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'Great Russians' and 'Little Russians': Russian-Ukrainian Relations and Perceptions in Historical Perspective

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The *Donald W. Treadgold Papers* publication series was created to honor a great teacher and great scholar. Donald W. Treadgold was professor of history and international studies at the University of Washington from 1949 to 1993. During that time, he wrote seven books, one of which — *Twentieth Century Russia* — went into eight editions. He was twice editor of *Slavic Review*, the organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, and received the AAASS Award for Distinguished Contributions to Slavic Studies, as well as the AAASS Award for Distinguished Service. Professor Treadgold molded several generations of Russian historians and contributed enormously to the field of Russian history. He was, in other ways as well, an inspiration to all who knew him.

The *Treadgold Papers* series was created in 1993 on the occasion of Professor Treadgold's retirement, on the initiative of Professor Daniel Waugh. Professor Treadgold passed away in December 1994. The series is dedicated to the memory of a great man, publishing papers in those areas which were close to his heart.

Glennys Young, Editor
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About the author of this issue

Andreas Kappeler is professor of East European History at the University of Vienna. He has published on the history of the Russian Empire and of Ukraine. His recent books include: *The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History* (Harlow, England: Longman; New York: Pearson education, 2001); *Kleine Geschichte der Ukraine*, 2nd ed.(Munich: C.H. Beck, 2000); and *Der schwierige Weg zur Nation: Beiträge zur neueren Geschichte der Ukraine* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2003).

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On 1762 the Ukrainian writer Semen Divovych wrote a dialogue in Russian verses titled "A Talk between Great Russia and Little Russia." At the time, 'Little Russia' was the official name for Ukraine. In the beginning 'Great Russia' asks 'Little Russia':

What kind of a people are you and whence have you come?
Tell me, tell me your origins, from what have you derived?

'Little Russia' explains her heroic past, from the time of the Khazars, to rule under the kings of Poland, until her voluntary submission under the Russian ruler Aleksei Mikhailovich who guaranteed restoration of her old privileges. 'Great Russia' replies:

You know, with whom you speak, or do you forget it?
I am Russia! Why do you disregard me? ...
As if you would belong to another Russia, not to me!

'Little Russia' answers:

I know, that you are Russia,
and this is my name, too.
Why do you frighten me? I am brave myself.
I have become subject not to you, but to your lord,...
Do not think that you yourself are my ruler,
But your lord and my lord are in command of both of us.
And the difference between us is only in adjectives,
You the Great and I the Little live in bordering countries.
That I am called Little and you Great
Is not a strange thing to you or to me.
For your borders are wider than mine,..
Yet we are equal and form one whole,
We swear allegiance to one, not to two lords -
Thus I consider you equal to myself.

'Little Russia' then explains her merits and refutes 'Great Russia's' accusation of having betrayed Russia with Hetman Mazepa. In the end 'Great Russia' is convinced:

Enough, I accept now your truth,
I believe all you said, I respect and recognize your
braveness ...

I won't give up my friendship with you forever.
We will live in the future in inseparable concord
and we will serve loyally one state.¹

In 1762, when this dialogue was written, the Tsarist state under Empress Catherine II began systematically to integrate 'Little Russia', which consisted of the Hetmanate of the Dniepr Cossacks on the left bank of Dniro/Dniepr River (with Kyiv/Kiev on the right bank). The Cossacks had enjoyed considerable autonomy within Russia since 'Little Russia's' voluntary union with Muscovy more than a century earlier. The "Conversation between Great Russia and Little Russia" reacts to 'Little Russia's' danger of being subordinated to 'Great Russia' and emphasizes the dynastic, pre-national character of the Tsarist Empire, which embraced 'Great Russia' and 'Little Russia' as equal partners. However, Semen Divovych's dialogue, written in the middle of the eighteenth century, does not reflect the reality of political interrelations between Russia and the Ukrainian hetmanate of this epoch, but, rather, the wishful thinking of the Cossack elite. It can be considered the swan song of the autonomous Hetmanate. In the following decades 'Little Russia' lost practically all her traditional rights and privileges and became a normal part of the Tsarist Empire, as was also the case with the right bank Ukraine which was annexed by Russia in the second partition of Poland in 1793.²

This equality between Ukraine and Russia lost its foundation in the nineteenth century when nationalism emerged in Russia. The 'Little' or 'Southern Russians' were considered integral parts of the Russian state, the Russian people and, consequently, the Russian nation. When Ukrainian intellectuals began to develop their own national movement, which brought into question an all-Russian nation, the Ukrainian language and culture were persecuted and subjected to repressive Russification (1863-1905). The February revolution of 1917 and the creation of an independent Ukrainian National Republic (1918-1920) seemed to change the character of Ukrainian-Russian relations. This was also true, to a similar extent, for the Ukrainian Soviet Republic during the 1920's. This kind of relationship ended under Stalin, who bludgeoned Ukraine with terror and degraded her to an obedient little sister of the great Russian brother.³

Only in 1991, when Ukraine emerged from the collapse of the Soviet Union as an independent republic, could the prospect of equality with Russia reappear on the political agenda. It was not until May 1997, after several delays, that Russian President Boris

Yeltsin and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma signed a "Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership" between the two countries. It begins by stating:

Ukraine and the Russian Federation ... based on the close historic ties and the relationship of friendship and cooperation between the peoples of Ukraine and Russia ... considering that the strengthening of friendly relations, good-neighborliness, and mutually beneficial cooperation corresponds to substantial interests of their peoples and serves the cause of peace and international security ... filled with a determination to ensure the irrevocability and continuation of the democratic processes in both states ... have agreed as follows:

Article 1: As friendly, equal, and sovereign states, the High Contracting Parties shall base their relations upon mutual respect and trust, strategic partnership and cooperation.

Article 1 is followed by 40 other articles which regulate the principles of equality, of reciprocal recognition, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the two states.⁴

After 225 years Divovych's wish was finally fulfilled, that Russia recognized independent Ukraine as an equal partner. For Russia the recognition of Ukraine was a difficult step. The Duma and the Federative Council ratified the Treaty on Friendship only in December 1998 and February 1999. However, despite what the treaty may say, Russian-Ukrainian relations even today are not completely normal or equal. Nevertheless, initial political tensions have eased in recent years.⁵

When Ukraine declared its independence in August 1991 and confirmed it in a referendum on 1 December, which passed with over 90 per cent of the votes, it delivered a mortal blow to the Soviet Union. Russian government and society were shocked. Russian politicians (among them not only imperial nationalists like the Russian vice-president Alexander Rutskoi, but also prominent democrats like the mayors of Moscow and Leningrad, Gavriil Popov and Anatolii Sobchak, and Yeltsin's close adviser, Gennadii Burbulis) reacted with open threats. The media in Russia and abroad feared war, even nuclear war, between the two most important post-Soviet states. On the eve of the Ukrainian referendum, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev declared, "we cannot even contemplate that Ukraine would leave the Union, because that would be big trouble for the Union, but even bigger trouble, a

catastrophe, for Ukraine.”⁶ The chief editor of the liberal newspaper *Moskovskie novosti* (*The Moscow News*) said shortly before the final collapse of the Soviet Union that “millions of Russians are convinced that without Ukraine not only can there be no great Russia, but there cannot be any kind of Russia at all.”⁷ Ukrainian politicians responded by insisting on independence. President Kuchma commented in 1995 that “Ukraine wanted to have an equal partnership with Russia ... There are forces in Russia which do not want to understand that Ukraine is a sovereign state and this is our main worry in relations with Russia.”⁸

However, the sensationalistic horror scenarios prominent in the Russian and Western press did not come to pass. On the contrary, Ukraine and Russia (with the notable exception of Chechnya) during the first decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union were spared from wars and violent interethnic conflicts—in contrast to the situation in the Caucasus or in former Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, Russo-Ukrainian tensions should not be underestimated. Many significant issues arose between Ukraine and Russia during the 1990’s including:

1. Problems connected with the heritage of the Soviet army, especially their nuclear weapons, which evoked fears in Central and Western Europe, namely due to the memory of the Chernobyl catastrophe of 1986;
2. The conflict over who would inherit the Soviet Black Sea Fleet, provisionally settled in 1997;
3. The problem of the Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea with the important marine harbor Sevastopol’. Crimea had been part of the Russian Republic for centuries, and only in 1954 was it transferred to the Ukrainian SSR. It is populated by a majority of ethnic Russians;
4. The existence of over 11 million ethnic Russians in the Ukrainian state, especially in its Eastern and Southern regions. They constitute over 20 per cent of the population of Ukraine;
5. Cultural and linguistic rights of the Russian speaking population of Ukraine, which consists of approximately 50 per cent of the general population;

6. The economic dependence of Ukraine on Russian petroleum and natural gas;

7. Diverging opinions about the character of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS): Ukraine succeeded in preventing Russian efforts toward tighter integration of CIS members.⁹

Relations between Russia and Ukraine, the two largest nations in Europe (territorially), are extremely relevant for the future of Europe and the world. Despite the "Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership" in 1997, contemporary attitudes threaten their relationship. These attitudes are largely the product of history. To better understand their relationship, it is necessary to closely examine this history. This paper offers an overview of this complicated, little researched problem.

The state of research

Many historians have examined the topic of Ukrainian-Russian relations. It is a central topic in Ukrainian historiography, and implicitly it is present in many works. Explicitly, a scholarly overview of the history of Ukrainian-Russian relations in Ukrainian does not exist. Nevertheless, four titles can be mentioned. Two such works are written by members of the Ukrainian community in the USA. Konstantyn Kononenko focuses on the economic relations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which he interprets as colonial dependency of Ukraine from Russia. Petro Holubenko's (a pseudonym for Petro Shatun) work analyzes cultural aspects of the problem. Both works have a strong anti-Russian bias and a relatively low scholarly standard, but they offer some interesting source material.¹⁰ Two other books were published in Ukraine recently by the Ukrainian publicists Oleh Hryniv and Mykola Riabchuk. The first, written by a national-conservative anthropologist, is strongly anti-Russian. The second, a collection of essays from one of the most brilliant contemporary Ukrainian journalists, has a national-liberal view and is aware of modern western theories and methodologies.¹¹ Russian-Ukrainian relations during the past few years have been the subject of several collections of articles concentrating on contemporary problems and looking for compromises; two of them have been published or co-published

by the National Institute of Ukrainian-Russian relations of the *Rada* of national security and defense of Ukraine.¹²

Generally, Russian historiography has neglected the Ukrainian problem. During the Soviet Period, Russians and Ukrainians had to praise "the friendship and brotherhood" of both peoples in history and present times.¹³ Russian emigrants published polemical works on "Ukrainian separatism" which have recently been republished and commented upon by extreme Russian nationalists.¹⁴ However, some professional Russian historians have worked on the history of Russian-Ukrainian relations. Among them, Aleksei Miller and Boris Floria have written valuable studies on special topics and organized a joint Russian-Ukrainian conference in Moscow in 1996, whose papers were published in 1997. That same year the Russian political scientist Dmitrii Furman edited a book, with papers written by Russian, Ukrainian, and American scholars on contemporary Ukrainian-Russian relations in historical perspective. In 1999 the popular journal *Rodina* (*Homeland*) devoted a large special issue with contributions of Russian and Ukrainian scholars to the subject.¹⁵

In the West, scholars of Ukrainian descent already in Soviet times made contributions to the topic. Among them are the path-breaking studies of Roman Szporluk. Most of the contributions he has made in the last twenty-five years were recently republished in a volume in 2000. In 1981, Peter J. Potichnyj organized a conference in Canada which was devoted to "Ukraine and Russia in Their Historical Encounter." These papers, which constituted the first scholarly treatment of the topic in general, were published 11 years later by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.¹⁶ Only the sudden and unexpected appearance of the two independent states evoked a broader interest in the history of Russian-Ukrainian interrelations in several foreign countries. An international research project, organized by Mark von Hagen (Columbia University) and I, tried to take an inventory of the central questions from the sixteenth century to the present. The volume presenting a selection of papers of the four conferences organized in the framework of the project finally has been published in 2003. Important contributions have been made by the British scholars David Saunders and Andrew Wilson. Recently three monographs have been published. Two, *Ukraine and Russia* by the British journalist Anatol Lieven and *Political Culture and National Identity in Russian-Ukrainian Relations* by Mikhail Molchanov, concentrate on contemporary problems. The other, *Russia and Ukraine* by Myroslav Shkandrii,

a Canadian specialist of Ukrainian literature, applies postcolonial theory in looking at discourses of Empire.¹⁷ On the whole, the problem remains under-researched. A general overview of the history of Ukrainian-Russian interrelations is lacking.

There are four aspects at the heart of Ukrainian-Russian relations that will be examined:

1. Problems of terminology and methodology;
2. Different representations of history;
3. Interrelations of elites and high cultures;
4. Mutual perceptions.

Ethnic terms and national projects

The two texts quoted in the beginning of this paper illustrate that both Russia and Ukraine, over the past few centuries, have appeared under different names and represented different entities and different projects of nation-building.

In the conversation of 1762 Ukraine bears the name 'Little Russia'. The term 'Little Russia' (*Malorossiiia*) did not mean, as Semen Divovych thought, the difference in size between the two areas. Since the fourteenth century the Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople designated two church provinces of Rus', Halych/Kiev and Vladimir/Moscow, with the terms "*he mikra Rosia*" ('Little Russia' which is inner or southern Russia) and "*he megale Rosia*" ('Great Russia' which is outer or northern Russia). Names of church provinces occasionally were transferred to different regions of Rus', but disappeared in the beginning of the fifteenth century. The term 'Great Russia' begins to reappear in sources during the sixteenth century, the term 'Little Russia' by its very end.¹⁸

Around 1600 Ukrainian educated churchmen studying Greek sources took up the term *Malorossiiia* and introduced it into the title of the orthodox metropolitan of Kiev, elected in 1620. As in the late middle ages, 'Little Russia' meant the East Slavic lands of the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth (Ruthenian or *rusyn*). Ukrainian churchmen began also to use more frequently the term 'Great Russia'. In the 1640's, when communication with Moscow became more intensive, the terminology was adopted in Russia. In

1654, 'Great Russia' and 'Little Russia' appeared for the first time in the official title of the Muscovite Tsar. Only from this time forward did the Russian government use 'Little Russia' (*Malorossiiia*) to express the idea that left-bank Ukraine, and later other Ukrainian regions, belonged to Russia.¹⁹

In the dialogue from 1762, 'Little Russia' represented the Hetmanate of left-bank Ukraine, or more precisely, its elites whose aim was to attain equal rights with 'Great Russia' in the framework of the Tsarist Empire. 'Great Russia' in this context meant the ethnically Russian part of Russia. Not until the nineteenth century did the term 'Little Russia' gradually acquire the pejorative meaning of the inferior part of Russia. *Malorossy* ('Little Russians') then became a negative designation by nationally conscious Ukrainians for Ukrainian people who were loyal to the Tsarist state and integrated themselves into the Russian culture and language.²⁰

The partners of the treaty of 1997 were Ukraine and the Russian Federation as sovereign republics. Only during the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century did the terms 'Ukraine' and 'Ukrainians', which had been used since the middle ages for particular regions, gradually become the common self-designation of the emerging nation. 'Ukraine' has served as the official name for the region only since 1917, at first for the Ukrainian National Republic, and then for the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Only after the Second World War did 'Ukraine' include Ruthenians (*rusyny*) from Western Ukraine, when, for the first time, nearly all areas with a Ukrainian-speaking majority were united into one state.

In 1997, *Rossiiia* (Russia) referred to the new state, *Rossiiskaia Federatsia* (the Russian Federation). In Russian, *Rossiiia* is distinguished from the ethnonym *russkii* (Russian). *Rossiiia* means a supranational identity which includes several ethnic groups, among them the Russians (*russkie*). So in principle, the new Russian state is a supranational federation of several peoples. The term *Rossiiia* is taken from the Tsarist Empire where it was first used in the sixteenth century and became the official designation of the multinational state in the eighteenth century. In the later Soviet period the equivalent of the supranational imperial nation was the supranational Soviet nation or people (*sovetskii narod*).²¹

The dichotomy between the ethnic nation based on language, culture, and common history (*russkie*), and the political or civic nation of subjects or citizens (*rossiane*) is crucial, although in practice the two conceptions continuously intermingle. The

notion of *Rossiia*, the common designation for the multinational Tsarist Empire and for the present Russian state, is closely related to the older terms *Rus'* and *ruskii*. In Ukrainian, English, or German *Rossiia* (Russia) and *ruskii* (Russian) are designated by the same term. Ukrainians often identified the Russian state (*Rossiia*) with the Russian people (*rossiis'kyi narod*). In contrast to the Russian nation, the Ukrainian ethnicity and state nation are designated by only one name, 'Ukraine' and 'Ukrainian'.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the term *Rossiia* designated a multinational state, just as the ethnic term Russian (*ruskii*) officially comprised not only ethnic Russians, but all Eastern Slavs, including 'Great Russians', 'Little Russians' (Ukrainians), and 'White Russians' (Belorussians). In this sense the Ukrainians were part of an all-Russian cultural Orthodox community which was an important pillar of Tsarist ideology. Modern Russian nationalism, which was constructed after the Crimean War, the Polish rebellion of 1863, and the apparition of a public sphere by political journalists like Mikhail Katkov and Ivan Aksakov, combined to form the concept of a Russian ethnic nation with the political concept of the Russian (*rossiiskii*) Empire aimed at the new project of an ethnically homogeneous Russian nation-state.²²

'Little Russians' or Ukrainians in the beginning of the twentieth century were regarded by many educated Russians as integral parts of the Russian nation. Assimilation to the Russian language and culture since the eighteenth century had been common among Ukrainian elites, but only after the Polish uprising of 1863 did Russification of Ukrainians become an explicit goal of Tsarist policy.²³ The effects of this policy were strengthened by the impact of modernization. This option of merging into a ethnic Russian nation was also propagated, at least in theory, by the Russophiles of Austrian Galicia who were for decades the most important branch of the Ruthenian national movement.²⁴ If Russification in the Tsarist Empire or later in the Soviet Union had been successful, such assimilation processes could have interrupted or even ended Ukrainian nation-building. An example for such an evolution were the Occitans or Provençals of France, with whom the Ukrainians of Russia sometimes compared themselves or were compared to by Russians.²⁵

In the Soviet Union, the supranational Russian Empire (*Rossiiskaia imperiia*) was replaced by a new supranational Soviet entity. Under this umbrella Ukrainians, Russians, and other nations

had to live harmoniously as socialist nations, liberated from the antagonisms of capitalism. With the Stalinist return to national values, the old all-Russian (East Slavic) project and partially Russian nationalism were revived. Russians once again became "the leading people" of the state, the older brothers in the Soviet family of peoples. Their language, culture, and history got a superior status, and Russification again was furthered by the state. In 1954 Khrushchev tried to promote Ukrainians to the role of the second brother or junior partner, but after his fall Russification again was furthered by the state.²⁶

In the history of Ukrainian-Russian interrelations the ambiguity of the Tsarist and Soviet Empires has always been a crucial issue. Their original character was supranational and it is quite problematic to identify them with Russia and the Russians. If we take seriously their supranationality, Russian-Ukrainian relations do not concern the interactions of Ukrainians with the Tsarist or Soviet state. The identification of the Empire with the Russians is contested by many Russians today who contend that the Russian people suffered more than most of the Tsarist and Soviet state under Imperial rule. As Geoffrey Hosking states, the position of an imperial nation impeded the formation of a Russian ethnic and civic nation.²⁷

On the other hand, Russian nationalism from the start had a strong statist and imperial character.²⁸ Most members of the elites in both Tsarist and Soviet times were Russians or Russified non-Russians. Many Russians in the late Tsarist and the late Soviet state considered themselves members of the ruling, imperial Russian nation. Believing their language and culture were superior to other peoples in the Empire, they therefore felt it their duty to civilize the non-Russian ethnicities of the territory. For many Russians today these notions of Russia and the Soviet Union are still interchangeable.²⁹ From the perspective of many Ukrainians, Russians are perceived as representatives of the state, as agents of the Empire. The Russian nation is identified with the Tsarist and Soviet state. Thus, in the history of Russian-Ukrainian relations, conceptions of the state, peoples, and nations have intermingled, making it impossible to separate them analytically.

Historically, Ukrainians and Russians have viewed the nature of their interrelations with each other in many different ways. Listed below are the four major ways in which they each have viewed the nature of their relationship with the other. (These are ideal

types; in reality, various intermediary forms and multiple approaches exist):

Russians have viewed their relationship with Ukraine in the following ways:

1. A supranational imperial Russian (*rossiiskaia*) nation
2. An all-Russian (*russkaia*) nation, including the three subgroups of 'Great', 'Little' and 'White Russians'
3. An ethnic Russian (*russkaia*) nation, either assimilating all Eastern Slavs, or consisting only of 'Great Russians'
4. A civic Russian (*rossiiskaia*) nation

Ukrainians, on the other hand, have viewed their relations with Russia in the following ways:

1. The Russian option: assimilation to a Russian ethnic and political nation
2. The 'Little Russian' option: subordination of a 'Little Russian' ethnic or regional entity under an all-Russian nation and state
3. The Ukrainian option without political independence: the existence of a separate Ukrainian nation, either with only cultural rights or with political autonomy within Russia or the Soviet Union
4. The Ukrainian option with independence: the existence of an Ukrainian nation with its own independent state, either with more emphasis on ethnic or on civic values

To make things even more complicated, the option of nation-building exists only for territorial or sub-ethnic parts of the Ukrainian or Russian ethnic groups. The 'Little Russia' mentioned by Divovych was a potential nation consisting only of the Cossack Hetmanate. However, the Ruthenians of Poland-Lithuania (Ukrainians and Belorussians together) and later the Greek Catholic Ruthenians of Austrian Galicia had the potential to become a

separate nation; this potential has been preserved among Galician Ukrainian Catholics to today. There are also aspirations among Ruthenians of Transcarpathia to imagine themselves as a separate nation.³⁰ Among Russians in various periods of history, nuclei of separate nations can be found among Old Believers, Don Cossacks or Siberians. But on the whole, the numerous 'Great Russians', united for many centuries in one state, are less dispersed than the Ukrainians, where deeper regional gaps exist.³¹

In view of the great regional and social variations, it is even questionable to speak of the formation of one Russian and one Ukrainian nation at all. Do Ukrainians in Lviv, Odessa, and Siberia or Russians in Moscow, Vladivostok, and Kiev have one common national consciousness? Are elites and commoners, townspeople and peasants members of the same nation? Or do they have any national consciousness at all?

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries numerous projects of nation-building have been suggested. Several alternative scenarios for the East Slavic nations have been imagined, constructed, discussed, and deconstructed. In investigating possible continuities in Russian-Ukrainian interrelations we have to take into account that Ukraine and Russia have had different meanings in different historical contexts and that various names have existed for both entities. Their relationship was not an interaction of two fully-formed nations, but, rather, a rivalry of different nation-building projects. This rivalry took place not only between Russians and Ukrainians, but also within the two communities. In this context we have to consider multiple identities and loyalties.³²

These permanent changes were connected with the process of nation-building or, to put it less mechanistically, with the imagining or inventing of nations. The Russian and the Ukrainian nations were late-comers to Europe. They were imagined and constructed in the nineteenth century, but developed into modern nations only during the twentieth century. However, national Russian and Ukrainian historiographies, which emerged together with the nations, usually projected their contemporary nations and their names back into history. They did not consider the alternative nation-building possibilities which have existed throughout history. Only the newer constructivist and voluntaristic approaches to nationalism have established a new understanding, namely that nations are not primordial, stable entities which have existed since ancient times and need only to be awakened, but intellectual and

social constructs (imagined communities) which emerged usually since the eighteenth century and which could appear in different forms. These forms have the ability to change their character or disappear completely.³³

In addition to the contribution that bilateral relations have had on nation building, Russia and Ukraine were also affected by other actors. For example, Poland introduced different ethnic, political, and social practices of nation-building. For centuries, Polonization of Ukrainians occurred, firstly in the kingdom of Poland-Lithuania from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, secondly in Austrian Galicia, and finally in the second Polish republic between the wars. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Russian-Ukrainian relationship was almost a function of their respective relations to the Poles. For a long time, the Tsarist government did not take Ukrainian peasants seriously, but looked at them mostly through the prism of Poland and the Poles who constituted the social and cultural elite in the Western parts of Ukraine. When the Poles, whose elite had been co-opted into the imperial nobility, revolted against Russia in 1830 and 1863, they were perceived as disloyal traitors. Many Russians believed the Ukrainian national movement was Polish or Jesuit intrigue and feared that Ukrainians could become Poles undermining the "Russian" character of the western borderlands of the Empire. On the other hand, for Ukrainians in the Western parts of Ukraine, the traditional social and religious antagonisms against the Polish nobility persisted after the partitions of Poland—making temporal coalitions with Russia against the Poles possible.³⁴

The Jews, who from the fourteenth century to the Shoah were an important part of the population of Ukraine, were a fourth possible actor. They traditionally were viewed by Ukrainians as agents of the Poles (and later the Soviets) which made Ukrainian-Jewish relations difficult. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries many Jews aligned themselves with the dominant culture, that is the Poles in the West and the Russians in the East. The social, political, and religious antagonisms between Ukrainians and Jews were sometimes manipulated by the Tsarist and Soviet governments. Collaboration of Ukrainians with Jews against Poles or Russians occurred, however, only rarely.³⁵

Finally, Russian-Ukrainian relations could be influenced by foreign policy. From the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, Poland-Lithuania, the Khanate of Crimea, and the Ottoman Empire were actual or potential contenders for power over Ukraine and the

Ukrainians. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Austria-Hungary and (after its collapse) the Polish Second Republic were the most important rivals of Russia and the Soviet Union. Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi, unable to liberate the Hetmanate from Polish-Lithuanian rule, looked to Istanbul, Bakhisarai, and Moscow for help. Due to foreign policy considerations, Tsar Alexei hesitated before accepting the hetman oath of loyalty. In the last decades before World War I the Ukrainian (and Polish) questions played an important role in the deteriorating relations between St. Petersburg and Vienna.

Until recently, the projects of Ukrainian and Russian nation-building were interdependent. The Russian nation has been imagined often together with 'Little Russians' or Ukrainians. In an article entitled "Great Russians" from a pre-revolutionary Russian Encyclopedia, the characteristics of 'Great Russians' are contrasted to 'Little Russians'.³⁶ The Ukrainian nation was constructed mostly in opposition to the Russian nation or the Russian-dominated Empire.

The 'great' and 'little' brother

The narrow interdependence and overlapping of the two nations often has been described using familial terminology. The two current presidents Leonid Kuchma and Vladimir Putin have emphasized several times the brotherly character of the relations between their two countries and peoples. During a meeting with the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus in May 2000, Putin said: "We have a common fate, common culture and religion. We are one family."³⁷

The notions of brotherhood first appeared at the beginning of the seventeenth century in a letter of the Orthodox Metropolitan of Kiev, Iov Borets'kyi, to Tsar Mikhail.³⁸ This terminology became common in the Tsarist Empire. It also appeared in Soviet propaganda after World War II to glorify the harmonious family of Soviet people in which Russians were the older and Ukrainians the younger brother or sister.³⁹ The Ukrainian brother was tightly linked to the older Russian brother. During World War II Ukrainians were promoted to the status of the "great Ukrainian people." Khrushchev tried to promote Ukrainians as 'Little Russians' to the role of the second brother who, in the words of Roman Szporluk, "may be employed in the family business."⁴⁰ For Non-Slavic

nationalities of the Soviet Union, Ukrainians performing imperial functions usually were perceived as Russians.

On the other hand, the older Russian brother reacted with special sensibility and severity, if the younger brother refused to obey and emancipated himself. This partly explains the severe repressions against Ukrainians in the late Tsarist Empire and in the Soviet Union during the 1930s and 1970s and the violent reactions of the Russian political class against the Ukrainian declaration of independence in 1991. This pattern is alive in Moscow today: the big sister Russia loves her smaller sibling 'Little Russia', if she subordinates herself under her authority, but reacts with non-comprehension or intimidation if the younger sibling has the intention of leaving the family. Many Ukrainians, for their part, accepted their situation as younger, smaller brothers together with an inferiority complex in relation to the older and greater brother, sometimes called the "great brother syndrome." The pattern of family relations can help to explain the Russian-Ukrainian relationship.⁴¹

In fact Ukrainians and Russians are closely related in language, religion, and culture. On the level of personal relations there are usually no barriers or interethnic tensions. However, on the national and state level the relations were not good and continue to worsen. This contradiction, as the liberal Russian political scientist Dmitrii Furman wrote, is at the heart of the problems between Russia and Ukraine, because brothers are not allowed to quarrel. It is well known that family conflicts often are fiercer than conflicts between strangers. Russians and Ukrainians quarrel, as do other brothers:

about their ancestors, the right of primogeniture, about inheritance. The younger demands that the older recognizes him as equal and does not patronize him, and the older in turn demands that the younger does not forget that he is younger and does take too many liberties.⁴²

Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev, complying with Ukrainian aims at equality, declared in 1994 that neither side was the 'elder' or 'younger' brother, rather they were 'twin brothers': "That's the formula we came up with. We were born together and will work together."⁴³ Sometimes the Russian-Ukrainian relationship is also characterized as one between father and son or between husband and wife. President Kuchma recently mentioned the "divorce

syndrome in the Ukrainian-Russian relationship," while the Russian politician Valerii Serov called for a "civilized divorce."⁴⁴

The Russian-Ukrainian relationship is not limited to a model of the family, husband and wife, or brother and sister in official political discourse. It must also be negotiated by individuals. Multiple identities and loyalties have been common over the centuries. In the pre-national and Soviet eras one could combine a Russian with a Ukrainian identity. Only with the emergence of Russian-Ukrainian antagonisms did it become difficult, if not impossible, to combine these identities. The Russian nationalist Katkov stated in 1863 that there could be "no rivalry between the southern and the northern part of one and the same nationality, just as there can be no rivalry between the two hands, between the two eyes of one and the same living organism," and he added in 1865, that "we love Ukraine as a part of our Motherland, as a most essential part of our people, as a part of ourselves." Therefore the loss of Ukraine threatens the mutilation of the Russian body and the Russian soul.⁴⁵ Viktor Chernomyrdin declared in 1996: "Ukraine is not only a neighbor state to us. It is part of our soul, and we want to be together with it all the time." And Boris Yeltsin added in 1997: "It is impossible to tear from our hearts that Ukrainians are our own people. That is our destiny —our common destiny."⁴⁶ This question is discussed below.⁴⁷

Mutual representations of history

This next section is about the mutual representation of history and Ukrainian-Russian interrelations. I will try to outline the two opposing positions.

Russian historians of the nineteenth century, from Nikolai Karamzin and Nikolai Ustrialov to Sergei Solov'ev, Vasillii Kliuchevskii, and Sergei Platonov, created a consistent conception of national history which was reproduced in the authoritative textbooks and has remained in effect until the present. According to this interpretation, the medieval Russian state was founded in Kiev. As a result of the Mongol conquest, its center and dynasty were dislocated to Vladimir-Suzdal' and Moscow in the North-East. The majority of the Russian population left the region close to the dangerous steppe and moved into the safe forests of the North-East. There, in the words of the eminent Russian historian Vasillii Kliuchevskii, "the gathering of the territories of Rus' transformed the grand duchy of Moscow into the national 'Great Russian' state"

which aimed at rebuilding the “common fatherland” of Kievan Rus’, the patrimony of the grand prince, as a Russian “national state.”⁴⁸ Parts of the Russian population who remained in the South-West were occupied by Poland-Lithuania and exposed to foreign influences since the fourteenth century. They began to speak in a Russian dialect corrupted by Polonisms and, since 1596, were forced to adopt a religious union with the Roman Catholic church.

Through the voluntary subordination of the Cossack Hetmanate in 1654 the ‘Little Russians’ or Ukrainians liberated themselves from foreign oppression and achieved reunification with Russia and the Russian people, a process which was completed by the partitions of Poland in 1772-1795 and finally by the voluntary reunion of Western Ukraine with the Soviet Union during the Second World War. The Ukrainian national movement, instigated by Poland and Austria, had little success and could not be successful, because an independent Ukrainian nation did not exist and could not exist. Ukrainian history was the history of a Russian region and a part of the Russian people. Therefore, Ukrainians in the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union voluntarily assimilated themselves to the Russians and thereby restored the initial ideal existence of a homogenous Russian people. This natural evolution suddenly was interrupted by the Ukrainian declarations of independence in 1918 and again in 1991.⁴⁹

In the Soviet Union this Russian imperial narrative was revived only since the late 1930’s. In the first two decades of Soviet rule the expansion of the Russian Empire was characterized as a series of military conquests and the rule of the Tsars was denounced as colonial domination and exploitation. Hetman Bohdan Khmel’nytskyi, who was the initiator of the subordination of Ukraine to Russia, was seen as an egoistic member of the feudal class. This image was replaced during Stalin’s “Great Retreat” by the traditional Russian image and finally canonized in 1954, when the celebration of its 300th anniversary labeled the Pereiaslav *Rada* the unbreakable “reunion of Ukraine with Russia”: “this historic act culminated the long struggle of the freedom-loving Ukrainian people against alien enslavers for reunion with the Russian people in a single Russian state.”⁵⁰ Khmel’nytskyi already during World War II had been promoted into the gallery of Ukrainian and Soviet heroes; in 1943 a special military Order and the city of Pereiaslav were named after him. But Ukrainian history after World War II again was degraded to a mere annex of Russian history. The Russian national conception of Ukrainian history which was revived in the

Soviet Union was used for legitimizing imperial policy. It dominates until today not only the conception of Ukrainian history in Russia, but also in Western Europe and America.⁵¹

The opposing position to this “traditional scheme of ‘Russian’ history” in its classic form was formulated by the Ukrainian historian and politician Mykhailo Hrushevskii on the base of earlier traditions going back to the Cossack chronicles of the seventeenth and eighteenth century and the *“Istoria Rusov”* (ca. 1800). It was developed further in the twentieth century, especially by historians of Ukrainian emigration, and it is officially accepted in contemporary Ukraine. According to this interpretation Kievan Rus’ was not a Russian but a Ukrainian state: “We know that the Kievan state, law, and culture were the achievement of one nationality, the Ukrainian-Rus’ one, the Vladimir-Moscow state of another, the ‘Great-Russian’ one.”⁵² Thus, Ukrainians had a Golden Age in medieval times, when the Russians still were hunting bears in the forests of the North East. Thus, they were in this period the “older brothers” of the Russians. The Muscovite state was formed later under the influence of the Mongol domination and therefore was something principally new, half-Asiatic. Only in the South-West of Rus’ was there demographic and political continuity in a European framework, first in the duchy of Galicia-Volynia and then in the grand duchy of Lithuania and the kingdom of Poland. For 450 years, the majority of Ukrainians lived in the kingdom of Poland-Lithuania, which was oriented toward the West, and for only two centuries in the Russian or the Russian dominated Soviet Empire. The Hetmanate of the Dniepr Cossacks emerging in the middle of the seventeenth century was the second Ukrainian state after the Kievan one and a precursor to a democratic Ukrainian national state.

The first phase of Russian dominance began with the attachment of the Cossack Hetmanate to the Muscovite Tsar in 1654, which was not a submission, but a terminable alliance. This alliance later was broken by Russia, which began to rule over Ukrainians as over a subject people. The democratic organization of the Cossacks and the European institutions like the municipal self-government were dissolved, and Ukraine became a province of Russia. But even under the severe conditions of this oppressive foreign rule, the Ukrainian people could preserve their identity and the memory of the Golden Age of the Cossacks. This was their main source of national identity until the nineteenth century, when Ukraine was reawakened as a nation by the national poet Taras Shevchenko and other “national awakeners.” Despite the severe oppression of the

Ukrainian language and culture, a Ukrainian national movement arose in Russia and Austrian Galicia and Bukovina and led to the formation of a national state in 1917-19. After its destruction by the Bolsheviks and Poles, Ukraine suffered under Russian-Soviet foreign rule, which reached its culmination during the 1930's with the Great Famine, interpreted as genocide, and the Stalinist Terror. Only in 1991 could an independent nation-state be resurrected.⁵³

Both conceptions of history are one-sided. Both project modern national categories into the past and exclude alternatives. The Russian historical narrative focuses on the Russian state, the Empire, and its main actors, the Russian rulers and the Russian people. The Ukrainian narrative is dominated by the myth of the Cossacks and the Ukrainian people, popularized by Shevchenko and Hrushevs'kyi, and in the Ukrainian National Republic. These one-dimensional interpretations of history, though not accepted by all Russians and all Ukrainians, represent important parts of the national consciousness. So, the myth of 1000 years of Ukrainian statehood has the goal of liberating Ukrainians from the syndrome of the "younger brother," while the myths of the direct inheritance of Kievan Rus' by the grand-princes of Moscow and of "Moscow the Third Rome" legitimize the primacy of Russia and the eternal union of Russia with Ukraine. The competition of national myths has been, as John Armstrong pointed out, an important battleground of Russian-Ukrainian relations up to the present. For example, in the current controversy over the Black Sea fleet and Crimea, some have used the myth of the glorious Russian imperial military past and the hero-city of Sevastopol', while others rely on the myth of the Zaporozhian Cossacks and their naval expeditions against Crimea and the Ottomans. Some symbols of independent Ukraine, like the trident (*tryzub*), the name of the Ukrainian monetary unit *hryvna*, both taken from Kievan Rus', and the historical personalities on the Ukrainian banknotes (among others, Kievan princes and hetman Ivan Mazepa) directly challenge Russian historical myths.⁵⁴

One example suffices to illustrate the different views of history. Peter I and Catherine II, who not without reason are the only Russian rulers to have been given the epithet "the Great," have been and are among the most popular historical people in Russia. On the other hand, hetman Mazepa, who defected from Peter to the Swedish king Charles XII in 1708, in the Russian tradition was canonized by Pushkin and Tchaikovsky as a traitor; in the Russian Orthodox church he was the subject of an annual anathema. The

portraits of Mazepa and Peter in Pushkin's poem *Poltava* (1828) have had a lasting place in Russian historical memory.

That he [Mazepa] recalled no benefaction,
That he revered no sacred action,
That from his heart all love was banned,
That he would squander blood like water,
That he held freedom fit for slaughter,
That he avowed no fatherland ...

Meanwhile, perturbed by nothing yet,
Quite unaware of any threat,
Mazepa weaves his sly devising,
A priest [in Russian, a Jesuit], whose word counts like his own,
Foments a popular uprising
And lures him with a parlous throne ...

Then Peter's booming voice resounded
Like the Almighty's instrument:
'To work, with God!' And from the tent,
By his close favorites surrounded,
Emerges Peter: living fire
His blazing eyes; his step resilient;
His visage fearsome; he is brilliant,
Embodiment of godly ire.

A hundred years have passed since then—
What now remains of those proud men.
So strong of license and of lust?...
Of all the names which shone and went
The annals of our iron era
Have raised but you, Poltava's hero,
Upon a timeless monument...
But vainly would you seek to trace
The Hetman's final resting-place:
Mazepa's name has long been dead!
At high cathedral service merely
His solemn ban is thundered yearly
and wakens hoarse echoes and dread.⁵⁵

So, in the work of the Russian national poet, the heroic genius Peter saves Russia from the danger of foreign rule, whereas Mazepa is stigmatized as the predator of the fatherland, collaborating with Jesuits and other foreigners.⁵⁶ This image was alive in Soviet times. In the official "Theses" of 1954 Mazepa is characterized as "a despicable traitor and Jesuit fosterling, who tried with the help of the Swedish and Polish invaders to sever Ukraine from Russia and

restore the detested foreign yoke," but against whom "the Ukrainian people rose unanimously."⁵⁷

From a national-Ukrainian perspective, Mazepa is considered a national hero who tried to restore a Cossack state independent from Russia. In contemporary Ukraine his portrait was used for the new currency *hryvna*. However, Mazepa has been criticized by Shevchenko and Ukrainian populists of being an aristocrat who suppressed his peasants.⁵⁸ On the other hand, Peter I and Catherine II, the heroes of the Russian tradition, are considered primarily responsible for the subsequent subjugation of Ukraine. Taras Shevchenko portrays the two rulers in 1844 in his political poem *The Dream (Son)*, which was not meant for publication. Looking at the famous monument of Peter I in St. Petersburg built by Catherine II, Pushkin's "Bronze Horseman," he states:

To the first —the second
Such a marvel she erected.
Now I know,
that it was this First who crucified
Our Ukraine,
And the Second who finished off
the widow-orphan
Hangmen! Hangmen! Cannibals!

Alluding to the many Ukrainian Cossacks, who were forced by Peter the Great to work for the construction of St. Petersburg, he wrote:

Accursed Tsar, insatiate,
Perfidious serpent, what
Have you done, then, with the Cossacks?
You have filled the swamps
With their noble bones! And then
Built the capital
On their tortured corpses, ...⁵⁹

During those same years, Nikolai Kostomarov wrote in the first political manifesto of the Ukrainian national movement, "Books of the Genesis of the Ukrainian People":

And on the left bank the Cossack Host held no longer
but hour by hour they succumbed to the fiendish
captivity of the Moscow Tsar and afterwards of the
Petersburg emperor, because the last Moscow Tsar and
the first Petersburg emperor destroyed hundreds of

thousands in the canals and built for himself a capital on their bones.

And the German Tsarina Catherine, a universal whore, atheist, husband slayer, ended the Cossack Host and freedom ... And Ukraine was destroyed.⁶⁰

There are many other examples of differing interpretations of the past. They include the primary Ukrainian myth of the historical role of the Ukrainian Cossacks; the significance of the Russian and Ukrainian revolutions of 1917-1920; and the role of the Ukrainian nationalists during World War II. However, in all these cases there is no uniform historical interpretation in Ukraine. Symon Petliura and Stepan Bandera are glorified as national heroes only in the Western and partially in the central parts of Ukraine, not in the East and the South of the country, where the Russian-Soviet traditions are still alive and strong.⁶¹

These two fundamentally contradictory conceptions of history are obstacles to a Russian-Ukrainian dialogue. Central to this controversy over historical myths, beginning with the right of primogeniture, is Ukraine's claim of equality with Russia. This claim conflicts with the Russian assertion that Ukraine is part of Russia or subordinate to it.

Interactions of elites and high cultures

When Ukrainians or *rusyns* came into closer contacts with Russians or Muscovites in the beginning of the seventeenth century, they appear, as Edward Keenan has pointed out, in official Russian documents as foreigners, as *cherkasy* (Circassians meaning Ukrainian Cossacks), *litva* (Lithuanians), *belarutsy* (Belorussians), or *khokhols* (named after the Cossack hairstyle). Ukrainians distinguished 'Great Russians' from their own group by calling them *moskali* (Muscovites). This terminology indicates that belonging to different states was the main distinction, but additionally there was a significant cultural gap and great socio-political differences between Russians and Ukrainians. Although both sides knew about the common Orthodox faith, the recent reform of Ukrainian orthodoxy in the spirit of Western humanism and Jesuit education had evoked suspicion in Russia of Ukrainian churchmen coming to Moscow, and of their writings. Another group that looked for contacts with Russia, the Dniepr Cossacks, were regarded as strong

soldiers, but unreliable and rebellious robbers, like the steppe nomads, they were thought to have a strange socio-political order.⁶²

The situation changed during the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries when many graduates of the Kievan Mohyla College (later the Kievan Academy), the first East Slavic institution of higher education, came to Russia and when, in 1686, the Kievan Orthodox metropolitanate was integrated into the Moscow patriarchate. Among the Ukrainian educated churchmen who played a significant role in the development of the Russian church, state, and culture were two close collaborators of Peter the Great, Stefan Iavors'kyi, first president of the Holy Synod, and Feofan Prokopovych, author of the most important manifesto of Russian imperial absolutism. During the first half of the eighteenth century, approximately half of the bishops in the Russian Orthodox Church were Ukrainian. The transfer of Western (Polish-Latin) ideas and cultural values to Russia by educated Ukrainians, a process that began earlier than the so-called Petrine Europeanization, contributed greatly to Russia's westernization. However, it should be mentioned that the long-term impact of humanism through the Ukrainization of Russian culture has recently been questioned by Max Okenfuss.⁶³

It was not only Ukrainian churchmen, but also many members of the autonomous Cossack Hetmanate elite who, during the eighteenth century, were gradually integrated into Russian society and culture. In 1785 the upper stratum of the Cossack officers (*starshyna*) was co-opted into the nobility of the Russian Empire. Ukrainians served the Russian imperators as political advisers, military officers, and scholars. The Russian government needed educated experts and trained officials for its reforms. The Orthodox Ukrainians were not discriminated against in Russia and, provided with a good educational background, they easily made careers in Russia, if they used the Russian language. The most prominent among them were the following: Kyrylo Rozumovs'kyi (1728-1803), president of the Russian Academy of Sciences (1746-1765) and last Ukrainian hetman (1750-1764); his son Andrii (1752-1836), a well-known diplomat in Russian service; Oleksandr Bezborodko (1747-1799), diplomat, Russian prince and chancellor of the Russian Empire; Petro Zavadows'kyi (1739-1812), a graduate of the Kievan Academy, who in 1802 became the first Russian minister of education; Dmytro Troshchyns'kyi (1749-1829), senator and minister; and Viktor Kochubei (1768-1834), a Russian prince, minister of internal affairs and chairman of the Committee of

Ministers. These high ranking Ukrainians established personal networks at court.

Besides these prominent politicians, there were many other Ukrainians, educated at the Kievan Academy or the Kharkiv Collegium, who came to Russia and served there not only in the administration, but also as journalists, writers, or historians. They contributed to the secularization of Russian cultural life and to the early discussions on the Russian nation and Slavdom. Through their writings Ukraine became more familiar in Russia. Educated Ukrainians during the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century contributed substantially to the political and cultural development of Russia, to "the convergence of Ukraine and Russia."⁶⁴

However, beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, the balance of cultural transfer was shifting. The new ideas of the Enlightenment did not come to Russia through Ukrainian mediation, but went to Ukraine via St. Petersburg and Moscow. The attraction of the dynamic Westernized Russian society and culture for the Ukrainian elite was steadily growing. The Cossack aristocracy and other educated Ukrainians were acculturated to the Russian nobility and became, at least partially, Russified in the capitals; although, parts of them conserved a regional 'Little Russian' patriotism. On the one hand, members of this 'Little Russian' elite kept alive the memory of the autonomous Cossack Hetmanate and its Ukrainian culture which had an important impact on the emerging modern Ukrainian national consciousness.⁶⁵

On the other hand, the permanent "brain drain" to Russia and the Russification of educated Ukrainians deprived Ukraine of an ethnic elite for a second time after the Polonization of the seventeenth century. Most of the many Ukrainians serving in the capital in the first half of the nineteenth century tried to become good Russians. The eminent statesman Viktor Kochubei wrote a few years before his death: "Although by birth I am a *khokhol*, I am more Russian than any in my principles, my circumstances, and my manners." But he and others, as David Saunders writes, never were able to sever their ties with Ukraine. There even were people who made careers by retaining their Ukrainian consciousness. One such individual was the grandfather of Vladimir Vernadskii, an artillery general, who is described by his grandson as "an original type of the old 'Little Russian' Cossackdom speaking almost only 'Little-Russian'."⁶⁶

The same is true for Ukrainians in Russian-language literature. The most famous example is Nikolai Gogol, who descended from the Ukrainian noble family Hohol and became one of the greatest Russian writers. However, the language, themes, and structural context of many of his works reflect his Ukrainian origin. His "Evenings on a Farmstead near Dikanka" and "Taras Bulba" were widely discussed in Russia as a piece of exotic 'Little Russian' literature. When Russians reproached him for portraying all Russians in a negative way, but describing 'Little Russians' with much sympathy and as having the soul of a *khokhol*, Gogol answered in a letter to his friend Aleksandra Smirnova in 1844:

I have to tell you that I myself do not know which kind of soul I have, the soul of a *khokhol* or of a Russian. I know only that I never would give preference to the 'Little Russian' before the Russian nor to the Russian before the 'Little Russian'. Both of their natures are too generously endowed by God and by design; each of them separately contains within themselves what the other lacks; a sure sign that they complement each other. Therefore, the very histories of their past existence are unlike each other so that different powers of their characters were developed in order to merge, later, into one, to create something more accomplished in mankind.⁶⁷

In pointing out his "twin soul," Gogol declares himself to be a member of a pre-national, all-Russian community in which 'Little Russians' and Russians have their place and do complement each other, a community where double loyalties and identities were possible.

For the Slavophile Konstantin Aksakov, however, Gogol is from 'Little Russia', "a living part of Russia, which has been formed by the mighty 'Great Russian' spirit." In his opinion, unity is derived from the 'Great Russian' element and has legitimate supremacy, like a head's supremacy over a person's body. However, a whole body is named after the man, not the head; similarly, Russia is called Russia, not 'Great Russia'. He believes that only by writing in Russian (that is, in 'Great Russian') can a poet from 'Little Russia' be visible. Therefore, he concludes, "Gogol is Russian, wholly Russian."⁶⁸

In general, in the first half of the nineteenth century the attitudes of Russians in regard to 'Little Russian' culture, which was viewed as a picturesque variant of the all-Russian culture, were quite favorable. Even some ethnic Russian scholars, such as the

linguist Izmail Sreznevskii or the historian Dmitrii Bantysh-Kamenskii, were among the “awakeners” of Ukrainian culture. This period of Ukrainophilia came to an end in the 1840’s and 1850’s; the subsequent “divergence of Ukraine and Russia” was also a reaction to the first steps of Ukrainian political nationalism. This applies to not only Russian conservatives like Nikolai Pogodin or (later) nationalists like Katkov, but also progressive radicals like Vissarion Belinskii, who criticized all manifestations of Ukrainian culture, including the poetry of Shevchenko and Markevych’s “history of ‘Little Russia’.” Belinskii echoes Hegel’s view on “non-historical” nations:

‘Little Russia’.. had no history in the strict sense of the word ... The history of ‘Little Russia’ is a tributary flowing into the great river of Russian history. ‘Little Russians’ were always a tribe, never a people, even less a state.⁶⁹

Aksakov and Belinskii set the tone for the attitude of educated Russians towards Ukrainian national aspirations. In principle this attitude did not change until the present time.

In Ukraine during the nineteenth century the Russian culture and language became the dominant one. In the big cities of Ukraine, Russian or Russified Ukrainian officials, landowners, merchants, and intellectuals dominated. The immigrated Russians, without doubt, were influenced by the Ukrainian milieu, regional traditions, and cultural peculiarities —a topic which has hardly ever been researched. The modern Ukrainian language and culture, which were under construction since the beginning of the century, were provincialized and limited more and more to the peasants. Only a small group of educated Ukrainians declared support for the Ukrainian language and culture and initiated an Ukrainian national movement. Among them were some ethnic Russian intellectuals, like Alexander Rusov, who made the conscious decision to adopt a Ukrainian identity.⁷⁰

This national consciousness had to be defined in opposition to the dominant Russian culture, language, and literature. Of great significance for the national movement was the former serf Taras Shevchenko, whose poetic works and tragic life made him a national myth. But most of the women and men who engaged in the Ukrainian national movement since the 1840s had studied in Russian schools and universities and were tightly linked to Russian culture and society. They could imagine Ukrainian culture only in a junior

partnership with Russian culture. So, the first Ukrainian political ideologist Nikolai Kostomarov, son of a Russian or Russified father and a Ukrainian mother, in the later years of his life worked as an all-Russian historian in St. Petersburg.⁷¹ Under the repressive conditions of the Tsarist Empire, people who wanted to promote Ukrainian nation-building either were working as scholars in the fields of history, ethnography, or literature (and tended to be mostly loyal to the Russian Empire and the all-Russian nation, e.g. Volodymyr Antonovych) or had to emigrate (as Mykhailo Drahomanov did).

Most of the Russified *malorossy* ('Little Russians'), as the nationally conscious Ukrainians labeled them with disdain, had, like Gogol, a dual all-Russian and 'Little Russian' identity. They made their careers in Russia, but usually did not give up their Ukrainian roots. They combined their loyalty to the emperor and the Russian state and their commitment to Russian culture with a loyalty and a commitment to Ukraine/'Little Russia' and its traditions. With the rise of nationalism the twin identities came into conflict. Individuals had to declare themselves as members of one or the other nation. It is important, however, to look at the nuances of national identities. There were and are many degrees of mixed identities which are often dependent on the political situation.

For example, in response to a question from the Russian-language newspaper *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* (*Ukrainian Life*) about the future of the Ukrainian nation, the economist Mikhail Tugan-Baranovskii (Mykhailo Tuhon-Baranovs'kyi) declared a few weeks before the outbreak of World War I, that he used to be a Ukrainian patriot in his youth, but that he now had a Russian identity. Only three years later he became general secretary of finance in the first government of the Ukrainian National Republic. He was by no means an unique case, but under the new political conditions many 'Little Russians' in 1917 and 1918 became conscious Ukrainians.⁷² Tuhon-Baranovs'kyi died in 1919 and Vladimir Vernadskii (Volodymyr Vernads'kyi), by this time president of the first Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, recalled that he was "a great product of Russian culture, its extraordinary richness, beauty, and power."⁷³

Vernadskii himself was an example of multiple and floating identities. In 1877, the fifteen-year old Vernadskii wrote in his diary: "The 'Little Russians' are terribly suppressed ... In Russia it is entirely forbidden to publish books in my mother tongue." In the following decades, Vernadskii made a brilliant career as a scholar in Moscow and St. Petersburg and in 1912 became a member of the

Imperial Academy of Sciences. As an all-Russian scholar he was active in the *zemstvo* movement. He was also a member of the liberal Kadet Party and of the Russian State Council. Declaring himself as a Russian with close ties to Ukraine, he wrote an article during World War I (which was not published until *perestroika*) about "the Ukrainian question" in which he expressed great sympathy for the Ukrainian national movement, though not for a separation of Ukraine from Russia. In 1917 he became a deputy minister of the Provisional government, but after the October Revolution he left Petrograd (the name given to the city of St. Petersburg from 1914-1924) and lived in Ukraine. There he was contacted by Mykola Vasylenko and Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi and agreed to serve as the first President of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in 1918-1919, although he remained skeptical of a Ukrainian national state. In 1921, Vernadskii returned to Petrograd and worked with the Soviet Academy of Sciences until his death in 1945. The long life of Vernadskii is a testimony of a mixed and shifting Russian-Ukrainian, all-Russian, and Soviet identity.⁷⁴

The same metamorphosis happened again in the first years of sovereign and independent Ukraine at the end of the twentieth century, when many members of the Russified 'Little Russian' Soviet elite, among them the current president Kuchma, changed their language, identity, and loyalty.

The Soviet period, which can be treated here only briefly, had ambiguous consequences for Ukrainian elites and high culture's interactions with Russia. On the one hand, the creation of the Soviet Ukrainian Republic and the policy of Ukrainization and indigenization (*korenizatsiia*) improved the situation of the Ukrainian language and culture and promoted Ukrainian nation-building. However, Soviet ideology, centralism, and imperial thinking set limits to national self-determination. The Ukrainian writer Mykola Khvylovyi, son of a Russian schoolmaster in the Russian-Ukrainian borderlands, in 1925-26 reacted with bold political pamphlets (one of them titled "Ukraine or Little Russia?") against the hegemony of Russian culture, against Moscow, "the center of all-Union Philistinism" and for the European-ness of Ukrainian literature.⁷⁵ Khvylovyi committed suicide in 1933, and during the 1930's all expressions of Ukrainian national thinking were suppressed by the Stalinist Terror. Nevertheless there continued to exist a territorial framework for nation-building, in which the Ukrainian language and nation were officially recognized, at least in theory, and comprised for the first time since World War

II practically all Ukrainians. On the other hand, Soviet ideology and the Communist party's monopoly of power allowed only a non-political nationalism (national in form, but socialist in content). Since the end of the 1920's Ukrainian elites and peasants endured Bolshevik terror, forced collectivization, a man-made famine, and the Second World War. These terrible experiences decimated the population and severely damaged Ukrainian culture.

After the Revolution, the Russians of the USSR had already lost many of their elites; they too were victims of the Stalinist Terror. The new ideology of Soviet patriotism, the victory in "the Great Patriotic War," and new super-power status resulted in a national consolidation of the Russians, furthered by Stalin. At the same time, their role as leading nation of the Soviet Empire restrained the formation of an ethnic and/or civic Russian nation. Out of the fifteen Soviet republics only the Russian republic lacked basic institutions such as a Republican party or an Academy of Sciences. The Russian nation was partially identified with the larger Soviet people or nation. Both Russians and Ukrainians, in the last years of the Soviet Union, did not constitute stable nations and suffered from crises of identity.⁷⁶

However, the situation of the Ukrainian nation was more precarious than that of the Russian one. The transformation of Ukraine into an urbanized and industrialized country gave Ukrainians a complete social structure (an important precondition of nation-building), but in the long-run it strengthened immigration of Russians and Russification of Ukrainians. Many Russian party officials, industrial cadres, and factory workers moved to Ukraine, and members of the Russified Ukrainian elite went to Moscow. The cities and the high culture in Ukraine after the war and especially during the seventies became more and more Russified. Ukrainian language and culture again, as during the nineteenth century, became increasingly provincialized and ruralized. This development of diversification was furthered by the repressive policy of the Stalin era and of the seventies. Increasing Russification was also successful because many Ukrainians were ready to accommodate themselves to Soviet-Russian society and culture and give up their Ukrainian language and identity, at least partially.⁷⁷

So, since the seventeenth century the Russian and Ukrainian elites and high cultures have continually interacted and intermingled. Until the end of the eighteenth century stronger impulses emanated from Ukrainian culture. In the last two centuries, the influences of Russian culture on Ukraine have been

stronger —a development which was facilitated by the Russification policy of the Tsars and Soviets. On the whole the two peoples have a great common cultural heritage which is not easy to divide into separate Russian and Ukrainian parts. This is as true for Russian writers originating from Ukraine, like Gogol', Vladimir Korolenko and Anna Akhmatova (born as Anna Horenko), as for authors living and writing in Ukraine, like the Russian Mikhail Bulgakov and the Russian-Jew, Isaak Babel'. It is also true for artists like Ilya Repin, Wassily Kandinsky, and Kasimir Malevich, born in Ukraine; for the film-director Alexander Dovzhenko; and even for the composers Petr Tchaikovsky and Sergei Prokof'ev, all of whom have been influenced by Ukrainian themes.⁷⁸

The fact that Russian culture was not always superior to Ukrainian culture, but that, on the contrary, modern Russian culture was partially created by Ukrainians, is important for the Ukrainian national consciousness. The significance of Russian culture is not questioned in the world, while Ukrainian culture always has to prove its *raison d'être*. Likewise, there is tension between an inclusive claim of culture by the Russians and the claim to equality of cultures by the Ukrainians.

Russian-Ukrainian perceptions

In general we have to emphasize that there have always been different perceptions of changing subjects and objects either simultaneously or over time. Because of the overlapping and intermingling of both cultures it is not always possible to grasp mutual perceptions. In any case the images of "the other" are closely interrelated to the image Ukrainians and Russians have had of themselves. It must be stressed, however, that this paper presents only a very limited picture of this problem, since little research has been completed on this topic by scholars.

In the writings of members of the Ukrainian national movement from the nineteenth century we can locate some Ukrainian stereotypes which still survive today. One of the most influential texts is Kostomarov's article "Two Russian nationalities" (*Dve russkikh narodnosti*) of 1861, in which, using examples from folklore and history, he summarizes Ukrainian-Russian dichotomies as:

1. Ukrainian individualism and personal freedom versus Russian collectivism and submissiveness;

2. Ukrainian traditions of private property, small families and the voluntary *Hromada* versus traditional Russian large families, repartitional communes and communal holding of the land;
3. Democracy and liberty, as created by the Cossacks versus the autocracy of the Tsars;
4. Ukrainian federalism versus Russian centralism;
5. Ukrainian love of nature versus a lack of such love among Russians;
6. Ukrainian imagination and spirituality versus Russian materialism and pragmatism;
7. Ukrainian tolerance and the absence of national exclusiveness versus Russian xenophobia and intolerance of other faiths;
8. Ukrainian spontaneity versus Russian social discipline and a spirit of organization.

So, Kostomarov, like other national ideologues, defines the Ukrainian "national character" in opposition to the Russian character. True, he states that many of the characteristics cited correspond to the national traits by which the Poles delimit themselves from the Russians. These are mostly traits of Western political culture. He adds, however, that Ukrainians were sharply distinguished from the aristocratic Poles by their democratic peasant culture and Cossack tradition.⁷⁹

These elements, especially the tradition of Cossack liberty and the Western character of the Ukrainian culture and mentality, are emphasized by later thinkers like Mykhailo Drahomanov:

Most of the national differences between Ukraine and Muscovy can be explained by the fact that until the eighteenth century, i.e., until the establishment of Russian rule, Ukraine was strongly linked to Western Europe. In spite of the handicaps caused by Tatar invasions Ukraine participated in Europe's social and cultural progress.⁸⁰

The founder and main ideologue of modern integral Ukrainian nationalism, Dmytro Dontsov, though a sharp opponent of the federalist Drahomanov, already in his early work, "The Foundations of Our Politics" (1921), stresses the opposition between Russia and Ukraine, and Russia and Europe as the "struggle of two civilizations." He postulates a continuity of the "Muscovite-Petersburg-Petrograd-(again)-Muscovite imperialism" and "expansionism against Europe," with "a deep mystic faith ... in the world mission of the Russian people." He elaborates on the elements of Russianness mentioned by Kostomarov, the Russian *obshchina* (community) and the lack of individualism and private property, the domination of the state with its officials ("the *baskaks* of the Khan") and the amorphousness and primitiveness of the people and even "the passivity," anti-intellectuality and anarchy of the Russian language. The Ukrainians, however, are the first bastion of Europe, with the Western values of family, property, social distinctness, clarity, and idealism.⁸¹

Even today such stereotypes are important parts of a Ukrainian national identity. They are strengthened by the negative perception of Tsarist Russian and the Russian dominated Soviet state, which are identified with despotism, colonialism, and totalitarianism. As Ukrainians have been confronted with Russians partially in their roles as representatives of the imperial state, such negative stereotypes have been transferred to the Russian people. On the other hand, one must keep in mind the fact that in contemporary Ukraine there is no general national consciousness embracing all regional and social groups. The national myths and anti-imperial stereotypes mentioned are much more strongly represented among West-Ukrainians and the intelligentsia than among Ukrainians living in the eastern or southern parts of the nation and among workers. In Galicia, the image of the imperial mind of the Russian people is common: "In the heads of the older brother under the fur cap with ear-flaps the imperial ambitions are firmly established."⁸²

The common, everyday perception of Russians by Ukrainians was and is, nevertheless, less offensive. It is ambiguous and combines characteristics like sentimentality and brutality, courage and drunkenness, hospitality and dirtiness. A common nick name for Russians *katsapy* (goats beards), which refers to a style of beard once popular in Russia, is given mostly in jest. Ukrainians traveling to Russia or living among Russians during the nineteenth century wrote of their hospitality and straightforward

behavior; others stress their arrogance. Only among Galician Ukrainians did stereotypes of the Russians sometimes have more negative and aggressive traits.⁸³

Russian perceptions of Ukrainians were changing during the nineteenth century. As Paul Bushkovitch has shown, Russian society of all political orientations in the first half of the nineteenth century looked with sympathy at the 'Little Russians'. As long as the 'Little Russian' language and folklore was a complementary, picturesque manifestation of the all-Russian culture, it could be furthered with benevolence. This perception changed when Ukrainians began to develop political goals and to delimit themselves from Russia and the Russians.⁸⁴

Simultaneously, in Russian society the question of a Russian nation was emphasized, and after the Crimean war and the Polish uprising of 1863, an ethnic Russian nationalism emerged. In an ethnic and/or political Russian nation, which usually included 'Little' and 'White Russians', there was no place for an Ukrainian language and culture. During this period, the national-cultural aspirations of Ukrainians which seemed to jeopardize the unity of the Russian nation, were strongly disapproved by the overwhelming majority of the Russian educated society. So the Ukrainian question became one of the crucial problems of Russian nation-building. Still the interest in Ukraine decreased, and, in the political thinking of late-Tsarist Russia, the Ukrainian problem was not among the most disputed, as Poland or the Balkans were.

The new perception of Ukraine was pronounced clearly by the first important spokesman of modern Russian nationalism, Mikhail Katkov, who was especially interested in the Polish question. One of his few editorials in *Moskovskie vedomosti* devoted to 'Little Russia' (June 21 1863) begins with the words: "An intrigue, everywhere an intrigue, a perfidious Jesuit intrigue!" and states:

Ukraine has never had a distinctive history, has never been a separate state, the Ukrainian people are a purely Russian people, a primeval [*korennoi*] Russian people, an essential part of the Russian people, without whom the Russian people cannot go on being what they are.⁸⁵

The Slavophile Ivan Aksakov added:

'Little Russia', Belorussia, 'Great Russia' —they are one body, something whole and indivisible— and to pull off one from another is equal as to dismember a body in its

parts; to cut off Kiev ... this would mean to cut into the living body.⁸⁶

Half a century later the liberal nationalist Petr Struve, a member of the Kadet Central Committee who primarily was concerned with forging a Russian national state and a single all-Russian culture, interpreted the Ukrainian national movement as:

the titanic project of a division ... of Russian culture; and this signifies that 'the Little Russian' and 'Belorussian' cultures are created intentionally, because they do not exist. If the 'Ukrainian' idea of the intelligentsia ... will inflame the popular basis by his 'Ukrainiandom' [*ukrainstvom*] —then this will lead to a gigantic and unprecedented schism in the Russian nation, which, such is my deepest conviction, will result in a veritable disaster for the state and the people. All our 'borderland' problems will seem like mere trifles in comparison to the prospect of bifurcation and —should the 'Belorussians' follow the 'Ukrainians'— 'trifurcation' of Russian culture. Russian Society, he concluded, must enter into an ideological struggle against 'Ukrainianhood' without any ambiguity or indulgence.⁸⁷

There were some moderated voices, as that of Aleksandr Pypin and Pavel Miliukov, who together with other leaders of the Kadets disapproved Struve's views on the Ukrainian question, or later Georgii Fedotov, but, on the whole, educated Russian society was quite unanimous in its negative reaction to the possible emancipation of the Ukrainian culture and nation from Russia. From this political perspective Ukrainians with national aims (Ukraino-philes) were regarded as traitors not only of the Russian state, but also of the all-Russian nation. They were denounced with the negative stereotypes of mazelists, petliurists, and banderists after the "traitors" Mazepa, Petliura and Bandera, who defected in the beginning of the eighteenth century, after the October Revolution and during World War II from the Russian or Soviet fatherland and collaborated with its enemies. Such stereotypes are common also among Ukrainians. So not only Russians, but also many Eastern Ukrainians distrust the West Ukrainian nationalists, "fascists," or banderists.

This image of the Ukrainian "Mazelists" can be regarded, as I have tried to explain elsewhere, as having three levels, levels

that help to explain the Russian government and society's perception of nationalities. On one level, since securing autocratic power and holding together the diverse empire was a priority, the most important factor was (actual or suspected) political loyalty or disloyalty. The Ukrainian Cossacks traditionally were regarded as potential traitors, a perception which was only reinforced by the defection of Mazepa. With the gradual integration of the Cossack elite into the Russian nobility this mistrust gradually decreased. The rebellious Cossacks and "Mazepists" in the nineteenth century became loyal 'Little Russians'.

On another level, which followed the principle of estates (*sosloviia*), the Ukrainians initially were considered to be a people with their own elite. When Cossack officers were included in the Russian nobility Ukrainians, however, became a people without their own elite. Peasants were disregarded as a distinct ethnic group or political subjects. Russia was aware of them only in connection with their noble lords, in the case of Ukrainians mostly Poles or Russians. Only people represented in the elites were taken seriously or ascribed high cultures and standard languages, whereas the languages of peasants were regarded as dialects. The majority of Ukrainians, therefore, were perceived as *khokhols*, as prototypes of an uncivilized peasant people.

On the third level, in a system of concentric cultural circles, the orthodox Slavic Ukrainians were perceived as members of the inner all-Russian circle. They were not recognized as an ethnic group and therefore were discriminated against; although, as individuals they were not discriminated against, but accepted as members of the Russian people. National aspirations of Ukrainians were a direct challenge to the Russian nation. Because peasant *khokhols* and loyal 'Little Russians' were not able to act as political subjects, the Ukrainian national movement usually was regarded as a "Polish," "Jesuit" or "Austrian intrigue." With the growth of Russian nationalism the criterion of culture gained steadily in strength and gradually converged with the criterion of political loyalty. The suspicion of political disloyalty in regard to non-Russians was also connected with strained foreign relations. This convergence of nationality and loyalty reached its height under Stalin, when the activities of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army degraded Ukrainians again to Mazepists. Stalin ordered the deportation of whole "treacherous" peoples to Soviet Asia; the Ukrainians, as Khrushchev reported in his speech of 1956, were not deported only

“because there were too many of them and there was no place to which to deport them.”⁸⁸ This stereotype of the Ukrainian traitor could be adapted in our time to the first Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk, who is regarded widely as the grave-digger of the Soviet Union. In a prestigious Russian scholarly journal the old thesis of “Ukrainian separatism,” manipulated by “Polish chauvinists,” recently has been revived.⁸⁹

On a non-political level, educated Russians usually perceive Ukrainians as a people of peasants. On the one hand, these *khokhols* of ‘Little Russia’ in the first third of the nineteenth century were seen as:

ideal peasants, industrious, deferential, and pure in personal morals, in all ways superior to Russian peasants. Nature itself collaborated, for the gentler Ukrainian countryside provided a pseudo-Italian backdrop to this paradise of virtue and sentiment.⁹⁰

Around 1800, Russian descriptions of Ukrainian villages emphasize the cleanliness of the houses, the excellent food, their songs, music and dances, their inclination to drink, but not to get drunk, “their European spirit ... without Asian savageness” and slavery. These dominant sentimental stereotypes describe the common people:

as living in a village idyll: they were lyrical and emotional; their homes were praised for their cleanliness and tasteful internal *décor*; they were admired for their colorful arts and crafts, their deep religiosity, decorous manners, honesty, hospitality, and attachment to patriarchal traditions.⁹¹

In the same period, a Russian traveler commented on the difference between Ukraine and Russia:

In a pleasant, jolly hut I find different faces, different ladies’ dress, different organization, and I hear a different language. Is this the empire’s border? Am I entering a different state? No! The empire goes on, but the land called ‘Little Russia’ starts here.⁹²

Gradually, however, this ideal image is complemented with other traits, typical for undeveloped subalterns: “‘Little Russians’,” wrote a Russian in 1831, “are on the whole very frank, pure-hearted, timidly submissive, and in moments of irritation, when insulted,

bold to the point of recklessness, but not malicious." They are "a primitive and undeveloped version of the Russian self ... The quiet, simple, rough Ukrainian folk." Often criticized for idleness, one traveler even uses bestial imagery when describing Ukrainians: "The ox is the living representation of the *khokhol*, who is just bestial and lazy."⁹³ In encyclopedias, geography and history textbooks and ethnographic literature of the second half of the nineteenth century 'Little Russians' usually are characterized on the one hand as good-natured, meek, bright and clean, humorous, and poetic. But the negative traits now prevail: 'Little Russians' are timid, slow, lazy, apathetic, passive, and hostile to innovations.⁹⁴ The most authoritative geographic description of Russia, published in 1903, offers a description of this ambivalent perception of Ukrainians:

The character of the 'Little Russians' shows a lot of particularities ... Above all we have to mention the slowness of movements, which is close to laziness. In the spiritual work there is often the same slowness and awkwardness, a lack of quick apprehension, and therefore the 'Little Russian' does not excel by a practical mind. The capability of concentrating leads him to dreaming, which gives mental food to his rich poetical creativity ... outside of the sphere of poetic and musical creations, his love of beauty is noticeable in his dress, in his house, in the love to nature ... and in the lack of cynicism in his language and behavior. His characteristic softness removes the 'Little Russian' from energy, the power of will, which are replaced by stubbornness.⁹⁵

Russians also perceive Ukrainians as lacking seriousness. In the nineteenth century among Russians "there takes shape the notion of Ukraine as a ludicrous place and of 'Little Russians' as burlesque, a parody of Russian." In the Russian popular literature before 1917 "Ukrainians ... often were stereotyped as likable, thickheaded clowns."⁹⁶ Catherine II and Pushkin viewed Ukrainians as "the singing and dancing tribe," and Stalin, according to the testimony of Khrushchev, followed this pattern, when he made Khrushchev (who was a Russian from Eastern Ukraine) "dance the 'hopak' [a Ukrainian folk dance] before some top Party officials" in order to humiliate him.⁹⁷ The Ukrainian language is not taken seriously and contemporary Russian mass media frequently use the Ukrainian words for independence, *nezalezhnist'* and *samostiinist'*, in order to turn Ukrainian independence to ridicule.⁹⁸

The typical attitude towards Ukrainians and their language is well shaped by Danylo Shumuk, who after his release from a labor camp went to Odessa. When he spoke Ukrainian, a woman spoke to him in Russian:

‘Young man, you’re dressed quite well and you have a fairly intelligent face, yet you can’t speak properly. Don’t you know Russian?’ ‘Why, the *khokhly* have become so impudent, even here, in Odessa’, another woman added, ‘that I was even asked to fill in a form in Ukrainian. I didn’t just come off the farm, I told them, I’m from Odessa’... ‘So we have a Banderite here - he considers even Odessa to be part of Ukraine’.⁹⁹

All these are typical attributes of a non-dominant people viewed by the dominant group. The Russians were described in contrast as having “developed an enterprising and energetic character,” as superior in “perseverance, cheerfulness and liveliness.” The ‘Little Russians’ are regarded as incapable of state-building and high culture and therefore in need of help from the ‘Great Russians’. But, as the positive traits of their character indicate, the underdeveloped *khokhly* have the capacity of being civilized by the more developed and more energetic Russians. By this development they would become assimilated into the more mature Russian culture. This perception of an uncivilized people in contrast to the dominating, civilized Russians has been adopted by many Ukrainians themselves whose inferiority complex is typical for the mentality of non-dominant or colonial peoples.

With regard to the Russian perception of Ukrainians, it is again important to note that most Russians view Ukrainians merely as a sub-group of the Russian nation; for example, they consider the Ukrainian language a Russian dialect contaminated by Polish influences and the Ukrainian culture a regional sub-culture. Most Russians do not accept Ukrainians as an independent nation. This was the case not only for Russians in the Tsarist Empire, but is also true today. Such inclusive views of Ukrainians by Russians have been noticed by Ukrainians and, consequently, have caused a Ukrainian backlash against Russia and Russians.

Conclusions

The history of Russian-Ukrainian relations can contribute much to one's understanding of the contemporary problems between the two largest states of Europe.

The three aspects discussed here give an ambiguous picture. The exclusive national representations of history, with their anachronistic projections and the mutual stereotypes, can serve as bases for conflicting claims and mutual misunderstandings. The Ukrainian orientation to the West, founded in Kievan Rus' and in the long symbiosis with Poland and Austria, manifesting itself in auto-stereotypes such as liberty, individualism, private property, and democracy, is contrasted with the supposedly Asiatic-oriental character and non-European history of the Russians. It serves today as an argument for the integration of Ukraine into (West) European institutions. The traditional mistrust toward the Russian-Soviet state dominates the negative stereotype. Many Ukrainians view not only Russian nationalists but also Russian democrats as agents of the old Empire. Russians legitimate their imperial aims with their traditional views of an all-Russian nation, including the Ukrainians, and with their preservation of an old state tradition. They view the uncultivated 'Little Russians' or *khokhols* as, at best, incapable of state-building and, at worst, guilty of treason. They consider their dialect and culture to be somewhat ridiculous provincial variants of the Russian language and culture. For Ukrainians and Ukraine, according to the opinion of many Russians, a future without the Russian state and Russian culture is unthinkable.

Such national representations of each other have been common for a long time among Russians, but they have emerged among Ukrainians only in recent years. Historians, and especially scholars from foreign countries, have the task of demythologizing these stereotypes and furthering the dialogue and mutual understanding between Russians and Ukrainians. They could remind Russians of the fact that Russian society and culture was not only or always the superior, but, on the contrary, has received important cultural influences from Ukraine. They could remind Ukrainians of the fact that Europeanization has come not only from Poland and Austria, but, since the eighteenth century, also from westernized Russia.

Despite these negative stereotypes and images, Russians and Ukrainians live together peacefully in both countries. Thus, negative perceptions of each other seem rare on a day to day basis. In everyday life and human relations, there are no deep interethnic antagonisms. Orthodoxy, linguistic affinity, and long historical

interrelations and mixtures of elites and cultures have produced a common heritage which ties Russians and Ukrainians together, facilitates communication, and spreads a family sentiment. In several polls during the 1990's Russian and Ukrainian respondents in Ukraine viewed Russians as being closer to them than any other nationality.¹⁰⁰ The editor of the newspaper *Golos Ukrainy* (Voice of Ukraine) was representative for many Ukrainians when he declared in 1993:

I am Ukrainian, but I hardly can imagine myself without Pushkin, Lermontov, and Tolstoy, and I think, this will be the case with my children and grandchildren, too. In Ukraine there always will be an adequate Slavic environment, and the Ukrainian never will tell the Russian: You are a newcomer.¹⁰¹

Since the nineteenth century millions of Ukrainians and Russians have been living together in Ukraine and in Russia, and mixed marriages are common. Family disputes among them occur, but they hardly run the risk to being drawn into bloody conflicts as has been the case with other family quarrels between Serbs and Croats or between Catholic and Protestant Irishmen.

Some of the ethnonyms and alternatives of nation-building mentioned above like 'Little Russians' and Ruthenians have disappeared. The terms Ukrainians and Russians (in the sense of 'Great Russians') are commonly accepted, although even today in Western Europe Ukrainians sometimes are designated as Russians. However, this principal equality of terms does not mean equality of content. It is questionable whether the two biggest East European nations have accomplished nation building in the way other European nations have. However, for more than ten years these two new independent states, with their democratic legitimacy and their sovereignty sanctioned by international law, have represented a framework of nation-building for Russians and Ukrainians which had never existed before. In this new atmosphere, it seems unlikely that Ukrainians will ever be completely Russified or fail to build a nation.

Nevertheless, even today several projects of nation-building are being discussed. The possibilities of a separate West-Ukrainian Galician nation or of a Cossack or Siberian nation, discussed in the early nineties, has proven unlikely. What has not been resolved is the duality of an ethnic and civic Russian and Ukrainian nation. It has a direct political influence on the problem of the great minorities

in both states. To which nation do the millions of Russians in Ukraine and Ukrainians in Russia belong? The treaty of 1997 is based on the concept of a supra-ethnic civic nation; it does not refer to Ukrainians and Russians, but to the peoples of Ukraine and Russia. However, on the other hand, numerous reports about the alleged forced Ukrainization of the Russian minority in Ukraine are published in Russian newspapers. If we take into account the long years of Russification of Ukrainian culture, it is understandable that the government of independent Ukraine now is furthering the Ukrainian language and culture and is trying to restrict the dominance of the Russian language. But despite some extreme measures in the first years after 1991, so far this policy of de-Russification has been implemented in a moderate and cautious way. At present, Ukraine is a bicultural Ukrainian-Russian country. In a representative survey of 1997 more than a quarter of the population of Ukraine had a mixed Ukrainian-Russian ethnic identity, and only 41 per cent identified Ukrainian as their language of preference.¹⁰²

It is quite possible that in Ukraine there will emerge a bilingual culture, society, and nation. However the precondition for such an evolution is equality. While most Ukrainians speak Russian, it is now the turn of the Russians in Ukraine to learn Ukrainian. When as many Russians are able to recite Shevchenko's poems in Ukrainian as Ukrainians are now able to recite Pushkin's poems in Russian, then this would be an important step to a possible bi-ethnic Ukrainian civic nation.

On the other hand, the traditional view of an all-Russian nation comprising Ukrainians and Belorussians ("the triune/*triedinstvo* Orthodox Russian nation") and the concept of a Soviet nation are alive and well. In 1992 Henry Kissinger said: "I never met a single Russian who thought that Ukraine could be independent." And in 1998 Leonid Kuchma added: "in Russia they pretend that Ukraine as a sovereign, independent state does not exist" and "the stereotype of viewing Ukraine as its constituent part or, at any rate, as the sphere of its prevailing influence has not yet been eliminated." In October 1997 a nation-wide poll in Russia recorded that 56 per cent of the respondents felt that Russians and Ukrainians are "one people;" in 1995 and 1997 40 per cent and 64 per cent (respectively) thought Russia and Ukraine should be united into one state.¹⁰³ Nearly all Russians with whom I discussed the Ukrainian problem over the last few years reacted with indignation, aggression, or, at least, incomprehensiveness to the possibility of

an independent Ukrainian nation and a sovereign Ukrainian state. This is the case not only for Russians in Russia, but also for many Russians and many Ukrainians in Eastern and Southern Ukraine, who are closer to Russian rather than Ukrainian language and culture. In 1995, 48 per cent of the population of these regions and, in 1997, 60 per cent of the population of the Donetsk region advocated a union of Ukraine and Russia as one state.¹⁰⁴ Parts of the Ukrainian political elite, especially on the left, are advocating a new rapprochement with Russia, e.g. a common currency and open borders.¹⁰⁵

As the rapprochement of Belarus and Russia shows, the concept of an imperial all-Russian or Soviet nation is not yet dead. Their situations again points out a crucial problem in relations between the Ukrainian nation and state: the fact that for centuries the Russians dominated Ukrainians as a people and as agents of an Empire and a European high culture. This led to a hierarchical relationship: The Russian (like formerly the Pole) was the master, the lord, the educated man, the townsman, the official, the big brother, the Great Russian; the Ukrainian was the uneducated peasant, the *khokhol*, the subject, the younger brother, the 'Little Russian'.

What Divovych demanded in 1762, has not been put into reality even today in spite of 1997's Treaty of Friendship. The big brother has not yet come to terms with the fact that the younger sister has declared her independence, that she has ceased listening to his advice, that she is claiming her contributions to their heritage. As long as Russia and the Russians do not recognize Ukraine and the Ukrainians as equal partners and as an independent nation, the tensions between the two countries will not disappear. Such a step is not easy for Russians and Russia, where the imperial legacy is alive and where that legacy grants a special role to Russians and the Russian language. It is also not easy for many Ukrainians who lived under the influence of Russian language, culture and values. It is painful to recognize borders which divide not only political and economic spaces, but also families and cultures, which split one's own history and identity.

If Russia and the Russians do not recognize the Ukrainian state, language, and culture as equal, many Ukrainians will continue to mistrust them and to fear that Russia will try to integrate them again in a Russian-dominated Empire. Only when this mistrust loses its foundations, when the political and cultural hierarchies between 'Great' and 'Little Russians' disappear, will Ukrainians be able to give up their defensive position and find a less strained attitude
48 toward Russia, the Russian language and culture, and their own identity. Only on the basis of equality will it be possible to revive

their common cultural and historical heritage and family ties, leading to good neighborly relations between Russia and Ukraine.

End Notes

¹ N. Petrov, ed., "Razgovor Velikorossii s Malorossiei," in *Kievskaiia Starina*, No. 1 (1882), pp. 313-365 and "Dopolnenie razgovora Velikorossii s Malorossiei," *Kievskaiia Starina*, No. 3 (1882), pp. 137-148. This was the first publication of the text; an earlier attempt was prohibited by Tsarist censorship in the 1840's. An excerpt in English translation is available in Ralph Lindheim and George S.N. Luckyj, eds., *Towards an Intellectual History of Ukraine: An Anthology of Ukrainian Thought from 1710 to 1995* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), pp. 69-70.

² Zenon E. Kohut, *Russian Centralism and Ukrainian Autonomy: Imperial Absorption of the Hetmanate 1760s-1830s* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1988). (See p. 63 for information about Divovych).

³ Overviews of Ukrainian history can be found in Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*, Second ed. (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Paul R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 1996); and Andreas Kappeler, *Kleine Geschichte der Ukraine*, Second ed., (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2000). For a general history of the Russian multinational empire see Andreas Kappeler, *The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History*, translated by Alfred Clayton (Harlow, England: Longman; New York: Pearson Education, 2001).

⁴ Lubomyr A. Hajda, ed., *Ukraine in the World: Studies in the International Relations and Security Structure of a Newly Independent State* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 319-329.

⁵ For recent developments see Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia: The Post-Soviet Transition* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001); Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2000); Kurt R. Spillmann, Andreas Wenger, and Derek Müller, eds., *Between Russia and the West: Foreign and Security Policy of Independent Ukraine* (Bern; New York: Peter Lang, 1999); Hajda, ed., *Ukraine in the World*; Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine under Kuchma: Political Reform, Economic Transformation and Security Policy in Independent Ukraine* (Basingstoke: Macmillan; New York:

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⁶ Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia*, pp. 56-62, 67-70, cit. pp. 61 and 69.

⁷ Kuzio, *Ukraine under Kuchma*, p. 201.

⁸ Vera Tolz, "Rethinking Russian-Ukrainian Relations: A New Trend in Nation-Building in Post-Communist Russia?" in *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2002), pp. 238-240 (see pp. 235-253).

⁹ See Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia*; Kuzio, *Ukraine under Kuchma* (especially, pp. 197-226).

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⁵⁰ "Tezisy o 300-letii vossoedineniia Ukrainy s Rossiei (1654-1954 gg.) odobreny Tsentral'nym Komitetom Kommunisticheskoi Partii

Sovetskogo Soiuzu," supplement to the journal *Novoe Vremia*, No.3 (16 January 1954) (*Pravda*, 12 January 1954). Citation from the English translation in John Basarab, *Pereiaslav 1654: A Historiographical Study* (Edmonton: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1982), p. 270. In contrast to this statement, the *Small Soviet Encyclopedia* of 1931 remarks: "Great power chauvinist historiography viewed the so-called annexation of Ukraine to Russia in 1654 as the 'reunification' of the two parts of a homogenous 'Russian' nation ... Ukraine ... developed into a Russian colony in the nineteenth century – a colony in which the Russian government began to eradicate all traces of national character" (from Lewytskyj, *Politics and Society in Soviet Ukraine*, p. 6).

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⁵⁵ Alexander Pushkin, *Collected Narrative and Lyrical Poetry*, translated by Walter Arndt (Dana Point, CA: Ardis Publishers, 1984), pp. 331, 334, 355, 359, 366-367.

⁵⁶ The more balanced picture of Mazepa in the poem “Voinarovskii” of the Decembrist Kondratii Ryleev (1825) had less influence on Russian public opinion. (See Shkandrij, *Russia and Ukraine*, pp. 96-105 and S. N. Luckyj, *Between Gogol’ and Ševčenko: Polarity in the Literary Ukraine, 1798-1847* (Munich: Wilhem Fink Verlag, 1971), pp. 81-87).

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⁵⁸ For recent Ukrainian and Russian appraisals of the role of Mazepa see Szporluk, *Russia, Ukraine, and the Breakup*, pp. 212-213.

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⁷³ V.I. Vernadskii, *Dnevniky 1917-1921* (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1994), p. 129.

⁷⁴ *Stranitsy autobiografii V.I. Vernadskogo*, p. 23; V.I. Vernadskii, "Ukrainskii vopros i russkoe obshchestvo," *Druzhba narodov*, Vol. 3 (1990), pp. 247-254; Vernadskii, *Dnevniky 1917-1921*; Vladimir Vernadsky, "The First Year of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences (1918-1919)," reprint from the *Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the US*, Vol. 11, No. 1-2 (1964-1968), pp. 31-32.

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⁸⁴ Bushkovitch, "The Ukraine in Russian Culture"; Saunders, *The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture*; Shkandrij, *Russia and Ukraine*, pp. 67-125; and Luckyj, *Between Gogol' and Ševčenko*, pp. 68-81.

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⁸⁷ *Russkaia mysl'*, No. 32 (January 1911), pp. 184-187 (cit. p. 185); Petr Struve, "Obshcherusskaia kultura i ukrainskii partikuliarizm: Otvet Ukraintsu," in *Russkaia mysl'* No. 33 (January 1912), pp. 65-86, cit. p. 85. See Richard Pipes, "Peter Struve and Ukrainian Nationalism," in *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* Vol. 3-4 (1979-1980), pp. 675-683 and in *Struve: Liberal on the Right, 1905-1944* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 210-218; Potulnytskyi, "The Image of Ukraine and the Ukrainians," p. 86. See also Andriewsky, *The Politics of National Identity*, pp. 415-445.

⁸⁸ Kappeler, "Mazepintsy, malorossy, khokhly"; N.S. Khrushchev: The 'Secret' Speech delivered to the closed session of the Twentieth

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⁹³ Dmitriukov (1831), quoted in Saunders, *The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture*, p. 2; Shkandrij, *Russia and Ukraine*, quote pp.76, 78 (Dolgoruky 1810).

⁹⁴ Yekelchuk, "The Grand Narrative"; Shkandrij, *Russia and Ukraine*, p. 81.

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⁹⁷ Shkandrij, *Russia and Ukraine*. p. 111; *Khrushchev Remembers*, Edward Crankshaw and Strobe Talbott, ed., (Boston; Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), p. 301. Khrushchev adds: "I had to squat down on my haunches and kick out my heels, which frankly wasn't very easy for me. But I did it and I tried to keep a pleasant expression on my face. As I later told Anastas Mikoyan, 'When Stalin says dance, a wise man dances'."

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