passing this decree, the Ukrainian history was revisited. In other words, the direct consequence of the ongoing Ukrainian – Russian conflict has been to rewrite the history of Ukraine. To that end, the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance under the leadership of Volodymyr Viatrovykh performed their duty to shape the contemporary Ukrainian historical memory (Olszański, 2017, p.5). In fact, Russia always have remained a threat to Ukrainian sovereignty. This is the reason why President Kuchma sought membership of NATO, while in 2002, Russia had already mentioned annexation of Tuzla Islands (Kuzio, 2012, pp. 406-407).

As a result, relations with Russia deteriorated and in 2017, plummeted, while Ukraine firmly rejected any Russian interference with domestic and foreign policies (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). Russia was less interested in such interference for a while, yet the West played a more active role in shaping Ukraine’s politics. However, the low speed of reforms diminished the influence of the West on Ukrainian politics, while Ukraine could still benefit from major agreements such as the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement or the financial aid agreement from the International Monetary Fund.

⁹² February 20 to be commemorated as the Heavenly Hundred Heroes Day– decree.

Despite all problems, it was separatism in the Donbas region and Russian annexation of Crimea that formed the greatest challenge for Ukrainian democracy until the full-scale war declared by Russia against Ukraine in February 2022. Already back in 2008, Motyl (p.19) summarized the situation in Ukraine and argued that if one day it was to be jeopardized, the cause of it would absolutely be Russia.

5.6 Russia's Full-scale War against Ukraine Waged on February 24, 2022

The incidents in 2014 led Ukraine to get closer to the European Union and distanced it from the Russian Federation. The fact that the presidential elections was won by Volodymyr Zelensky showed that Ukrainian society became a conscious civil society. At the same time, Ukrainian nation chose the path of democracy with closer ties with Europe. Despite its efforts, Russia's candidate could not win the elections. As a result, the Ukrainian nation also got more united than it was before the 2014. Vladimir Putin understood he was losing control over Ukraine, therefore during an extraordinary meeting on February 24, 2022, Putin announced a military operation against Ukraine in Donbas region. In his speech aired on TVs around 5 a.m.⁹³, he explained that the aim of the military operation was to demilitarize Ukraine and eliminate neo-Fascists to protect local Russians. Putin also mentioned the threat coming from NATO and requested Ukraine to remain neutral.

Putin referred to the Soviet rhetoric regarding fascists (in reference to Stepan Bandera and OUN-UPA). Ukrainian nationalists are often regarded as banderites, therefore Putin resorted to the Soviet rhetoric in an attempt to find an excuse to fight the Ukrainian government. The more independent and pro-Western oriented Ukraine became, the more furious Putin got since he was losing control. Therefore, in order to

⁹³ Kyiv time zone.

regain control in Ukraine and prevent it from becoming an EU member, he decided to declare war to destroy the Ukrainian government. As a matter of fact, Putin recognized two regions separating from Ukraine only three days before waging the war. The regions are Donetsk and Luhansk. After the declaration of the war, Russia started to bombshell Kyiv, Kharkiv, Sumy, Chernihiv and Odesa.

Figure 40. *A residential building hit by a missile in Kyiv on the February 26, 2022*



(Source: <https://war.ukraine.ua/photos/page/6/>).

The Russian army conducted air strikes on many Ukrainian cities. In the first phase of the war, the Russians attacked the northern front Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Donbas region and Kyiv. The airstrikes also targeted western cities, Ivano-Frankivsk and Lutsk. Russian troops entered Ukraine also from the territory of Belarus, hence quickly took over the power plant in Chernobyl. The Russian army was counting on

rapid siege of the capital city Kyiv. However, the Ukrainian army successfully repulsed them, leading Russians to try to get through to Kyiv for over a month by cities near Kyiv including Bucha, Irpin, Hostomel and Borodyanka. When the Russian army retreated, though, the scale of devastation revealed and in Bucha, massive graves were found. Almost 400 innocent civilians were brutally killed by the Russian army. The Ukrainian authorities are accusing the Russian army of genocide, while Russian authorities deny the allegations. There is now an international investigation ongoing to reveal whether there has been genocide or not. What is more, the city of Borodyanka turned out to be massively destroyed.

Figure 41. *Destroyed buildings in the city of Borodyanka near Kyiv on the 6th of April 2022 by the heavy Russian's army bombardments*



(Source: <https://war.ukraine.ua/photos/page/2/>).

The Russian army led and continues to lead bombardments of the residential areas. Almost the entire city of Mariupol is destroyed. Some residents are claimed to be trapped in the devastated city. The Russian army seems to prevent their evacuation, while people in Mariupol do not have access to water, heating or food. The Ukrainian government so as many international organizations call for help against the humanitarian crisis in this city.

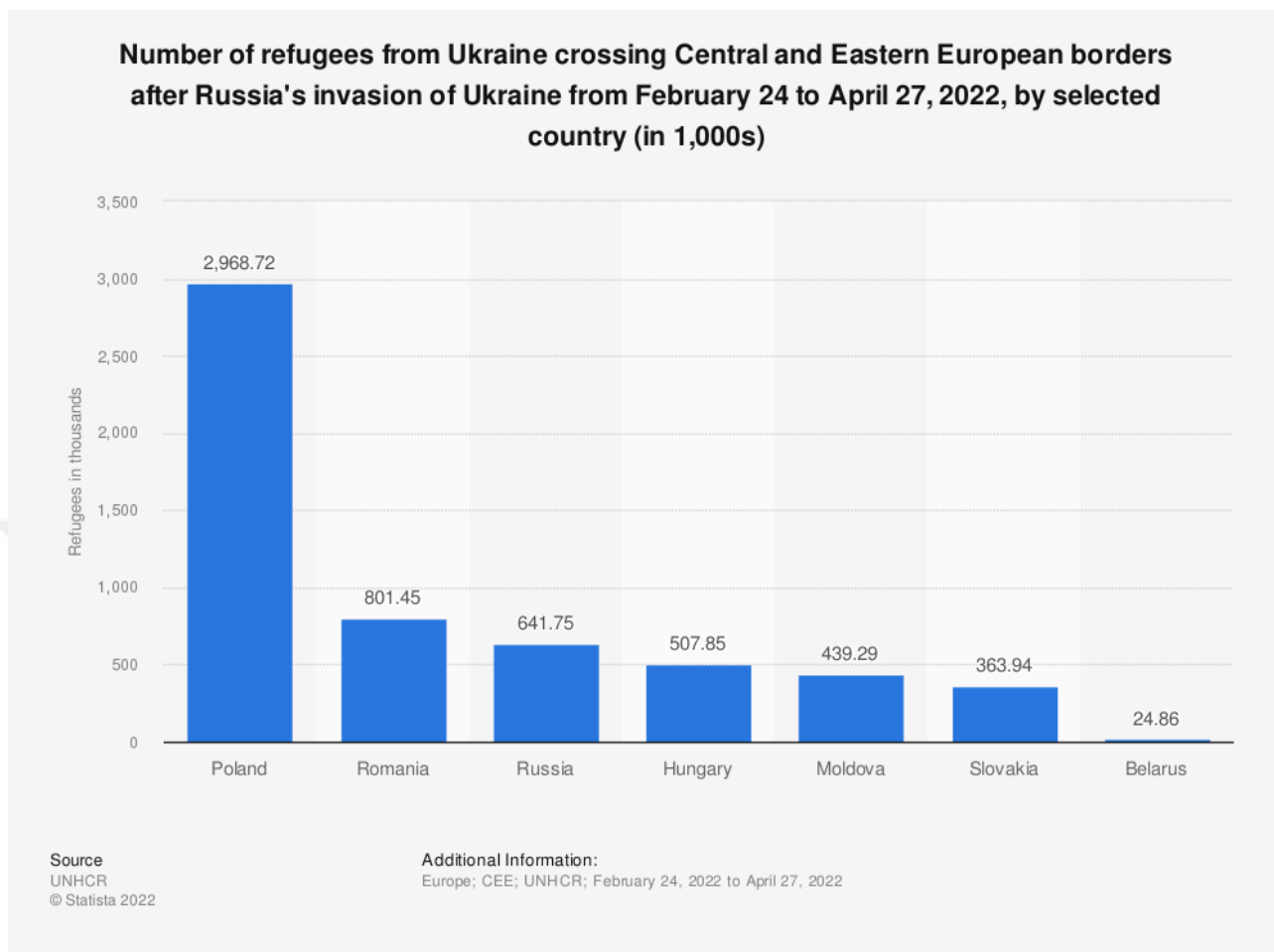
Figure 42. *Destroyed city of Mariupol facing humanitarian crisis*



(Source: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/kyiv-silent-on-airstrike-in-russia-3000-flee-besieged-mariupol/>).

According to UNHCR's report of 2022, 7,7 million people have been displaced within the borders of the country and since February 24, 2022, over 5 million Ukrainians have fled Ukraine, while 8 million remain in need humanitarian aid. Refugees have mostly fled to neighboring countries, 90% consisting of Ukrainian women and children (UNHCR, 2022).

Figure 43. *Number of refugees fleeing Ukraine from February 24 to April 27*

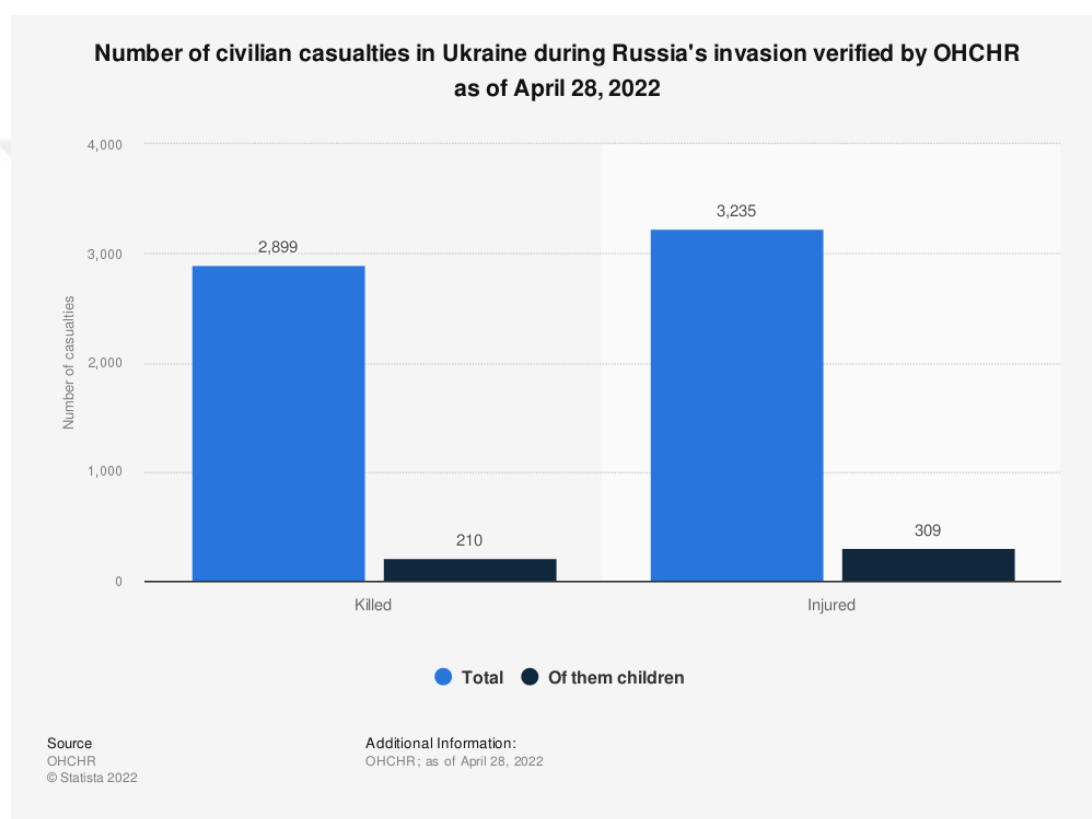


Note. UNHCR's data collected from 24 February, 2022 to 27 April, 2022. (Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1293403/cee-ukrainian-refugees-by-country/>).

Most Ukrainian refugees found shelter in Poland (over 2,5 million). In addition, almost a million sought refuge in Romania and other countries neighboring Ukraine. Over 600,000 fled to Russia, since many had relatives there or they simply did not have any other choice due to the lack of humanitarian corridors. There are also claims that Russia is taking people from occupied regions, especially from Donbas away to Russia against their will.

The war has devastated urban infrastructure in the country as well including irreparable damage to hospitals, schools, roads, and bridges. And, of course the great loss for the Ukrainians is the loss of lives, innocent people, women, children and elder.

Figure 44. *Number of civilian casualties in Ukraine since the beginning of the war on April 24, 2022*



Note. Data as of 28 April, 2022. (Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1293492/ukraine-war-casualties/>).

According to data gathered by the OHCHR, since the outbreak of the war nearly 3,000 people were killed including over 200 children. Additionally, over 3,000 were injured. In other words, on February 24, 2022 the lives of Ukrainians changed, have changed, many had to flee their homes, many lost their homes, many lost their

relatives, many lost their lives, the country's infrastructure is largely damaged but the Ukrainian nation still stands, stronger than ever ready to fight for their homeland.

5.7. Phenomenon of President Zelensky

On May 20, 2019, Ukraine chose a new president. It is important to add, that the president had no political background. Volodymyr Zelensky became the sixth president of independent Ukraine. Before starting his political career, Zelensky was an actor and a comedian in TV series and films. He owned a production company called Kvartal 95 Studio. TV series titled “*The Servant of the Nation*” (ukr. *Слуга народу*) gave him much of his popularity. He played the role of a teacher who unexpectedly becomes president of Ukraine. Zelensky was born in Kryvyi Rih, located in the center of Ukraine and is a native Russian speaker, but he learned Ukrainian during his presidency. He studied law in Kyiv (Ofitsiynoho Internet-Predstavnytstva Prezydenta Ukrayiny, n/d). Following the success of the above-mentioned TV series, he established the political party named the Servant of People – the successor of the former Party of Decisive Change (ukr. *Партія рішучих змін*). The first president of the party was Ivan Bakanov, Zelensky's friend. At first, Zelensky did not plan to run in the presidential election. Yet, he decided to run for President in 2019 along with candidates Petro Poroshenko and Yulia Tymoshenko. Zelensky and Petro Poroshenko competed in the second round, and Zelensky defeated Poroshenko by receiving 73% votes. As a surprise Ukrainian society has chosen a comedian over experienced politician and a former president.

Why Volodymyr Zelensky won the elections?

Ukrainian people are really tired of politicians who keep on promising but not fulfilling their promises, and things remain the same if not worse and all issues that Ukraine is troubled with remain unsolved. Ukrainians wanted to believe that their

course could change if someone from outside politics came to power – just like in the TV series.

Ukrainians had moments when their trust towards those in power was lost and it resulted in revolutions. It was very difficult to re-gain this trust. Although the government changed after the Euromaidan revolution, the internal issues remained unsolved. The country was still going through same difficulties including but not limited to corruption, economic crisis, worsening living conditions and war in Donbas. Since 2008 trust in the government; president, parliament, the cabinet and courts had tendency to decrease whereas the most trusted the church and the national army. People noticed that during Petro Poroshenko's presidency, nothing changed and their trust again decreased. Yet, they felt hopeful with Zelensky as people strongly believed that someone with no political background and corruption record would bring real change. People were hoping that finally someone would deal with one of the largest problem of Ukraine, as underlined by interviewees⁹⁴ – corruption as the main reason of distrust to the government.

The Orange and the Euromaidan revolutions resulted in the steps being taken to solve this issue; for instance in 2005 Viktor Yushchenko began his anticorruption reform and after the Euromaidan the National Anticorruption Bureau and the National Agency for Prevention of Corruption (NAPC) were established. Large, nationwide anticorruption campaign was launched with its anticorruption advertisements in media and on the streets throughout the country.

In 2016, the system of e-declaration system was commissioned to make sure officials declared their income and welfare. Despite those efforts to fight corruption, there has not yet been expected results (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018).

⁹⁴ Data collected in Lviv, Ukraine in 2018.

Therefore, Ukrainian people truly believed that someone not related with politics would finally make a change. Moreover, Zelensky in his presidential campaign proclaimed that he would unite the country and promised to fight corruption and bring the conflict in the east to an end. On top of those promises, it can be uttered that his TV series the Servant of the People definitely brought Zelensky success in the elections (Kowalczyk, 2022, p. 15).

In the first years of his presidency, Zelensky tried to re-establish negotiations with the Russian president Vladimir Putin, however it did not bring much of a breakthrough. In addition, he endeavored to end corruption, firstly targeting oligarchs by introducing an anti-oligarch law to reduce their influence on politics (Rudik, 2021) and stop their effect on the Ukrainian economy. Indeed, income from the gas transit from Russia to Europe had been confiscated by oligarchs instead of transferring it to the treasury. According to the surveys, two years after taking the president's office Zelensky was regarded as the second the best president so far in Ukraine's history (Minakov, 2021).

Presidency Overshadowed by War

Since Zelensky is an actor and comedian, Putin was counting on Zelensky's lack of political experience, he was convinced that he would quickly conquer Kyiv, eliminate "the fascist" Ukrainian government and replace it newly established Russian oriented one.

After the outbreak of the war in February 2022, the US authorities offered Zelensky's evacuation, while he responded that he needed weaponry, not a ride. Despite intense Russian shelling and Russians hunting him, he rejected leaving Kyiv. Instead, he remained in office and got actively involved in defending the country.

Figure 45. *President Volodymyr Zelensky in the chancellery during the war on March 2, 2022*



(Source: <https://war.ukraine.ua/photos/page/7/?photo=13968>).

By remaining in office in Kyiv during the intense Russian shelling, Zelensky proved to be courageous and a great military leader. He was announced a national hero (Mulvey, 2022). He decided to stay even though he knew that Russians were hunting him and he is the top aim in Ukraine. He addresses Ukrainian, through his social media accounts with motivation and support. He switched his suit to military uniform, often appeared tired and unshaved but still giving hope to the Ukrainian nation and raising morale of the people. What is important in given circumstances although he is a native Russian speaker, he uses only Ukrainian. His speeches addressed to the Western politicians sometimes were very emotional and blunt. Since

the outbreak of the war he spoke online in front of many parliaments and everywhere he received standing ovations.

Figure 46. *President Volodymyr Zelensky receiving standing ovations after his online speech in front of the Italian parliament on March 22, 2022*



(Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60855280>).

Zelensky even addressed president Putin directly: “(...) What do you want from us? Sit down with me at the negotiation table. I am a neighbor, I do not bite, I am a normal man. What are you afraid of? I am not a terrorist.(...)” (Radio Svoboda, 2022). Indeed, Zelensky managed to unite the Ukrainian nation, Ukrainians who did not support or were not satisfied with Zelensky’s presidency, claim now that he proved to be a great president⁹⁵. Zelensky underwent great transformation from a leader whose support was declining recently to an outstanding leader of a nation who despite difficult situation continues to remain in the office, works intensively and keeps on supporting raising morale of his army and the nation.

⁹⁵ Data from interviews in Warsaw, Poland after the outbreak of the war in February, 2022.

The war in Ukraine certainly is a challenging experience for president Zelensky, but at the same time, it has been an opportunity to prove his leadership skills. He has been able to motivate Ukrainians in the fight for sovereignty, freedom and independence against the Russian enemy. In these extraordinary circumstances, he proved to be the leader that Ukraine needs right now. Not only due to the circumstances but also thanks to his efforts Ukrainian government is fully functioning and what is more is hosting many foreign high-level delegations. Undoubtedly one of his great achievements is applying for EU membership.

What kind of leadership does the Ukrainian nation need?

Giving the example of president Yanukovich Ukrainian showed that certain type of leadership that the Ukrainian nation does not want and need, Harasymiw (2005, p. 221) argues that the nation needs a caring president who is trustworthy and pro-democratic. This is far from what the authoritarian Tsarist regime imagined in the past.

It seemed that after the Orange and the Euromaidan revolutions, Ukraine would finally achieve stability. Nevertheless, the country was continuously going through unresolved internal affairs, with corruption as the main problem. When Petro Poroshenko became the new president, the people of Ukraine were looking forward to seeing some positive changes in their homeland, however, the situation did not improve. Therefore, people were exhausted with politicians who did not fulfill their promises. They became eager to support Volodymyr Zelensky for not having a political background in 2019. Thus, Volodymyr Zelensky, an actor popular for his role of president in a TV series, won the second round of the elections and was elected the 6th president of Ukraine.

CHAPTER 6. UKRAINE'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

This chapter discusses Ukraine's relations with two neighbouring countries; Russia and Poland; the political, geopolitical, economic and military. The reason why the focus is limited only to those two countries is because Russia and Poland are the most important neighbours of Ukraine, which is situated between them and both of them have had huge historical impact on Ukraine. Its relations with both of them is significant in terms of geopolitics in Europe. Therefore, this chapter also discusses relations with the European Union. It was bipolar direction Russia-the European Union, east or west that divided the country and caused social unrests that turned into revolutions in 2004 and 2014.

6.1 Relations with the Republic of Poland after 1991

Ukraine and Poland certainly share long history although their relationship changed over decades. Although Poland and Ukraine have common history, they had been involved in tragic, violent and bloody incidents from time to time. First of all, Polish and Ukrainian nations are disunited due to national ambitions, territorial claims and unresolved tragedies left from WWII (Gibas-Krzak, p.7). "Difficult issues" in the Polish-Ukrainian relations include socio-political problems involving different perceptions and assessments of the historical past (Malikowski, 2010, p. 45). There were times when Ukraine was oppressed by Poland and there were times when both of the nations had to struggle for independence. On the other hand, they sometimes had to join forces in order to defeat the common enemy – Russia. However, even during this struggle Poland was always privileged. Due to the long lasting relations and long, common history memories of Poles are still vivid and full of stereotype

regarding Ukrainians that has its beginnings in Cossacks period. Thus, Poles often consider Ukrainians as traitors and rebels (Gibas - Krzak, 2005, p. 16).

As mentioned before, in the 14th century, Ukraine was annexed to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that started long and very close relations between the two nations. Thus, Polish Law was set in Ukraine (only in Halych Rus and Podolia), and Poles began to settle down in Ukraine. It is important to mention that during the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth period of rule, Ukrainians got closer only with Poles, not with Lithuanians. The reason for that was the cultural, ethnic and language differences between those two nations (Serczyk, 1979, p. 55).

The Polish – Ukrainian relations were strongly disturbed by World War I and World War II and the governments still disagree on socio-political ramifications of the wars inflicted on them. In fact, these have been the greatest challenges in achieving proper relations between the two countries (Malikowski, 2004, p. 248).

After the collapse of the USSR and the formation of an independent country, Ukraine more than ever needed allies. Poland was not only a neighboring country but also the country with which Ukraine had long relations. On the other hand, in the 20th century the relations between Ukraine and Poland were limited for the misunderstanding between the two nations pertaining to massacres of Poles in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia led by Stepan Bandera. The Operation Vistula that forced many Ukrainians to resettle in the West of Poland also constituted a topic of dispute.

It is worth noting that Poland gained its full independence from the USSR in 1989. This was a year earlier than Ukraine did⁹⁶. On August 24, 1991 Ukraine declared its independence⁹⁷ and Poland was the first country to acknowledge strategic partnership with this country. Despite some disagreements, Poland expressed sympathy towards Ukraine and played an important role as its advocate to become an EU member (Donaj, 2007, 63).

When Poland “re-gained its independence” in 1989, the policy of good relations with neighbors and USSR was established. Therefore, Poland was one of the first countries to build diplomatic relations with independent Ukraine. In order to establish good partnership both countries decided to forget about the bloody and tragic past and in 1992 signed treaty on good neighborliness, friendly relations and cooperation (Gibas- Krzak, 2006, p. 39). Although such steps were taken some issues remain unresolved until this day and what is more from time to time cause misunderstandings. For instance, celebrating by one of the side anniversaries that are considered to be “difficult” and troublesome part of the common history, which cause tensions between Poland and Ukraine; such as anniversary of Stepan Bandera’s death, the massacre of Poles in Volhynia or Operation Vistula (Malikowski, 2004, p. 250).

Poland developed bilateral relations with Ukraine as opposed to Europe as Ukraine was not deemed a useful partner to the West. The situation with Ukraine and the West has not changed much today. Ukraine is still not regarded as an important partner to the West. However, the situation slightly changed due to the Russian aggression in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea. Europe realized the strategic

⁹⁶ Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine in 16th of July 1990.

⁹⁷ Act of Independence/ Declaration of Independence of Ukraine.

importance of Ukraine after Russia declared war against Ukraine. Polish politicians often underline that Ukraine is Poland's important partner in foreign politics (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 57). Both countries also supported each other in their pursuit of admission to various international organizations. For instance, with the help of Poland, Ukraine became a member of the Central European Initiative.

In 1992, the Polish and Ukrainian governments signed the Polish – Ukrainian Friendship Treaty (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 43). In the following years, Ukraine and Poland established cooperation on many different areas including political, economic, military, interregional cooperation and law. Yet, they did not share a common path towards European Union accession since Ukraine was concentrating on its good relations with Russia, while Poland was trying to support Ukraine in the international field. Only a few years before Ukraine got independence, Poland had to go through transformation too. Therefore, Poland was willing to guide and support Ukraine throughout the whole transformation process (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, pp. 44, 46).

Military Cooperation

The Polish – Ukrainian relations are also based on military cooperation with the relevant agreement signed in 1993. Within the framework of this agreement, Polish-Ukrainian Peace Force Battalion (POLUKBRAT) was established. It is important to add that military cooperation between Ukraine and Poland was sustained even after Poland joined NATO in 1997 (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, pp. 70-72). The incidents in 2014 further increased their military cooperation. As a matter of fact, Russia's invasion of Ukraine made Poland feel the close threat of Russia in its back door. "The General Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the

Government of the Republic of Poland on Cooperation in Defense Sphere” was signed in 2016.

Priorly in 1997, president Aleksander Kwaśniewski and president Leonid Kuchma signed the reconciliation agreement. However, good relations were disturbed by the conflict due to the attempt to restore the Cemetery of Eaglets (Cemetery of the Defenders of Lviv), where Poles who fought with Ukrainians and Soviets in 1918-1930 are buried. Lychakiv Cemetery is where many prominent Polish figures are buried. Therefore, this cemetery plays an important role in the Polish history. It is also a significant memorial of the Polish heroes. The military part of the cemetery was many times destroyed and rebuilt. It is a source of dispute between Poles and Ukrainians since for Poles it has cultural meaning, and for Ukrainians it is painful since Poles who are buried there fought against Ukrainians during the Polish-Ukrainian war. At the end of communist era, Poles living in Lviv slowly began to rebuild it. Despite the ongoing tensions due to the cemetery, Polish and Ukrainian governments reached an agreement in 2005. The cemetery was officially rebuilt and both presidents Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Viktor Yushchenko attended the opening ceremony.

In 2004, Viktor Yanukovych was elected as president although the allegations fraud, leading to protests and the Orange Revolution, as underlined in the study. The Polish side who provided firm support to Ukrainians in this revolution. In addition, Poles supported Ukrainians in their democratic struggles by publications, discussions, demonstrations or even concerts (Urbanowicz, 2005, pp. 53, 57). At that period, Poland took the role of Ukrainian representative in the international area and acted as a mediator between the EU and Ukraine regarding the 2004 presidential elections.

On the other hand, 2018 did not start well in terms of Polish-Ukrainian relations. Tension emerged, when Polish authorities proposed an amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance ending up with protests on February 5 by the nationalist party Svoboda in Ukraine in front of Polish diplomatic missions. People gathered in front of the Polish Embassy in Kyiv holding both national Ukrainian flags, paying respects to OUN-UPA. They referred to Bandera in a positive manner, calling occupants of Western Ukraine in 1918-1939 to court trials (Andrusieczko, 2018).

Figure 47. *Anti-Polish demonstration in Lviv in 2018*



(Source: <https://www.rp.pl/kraj/art9902221-lwow-nie-dla-polskich-panow-polskie-msz-reaguje>).

The Ukrainian government did not agree with the expression used in the amendment “Ukrainian nationalists” and “crimes of Ukrainian nationalists”. The latter in particular was found to be offensive. However, the Ukrainian government’s response was moderate, while the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance

decided not to cooperate with the Polish counterpart for the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians (Kononczuk, 2018). The amendment to the Act caused turmoil in Polish-Ukrainian relations (Polish Institute of National Remembrance, 2018). The situation between Poland and Ukraine was really tense and caused anti-Polish attitudes in Ukraine. However, on January 19, 2019, the Polish Constitutional Tribunal said that the amendment was against the Constitution (Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich, 2019).

It can be uttered that the Polish-Ukrainian dispute regarding the amendment to the Act of the Institute of National Remembrance caused greater attachment of Ukrainians to Bandera and OUN-UPA. In fact, the anti-Polish demonstration may be assumed to have resulted from this greater commitment. In fact, the tension incremented Ukrainian nationalist feelings and revival of the OUN-UPA symbolism. Nevertheless, rejection of this amendment did not finish the dispute between Poland and Ukraine. Ukraine continues to glorify and commemorate people considered by Poland as criminals.

Despite occasional tensions, though, Poland and Ukraine are good partners supporting each other when necessary. Poland has always supported Ukraine in the international area as well as democratic moves and pro-European aspirations. Poland has frequently played a mediator role during some conflicts – both domestic and international – to protect Ukrainian sovereignty.

The Polish-Ukrainian Relations at the Time of War in Ukraine

When Putin waged war against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the response from the Polish government was quick. The Polish government immediately condemned the Russian aggression and started to support Ukraine.

On March 8, 2022, the Polish government responded to president Zelensky's call for military aid:

“The authorities of the Republic of Poland, after consultations with the President and the Government of the Republic of Poland, are ready to immediately transfer all their MIG-29 planes free of charge to the base in Ramstein and place them at the disposal of the Government of the United States of America. At the same time, Poland asked the United States of America to provide it with used aircraft with similar operational capabilities. Poland is ready to immediately agree on the terms of purchase of these machines. The Polish government also asks other NATO countries - owners of MIG-29 planes - to act in a similar way (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 2022).

The above cited statement appeared on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland's website. However, it later revealed that the issue mentioned in the statement was not consulted with NATO. The Polish authorities made such a decision in reference to the US statement on “giving green light” to send fighters to Ukraine. Unfortunately, the Polish statement only stirred NATO. NATO's final decision was negative since such move could be understood by Russia as interference in the war. This could escalate the conflict with possible NATO involvement (Editorial Board of WSJ, 2022). Despite the fact that the intention of the Polish government was good, they ended up giving false hopes to Ukraine.

In the following days, Polish prime minister Mateusz Morawiecki, deputy prime minister Jarosław Kaczyński, the Slovenian prime minister Janez Janša and Czech prime minister Petr Fiala formed the first official delegation and paid a visit to Kyiv March 15, 2022. The delegation met president Zelensky. Prime minister Denys

Shmyhal expressed their solidarity with the Ukrainian nation. They promised humanitarian aid and military support. Jarosław Kaczyński raised the need for a peacekeeping mission by NATO or any other organization. This, however, was not to be accepted by NATO since it would mean their involvement in the conflict.

On April 13, Polish President Andrzej Duda, Estonian President Alar Karis, Latvian President Egils Levits and Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda visited Kyiv. This delegation witnessed the horrors of the war, and expressed their support to Ukraine. They also uttered their hopes that Ukraine would become an EU member in the shortest time possible.

It must be noted that Poland as the neighboring country accepted the greatest number of the Ukrainian refugees. According to the official records of the Polish Border Guard (Straż Graniczna, 2022), 3,053 million people crossed the Polish - Ukrainian border since the beginning of the war while the number has been declining at recent times. According to UNHCR, Poland (2022) has accepted over 2 million refugees from Ukraine⁹⁸. The Polish government offers not only military aid to Ukraine: they also provide great humanitarian aid to Ukrainian refugees and Ukrainians remaining in the country by means of volunteers. In addition, the Polish government has taken action against Russia, regardless of the worsening Polish-Russian relations. Therefore, Poland has once again proven that it is a true friend of Ukraine.

Malikowski (2010, p. 194) purports that Polish-Ukrainian relations depend on the external factors: geopolitical situation and foreign policies of the Russian Federation and the USA. However, these relations are sometimes asymmetrical with both good and bad terms.

⁹⁸ Not all of them remained in Poland, many decided to go further to the West.

6.2 Relations with the Russian Federation after 1991

Relations of Ukraine with Russia are as same long and complex as Ukraine's relations with Poland. It is important to mention that Russians are the largest minority in Ukraine. In census taken in 2001 17,3 percent people declared to be Russian (Derzhavnyy Komitet Statystyky Ukrayiny, n/d). During the Soviet times the stereotype of Ukraine Russia's younger brother was widely spread.

Ukraine has always been under strong Russian influence, both countries have common roots, similarities in language and religion. The Russian approach towards history of both nations is represented in the idea that both Russians and Ukrainians are descendants of the holy Kyivan Rus (Diec, 2015, p. 114). Whereas, Ukrainians often refer to establishment of the Kyivan Rus as a part of their national constitutive myth by underlining Ukrainian nation is the only descendent of that state. That also underlines the division as Ukrainians are using in order to separate them from the Russians by forming "us" and "they".

In the 18th century, almost all territory of Ukraine was taken under the rule of Russian Tsardom and intensive Russification began. Ukrainian language was forbidden (Serczyk, 1979, p. 204; Hrycak, 2000, p. 87). According to Gibas Krzak (2005, p. 74), Russians always thought that Ukrainians were in fact Russians: they did not distinguish between Ukrainians or Belarusians either. Thus, each independence movement was considered as separatism (Beley, 2017, 10). It remained under the Russian Tsardom until 1917 when Ukraine declared Ukrainian War of Independence and in 192, became part of the USSR as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialistic Republic. Despite the fact that Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, it continued to bear the Russian influence.

Russia did not want to give up on Ukraine easily, therefore in 1991, the Commonwealth of Independent States was established⁹⁹. However, conflict of interest appeared and cooperation became difficult (Olszański, 2001, p. 34). Russia began its propaganda against Ukraine that resulted in weaker international relations of Ukraine. Thus, Ukraine was considered as an unstable country on the international level (Gibas- Krzak, 2005, p. 77). In 1992, Russia had territorial claims against Ukraine, especially with regard to Crimea. The Federation Council of the Russian Federation adopted a declaration on the illegal transfer of the Crimean Peninsula in 1954 since Crimea was crucial for Russia. Moreover, the majority of Crimean inhabitants were ethnic Russians. This claim could also result in the accession of Donetsk and Luhansk to Russia as they were strategic for the economy of the former USSR¹⁰⁰ (Diec, 2015, p. 114). The number of ethnic Russian in Crimea and Donbas was very high. In addition, the people residing in those two regions were against Ukrainian national movement and Ukrainization. The idea of regional autonomy had been present at those times as Russian was the state language in those regions (Nahaylo, 1999, p. 434). In order to prevent a separatist movement, however, Kyiv granted Crimea the status of autonomous republic of Ukraine in 1992 (Wydra, 2003, p.112). The conflict with Russia over the Crimean Peninsula seemed to be resolved, while it actually became frozen until 2014 when Putin illegally annexed Crimea to its lands.

It is worth noting, that Russia has always been regarding Ukraine as a country not able to function on its own. Since the time Ukraine gained independence, Russia has tried to have control over its government. In 1992, the dispute over the Black Sea Fleet took place, and in the same year, a number of other conflicts emerged with

⁹⁹ By Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

¹⁰⁰ Regions.

customs and currency as well as the conflict in Transnistria and attempts to destabilize Crimea.

Gaining independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union brought another challenge: establishing its own independent army and making a decision on what to do with the former Soviet military equipment. Forming an independent Ukrainian army was also a significant step in Ukraine's state-building process. The other issue that Ukraine and Russia had to deal with after the collapse of the USSR was the Soviet nuclear weapons in Ukraine (Jaworsky, 1996, pp. 223, 227). Ukraine was facing a dilemma whether to keep that nuclear weapon for themselves as a deterrent or to use it in negotiations with the West. Ukraine chose the second option, and the West would not agree for nuclear weapons to remain in Ukraine. The dispute could end with political and economic sanctions being imposed on Ukraine. Hence, the said nuclear weapons were transferred to Russia in return for security guarantees and benefits to Ukraine from both Russia and the West. The USA also granted Ukraine 450 million US \$ of financial aid. As many agree, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia always wanted to keep control over the former USSR countries though (Jaworsky, 1996, p. 223). In 1993, president Yeltsin requested the UN and OSCE to grant authorization to become an expert on solving issues regarding the former Soviet countries. Yet, both organizations rejected the request. Ukraine deemed this as Russia's return to neo-imperial policy and acting as the Gendarme of Europe (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 80).

In 1994, Leonid Kuchma was elected President of Ukraine and worked for close economic relations with Russia. Yet, after Ukraine became an independent country, Russia did not want to recognize Ukrainian borders until 1997 when the Ukrainian - Russian Friendship Treaty was signed. However, it took place under the

international pressure and Russia had to recognize Ukrainian state. At that time, NATO's expansion was also becoming a fact (Olszański, 2001, pp. 33, 37). Existing borders were not to be violated according to international community's pressure (Clem, 2014, p. 229). Moreover, the treaty also solved the issues of territorial claims. Russia was allowed to lease¹⁰¹ the military harbor in Sevastopol for twenty years for its Black Fleet. With the treaty, economic cooperation was established and the Ukrainian territorial sovereignty was guaranteed as well. In 2010, Yanukovich prolonged the lease time of the military base in Sevastopol for another 30 years. After years of balanced relations with Russia on those grounds, Ukraine again switched its attention from the West towards Russia during Yanukovich's presidency.

In this context, it can be argued that Ukraine tried to balance its politics between the West and Russia. However, whenever Ukraine tried to cut its ties with Russia, it faced challenges. For instance, Russia strongly opposed Ukrainian's entry into the Council of Europe in 1995 (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p.82). After the collapse of the USSR, Russia was separated from the rest of Europe and due to the devastated consequences, Russians always did their best not to lose Ukraine in their zone of influence. As a matter of fact, Putin always aspired to maintain control over Ukraine, while Ukraine made few attempts to cut its ties with Russia. However, each attempt by Ukraine towards the West was strongly opposed by the Russian government. The importance of Ukraine was visible in president Yeltsin's reference to Ukraine as "the most important priority". They thus tried to prevent it from becoming a NATO member. One can claim that the greatest concern of Russia regarding Ukraine was losing power against the US (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 84). Immediately after the

¹⁰¹ Lease for free, since Ukraine had debt to Russia and it promised Ukraine warships. However, they received only 18,3% of the Black Fleet, otherwise Yeltsin threatened Ukraine with cutting gas off (Gibas-Krzak, 2005, p. 112).

collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine had to depend on Russia in economy, since 90% of the gas and 90% of the oil Ukraine was provided by the Russian Federation. Russia often used the dependence of Ukraine on Russian gas in negotiations and blackmailing. In fact, Russia resorted to use its natural gas pipelines as an instrument to impose political pressure on Ukraine (Günay, 2015, p.99; Olszański, 2001, p. 36), reducing the chances of Ukraine to diminish Russian influence in their politics and internal affairs. After Putin came to power, the isolated policy of Europe in the 2000's enabled Russia to strengthen its position in both Ukraine and the world.

In this context, unresolved internal problems caused Ukraine to experience a gradual decline of power especially with the effect of some pro-Russian governments. At times of such governments, Ukraine believed that it was possible to function without Europe, but it was not possible to survive without Russia (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 94). Moreover, Russia remained the largest trade partner of Ukraine until 2012¹⁰² (Molchanov, 2016, p. 526).

Nevertheless, Putin underestimated the Ukrainian nation. The course of history began to change in 2004 after the Orange Revolution and then in 2014 after the Maidan Revolution. Russia started to irreversibly lose control over Ukraine. Therefore, seeing Ukraine leaving Russian's geopolitical zone, Putin decided to act quickly and took over the Donbas region and annexed Crimea in 2014. Since then, Russia and Ukraine have been confronting in the military conflict in the Donbas region. According to Marten (2015, p. 189), the reason for Vladimir Putin's actions may be explained in Russian president fear of NATO's expansion by Ukraine getting closer with the West. This would cause losing significant power possibly ending up

¹⁰² The situation changed in 2013 when the EU became the most important trade partner of Ukraine.

with West interfering in Russian politics. Putin feared ending up like president Yanukovich, thus he waged an unjustified war against Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

In fact, due to latest policy towards Ukraine, Vladimir Putin managed to unite divided Ukrainian nation and to spread nationalistic feelings in Ukraine, although overshadowed by Russia for centuries. Russia aspires to rule over the territories it once had. As it can be observed, Russia has never given up on re-gaining Ukraine. There are more and more comments on Russia's longing for its imperial past, and Ukraine is of particular importance to them as implied by Russian reference to Ukraine as Little Russia (*ukr. Малороссия*). In this regard, Russians believe that Ukraine and Russia do not differ from each other as they share the common roots of Kyivan Rus (Naydan, 2005, p. 24).

It is notable that Russia has treated Ukraine as subordinate. (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 111). Putin confirmed this viewpoint in a speech aired on TV before he declared war against Ukraine. His statements were offensive against Ukraine, claiming that they never had tradition of a genuine statehood. He uttered that modern Ukraine was created by Communist Russia. Vladimir Putin accused NATO and its enlargement plans and claimed this was a substantial threat to the Russian Federation. Meanwhile, NATO did not intend to accept Ukraine into the alliance. In fact, starting from the war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea, Putin has lost influence in Ukraine and has decided to restore it by declaring war. Due to consistent pressures, one can argue that it has been Russia that forced Ukraine to closer relations with NATO and the EU (Marten, 2015, p. 190).

6.3 Relations with the European Union

After gaining the independence in 1991 Ukraine could not decide which way should choose; whether to look towards the West and the European Union or towards the East and Russia. On the one hand Ukraine did not want to have close relations with Russia; its long term oppressor and at the same time close neighbor, a big brother but on the other hand did not had much choice. On the one hand, Ukraine wanted to move forward, not to look back at the past and leave all system behind, just transfer and be like other democratic countries in the West, but on the other hand Ukraine did not want the big change in the system.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Ukraine many times declared willingness to join the EU and NATO, however Ukraine could not really decide which path it should follow. Olszański (2001, p. 33) indicates that Russia was the most important partner in the East of Europe. Ukraine started political relations with the European Union in 1994 after the signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The EU-Ukraine relationship was based on the European Neighborhood Policy and later on the Eastern Partnership Programme that did not contain any promise of future membership (Pridham, 2014, p. 54). In 1995, Ukraine joined the Council of Europe (Gibas - Krzak, 2006, p. 57).

The European Union was also reluctant towards Ukraine's accession. On the one hand Ukraine was a barrier between Russia and the European Union, and on the other hand, the EU did not want Ukraine to turn to Russia and at the same time did not want Ukraine in the EU, not yet at least. Nevertheless, Ukraine has very important, strategic position in terms of geopolitical situation that is why Ukraine is an important partner for the European Union. One of the reasons why Ukraine was pushed away from the EU and the West was an oligarchic and bureaucratic system

and their network of connections and mutual relations that formed in Ukraine, in other words did not manage to successfully overcome key regime transition issues resulting from its post-Communist legacy on which its political conditionality policy is based on (Donaj, 2007, p. 52; Pridham, 2014, p. 55).

So far, there are only three post-Soviet countries that have successfully completed accession to European Union: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Ukrainian relations with the European Union, on the other hand, constitute the reason for the crisis in Ukraine. As a matter of fact, President Yanukovych did not sign the Association Agreement back in time. The Ukrainian nation also did not have the desire to join the EU. People living in the western part of Ukraine expressed willingness to access the EU, whereas the east and south of Ukraine were against this idea.

In 1999, when Kuchma was re-elected, he stated that Ukraine should turn towards integration with the EU. Poland and Ukraine held conference meetings on integration with the EU. Thanks to this conference, Ukraine started to gradually ponder being associated with the EU. However, there has been social unrest throughout the country after 2001, hence president realized that the country needed economic, social and political reforms (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, pp. 59- 61). The political crises in 2000 and 2001 affected the relations of Ukraine with the European Union, unfortunately with worsening pattern (Olszański, 2001, p. 41). Nevertheless, in 2002, president Kuchma expressed the desire of Ukraine to integrate with the European Union.

After the Orange Revolution, the relations with the European Union became better with the EU's financial support. However, during this period, Ukraine was

dealing with lots of internal problems, including violations of fundamental human rights and not following democratic norms. Hence, it was not possible to ensure full cooperation with the European Union or NATO, which favored Russia.

In 2009, the cooperation between the EU and Ukraine was changed into the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda thanks to the initiative of the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council. This Association Agenda did not include *de facto* membership, though and Kuzio (2012, p. 399) argues that all former Ukrainian presidents tried to get an official approval from the EU on possible membership. However, the EU would have to offer membership to other Eastern Partnership countries before Ukraine and thus was reluctant of such a huge enlargement. It can be argued that the EU approach towards Europe remained as explained in Caşın's words: "the door is not open but neither closed" (Caşın, 2015a, p. 83).

In 2010, Viktor Yanukovych won the presidential elections and democratic regression began in Ukraine. And in April 2010, Yanukovych signed the "Kharkiv Accord", a treaty enabling Russia to extend the lease agreement for the Crimean military base in Sevastopol until 2047. The agreement started in 1997. The imprisonment of Yulia Timoshenko in 2011 made the relations with the European Union deteriorated (Günay, 2015, p. 99). It can be observed that the EU only have hope to Ukraine while it was not willing to welcome it as a member. Due to feeling pushed aside, Ukraine got closer with Russia (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, 63). Of course, the issue why Ukraine sustained close relations with the Russian Federation is more complex to understand in a glimpse.

As it was indicated previously, Ukraine has been dealing with a number of domestic issues, therefore the country has fallen short of fulfilling many requirements

of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. For instance, the electoral system is in need of a reform that does not take place (Minakov & Rojansky, 2018). Nevertheless, Ukraine in recent years has made significant developments in terms of democracy, civil society and has undoubtedly got closer to the Western world. It is obvious that after the conflict in Donbas and Russia's annexation of Crimea, Ukraine started to seek closer relations with the European Union. Molchanov (2016, p. 533) emphasizes that Ukraine received very little help from the EU as opposed to its efforts for democratization. On other words, the help of the EU was not enough for Ukraine to solve its issues with declining economy. Considering the strategic position of Ukraine, and Russia's violation of international law, the European Union could have done more to secure Ukraine's future. This state drastically changed after Russia declared war against Ukraine, though, affecting the EU-Ukraine relations.

On February 28, 2022, President Zelensky signed the application for EU membership. Meanwhile, the EU realized that there was a need for urgent response due to the security risks. Therefore, Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission's President, handed over a questionnaire for European Union membership during her official delegation visit to Kyiv on April 8, 2022, and promised an exemption for the regular procedures taking few years. Ursula von der Leyen turned to President Zelensky and said:

(...) Ukraine belongs in the European family. We have heard your request, loud and clear. And today, we are here to give you a first, positive answer. In this envelope, dear Volodymyr, there is an important step towards EU membership. This questionnaire is the basis for our discussion in the coming months. This is where your path towards the European Union begins (...)
(European Commission, 2022).

Figure 48. *Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission President handing over EU membership questionnaire during her visit to Kyiv on April 8, 2022*



(Source: <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/u-kiyevi-rozpochalasya-zustrich-volodimira-zelenskogo-z-ursu-74185>).

President Zelensky completed the first part of the questionnaire for obtaining EU candidate country status and submitted it to Head of the European Union Delegation to Ukraine, Matti Maasilta on April 18, 2022. The remaining part is to be submitted. Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, Olha Stefanishyna stated that they had analyzed the part submitted. No additional questions were submitted to Ukraine. The work towards EU membership has been ongoing (Derzhavni Sayt Ukrayiny, 2022). It can be deduced that Ukraine is close to finally become a member of the European Union. Indeed, the ongoing crisis has speeded up the decisions of EU politicians, while Ukraine has already made great progress in fulfilling the criteria required to become an EU member. It has already proven that it is a European nation. The transition and struggle that Ukraine has

undergone in recent years have paved the way for Ukraine's membership, in addition to the pressing security threats against the EU. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that Ukraine has made efforts to change its Ukrainian national identity to abide by European values.



CHAPTER 7. GEOPOLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF UKRAINE

Ukraine located between Russia and Poland, is one of the biggest countries in Europe with its 603.000 square kilometer land and population reaching nearly 45 million. Being situated between the borders of NATO, the European Union and the Russian Federation forms a “buffer zone” therefore gives Ukraine strategic position and importance. Therefore, the turmoil in Ukraine then Russian invasion in Donbas and later annexation of Crimea was the first signal for Europe regarding its security since it is first such disturbance in the geopolitics since the WWII and undoubtedly reminded the West the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of Ukraine (Clem, 2014, p. 219; Pridham, 2014, p. 54). At that time it was acknowledged by the European Parliament that Russia’s aggression towards Ukraine and expansion policy are a threat to the independence and unity of Ukraine, so as to the whole European Union (Averre, 2016, p. 699). During the NATO’s Wales Summit in 2014 it was underlined that Ukraine is an important, long-standing partner of the Alliance and it will continue to support launched reforms program (Caşın, 2015b, p. 111).

Huntington (1996) in his book *“The Clash of Civilizations”*, claims that Ukraine lies directly in the middle of two civilizations: the Western Christian world and the Orthodox world. As explained previously in the study, Hrushevsky also suggests that Western Ukraine has been pro-European for a long time (Armstrong, 1990, p. 10). Nowadays, this belief is being also widely accepted and expressed throughout Ukraine by desire to join the European Union. Ukrainians emphasize their European roots now, and consider themselves to be a European nation. On the other hand, this is unacceptable for Russia, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has never given up on hopes to control Ukraine. They have always tried to interfere in

Ukraine's internal affairs and foreign policy, and to keep Ukraine away from the European Union and NATO. Especially the latter is recognized by Russia as a threat.

The first serious sign of a Russian threat appeared already back in 2008 when Russia invaded Georgia. Just four months before the Russian invasion of Georgia the NATO Bucharest Summit took place. The Russian president Vladimir Putin participated the summit, and strongly opposed the potential enlargement of NATO, especially regarding the future membership of Ukraine and Georgia, the deployment of an American anti-missile shield in Europe and the increase of the US military presence in Europe. As a result, the future membership of Ukraine was questioned (Clinton, 2014, pp. 228-230). In fact, Putin has achieved his goal, and four months later Russian troops invaded Georgia. The West proved to be unable to protect and support both Georgia and Ukraine.

Ukraine has geopolitical importance to Poland as well as to the rest of Europe. It "blocks" Russia from the rest of Europe. Therefore, Ukraine is also crucial in terms of shaping European security system (Gibas-Krzak, 2006, p. 54). In addition, Ukraine plays an important and strategic role in the world food supply, is known for serving as "breadbasket of Europe" (Katchanovski, et. al. 2013, p. 17). Now, due to the Russian invasion, the world food supply is jeopardized. The war has direct impact on the prices of food that may end up in food crisis. Therefore, the reaction of the West after the Russian invasion in Donbas and Crimean annexation can be regarded as considerably weak and insufficient, NATO and the EU have failed in comprehending Russia's security interests (Averre, 2016, p. 700). The problem is that what Ukraine considers as a great opportunity, Russia considers as a threat to their national security. Therefore, the EU and NATO enlargement policies causes tensions in the region and Russia's response to it (Averre, 2016, p. 705). Meanwhile the EU and NATO

standpoint is that they are trying to sustain peace and stability in Europe.

Nevertheless, neither NATO nor the EU wanted to deal with Russia and as a result in 2008 NATO denied Ukraine access to membership plans¹⁰³ (Caşın, 2015a, p. 79).

States are obliged to follow international rules and law, that is to respect internationally recognized borders, sovereignty of other states including their territorial integrity and political independence (Clem, 2014, p.222). According to this rule, Russia failed in respecting international law and the West failed in preventing Russia from doing so. Being aware of Ukraine's geostrategic and geopolitical importance, the West should have paid more attention to Russia's imperial policies after the Russian invasion in 2014 and they should have tried to secure Ukraine. The reaction of the West after the events of 2014 were poor and this enabled Putin to continue his neo-imperial expansion policies. As a matter of fact, Russia is trying to restore its lost greatness by impositions on former Soviet countries (Payne and Foster, 2017, pp. 2,14).

7.1 Facing the War in 2022

European politicians harmoniously agree that the security of Ukraine will guarantee the security of Europe and that European security is jeopardized since Russia declared war to Ukraine. The Russian Federation broke international law by violating territorial integrity of Ukraine already back in 2014. This was the greatest challenge against Europe's security (Caşın, 2015b, p. 111). However, now the situation is worse and the scale of conflict is much greater. This has direct impact on the European stability and security. In fact, it is under the threat of a spread of a conflict to neighboring countries and possible outbreak of World War II. It must be

¹⁰³ And Georgia, which is important in the context of Russia's foreign policy towards the former USSR republics.

noted that neighboring countries especially Baltic states that were former Soviet republics are seriously concerned about Russia's aggression on Ukraine. They fear that Russia could attack them next since Baltic states are inhabited by Russians. In other words, Baltic states have large Russian minority groups, left from after the collapse of the Soviet Union. For Russia, protection of Russian minorities is a beneficial excuse in launching attacks. Nevertheless, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are NATO members and they would stop Russia from attacking the Baltic states by the virtue of the principle that 'an attack to a NATO member is one that is against all NATO members'¹⁰⁴(NATO, 2022). Hence, Western politicians now face the greatest challenge of the modern world, while pulling efforts to help Ukraine and to stop the spread of the military conflict outside the border of Ukraine. Western countries provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine, as well as military equipment. Since the beginning of the war, Kyiv was visited by many western high ranked officials including European Commission's President Ursula von der Leyen, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell¹⁰⁵, President of European Council, Charles Michel and prime ministers of the United Kingdom, Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and presidents of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. And most recently, on April 24, 2022 a high level US delegation visited Kyiv. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III discussed the current issues in this visit (Kramer & Kitroeff, 2022). The aim of the official visits is to first of all show solidarity with the Ukrainian nation in their fight for freedom and secondly to seek solution as to how to provide financial, military and humanitarian aid and how to stop the conflict overall.

¹⁰⁴ Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

¹⁰⁵ Visited Kyiv on April 8, 2022.

The entire world is concerned with the development of the conflict. The United Nations is an organization aimed at sustaining international peace and security, hence is actively involved in immediate peaceful resolution of the conflict. Consisting of 193 members, the UN has two observes and out of 193 members, 141 condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and supported Ukraine in its fight for sovereignty, freedom and independence. Some countries decided to remain neutral in this matter for instance, Azerbaijan and India. In total 35 countries abstained and there are 5 countries that expressed their support to Russia: Russia, Belarus, Syria, North Korea and Eritrea.

Figure 49. Map shows the countries which condemned Russian aggression against Ukraine after March 3, 2022



Note. Data as of 3 March, 2022. (Source:

<https://www.statista.com/chart/26946/stance-on-ukraine-invasion/>).

The United Nation's resolutions demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Russian army from the territory of Ukraine that includes Donbas and Crimea, which has been occupied by Russia since 2014 (United Nations, 2022). The US sent a powerful message to Vladimir Putin, however it did not stop him from continuing military attacks on Ukraine. On the other hand, the number of sanctions imposed by the West on the Russian Federation continued. Some countries who condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine did not want to take part in imposing sanctions on Russia. For instance, Turkey did not close its air zone for Russian planes and did not join the Western world in imposing sanctions against Russia.

As a result of the sanctions, however, Russia began to accuse the West of being anti-Russian and according to Russian authorities, NATO contributes to the aggravation of the conflict. Therefore, in order to counteract sanctions imposed on Russia, the Russian government decided to use its natural gas as a weapon in causing global disorder in an attempt to influence Western politicians to change their hostile policies against the Russian Federation.

The whole Western world is concerned with how the situation in Ukraine is developing and how to peacefully end the conflict without escalation that could turn into World War III. Moreover, the world's attention is focused on the China's response to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. China is the closest ally to Russia and they have never condemned the Russian aggression on Ukraine. China has avoided to call the aggression as war, as well. Thus, the West is worried that China could join Russia or support them militarily against Ukraine. On the other hand, China is calling both sides of the conflict to end the conflict and resort to peaceful resolution.

So far, there have been some attempts to end the war with peace negotiations in Belarus¹⁰⁶ and two times in Turkey¹⁰⁷, however the talks did not turn out to be as effective as the Ukrainian side wished. There has been no ceasefire and no withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine. Meanwhile has Russia demanded neutral status of Ukraine. In other words, Russia wants Ukraine to withdraw its pursuit to access NATO and the EU, and to accept Crimea as a territory of the Russian Federation as well as to recognize the republics of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent territories. The Ukrainian side considers Crimea and Donbas as integral Ukrainian territories; hence Russia's demands seem to be unacceptable. Western leaders strive to hold negotiations and influence president Putin, yet his standpoint does not change despite failure to conquest Kyiv and the great losses of the Russian army.

The war has been ongoing for over 60 days and has entered a new phase now, where Ukrainian people decided to return to the capital city and the Russian army is focused on the siege of Mariupol and gaining control in the Donbas region. Just before the outbreak of the war, the US warned of a possible Russian aggression on Ukraine. Based on the warning, numerous foreign representations had already decided to evacuate their diplomatic missions and move their offices out of Kyiv to Lviv or to Poland. However, after the visit to Kyiv by Ursula von der Leyen and Joseph Borrell on April 8, 2022, it was decided that EU would resume its diplomatic mission in Kyiv but it would be moved to Rzeszów, Poland. Borrell explained that this decision was made as the Ukrainian government proved to be handling the current extreme conditions perfectly enabling the return of the EU delegation to the capital city:

¹⁰⁶ The peace negotiations in Belarus took place on the 28th of February 2022, on the 3rd March 2022 and on the 7th of March 2022.

¹⁰⁷ The peace negotiations in Turkey took place on the 10th March 2022 and on the 29th of March 2022.

“During our stay in Kyiv we have witnessed first-hand the ability of the Ukrainian administration to ensure effective and full functioning of state and government structures, despite very difficult circumstances. Return of our Delegation to Kyiv will ensure even better interactions with the Government and more support for Ukrainian people” (European Union External Action, 2022b).

In the mid-April 2022, the other diplomatic missions who fled the capital city began to return to Kyiv and re-open their embassies. Upon this development, at least 17 countries decided to resume their diplomatic missions in Kyiv, and these are mostly European Union or NATO member countries that are actively engaged in supporting Ukraine in its fight against the Russian invader. Countries seem to ally to make sure that Russia fails in its goal to destroy the Ukrainian government. However, so far the US and the United Kingdom have refrained from sending their diplomatic missions back to Kyiv yet (Gramer, 2022). It seems that Russia’s aggression has lately focused only on the eastern part of Ukraine, mainly the Donbas region. During the visit of the UN Secretary General Antoni Guterres to Kyiv, though, Russia carried out an air strike on the capital city (Aljazeera, 2022). It must be noted that just one day earlier, Guterres met Vladimir Putin in Moscow (Henley, 2022).

The response from the western world was quite quick, though not always unanimous or decisive, sometimes required reconsideration and consultation. Especially the United States and the United Kingdom reaction was very quick and firm, on the other hand Germany is being accused of very weak response and minimal help.

President Zelensky expressed his gratitude for the help and solidarity of the Western world, while repeating the need to close the air space over Ukraine. Of course, decisions to aid Ukraine are rather challenging to take, however closing the air space over Ukraine is an extremely delicate matter. As can be remembered from the previous arguments, when the US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken gave “a green light” to countries wishing to send fighter jets to Ukraine, Poland declared its readiness to offer Ukraine their own fighter jets without consultation with NATO. Poland’s offer was to use fighters from the NATO base in Rammstein, which surprised other NATO members and almost immediately was rejected by the US president Joe Biden so as my many other NATO members. This was taken too risky and could lead to the escalation of the conflict, dragging NATO into hot war. Now, the NATO and the Western countries’ aid is limited to political support and solidarity, financial, humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine.

The war in Ukraine is the greatest challenge to the European security since the outbreak of the Second World War. The NATO is seeking way how to peacefully stop the conflict without escalating it and turning it into global war. The response of the NATO and the EU member states shows that Ukraine is not left alone in their struggle, what is more it also sends message to president Putin that the West is in fact united¹⁰⁸ (despite the lack of consensus on gas import from Russia) and ready to counteract. The threat coming from Russia on using nuclear weapon in case of foreign involvement in the war is causing the West to act more carefully in order not to

¹⁰⁸ The only concern is the attitude of the Hungarian government, which for instance did not agree to supply arms through its territory and that fact that Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán remains in close relations with the Russian president Vladimir Putin.

provoke president Putin and to sustain global peace and security. The current conflict in Ukraine once more realized the geopolitical importance of Ukraine.



CONCLUSION

Nationalism is a broad concept with diverse ramifications. Moreover, it is not only broad but also a complex concept in the case of Ukrainian nationalism. Therefore, not all thread of Ukrainian nationalism were covered in this dissertation. Some of them were briefly mentioned here whereas some remained (sometimes) intentionally neglected. This study provides analysis of Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian identity in the Western Ukraine. The preliminary assumption of the study was to limit the focus of the study only to the Western part of Ukraine, however during the research and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, I decided to explain nationalism first of all through history of Ukraine, then revival of nationalism in the West of Ukraine – the piedmont of the Ukrainian nationalism, struggle for independence, presenting the controversial figure of Stepan Bandera, who both divided and united the Ukrainian nation and placing it in the context of the current events taking place in Ukraine.

Firstly, in order to understand the notion of Ukrainian nationalism, the concept of nationalism, ethnicity, identity and memory were examined within the framework of an anthropological theory.

Nationalism as a concept appeared after the French Revolution and now is the leading ideology continuously since the 20th century that produces political movement and on the other hand may lead to conflicts. Nationalism, identity and ethnicity share common features and are based on mutual relations between them, in certain circumstances they are more or less interrelated with each other, on the other they may also exclude each other. In other words, the relationship between them depends on the cultural, social or political context.

Cultural nationalism is a concept that is based on the assumption of the development of a unique culture featuring distinctive and shared common language, tradition, history and heritage. The assumption of such type of nationalism may be found in modern Ukrainian nationalism.

In order to form nationalism of a certain nation, firstly national consciousness appears, based on awareness of the distinctiveness of a particular group that may form a nation. Ukrainian national consciousness has its roots in 19th-century Western Ukraine where it could emerge due to the considerably mild and tolerant rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Meanwhile, the other parts of Ukraine remained under the rule of the Russian Empire where the conditions were not favorable for Ukrainian nationalism to emerge. The Ukrainian nationalism in Western Ukraine of that time was based on awareness of being different from the Poles and the Russians, whereas such awareness and idea of distinctiveness did not take place under the Russian Empire and under the Soviet Union where the assumption of one identity – Russian predominated. Therefore, this historical experience of belonging to two different empires caused a division of the country that is visible until today. That is also why the level of nationalism and sense of unity varied throughout the country even after gaining the independence in 1991.

In the following part of this chapter, the notion of memory was discussed, providing an analysis of collective memory in understanding Ukrainian nationalism in reference to OUN-UPA which was kept alive in the memory of people in Western Ukraine.

Secondly, the history of Ukraine starting from the establishment of Kyivan Rus in the 9th century until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was briefly

presented in order to supplement the study with historical background, since history is what reflects the present. In Ukraine's case, history allows us to comprehend not only the essential characteristics of Ukrainian nationalism and its key symbols, but also the reasons behind the ongoing crisis. In this chapter, the revival of Ukrainian nationalism in Galicia – considered as the cradle of Ukrainian nationalism – was discussed.

History of Ukraine dates back to the 9th century, and throughout its history, Ukraine remained stateless for many years, while being oppressed or divided by its neighbors. Ukrainians had to constantly fight for their freedom and independence. Despite being subordinated, Ukrainian nationalism has managed to survive up to the present day. Moreover, this chapter analyzed the construction of Ukrainian national symbols, formation of national consciousness and history-writing after gaining independence in order to better understand the phenomenon of Ukrainian nationalism.

The third chapter featured an analysis of the influence of religion in shaping national consciousness based on the example of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Galicia. Religion turns out to be a significant factor contributing to Ukrainian national awareness. In the case of the Ukrainian national awakening, the clergy played an important role and were the largest group involved in the revival of Ukrainian nationalism. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was abolished by the Soviet authorities, however survived through underground activities until it was officially restored in 1989. The church also got involved in the Euromaidan Revolution supporting Ukrainians participating in the protests. Further, the response of Patriarch Kirill concerning the outbreak of the war in Ukraine and its influence on the division of the church was analyzed. Patriarch Kirill's support for the Russian invasion made a direct impact on the further division of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church since many

Ukrainians decided to abandon Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate and not to affiliate with the Russian Patriarch and Moscow Patriarchate.

The fourth chapter presented the figure of Stepan Bandera, OUN and UPA organizations, as well as an investigation of the contemporary perception of the notion of “banderites”. The role of OUN-UPA in shaping the Ukrainian identity was questioned. Followers of Stepan Bandera are often called “banderites”. As a result of Soviet propaganda, Ukrainian nationalists in Western Ukraine were associated with “banderites” with negative connotations. OUN -UPA was active in the West of Ukraine, and one can currently find many monuments of Stepan Bandera in numerous western Ukrainian cities. The attempts of politicians to glorify Stepan Bandera and other OUN-UPA prominent members caused enmity in the country, while western Ukrainians preached figures of Ukrainian history who fought for the independence of Ukraine in the past, during the Euromaidan Revolution and the war in Donbas. In other words, the revolution and the conflict with Russia resulted in the revival of Bandera’s myth, a symbol of Ukrainian nationalism and resistance. The most visible expression of this revival today is the commonly used slogan “*Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the heroes!*” (ukr. *Слава Україні! Героям слава!*) associated with the OUN-UPA organization. It is now widely used by Ukrainians and as an official salute of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The activities of OUN-UPA members surely created a hazy image of Ukrainian nationalism and added to the complex history of Ukraine. Many catastrophic incidents left country with many unanswered questions and unresolved issues affecting current domestic and foreign policies.

The period of Ukraine’s history after gaining independence in 1991 (after the collapse of the Soviet Union) is covered in the fifth chapter. Ukraine faced numerous challenges during that period due to the Soviet legacy, yet they managed to hold the

first parliamentary and presidential elections and to raise new political elites. The Soviet past left many internal issues that Ukraine could not manage to solve in the early years of independence. Many of those unresolved problems that Ukraine was dealing with at that time led to the Orange Revolution.

Since gaining independence, Ukraine remained under the strong influence of Russia. Ukraine was interdependent on Russia economically and due to the natural gas that Ukraine received from Russia. Natural gas from Russia to Europe is also transiting through the territory of Ukraine. Whenever Ukraine wanted to move towards the West, Russia was strongly opposing it and used its natural gas as a source of blackmail. Russia did not want to lose control over Ukraine while Ukraine wanted to become more independent and build closer ties with the West.

Thus, Ukraine found itself stuck between the East and the West. The country itself was divided: the west of Ukraine was western-oriented, whereas the east of Ukraine was pro-Russian. This division was also visible in the policies of Ukrainian politicians with pro-Russian president Yanukovych versus pro-Western president Yushchenko. Yushchenko was supporting the idea of joining NATO and the EU, whereas Yanukovych wanted closer ties with Russia. As a matter of fact, President Yanukovych suspended signing the Association Agreement with the European Union and this caused brutal confrontations with the police during protest movements. The protests rapidly transformed into a revolution called the Euromaidan Revolution. The revolution resulted in a death tolls of over 100 people and president Yanukovych being ousted. The incidents that took place in aftermath of the revolution continued. President Putin saw the opportunity in the chaotic destabilized situation in Ukraine and decided claim parts of Ukraine – Donbas, which he wanted to restore. In the following steps Russia illegally annexed Crimea.

The next chapter analyzed the reason why the Euromaidan Revolution took place and what changed after the revolution as well as the underlying reasons behind the current war with a special focus on Putin's waging the war on February 24, 2022 against Ukraine. The war was not provoked or justified. Putin stated that the war aimed at the "demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine" and accused Ukraine of carrying out genocide on Russian-speaking inhabitants of the Donbas region. In fact, he realized that he had been losing influence on Ukraine as it started to build closer ties with the West, and after the Euromaidan Revolution he could not set up a pro-Russian government in Ukraine. Putin is referring the Ukrainian government as neo-Nazis. In fact, the Ukrainian government certainly does not contain Nazi features, however there are accusations that Ukraine is referring to fascist symbols. Putin is referring to the Soviet rhetoric regarding Ukrainian nationalists. Soviet propaganda included defamations of Stepan Bandera and OUN-UPA members, Ukrainian nationalists fighting for the Ukrainian national cause and freedom. They were presented as fascists and traitors who collaborated with Nazis. The Soviet authorities were aware of the importance that Bandera and OUN-UPA members played in shaping national feelings in Western Ukraine and had to quickly counteract to stop the spread of the nationalistic sentiments. Therefore, Soviets put emphasis on the affiliation with the enemy, the Nazis in their propaganda. Figure of Stepan Bandera is very controversial, though, due to allegations of mass killings of civilians.

In Poland, Bandera is perceived as a bandit responsible for murdering innocent Poles in Volhynia. He is a fascist to Russia, and hence any manifestation and glorification of Bandera or other OUN-UPA member causes protests and tensions with Poland, Russia and Israel. He is differently represented in Ukraine as a result of the Soviet propaganda: in the east of Ukraine, the Soviet rhetoric is being repeated,

whereas in the west of Ukraine he is regarded as a national hero who fought for the independence of Ukraine. Thus, the same historical figure is seen not to fit the officially accepted norms and the political correctness within the borders of the state. Therefore, the nation was and is still divided in terms of the perception of Bandera and OUN-UPA members. However, during the Euromaidan Revolution a very slow process of accepting OUN-UPA as part of Ukrainian history started. This led to the reformation of Ukrainian nationalism. The memory of the OUN-UPA's struggle for independence (although dividing the nation) gained importance again binding the nation. One can deem the attempts to rehabilitate the dark past of OUN-UPA may be a form of reaffirming Ukrainian identity.

Located between the East and the West, Ukraine serves as a buffer zone that blocks Russia from the West. Historically placed under the Polish and Russian influence, therefore, Ukraine has had complex international relations with its neighbours. The next chapter after the analysis of Bandera was limited to two neighbors due to time constraints of the study: Poland and Russia later with addition of the European Union.

Analysis of Ukraine's relations with two most important neighbors that represent two contrary civilizations enables understanding its geopolitical and geostrategic importance. Ukraine historically has had strong ties with both Poland and Russia. West of Ukraine is strongly influenced by Poland whereas central and eastern part of Ukraine have been affected by Russia since the time of the Russian Empire. The Bolsheviks also influenced the country, and finally after WWII, the whole modern Ukraine became part of the Soviet Union. Therefore, this study analyzed the relations of Ukraine with only those two countries. The European Union accepts the

geostrategic and geopolitical importance of Ukraine given the current conflict with Russia, adding an important feature to Ukrainian nationalism as a European nation.

Ukraine's relations with Poland have long-lasting history, although interspersed with turbulent incidents such as massacres of Poles in Volhynia and eastern Galicia by UPA and OUN and the Operation Vistula carried out by the Polish government that forced many Ukrainians to resettle in the west of Poland. The incidents overshadowed the relations of those two countries and from time to time caused tensions. As a matter of fact, the offer of Polish authorities to make an amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance containing the phrase "crimes of Ukrainian nationalists" caused deep tensions between the countries. Despite the difficulties, though, Poland and Ukraine tried to maintain good relations and in 1992, the Polish – Ukrainian Friendship Treaty was signed. In the following years, Ukraine and Poland established cooperation in political, economic and military areas. During that time, Ukraine was still under strong Russian influence and had closer ties with Russia than with the West, whereas Poland was leaning towards acceptance by the EU and NATO. Few years earlier, Poland had undergone transformation too, thus offered its assistance to Ukraine in the transformation into democratic processes. Poland was also engaged in support of the Orange Revolution. During that period, Poland once again took the role of representing Ukraine in the international area and acted as a mediator with the EU regarding the 2004 presidential elections.

Again, during the Euromaidan Revolution, Ukraine could count on the Polish support and stance of the Polish government against the annexation of Crimea by Russia. However, in 2019, the Polish - Ukrainian relations began to worsen due to the amendment to the aforementioned Act. It caused turmoil in the relations between

those two countries which resulted in an anti-Polish demonstration. Despite differences in history and occasional tensions, Poland and Ukraine are good partners who are supporting each other when necessary.

After the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, Poland immediately condemned the Russian invasion. Moreover, the Polish delegation consisting of prime minister and deputy minister together with Slovenian prime minister and Czech prime minister became the very first foreign high level delegation visiting Kyiv to show support and solidarity. Since the beginning of the war, Poland sheltered over 2 million Ukrainian refugees. The Polish government took a number of initiatives to provide aid to Ukrainian refugees in Poland, and also supports Ukraine militarily in addition to providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine. The Polish government took a firm stand against the Russian Federation that caused deterioration of the Polish-Russian relations. The Russian aggression on Ukraine and Russia's neo-imperialist and expansionist policy resulted in strengthening relations between Poland and Ukraine.

Relations of Ukraine with Russia are as long and complex as relations of Ukraine with Poland. According to Russian approach, Ukraine and Russia form one nation that has its origins in Kyivan Rus based on the presumption that Ukrainians in fact are Russians and there is no distinction between Ukrainians and Russians. In the 18th century, Ukraine was under the rule of the Russian Empire and went through an intensive Russification process. In the early 20th century, Ukrainians' attempts to establish independent state failed and Ukraine became part of the USSR in 1921. Ukraine remained part of the Soviet Union for 72 years until it gained its independence in 1991 and afterwards was still economically depending on Russia. On the other hand, Russia never wanted to lose control over Ukraine, thus by means of

propaganda and natural gas manipulation, Russia interfered in Ukraine's internal and foreign affairs. It must be noted that Ukraine is largely depending on gas from Russia. Besides, Russia exports gas to Europe through Ukraine's territory. On the other hand, Ukraine's close ties with Russia resulted in weak and distanced relations with Europe. However, Ukraine tried to get closer with Europe but each such attempt was immediately opposed by Russia. Russia regarded Ukraine's integration with the West and especially the NATO as a threat.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union Ukraine remained burdened with many unsolved issues that resulted in conflict with Russia; among others the dispute over Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet causing destabilization and separatist moods already back in 1992, customs and currency conflict and conflict in Transnistria. The Ukrainian - Russian Friendship Treaty was signed considerably late in comparison with Poland because it was signed in 1997. One of the main postulates was strategic friendship and recognition of existing borders and their inviolability. The treaty solved territorial claims. The Russian policy towards Ukraine was such influential that the Ukraine government agreed to lease the military harbor in Sevastopol for Russian Black Fleet for twenty years and then president Yanukovich prolonged it for another thirty years. The other issue arising after the collapse of the USSR was the large arsenal of nuclear weapons remaining on the territory of Ukraine. The whole arsenal was transferred to Russia, and Ukraine received financial aid from the US in return, in addition to security guarantees from both Russia and the West.

Russia's privileged position with Ukraine's economic dependence, internal problems of Ukraine, strong position of oligarchs in Ukraine and their connections with politics, weak European policies towards Ukraine strengthened the position of Russia in both Ukraine and on the international area. Russia managed to set up a pro-

Russian government, thus Ukraine became politically and economically dependent on Russia. However, not whole Ukraine was supporting the pro-Russian government, thus after president Yanukovych rejected the assimilation process with the European Union, the Ukrainian nation began to protest, which quickly turned into a revolution that ended up with overthrowing the Ukrainian government.

Russia used the chaotic situation in the country and reached the territories which were subject of dispute after the collapse of the USSR: Donbas and Crimea. The annexation of Crimea was condemned by the Western world, and a number of sanctions were imposed on Russia. Nevertheless, the West was continuing its close relations with Russia. However, Ukraine has remained in a state of a war with Russia in the Donbas region for eight straight years. Nevertheless, contrary to Russia's preliminary expectations, the majority of ethnic Russians of Donbas did not mobilize against Ukraine which proved that the ethnic Russians in Ukraine choose to be associated with Ukraine and ethnonationalism in Ukraine does not jeopardize Ukrainian nationalism. In fact, those unsolved conflicts, internal issues of Ukraine, inaction of the West encouraged Putin to declare war against Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Ukraine became victim of Russian neo-imperial and expansion policy which expresses nostalgia towards Russia's once greatness. Russia is trying to impose its hegemony on Ukraine by all means. Thus, the whole world's attention is focused on the unprovoked and unjustified military attack on a country which was not a threat. Russia once again broke the international law and attacked to breach the territorial integrity of the Ukrainian nation state. Once again, Ukraine has to fight for its sovereignty, independence and freedom.

The West, being aware of the geostrategic, geopolitical and geoeconomic importance for both Europe's security and food supply could have done more in terms of stopping Russia's expansion. Back in 2008 the Bucharest Summit NATO gave green light to Vladimir Putin ensuring him that NATO will not proceed with its enlargement policy especially regarding Georgia and Ukraine that in fact resulted in Russian invading Georgia. Already then it was a warning that the Russian president Vladimir Putin was unpredictable and posed a threat not only to the national security of Ukraine but to the whole Europe came already back in 2014 when Russia began occupying Donbas and annexed Crimea. The Europe did not give enough importance to Ukraine's case, as Ukraine was not regarded as an important partner for the West. On the other hand, Ukraine's relations with the European Union reach back to 1994 when the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement was signed. However, the European Union was reluctant towards Ukraine's membership. None of the Ukrainian president obtained assurances of future membership.

As a result, Ukraine got closer to Russia and became interdependent on the latter. The rest of the Ukrainian nation did not want to agree for such state, therefore protested against Russia and in favor of being a part of Europe. At that time, the West should have paid more attention to Ukraine, nevertheless the situation slightly changed due to the Russian aggression on Donbas region and annexation of Crimea. However, Europe continued its neglecting policy regarding Russia. Moreover, Europe depends on the gas from Russia, which Russia is often using in negotiations. By buying Russian gas, Europe is also financing Putin's regime. The European Union has shown unity in the face of the war. However, the member states have not reached any consensus regarding the gas from Russia. Europe has finally realized the strategic importance of Ukraine and also how much Europe is depending on Russia (mostly in

terms of gas and oil supply), after the latter declared war against Ukraine. And now, the West has found itself in a difficult position and under a real threat of a war with Russia.

Ukraine now became a zone that stops Russia from the rest of Europe and its struggle for its own national security is also a fight for the European security. The outbreak of the war made also the West understand it needs to act and act quickly in order not to lose Ukraine over Russia since Ukraine's defeat would mean that the West would be directly neighbouring Russia and also it would be a threat of a further Russian's expansion. Therefore, at the beginning of April 2022, the European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen handed over the questionnaire for European Union membership to president Zelensky during her to official visit to Kyiv. Certainly, this has been a significant step in the EU-Ukrainian relations, a historical moment for the Ukrainian nation and a great achievement for president Zelensky. On the other hand, it is a poke directed at Russia. Putin has tried to implement his plan regarding Ukraine to keep it in its own geopolitical zone, however the Euromaidan Revolution and pro-European tendency in the country successfully pulled Ukraine out of Russian influence.

The current president of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky has also proven to be a great leader who perfectly leads and supports the Ukrainian nation during these difficult times. Under his leadership, the government maintains its functions despite the extraordinary circumstances.

The Ukrainian desire to join the NATO has always been the greatest fear of Russia, at the same time the NATO now fears that any further step could provoke Russia and the conflict would escalate.

Therefore, Ukraine has received response that it would not become a NATO member. Russia threatens the West that any kind of involvement of NATO would cause retaliation. Thus, out of fear of escalation of the conflict and possible outbreak of World War III, the West's actions are limited to multiple sanctions imposed on Russia as well as supporting Ukraine with all kinds of help, including military aid. The Russian aggression on Ukraine has jeopardized the European security and right now the further development of the war depends on Ukrainian defense militarily supported by the West. However, Putin has already proved to be unpredictable and actually any move of the NATO could provoke him.

There are few long term scenarios on how the war can develop. The first one foresees NATO's involvement in the conflict and defeat of Russia or escalation that could turn into World War III. The second postulates Russia taking just the east of Ukraine and setting up a pro-Russian government in Kyiv. The third is the defeat of Ukraine and incorporating the whole Ukraine into the Russian Federation. Another scenario assumes Russia would take over eastern parts of Ukraine and this could also be satisfying for Putin. Ukraine or just its part being incorporated in Russia would affect the geopolitics, geoeconomic and security of whole Europe and Ukraine would end up being totally dependent on Russia and would lose its strategic position for Europe. One of the worst scenario is Russia resorting to nuclear weapons, which had already been mentioned by Kremlin.

On the other hand, the current situation in the front, the conditions of the Russian army and the successes of the Ukrainian army to push Russian troops back indicate the war will be continuing for some time. The West will try to prevent de-escalation but not involving directly, on the other hand will continue to support Ukraine with military aid. The war lasting for many years, costing lives of many

Russian soldiers will weaken position of president Putin that will end with Ukrainian victory and Russia's defeat. As a result, Russia will lose irreversibly its great power status. Russia not gaining expected success may also turn to Belarus for help which would also result in escalation of the conflict.

Scenarios concerning Ukraine's politics; Ukraine finally will make a final decision (actually already decided), it will choose further integration with the West, will join the EU, however this path will be challenging both for devastated by the war Ukraine and for the EU but prospects of NATO membership seems to be rather distant (at least not anytime soon), in order to avoid any moves that could provoke Kremlin.

At the moment, whole world's attention is turned to the course of the conflict. Considering reports from the field, Putin will not stop until he gets what he wants. The question is what exactly he wants to achieve. Nonetheless, no matter how the conflict will develop, the Ukrainian nation will survive.

Ukraine as a descendant of Kyivan Rus is a country of a long lasting tradition that managed to survive and keep national spirit despite its difficult history when had no state and was constantly forced to fight for its freedom and independence. Ukraine spent most of its long history divided between neighbouring countries; Poland and Russia. Today's division of the country and strong Polish and Russian influence (among others ethnic issues, language issues, minority issues, religion) is a reflection of its complex history.

Gaining independence in 1991 was long awaited historical moment in the history of Ukraine. The modern state of Ukraine faced challenge of how to re-build a nation. The Soviet legacy left Ukraine with many difficult issues which despite 31

years of independence many remained unsolved and in fact lead to the current conflict.

As it is history and experience that shape us and our identity and create who we are today, hence the findings of this study indicate that certainly latest event re-shape identity of Ukrainian nation. Ukraine that we see now is a reflection of its past, however the number of events that began in 2004 during the Orange Revolution, the events of 2014; the Euromaidan Revolution, war with Russia in Donbas, annexation of Crimea and finally the Russian war against Ukraine have re-shaped Ukrainian nationalism and re-shaped Ukrainian national consciousness.

As a result of the conflict with Russia the national consciousness and Ukrainian nationalism went through a revival and reconstruction based on being differentiated from Russia, putting emphasis on uniqueness of the Ukrainian national symbols that represents resistance and a fight for national freedom. Therefore, in this circumstance also the revival of Bandera's myth was possible, that perhaps would not take place otherwise or not on such scale. Strongly divided nation in 1991 after gaining independence, seems to be finally united today.

Ukrainians now are united more than ever and are determined to fight for their freedom and independence of Ukraine. The revival and spread of national consciousness were increasing slowly after the Euromaidan, then it spread towards the Eastern parts of Ukraine where Ukrainian nationalistic feelings were not deeply rooted and as strong as in the Western Ukraine after the Russian war in Donbas and annexation of Crimea. However, it is after the Russia declared war against Ukraine, the Ukrainian nationalistic feelings boosted and national consciousness reached its peak.

Ukrainian nationalism is not a threat to the stability and security of Europe, it is Russian neo-imperial and expansion policy that is the greatest threat for Ukraine and to the whole world. Just before declaring the war against Ukraine, the Russian president Vladimir Putin stated that there is no nation as Ukrainian one, however this study proves otherwise; Ukraine is a country with its own unique and distinctive culture, language, tradition and history.

This study and fieldwork within the framework of this research was limited to Western Ukraine, however hopefully it will be continued whenever the conditions in the country will allow it. My future plan is to conduct further research in other parts of Ukraine; focusing on Central and Eastern Ukraine in order to make a comparative analysis between those three regions and to examine if the level of national consciousness in those two regions is at the same high level as it is in Western Ukraine and to investigate if and how the symbols associated with Western Ukraine that is OUN-UPA are used outside of West of Ukraine.

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APPENDICES

Transcription of Selected Interviews

Interviewee No. 1 (Novovolynsk)

Intvr: Could you please introduce yourself? What is your name and profession?

Resp: My name is X and I'm the director of local high school here in Novovolynsk.

Intvr: Where did you study?

Resp: At Rivne State Humanitarian University, I've got a degree in Physics and IT.

Intvr: Where do you come from?

Resp: I come from Berezno city in Rivne Oblast.

Intvr: Ok, good. What does it mean for you to be an Ukrainian?

Resp: What does it mean for me to be an Ukrainian? Well, (laughing) what a question. To be an Ukrainian for sure means to live in Ukraine, to speak only in Ukrainian. I, hmm, to be interested in the tradition of our Ukrainian ancestors, heritage and to know the basic history of your country. I think if some regard himself as Ukrainian should identify himself with Ukraine. This is what I think.

Intvr: And you just answered my next question, how do you identify yourself. Ok, good so I have a question that you may have also partially answered. What language do you use in your daily life, at work and with your family?

Resp: Only in Ukrainian. However, it depends on the speaker. If the speaker speaks Russian like our Ministry of Education, they all speak only Russian there but I try to speak Ukrainian to them.

Intvr: Can you speak Russian?

Resp: What?

Intvr: Can you speak Russian?

Resp: Yes, I do.

Intvr: What other languages do you know?

Resp: English with a dictionary (laughing).

Intvr: Good, so if you know Russian how often do you use it?

Resp: To be honest, I don't remember last time I spoke Russian. I use it sometimes to read something but I don't remember last time I talked to someone in Russian.

Intvr: What languages are being taught here in high school?

Resp: My dad is Russian and speaks only Russian, when I was a kid maybe only once I spoke Russian to him. What was the previous question?

Intrv: What languages are being taught here?

Resp: In the primary school?

Intvr: No, I mean here at high school.

Resp: Only Ukrainian.

Intrv: What about foreign languages?

Resp: English.

Intvr: Ok, so I have a question if your father is Russian then when you were little what language you were using at home? In what language you were communicating?

Resp: Only in Ukrainian.

Intrv: What about your dad?

Resp: Only in Russian.

Intrv: And with you also in Russian or in Ukrainian?

Resp: In Russian.

Intrv: So in what language were you responding to him?

Resp: My mom is Ukrainian, we were taught Ukrainian at school, only Ukrainian, what about my dad, he was indifferent.

Intrv: I'm not sure if it is suitable in this particular region, because when I was reading various books about Ukraine, it was written there that there was period where people in some regions of Ukraine were ashamed to speak Ukrainian, have you ever encountered something like this? That someone was ashamed to speak Ukrainian?

Resp: In our region?

Intrv: Anywhere, in your life if you have seen such situation?

Resp: Of course, in big cities like in Kyiv they speak Russian, when you speak Ukrainian there you may feel weird, in small cities or at home people talk only in Ukrainian but on the buses you will hear Russian.

Intrv: Did I understand right, so people in big cities are ashamed of speaking Ukrainian?

Resp: Maybe not ashamed but it was like this, in big cities there are Russians who are just rooted there that is why Russian was popularized that is why in big cities majority of people talk in Russian.

Intrv: So is it a shame to speak Ukrainian in big cities?

Resp: Hmm, not really, for example in city of Lviv people identify themselves with the Ukrainian tradition, there in fact you can hear Russian but so less. People try there to speak Ukrainian, for example in city of Kyiv as I said people speak Russian, people even if know Ukrainian don't want to speak Ukrainian. When there was USSR, if you would come to the city and would speak Ukrainian, people immediately would say you came from a village...

Intrv: This is exactly what I read that why I asked this question. It was in each book I read about Ukraine that's why I asked about it. In books that I've read there was a

statement that Russian speakers inhabiting Ukraine were feeling alienated, is here in this region such thing too?

Resp: Russian speakers? No...

Intrv: This is what I read in one book, no?

Resp: I will tell you, if there was such thing it was concerning Ukrainian speakers, not

Russian speakers. There was no such thing at all. If we look at the center like Kyiv and east, then if someone was speaking Ukrainian then he was feeling alienated. But here in our region, there is no such thing in Western Ukraine, in Novovolynsk many people speak Russian, they are Russian, because we have here a mine, hence many people came from Russia and from east, Russians or just Russian speakers and they remained here. Many people speak Russian here.

Intrv: But they don't feel lesser?

Resp: Absolutely not.

Intrv: Ok, here I have quite interesting question. Do you think one can be Russian speaker, not knowing Ukrainian, don't use Ukrainian language and despite be Ukrainian nationalist?

Resp: I will....(a secretary entered). I think it is possible, there are many people like that and many examples, in Maidan there were many Russian speaking people from east, who speak only Russian but stood for Ukraine, but I think who speaks Ukrainian is a real patriot.

Intrv: In one book I found such fragment „Ukraine for Ukrainians or there is place for everyone for each nationality”?

Resp: I think it's absolutely for everyone, there are many different nationalities in Ukraine and they live together peacefully, how it has turned out as everywhere else there are

good and bad people. Ukrainians have their own traditions and others have their own.

It's normal.

Intrv: Ok, I understand. Why here in this region the nationalism is so intensive, with high level of patriotism in comparison to other parts of Ukraine?

Resp: It is historical. If we look at history, the east of Ukraine wasn't inhabited by Ukrainians. Why west of Ukraine? West of Ukraine because till 1939 was part of Poland, there was no USSR, there was no repression, then the nationalist appeared the Ukrainian Insurgent Army that did not allow repressions, as a result the West was inhabited by strong nationalists. This is our tradition of our grandfathers. That is why west is so patriotic, this is our tradition. We live here whole our life.

Intrv: What do you think of the language issues in Ukraine? That whole country don't use one national language? What are the reasons and if there is a solution for that?

Resp: In my opinion, it is a problem, I mean people can talk what language they like, but for example this is our country and we should use only our national language, for example at public office, me at work, at school or Ministry of Education should use only national language. This our country. The Ministry of Education should speak only Ukrainian. In my opinion, what I would do, if you want to work in public service you should pass an Ukrainian language exam, literature and history of Ukraine. This would make people more patriot, if you don't want to learn the language and history then you are not patriot.

Intrv: I asked this question because people that I know from Kharkiv, Odesa, Crimea no one spoke Ukrainian. Especially people at my age didn't. That's why I asked this question.

Resp: In that region it's a big problem. Ukrainians there go to Russian schools. The problems started in primary schools, where majority of program was in Russian that's why

people didn't talk in Ukrainian. If here in our region there was less courses instructed in Russian and less Russian schools, then in the east; Odesa, Kharkiv there majority of classes were in Russian. At schools, from the beginning, starting from the first grade everything was in Russian. At schools there are in fact various nationalities, for example in Transcarpathia there are Hungarians, Romanians and etc., at each schools are in their own ethnic language but most of the classes should be in Ukrainian so that people know their national language.

Intrv: Ok, good. It has been many years since Ukraine gained independence but still Ukraine faces ethnic issues, separatists, what is the reason for that? Is it the failure of the system?

Resp: We gained independence from USSR, hence it was difficult to complete Ukrainization, there were many nationalities, Russians in the east were saying „we are Russians”, the process of ukrainization was not successfully completed. The main problem is that from the first day after Ukraine gained independence this question should be asked and how to deal with Ukrainian language and how to integrate other nationalities into single Ukraine nation. Till the last moment that haven't been done. Actually there was nothing done towards it, that is why we encountered situation in the east, although there and here as same people, normal people, who wants to live and work normally.

Intrv: What is the influence of the war in the east of Ukraine on people's life in here? Do people here feel more integrated?

Resp: Well, I think people here feel integrated, lots of people from the West are fighting in the East. People are more disciplined because it so sad to see in TV that every day people die in there and then we see here when dead bodies are being brought back home from the East and there is a funeral of some young men and all people participate in those funeral then we can see that people are integrated and united.

Intrv: Are you a member of political party?

Resp: Hmm, no.

Intrv: Ok, the last question...

Resp: I can tell you why I am not a member, should I tell you why?

Intrv: Yes, of course, please.

Resp: I am working in a public service, I am a director of a high school, here the politics I think as a director of a school I shouldn't get involved in politics.

Intrv: Ok, the last question. What is your religion?

Resp: I'm an Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Intrv: That would be all for now. Thank you so much.

Interviewee No. 2 (Lviv)

Intrv: Could you introduce yourself? You don't need to tell your name and surname, just something about yourself, age, education, where do you work, etc.

Resp: Ok, I'll try to speak Polish. My name is Nataliya and I'm 30 years old. I studied landscape architecture here in Lviv and now I'm working in organization of education initiatives, it's NGO. It's an organization that does many things not only in Ukraine but also in Europe, in the West. It's very interesting, we work with people.

Intrv: You have mentioned before you have got PhD, don't you?

Resp: Yes, I do.

Intrv: Ok, next question. What does it mean for you to be an Ukrainian?

Resp: Everything, I guess, because when I was studying for almost 2 years abroad and I came back to Ukraine then my friends and other people, the first question they all asked was what are you doing? Why did you come back? And from a country where there is everything and you don't need to for example work in two different places in order to

earn money or something, whereas for me it was a simple answer: I came back home so hmm Ukraine and to be Ukrainian means to where my heart is. You can always emigrate, go somewhere but not every time when you come back you will hmm feel that you are at the right place. So it has two meanings for me.

Intrv: How would you determine your identity?

Resp: I didn't understand, one more time please.

Intrv: How would describe yourself? Who are you?

Resp: Hmm a human being, I don't know. It's a difficult question.

Intrv: Yeah those questions seems so easy but make you focus and think. I asked the same question to my mom and she didn't know what to respond.

Resp: I know I am in the place where I am supposed to be and with who I am supposed to be but who am I? I am a mom (laughing) and a wife of my husband. I guess that's all (laughing).

Intrv: In what language you communicate with others in your daily life, at home, at work?

Resp: In Ukrainian.

Intrv: Do you speak Russian?

Resp: Yes, I do speak Russian, Polish, Slovakian, Belarusian and English. I used to study German but it didn't work out (laughing).

Intrv: As we agreed on yesterday, if you don't practice a language you just loose it. I also forgot German.

Resp: Yes, that's true. When I was living in Sweden we had Swedish courses but I thought why do I need one more language? If I wanted to stay there and work or study then yes. But just to learn one more language then I don't need it.

Intrv: Speaking of Russian, how often do you use it? In what situations you use Russian?

Resp: When I talk to foreigners. So, it's very important that I don't speak Russian with people from Ukraine, from the east of Ukraine, who understand Ukrainian language but speak Russian. For me there is no difference whether a person speaks to me Russian or Ukrainian but I like my language and I want to, I ... , when people that I talk to don't use Ukrainian everyday so at least once they could. I know that in Lviv and around this area the dialect is very similar to Polish because in central Ukraine I have lots of friends who speak Ukrainian but it sounds for me pure somehow, it doesn't have same dialect.

Intrv: I didn't know there is some dialect in here.

Resp: We've got lots of Polish words in our dialect here. Really a lot. For example „filizanka kawy” (ed. A cup of coffee). If you say it in Kyiv no one will understand you.

Intrv: So how do you say in Ukrainian then?

Resp: „Horniatka kavy” or „chashka kavy”.

Intrv: That's totally different. „Chashka” isn't Russian?

Resp: Yes, but ...

Intrv: It doesn't sound similar at all.

Resp: Yes, lots of words like „placok” „placki” those also in central Ukraine would be different, they would say „pyrih” and „pierogi” in Polish are „varenyky” so there are lots of words that are different here and in the rest of Ukraine which came from Poland.

Intrv: It's really interesting. I need to learn more about it. Do you know anyone or maybe you had a situation when you were ashamed to speak Ukrainian?

Resp: No, never. Never.

Intrv: Do you know someone maybe who had such situation?

Resp: (takes a deep breath) hmm in Ukrainian?

Intrv: Once I read that, but it was in the past, when USSR collapsed that people often were ashamed to speak Ukrainian.

Resp: Yeah, maybe for our parents when there was USSR maybe it was forbidden for them to speak Ukrainian at school or at the university. But I don't think any of them would say it's a shame or something like this to speak Ukrainian, then I don't think so.

Intrv: Do you know someone who doesn't speak Ukrainian and is Ukrainian?

Resp: Yes, I do. My husband's dad, who lives 40 years in Lviv, understands Ukrainian perfectly but he doesn't want to speak Ukrainian.

Intrv: So what language does he speak?

Resp: Russian. Yes, because his father was a soldier and traveled a lot throughout the Russia and he was born in Lithuania, then they moved to Lviv. It is a bit weird, we speak Ukrainian with him and he wants to speak Russian.

Intrv: Are there more people like that in your environment?

Resp: A lot. Really a lot, in Lviv lots of people speak Russian. A lot of people who were soldiers or their parents were soldiers. A lot of people who worked with the Soviets, for example in the TV or in the structures where everyone spoke Russian. A lot of people were transferred from Western Ukraine to Siberia who were doctors, simply elite, they were forced to move to Russia and people from Russia were brought in here. They brought people from Russia to live here, for example in the east the coal mines, for some period of time there were only Ukrainians but people from throughout Russia were brought in there, that's why ... There everyone used to speak Ukrainian but because of that people began to speak Russian, because many people were brought in from Russia.

Intrv: You have mentioned your father in law that he speaks only Russian and doesn't want to speak Ukrainian although he understands it. Once I read that Russian speakers of

Ukraine felt alienated, lesser, rejected and separated from the society. Do you think there is something like this in modern Ukraine?

Resp: No.

Intrv: No? So they normally speak Russian here in Lviv for example and they are equal with the rest of the society who speak Ukraine?

Resp: Here in the west of Ukraine, I don't know if it's because of TV or politics or what's the reason for this but if you come to Lviv and you will speak Russian then you will have problems with nationalists or with people who speak only Ukrainian and they can beat you up or talk to you differently or don't talk to you at all, they will say they don't understand you. There are things I heard, it's not true of course but people in the east say when they come to Lviv and first thing they say is: -how I am supposed to talk to the people here? In Ukrainian? But in fact I can't speak Ukrainian, ok but I'll try.

Intrv: Ok, no problem just speak Russian.

Resp: No, they would kill me here (laughing). No, it's not like that in here. Lviv is a tolerant city. You can speak various languages here, as we talked yesterday we've got here many different ethnicities who used to live in their environment, and somehow everyone lived peacefully. They had common interests and work. I don't think it's a problem.

Intrv: So, is there a stereotype in the east of Ukraine concerning western part?

Resp: Crimea, Central Ukraine but it's concerning only Lviv.

Intrv: So not whole Western part of Ukraine just Lviv?

Resp: Yes, only Lviv. At least this is what I heard. Although maybe they say it about the whole West of Ukraine. Maybe they all think about the west that we all are Banderites so we could kill (laughing). When this war has started, that conflict in the east then people used to say that if you come from the east with the kids to the west then in the

west we will eat those kids (laughing). It was shown in the Russian TV. Yeah, such propaganda. It is funny for us because I remember when I was going by train to Donetsk, 5 or 6 years ago and in Dnipropetrovsk some old man sat next to me and started talking to me, I was speaking Ukrainian and he asked me if I'm not scared to speak Ukrainian there. I asked him why should I be scared? That you speak Ukrainian here, you are a young girl and speak Ukrainian here, he said. And I answered him that I am still in Ukraine I didn't leave my country yet, I didn't leave its borders. I didn't go abroad. Yes, you are right but If I were you I wouldn't speak Ukrainian I would be scared to speak Russian in Lviv or in the west, he said. So, it's only propaganda and stereotypes. People who constantly live in one place and do not leave their own garden create such weird stories and they believe in such stories.

Intrv: Do you think it is possible to be Russian speaker and not knowing Ukrainian and despite that still be Ukrainian nationalist?

Resp: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Even now during this ongoing conflict, in Ukraine many people moved here from Belarus or Georgia or from Russia and they joined our army and fighting in the east because they say we must support Ukraine in their struggle for freedom and for different life of Ukrainians and for me as I said before there is no difference whether you speak Russian or Ukrainian or any other language as long as they share same interests that are important for their lives. The language doesn't matter for me.

Intrv: Don't you think that everyone should know Ukrainian?

Resp: Yes, I do think so.

Intrv: And all people that inhabit Ukraine should speak Ukrainian?

Resp: Yes, I do think so. Right now we are going through some education reforms in Ukraine and we've got problems with Hungarian, Romanians, Moldavians, Bulgaria who

opposed reforms, they don't agree for children in schools in Transcarpathia and actually throughout Ukraine to study only in Ukrainian just as their national language, meaning for example maths would be in Ukrainian too instead of Hungarian, as it was until now. Our neighbors didn't like this decision. From Poland there was also disaffection. They say: „why a child who is 6 years old and speaks only Polish at home now, all of a sudden at school has to speak Ukrainian”, they say it's not normal for a child to be taught in Ukrainian starting from the first grade just as rest of the children in Ukraine.

Intrv: My previous informants told me Poland was the first country who supported Ukraine in this case.

Resp: It was just form of dissatisfaction, nothing official though. As far as I know all our neighbors said those reforms are not ok. Hungarians said „you've got conflict in the east, do you want to have problems also in the west?”. For Hungarians it is and it always has been a conflict. Bulgarian said „ok, we understand that children who are going to school in Ukraine must speak Ukrainian”. Once I visited a village in Transcarpathia and we got lost, so my dad went to the nearest house to ask about directions and the woman got scared that my dad was speaking Ukrainian, she went into the house to call her husband, he came out and began to speak Russian. My dad asked him how he learned Russian, and he answered that he was a soldier and then he learned Russian. That means that a person who resides in Ukraine had no opportunity to learn Ukrainian but only due to Soviets he could learn Russian because he had to communicate with them somehow.

Intrv: Was he a Hungarian?

Resp: Yes, Hungarian minority that lives in Transcarpathia, just next to the Hungarian border. Next to border Hungarians, Slovakian and Romanians live. It's actually the same

when you go next to the Polish border, but Polish and Ukrainian are similar languages. Yeah you can't communicate with those minorities like Hungarian, the words are not even close to Ukrainian.

Intrv: When I was reading some books about Ukraine, some politicians were saying that: „Ukraine only for Ukrainians” what do you think? Is there place for everyone?

Resp: I guess it was party during the elections...

Intrv: Yes, it was at the beginning of the 1990s.

Resp: I think this is stupid, that Ukraine only for Ukrainians. It's just stupid for me. It's a big country, the biggest in Europe in terms of its area and for example if a French wants to come and settle down in south of Ukraine in order to make wine, has the grape plantation and he just wants to live there, earn money and pay taxes to Ukraine then why not? Actually it's. Not only about the taxes and money, it's about the fact that where a man feels good let him live there and that's all. If he has an Ukrainian wife and she wants to be here or she wants to be with him then let her decide. It's simple. If someone wants to go abroad, earn money there and after 2-3 years come back to Ukraine, that's also ok. And if someone wants to live whole his life abroad and doesn't want to come back to Ukraine, that's also okay. It's his choice.

Intrv: So what do you think if a foreigner comes to Ukraine, then should he follow and accept Ukrainian culture, tradition or he should live his life? Or maybe the other way rather you would say „He is not „ours”, let him live the way he wants”?

Resp: I think he should know our culture and I don't like that a foreigner comes to some country and try to introduce his traditions and culture. This is only because I used to live in the south of Sweden and I met there many various nationalities who don't want to live like people do live in Sweden. Generally, they create their own ghettos where they speak their own language, they practice their culture and tradition and when you

as a stranger enter there then you are endangered. You may have issues with those people who live there on that territory. The same in Ukraine, when you come here, you must, but you must try to learn to live like, hmm ok you don't have to follow each tradition etc but you must consider that you live in different country and if people... hmm I can't find any example... We've got here many holidays and if we have an off day due to religious holidays and you work.... No one is working and you go outside to do some work around your house, for example something loud and everyone is looking at you like strange because you act differently from the rest of the people. Then I guess it's no okay. But on the other hand if you really have to do it, and only today you can do it, you can't postpone it then it's okay unless you do it on purpose to show „hey, I'm different from you” and you want to show that you will not act like the rest of us then it is strange for me and I think this is improper behavior.

Intrv: The next question, it has been 26 years since Ukraine gained its independence and still there are unresolved ethnic issues, there is separatist movement. Do you think there is some solution towards it? Or maybe after the USSR collapsed and Ukraine was undergoing nation building process maybe then those issues could be solved differently? Do you think it's a system failure? What do you think about it? For example in the Baltic Republics they found different solutions.

Resp: If you go there, you will see that they also still deal with those issues and it will never disappear because people who lived in USSR are still alive and I think we will have this issue until people will talk about the past. I think it's in people's minds. For example it was funny for me when some time ago I heard a question: „why in Ukraine there is corruption?” Because during USSR everything was local and everyone was stealing, for example I was sent to pick up tomatoes or potatoes for the Soviet state but I will take some for myself because how I'm supposed to survive and

feed my stomach, am I supposed to work 6 days for a state? And I don't have time to grow potatoes and take care of it, so I'll take some in order to eat it. So now, people say we've got corruption because we still have got that old system in our minds. Everything could be just taken without asking and now we've got a lot of private properties and no one wants to be robbed. For people it's a big gap, they can't understand the way it is supposed to be. This is what I think.

Intrv: What about the ethnic issues?

Resp: I always have Polish example on my mind. It's an example of a monoculture. The nation, religion everything is „mono” there. That is why for you to speak German or Lithuanian or Slovakian, because they are your neighbors is just out of a question. But why here people who live in their own country in Ukraine (ed. emphasizes „W Ukrainie”, not „Na Ukrainie” and finds it very important to stress it) We always fight about that „W Ukrainie” and „Na Ukrainie” with Russians. „Ukraina”, I read somewhere about it so I don't know whether it is true or not. In Russian „Okraina” which means somewhere aside which means Russian say „oh you live „na Okrainie” meaning aside, somewhere there. No! I live „w Ukrainie”. I didn't answer your question.

Intrv: No, it is also important matter for me and by how your respond now you also answer what it means for you to be Ukrainian.

Resp: You just met one great Ukrainian patriot (laughing).

Intrv: What is the influence of the war in the east on people here in his region? Are people more integrated? What has changed?

Resp: A lot has changed actually. Many people from our, Western part of Ukraine left there husbands, brothers, many people died there. There is no single village in West Ukraine where there wouldn't be a loss of a man in the war. Thus, for us this conflict

is too expansive. I don't mean money, I mean people's lives. I have no idea about the costs of the war, how expensive it is for our country, for politicians, I don't know. Once I heard that 5 million hryven each day was required for the army support, the food, ammunition etc. However, no one says it is a war. But I always repeat that for us it is a war because a conflict is being solved while sitting behind the table and war is somewhere in the forest, in the fields, simply where people die.

Intrv: So in Ukraine people do not refer to it as a war?

Resp: Each person will tell you something different in this matter. One will say it is antiterror operation, this is what is written in newspapers, and every politician would tell you it's not a war but antiterror operation APO. That is why, once again I say it is a war. I've got many friends from Russia who at the beginning used to ask me „how is it? What is going on there? Tell us more because our information is twisted”. So I said people came from two sides and are just killing our each other and for what? Each war occur because of politics, because of people who „sit above us”. And us simple people, we can't solve this conflict. We can talk about it, we can scream, protest even one more revolution, however I think there will be no third, because people are tired already. And people see that nothing changes. For me this is so sad, because after the last revolution I really thought things will get better. During the revolt I was in Kyiv and I will never forget it. It's good I wasn't in Maidan in that particular moment but I was at the railway station, I had a group of 25 foreigners. The group members were 18-25 years old and they were scared to see helicopters constantly flying above us, in the TV everywhere we could only see blood, blood and blood. The trains weren't operating towards the West, because that day they didn't want more people to come from the West to join in the revolution. Everywhere, „in each corner” there was some issue, it was a sad day in history of Ukraine. Everyone witnessed it differently. It's a

pity that politicians didn't get their lesson. All they did was to change their seats, someone left, someone else entered or got higher position and they make a circus out of people's tragedy, people's blood, they just create new seats and titles for themselves.

Intrv: Two more questions. Do you belong to any political party?

Resp: No, no.

Intrv: Why not?

Resp: Because I am apolitical. Although in Ukraine you cannot be political because of all the things I have mentioned. Political party is not a place for me. Each of them has its own program that I not necessarily agree with. With some I do agree, with others I don't. There is no party that I would say „ok, this one is for me and I agree with their program”. Although my husband was a party member. He was a member of a very popular party in Lviv, party Svoboda, a nationalist party and it was interesting to listen to him explaining me why he support this party. In the last elections they didn't proceed to parliament. My husband liked their motto „Slovo y dyelom” which meant that they will to only talk but also take actions.

Intrv: You didn't like their program? Didn't you want to join them?

Resp: No, as I said I don't even have favorite music group (laughing) or my favorite film. I like everything a little bit. I like rock and pop music etc there is no one favorite. It's a mix, whole my life is a mix.

Intrv: The last question. What is your religion?

Resp: I'm Greek Catholic under Pope but we follow Orthodox rite. In Livv there are many Greek Catholics. This is our cross (showed me her necklace with a cross).

Intrv: Thank you so much for your time.

Interviewee No. 3 (Lviv)

Resp: I was around 21 years old and I used to watch Polish TV every day, because Soviet TV was just airing propaganda. It was ideology, it was concentrated in terms of ideology on routine. A little bit of sport, weather and Brezhnev. Brezhnev, yes we are talking about those times. Since morning until night it was just Brezhnev, party delegations and conventions, something like this, kolkhoz, electric station, architecture and that's all. Meanwhile Polish TV, that was something different I remember „Czerwone Gitary” (edited, a Polish music band popular in the 1960s), Sopot Music Festival (started singing in Polish)(...) There were also many funny Polish jokes (told a joke)(...). We were more, of course we used to live, since we are Ukrainians, we used to live in a kind of separated world, at least here in Galicia, Ternopil, Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk. In this separated world of cultural traditions because I come from a traditional house. My family, my mother and father were first generation that lived in Lviv and my grandparents were peasants They came to Lviv and brought here their traditions and culture, Ukrainians songs, Ukrainian holidays and this is how I grew up. But in general the world surrounding me was something different for me and it was alienus/ foreign. Because that ideology that all around me talked about totally different things, for me everything was opened and I couldn't accept it easily. But I had to accept otherwise I would be expelled from university. Polish culture, Polish TV, for me it was kind of liberal form. Polish TV was about..., in here the art was ideological too, Polish cinema and music, TV was showing concerts, festivals like Sopot (sings again „Kolorowe jarmarki”), it was something humane. Do you understand? It was symptom of humanity. No matter what we have sympathized with Poles and for us Polish culture was interesting, understandable, more understandable than this culture that was expressed and presented in the Soviet Union. When Poles

were celebrating Easter, for us Polish chocolates and the Christmas Eve and Christmas tree shown in the TV for us were beautiful, we didn't have it. In TV there was absolutely nothing, it was forbidden to say anything related with religion and Christianity. It was like a pagan system, there was nothing. And there was a Christmas tree, decorations, chocolates that's why we also felt that nice Christmas atmosphere. It was very nice feeling. We couldn't have same feelings here. We couldn't experience it here. Therefore, cultural Polish environment and religious Polish environment and political Ukrainian aspirations were not even dreamed of. An average Galician could not even dream of any kind of independence. Maybe only few people who were related with dissident environment, only they knew such things. The idea of independence, I am not even mentioning nationalism were not comprehended here in this territory. Officially there was also nothing expressed, it was even forbidden to mention something like this.

Intrv: But what about Rukh?

Resp: Oh, you are talking about later period. Rukh appeared in Lviv in 1988. I remember it because I participated in all such events. I was a member of a Republican Party during the Soviets. I was young back then. I was like 25 or 28 years old. First meetings of Rukh were just here in front of the university, here where the Ivan Franko's monument is. There two first meeting of Rukh took place. It was June - July 1988. There were two meeting that were brutally, including dogs, dispersed. Few people, who organize those meetings, were arrested. And that's all. Among the organizers there was Viacheslav Chornovil, have you heard of him? It was a dissident who was a former political prisoner. Also Iryna and Igor Kalynets - the poets and Ivan Makar. Ivan Makar was a speaker of those meetings. When all of them were arrested only Makar was imprisoned. He was in prison and a newspaper that was leading in terms

of numbers being sold in the Soviet Union, Komsomolska Pravda. It was written in there, I remember it as it was today, this article was titled „Fairytale of Makar”. He initiated establishing the National Front. It was a copy, to certain degree of those processes taking place in... but a weak copy of those processes because they were more powerful; Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the Baltic states. And here, they tried to organize something like this so they copied those political institutions that opposed the Soviet regime in the Baltic states.

Intrv: Can I ask you something?

Resp: Yes, please.

Resp: Those Baltic states, I think they manage to handle ethnic issues more efficiently than Ukraine did.

Resp: Ethnic issues? We can talk about it now. You focus on post-Soviet era, what chronology do you focus on?

Intrv: 1991 until today.

Resp: Ok, because there is always discussion and it wasn't my area of research. Shporluk, Shporluk is a well-known researcher of Ukrainian nationalism. Roman Shporluk, he used to live in Canada and he is a professor at Ottawa University or something like this. He has written many monographs regarding Ukrainian nationalism. He wrote a lot about the Soviet Union. We don't have researchers who observe nationalistic processes systematically. Unfortunately, we don't. Why is it so? The answer is very debatable. Returning to the Baltic states, I think those processes, that were occurring in Ukraine, if we are talking about the ethnic processes, language and ethnic, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia went through like 10 or 15 years ago. I am sure you have heard of those protests that took place back then when they became EU members. In Lithuania for example, they didn't care about languages of minorities, everything had

to be in Lithuanian. Very complicated situation was in Latvia, though. Following the last census in 1989. The Latvians were 48% whereas Russian speaking minority was 52%, kind of paradox. They still protest against any language regulations, both in Latvia and Russia. But 10-15 years ago, even European Union institutions were saying its against civil rights, human rights but they didn't react. They are members of EU and they were an important, hmm I would say strategic position due to NATO. It was one of the crucial moments and silently, silently, others forgot about it and they succeeded. In Ukraine those processes that took place 10-15 years ago in Baltic states, they tried to implement them in here as well. The problem was.. hmm for example I know the Polish schools in Lviv case. I am in touch with Polish teachers and schools. The Poles in Lviv, those regulations that were accepted by Verkhovna Rada didn't bother much Polish minority. In Lviv there were two schools, they have lots of students. Now in Lviv, there is huge interest in Polish language. Many young people attend them, because they want to study in Poland, some of them want to work in Poland. I don't know if Polish minority has an issue with the education here, they have lots of students, constant interest, they've got books. In my opinion, in Galicia large number of Polish minority lives... I think that a man who is not involved in... Poles in here don't have with nationalists manifestations neither after the WWII period neither after the post-Soviet period. Now, regarding the language regulations the Hungarians or the Romanians, there the situation, as far as I know, is different. In Lviv, I think. Nationalist tendencies appear when minority group is a large one in their environment, has to be active in political processes, actively transfers its culture into the society, there must be a critical mass. Some big community may have influence on those processes. The Poles in Lviv aren't a major group. They consist of businessmen who have Polish -Ukrainian businesses, tourists, and small group of

elderly. The young Ukrainians who attend the Polish schools, are normally in touch with the rest. I wonder, what group attending the Polish schools is larger, the Ukrainians or ethnic Polish minority. I think there are more Ukrainians. Therefore, the Polish environment, the Polish minority, Polish culture, Polish political aspirations in Lviv or in Galicia, Western Ukraine are not annoyed. They live their own lives, they speak Polish, they attend Polish schools, have some newspaper, that's all. The Poles are coming here, they help and do actually good things for the city because they come and „leave” their money here, złoty, dollars and euro. It's very good. There are no problems. In Bukovyna and Transcarpathia, those minorities whether Hungarian or Romanian are a big part there, 30% and Hungarian speaking even around 50%. They have not only cultural demands but also in terms of political processes, even separatist; the great Romania and the great Hungary. The primary school graduates can't speak Ukrainian there, at all. They can't participate in high school exams to graduate and attend universities in Ukraine. I understand why it is like this. Mentally, they are attached to Hungary or Romania. Economically, they are also attached to Hungary or Romania, because those countries are EU members. Wage, health care...

Intrv: Do they have double citizenship?

Resp: Yes, in Ukraine the law forbids to have double citizenship but in Ukraine it is different.

You can forbid but still everything is functioning somehow in some black, grey zone.

It was said that 150 thousands of people in both oblasts has foreign citizenship,

Romanian and Hungarian. It is said that it is a threat to Ukrainian security.

Intrv: Speaking of which, I wanted to ask what do you think is the biggest threat to Ukraine?

To Ukraine's integrity?

Resp: What is the biggest? Ukrainians by themselves. I think that the state's security depends of various things but we can divide it into 2 categories: domestic, internal and external

security. External is an aggression of Russia. You know those issues that occurred in the east of Ukraine and with Crimea etc. The other question is regarding how Ukrainians respond to those processes, and not only to those processes. Ukrainians have six denominations, Ukrainians are Ukrainian-speakers and Russian-speakers. Ukrainians are mentally divided, they are pro-European and pro-Moscow orientated. Ukrainians are extremely divided politically. When Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Jacek Kuroń were participating in the presidential elections and Kuroń lost, it was a big tragedy for the Poles and I couldn't understand it. Kwaśniewski was a socialist, and Kuroń was representing the rightist, for me it was indifferent because they both were pro-Polish: Poland in the EU, Polish cultural development, they both had the same goals. Here it is, hmm those processes for 3-4 years were dimmed because it was even dangerous to admit that you are pro-Russian, but now there are movement, hmm they are not so popular yet, not as before 2014 but here the leftists; socialists, communists are pro-Russian, the rightists; pro-European, ultra rightist are nationalists, they want to follow the third path of the development; not together with Europe, not together with Russia but something else. This society is very inhomogeneous, it is divided; economically, in terms of social welfare, politically, in terms of religion, in terms of mentality, in terms of language. Therefore, I think that the biggest threat to the Ukrainian nation are Ukrainian itself. But all those issues could have been handled, at least it could be tried to solve it and to complete some scenario that would comprehend at least internal politics. Internal politics but not focused on state ideology. I think this is very important. Some state ideology it sounds, hmm this is very debatable. I understand the basic ideology of state, there are supporters and opponents of this conception. But ideology; European Union, human rights, liberal freedom and for me the most important is the question of corruption. Corruption

whose nepotism, which neglect all these things. Because a man who ideologically is oriented to Russia, for example such man when if he sees that in 4 or 5 years in medical cases you don't need to bribe anyone in each step, you don't need to bribe people at each office, when he sees that a judge who took bribe for example 100 thousand Hryvnia and was punished for that, when some clerks earn 2 million Hryvnia and some do have such bonuses, those things demoralize the society. Whatever people will say, that Ukraine will be European, when 4 years after post-Maidan the situation rather resembles the failure than a victory of post-Maidan's dreams, ideas. Then the security issues are in question. And if the destructive impulses will increase from the east, and they will increase I can't give guarantee that in some other regions another people's republic will be introduced who would like to support the Russian Spring and to follow the same scenario that was produced in Moscow, in Kremlin. That is why I mentioned two groups of security; internal and external. Here we have Russian aggression, here we have help of neighbors, EU and USA and Poles. They all say that this is also their venture, here in the east. Because if Ukraine would be focused on politics with Russia, here at Zbruch River there would be standing ...and they have never forgotten, it was historical their land too. Then the security question would in concentrated on internal and external factors. This is my vision, here each concept may be different but out of it we have got a basic understanding of the current situation in Ukraine.

Intrv: I have a question regarding corruption. I have seen in the Internet that there are social campaigns launched against corruption. Since when it is taking place? Is is something new?

Resp: This man is called Shabunin, the Anticorruption Committee. And today, hen front of the Verkhovna Rada, there was some actions „begone corruption”. There are many

institutions that fight with the corruption. There are 4 or 5 public institutions that deal with the corruption. Those clerks who work there, have got very high salaries because it was often said here that in order to fight with the corruption you must receive enough high salary, then you won't be tempted to accept bribe. That is why they earn around 1.5 - 2 million Hryvnia, 40 thousands of Dollars monthly and corruption is the highest in Europe. There is lots to talk about in terms of this. People always say here that here there is no political willingness to fight this phenomenon. Unfortunately, those hopes that majority of the society laid on to the current President, but it's politics. It will be difficult to elect homogeneously a president in the upcoming elections. I will tell you that liberal scientific environment have no answer so as non liberal. There is no rightist candidate that people like nationalists would vote for. Those like Svoboda is marginal now, 1 or 2%, they don't even enter parliament anymore because they are discredited for many various reasons.

Intrv: Will Tymoshenko run for the elections? I have seen some posters all around the city.

Resp: Yes, they are everywhere. I don't know, they say many various things about her nomination and the past, her connections with Russia and Putin. So, I don't know.

Intrv: Speaking of which, the president Petroshenko is the owner of Roshen who still has their factories in Russia, isn't it?

Resp: There are inconsistent information regarding this. But there are still factories in Russia I can't deny it. But they say it is not operating now. I am not a great President Petroshenko supporter, I have never voted for him but he is the President chosen by the majority of Ukrainians. I am not active in politics, I just observe those processes. I don't support all of his actions. But it's only 10 months left to the new elections and I hope there will be a new president. We will see. That would be all for this topic or now.

Intrv: Thank you so much for your time.

