

Electoral Systems, Campaign Strategies, and Vote Choice in the Ukrainian Parliamentary and Presidential Elections of 1994

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In the Ukrainian parliamentary elections of 1994 the Communist party gained the greatest number of seats, yet the presidential election of the same year was won by a liberal reformer, Leonid Kuchma. The question arises as to how within a period of only a few months the Ukrainian electorate could have brought about such divergent results. This article addresses the question with reference to the workings of the Ukrainian electoral systems. It argues firstly, that the systems governing the two types of election created distinctive incentive structures for campaign strategy which interacted with the structure of preferences of the electorate in different ways, and secondly, that majoritarian aggregative formulae had different effects in the two sets of elections.

One of the great unknowns of the political changes currently underway in the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union is the long-term shape of their emerging party systems. Much will depend, in deciding this question, on the behaviour of electorates that have till recently had little or no experience in making choices between potential rulers. The basis on which they make these decisions is obviously affected by a range of interlocking factors, some structural and some contingent on the conditions at the time of an election and the events which surround the electoral process. Survey work in this field has generally focused on the short-term effects of economic perceptions, political attitudes, and perceptions of leaders, as well as on the underlying demographic factors which influence vote choice. Yet to understand electoral politics in new democracies, it is also vital to consider the role of political institutions such as electoral laws and party systems, and the specific ways in which these institutions are manipulated by political actors.¹

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¹ Previous work on the effects of electoral systems in eastern Europe include J. McGregor, 'How electoral laws shape eastern Europe's parliaments', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2, 4, (22 January 1993), 11–18; and K. Kuusela, 'The Founding Electoral Systems in Eastern Europe, 1989–1991', in G. Pridham and T. Vanhanen, eds, *Democratization in Eastern Europe: Domestic and International Perspectives* (London and New York, Routledge, 1994), pp. 128–50. On the impact of the Russian electoral system on the outcome of the 1993 elections, see M. Urban, 'December 1993 as a replication of late Soviet electoral practices', *Post-Soviet Affairs* 10, 2 (1994), 127–58.

In this regard, the parliamentary and presidential elections that took place in Ukraine in 1994 are an instructive case. Because the results of the two elections appear to have been so divergent, analysis of the factors which produced them raises a number of questions of general interest concerning the institutionalization of competitive electoral systems in post-communist countries.

The parliamentary elections of March/April 1994 were the first multi-party elections to be held in modern Ukraine, yet their outcome has been interpreted by many as a step back toward the socialist past, as was the case with recent elections in Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Estonia, and Russia. The re-legalized Communist party gained the greatest number of seats in the new legislature,² which elected as its speaker the socialist leader Oleksandr Moroz. The Ukrainian presidential election, on the other hand, was won in July of the same year by a self-proclaimed liberal, Leonid Kuchma. The question arises as to how within a period of only a few months the Ukrainian electorate could have brought about such discrepant and potentially destabilizing results. In what follows this question will be addressed with reference to the formal mechanics of the electoral systems governing the two sets of elections as well as the effects of these systems on the campaign strategies of major political players.

One possible explanation for the divergent electoral outcomes is that the economic quagmire into which Ukraine had fallen produced an unstructured and volatile electorate. This is suggested by Evans and Whitefield, who argue that politics in post-socialist countries which do not implement successful market reforms, and thereby create a structured class system, will revolve around competence or 'valence' issues and issues of state sovereignty. They note that in Ukraine the ethnic division between Russians and Ukrainians may serve as a grounding for the political system, but suggest that there is nevertheless a real danger that in such a situation party politics will not take root and the electorate will instead lurch from one populist demagogue to another.³

Is this what we have witnessed in the recent elections, or can the results be explained in other ways? I shall argue that though the elections of 1994 did turn largely on questions of competence and statehood as Evans and Whitefield predict, a volatile electorate was not the cause of the discrepancy between the results of the parliamentary and the presidential contests. The results are explicable primarily in terms of the way in which the electoral system interacted with the configuration of preferences of the electorate to create distinctive incentive structures which shaped competition among élite actors. The formal properties of the aggregative rules governing the different elections then magnified the divergence in outcomes.

Both the parliamentary and the presidential contests were governed by absolute majority rules which generally necessitated run-offs between the two candidates who gained the greatest number of votes in the first round. In the parliamentary elections, the country was divided for this purpose into 450 single-member constituencies. It was noted at the time of the 1994 parliamentary elections that the single-member system put a premium on

² Though the new Communist Party is not technically the same as the old, it is the old party's principal successor and it has maintained a high degree of continuity with CPU organizational structures.

³ G. Evans and S. Whitefield, 'Identifying bases of party competition in eastern Europe', *British Journal of Political Science*, 23, 4 (1993), 521–48.

constituency-level factors. This encouraged voters to choose well-known local leaders and down-played the role of political parties. The system also favoured parties with strong constituency-level organizational bases which could mobilize support on a local level. Because the leftist heirs to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had well-developed organization bases, and because in certain parts of the country many well-known local leaders were either members of these parties or independents, the elections resulted in a parliament in which the left was over-represented and independents held the balance of power.⁴ Yet the electoral system also had other influences which were not so obvious to commentators at the time. Understanding this requires a short detour into some theories of electoral systems.

Duverger recognized that electoral systems have two types of impact on electoral outcomes, which he labelled 'psychological' and 'mechanical' effects.⁵ The 'psychological' effects are ways in which the electoral system shapes the strategies of voters. The 'mechanical' effects have to do with the properties of the formulae by which votes are translated into seats. As far as 'psychological' effects are concerned, Duverger argued that plurality systems encourage voters to abstain from voting for parties that have little chance of winning a plurality of the vote in their constituency, and vote instead for one of the larger parties (what is generally known as 'tactical' voting). Voters have no such incentive under proportional systems, which encourage them instead to vote their preferences. But Duverger also noted that the incentives of a double-ballot majoritarian system were similar to those of a proportional system, in that voters had no reason not to vote for their first choice on the first round, as they would in any case have an opportunity to choose another option if their first choice was not successful.⁶ The 'psychological' effect of a double ballot on voter strategies is thus minimal. But subsequent theorizing about party competition has made it possible to extend Duverger's hypothesis by examining the 'psychological' effect of electoral systems on candidates, or, differently put, the incentive structures electoral systems generate for contestants.

Downs was the first major theorist of the incentive structure created by majoritarian electoral systems. He argues that parties have a strong incentive to win the support of the voter occupying the median position on the ideological spectrum of an electorate, for it is this voter who determines the outcome of the race.⁷ There are many reasons for doubting that Ukrainian voters in 1994 engaged in the type of 'rational' benefit-maximizing voting that Downs

⁴ M. Wasyluk, 'Ukraine on the eve of parliamentary elections', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 3, 12 (25 March 1994), 44–50; D. Arel and A. Wilson, 'The Ukrainian parliamentary elections', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 3, 26 (1 July 1994), 6–17. M. Bojczun, 'The Ukrainian parliamentary elections in March–April 1994', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 47, 2 (1995), 229–49.

⁵ M. Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State* (London, John Wiley, 1959, 2nd ed.), pp. 225–6.

⁶ M. Duverger, *Political Parties*, p. 240; see also G. Sartori, *Comparative Constitutional Engineering: an Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes* (London, Macmillan, 1994), p. 11.

⁷ A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Voting* (New York, Harper and Row, 1957). Downs's theory is only applicable in this form if the electorate's preferences are captured by one principal issue dimension (see J. M. Enelow and M. J. Hinich, *The Spatial Theory of Voting: an Introduction* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984), but, as we shall see, the assumption of unidimensionality holds for the Ukrainian electorate in 1994. Downs's theory was also developed primarily with reference to the American plurality system rather than a majority system, but its logic is that of majoritarian constraints, which apply in a two-party system even if the electoral rule is a majority one.

attributes to electorates (not least because few were in a position to determine where their material interests lay or to identify a political party that could be relied on to promote them). But Downsian constraints need not rely on Downsian assumptions, for any type of policy preference, whatever the basis on which it is held, can be used to locate voters along an issue dimension.

In what follows, the two aspects of Ukraine's electoral systems will be examined in an effort to shed light on how they contributed to the electoral outcomes of 1994. The 'psychological' effects of the system on campaign strategies are complex, and discussion of this component of the electoral process will constitute the bulk of the analysis. The final section will examine the 'mechanical' effects of the system.

Psychological Effects

The basic structure of electoral preferences in Ukraine in 1994 goes a considerable way toward explaining the strategies employed by parties and other political actors in the electoral sphere, once the underlying constraints of the majoritarian electoral systems are taken into account. These constraints operated differently in the parliamentary and presidential elections, and it is this difference, rather than electoral volatility, which explains in large part the discrepancy in the outcomes of the two sets of elections. A second important contributing factor was the non-dimensional issue of incumbent competence, which accounted for the tendency of voters to express their disaffection with current power-holders.

The analysis in this section is based on data from sample surveys of the voting-age population in conjunction with analysis of platforms, statements, and comments of the major parties/candidates as reported in the national press.⁸ The parliamentary races varied from constituency to constituency to such an extent, and involved so many different political and social groups, that it is not possible adequately to summarize the strategies employed by candidates or to make generalizations about the electorates addressed locally. Instead I shall focus on the campaign strategies at the national level of four political leaders. These include the presidential candidates Oleksandr Moroz, Leonid Kuchma, and Leonid Kravchuk, and as well V'yacheslav Chornovil.

Together these leaders can be taken to represent the four most important political tendencies active in the elections of 1994. Moroz was the leader of the Socialist Party of Ukraine, which was the main pillar of the Ukrainian left before the re-emergence of the Communist Party in October 1993. He was also the presidential candidate supported by the left. Kuchma was the co-leader of the centrist Inter-Regional Bloc for Reforms (IRBR) and eventual winner of the presidency. Kravchuk was the incumbent president and, though not affiliated with any party or bloc, was associated with what is commonly known as the 'Party of Power'.⁹ Finally, Chornovil was the leader of the main right-wing party

⁸ Material was collected mainly from the January–July 1994 issues of the following newspapers: *Holos Ukrainy (HU)*, *Uryadovi kur'ier (UK)*, *Demokratychna Ukraina (DU)*, *Robitnycha hazeta (RH)*, *Profspil'kova hazeta (PH)*, and *Pravda Ukrainy (PU)*. Subsequent references will be to the abbreviated forms cited here in brackets.

⁹ This mythical organization is the ruling establishment – composed largely of depoliticized former *apparatchiki* who had managed to remain in positions of power by manipulating local patronage networks.

in Ukraine, Rukh, which led the movement for independence in 1990–1991. Chornovil was Kravchuk's only serious rival for the presidency in 1991, and though he declined to run in 1994, his party came second only to the Communist Party in the number of parliamentary seats won, and his presence as a leader was felt throughout the electoral process. Reference will also be made to the platform of the Communist Party of Ukraine and to the statements of Communist Party leader Petro Symonenko, but because Communist positions were relatively unvarying, little will be gained by explicit analysis of their development over the course of the campaign.

In early 1994 Ukraine found itself in serious political and economic disarray. The economy had since 1992 been wracked by periodic bouts of hyperinflation, and manufacturing industry was slowly grinding to a halt in the absence of the cheap energy supplies and ready outlets for its goods once provided by the Soviet Union. Though inflation had been under control since early 1994, prices had been kept relatively stable at the expense of the work-force, a significant portion of which had not been paid in several months. The great hopes of economic growth which had accompanied Ukraine's declaration of independence in 1991 had been shattered; the new crop of democratic leaders were not delivering the prosperity that had been expected of them. Instead they appeared at best to be bickering amongst themselves, and at worst to be using their positions to plunder the national coffers.

For the public, three issues were of vital concern in 1994: the economy, Ukraine's relations with Russia and the CIS, and crime, especially corruption within the state apparatus. Surveys by the main polling organizations in Ukraine all showed that the economy was top of the electorate's priorities.¹⁰ Polls conducted in May 1993 and February 1994 both depicted a country symmetrically divided into three groups: those who advocated a market or capitalist system, those who were in favour of a centrally-planned socialist system, and those who thought Ukraine should have a mixed system or follow a 'third way' between the two.¹¹ There was also a considerable amount of regional variation in views on this issue. In Kiev and the west of Ukraine, the move toward a market economy was looked upon favourably by the majority of the electorate, while in the industrial east, where the changes of the past three years had taken their highest toll, there was more support for a return to a centralized, planned economy.¹²

On the issue of relations with Russia there was less of a balance; more voters were in favour of closer ties between Kiev and Moscow than were against

¹⁰ 'Ukrainian Public Opinion of the Eve of Elections to a New Parliament', Democratic Initiatives Research and Education Centre (Kyiv, November, 1993); M. Wasyluk, 'Ukraine on the Eve of Elections', p. 47; *HU* 17 February 1994, p. 2).

¹¹ K. Mihalisko, 'Ukrainians and their leaders at a time of crisis', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2, 31 (30 July 1993), 54–62. See also J. Martinyuk, 'The Demographics of Party Support in Ukraine', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2, 48 (3 December 1994), p. 42.

¹² K. Mihalisko, 'Ukrainians and their leaders at a time of crisis'. This survey confirms previous studies which have found similar geographical divisions on the issues of level of decision making and economic reform. See V. L. Hesli and J. D. Barkan, 'The Center-Periphery Debate: Pressures for Devolution within the Republics' in A. Miller, W. Reisinger, and V. L. Hesli, eds, *Public Opinion and Regime Change: the New Politics of Post-Soviet Societies* (Boulder, Westview, 1993), pp. 124–52; and I. Bremmer, 'The politics of ethnicity: Russians in the new Ukraine', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 46, 2 (1994), 261–83.

them.¹³ The interaction between these two issues may well have been the deciding factor in the outcome of both sets of elections. When it came to the solution to Ukraine's immediate economic problems, Socis-Gallup found in January that 43.1% of the population were willing to accept limits on the country's sovereignty for the sake of improving the economy, while 33.4% were not.¹⁴ Given the fact that market reforms were more advanced in Russia than in Ukraine, it would seem illogical for voters to support both a deceleration of reforms and a strengthening of economic ties with their northern neighbours, yet a study published on the eve of the presidential election demonstrated that a large portion of the eastern Ukrainian electorate did indeed hold these apparently incompatible views, and that there was considerable overlap between the two issue dimensions.¹⁵

The third issue of concern to the Ukrainian electorate in 1994 was crime, which was linked in the minds of many to corruption by government officials. Given that this was the most frequent explanation for government incompetence, the crime/corruption issue represents an important aspect of the electorate's evaluation of power-holders and those aspiring to that status. But unlike the dimensional issues of economic reform and relations with Russia, crime/corruption is a non-dimensional valence issue, on which different voters had different levels of intensity of feeling, rather than different views.

Since the parliamentary elections of 1990, Ukrainian politicians had been given little incentive to take the views of the mass public into account. When elections were announced for 1994, this suddenly changed. Over the course of the two election campaigns, the political élite had the opportunity to become intimately acquainted with the contours of public opinion and to test strategies for manipulating it. The dynamics of the electoral situation meant that in order to compete for the support of the crucial median voter, candidates were obliged to modify their positions in response both to public opinion and to each other. It is to this process that we now turn.

The Parliamentary Elections

The leaders of all the main political parties focused in their campaigns on two issues: corruption and the political paralysis of the incumbent regime. For the left, the right, and the centre alike, the 'Party of Power' was the principal enemy and main rival. The major parties were in agreement that the present power-holders had failed to serve the interests of the Ukrainian people, but divided amongst themselves as to what was the best alternative.

¹³ 'Ukrainian Public Opinion of the Eve of Elections to a New Parliament'; D. Arel and A. Wilson, 'Ukraine under Kuchma: back to "Eurasia"?', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 3, 32 (19 August 1994), p. 9.

¹⁴ M. Wasylyk, 'Ukraine on the eve of elections', p.47. According to a poll conducted in February by Democratic Initiatives, 35% thought the solution lay either in the entry of Ukraine into the ruble zone or the creation of a federation with Russia, while only 20% believed the economy could be saved through the acceleration of market reforms or large-scale privatization, *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy*, 8 (May 1994), p. 29.

¹⁵ Survey conducted by the Academic-Practical Centre for Political Psychology, reported in *HU* 25 June 1994, p. 3.

The Right: Chornovil and Rukh

Rukh candidates clearly had the best chances in the western part of the country, where the party's organizational base was strongest and median voters were in most cases committed patriots. It was here that Rukh ran most of its candidates, and statehood was its main campaign issue. Rukh put emphasis first and foremost on the value of nation-building. It saw nationhood as embodied in the Ukrainian state and brought to life by means of democratic political institutions and a Western European style mixed economy.¹⁶ The party's belief in the primacy of the values of nation- and state-building was summed up in its three 'p's': patriotism, probity (*poryadnist'*), and professionalism, defined in their applied form as statehood, democracy, and reform. The order of these values is important; the establishment of the Ukrainian state took first place, with political and economic reforms conceived of as means to this end. Moreover, the stress on 'professionalism' framed the economy as a matter of competence, often with little attention in Rukh campaign statements to the nature of the type of reforms advocated.

In many of its basic issue positions, Rukh was uncomfortably close to the unpopular president, Kravchuk. To distance itself from the current administration and enhance its image as a self-styled 'loyal opposition', it was obliged to depict the corrupt 'non-party nomenklatura' as the 'most dangerous' political force in Ukraine.¹⁷ It condemned the electoral law of November 1993 as undemocratic and 'anti-party', denounced corruption by the present institutions of state, and accused the authorities of conducting a campaign of 'political terror' against its party.¹⁸ This strategy had the practical effect of emphasizing performance rather than substantive issues, thereby making it possible to open an area of competition between Rukh and the representatives of the 'Party of Power' who were in many constituencies its main rival.

Rukh's stated goal in the elections was to win 20–25% of the seats,¹⁹ or approximately the number won in 1990 by the Democratic Bloc of which it was the main component. Yet the Rukh organization had hemorrhaged badly since its time as an anti-communist umbrella movement, and in the 1994 elections its members secured only 6% of the seats filled (though several more deputies subsequently joined the Rukh parliamentary faction). Chornovil consoled his party with the observation that, if Rukh had not won the elections, neither had the Communists,²⁰ and it has been estimated that the total number of seats won by the national-democratic camp as a whole in 1994 was almost identical to that won by the Democratic Bloc in 1990.²¹

The Left: Moroz, the Socialists, and the Communists

The strategy of the Socialists was not far removed from that of Rukh. In many ways the former can be seen as the mirror image of the latter, with populism replacing nationalism as the ideological basis on which the campaign was

¹⁶ See, for example the Rukh party platform, *UK* 20 January 1994, p. 6, or the declaration in *HU*, 4 February 1994, p. 4.

¹⁷ *Vysokyi zamok* 31 March 1994, p. 1.

¹⁸ *HU* 22 January 1994, p. 2; 4 February 1994, p. 4.

¹⁹ *HU* 17 February 1994, p. 3.

²⁰ *HU* 13 April 1994, p. 1.

²¹ D. Arel and A. Wilson, 'The Ukrainian parliamentary elections', p. 11.

fought. The Socialists sought to link together the growing crime and corruption in society with irresponsible economic liberalization and the other self-serving policies of the current powerholders. The party programme was based on five principles: no state secrets kept from the people, no élites in power, no alienation of workers from power and ownership, the guarantee of human rights, and, finally, the enhancement of spiritual values, collectivist traditions, and international friendship.²²

If the national democrats were coy about the nature of the economic reforms they proposed, the Socialists were equally reluctant to emphasize state planning and the other traditional trappings of socialism. Moroz went to some pains to take a centrist stance on economic issues by letting it be known that his party was not entirely against market reforms and private property, but that they advocated a slower pace, a mechanism whereby ownership would be transferred to workers, and protection of the manufacturing sector.²³ Eager to establish his democratic credentials, Moroz distanced himself from the authoritarian 'socialism' established under Soviet rule, and declared his support for a multi-party political system.²⁴

The centrist position of the Socialists extended also to foreign policy. From a Socialist point of view, the rapid pace of market reform in Russia made closer ties with that country less than desirable. The main foreign policy plank of their programme was the need for import tariffs to protect Ukrainian manufacturing.²⁵ Significantly, and perhaps fatally, the issue of Ukrainian nationalism and ties with Russia was underplayed in their parliamentary campaign.

Observing the resurgence of socialists in recent elections in other eastern European countries, Moroz may have been counting on popular disenchantment with market economics to yield up a considerable vote to a party which advocated a return to common ownership and the redistribution of wealth.²⁶ He was wrong. The Socialist Party fared poorly, gaining only 16 seats, mainly in the east and the south. In some cases this may have been because it withdrew candidates in favour of the Communist Party, as was alleged at the party conference which followed the elections,²⁷ but it was more likely due to that fact that those who wanted a return to the socialist past were also in favour of a renewal of ties with Russia.

Only the Communist Party offered this combination of policies and the re-animation of old structures was probably one of the chief secrets of its success.²⁸ One of the main planks of the Communist Party platform was to 'renew the unjustifiably ruined ties with Russia and the other countries of the former [Soviet] Union'. The party was in favour of the 'rebirth, on the basis of new principles and voluntary inclusion, of a union of the fraternal peoples which belong to the states created on the territory of the USSR'. It also supported

²² *RH* 1 March 1994, p. 3; *UK* 19 March 1994, p. 6.

²³ *DU* 3 February 1994, p. 1; *RH* 11 February 1994, p. 1.

²⁴ *DU* 15 March 1994, pp. 1–2.

²⁵ *DU* 24 March 1994, p. 2.

²⁶ Moroz made an explicit comparison between his party's policies and those of the former communists in Poland. *DU* 3 February 1994, p. 1.

²⁷ *RH* 20 April 1994, p. 2.

²⁸ There is also evidence that the Communist Party benefitted from clientelist relations to a greater degree than the Socialists; see S. Birch, 'Nomenklatura democratisation electoral clientelism and party formation in post-Soviet Ukraine', *Democratization*, 4, 4 (1997), 40–62.

greater regional autonomy within Ukraine, granting Russian the status of second state language, dual (Russian-Ukrainian) citizenship, and a halt to privatization.²⁹ This openly pro-Russian and anti-market stance coincided closely with popular opinion in many of Ukraine's eastern regions, contributing greatly to the Communists' success in winning 85 seats in the new parliament.

Kuchma and the Inter-Regional Bloc for Reforms

It is no coincidence that the Inter-Regional Bloc for Reforms adopted a position on the status of Russian language and regional autonomy which was nearly identical to that of the Communists. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia had fared considerably better than Ukraine economically; the average salary in Russia was in dollar terms nearly ten times that in Ukraine at the time of the elections. The IRBR portrayed itself as a political force in favour of both market reforms and closer ties with Russia. It argued that Ukraine would do well to re-establish the trade links that had once maintained the two countries on equal economic footing. Not to do this in the name of national sovereignty was foolishly romantic 'economic nationalism' which would backfire in the end by destroying the very state it sought to preserve.

The Bloc's co-founder and *de facto* leader, the Russian-speaking Leonid Kuchma, was a reform-minded former director of the largest missile factory in the world. From October 1992 to September 1993 Kravchuk had allowed him to run the government, hoping that he would be able to live up to his reformist views, but Kuchma freely admits that he had little success in developing and implementing an effective economic programme. Kuchma then assumed the position of president of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (UUIE). For the purposes of the parliamentary elections the UUIE joined with the ethnic Russian Vladimir Grinev, former deputy speaker of parliament and leader of the liberal New Ukraine parliamentary faction which controlled 50 seats in the outgoing legislature. Together they founded the IRBR, which held its first conference in January 1994.

The credo of the IRBR was 'economics above politics'; it aimed for pragmatic solutions to the country's problems. When it was first founded, the 'cornerstone' of its economic programme was market reform through a three-stage process of stabilization, privatization and structural rebuilding.³⁰ Responding to voter sympathies in the east and south, the IRBR's emphasis shifted over the course of the campaign away from market reforms as the key to economic recovery and toward trade liberalization, a renewal of severed trade ties with Russia, and the reconquest of the Russian market for Ukrainian manufactures. By the time of its second conference in March, the three-stage programme had come to consist of stabilization, structural rebuilding, and economic union with Russia, privatization having been squeezed out in the process.³¹ On the social front, the Bloc played to populist demands in the Crimea and the Donbas for regional autonomy, while at the same time offering firm central control.³²

²⁹ UK 17 March 1994, p. 6.

³⁰ HU 27 January 1994, p. 2.

³¹ *Post postup* 17–24 March 1994, pp. A1–A2; HU 19 March 1994; UK 19 March 1994, p. 6.

³² *Vysokyi zamok* 12 April 1994, p. 2.

The ideological strain implicit in the ambiguity of the IRBR's stance on both economic and social issues divided the bloc internally.³³ Yet it was successful enough in portraying itself as an electoral force that by March it was registering around 10% support in the polls, and Kuchma's own personal popularity rating was nearing 20%.³⁴ On election day it was revealed that this strategy had not been very successful. Only six seats were won by official IRBR members, and a further dozen or so Bloc sympathizers. Over half were in its three urban power bases of Kharkiv, Odesa, and Kuchma's home town, Dnipropetrovs'k. The Bloc failed almost entirely to penetrate the most highly Russified and industrialized region of the Donbas, which was won mainly by Communists and local chieftains; nor did it gain any seats in the Crimea.

This apparent failure was not to prove as calamitous for Kuchma as at first appeared. The parliamentary campaign served the purpose of laundering Kuchma's image, which had been badly soiled by his unproductive stint as prime minister. By allying himself with an oppositional group, he was able to distance himself from the 'Party of Power' and stake out the political territory he would then seek to occupy in the race for the presidency. The Ukrainian president must be elected by an absolute majority, and Kuchma had rightly surmised that an electoral system that, in classical Downsian fashion, squeezed out a centrist party, would nevertheless yield all to a centrist candidate who was able to make it to the run-off.

Kravchuk and the 'Party of Power'

Kravchuk took advantage of his position above the political fray of the parliamentary elections to distance himself from party politics. His main emphasis during this period was on the need for political reform, including a new constitution and a referendum on relations between the centre and the regions.³⁵ He argued for a weakened presidency in order to play to the left, which also favoured such a change, but concentrated on statebuilding issues in order to be seen to be making common cause with the right. On the crucial issue of statehood/foreign policy he also tried to maintain a nonaligned position. In January he signed a trilateral accord in which Ukraine agreed to give up its nuclear weapons, yet he argued against recreating economic ties with Russia.³⁶

It was hardly in Kravchuk's interests to associate himself with the other nonaligned members of the old nomenklatura who were seeking in the parliamentary elections to enhance their positions. Members of this 'Party of Power' were seen by many as being responsible for ruining the economy and criminalizing society. Generally finding themselves on the wrong side of the crime question by the mere fact of being in positions of authority, they tended to rely on local patronage networks to reach their electoral aims.³⁷ Though they

³³ *DU* 22 February 1994, p. 1; Post postup 3–9 February 1994, p. A4.

³⁴ *Politychnyi portret Ukrainy* 8, May 1994.

³⁵ *HU* 15 January 1994, p. 2; 21 January 1994; 29 January 1994, p. 2.

³⁶ *UK* 1 March 1994, p. 3.

³⁷ The political strategies of this group were based primarily on the need for self-preservation. Most of its members were pragmatists who adapted to the ideological stream which was prominent in their region. See A. O. Bilous, *Politychni ob'yednannya Ukrainy* (Kiev, Ukraina, 1993), pp. 62–5; and D. Arel and A. Wilson, 'The Ukrainian parliamentary elections', p. 7. There is evidence that such candidates often used vote-buying as a means of securing electoral support. See M. Bojcnuk,

generally stood apart from the ideological debate, they had the advantage of institutional favour: they were in positions to exert control over local electoral commissions, media organizations, and campaign resources.

In the 1994 race the 'Party of Power' was especially successful in the vicinity of Ukraine's major non-metropolitan cities in the east and south, as well as in Kiev *oblast'* (though not in the capital itself). In total it has been estimated that establishment candidates won 77 seats in the new parliament.³⁸ This represented a reduction in the number of non-party-affiliated deputies, but it was still a large enough segment to leave the legislature malleable. In theory this was in the president's interest, but as he allied himself closer and closer with the right he began to lose the loyalty of his former fellows, who increasingly sided with a resurgent left.

The Presidential Election

If the old nomenklatura of the 'Party of Power' was the whipping boy of the parliamentary elections, Kravchuk quickly assumed this role in the run for the presidency. The difference was that the incumbent president had enough authority and prestige remaining to ensure that he would be a candidate in the run-off. The focus of competition was now on the median voter in the nation, not the median voter in each constituency. Both extremes of the electoral spectrum recognized they had little chance of winning in the second round against a centrist candidate and withdrew from the race. Though located at the edges of the ideological spectrum, neither Rukh nor the Communists were parties of ideological fanatics, and while it had been rational for each of them to contest a significant number of parliamentary seats, it was not rational for either to run a candidate in the presidential election. The Communists, for their part, had ideological objections to the institution of the presidency itself with which to justify their decision.³⁹

Kuchma and Moroz declared their candidacies in April. Four other candidates also gathered the requisite number of signatures to have their names on the ballot: Volodymyr Lanovyi, the young Rukh-supported economist; Kravchuk's one-time ally and Chairman of last parliament, Ivan Plyushch; the ethnic Russian businessman, Valerii Babych; and finally, the elderly Minister of Education, Petro Talanchuk.

Though Kravchuk had continually demonstrated himself over the course of his presidency to be a pragmatist and a compromiser in both foreign and domestic policy, the presence of a moderate left-wing candidate and no moderate right-wing candidate gave him an incentive to confirm popular perceptions of his rightward gravitation during his term in office and to assume the mantle of the national-democrats. This move left Kuchma a wider space in the centre, but there was a danger that if Kravchuk did not gain the support of

'The Ukrainian parliamentary elections in March–April 1994', p.37; see also S. Birch, 'Nomenklatura democratisation'.

³⁸ *Post postup* 15–25 April 1994, p. A4.

³⁹ Another reason why the Communists may have decided not to contest the presidency could have been that they had won many of their parliamentary seats on the basis of clientelist relations which relied on local party machines, and they may have felt that they had yet to build a strong and cohesive enough national machine to mobilize support for their leader in a national election (see S. Birch, 'Nomenklatura democratisation').

the right, many in this camp would decide not to vote at all. If this happened, he would be left with the support of a severely truncated portion of the ideological spectrum. Rightly sceptical of his prospects, Kravchuk attempted to delay the election until such time as the powers of the supreme executive had been better defined. But the newly-elected parliament refused to grant him his wish, and eventually Kravchuk agreed to the election when opinion polls showed him taking the lead in popular support.

It was clear by May that the contest would be between Kuchma and Kravchuk. During the weeks prior to the election, these two candidates rose steadily in popularity, with the latter slowly gaining on his main rival. Despite the left's success in the parliamentary elections, the Socialist's candidate Moroz trailed in the polls. In an effort to woo voters on the left, Kravchuk assented in June to the appointment of a Socialist-backed prime minister, and in the first round of the presidential election on 26 June, the president took 37.7% of the vote to Kuchma's 31.3%, while Moroz scored a mere 13.0%.

Kravchuk polled less than 20% in the Crimea and the Donbas regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, but he swept the west and the centre of the country, with nearly 90% of the vote in the three western regions comprising Galicia. In the Donbas, a strong showing for Moroz edged Kravchuk into third place, while in several regions of the centre and the northwest the Socialist came second, but nowhere did he obtain more than a quarter of the vote. It was Kuchma who now reigned throughout most of the east and south.

Though Moroz refrained from advising his supporters as to how to cast their votes in the second round, the Communist Party gave a signal to leftist voters by announcing that it would not support Kravchuk. Evidently securing a considerable portion of the first-round support for Moroz, Kuchma won in the second round on 10 July with 52.1% as against Kravchuk's 45.5%. The regional distribution of the vote was even more marked in the run-off than in the first ballot, with Kuchma receiving the support of only 3.9% of the electors of the western region of Lviv, but close to 90% in the Donbas and the Crimea.⁴⁰

Chornovil

That Rukh came second only to the Communists in numbers of parliamentary seats won was not sufficient encouragement for the party to put forward a presidential candidate; at the party conference which followed the second round of the legislative elections, Rukh backed Kravchuk's plea for a postponement of the presidential election. When the bid for postponement was unsuccessful, Chornovil stated that personally he would support Lanovyi, and many of Rukh's regional branches followed suit.⁴¹ In the second round, Rukh declared its somewhat reluctant support for Kravchuk.⁴² True to the Rukh party platform, Chornovil put his nationalist values above his desire for economic reform by switching the object of his sharpest criticisms from the 'Party of Power' to the IRBR and Kuchma, seen now as the greatest threat to Ukraine. He declared his

⁴⁰ See S. Birch, 'The Ukrainian parliamentary and presidential elections of 1994', *Electoral Studies*, 14, 1 (1995), 93–9.

⁴¹ *HU*, 11 May 1994, p. 6; *RH* 1 June 1994, p. 1.

⁴² *Za vil'nu Ukrainu*, 6 July 1994, p. 1.

willingness to work with anyone in parliament, including the Communists, who supported the strengthening of the Ukrainian state.

This new-found pragmatism and apparent disregard for Rukh's once-cherished principles of structured party politics might at first seem strange, but it makes sense in terms of both the party's weakened position and the shift in strategic alliances necessitated by the presidential contest. Kuchma was by this time successfully positioning himself in the centre on both economic and foreign policy. With anti-incumbency sentiment strong, he clearly represented a serious threat to the president. The only hope for the national-democratic right was to prevent Kuchma from reaching the second round, and promoting instead Moroz, from whom Kravchuk could more easily regain the centrist position. It is therefore not surprising that Chornovil should have declared his willingness to cooperate with the patriotic left by stressing their common commitment to the Ukrainian state. The potential of such a move had not been lost on certain sectors of the left either.

Moroz

On 18 May the new parliament elected Oleksandr Moroz as its speaker by a margin of 171 to 103. Perhaps because of the responsibility of his new post, perhaps in response to overtures from the right, Moroz too began in May to talk of the need to depoliticize law-making, to structure the chaotic system of parliamentary factions, and for the legislature to unite in order to solve Ukraine's problems. He also began increasingly to advocate Ukrainian independence, strengthening of the institutions of the Ukrainian state, and the consolidation of Ukrainian society.⁴³

Given that the Socialists were against direct election of the president and the Communists were in favour of abolishing the institution altogether, many did not take Moroz's campaign for that post altogether seriously. That he was not campaigning in earnest was suggested also by the moderate tone of his speeches and his absences at critical junctures. When he did hit the campaign trail it was mainly in the east. He was clearly fighting for the same territory as Kuchma, and doing so by mimicking the latter's popular views on foreign relations which stressed economic ties with Russia but stopped short of advocating a renewal of the Soviet Union. This view is encapsulated in his oft-quoted quip that 'he who feels no sorrow for the dissolution of the [Soviet] Union has no heart, but he who still wants today to renew the Union has no head'.⁴⁴ Evidently having learned his lesson from the parliamentary race, Moroz tried to reproduce in somewhat attenuated form the political formula which had served the Communists so well in the earlier elections: a foreign policy as pro-Russian as that of his main rival, but an economic policy that coincided more closely with the desire of many in the east for a return to socialist economics.

The sudden change in emphasis of Moroz's political platform, coming so soon after his flirtation with the nationalist right, won him few followers. Too moderate to be the repository of a protest vote, but too diffident to attract the support of a committed electorate, he continued to lag behind the two Leonids in popularity, and as we have already seen, he fared poorly on election day.

⁴³ *HU* 11 May 1994, p. 3; 20 May 1994, pp. 1–2, 3; *PU* 2 June 1994, p. 2.

⁴⁴ *HU* 25 June 1994, p. 2.

Kuchma

Kuchma presented himself as a hard-nosed and experienced technocrat, possessed of the skills necessary to lead Ukraine out of the clutches of a corrupt ex-communist establishment and on the road to economic recovery. Kravchuk was clearly the main target of his attacks, even in the run-up to the first round. Kuchma accused the current administration of widespread corruption and decried the immiseration of the people under Kravchuk;⁴⁵ when questioned about his own stewardship of the government, he admitted to having made mistakes when in power but claimed that his hands had been tied by both president and parliament.⁴⁶ His tough talk and clean image made him the most credible of those who denounced state corruption. He portrayed himself as a man of deeds, not of words. He turned the tables on Kravchuk, who prized his lack of party affiliation and supposed transcendence of party politics, by capitalizing on popular discontent with power-holders and the tarnished ideologies of both right and left. In this way he was able to contrast himself with the president – former ideological chief of the Communist Party of Ukraine.

Undoubtedly sensing the need to position himself firmly in the centre of the political spectrum, Kuchma moderated his pro-Russian, reformist stance as the election drew near. He painted himself as an economic realist who believed that trade links should not be prejudiced by cultural antagonisms. Yet he was sensitive to allegations of treason by the right; he defended Ukrainian independence, stressing that he was for economic but not political union with Russia.⁴⁷ Obviously aware of where his potential constituency lay for economic issues, Kuchma reduced the 'liberal' content of his platform to a call for free trade with Russia and a liberal ethnic policy, including regional autonomy for Ukraine's heavily Russified eastern regions. He indicated readiness to work with the left and de-emphasized privatization, concentrating instead on fiscal and monetary policy.⁴⁸

Kuchma's long-term vision of Ukraine's future was built on the socially-oriented ideas propounded by the IRBR in the latter part of the parliamentary race. His stated approach to the economy was a 'Eurasian' one, reflected in his admiration for the 'Chinese path' to economic development, and emphasizing the desirability of choice between work in the state or the private sector. This orientation naturally suggested closer links with Russia, the great 'Eurasian' power.⁴⁹ In this way Kuchma was able nicely to circumvent the inconvenient fact that the social guarantees demanded by voters in favour of strengthening ties with Russia would not necessarily be achieved through the more liberal policies currently being implemented in that country. He had the advantage, therefore, of being able to attract both those who wanted genuine reform and those who wanted a return to the past.

It is noteworthy that support for Kuchma was not concentrated in the same regions that had elected members of his Inter-Regional Bloc for Reforms to parliament, but was highest in the first round in those regions which border on

⁴⁵ *HU* 6 July 1994, p. 1.

⁴⁶ *Vysokyi zamok* 12 April 1994, p. 2.

⁴⁷ *RH* 20 April 1994, p. 2; *HU* 17 June 1994, p. 5; *PU* 14 April 1994, p. 2.

⁴⁸ *RH* 20 April 1994, p. 2; *PU* 16 June 1994, p. 2.

⁴⁹ See also the interpretation of Kuchma's vision of 'Eurasia' in D. Arel and A. Wilson, 'Ukraine under Kuchma: Back to "Eurasia"?'.

Russia (Luhans'k, Donetsk, Sumy), as well as the Crimea and Odesa, where historic links with that country are strong. All these regions were ones in which the Communists did well in the parliamentary elections. Kuchma had succeeded in sufficiently moderating his economic position by the time of the presidential contest that in the minds of the voters he had lost his liberal image (as is suggested by survey evidence).⁵⁰ Relations with Russia and the fate of the economy were seen by these voters as two sides of the same coin, and this was a message Kuchma conveyed loud and clear.

Kravchuk

Ironically, Kuchma's support was located in the areas that had voted overwhelmingly for Kravchuk in 1991.⁵¹ In 1994 Kravchuk's campaign was designed to recover from his rival as much ground as possible, by two strategies. Firstly, he attempted to reorient the debate to play to his own strengths; and secondly, he used his powers as president to pre-empt Kuchma's criticisms.

The main planks of Kravchuk's platform were sovereignty, peace, and harmony: sovereignty to appeal to the nationally-oriented portion of the electorate, peace and harmony to conjure up popular fears of civil unrest. During his reign as ideological chief of the CPU, one of Kravchuk's main tasks had been to control 'bourgeois nationalism'. He understood well the characteristics of the groups he was working with, and he evidently believed that if he could successfully exploit the ethnic cleavage, he would have a good chance of winning the support of the 72% of the population who are nominally ethnic Ukrainians.

Kravchuk appealed in his campaign to stereotypical Ukrainian characteristics: love of work, devoutness, and aversion to radical change combined with an ability to withstand great hardship in times of turbulence. He used the time-honoured communist technique of portraying any sign of conflict as a threat to the fabric of society; he implied with his emphasis on peace and harmony that Kuchma was a dangerous traitor, a Russian pawn, whose election would provoke violent protest, or even civil war. Though his accomplishments as president were few, he noted in his New Year's address to the nation that at least Ukraine had peace, bread, and democracy, which was more than could be said at the moment for her northern neighbour.⁵² He attempted to embody traditional values in the country he had helped found, declaring that 'my highest moral value is the protection of the state as something sacred'.⁵³ And with unashamed complacency, he proposed hard work as a recipe for economic salvation.⁵⁴

Kravchuk's second strategy was to use his position as president to undermine Kuchma's campaign. The incumbent made a number of concessions to his

⁵⁰ Survey conducted by the Academic-Practical Centre for Political Psychology, reported in *HU* 25 June 1994, p. 3.

⁵¹ See P. Potichnyi, 'The referendum and presidential election in Ukraine', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 33, 3 (1992), 123-38.

⁵² *UK* 4 January 1994, p. 1. Kravchuk was referring to the recent conflict between Russian president El'tsin and the Russian parliament which led to the storming of the latter by the former in October 1993.

⁵³ *HU* 14 June 1994 p. 2.

⁵⁴ *PH* 30 April 1994, p. 1; cf. *UK* 1 March 1994, p. 3.

opponent's supporters and went some way toward realizing Kuchma's campaign promises. The previous winter he had granted special economic powers to the regional administrations in several southern and eastern *oblasti* in which he was weak, and he called for a 'unitary-decentralized' state.⁵⁵ In April he led Ukraine into the economic union of the CIS as an associate member; shortly before the second round of the election he went so far as to say in reference to Russia that 'We need to move toward integration, toward unions on the basis of equal rights'.⁵⁶

On the economic front, his Council of Ministers issued a statement in May criticizing Kuchma's term in office as prime minister and blaming him for the country's current woes. Kravchuk emphasized the progress the government had made since Kuchma's resignation and claimed (falsely) that privatization, which had made no progress under the Kuchma government, was now finally getting underway.⁵⁷ Though repeatedly de-emphasizing the magnitude of the current economic crisis, he announced a programme of macro-economic stabilization to be planned together with the International Monetary Fund, and promised a panoply of new reforms in spheres such as of taxation, manufacturing and agricultural policy.

It was widely recognized at the time that the presidential race was about relations with Russia. Kravchuk attempted to make of the foreign policy issue a question of values, whereas Kuchma attempted to make it a question of economics. With the considerable advantages afforded by control of the mass media and the organs of executive power, Kravchuk nearly won his wager that, at the end of the day, traditional ethnic ties would override short-term frustrations.⁵⁸ A factor that helped tip the scales was the unexpectedly high turnout in the second round in the east and south, which it may be possible to interpret as an expression of anti-incumbent anger. Yet it was the strong vote for Kuchma in the ethnically Ukrainian regions of central Ukraine that made his victory possible. Whether it was Kravchuk's complacency which lost him the race or Kuchma's success in mobilizing a sector of the population that had been politically quiescent over the past few years is a moot point, but it was the centre – both politically and geographically – which decided the election in favour of the latter.

'Mechanical' Effects

We have seen that analysis of the psychological effects of the electoral system goes a long way in explaining why the Ukrainian electorate brought to power a left-dominated parliament but elected a reform-minded president. But the mechanical effects of the system also played an important role in this process. It

⁵⁵ *HU* 29 January 1994, p. 2.

⁵⁶ *HU* 5 July 1994, p. 3.

⁵⁷ *UK* 1 January 1994, p. 1; 1 March 1994, p. 3.

⁵⁸ It is also possible that Kravchuk simply misinterpreted the ethnic cleavage. A majority of Ukraine's citizens use the Russian language in their daily lives, which suggests that the linguistic division might be more important than the traditional ethnic one. This argument is made by V. Khmel'ko ('The Political Attitudes of Linguistic-ethnic Groups in Ukraine Since Independence', paper presented at the Russian and East European Centre Seminar, St Antony's College, Oxford, 15 May 1995). But it is difficult to determine the direction of causality in this relationship; it may be the case that language use is as much a result of political orientations as the other way round.

has long been recognized that majoritarian electoral systems generate parliaments whose composition is not proportional to that of the votes won by parties; the principal effect of such systems is to exaggerate the seat share of the party which gains the largest share of the vote.⁵⁹ In Ukraine, the distortion created by this effect was further exacerbated by the regional polarization of the country.

Contrary to the claims of some, the aggregative mechanism did actually favour parties, in as much as party candidates received less than a third of the vote but gained nearly half the seats (see Table 1). Moreover, the overall deviation from proportionality was only 10.11%.⁶⁰ Though this figure is more than double those found in eastern European countries with proportional or semi-proportional electoral systems,⁶¹ surprisingly, it is lower than that which resulted from the Russian elections of 1993 (14.26%), also conducted according to a semi-proportional law, and considerably lower than the average for plurality systems (23.4%).⁶² Though the right-wing parties received seats roughly in proportion to their vote shares, the left was disproportionately favoured, garnering fewer than a fifth of the vote but more than a third of the seats. The seat share of the Communist party itself was double its vote share, a distortion that accounts for over half of the total deviation from proportionality. Thus, not only did the electoral system favour the nomination of independent candidates, it also favoured the success of parties that were in a position to take ground from independents. The main party of this sort was the Communists, who had strongholds in the heretofore largely depoliticized regions of the east and south. The difference in support for left-wing and right-wing parties was 7.35%, whereas in terms of seats gained, it was 23.37%. This resulted in a parliament in which, despite the large number of independents, it was possible to cobble together a left-wing majority.

The presidential election was also governed by absolute majority rule, but in this case the majority which determined the result at the national level was that of the national electorate. The discrepancy between these two aggregative mechanisms worked to magnify the psychological effects of the electoral system by over-representing the main left-wing party, which was subsequently marginalized by the incentive structure of the presidential contest.

Conclusion

The puzzle of the Ukrainian elections of 1994 was why a public that had elected more than a third of its parliamentary representatives from the left gave so little support to the main leftist candidate for the presidency, and offered it up instead to one whose party had won a minuscule proportion of the parliamentary seats.

⁵⁹ M. Duverger, *Political Parties*, p.222. For a technical explanation of this effect, see R. Taagepera and M. S. Shugart, *Seats and Votes: the Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 158–61.

⁶⁰ The deviation from proportionality is calculated by summing the absolute values of the differences between each party's vote share and its seat share, then dividing by two. See R. Taagepera and M. S. Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, pp. 110–1.

⁶¹ See J. McGregor, 'How electoral laws shape eastern Europe's parliaments', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2, 4 (27 January 1993), p. 13.

⁶² R. Taagepera and M. S. Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, p. 111. The deviation from proportionality for the Russian elections was calculated on the basis of figures listed in *Nezavisimaya gazeta* 18 December 1993; 28 December 1993.

TABLE 1. Proportionality in the Ukraine Election of 1994

Party	Votes (%)	Seats (%)
<i>Left</i>		
Communist Party (KPU)	12.72	25.44
Socialist Party (SPU)	3.09	4.14
Agrarian Party (SelPU)	<u>2.74</u>	<u>5.33</u>
	18.55	34.91
<i>Centre</i>		
Party of Democratic Renewal (PDVU)	0.83	1.18
Social Democratic Party (SDPU)	0.36	0.59
Labour Party (PPU)	0.40	1.18
Civic Congress (HKU)	<u>0.25</u>	<u>0.59</u>
	1.84	3.25
<i>National Democrats</i>		
Rukh (NRU)	5.15	5.92
Republican Party (URP)	2.52	2.37
Democratic Party (DemPU)	1.08	0.59
Christian Democratic Party (KhDPU)	<u>0.35</u>	<u>0.30</u>
	9.10	9.17
<i>Far Right</i>		
Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (KUN)	1.25	1.48
Conservative Republican Party (UKRP)	0.34	0.59
National Assembly (UNA-UNSO)	<u>0.51</u>	<u>0.30</u>
	2.10	2.37
<i>Other parties</i>		
	1.93	
<i>All parties</i>	33.52	49.70

Deviation from proportionality: 10.11%.

Source: Calculated from the 'Vybory-1994' database constructed by the Petro Mohyla Scientific Society of Kyiv. For the sake of consistency and comparability, figures were calculated on the basis of vote and seat percentages for the March–April electoral rounds only.

Though valence and statehood issues were most important in these elections (as Evans and Whitefield predict they should have been) the result was *not* indicative of electoral volatility. On the contrary, there are good reasons in the structure of popular preferences, the incentive structure created by the electoral system, and the different aggregative mechanisms employed in each case, why the outcomes of the elections should have been what they were.

By contrast with economic issues, there was no real compromise stance on the matter of statehood, which dominated both parliamentary and presidential races; its ethnic overtones made it a highly emotional topic which tended to polarize voters. Thus although Ukraine's economic plight was foremost in voters' minds in 1994, the economic issue was in large measure displaced onto foreign policy. People's vote did indeed reflect their economic worries, but the question was seen in geopolitical terms, in terms of which foreign policy

orientation would have the greatest chance of rescuing Ukraine from its current economic chaos. This specific configuration of preferences among the electorate structured competition between candidates and ideological camps at the élite level. The valence issue of incumbent competence may well have been what decided the race between Kuchma and Kravchuk, but the fact that the contest in the second round was between these two centrist candidates, rather than between the leaders of those parties which had been most successful in winning parliamentary seats, can be attributed to the dynamics of competition along the ideological dimension.

The dynamics of the electoral process are especially crucial in countries which have yet to establish strong party systems. These dynamics mark out the parameters within which competition takes place, and can thereby either marginalize key players from the political game or include them in it. They also serve to determine institutional interests by defining the key constituencies of different types of elected official. The specificities of the institutions adopted at this juncture are thus very important in influencing the long-term shape of and prospects for the system.

In democratizing countries, institutional design is more often decided by political bargaining than by considerations of democratic ideal. This approach tends to lead to compromise solutions: semi-presidential systems (as in Ukraine) or semi-proportional electoral laws. In either case, a situation is created in which one group of élite actors rises to power according to one set of institutional constraints, and another group according to another set. The consequence is a displacement of competition from that between parties representing sectors of society to that between institutional structures. This often means that the public at large feels marginalized from politics and disillusioned with democracy. In tracing the dynamics of the electoral process in one democratizing country, I have offered a concrete example of how the interaction between popular opinion and the rules governing elections can generate a situation conducive to such an outcome.

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