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Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS

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The past decade has witnessed nothing short of a fundamental transformation in the relationship between Ukraine and Russia. The key factor, of course, was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of Ukraine and Russia as independent states. At this juncture, the discourse between Ukraine and Russia, which throughout the Soviet period had been focused almost entirely on inter-ethnic (or inter-nationality) questions, was broadened to include international issues, which, moreover, became paramount.[1] Problems of language, culture, and interpretation of historical events were now over-shadowed by problems of state: borders, armies, and nuclear weapons. Neither side, each for its own specific reasons, was especially well prepared for such a dramatic change. Thus, it should not be particularly surprising that Ukrainian-Russian relations in the post-Soviet period have largely been strained, conflictive, and, indeed, unstable. The very fact that it was only in mid-1997, almost six years after the Soviet Union had ceased to exist, that Kyiv and Moscow finally managed to conclude a treaty on "friendship, cooperation, and partnership," which, moreover, has yet to come into force, testifies to the inordinate difficulties of what is perhaps best described as a lengthy and difficult process of "normalization."[2]

Issues, Problems, Perceptions

Most discussions of contemporary Ukrainian-Russian relations have tended to focus on specific issues about which Kyiv and Moscow have divergent opinions and viewpoints. Among these, the most prominent and longstanding have been the fate of the Black Sea Fleet and its main base, Sevastopol; the related but larger question of Crimea, specifically whether or not it should rightfully be considered a part of Ukraine; and the role and functions of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). There are a host of other problems and irritants that have exacerbated relations since independence, including sharing out the debts and assets of the former Soviet Union; delimiting and demarcating borders between the two countries; and, more recently, the eastward expansion of NATO and Moscow's renewed concern about the status of the Russian language in Ukraine. All of these disputes may be said to be quite "normal"—that is, they are easily identifiable and perfectly soluble. Indeed, probably the most difficult and certainly the most emotionally laden issue—the disposition of the Black Sea Fleet—while perhaps not definitively resolved, has been postponed for twenty years by the Ukrainian-Russian agreements concluded on 28 May

1997,[3] which, in turn, paved the way for the signing of the basic bilateral treaty several days later. This is quite an accomplishment, particularly if one recalls that the tension between Kyiv and Moscow over the Black Sea Fleet in early 1992 was such that observers wondered whether the newly formed CIS would promptly fall apart before it managed to get off the ground.

Overall, and in spite of a difficult agenda of unfinished business, the experience of the years since independence has shown that the leaders of Ukraine and Russia are capable of conducting a dialogue, that compromises can be reached, and that seemingly intractable differences can be resolved. At the same time, it is equally clear that there are some fundamental problems in the Ukrainian-Russian relationship that go deeper than disagreements at the negotiating table.

In early 1997, a leading Moscow newspaper published interviews with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and his top national security adviser, Volodymyr Horbulin.[4] The general thrust of both interviews was that relations with Russia were bad and seemed to be getting worse; the leitmotif was that Russia was not taking Ukraine seriously, that its attitude was patronizing and condescending. On the face of it, there is nothing particularly revealing or astonishing in these perceptions. Russia, after all, is having problems of one sort or another with nearly all of the former Soviet republics, including Belarus, with whom it has entered into a "union" of sorts. In this respect, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev is not alone in his estimate that Moscow's policies in the CIS have had the effect of "not attracting potential allies, but repelling them."[5] Both Kuchma and Horbulin, however, seemed intent to underscore that there was an added dimension to the Ukrainian-Russian relationship, that the problems went beyond the realm of the "normal." Horbulin, for example, said that he was not prepared to offer a rational explanation as to why there were such difficulties, suggesting that a close reading of Freud could provide some insights or that perhaps Dostoevsky might have the answer. But then he added: "I often recall what former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told me: 'I never met a single Russian who thought that Ukraine could be independent.'" Kuchma was more forthright, saying that "in Russia they pretend that Ukraine as a sovereign, independent state does not exist." "As I see it," he continued, "in Russia, 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." Kuchma returned to the problem a year later, after President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Kyiv and the successful conclusion of the long awaited bilateral treaty. In an interview in *Izvestiia*, the Ukrainian leader, although emphasizing that Ukrainian-Russian relations had vastly improved and that "problems of a political character" were now virtually nonexistent, nonetheless expressed concern about what lay ahead. Specifically, Kuchma called attention to what he termed the "divorce syndrome" in the Ukrainian-Russian relationship, briefly characterizing it as a "complicated political-psychological problem that casts an ominous shadow on the entire complex of Ukrainian-Russian relations."[6]

But why should the Ukrainian-Russian divorce be any different or more complicated than the other divorces that occurred at the end of 1991? Writing several weeks after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Len Karpinskii, then chief editor of *Moskovskie novosti*, framed the problem in stark, almost eschatological terms. Karpinskii argued that one of the redeeming features of the Belovezha accords that created the CIS was that it prevented a complete split between Ukraine and Russia, which, he felt, would have been a "genuine tragedy" for Russian national consciousness. "Millions of Russians," he asserted, "are convinced that without Ukraine not only can there be no great Russia, but there cannot be any kind of Russia at all."[7] This perception emphasizes the degree to which Ukraine is not only and not simply a problem *for Russia*, but, more importantly, that it is also a problem *of Russia*. The defining characteristic of the Ukrainian-Russian "divorce syndrome" is that when Ukraine declared its independence in August 1991 it initiated divorce proceedings not only against the USSR, but also against what many Russians perceived to be "Russia." As Roman Szporluk has pointed out, in imperial Russia Ukrainians (and Belarusians) were viewed as component parts of a greater Russian nation, and what sets them apart from all of the other non-Russians of the former Soviet Union is that many Russians question their very existence.[8] Today, a large segment of the Russian population, and certainly much of Russia's political class as well as its cultural elites, still continues to view Ukraine as an integral part of Russia and Ukrainians as an organic part of the Russian nation. A nationwide poll conducted in Russia in the fall of 1997 by the Center for the Study of Public Opinion showed that 56 percent of respondents felt that Ukrainians and Russians are "one people."[9] The same sentiment was voiced by Yeltsin in an address to his countrymen in November of that year: "It is impossible to tear from our hearts that Ukrainians are our own people. That is our destiny—our common destiny."[10]

Russia's problems in dealing with Ukraine have also been greatly exacerbated by the fact that, with few exceptions, not much of an effort has been made in Russia, either in the mass media or among the intelligentsia, to reexamine and reconsider the historical baggage in the Ukrainian-Russian relationship. A study that focused on the image of Ukraine and Ukrainians in the Russian press after the collapse of the Soviet Union found that, in spite of the fact that the Ukrainian referendum on independence in December 1991 yielded a vote of more than 90 percent in favor, the prevailing trend in the ensuing years was to present a picture of Ukrainian independence in almost conspiratorial terms—that is, as the result of efforts by "nationalist" or "sovereign communist" elites ostensibly working against the genuine will of "the people." The study concluded that, for the most part, "Russian public opinion and the mass media evade serious discussion of the problems that are posed for Russian identity in connection with the formation of an independent Ukraine. A significant spectrum of public opinion continues to view the separation of Ukraine as something artificial and temporary."[11] There are no functioning

academic centers or institutes for Ukrainian studies in Russia, and Ukrainian history in the country's leading university is still taught as part of "the general course on the history of the fatherland."[12] As late as 1997, a leading Moscow academic journal could still publish a lengthy two-part article essentially restating the main theses of the Russian classics on "Ukrainian separatism"—namely, that Ukrainian nationalism was largely the invention of a small group of intellectuals headed by the historian Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, who was manipulated by "Polish chauvinists" determined "to set the Little Russians against the Russians and thereby split the Russian Empire from within."[13]

This is not to say that such views hold sway over the entire journalistic and academic community in Russia. In an article entitled "Problems in Relations with Ukraine Remain," the former diplomat and political commentator Aleksandr Bovin, for example, refers to "the emotional background against which practically all of us view relations with Ukraine." He admits that intellectually he understands that Ukraine is independent and that Crimea and Sevastopol are now in a foreign country, but confesses that emotionally he is unable to deal with these realities. "Maybe I'm wrong," says Bovin, "but I have the feeling that a considerable part of the Russian elite simply cannot part with this [divorce] syndrome." But he also offers a solution to the problem:

> Let's think about the situation. Either, or. Either we feel that the separation of Ukraine is an historical misunderstanding, a regrettable, temporary accident, that there is a realistic possibility of changing the course of events or, as a minimum, imposing our will on Kyiv—and then we can and should conduct a brutal, forceful course with respect to Ukraine. Or, after all, we come to the conclusion that, in the foreseeable future, there is no going back, that Ukraine is a truly independent and truly sovereign state that has the "right" to its own policies that correspond to its own interests—and then it follows that we learn how to live with that kind of Ukraine.[14]

Dmitrii Furman, one of a handful of Russian academics specializing in contemporary Ukrainian issues, also focuses on the psychological and the irrational as the core problem in the Ukrainian-Russian relationship: "Grasping the realities, shaking off the nationalist mythology—that is the way to deliverance from the painful Russian and Ukrainian psychological complexes and the psychological tension in Russian-Ukrainian relations."[15] There are representatives of the younger generation of Russian scholars who are interested in Ukrainian history and politics and whose research and publications reflect their awareness of the complexities of the Ukrainian-Russian relationship and offer thoughtful and balanced analyses.[16]

To what extent the Russian political class is moving or is even prepared to move in the same direction is an open question. Yeltsin's apparent conviction that it is "impossible" to sever the special bond between Ukraine and Russia does not inspire a great deal of optimism. Although the Russian President is well-known for his sometimes strange and erratic behavior, Yeltsin's statement on the eve of the Russian-Belarusian "union" that his Ukrainian counterpart

"wants to join, but something's hindering him" belies either hopelessly wishful thinking or complete ignorance of Ukrainian realities (or both).[17] Dmitrii Riurikov, Yeltsin's former adviser on foreign policy, is a particularly interesting case of how the "divorce syndrome" affects Russian political behavior. In an interview several years ago, Riurikov briefly noted that there was "something [in Ukrainian-Russian relations] that remains immutable—namely, a psychological layer that we are unable to surmount." He then proceeded, unwittingly, to personify the problem by expressing his irritation at Ukraine's refusal to conduct its relations with Russia on the basis of a "special relationship" and a "special history." Kyiv, he insisted should make a "fraternal grand Slavic gesture" and refrain from constant appeals to its own national laws and international norms as the basis for its policies regarding Russia.[18] In short, Ukraine, as the "younger brother" in this "special relationship," should behave according to its prescribed role. As one moves either to the right or left along the contemporary Russian political spectrum, the prospects for the "normalization" of Ukrainian-Russian relations grows increasingly more questionable. In fact, the right-left delineation in this context is meaningless to the extent that the Russian nationalists and communists share essentially the same views on Ukraine. The convictions of a "traditional nationalist" like Viktor Aksiuchits, who heads the Russian Christian Democratic Movement, appear not to have changed since 1991–1992. In an article in early 1997, Aksiuchits argued that the concept of Slavic unity was valid when applied to Poles or Serbs, but that in the case of the Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians it was a ploy intended to cover up the fact that all three constituted a single and indivisible nation. "History," he insisted "does not know either the Ukrainian or Belarussian nations or the "sovereign" states of Ukraine or Belarus."[19] Similarly, Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov writes that "Russian civilization" has been torn into three parts:

> In essence, this is a problem of our viability. How it will be solved will determine whether or not our Fatherland will be what it has always been—a unique, distinctive, and self-sufficient civilization. That is precisely why the second strategic task—after the internal consolidation of all healthy political forces—is the task of a new reunification of Ukraine and Belarus with Russia.[20]

Some of Russia's confirmed democrats and proponents of market reforms have also articulated views or policy positions with regard to Ukraine that, at the very least, are quite problematical, and two of the leading contenders to succeed Yeltsin, Moscow Mayor Yurii Luzhkov and former Security Council Secretary Gen. Aleksandr Lebed, have both raised Russian claims to Crimea and Sevastopol.

Before and After Independence

There was a period beginning in May–June 1990, when Yeltsin was elected head of the Russian Supreme Soviet and Russia declared its state sovereignty, during which Ukrainian-Russian relations enjoyed a brief but unprecedented honeymoon. At the time, the major political issue in the Soviet Union was the struggle between the Soviet center, represented by Mikhail Gorbachev as Party leader and USSR president, and the Union republics. It was in the interests of both Russia and Ukraine, the two most important and influential republics, to work together in their efforts to wrest as many prerogatives from the center as possible in the process of asserting their sovereignty. At the time, there was still a Soviet Union and, with few exceptions, no one in Russia gave much thought to what implications the weakening of the Soviet state could have for the legitimacy of the new, democratic, and sovereign Russia and its relations with Ukraine and the other republics.

A concrete example of the "new era" in Ukrainian-Russian relations was the "Declaration of the Principles of Inter-State Relations between Ukraine and the RSFSR Based on the Declarations of State Sovereignty" signed by representatives of the Ukrainian parliamentary opposition group called the People's Council (Narodna Rada) and their Russian counterparts from the Democratic Russia bloc. Noting that the growth of democratic movements in the two republics offered the Ukrainian and Russian peoples "a real chance to open a new page in the history of their relations," the document affirmed: (1) the unconditional recognition of Ukraine and Russia as subjects of international law; (2) the "sovereign equality" of the two republics; (3) the principle of noninterference in each other's internal affairs and renunciation of force in their dealings; (4) the inviolability of existing state borders between the two republics and the renunciation of any and all territorial claims; (5) the safeguarding of the political, economic, ethnic, and cultural rights of the representatives of nations of the RSFSR living in Ukraine and vice versa; and (6) the desirability of mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields on the basis of inter-state treaties and the regulation of disputes in a spirit of harmony.[21] These principles were incorporated into the formal treaty between Ukraine and Russia signed on 19 November 1990, which recognized the territorial integrity of both republics and their existing borders within the USSR. The choice of the Ukrainian capital as the venue for the official ceremonies was not fortuitous. Speaking at a press conference directly after the treaty was signed, Yeltsin pointed out that previous agreements between Ukraine and Russia had been arranged in Moscow on unequal terms and stressed that "we very much wanted to sign this one in Kyiv."[22] The gesture was intended to underline the fundamental change in relations between Ukraine and Russia. Addressing the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet (Verkhovna Rada), the Russian leader announced another fundamental change—a reassessment of Russia's self-image:

> I categorically reject the accusation that Russia is now claiming some special role. At the [Supreme Soviet] session, [Nikolai] Ryzhkov said that we allegedly want to shift the center from the center to somewhere in Russia. I categorically reject this accusation. Russia does not aspire to become the center of some sort of new empire. It does not want to have an advantage over other republics. Russia understands better than others the perniciousness of that role, inasmuch as it was Russia that performed precisely that role for a long time. What did it gain from this? Did Russians become freer as a result? Wealthier? Happier? You yourselves know the truth; history has taught us that a people that rules over others cannot be fortunate.[23]

The Supreme Soviets of both republics ratified the document within a matter of days, although some Russian lawmakers questioned the wisdom of adhering to the accord before having sorted out the Crimean question.

In the months that followed, Ukraine and Russia continued to offer the strongest opposition to Gorbachev's plans for a renewed Union. At the same time, it was becoming increasingly clear that the Ukrainian and Russian positions with regard to the center were not identical. Yeltsin, in spite of his personal rivalry with Gorbachev, showed himself to be considerably more flexible and compliant in his dealings with the center than the Ukrainian leadership. Already in September 1990, the Presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet issued a statement declaring that it would be premature to conclude a new Union treaty before the stabilization of the political and economic situation in Ukraine, the building of a law-based and sovereign state, and the adoption of a new republican constitution.[24] The following month, in response to the demands of student hunger strikers in Kyiv, the Supreme Soviet confirmed the stand taken by its Presidium. The differences between Ukraine and Russia were particularly glaring with regard to the "Nine Plus One Agreement" concluded in April 1991 between Gorbachev and the nine Union republics, including Ukraine, that had participated in the referendum on the preservation of the Soviet Union the previous month. The agreement called for the speedy conclusion of a new Union treaty, recognized the sovereignty of the republics, and conceded the need to broaden their rights significantly. Yeltsin's public comments gave the impression that all major disagreements with the center had been resolved to Russia's satisfaction. Kravchuk, on the other hand, who did not represent Ukraine at the meeting, while praising Gorbachev's concession on the sovereignty issue, nonetheless characterized the document as having "no juridical force."[25] Ukraine's position hardened in June, when the parliament decided not to discuss the new Union treaty until mid-September, arguing that it needed time to determine if the latest draft was in line with its declaration of sovereignty. Russia, on the other hand, approved the new draft in principle in early July; at the end of the month, Yeltsin was quoted as saying that Russia was prepared to sign the document "tomorrow, if you like."[26]

The first serious conflicts between Ukraine and Russia, however, came in the aftermath of Ukraine's declaration of independence on 24 August 1991.

Two days later, Yeltsin's press secretary issued a statement saying that Russia reserved the right to raise border issues with those republics, apart from the three Baltic states, that declared their independence and "discontinue union relations."[27] Later the same day, he explained that the statement applied primarily to Crimea, Donbas, and northern Kazakhstan, all regions with substantial Russian minorities. "If these republics enter the Union with Russia," he explained, "it is not a problem. But if they go, we must take care of the population that lives there and not forget that these lands were settled by Russians. Russia will hardly agree to give away these territories just like that."[28] The situation was further aggravated by remarks made at the time by Anatolii Sobchak and Gavriil Popov, the mayors of St. Petersburg and Moscow, respectively, and two of the most prominent representatives of Yeltsin's team. Popov, in particular, argued that declarations of independence were "illegal"; expressed his full support for Yeltsin's stand on borders; demanded the renegotiation of treaties with secessionist republics; and maintained that, among others, the status of Crimea and Odesa Oblast should be decided by local referendums.[29] The following day, the meeting of the USSR Supreme Soviet was interrupted by the announcement that "an emergency situation" had developed and that a Russian delegation headed by Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoi was already on its way to Kyiv. As Yeltsin subsequently explained, its purpose was "to tell the Ukrainian people: if you stay in the Union, we will not make territorial claims."[30] The deputies were asked to approve the dispatch of a delegation from the Soviet parliament as well. Both delegations arrived in the Ukrainian capital later that day and were met by a hostile crowd said to be the largest since the student strike of the previous year. After night-long negotiations, with the USSR Supreme Soviet delegation acting as observers, the Ukrainian and Russian sides produced an eight-point communiqué promising joint efforts to avert "the uncontrolled disintegration of the Union state"; recognizing the need for interim inter-state structures for a transitional period with the participation of interested states that were "subjects of the former USSR"; and reaffirming the articles of the 1990 Ukrainian-Russian treaty concerning the territorial integrity of both states and the rights of their citizens.[31] The phrase "former USSR" appears to have been coined at that precise moment.

Ukraine and Russia continued to drift apart in the final months of the Soviet Union's existence. Already at the end of August 1991, Kravchuk maintained that Ukraine could not work on the new Union treaty until after its referendum on independence. By that time, the Ukrainian leader was also insisting that a confederation was the only option for Kyiv. Meanwhile, Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and Nazarbaev reaffirmed their commitment to continue the negotiations in Novo Ogarevo. Several months later, in November, Kravchuk argued that the Novo Ogarevo process no longer existed and that Gorbachev's efforts were a "fraud" in which he would not participate. Relations between Kyiv and Moscow were also becoming increasingly strained. Against the background of

growing official concern in Moscow about the rights of Russians and Russian speakers in the non-Russian republics and unspecified pledges of support, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, whose moral authority in Russia was then undisputed, issued an appeal in October in connection with the forthcoming Ukrainian referendum on independence in which he argued that the aggregate vote was meaningless. Instead, the results in each oblast should be considered separately to decide the territorial future, as it were, of the given oblast. The thrust of the Nobel laureate's argument was that Ukraine was not a legitimate entity, but rather the product of "false Leninist borders."[32] Very soon thereafter, in the midst of the Ukrainian-Russian debate over the fate of Ukraine's nuclear arsenal, *Moskovskie novosti* printed the sensational news that Russian government officials had discussed the possibility of a nuclear conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Another Moscow newspaper presented a somewhat different version—namely, that Russian leaders had considered a preventive nuclear strike against Ukraine. The story was denied by the Russian defense minister and downplayed by Kravchuk, but then Yeltsin was quoted by Ukraine's first deputy prime minister as having told him that he had indeed discussed the possibility with his generals, but that "it was not technically possible." In Ukraine, the Russian president's explanation had the effect of adding more fuel to the fire. The referendum results appear to have shocked many in Russia. Sobchak, like Gorbachev, tried to argue that the vote for Ukrainian independence should not be construed as a vote against some kind of Union and that, in any case, if Ukraine were to secede Russia would immediately raise territorial claims, referring specifically to the "forced Ukrainianization" of the Russian minority. The St. Petersburg Mayor likened the situation to the conflict between Serbs and Croats in Yugoslavia, with the exception that a nuclear conflict could not be excluded in the Ukrainian-Russian case. Ukraine's plans for a separate army, he warned, posed a "serious threat for all of humanity."[33]

From Kyiv's standpoint, the results of the Ukrainian referendum effectively put an end to any plans for a renewed Union. Yeltsin and the Russian leadership, on the other hand, continued to express their support for some sort of arrangement with the center until the very eve of the Belovezha meeting on 7–8 December. Even as late as 5 December the Russian leader claimed that there was no alternative to a Union treaty. It was only in his address to the Belarusian parliament two days later that Yeltsin, while stressing that Russia always wanted a Union, conceded that the attempt to reconstitute the USSR was a failure.[34] Ukraine and Russia now turned to the difficult process of dismantling the Soviet Union, which brought new tensions to the surface.

After the USSR: The CIS

In some sense, the Belovezha talks can be viewed as the final attempt on Russia's part to preserve the Soviet Union. A full account of what transpired during those two days has yet to be written. According to Kravchuk, the

meeting was arranged on Ukraine's initiative already in mid-November 1991. Yeltsin is said to have initially acted as a messenger for Gorbachev, conveying the Soviet president's readiness to entertain wide-ranging concessions on the draft Union treaty as long as Ukraine affixed its signature to the document. In the final analysis, Kravchuk refused to sign the existing draft, make amendments, or propose his own version of the treaty.[35] The result was the agreement between Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus to create the Commonwealth of Independent States. After returning to Kyiv, the Ukrainian leader said that Russia and Belarus would have preferred a closer association, but that Ukraine's position precluded such an arrangement. Yeltsin later admitted that "it was not Russia that seceded from the [Soviet] Union," but that the pressure for independence in most of the republics forced Russia to agree to the CIS.[36]

Against this background, Russia's drive to facilitate greater integration within the CIS, which initially took the form of supporting the establishment of coordinating institutions and supranational bodies within the organization such as the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and promoting the CIS Charter, are perfectly understandable. In April 1992, the Congress of Russian People's Deputies declared its dissatisfaction with the level of political, economic, and military integration among the CIS member states and called for further efforts along these lines. By the end of the year, Russian lawmakers were suggesting that the parliaments of the former Soviet republics consider forming a confederation or some other form of "drawing together."[37] In Ukraine, on the other hand, Kravchuk was faced with criticism from the parliamentary opposition, which argued that Ukraine's membership in the CIS threatened its independence. The Ukrainian Parliament ratified the agreement forming the CIS on 10 December, but added twelve reservations, including the affirmation of the inviolability of state borders and the right to its own armed forces. Within a week, on the eve of the Alma-Ata (Almaty) meeting that saw eight additional former Soviet republics join the CIS, the parliament adopted a thirteen-point declaration delineating its understanding of the CIS as a loose association of independent states. The move was prompted by what the lawmakers maintained were attempts to form a "new union state" on the basis of the CIS.[38]

From the very start, therefore, it was quite clear that Ukraine and Russia had very different views as to the nature and purpose of the CIS. For Ukraine, the CIS was, in the words of its parliamentary head, Ivan Pliushch, a necessary mechanism for an orderly "divorce process." At about the same time, in February 1992, Kravchuk described it as "a committee to liquidate the old structures."[39] Both Ukrainian leaders essentially saw the CIS as a transitional body, which was reflected in Kyiv's decision to steer clear of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and the CIS Charter. As a matter of principle, Ukraine refused to take part in any CIS initiatives aimed at greater integration in the political, military, and security spheres and, accordingly, did not sign the collective security treaty in Tashkent in May 1992. Toward the end of the first year of independence, however, intransigence gave way to a more pragmatic and

balanced approach, which can largely be ascribed to the impact of harsh economic realities brought on by Ukraine's devastating dependence on Russian sources of energy and the inability or unwillingness of its leaders to develop a program of market reforms. An important factor was the appointment of Leonid Kuchma, an experienced director of one of Ukraine's largest industrial enterprises, Pivdenmash in Dnipropetrovsk, as prime minister in the fall of 1992. While not proposing shock therapy, Kuchma favored closer economic ties with Russia, maintaining that "anti-Russian actions in politics led to anti-Ukrainian economic consequences."[40] The result was a partial reappraisal of earlier policies with regard to the CIS, at least insofar as the economy was concerned. Accordingly, in April 1993 Ukraine initialed the agreement to form the CIS Consultative Coordination Committee, with the proviso that it would not go beyond its mandate to coordinate economic policies, and at the CIS summit in May Kravchuk signed a joint declaration proposing greater economic integration and a common market for goods and services, while at the same time objecting in principle to the idea of an Economic Union. At the September 1993 summit, which witnessed agreement on the creation of the Economic Union, Ukraine displayed its characteristic wariness by opting for the undefined status of "associate member."

Kuchma's election as president in July 1994 was widely expected to result in a clean break with the previous administration's policies, specifically with regard to Russia and the CIS. The new president had built his electoral campaign around the need for change, promising economic improvement through the restoration of ties with Russia. His slogans, which included official status for the Russian language in Ukraine, fell on fertile ground in the industrial and heavily Russian and Russified eastern and southern regions of the country, which were more visibly affected by the economic crisis and accounted for a larger proportion of the electorate than the central or western regions. At the October 1994 CIS summit, Kuchma signed the agreement establishing the Inter-State Economic Committee, which was envisaged as a body charged with coordinating, executive, and control functions for the Economic Union and represented the first supranational organ to be created within the CIS. But the assumption that Kuchma would be more receptive to political, military, and security integration within the CIS proved unfounded. The new Ukrainian president was quick to point out that Ukraine had not affixed its signature to any documents that conflicted with its constitution or laws, singling out Kyiv's continued rejection of CIS collective security arrangements, and stated forcefully that he did not become president of Ukraine "in order to become a vassal of Russia."[41]

If Ukraine viewed the CIS in terms of divorce, Russia gave every indication that it wanted to strengthen the organization and, indeed, assume its leadership. Very revealing in this regard was a confidential document prepared by Yevgenii Ambartsumov, head of the Russian parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, excerpts from which were leaked in August 1992. The report,

which summed up closed hearings on Russia's foreign policy, called for rejection of the Western-oriented course pursued by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and proposed what was described as a "Russian Monroe Doctrine" for the CIS:

> As the internationally recognized legal successor to the USSR, the Russian Federation's foreign policy must be based on the doctrine that proclaims the entire geopolitical space of the former [Soviet] Union the sphere of its vital interests (along the lines of the USA's "Monroe Doctrine" in Latin America) and to secure from the world community the understanding and recognition of Russia's special interests in this space.[42]

Essentially the same thesis was put forth by Yeltsin in early 1993, when he asked the international community and, specifically, the United Nations, for "special powers as a guarantor of peace and stability" on the territory of the former Soviet Union. By the end of 1993 and in early 1994, it was clear that Russia's policies with regard to the CIS were based on the propositions that it is the dominant player in the post-Soviet space and that the entire territory of the former Soviet Union constitutes a zone of Russia's "historically determined interests" wherein it performs a "special role." This was the substance of Kozyrev's remarks at a January 1994 meeting of Russian diplomats from the CIS countries.[43] At the same time, Yeltsin told Russian lawmakers that the CIS had reached a crucial point in its development that was marked by closer integration and that, in the process, "Russia's mission is to be first among equals."[44] This was a clear departure from the Russian president's earlier renunciation of any claims to a leading role in the CIS. The hardening of Russia's official policy may well have been a response to the December 1993 parliamentary elections, which witnessed a major victory for Vladimir Zhirinovsky's ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party. One of the indications of the shift to the right was the establishment, in addition to the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, of a separate permanent parliamentary committee on CIS affairs and relations with compatriots, thereby underscoring the perception of the world outside Russia's borders as falling into two categories—the Near Abroad, which encompassed all of the former Soviet republics, and the genuinely foreign countries. The CIS committee was headed by Konstantin Zatulin, who defined Russia's policies toward the CIS as falling within the realm of Russia's domestic affairs and maintained that most of the former Soviet republics had to become Russia's satellites or face extinction. Zatulin's attitude toward Ukraine was vividly reflected in his skepticism about the need to recognize "the historically nonexistent borders of an historically nonexistent state."[45] Other prominent Russian politicians, including representatives of the democratic camp, also voiced their support for various forms of tighter integration. Sergei Shakhrai, a deputy prime minister, announced plans in early 1994 for a new confederation, including unified armed forces and a unified command, confessing that he was motivated by a need for "moral and

political compensation" for his role in the destruction of the Soviet Union.[46] Vladimir Shumeiko, head of the upper house of the Russian parliament and chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, saw the CIS being transformed into a confederation and "later, maybe, we will even see a federation."[47]

Russia's official policy with regard to the CIS was reflected in plans for development of a long-term CIS integration plan and in the establishment of a slot in the government for a deputy prime minister specifically responsible for CIS affairs. Such documents as the report of the Foreign Intelligence Service, headed at the time by Yevgeny Primakov, entitled "Russia-CIS: Does the West's Position Need Modification?" (September 1994); the Memorandum on "The Basic Directions of the Integrationist Development of the Commonwealth of Independent States" and the accompanying long-term plan proposed by Russia and adopted at the CIS summit in Moscow (October 1994); and the presidentially decreed "Russia's Strategic Course with the States-Participants in the Commonwealth of Independent States" (September 1995) were all geared toward promoting and strengthening integration. The "Strategic Course" spelled out that Russia's "main vital interests in the economic, defense, and security areas and in the defense of the rights of Russians" were all to be found on the territory of the CIS, thereby dictating Moscow's priority relations with its member states. The main task was described as "the creation of an economically and politically integrated union of states."[48] In practical terms, by early 1996 Russia expanded its original customs union with Belarus to include Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, Russia and Belarus formalized the first of several agreements designed to establish a "union state." Russia's State Duma, the lower house of parliament, went further. In March 1996, it passed two resolutions denouncing and retracting Russia's role in the dissolution of the USSR and the creation of the CIS in December 1991 and, at the same time, it reaffirmed the validity of the Russian vote in the so-called Gorbachev referendum of March 1991 on preserving the Soviet Union.[49] Zatulin's successor as head of the parliamentary CIS committee expressed the sentiments of most of his fellow lawmakers when he explained that his committee's main task was: "To gather together the Great Mother Rus' and, to that end, prepare the necessary legal groundwork."[50]

Ukraine, on the other hand, increasingly moved toward a more balanced foreign policy course between East and West. The Trilateral Statement on denuclearization in January 1994 paved the way for the development of relations with the West, and the following month Ukraine was the first of the CIS countries to sign on to NATO's Partnership for Peace Program. By the spring and summer of 1996, it was clear that Kuchma and his advisers had set a course for Ukraine's "return to Europe." This found its clearest expression in the Ukrainian President's address at a meeting with top foreign affairs officials in July, where he specified that Kyiv's strategic aim was to "integrate" into European and transatlantic organizations while "cooperating" within the framework of the CIS:

> I would also like to note that our foreign policy terminology should reflect the principled political line of the state. Along with the strategic choice of adhering to the processes of European integration, Ukraine's firm and consistent line is the line of maximum broadening and deepening of bilateral and multilateral forms of cooperation both within and outside the framework of the CIS while safeguarding the principles of mutual benefit and respect for each other's interests and abiding by the generally recognized norms of international law.[51]

In practice, Kyiv has downplayed the multilateral aspect of its CIS policies and placed primary emphasis on developing and expanding bilateral cooperation with virtually all of the CIS member states.

Ukraine and the Former Republics

Primary consideration has been given to Ukraine's immediate neighbors Belarus and Moldova. The former poses a particular problem because of President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's foreign policy, which is pro-Russian, integrationist, and anti-Western, and his authoritarian and anti-democratic domestic policies. In spite of these constraints, Ukraine has sought to counter the isolation of Belarus, which could have the effect of driving the country further into the arms of Russia, and has worked very closely with Poland to that end. The basic bilateral treaty between the two countries was signed in July 1995, and in May 1997 Kyiv and Minsk signed a state border treaty, the first of its kind in the CIS. Ukraine's interests in Moldova are dictated, above all, by the impact on regional stability of the unresolved dispute over the breakaway Transdniester republic, with its center at Tiraspol where, moreover, Russia's influence remains strong. In addition to Russian peacekeepers, there are still about 3,000 troops of the former 14th Russian Army in the region, and Moscow does not appear to be in a hurry to implement its 1994 agreement with Chişinău on their phased withdrawal. Ukrainians in Moldova overall as well as in the Transdniester region are the largest national minority, a factor that has also been cited by Ukrainian diplomats. During the last few years, Kyiv has played a much more visible role in efforts to mediate the dispute between Chişinău and Tiraspol. In January, 1996, together with the presidents of Russia and Moldova, Kuchma signed a joint declaration that underscored the need for a quick resolution of the Transdniester conflict by defining a special status for the region within Moldova; Ukraine and Russia also assumed the role of guarantors of agreements between the two sides. Both Chişinău and Tiraspol have urged the Ukrainian leadership to send peacekeepers to the region, a proposal that is under consideration in Kyiv, but which would require some form of agreement on Russia's part. In May 1997, Ukraine and Russia added their signatures together with a representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to the Memorandum signed by Moldova and

the Transdniester republic on normalization of relations. Further agreements between the four were reached in March 1998. Joint Ukrainian-Moldovan military exercises were held for the first time in June 1998, and plans are underway for a joint peacekeeping battalion similar to the one formed with Poland. Ukraine's relations with Moldova, however, have not been entirely free of problems. In the immediate post-Soviet period, when Moldova's Popular Front still played a prominent role in the country's political life, disputed border claims were a sensitive issue, and it was only in late 1994 that an agreement was signed renouncing mutual border claims. This made it possible to begin talks on delimiting and demarcating the state border, which are nearly completed, and, in turn, facilitated the ratification of the basic bilateral treaty signed in October 1992.

Ukraine's priorities in the Transcaucasus, in addition to political and security issues, have a very clear economic dimension. Specifically, Kyiv has entered into the competition for delivering Caspian oil to international markets by proposing a transit route from Baku in Azerbaijan through Supsa in Georgia and on to a terminal near Odesa. The fact that Georgia and Azerbaijan, together with Moldova and Ukraine, have recently formed the informal grouping frequently referred to as GUAM is an indication not only of the level of cooperation between the four countries, but, as some observers have noted, reveals the degree to which Ukraine has emerged as a respected and influential counterweight to Russia in the CIS. From the standpoints of both Georgia and Azerbaijan, Kyiv's defense of the principle of territorial integrity bolsters their positions with regard to the separatist regimes in Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh, respectively. Tbilisi has a running dispute with Moscow about the role and functions of Russian peacekeepers in Georgia and has asked Kyiv to assume a peacekeeping role. As with Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia are planning a joint peacekeeping battalion that would eventually include Azerbaijan. Among the Central Asian countries, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have pursued policies within the context of the CIS that largely overlap with those of Ukraine; the former because of its tough-minded defense of its independence and criticism of Moscow and the latter because of its unswerving principle of neutrality.

The three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are not members of the CIS, and they see themselves to a large extent as already being in Europe as opposed to returning to Europe, which clearly impinges on their foreign policy priorities. Ukraine's relations with Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius have benefited enormously from Kyiv's policy of supporting the efforts of the Baltic states to join NATO and the European Union.

Needless to say, Ukraine's diplomatic activity in the post-Soviet space is a source of concern for Moscow. In some quarters, Ukraine is perceived as being the driving force behind the emergence of a Tashkent-Baku-Tbilisi-Kyiv axis, whose primary purpose is purported to be the "destruction" of Russia.[52]

The CIS may well be at a turning point in its relatively short history. It is becoming increasingly clear that most of the post-Soviet states, while still tied to Russia in a myriad of ways, have made a great deal of progress in developing a fairly clear sense of purpose and identity. The result has been that they are moving in directions other than Moscow. It has been estimated that by the beginning of 1997 almost 800 multilateral CIS agreements had been signed, but that only somewhat over 200 had been actually implemented.[53] At the October 1997 CIS summit in Chişinău, Yeltsin, who has been reelected to the post of head of the CIS Council of the Heads of States for the last several years, was subjected to harsh criticism for what was described as Russia's inefficient and irrational policies with regard to the CIS. His only supporter was said to be Belarusian President Lukashenka. Russia, it seems, may be drawing the appropriate conclusions. It was agreed that the CIS needed to be reformed. In early 1998, Russian Deputy Prime Minister in charge of CIS affairs Valerii Serov argued that the term "Near Abroad" had to be removed from Moscow's diplomatic parlance because it implied that the independence of the former Soviet republics was a temporary phenomenon and that sooner or later everything would return to the "normal" state of affairs. Serov is reported to have said that it was time to recognize that "a civilized divorce had taken place and that the main thing now was to build our relations on the basis of the realities that are in place."[54] Several months later, in connection with the reorganization of the Russian government, his slot in the Cabinet of Ministers was abolished and matters related to the CIS were transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the face of it, this looks like progress.

Crimea, the Black Sea Fleet, and Sevastopol

The question of Crimea's status, the problem of Sevastopol—concretely, the fact that it was the main base of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet and had a specific administrative status—and the issues, both practical and political, involved in determining the fate of the Black Sea Fleet in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse, have arguably been the most important concrete issues affecting Ukrainian-Russian relations.

The Crimean question is defined by a combination of specific factors that, taken together, have formed one of the most intractable and longstanding problems that confront Ukraine and that impinge directly on the country's stability and on its relations with Russia. First of all, Crimea was formerly part of the Soviet Russian republic. It was transferred to Ukraine in February 1954 by a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet on the initiative, at least formally, of the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet. Shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, reform-minded democrats like Kozyrev argued that the legality of the transfer was highly dubious because the decisions had actually been made by the totalitarian leadership of the discredited Communist Party of the Soviet Union.[55] A second factor is that Crimea is the only

administrative region of Ukraine with a majority of ethnic Russians. According to the 1989 census, Russians accounted for 67 percent of the population, while Ukrainians constituted only 25.8 percent; an even larger majority considered Russian to be their native language, including 47.4 percent of the Ukrainians. Today, the proportion of Russians has decreased, largely because of the return of the exiled Crimean Tatars, who numbered 240,000 (9.1 percent of the population) in mid-1996.[56] Third, the Black Sea Fleet is based largely in the Crimean port of Sevastopol, which imparts a military and geostrategic dimension to Russia's policies with regard to the region. But probably the most important factor is simply that most Russians feel that Crimea is Russian territory, that it has little to do with Ukraine, that it should never have been transferred to Ukraine, and that rightfully it should be part of Russia.

Russian claims to Crimea, it will be recalled, were first raised directly in connection with Ukraine's declaration of independence. The first attempt to reverse the 1954 transfer of the peninsula was initiated by Vladimir Lukin, who was then chairman of the Russian parliamentary committee on foreign affairs and foreign economic relations, in January 1992. The committee drafted a resolution "On the Decisions of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 19 February 1954, and the USSR Supreme Soviet of 26 April 1954, Concerning the Removal of Crimea from the RSFSR," which proposed that the lawmakers declare those decisions invalid and void of legal force. At the time, relations between Kyiv and Moscow were severely strained over the Black Sea Fleet and the larger question of the fate of the Soviet military on Ukraine's territory, and the draft resolution was not acted upon so as not to further exacerbate tensions. Not long after, however, a group of nationalist deputies led by Sergei Baburin succeeded in gaining overwhelming approval for a resolution instructing two parliamentary committees to study the constitutionality of the 1954 decisions and suggesting that the Ukrainian parliament conduct a similar review. At the same time, the Russian parliament approved an appeal to its Ukrainian colleagues, urging them to recognize the Black Sea Fleet as an indivisible part of the CIS Strategic Armed Forces. This was done in spite of the fact that the CIS summit in Moscow (16 January) had already agreed that the as yet undetermined part of the Black Sea Fleet that would be transferred to Ukraine did not constitute a strategic force. The degree to which the Russian parliamentarians saw the Crimean and Black Sea Fleet issues as intertwined became apparent from the leaked excerpts of a letter from Lukin to Ruslan Khasbulatov, the parliamentary speaker, recommending, among other things, that Crimea be used as a bargaining chip in the Black Sea Fleet dispute. Lukin argued that after parliament invalidated the 1954 decisions on Crimea, the Ukrainian leadership would be confronted with a dilemma: either it agreed to the transfer of the Black Sea Fleet and its bases to Russia, or Crimea's status would be called into question. The letter also referred to the "special relationship" between Russia and Ukraine, which, Lukin argued, Ukraine wanted to sever by orienting itself toward the West.

In the spring of 1992, Yeltsin sent Rutskoi to Crimea and the breakaway Transdniester republic, where the Vice-President openly claimed that Crimea was part of Russia. Asked if he was aware of military equipment being transferred from Crimea to Russia, Rutskoi responded sarcastically: "Why should we transfer anything from Russia to Russia?"[57] His remarks caused a stir in Ukraine and coincided with a warning from Yeltsin that any attempt on Ukraine's part to change the status of the Black Sea Fleet unilaterally would result in its being placed under Russian jurisdiction and subsequently transferred to the CIS strategic forces. Kravchuk, in the meantime, signed a decree on 5 April 1992 on measures to create Ukraine's armed forces, which presupposed a navy based on the Black Sea Fleet. This prompted Yeltsin to issue his own decree making good his earlier warning. The war of decrees was suspended at the end of April as part of an agreement reached in Odesa that committed both sides to a moratorium on unilateral actions and provided for a working group to prepare a treaty on the Black Sea Fleet. At the same time, nationalist Russian lawmakers attempted to place the Crimean question and the Black Sea Fleet issue on the agenda of the Sixth Congress of Russian People's Deputies. The following month, on 21 May, a closed session of the Russian parliament adopted a resolution declaring the 1954 decisions on Crimea "without the force of law" and urged that the Crimean problem be resolved through Russian-Ukrainian negotiations, with Crimea's participation, and on the basis of "the will of its population." It was against this background that Baburin was quoted as telling the Ukrainian ambassador in Moscow: "Either Ukraine reunites with Russia, or there will be war."[58]

The first Kravchuk-Yeltsin summit in Dagomys in June 1992 did not produce a solution to the problem of the Black Sea Fleet, stipulating only that discussions should continue on the formation of Ukrainian and Russian naval forces on the basis of the Black Sea Fleet. The two leaders met again in Yalta in August and decided that the Black Sea Fleet would be divided after 1995. In the interim, it was removed from CIS subordination and placed under the direct command of both presidents. The June 1993 summit in Moscow resolved that the "practical formation" of the Russian and Ukrainian navies was to begin in September and that the fleet was to be divided evenly in accordance with further agreements. The Massandra summit in September 1993 ended in confusion, with the two sides backing conflicting interpretations of what had transpired. The controversy focused on whether or not the Ukrainian side had actually agreed to surrender its half of the Black Sea Fleet and its infrastructure in return for the cancellation of all or part of Ukraine's debts to Russia. The first more or less concrete agreement was reached in Moscow in April 1994, stipulating that the Russian and Ukrainian fleets would be based separately and that Ukraine would receive 15–20 percent of the warships and was followed by a more detailed agreement in Sochi in June 1995.[59] None of these documents, it should be pointed out, were ratified by either side.

Having "disposed" of the Crimean question, at the end of 1992 the Russian Congress of People's Deputies turned its attention to the status of Sevastopol. Acting on the basis of a little-known decree adopted in October 1948 by the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet that gave the city a separate administrative and economic republican status, the lawmakers argued that because Sevastopol was not, strictly speaking, a part of Crimea it, therefore, was never actually transferred to Ukraine. Accordingly, in July 1993, the Russian parliament passed a resolution, without a single dissenting vote, affirming Sevastopol's "Russian federal status," providing for its financing from the Russian budget, and calling for negotiations with Ukraine on the city's status as the main base of the single Black Sea Fleet. Dmytro Pavlychko, then chairman of Ukraine's parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, qualified the move as tantamount to a declaration of war; Yeltsin and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs denounced the resolution. For the first time in the Ukrainian-Russian dispute, the international community, including the United Nations, publicly criticized Russia for violating internationally accepted norms and agreements.

The new bicameral Russian parliament elected at the end of 1993 was considerably more moderate than its predecessor, although it, too, reacted to developments in Ukraine. In connection with Crimea's decision in May 1994 to, in effect, renew its claim to independence by restoring its earlier constitution, the State Duma adopted an appeal to the Ukrainian parliament cautioning against any forceful moves in the conflict between Simferopol and Kyiv, but at the same time praising the Ukrainian leadership's handling of the situation and promising to promote a constructive compromise. Later in the year, however, prompted by the Ukrainian parliament's revocation of a host of Crimean laws judged to be in violation of the Ukrainian constitution, Russian lawmakers approved a declaration saying that, although they recognized the reality of Crimea being part of Ukraine, they were concerned by Kyiv's actions and suggested that these could jeopardize the ongoing negotiations on the Black Sea Fleet and the signing and ratification of the basic Russian-Ukrainian treaty. Russia's position on Crimea was seriously weakened by its campaign in Chechnya, although this did not prevent Luzhkov from declaring Sevastopol a district of Moscow while on a visit to the city. The Ukrainian leadership took advantage of Russia's predicament in the spring of 1995 by abolishing Crimea's constitution and its presidency and temporarily subordinating the Crimean government to the central government. Representatives of the Russian government were cautious in their reactions, stating that Crimea was an internal Ukrainian matter. The State Duma, however, did issue a statement expressing its concern about the impact of these developments on Russian-Ukrainian relations, referring specifically again to the Black Sea Fleet talks and the negotiations on restructuring the Ukrainian debt. Less than a month later, however, Yeltsin, in his first response to Kyiv's actions, insisted that the treaty with Ukraine could not be signed until Russia was assured that the rights of the Crimeans were being respected; later, he added that the unresolved problem of

the Black Seat Fleet also precluded his visit to Kyiv. At about the same time, Kozyrev made the sensational statement, without referring specifically to Crimea, that in some cases the use of direct military force might be necessary to protect Russia's compatriots abroad.[60] In the aftermath of a meeting between Yeltsin and Ukraine's acting Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk in mid-April, it became clear that the Black Sea Fleet was the main obstacle to the signing of the basic treaty. Russia's point of departure was that all of Sevastopol should serve as the base for the Black Sea Fleet, which meant, in effect, that Ukraine would have to yield jurisdiction over the city to Russia. The Ukrainian leadership refused to yield on this point as a matter of principle. The Russian parliament, in the meantime, continued to play an obstructionist role. In October and December 1996, it passed several resolutions and statements that called into question the division of the Black Sea Fleet, the status of Sevastopol, and, indeed, Crimea as a whole. By this time, however, it appears that Moscow's concern about Kyiv's Western orientation—specifically, its courting of NATO, overshadowed all other issues.

Conclusion

The status of Crimea and Sevastopol have been primary concerns for Russia's elected representatives, who accurately reflect the mood of their electors.[61] For someone like Luzhkov, whom many observers consider to be the favorite to succeed Yeltsin, Sevastopol, in particular, has become something in the nature of a preoccupation. After one of his frequent visits there in early 1998, the Moscow Mayor articulated his position in a very straightforward manner: "Relations between Russia and Ukraine will not be clear until a question of principle, the status of the eternally Russian lands Crimea and Sevastopol, is solved."[62] In the final analysis, however, neither Crimea nor Sevastopol could stand in the way of concluding the basic treaty between Ukraine and Russia, which is the required initial step paving the way for the "normalization" of relations. In some sense, Russia had little choice but to acquiesce. Its hands were tied by commitments to respect Ukraine's territorial integrity in international agreements such as the Trilateral Statement (January 1994) and the Budapest agreements of the OSCE (December 1994). More important, however, was the realization that Ukraine's "European choice" posed the danger of completely "losing" Ukraine unless concessions were made. In February 1995, the treaty was finally initialed after Moscow dropped its insistence on a clause providing for dual citizenship and a compromise was reached on a clear formulation of what constitutes the inviolability of borders. This left the Black Sea Fleet as the only serious outstanding issue. Eventually, in early 1997, Russia abandoned its previous policy of linking an agreement on the Black Sea Fleet to the treaty, which paved the way for the long awaited state visit by the Russian president to the Ukrainian capital and the ceremonial signing. In February 1998, Kuchma made his first state visit to Russia and signed a wide-

ranging and long-term program of economic cooperation. But problems still remain. Most important, the State Duma has given no indication that it is prepared to ratify the treaty. On the contrary, it has demonstrated that it is ready to exploit non-issues such as the alleged linguistic discrimination of Russians and Russian-speakers in Ukraine as a pretext for rejecting the document. The first concrete steps have been taken on delimiting and demarcating the state border between the two countries, which eventually should result in a formal treaty, although it is clear that the Russian side prefers so-called transparent borders and would like to formalize the concept of CIS "external borders." Specialists on both sides have decided that further negotiations are apparently necessary in order to implement the base-line agreements on the Black Sea Fleet. The discussions on the debts and assets of the former Soviet Union seem to be going nowhere. In the meantime, no one is quite sure how Ukrainian-Russian relations will develop in the post-Yeltsin era.

NOTES

1. Admittedly, something approximating international relations between Soviet republics had already made its appearance during the late *perestroika* period. Specifically, in November 1990, Leonid Kravchuk and Boris Yeltsin, at the time heads of their respective parliaments, signed a treaty in Kyiv that had all the accoutrements of an inter-state document, with each side "recognizing the other as sovereign states." For the text, see *Radians'ka Ukraina* 21 November 1990, and below, Appendix A, pages 319–29.
2. The treaty was signed in Kyiv on 31 May 1997 and ratified by the Ukrainian parliament by an overwhelming majority on 14 January 1998. As of July 1998, the Russian parliament had not ratified the document. For the text of the treaty, see *Uriadovyi kur'ier* 3 June 1997.
3. For the texts of the three agreements and the protocol signed by the then Prime Ministers Viktor Chernomyrdin and Pavlo Lazarenko, see *Vestnik voennoi informatsii* 10 (October 1997): 15–18; 11 (November 1997): 9–10; and 1 (January 1998): 17–19. For an analysis, see James Sherr, "Russia-Ukraine *Rapprochement*?: The Black Sea Fleet Accords," *Survival* 39(3) Autumn 1997: 33–50.
4. *Nezavisimaia gazeta* 20 February 1997 and 5 February 1997, respectively.
5. *Nezavisimaia gazeta* 16 January 1997.
6. *Izvestiia* 24 February 1998.
7. *Moskovskie novosti* 22 December 1991.
8. Roman Szporluk, "Belarus, Ukraine and the Russian Question: A Comment," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 9(4) October–December 1993: 366.
9. Interfax, 27 October 1997. This figure has remained fairly stable. In June 1993, a poll conducted among Russia's urban population yielded a 63 percent affirmative response to the same question. See *Novoe vremia* 37 (September 1993): 6.
10. For the text, see *Krasnaia zvezda* 22 November 1997.
11. A. I. Miller, "Obraz Ukrainy i ukraintsev v rossiiskoi presse posle raspada SSSR," *Politicheskie issledovaniia* 1996 (2): 135.
12. *Kievskie vedomosti* 28 May 1997. This problem is discussed in some detail by Roman Szporluk, "Reflections on Ukraine after 1994: The Dilemmas of Nationhood," *The Harriman Review* 7(7–9) March–May 1994: 5–6.
13. S. M. Samuilov, "O nekotorykh amerikanskikh stereotipakh v otnoshenii Ukrainy," *SShA—ekonomika, politika, ideologiia* 1997 (3): 89. See also the rejoinder by A. Garan' [O. Haran'], "O 'rasizme' Grushevskogo i

ukrainskom natsionalizme kak 'pol'skoi intrige,'" *SShA—ekonomika, politika, ideologiia* 1998 (1): 125–27. Readers interested in a representative sample of Russian interpretations of "Ukrainian separatism" are referred to the recently published *Ukrainskii separatizm v Rossii. Ideologiia natsional'nogo raskola. Sbornik* (Moscow, 1998).

14. *Izvestiia* 5 March 1998.
15. See his introductory chapter "Russkie i ukraintsy: trudnye otnosheniia brat'ev," in Dmitrii Furman, ed. and comp., *Ukraina i Rossiia: obshchestva i gosudarstva* (Moscow, 1997), 16.
16. I have in mind, specifically, the scholarly and publicistic works of Aleksei Miller and Arkadii Moshes. Miller is a specialist on 19th and early 20th century Ukraine. He contributed to the Furman volume cited above ("Rossiia i Ukraina v XIX–nachale XX v.: nepredopredelennaia istoriia," 71–87) and edited, together with V. F. Reprintsev and B. N. Floria, and contributed to a collection of articles on Ukrainian-Russian relations entitled *Rossiia–Ukraina: istoriia vzaimootneshenii* (Moscow, 1997). Moshes specializes in contemporary Ukrainian affairs. See, among others, his *Vnutripoliticheskoe razvitie i vneshniaia politika Ukrainy v 1991–1995 gg.* (Moscow, 1996) [=Doklady Instituta Evropy, Rossiiskaia Akademiia Nauk, 27].
17. Quoted in the *Financial Times* 27 March 1996.
18. *Kievskie vedomosti* 28 April 1995.
19. *Nezavisimaia gazeta* 27 February 1997.
20. Gennadii Ziuganov, *Geografiia pobedy. Osnovy rossiiskoi geopolitiki* (Moscow, 1997), 248–49.
21. For the text, see *Literaturna Ukraina* 6 September 1990.
22. *Vechirnii Kyiv* 21 November 1990.
23. *Molod' Ukrainy* 2 December 1990.
24. For the text, see *Radians'ka Ukraina* 28 September 1990.
25. *Komsomol'skoe znamia* 6 May 1991.
26. *Los Angeles Times* 31 July 1991.
27. For the text, see *Rossiiskaia gazeta* 27 September 1991.
28. Reuters, 27 August 1991.
29. Central Soviet Television, 27 August 1991.
30. TASS, 29 August 1991.
31. For the text, see *Molod' Ukrainy* 30 August 1991.
32. *Russkaia mysl'* (Paris) 11 October 1991. A year earlier, *Komsomol'skaia pravda* and *Literaturnaia gazeta* published Solzhenitsyn's well-known

brochure "Kak nam obustroit' Rossiiu?" in which he proposed that a new "Russia" called the Russian Union be formed on the basis of the Russian, Ukrainian, and the Belarusian republics as well as a part of Kazakhstan.

33. *Le Figaro* 4 December 1991, and AFP, 9 January 1992.

34. For a detailed discussion, see Roman Solchanyk, "Russia, Ukraine, and the Imperial Legacy," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 9(4) October–December 1993: 353–54. For an excellent treatment of Yeltsin's position on the preservation of the Soviet Union, see Marc Zlotnik, "Yeltsin and Gorbachev: The Politics of Confrontation," in Mark Kramer, ed., *The Collapse of the Soviet Union* (forthcoming).

35. See the interviews with Kravchuk in *Paris Match* 26 December 1991; Russian Television, 11 February 1992; *Sobesednik* 15 April 1992; and Leonid Kravchuk, *Ostanni dni imperii . . . pershi roky nadii* (Kyiv, 1994), 11–37.

36. See Yeltsin's address to the Sixth Congress of Russian People's Deputies in *Rossiiskaia gazeta* 23 April 1992.

37. ITAR-TASS, 14 December 1992.

38. For the texts, see *Holos Ukrainy* 14 December 1991 and 21 December 1991, respectively.

39. *Nezavisimaia gazeta* 12 February 1992, and AFP, 20 February 1992.

40. U*riadovyi kur'ier* 16 October 1992.

41. *Nezavisimaia gazeta* 28 October 1994.

42. *Izvestiia* (Moscow evening ed.) 7 August 1992.

43. *Diplomaticheskii vestnik* 3–4 (February 1994): 28–30.

44. *Rossiiskaia gazeta* 12 January 1994.

45. *Nezavisimaia gazeta* 24 March 1995.

46. *Moskovskie novosti* 3–10 April 1994.

47. ITAR-TASS, 9 June 1994.

48. For the text, see *Diplomaticheskii vestnik* 10 (October 1995): 3–6.

49. For the texts, see *Sobranie zakonodatel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii* 13 (25 March 1996): 3153–3154.

50. *Delovoi mir* 6 February 1997.

51. *Uriadovyi kur'ier* 18 July 1996.

52. See the report entitled "SNG: Nachalo ili konets istorii?" authored by Konstantin Zatulin and Andranik Migranian in *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 26 March 1997.

53. *Novoe vremia* 3 (26 January 1997): 4.

54. *Izvestiia*, 22 January 1998. See also *The Economist* 31 January 1998: 53.

55. TASS, 23 January 1992, and *Rossiiskaia gazeta* 24 January 1992.

56. S. M. Chervonnaia, "Vozvrashchenie i integratsiia krymskikh tatar v Krymu: 1990-e gody," in V. A. Tishkov, ed., *Vynuzhdennye migranty: integratsiia i vozvrashchenie* (Moscow, 1997), 148. For somewhat different figures, see Jane I. Dawson, "Ethnicity, Ideology and Geopolitics in Crimea," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 30(4) December 1997: 429.

57. Quoted in *Nezavisimaia gazeta* 7 April 1992.

58. *Izvestiia* (Moscow evening. ed.) 26 May 1992.

59. These agreements are conveniently reprinted in S. P. Kudriashov, S. O. Odarych, Iu. M. Orobets', and M. V. Tomenko, *Karta Sevastopolia: triumf prezydentiv, trahediia Ukrainy* (Kyiv, 1997). For a detailed discussion of the Black Sea Fleet question, see Nikolai Savchenko, *Anatomiia neobiavlennoi voiny* (Kyiv, 1997).

60. *The Washington Post* 19 April 1995, and the *Los Angeles Times* 21 April 1995.

61. A nationwide survey in December 1996 showed that 70 percent of respondents felt that Sevastopol should be a part of Russia. See *NG-Stsenarii* 10 April 1997.

62. Quoted in *Trud* 24 February 1998.