

Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century: An Agenda for the Study of Politics*

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The study of politics among the East Slavs has been coloured by a number of political and cultural presuppositions. In the nineteenth century, most Russian historians viewed Ukrainians and Belarusians as wayward branches of a single Russian nation and judged historical events and personalities from that perspective. Differences between Russians, on the one hand, and Ukrainians and Belarusians, on the other, were explained as the result of contamination by Polish influences. That view was brought to the West by Russian émigré historians after the Russian revolution and, to a remarkable extent, was accepted by their Western students.¹

Ukrainian and Belarusian historians eventually created their own conception of national history. In the nineteenth century, however, Ukrainian historiography was dominated by populism. The populists made significant contributions to political history, but their primary interest was in social issues, such as the struggle of the masses for freedom and social justice against Polish and Russian landlords.

Only with the emergence of a "statist" orientation in the twentieth century did historical research focus on politics, particularly on indicators

* Although almost all works dealing with political affairs in early modern Ukrainian and, to a lesser degree, Belarusian history touch upon practical relations with Muscovy/Russia, relatively few analytical or thematic works on the topic exist. In general, historians of Russia paid little attention to the topic. By the 1930s, it was virtually taboo in Soviet historiography. In this essay only a few important and more recent works are mentioned.

of Ukrainian or Belarusian statehood. Some Belarusian and Ukrainian historians viewed the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as an embodiment of Belarusian and/or Ukrainian statehood. Much attention was paid to politics and foreign relations (e.g., the Ukrainian Cossack political entity). After the statist historical school was proscribed in the Soviet Union, it was continued by Ukrainian and Belarusian émigré historians.

In the Soviet Union, Marxist historians of the 1920s viewed Russian expansion into Ukraine and Belarus as a manifestation of Russian imperialism. However, by the 1930s the old Russian school, with some new embellishments, emerged victorious once more. The Soviet scheme now posited the concept of an ancient unity of the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian peoples in an "old Russian nation." According to the Soviet interpretation, after the breakup of the "old Russian nation" into three national components, the Ukrainians and Belarusians wanted nothing more than to "reunite" with their Russian "elder brother." The study of politics was fitted into this scheme. Only recently, as the result of openness and restructuring, have these dogmas come into question.²

Because of such views, political relations among Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians have been characterized largely as either "fraternal reunion" or "Russian imperialism." It is necessary to go beyond such slogans and attempt to see political relations among the East Slavs within the context of sixteenth- to eighteenth-century politics.

In the sixteenth century, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus were hardly political equals. Russia, as represented by Muscovy, was a major political power, while Ukraine and Belarus were part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Relations among the East Slavs, therefore, existed not on the level of state policy and diplomacy, but more in the realms of religion, trade, and culture. These seemingly unofficial relations, however, had political and international dimensions. In fact, what constituted "politics," "sovereignty," and "international affairs" in the sixteenth century is still open to question. Dependent political entities—protectorates, vassalages—and autonomous political bodies within states—estates, regional parliaments, free cities—were common in Europe. Estates and regional bodies were still assessing their "rights to resist" a sovereign and their ability to seek assistance from "foreign" rulers.

Poland-Lithuania did not experience a fully developed feudalism and therefore had fewer autonomous political bodies than other states. Nevertheless, its politics were complex and diffuse. The Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were two separate states first joined in a personal union under a common monarch in 1385 and then brought together into a common state by the Union of Lublin in 1569. The unity of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth rested in a common

king and in a Diet, a two-house legislature composed solely of nobles. Separate administrations, law, finances and armies continued to exist in the Kingdom of Poland and in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Government structures were poorly developed and, to a substantial extent, merged with the corporate institutions of the nobility. Local dietines of nobles assumed more power. Some large landowners, called magnates, had their own armies and administrations, and even conducted their own foreign policy. Despite a gradual polonization of the nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, separatist tendencies persisted into the eighteenth century.

Many scholars have viewed the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a successor state to Kievan Rus'. Nineteenth-century Russian scholars labelled the Grand Duchy as the "Lithuanian-Russian" state (they viewed the Ukrainian and Belarusian population of Lithuania as Russian). Ukrainian and Belarusian historians have referred to it as the Lithuanian-Ruthenian (Ukrainian-Belarusian), Lithuanian-Ukrainian, or Lithuanian-Belarusian state. Such claims stem from the facts that the Grand Duchy adopted Ruthenian (Ukrainian-Belarusian) as its official state language and that its law codes were greatly influenced by the laws of Kievan Rus'. The official title for the country, the "Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Rus', and Samogitia," supported the claim. Today, historians need to reexamine the East Slavic contribution to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Ukrainian and, in particular, Belarusian claims to statehood need to be fully explored.³

At the Union of Lublin, the Belarusian lands remained part of the Grand Duchy, while most of the Ukrainian lands were incorporated into the Kingdom of Poland. Within the Ukrainian lands the Ruthenian language was retained in administration, and the Lithuanian Statute continued to be the code of law. Such prerogatives, together with the Orthodox faith, differentiated Ukraine from Poland, and provided the basis for the emergence of a regional political grouping of the nobility, which referred to itself as the "Rus' nation."

The study of Belarusian and Ukrainian politics requires one to examine, first, the policies and outlook of the nobles in general, and then those of the great nobles or "magnates" in particular. As virtual "kinglets," these magnates were able to pursue political and foreign policies separately from, or even in opposition to, the Polish-Lithuanian government. Their actions, whether motivated by belief, personal ambition, court politics, or sheer adventurism, had far-reaching political and international repercussions. Two instances had particular significance for the politics of the East Slavs. In 1508, a Ruthenian princely family, the Hlynskys, led a revolt against the Polish-Lithuanian state in which they attempted unsuccessfully to sever the Ruthenian lands from Lithuania.

In the 1540s, Prince Dmytro Vyshnevetsky united and organized the Zaporozhian Cossacks, made bold raids against the Tatars, and laid the foundation for an independent Cossack military force. Scholarship has yet to discuss to what extent such activities can be considered an expression of specifically Ruthenian or Ukrainian politics and foreign policy.

The most important specifically Ruthenian institution was the Orthodox church. Apart from its religious, spiritual, and cultural dimensions, the Orthodox church has to be examined as a political institution within the context of the political structure of Eastern Europe. Although many aspects of the church's political role and ecclesiastical structures require study, the following topics need reexamination and elaboration:

1. The politics of the Union of Brest of 1596. With the approach of the four-hundredth anniversary of the union, dispassionate study is sorely needed and very much in order.
2. The Orthodox church and its search for a legitimate place within the increasingly intolerant Poland-Lithuania. The church under Metropolitan Peter Mohyla was perhaps the best example of a revived, vibrant, and tolerated Orthodox church.
3. The Orthodox church's relationship with the Cossacks and, subsequently, with the Hetman state. From the 1620s the Orthodox church maintained complex and at times very close relations with the Zaporozhian Cossacks and, subsequently, with the semi-independent political entity, the Hetman state.
4. The church's attempt to maintain a united ecclesiastical structure despite the partitioning of Ukraine into Muscovite, Polish, and Ottoman parts.
5. The subordination of the Kievan metropolitan to the Moscow patriarch (1686).
6. The gradual absorption of the Ukrainian and Belarusian eparchies into the imperial Russian Orthodox church.⁴

In addition to the church, the Cossacks formed another centre of autonomous politics in Ukraine. Cossacks were not unique to Ukraine, but emerged somewhat spontaneously in the no-man's-land between the sedentary states and the nomads of the steppe. Cossack hosts existed on the borders of the Muscovite state—the Don, Iaik, and Volga—providing the basis for the great uprisings of Razin, Bulavin, and Pugachev. Similarly, the Zaporozhian Cossacks living on the borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were a source of social discontent. In

the sixteenth century, the Zaporozhian Cossacks carried out a foreign policy increasingly independent of Poland: they made agreements with Muscovy, Crimea, the Ottoman Empire, and Moldavia. Thus, from the sixteenth century, the Ukrainian Cossacks played a role in the politics of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and in the international order.⁵

In the 1620s, the Zaporozhian Cossacks intervened on behalf of the Orthodox in their struggle against the Uniates and Roman Catholics. An Orthodox church hierarchy was reestablished under Cossack protection. From the 1620s, the Cossacks' demands to the Poles consistently included the recognition of the Orthodox church and the abolition of the Union of Brest. The "nationalization" of the Zaporozhian Cossacks (i.e., the process of merging social and religious concerns) needs to be more thoroughly researched.⁶

With the emergence of a semi-independent Cossack political entity in the seventeenth century, it is possible to talk of political relations between Ukraine and Muscovy/Russia in the usual sense of state policy, diplomacy, and military affairs. As a first step, I propose reexamining these relations within a larger geopolitical context. A call for traditional political history hardly seems to qualify as a new agenda. However, the study of politics has been so coloured by the end result—Russia's absorption of both Ukraine and Belarus—that the place of the East Slavs in the sixteenth- to eighteenth-century international order remains somewhat obscured.

In sixteenth- through eighteenth-century Eastern Europe, four major powers were engaged in a play of alliances, counter-alliances, major and minor coalitions, and warfare. On the Baltic littoral was Protestant Sweden, which had territorial ambitions in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and was engaged in territorial conflict with Muscovy. To the south was the predominantly Catholic Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth—in actuality, two states with varying foreign orientations: Lithuania was very concerned about the expansion of Muscovy and Sweden, whereas Poland was turned more toward the steppe, against the Tatars and the Ottoman Empire. Northeast of Poland-Lithuania was Orthodox Muscovy, which was pursuing a policy of expansion at the expense of Lithuania and attempting to forge a path to the Baltic Sea, an effort being blocked by Sweden. The Black Sea littoral was, through intermediaries, under the control of the Ottoman Empire, itself frequently preoccupied with Persia and the Habsburgs.

Between the sedentary states of Poland-Lithuania, Muscovy, and the Ottoman Empire there was a belt of autonomous states and steppe peoples—Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldavia, Crimea, and the Don Cossacks. The existence of this frontier belt between major powers

allowed a Ukrainian Cossack state to emerge. One unfulfilled task of historical scholarship is to study the Cossack Hetmanate within the context of the steppe frontier, following the "frontier" thesis of McNeill.⁷

Survival as a semi-independent political entity required that the Cossack Hetmanate have good relations with at least two of its three powerful neighbours—a position that frequently proved impossible to hold. The Cossack polity had constantly to balance the conflicting pressures from the regional powers. As a result, at various times Cossack Ukraine sought protection from all the major powers: Muscovy, Sweden, Poland-Lithuania, and the Ottoman Empire. In order to gain a new perspective on Ukrainian-Russian relations, one must first reconsider Ukraine's non-Russian options.

Sweden, a non-neighbour of Ukraine, did not represent a real, long-term alternative on which to base the political future of the Cossack polity. Nevertheless, in the second half of the 1600s—Sweden's century of greatness—two Cossack hetmans, Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Ivan Mazepa, turned to that country for support in their attempt to ensure the viability of their polity. To understand why that occurred, we must more carefully examine Sweden's policies and goals toward Ukraine in this period, when political relations expanded into a network from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

The most obvious non-Russian political option for Cossack Ukraine was to reach an accommodation with its chief antagonist, Poland-Lithuania. Only four years after Hetman Khmelnytsky concluded the Pereiaslav Agreement with Muscovy (1654), his successor, Ivan Vyhovsky, attempted to reach an accommodation with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The resulting Treaty of Hadiach (1658) brought the Cossack polity, as the Principedom of Rus', into a tripartite federation with Poland and Lithuania. Hetman Vyhovsky at the head of a combined Polish-Cossack army defeated the Muscovites decisively at Konotop (1659). However, a subsequent uprising by the Ukrainian masses negated that success. A Ukrainian Cossack polity under Polish protection on the Right Bank was wiped out in the virtually continuous wars between 1660 and 1681. In this connection, major questions needing reassessment arise. Could the Ukrainian people have reconciled themselves to a joint state structure within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth? Could the Poles have accepted the Ukrainians as a partner? Were Cossack freedoms and *szlachta* dominance inherently incompatible? What was the nature of Cossack Ukraine under the Poles?

The Crimean-Ottoman orientation should also be reexamined. At various times, particularly when the Commonwealth and Russia were allied or at peace, the Ukrainian Cossacks looked to the Crimean Tatars

or the Ottoman Empire for support. The Tatars, however, proved unreliable and exacted a heavy price from the population. Despite the unpopularity of the Tatar-Ottoman option among the masses, it persisted (e.g., Hetman Doroshenko's submission to the Ottoman Porte, Petro Ivanenko's treaty with Crimea in 1692, the activities of émigré hetman Pylyp Orlyk). Two questions need to be addressed: Was accommodation with the Tatars and Ottomans based on a communality of interests or was it merely the result of desperation? What was the nature of Cossack Ukraine under Crimea and/or the Ottomans?

While both the Polish and Tatar-Ottoman alliances seemed unpalatable to a large segment of the Ukrainian population, the Muscovite orientation was also beset with problems. From the Pereiaslav Agreement (1654) until Hetman Mazepa's siding with the Swedes (1709), Cossack Ukraine participated in four wars against Muscovy. In 1668, there was a massive anti-Russian uprising in Ukraine. Clearly, the political relationship between Muscovy and Cossack Ukraine was a troubled one.

The scholarly-political debates over the nature of the Pereiaslav Agreement or over the desire or lack of desire of Ukrainians and Russians for "union" or even "reunion" have become particularly unproductive.⁸ A new agenda should focus on the actual interests and policies of the two sides. Important questions to be considered include: What did Khmelnytsky attempt to accomplish by negotiating the Pereiaslav Agreement? What were Muscovy's goals in Ukraine and Eastern Europe? At what point did their interests converge or diverge?

Their most obvious mutual political interest was opposition to Poland-Lithuania. Khmelnytsky and some of his successors wanted to establish some larger Cossack political entity at the expense of Poland-Lithuania. Whatever other frictions existed between them, as long as Cossack Ukraine and Muscovy acted against the Commonwealth they had a mutuality of purpose.

Yet, for a great part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Muscovy pursued a policy of peaceful and even cordial relations with Poland. Prior to the Pereiaslav Agreement, Khmelnytsky repeatedly had to plead and entice Muscovy into an anti-Polish coalition. Just a year later (1656), Muscovy negotiated a truce with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, thus denying Khmelnytsky the primary benefit of the Pereiaslav Agreement. By the Truce of Andrusovo (1667) and the "Eternal Peace" of 1686, Muscovy made peace with Poland and acceded to the partitioning of Cossack Ukraine into the Polish Right Bank and the Russian Left Bank. Every hetman up to and including Mazepa schemed to recover Right-Bank Ukraine—a goal that clashed with Muscovy's desire to maintain peaceful relations with the Polish-Lithuanian Common-

wealth.

Even when they jointly opposed Poland-Lithuania, the interests of Cossack Ukraine and Russia diverged in Belarus. As the uprising of 1648 spread into Belarus, Khmelnytsky sent Colonel Ivan Zolotarenko there to organize a Belarusian Cossack regiment. The Belarusian lands liberated from the Commonwealth were organized as part of the new Cossack polity, disregarding Muscovite claims to the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Thus, the two allies—Cossack Ukraine and Muscovy—were in competition in Belarus. That historical episode is little known and poorly understood.⁹ As a rare example of direct Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian interrelations, it certainly deserves a major study.

Muscovite attitudes toward incorporating Ukraine should also be reconsidered. On the whole, it is assumed that after the Pereiaslav Agreement, the tsar laid claim to Ukraine in perpetuity. Indicators of the new reality were the change in the tsar's title and the requirement that the Ukrainian population pledge allegiance to the tsar. However, as pointed out by Hans Torke, during much of the seventeenth century Muscovy treated Ukraine as expendable or of secondary importance.¹⁰ In dealing with the Commonwealth, Muscovy seemed much more concerned about affronts to the tsar's title or with the tsar's candidacy to the Polish throne than about claiming possession of Ukraine. In that connection several major questions require investigation. Did Muscovy view Ukraine as a perpetual and priceless possession of the tsar, or were the Cossacks merely marginal and dispensable allies to be bartered away to secure a Polish peace? Was Muscovy ready to give up not only the Right Bank, but the entire Ukraine? (Giving up Ukraine was advocated by A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin, who was in charge of Muscovite foreign policy in the 1660s.)

After 1709, there came a fundamental shift in Ukrainian-Russian relations. Hetman Mazepa's break with Peter I was the last attempt of Cossack Ukraine to participate in an anti-Muscovite coalition. Subsequently, the geopolitical situation changed drastically. By the end of the eighteenth century, the newly proclaimed Russian Empire became the dominant power in Eastern Europe, Ukrainian autonomy was abolished, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was partitioned, and most of Ukraine and Belarus were incorporated into the Russian Empire.¹¹

In assessing political relations among the East Slavs in the eighteenth century, one must address the question of Russian centralism. In Muscovy, power was highly concentrated at the capital, which impeded the emergence of any independent or regional centres of authority. As Muscovy expanded, it abolished local peculiarities in the newly acquired

territories. However, Muscovy was somewhat inconsistent in its administrative practices and permitted some borderland autonomy. Whatever the reason—tenuous control, treaty obligations, fear of the Cossacks—in the seventeenth century there was no serious attempt to incorporate Cossack Ukraine administratively into Muscovy. In the eighteenth century, however, Ukraine was absorbed fully into the Russian Empire.¹²

The evolution of the Russian Empire on Western absolutist patterns may be a key to explaining the change in Russia's policies toward Cossack Ukraine. Western absolutist states were characterized by increasing state control and activism, particularly in rationalizing government, increasing state revenues, and encouraging development. Peter I, who consciously imitated Western administrative models, began the policy of extracting increasingly greater economic and human resources from Cossack Ukraine. Regulations in trade routes, state monopolies, tariffs on foreign goods, and import and export taxes were introduced into Ukraine for the first time. Subsequently, great pressure was exerted to gain control over the Ukrainian Hetmanate's fiscal apparatus. Another major topic that must be investigated thoroughly is the evolution of the Russian absolutist state, particularly the state's imperial fiscal and administrative apparatus and its impact on Ukrainian autonomy.

In order to understand the new Russian state activism, it is necessary also to study its intellectual underpinnings. Marc Raeff has suggested that cameralism and the concept of the well-ordered police state as developed in the Germanies were intellectual models for Russia.¹³ The way for penetration of such ideas had been prepared by Muscovy's Westernization through contact with Ukraine. In essence, the cameralists had the political goal of maximizing society's productive potential through the agency of the state. In the West, autonomous local units that were able to accept such a programme were co-opted by the state; those that were not clashed with the state. In Russia, local autonomous bodies were virtually non-existent, so the state assumed the entire role of developing and regulating society. However, Peter I was eager to co-opt people and adopt institutions from the Baltic provinces and Ukraine. Thus, the local autonomy of Ukrainians and Balts was dependent to some extent on whether they could fit their institutions into the emerging imperial purpose.

It is also important to remember that the fate of autonomy frequently depended more on court politics than on theories of government or the development of a Russian state structure. For example, Ukrainian autonomy was renewed and Kyrylo Rozumovsky was elected hetman as a result of his brother's morganatic marriage to Empress Elizabeth. By the

mid-eighteenth century, Ukrainians were beginning to play an increasing role in an imperial political system, allying themselves with various court factions. The Ukrainian role in court politics is still hardly known or understood.

The Ukrainian entrance into imperial politics resulted in the co-optation of many Ukrainians into the imperial service. The Ukrainian clergy's impact on the Russian church has been well documented. Did the Ukrainian secular elite have a similar impact on imperial politics? David Saunders posits that the Ukrainians did indeed have an important role.¹⁴ Was such co-optation a "pernicious loss" to Ukraine? Did these Ukrainians see any contradiction between serving the Empire and maintaining their own autonomous institutions? These questions merit serious consideration.

That some Ukrainians saw no contradiction between imperial service and Ukrainian autonomy is evident in the life of one historical figure, Hryhorii Poletyka. Although his entire career was spent in the imperial state service, he was also the most outspoken defender of Ukrainian autonomy at the Legislative Commission of 1767-68. His political outlook is encapsulated by the title of one of his own works, "Historical Information: On What Basis Little Russia Was Under the Polish Republic and by What Treaties It Came Under Russian Rulers, and a Patriotic Opinion as to How It Could Be Useful to the Russian State Without Violations of Its Rights and Liberties."¹⁵

Although Poletyka's outlook could be fitted into cameralist and well-ordered police state concepts, it clashed with the rationalism of the Enlightenment that was becoming dominant in Russia during the reign of Catherine II. Rationalist thought presumed the uniformity of human nature and the universality of basic laws. Once discovered, therefore, the basic laws of good government had to be equally applicable in Moscow, Siberia, or Ukraine. There was no longer a basis for compromise between autonomy and imperial interests. As a result, autonomy was abolished and the Empire came to be uniformly administered.

Many of the questions raised by the integration of Ukraine into the Empire are also applicable to Russia's absorption of the former Belarusian nobility, or *szlachta*, of Smolensk. After a long struggle, Muscovy promised to preserve the "rights and liberties" of the Smolensk *szlachta*: it maintained self-rule and a territorial military organization, the Smolensk *szlachta* regiment. Apparently, similar traditions from Polish times linked the Ukrainian and Smolensk elites, and the resulting frequent intermarriages may have reinforced autonomist sentiments in Smolensk. How else is one to interpret the strange, secret ukase of Empress Anna (31 January 1737), issued "to discourage the Little

Russians from forming familial ties with the inhabitants of Smolensk."¹⁶ In 1764, the special privileges of the Smolensk *szlachta* were abolished. The subsequent integration of Smolensk into the empire remains one of the many lacunae in study of the East Slavs.

Political outlook and integration of elites raise the question of political culture. Although scholars have made use of the concept of political culture, it has proved elusive to define. Edward L. Keenan has described political culture as a complex of beliefs, practices, and expectations that give order to political life and provide its bearers with, or allow them to generate, both the underlying assumptions and the patterns of their political behaviour.¹⁷ If such a definition is applied to the East Slavs, can one discern distinct Muscovite and Ruthenian political cultures in the sixteenth century? Does a Ruthenian political culture bifurcate into Ukrainian and Belarusian components? If so, what are its political features and when does that happen? How did the Muscovite political culture become transformed into an imperial Russian political culture? To what extent were the Ukrainian and/or the Belarusian political culture merged into an imperial Russian political culture? These are fundamental questions that scholars have rarely posed, let alone addressed.

It is within the framework of political cultures that one has to consider the formation of the Russian imperial and Ukrainian political outlooks and the interrelationship between the two. That study entails a thorough investigation into the origins and evolution of what could be considered the Little Russian idea and its relationship to the concept of the three branches of the "All-Russian" nation. Another important task in studying Ukrainian-Russian relations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is determining the Ukrainian roots, original purpose, and subsequent transformation of the concept of the three branches of an "All-Russian" nation: Great Russian, Little Russian, and White Russian. Research on these questions is only beginning, and I offer a few tentative comments regarding it.

Although the Little Russian idea had various roots, its purpose was to accommodate Ukraine within Muscovy and the Russian Empire. Its first manifestation occurred in pro-Russian Kievan ecclesiastical circles in the seventeenth century. These Ukrainian clergymen developed the concept of a common *sloveno-rossiiskii* people that included Russians (Great Russians) and Ukrainians (Little Russians). The *Synopsis*, published in 1674, presented the theory of the transfer of Rus' princely seats from Kiev to Vladimir and then to Moscow, and posited the idea that the Muscovite tsar was the only legitimate ruler of *Rossiiia*—a land that included Ukraine. While these clerics sought political unity with Moscow,

they wanted to preserve the autonomous rights of the Ukrainian church and clergy.¹⁸

The secular manifestation of the Little Russian idea developed in the late seventeenth and particularly in the first half of the eighteenth century. The conceptual model borrowed by the Ukrainian secular elite was that of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. After the failure in 1658 to transform the Commonwealth into a tripartite state that would include Poland, Lithuania, and Rus', subsequent political thinkers envisioned a similar arrangement, but now within the emerging Russian Empire. By and large, the secular elite accepted the theory elucidated by the Kievan clergy that Great Russia and Little Russia were joined as lands ruled by the "All-Russian" tsar. However, the secular elite also insisted that Little Russia's submission to the tsar was based on treaties that confirmed "rights and liberties" of Little Russia and its people.

As the Little Russian idea was reaching its greatest development, in the second half of the eighteenth century, Ukrainian autonomy was abolished. The question that remains is what happened to the Little Russian idea with the disappearance of Little Russia as a distinct political and administrative entity. The answer must be based on thorough research and analysis. In the interim I suggest a few possibilities.

Some elements of the Little Russian idea actually survived the abolition: (1) the concept of Little Russia as a cherished homeland; (2) historical consciousness, through an increase in historical writings; (3) the continuation of some "rights and liberties" through the elite's incorporation into the *dvorianstvo*, as well as the retention of customary law until 1917. Other elements of Little Russian political culture were transmuted and had some impact on a variety of political and intellectual currents: (1) the formation of a conservative Little Russianness, characterized by intense nostalgia for the past; (2) further elaboration of the idea of several Russias—Great and Little—forming the All-Russian state and the All-Russian nation; (3) adoption of some aspects into the political component of Ukrainian national consciousness in the nineteenth century. The Little Russian idea and the Great Russian concept developed in the seventeenth and particularly in the eighteenth century seem to have had an impact on the formation of Russian imperial ideology, of extreme Russian nationalism, and of modern Ukrainian national consciousness in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The study of the political relationship among the East Slavs has hitherto been approached largely from a nineteenth- or twentieth-century political perspective. Increased interest in the West, the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the emergence of independent Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia have provided an unprece-

dented stimulus and opportunity for reexamining and reassessing the political history of the East Slavs. This paper has pointed to some of the major questions, themes, and topics that apply in setting a new agenda for the study of politics among the East Slavs.

Notes

1. For a recent and noteworthy exception, see Andreas Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvoelkerreich: Entstehung, Geschichte, Zerfall* (Munich, 1992).
2. The various historical views are well covered in two recent books by Stephen Velychenko: *National History as Cultural Process: A Survey of the Interpretations of Ukraine's Past in Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian Historical Writing from the Earliest Times to 1914* (Edmonton, 1992); and *Shaping Identity in Eastern Europe and Russia: Soviet and Polish Accounts of Ukrainian History, 1914-1991* (New York, 1993). See also Dmytro Doroshenko, "A Survey of Ukrainian Historiography"; and Oleksander Ohloblyn, "Ukrainian Historiography, 1917-1956," a special issue of the *Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.*, vol. 6-7, no. 4 (1957).
3. See V. Druzhyts, "Palazhenne Litoŭska-Belaruskai Dziarzhavy paslia Liublinskai Vunii," *Pratsy Belaruskaho dziarzhavnaha universytetu*, 1925, no. 6-7: pp. 216-51.
4. On Ukrainian-Russian church relations, see V. Eingorn, *O snosheniakh malorossiiskogo dukhovenstva s moskovskim pravitelstvom v tsarstvovanie Alekseia Mikhailovicha* (Moscow, 1894); and K. Kharlampovich, *Malorossiiskoe vliianie na velikorusskuiu tserkovnuiu zhizn* (Kazan, 1914).
5. Another important work that deals with Cossack-Muscovite relations is Ivan Krypiakevych, "Kozachchyna v politychnykh kombinatsiakh 1620-1630 rr." *Zapysky Naukovoho tovarystva im. Shevchenka*, vols. 117-18 (1914).
6. Gunnar Hering, *Ökumenisches Patriarchat und Europäische Politik (1620-1638)* (Wiesbaden, 1968), examines the plans for an Orthodox bloc, in which the Cossacks were an important component.
7. William McNeill, *Europe's Steppe Frontier, 1500-1800* (Chicago, 1964).
8. See John Basarab, *Pereiaslav 1654: A Historiographical Study* (Edmonton, 1982).
9. Lev Okinshevich, "Kazatstva na Belarusi," *Polymia* (Minsk, 1927).
10. Hans-Joachim Torke, "The Unloved Alliance: Political Relations between Muscovy and Ukraine in the Seventeenth Century," in *Ukraine and Russia in their Historical Encounter*, Peter J. Potichnyj et al., ed. (Edmonton, 1992), pp. 39-66.
11. See Orest Subtelny, *The Mazepists: Ukrainian Separatism in the 18th Century* (Boulder, 1981), and idem, *Domination of Eastern Europe: Native Nobilities and Foreign Absolutism, 1500-1715* (Montreal, 1986).

12. See Zenon E. Kohut, *Russian Centralism and Ukrainian Autonomy: Imperial Absorption of the Hetmanate, 1760s-1830s* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988).
13. Marc Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change Through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800* (New Haven and London, 1983).
14. David Saunders, *The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture, 1750-1850* (Edmonton, 1985).
15. "Istoricheskoe izvestie, na kakom osnovanii Malaia Rossiia byla pod respublikoiu Polskoiu, i na kakikh dogovorakh oddalas Rossiiskim Gdriam [sic], i patrioticheskoe rassuzhdenie, kakim obrazom mozhno by onoiu nyne uchredit chtob ona polezna mogla byt Rossiiskomu Gosudarstvu bez narusheniia prav ee i volnostei," *Ukrainskyi arkhieohrafichnyi zbirnyk Vseukrainskoi akademii nauk* 1 (1926), pp. 147-61.
16. O. Ohloblyn, "Smolenska shliakhta," *Entsyklopediia ukrainoznavstva*, vol. 8 (Paris and New York, 1976), p. 2919; "Imennoi ukaz A. I. Shakhovskomu o priniatii sekretno iskusnykh mer k pobuzhdeniiu malorossiiskogo naroda vstupat v svoistvo s velikorossiiskim narodom, a ne s smolianami, poliakami i drugimi zarubezhnymi zhiteliami," *Sbornik Imperatorskogo rossiiskogo istoricheskogo obshchestva*, no. 108 (1900), p. 26.
17. Edward L. Keenan, "Muscovite Political Folkways," *Russian Review*, vol. 45 (1986), p. 116.
18. Frank E. Sysyn, "Concepts of Nationhood in Ukrainian History Writing, 1620-1690," and Zenon E. Kohut, "The Development of a Little Russian Identity and Ukrainian Nationbuilding," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol. 10, no. 3/4 (December 1986), pp. 393-423 and pp. 559-76.