12 Progress on hold: the conservative faces of women in Ukraine

SOLOMEA PAVLYCHKO

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the declaration of independence were a fundamental turning point in the history of Ukraine. 1990 and 1991 were years of enormous political and social optimism, and at this time there was mass participation in the euphoric demolition of the totalitarian, imperialist, politically closed and economically bankrupt state. Over 90 per cent of Ukraine's population voted in favour of independence in the referendum on 1 December 1991 in the belief that they would be better off in a new country called Ukraine rather than in the USSR. The first parliamentary election of March 1990 and the presidential election of December 1991 showed high levels of electoral turn-out. Civic life was vibrant, new political parties emerged one after another, hundreds of NGOs were formed, laying the foundation of democracy and civil society. In this stormy process, new leaders emerged and, for the first time, alongside men's voices, women's voices were heard.

Crisis in Ukraine

The enormous crisis – sharp decline in production, inflation, widespread corruption and government prevarication when it came to reform – radically altered the situation in Ukraine in 1992–4. Words such as 'market', 'democracy', 'independence' and 'the West' began to lose their currency. It turned out that the market economy in its Ukrainian variant resembled a bazaar, and democratically elected parliaments were the main obstacle to reform. The West fixed its attention on Russia and took scant notice of the newly independent states. Old Soviet institutions and bureaucratic practices were pre-

served in the new Ukraine. The transition period became so stretched out that it seemed it was becoming permanent. The enthusiasm associated with the destruction of the old was replaced by uncertainty and a sense of the pointlessness of individual and social efforts.

Political parties and organisations, including women's organisations, continued to spring up as before. However, their role and popularity in society diminished. The democratic movement, which in 1990 counted millions of active sympathisers, fragmented into scores of small associations and organisations. Gradually the society was eaten away by apathy. Symptomatic of this was the March 1994 elections: parliament has 450 seats of which only 394 have been filled; the rest remain vacant because of low level of electoral interest and Ukraine's bizarre electoral law. (To be elected, a member of parliament has to win more than 50 per cent of the votes with more than 50 per cent of eligible voters participating in elections.) Out of twenty ridings in Kiev, seventeen seats remain vacant because of voters' apathy. This in a city which four years earlier witnessed mass demonstrations involving hundreds of thousands of people.

Women's voices

The role, status and the general life and problems of Ukrainian women in the last few years must be understood within the overall societal context. Between 1989 and 1991, women first appeared on the political scene of Ukraine not as a statistical mass but as an independent force with an independent voice. It was as if the eternally quiet, second-class majority all spoke at once. These were women political prisoners and dissidents who demanded freedoms, anti-militarist activists, ecological activists who demanded the shut-down of Chernobyl and the distribution of honest information about the consequences of the 1986 nuclear disaster. Women's voices were very audible in religious and cultural movements. They demanded the legalisation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the restoration of rights of the Ukrainian language. Amongst cultural organisations, especially in the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian language society (which today is called the 'Prosvita' society), women did not, as a general rule, advance their claim to leadership positions but they were, and remain, the basic moving force of local organization, especially in eastern Ukraine where they face the most formidable challenges. Within the academic community, women raised awareness of the feminist tradition in literature, rediscovered the indigenous Ukrainian

feminist tradition hitherto suppressed by the Soviet regime, and argued for the need to introduce women's studies in universities. The first centres for gender studies were founded and the first gender research in sociology undertaken. On television and radio the first programmes about Western feminism were aired, and family violence, rape and even the existence of the lesbian and gay movement were discussed. There were few women on the national political scene but a number did achieve national reputations as members of parliament.

Women's organisations became those grassroot formations where, for the first time, it was possible to speak about political opposition to the communist regime, the threatening environmental situation, the appalling conditions of life for tens of thousands of Ukraine's orphans and about one of the world's highest abortion rates. The main perspective was that of the protection of children. In this, woman as mother was the dominant concept of the role of a woman. Women set up the country's first charitable organisations. The second perspective – the political aspect of the vast majority of the women's organisations – was opposition to communism and totalitarianism. Women's organisations as a political force and individual women personalities contributed significantly to the collapse of the USSR.

Although the ideologists of women's organisations accepted the role of women as mother, thus repeating the totalitarian stereotype, it appeared, none the less, that women began seriously to fight for a new social status and planned to exert genuine influence on the political and social life of their country. Moreover, there was no doubt that women were a new, bold and dynamic social force and that, ultimately, their values would be humanistic values as the feminist theoretical tradition states. Thus, in 1992 there was much ground for an optimistic prognosis. One cannot say that all expectations have been shattered, since in all respects the distance between post-perestroika 1990 and 1996 is immense. Society continues to change even though the tempo has subsided.

Women's organisations and women activists were the tip of the female iceberg. As we see today, however, the phenomenon known as 'Ukrainian women' is contradictory. It has become clear that one cannot speak about women in Ukraine as a homogeneous group. Neither can we speculate about a single women's identity or the overall political priorities of women, let alone about typical electoral behaviour. It has become apparent that differences among women are no less sharp that those between women and men. For example, it has transpired that women members of parliament in reality do not

represent women, have little interest in women's issues apart from the traditional concepts of motherhood and are even somewhat ashamed of their sex. It is obvious that the development of the women's movement will not follow Western patterns: the approaches of Western feminism cannot be copied blindly when analysing the condition of post-Soviet women.

Women in politics

At the beginning of the 1990s it appeared that women would become a significant political force and, moreover, one which would be unequivocally democratic and progressive. The début of women on the political scene provided grounds for this view, but today if one asks whether there is a serious women's voice in Ukrainian political discourse, the answer is an unequivocal 'no'. And this is in spite of the fact that there are over seventy women's organisations in Ukraine today whose representatives attended the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995; in spite of the fact that in parliament there are seventeen women deputies, whereas in the previous parliament there were thirteen; in spite of the fact that the educational level of women is higher than that of men; in spite of the fact that women form 54 per cent of Ukraine's population and 52 per cent of the work-force.[1]

As a general rule, all discussion about the political status of women begins with analyses of their representation in the organs of power. Let us examine the Supreme Rada – Ukraine's parliament. The seventeen women members of parliament represent 4 per cent of deputies. Of them, three belong to the Communist Party, two are socialists, two are members of the agrarian faction – in other words, seven are members of the left-wing bloc. Only one woman belongs to Rukh (People's Movement for the Revival of Ukraine), and the rest belong to faceless centrist factions. In Ukraine's first democratically elected parliament, a number of women belonged not only to the democratic bloc, Narodna Rada, but they were also among the most active and eloquent advocates of independence and economic and political reform. In the first parliament, five women were members of Rukh. Brilliant personalities such as Larysa Skoryk and Iryna Kalynets are no longer to be found in the Supreme Rada. In the second parliament the fact that so many women belong to the communist and socialist bloc has meant that the women's political voice no longer advocates democracy and the development of civil society.

There are no strong women personalities in political parties, in government organs or in parliament today. No women have national reputations. Ukrainian political parties, be they left- or right-wing, are exclusively male clubs. Most democratic political parties endorse the general rhetoric of the state about 'the return of women to the family' or, as it is sometimes called, 'the renaissance of the patriarchy'. It does not seem to bother democrats that this position is at odds with their other democratic ideas. Among left-wing parties there is an inconsequential proportion of women and no women at all in the leadership. Perhaps the only exception is Natalia Vitrenko of the Socialist Party, who is a member of parliament and adviser to the head of parliament on economic affairs. She is the most vocal amongst the most conservative, anti-democratic, anti-market reform and anti-Ukrainian wing of the political spectrum. In October 1995, she elaborated an alternative to the government economic programme which was characterised by its hostility to privatisation and the market, and by its nostalgia for Soviet-style state control. However, in January 1996 she was expelled from the Politburo of the Socialist Party, and later from the party itself, for her criticism that the socialists were too timid in their opposition to the president's and the government's course of reform. In May 1996 she founded the progressive Socialist Party which upholds 'genuine Leninist principles'. The fact that Vitrenko is the most vocal political woman has served to discredit women's voices in politics.

That there are no women political leaders is not surprising in view of the fact that 97 per cent of women do not belong to any political organisation.[2] (There are no data on men's participation in the research cited, but it is not very substantial either.) At the same time, sociologists note that the consciousness of women is quite politicised. This politicisation lies in the fact that they actively follow political events; however, they rarely show partisan political sympathies. Interestingly, the political orientation of women is virtually the same as that of men.[3]

The Supreme Rada is the only higher organ of power where women are represented at all. There are about sixty-five ministers and heads of state committees in Ukraine's government: not one is a woman. There are some 270 deputy ministers and only six are women. In Ukraine's constitutional order, ministers are appointed and, as a rule, are not members of parliament. The majority of the public service consists of women, yet only 3 or 4 per cent are to be found in the upper echelons. Sociological surveys show that 'serious representation

at the level of decision-making is to be found only in medicine (39 per cent) and science (29 per cent)'.[4]

At the same time, women as civil servants are often the symbol of the ineffective, conservative, prevaricating Ukrainian state. Thus, as previously mentioned, women not only form the majority of state functionaries, but in a number of spheres and a number of ministries they are a dominant majority. Their numerical preponderance in some ministries (headed, of course, by males) has few parallels in Western countries. In Table 12.1 we give data for a number of ministries. It should be noted that support staff (secretaries and the like) are excluded from the quoted figures.

Table 12.1: Percentages of female employees in Ukrainian ministries

Ministry of the Economy	67.2
Ministry of Finance	80.1
Ministry of Justice	87.3
Supreme Court	76.2
Higher Arbitration Court	83.9
Ministry of Statistics	93.9
Ministry of Social Welfare	95

Source: Statistics from Public Service Commission. Cabinet of Ministers Report (unpublished mimeo), 1 June 1995.

Professions which in the West are traditionally masculine – courts, the justice system, banks, economic ministries – in Ukraine are feminised. These women, under certain conditions, could become a substantial force of the feminist message, could change the stereotype about the status of women. They are well educated and professionally qualified but in the political sense they are the most inert and silent, and are the furthest removed from the women's movement of whatever orientation. Beneath the surface they really believe that motherhood and marriage is the height of a woman's career, that women must be charming and take good care of men, that 'nature' made it thus. In other words, there is a deep assimilation of traditional male rhetoric by these women. The problem lies in the fact that thousands of women – civil servants, women in parliament and professional women in general – belong to that type which could be called 'a woman-man', who achieve high positions but do not change the nature of authority and its ideology in the interest of women. The

thousands of women found in this category are lost in the mass of over 25 million Ukrainian women who belong to totally different social layers, groups which, irrespective of education or work, exist beyond the decision-making sphere, beyond prestigious employment, status and high incomes.

Women, work and discrimination

Women are traditionally concentrated in spheres outside serious decision-making – in agricultural labour, construction, industry and education. Moreover, the lower and the less well paid the positions, the greater the chance of finding women in them. A high level of unemployment among women is characteristic of the situation in post-Soviet countries. In Ukraine 70 per cent (some data suggest 80 per cent) of the unemployed are women, two-thirds of whom have higher education. Women were the first to lose jobs in the stress of the period of the transition from a planned to a market economy. Moreover, many women are stuck in physical labour, which itself is a form of hidden discrimination. The average income of women is substantially lower than the average income of men. According to the Human Development Report sponsored by the United Nations, the average income of women in industry as compared to that of men in 1993 ranged from 45 per cent in the energy sector to 90 per cent in light industry.[5]

The state does everything it can to avoid shedding light on facts which point to discrimination. The data cited earlier exist only in materials prepared under pressure from international organisations and circulated in research and policy papers. For internal purposes the state, through its senior members of parliament or ministers, constantly repeats the patriarchal rhetoric of 'return women to the family'. In fact, this rhetoric is a badly masked attempt to hide and justify high levels of unemployment and discrimination against women, which has become much worse in the last three years.

The few women politicians who exist stubbornly refuse to acknowledge social and economic discrimination against women and refuse to include the women question in their programmes. The official women's discourse in Ukrainian society is generally restricted to topics concerning motherhood, children and family matters – the last parliament, for instance, had a Commission on the Family, Motherhood and Children. The new parliament abolished this commission but, under pressure from women's organisations, a Committee on

Women's Affairs, Motherhood and Children was established by the president's administration. In daily life women's discourse consists of the kitchen, fashion, make-up, health and sex. Not surprisingly, a 'serious' woman politician will try to demonstrate before society that she is not interested in this kind of question and, in fact, is no different from her male colleagues. The message of the woman leader or of a successful woman in a men's world is construed thus: first, by upbringing, education, behaviour and views ('women's things are trivial'), I am the same as you – that is, I am man, only of a different sex: second, however, I can, when necessary, use my feminine charm.

Alexandra Kuzhel', a member of parliament from Zaporizhzhia, 'a capitalist' and head of an accounting firm who does not hide her ambition to become the next president of Ukraine, recently said the following:

> Whenever some woman member of parliament goes abroad we get together and discuss what to wear, how to be attractive. This is very important. When I travelled to England I bought myself a very expensive suit because I knew that otherwise I would not be accepted in their parliament. I don't like to be together with too many women. I feel much more comfortable in the company of men.[6]

When asked if it is difficult to compete with men and whether men take her less seriously because she is a woman, she answered, 'No. I cannot complain about serious negative attitudes towards me. Of course, sometimes I confront haughtiness but this is an exception, not the rule.'[7]

It is not only women politicians but the entire society that stubbornly refuses to recognise discrimination against women. Recent public opinion polls showed the information given in Table 12.2, which demonstrates that the majority of respondents do not know about the discrimination against women and almost half consider men and women to have equal rights and equal chances.

Analogous results could be drawn from twenty-five interviews from women of the eastern Ukrainian industrial city of Luhansk. Only two of them 'explicitly acknowledged having been subject to discrimination as a woman'.[8] Interestingly, most of the interviewed women lacked any Ukrainian (linguistic, cultural, political or regional) identity and all felt that the Russian language had to be accepted as a state language along with Ukrainian. Those with business orientations were advocates of economic union with Russia and Belorus. Most of them felt that their life was materially better in former times (presumably in

the times of the USSR); however, most of them were 'unwilling to try the private marketing operations which offered scope for much higher earnings'.[9] Although only twenty-five women were interviewed, their answers show a typical complex of feelings and ideas of Ukrainian women in this region – the justifiable despair, lack of political and national identity, and some latent political conservatism. The most active opponents of the granting of the collective farm lands to individual farms in 1993 (when this farming movement emerged) were women from collective farms – the most oppressed, uneducated and underpaid strata of women in Ukrainian society.

Table 12.2: Social attitudes on gender roles in 1995 (replies given in percentages)

(1) Is there any change in the level of involvement of women in Ukrainian society?	
Increasing	27.8
Remains the same	39.1
Diminishing	13.6
Difficult to say	19.5
(2) Do men and women have equal opportunities for job promotion?	
Women have better opportunities	3.8
Men have better opportunities	44
Opportunities are equal	43.8
Difficult to say	8.5
(3) Have you noticed in recent years instances of discrimination against women?	
Yes	17.8
Can't recall	19.5
No	53.5
Difficult to say	9.3

Source: Socis-Gallup, Ukrainian Political and Economic Index. Report no. 14, May 1995, pp. 24–5.

In general, recent surveys of opinion point to a marked decrease in women's political activity. In the 1980s and the early 1990s, women's political activism was on the upswing. Three leading Ukrainian sociologists conclude:

On the whole, most important today for the majority of women is how to survive the sharp price increases (67 per cent of women and 55 per cent of men consider this a primary concern). For men, much more important than

for women is concern to influence decision-making (men – 27 per cent; women – 19 per cent) ... One can conclude on the basis of the latest data that men are much more politically literate than women. Women in Ukraine provide simplistic solutions (all their interests are focused on the survival of their families) and their only expectations of assistance is that which the relatives can provide.[10]

However, there is another side of these sociological data, not noticed by its authors. Taking on themselves the whole burden of economic survival, women give men a chance to be parasites on women and to be free to dedicate their effort to ideas and ideals.

Table 12.3: Responses on jobs for which men and women are most suited

	Most suitable for women (%)	Most suitable for men (%)
Pre-school education	67	33
Household chores	65	35
Service sector	58	42
Medicine	57	43
Schools	53	47
University	48	52
Scientific research	44	56
Agriculture	42	58
Industry	38	62
Civil service	32	68
Politics	30	70

Source: Iu. Saienko, E. Plisovs'ka, M. Linovytska, 'The status of women in the political, social and economic life of Ukraine', *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 13, p. 18.[11]

The public opinion survey which is cited in this chapter provides interesting data on perceptions of what is considered suitable employment for men and women, shown in Table 12.3. The data speak for themselves. What is important to add, however, is that women considered all jobs as suitable for both sexes equally. It was men who focused on household work, the service sector, pre-school education, schools and medicine as the most suitable for women, and regarded scientific research, public administration and politics as male spheres.[12]

Two of the three authors of the sociological survey cited are

women; despite this, that study contains not a few sexist remarks in the analyses of the survey results. Thus, when the survey shows that women, more than men, preferred to work under the leadership of an experienced boss, the authors remark, 'this of course corresponds to a woman's nature'.[13]

Women's organisations

The women's movement could be playing a role in the mobilisation of women and in raising public consciousness as to the status of women. The unofficial women's movement in Ukraine has a six-year history. It started in 1990 with the Women's Community of Rukh (which later split from Rukh), the Union of Ukrainian Women and others. They emerged at the end of perestroika and were part of the social awakening and birth of new political ideals, one of the most exciting moments of this century. It was only later that it became clear that the patriotically inclined women's organisations lost their sense of mission with the collapse of the USSR and with the emergence of an independent Ukraine. Their political programme had won. When a new programme had to be advanced, problems started. Instead of focusing their energies on the struggle for equal rights, the organisations, by and large, swallowed the rhetoric of national revival and were lost among the scores of political and community organisations advancing similar goals.

During the last five years the number of women's organisations has increased to seventy; Kiev itself has some twenty organisations. However, their influence on society remains modest and the women's movement in Ukraine has little political influence. Most women's organisations have small memberships and are regionally based. As a rule, the women's movement does not involve young women or women from the agricultural and industrial milieux – almost without exception, members of these organisations are women with higher education, middle-aged if not elderly, often housewives. The leaders of the two most influential groups (Women's Community and the Union of Women of Ukraine) are wives of Ivan Drach (former head of Rukh and a member of parliament) and Viacheslav Chornovil (acting head of Rukh). Feminism occupies virtually no place in their discourse and if they mention feminism, they will quickly add a footnote distancing themselves from it.

Women's organisations can be divided into two categories: first, political and, second, service/community groups. The political

women's organisations are Women's Community (Zhinocha Hromada), the Union of Women of Ukraine, Ukrainian Christian Women's Party and others. These represent the democratic spectrum. The communist spectrum includes the Union of Women of Ukraine, which was formally the Committee of Soviet Women, and the newly created Women of Crimea group. The former support Rukh or are aligned to the republican, democratic, Christian-democratic, liberal or other centrist parties; the latter support the unreconstructed communists. Common political action of women's organisations in Ukraine is thus impossible to achieve.

In the spring of 1994, during the elections to parliament, Zhinocha Hromada made an attempt to unite women's organisations into a common electoral bloc. Among the priorities of the bloc were: 'strengthening Ukraine's independence, freedom, democracy and rule of law, rapid economic reform, social protection of the population, defence of the political, economic and social rights of women, guaranteed rights for families ... the propagation of humanistic values in education and in the mass media'.[14] The programme of the women's bloc was vague, to put it mildly, and could hardly compete with men's parties and blocs.

There is a wide panorama of service/community women's organisations. It includes groups such as the All-Ukrainian Federation of Mothers With Many Children (those with more than three); the organisation of Jewish women, Rachamim, which helps elderly Jews; 'Mama–86', an organisation which helps the child victims of Chernobyl; or professional groups such as the Association of Women Film-makers. Recently, women involved in business and in the mass media, or the wives of the *nouveaux riches*, have organised themselves into groups such as the Odessa Ladies Club. Also, recently the institution of girls' schools has revived, whose purpose is to educate a spectrum of ladies, from governesses to the wives of rich men – a mission fundamentally different from that of girls' schools at the turn of the century, whose goal was to provide women with an excellent education.

Traditionally, the women's discourse of motherhood has a chance to become sharply politicised if a woman has a son serving in the army, as Kathryn Pinnick has shown in chapter eight. The Soldiers' Mothers for the New Army is a group dedicated to ensuring that human rights are respected in the army and to highlighting cases of brutality in the armed forces. 'Mama–86', a curious name, given its

activism, is, in fact, an organisation campaigning on issues of environmental protection and on the shut-down of Chernobyl.

The independent state

In independent Ukraine, the state has simply neglected women's issues and made little effort to win women's support. In the presidential campaign of June 1994, Leonid Kravchuk, who was seeking re-election, met with women only on the night before voting took place. With the approaching UN conference in Beijing, the Ukrainian state decided that it could not be bypassed in this important event. In the spring of 1995, a National Conference of Women's Organisations was hastily convoked to prepare for Beijing, and a National Committee organised. The National Committee was headed by deputy prime minister for social policy, Ivan Kuras, who also headed the Ukrainian delegation to the women's conference in Beijing. On the eve of his departure to Beijing he gave an interview to the magazine *Women* (*Zhinka*), where he indicated that, under the leadership of the National Committee, two programmes were being developed: 'Family planning' and 'Children of Ukraine'. Questions of women's rights or discrimination against women were not mentioned in the interview. In the deputy prime minister's mind, the status of women is inextricably bound up with the defence of the rights of the family, motherhood and childhood.[15]

In short, government policy remains the same, as does its rhetoric. The more they speak of defence of women in the role of the mother and wife, the deeper is the open and covert discrimination against women.

In the meantime, millions of Ukrainian women distance themselves from problems of discrimination and ignore the political rhetoric surrounding women's issues by avidly watching Mexican, Brazilian or Portuguese soap operas which flood Ukrainian television, while remaining the objects of sexual abuse in the family, sexual harassment at work and victims of an antediluvian health system. Most do not see themselves as objects of discrimination, most do not have independent ideas or voices and accept the stereotypes peddled by the mass media.

The media have generated two main stereotypes which have remained the same since the beginning of glasnost (the end of the 1980s). The first is woman as icon (wife, mother, the backbone of the family and of the country, a national shrine and the Hearth Mother). The second stereotype is that of the glamorous woman – beautiful,

well-dressed, chic, – whose life-style is advertised in countless women's magazines from the Russian edition of *Cosmopolitan* to the Ukrainian language *Women's Secrets*, published in Lvov. Whereas the first stereotype is rooted in local, national values, the second is identified with the West. The national icon and glamorous woman are the beloved clichés of television and the tabloid press (a press which outnumbers all other types of newspapers). Every media consumer has an opportunity to select the myth of his or her choice.

There is not much that one can say about men in this connection. The arguments and rhetoric of Ukrainian males have remained the same in recent years, even though the individual words may have changed. Communist and former political prisoners, writers of the older generation and young assistants to the president – all speak in the same voice: women are a delightful, venerated, respected sex in general, and in Ukraine in particular, and the only problem is that they are forced to work. Accepting the blame for this condition, men hope for a better future where women will be freed from labour. In the recent past I have not heard a single public interview with a man who would acknowledge discrimination against women. But you have to give Ukrainian male politicians their due. Unlike in Russia, they have not raised the question of the introduction of polygamy: Christian traditions in Ukraine are too strong for that.

Conclusion

To summarise, contemporary Ukraine shows two tendencies: first, the strengthening of discrimination against women in all spheres of social life and the workplace; and, second, the unwillingness or inability of society in general, and women's organisations in particular, to understand this phenomenon and to challenge it.

It is characteristic of the situation in Ukraine that a man led the Ukrainian delegation to the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, a delegation hand-picked by the state apparatus. It is typical of the situation in Ukraine that the quite substantial number of Ukrainian delegates (which also included activists who attended the NGO events) remained silent throughout. This silence is characteristic of the political discourse of Ukrainian women. Of course, there are individual voices – generally academics and artists – which sound dissonant chords. There are a number of feminists, and Simone de Beauvoir's *The second sex* recently appeared in Ukrainian translation. One hopes that these voices will strengthen and become more author-

itative – 54 per cent of the country's population cannot remain mute forever.

A couple of years ago one could have ended on this optimistic tone. But today the main question remains – what will the women's voices be like? Whom will women support? Will they become a base of support for communists, since they have been most affected by the transition to the market and long for the past as it appears to some that they lived better under the old regime? Or will they support democratic reforms notwithstanding unheated flats, unemployment, the growth of crime and insane price rises? Today one can speak of certain tendencies to support the former (although since there is no single women's identity, equally there is no single political choice). Exhausted women, manipulated by male demagogues, blinded by stereotypes and locked in unprestigious employment, especially on collective farms, have the potential for serious political conservatism. Nationally conscious and democratically oriented women, who, by and large, live in cities and have higher education, as a rule profess the patriarchal ideas of woman as Hearth Mother which in itself is also a manifestation of deep cultural conservatism. The only effective antidote to these tendencies will be quick transition to democracy and market economies, a transition which today has stalled and which has given rise to archaic discourses, one of which is women's conservatism.

Notes

1 *Ukraine. Human development report 1995* (Kiev: PROON, 1995), pp. 35–6.
2 N. Lavrinenko, 'The women's movement in post-communist Ukraine: achievements and slips' in *Politchnyi portret Ukrainy* 13 (Bulletin of the Research Centre, 'Democratic Initiatives') (Kiev: 1995), p. 11.
3 E. Plisovs'ka, 'The women's movement in the world and in Ukraine' in *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 13, p. 6.
4 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
5 *Ukraine. Human development report 1995*, p. 36.
6 Alexandra Kuzhel', 'Husbands who put up with such women as I am are kamikaze', *Vseukrainskiie Vedomosti*, 28 October 1995, p. 3.
7 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
8 W. Michael Walker, 'Changing lives: social change and women's lives in east Ukraine' in Sue Bridger (ed.), 'Women in post-communist Russia' in *Interface* no. 1 (Bradford, Summer, 1995), p. 102.
9 *Ibid.*, p. 109.

10 Iu. Saienko, E. Plisovs'ka, M. Linovytska, 'The status of women in the political, social and economic life of Ukraine' in *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 13, p. 16.
11 The results of this study are based on a survey of 1,197 respondents in ten oblasts (596 men and 601 women).
12 Saienko *et al.*, 'The status of women', p. 18.
13 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
14 Lavrinenko, 'The women's movement in post-communist Ukraine', pp. 10–11.
15 'Unity of efforts in everything', *Zhinka* 8, 1995, pp. 4–5.