PARTIES AND ELECTORATES IN UKRAINE:

CULTIVATING THE GRASS-ROOTS[1]

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This chapter addresses the development of Ukrainian political parties with reference to the strategies employed by politicians to cultivate grass-roots support bases. One of the key questions in the study of post-communist politics is how parties structure their relations with the citizenry in such a way as to win votes in elections. Popular cynicism and disillusionment with parties in general have hampered efforts in Ukraine to cultivate party identification of the type found in Western societies. At the same time, most parties are too organizationally fragile to be able to establish stable party 'machines'. Finally, perceptions of lack of party accountability for policy limit the credibility of appeals to policy-based voting. This combination of factors presents parties with a difficult task at election time, and the aim of the analysis is to explore how they approach the electorate and which strategies have proved most successful.

Some commentators have discerned a partisan configuration in Ukraine similar to that found in many Western countries (Hesli, Reisigner & Miller, 1998; Evans & Whitefield, 2000; Miller, Erb, Reisenger & Hesli, 2000). Others, however, contend that Ukraine has no genuine parties at all (Bilous, 1997) or no real party system (Kubicek, 2000), with the implication that parties are therefore not important in Ukrainian politics. Questioning both these views, I shall argue that parties are increasingly important in Ukrainian politics but that their nature as organizations and the role they play in politics differs fundamentally from that found in Western democracies.

The Ukrainian party system cannot be fully comprehended if it is situated on a trajectory of party system development that leads from a one-party system to Western-style multipartism (the teleological fallacy of much of the democratization literature). Political parties in Ukraine function in very different ways and serve different functions both from the CPSU under

communism and from parties in established democracies; rather than mediating between the state and civil society, many of the most influential parties represent vehicles through which economic elites penetrate the state in order to serve their own economic ends.

Maintaining electoral support is the weak link in the chain of relations through which parties strengthen their positions. To this end they have attempted a variety of means of winning support, which will be assessed here mainly with reference to the 1998 parliamentary elections. The first section will provide an overview of the development of political parties in Ukraine since the communist period. The link between parties and voters will be the topic of the second section. A brief conclusion will summarize the findings of the analysis and draw out their implications for future research.

Political Parties, Democracy, and the Context of Post-Communism

When democracy was first being invented in its modern guise in the eighteenth century, factionalism was seen as an evil to be avoided (Hamilton, Madison & Jay, 1961), but gradually over the intervening years parties representing different groups in society have come to be seen as crucial to democracy. The rise of mass parties with the expansion of the franchise in the late nineteenth and earliest twentieth centuries in the West established them firmly as legitimate players in the democratic process. Their role was to articulate and aggregate interests and thereby provide institutionalized links and two-way channels of communication between the state and civil society. Notwithstanding recent accounts of the professionalization and cartelization of parties in established democracies (Panebianco, 1988; Katz & Mair, 1995), they are seen as necessary to the democratic process. Moreover, when the West exports democracy, parties play a central role in the ideal type promoted.

The role of political parties in the post-communist context is obviously conditioned by their role under communism itself, and this role was characterized by a discrepancy between theory and practice. The leading role of the party was in theory a means of ensuring ideological integrity and policy development that reflected a scientifically-based approach to socio-political development. In practice, however, the party was a hierarchical power structure that served as once as a means of rule and a network of patronage. Patronage relations were especially well developed in Soviet Ukraine, where many of the USSR's most economically important and prestigious components of the military-industrial complex were located (Willerton, 1988; Harasymiv, 1990).

In the post-Soviet context parties have generated considerable antipathy from large sectors of the population while at the same time being relatively attractive to elites. This has led to a proliferation of parties with weak links to distinct sectors of the electorate and fluid identities. Parties tend to be

subordinated to individuals and institutions rather than the other way round. Parties do not structure politics; politics structures parties in the sense that politics tends to be fought out in terms of struggles among institutions dominated by individuals. Organized political structures have thus played a weak and marginal mediating role between the state and civil society, and the inherent weakness of independent civil society has further attenuated these links. (See, for example, Miller, White & Heywood, 1998; Birch, 2000; Birch & Wilson, in press).

In schematic terms, there have been three main phases in the development of the Ukrainian party system: (1) the pre-party phase when nascent political groups mobilized around anti-communist causes and began to organize; (2) the period between the legalization of opposition parties in 1990 and the first multiparty parliamentary elections in 1994; and (3) the post-1994 period. Roughly speaking, the first period was characterized by protest, the second period by experimentation and learning, and the third period by the establishment of party-based channels of influence and power-regulation. The Ukrainian parties did not have to face electoral competition until March of 1994, four years after the earliest of them had formed. They therefore developed primarily as parliament-based organizations, without the perceived need to build extensive mass support bases. One of the consequences of this is that party leaders often overestimated their popularity among the electorate. The 1994 elections were a rude surprise to many of the fledgling political structures; prominent new parties such as the Ukrainian Republican Party and the Democratic Party did poorly, while the left demonstrated its continued grip on the popular consciousness (see Table 2.1). Four years later, in the parliamentary elections of 1998, an entirely new crop of parties had formed, and in the run-up to the 2002 elections, the range of parties on offer underwent further transformation.

In ideological terms, the Ukrainian party galaxy bears the birthmarks of its genesis in the late Soviet context. Since alternative political associations were allowed to form in the spring of 1990, the ideological spectrum has been structured around a broad opposition between a left favouring state control of the economy and close ties with the states of the former Soviet Union, and a right more open to the market and intent on shoring up Ukrainian independence. Yet neither the Communists nor the opposition *Rukh* party which spearheaded the independence drive has succeeded in dominating its portion of the political spectrum.

The Communists have had to compete for turf with other leftist parties, most notable among them the Socialist Party of Ukraine, and Rural (*Selyans'ka*) party and more recently the break-away Progressive Socialists, while on the right *Rukh* vies for support with a host of other moderate 'national democratic' and nationalist groups. Between independence in 1991 and the first parliamentary elections in 1994 the left parties maintained relative solidarity, both in elections where they divided the seats amongst

themselves, and in parliament where they tended to vote as a bloc. The non-successor parties were considerably more fragmented, suffering frequent splits, short-lived mergers, re-launches, and name changes in an effort to map out viable political spaces and define constituencies. The reason for this is not difficult to fathom: there is only one way back but many ways forward. But more recently, when it has become obvious that the way back is a dead end, leftist cohesion has suffered badly, with many Socialists being pulled toward the centre, the Rural party splitting broadly along regional lines, and even the Communists failing to maintain the discipline they once enjoyed.

When analysing the development of the party system, it is necessary to bear in mind that Ukrainian parties were not starting from scratch. There was a long tradition of coerced political activism in Ukraine, such that the rise of multiparty competition coincided with a decline in party membership from 3.30 million in 1989 to 2.96 million in 1991 (Kuzio & Wilson, 1994, p. 142). At the same time, however, the Ukrainian party system was undergoing a dramatic diversification, and the meaning of party membership was diversifying along with it. After ten years of development, the party system has only one organization that can be described as a mass party in the traditional sense that it represents a distinct sector of the population and has a strong grass-roots support base – the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU). But the CPU is a residual mass party, and its distinctive social contours – the age and economic deprivation that characterize its adherents – contrast sharply with its profile during the Communist period. The CPSU was banned in 1991 and not allowed to reform until the autumn of 1993. During the interim the Socialist Party of Ukraine, founded in October 1991, took over a large part of the communist party membership, which reverted to the latter in 1993. But this was also a residual membership. The CPSU attracted members largely because of the career ladder it represented. The post-Soviet communist party, by contrast, was formed of members who shared common interests and believed that the restoration of the Soviet system – both in its economic and its geopolitical aspects - would serve those interests. In many sense it has, by default, become much more similar to Western communist parties – anti-system parties of the under-privileged who share common beliefs and values.

Initially, Ukraine appeared to be going down the road of many East European states, where anti-communist umbrella movements gradually broke up into their component parts which began to differentiate themselves ideologically and compete for votes on this basis. But the 1994 parliamentary elections demonstrated the limited reach of the new anti-communist parties. In these elections two thirds of Ukraine's voters opted for candidates with no party affiliation (see Table 2.1), and a further fifth chose one of the parties of the left which had developed in the wake of the demise of the CPSU. The right and the centre together commanded less than 15 per cent of the vote and won approximately as many seats in the new parliament.

Table 2.1 Results of the 1994 parliamentary elections*

Party	Per cent votes (first round)	Number of seats by party membership	% Seats by party membership**	Number of seats by nomination	% Seats by nomination**
Communist Party	12.72%	86	25.44%	49	14.50%
Socialist Party	3.09%	14	4.14%	4	1.18%
Rural Party	2.74%	19	5.62%	29	8.60%
Total left	**18.55%**	**119**	**35.21%**	**82**	**24.26%**
Party of Democratic Rebirth	0.83%	4	1.18%	0	0%
Labour Party	0.40%	4	1.18%	2	0.59%
Social Democratic Party	0.36%	2	0.59%	0	0%
Civic Congress	0.25%	2	0.59%	0	0%
Total Centre	**1.84%**	**12**	**3.55%**	**2**	**0.59%**
Rukh	5.15%	20	5.92%	12	3.55%
Ukrainian Republican Party	2.52%	8	2.37%	5	1.48%
Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists	1.25%	5	1.48%	3	0.89%
Democratic Party	1.08%	2	0.59%	0	0%
Ukrainian National Assembly	0.51%	1	0.30%	0	0%
Christian Democratic Party	0.35%	1	0.30%	0	0%
Ukrainian Conservative Republican Party	0.34%	2	0.59%	1	0.30%
Total Right	**11.20%**	**39**	**11.54%**	**21**	**6.21%**
Other parties	1.93%	0	0%	0	0%
Independents	66.48%	168	49.70%	217	64.20%
Unknown				16	
Vacant seats		112		112	
Total	**100%**	**450**	**100%**	**450**	**100%**

Source: Calculated from the Vybory-94 database: Petro Mohyla Society of Kiev. (1995). *Khto ye khto v ukraïns'kii politytsi 1995*, Kiev: KIS.

* Results of the March and April 1994 elections.

** These figures are percentages of seats filled.

The Ukrainian parties of the left had maintained their electoral stronghold among the electorate largely due to patronage-based mobilization strategies (Birch, 1997), and it was not long before other parties began to imitate them. The post-1994 period saw the rise of a new kind of party; unlike the parties of the 1990-94 period, which had formed around ex-dissidents and intellectuals, the post-1994 'centrist' parties formed around those who had gradually accrued political and economic power. Parities were means of structuring that power. They also represented mechanisms for transforming economic power into political power that was durable and reliable. Such parties are to networks of political patronage what banks are to mafia-like economic activities: mechanisms of legitimation and

regularization. Though the most politically active of Ukrainian citizens have been firmly ensconced in either the left or the right 'camp', approximately half of Ukrainian voters have been shown in surveys to favour more 'centrist' positions or not to have strong ideological leanings. A large number of the deputies elected to parliament in the single-member constituencies in 1994 were also centrist by political proclivity and factional allegiance. In ideological terms these were people who did not have strong views on statehood - which mainly divided the left and the right - and were more concerned with the distribution of state assets.

This rise in organized parties of the centre was accelerated at the time of the 1998 parliamentary elections for three main reasons. Firstly, the adoption of party list voting for half of the seats in parliament provided a strong incentive for centrists to organize along overtly partisan lines. Secondly, as post-communist transformation led to socio-economic differentiation and increasing wealth disparities among the general population, economic cleavages became more prominent; the interests of the 'haves' were more clearly distinguished from those of the 'have-nots'. Finally, the resolution of Ukraine's main statehood problems made this issue less salient. With the adoption of the constitution in 1996, Russian recognition of Ukraine's borders the following year and the resolution of tensions over the status of Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet, politicians and ordinary citizens alike were better positioned to turn their attention to economic issues. The centre of the spectrum benefited as a result, while the balance of strength between the left and the right remained much as it had been in the previous parliament.

A final aspect of the Ukrainian party system that must be noted is its high degree of regionalization, both in terms of party development and party support. 'Partification' of electoral support is much more developed in the west of the country, where the main parties are those of the right and the centre, than in the east and south where competition generally revolves around a centre-left axis. It is also notable that there is no 'red-brown' coalition as in some post-communist countries (Russia, Slovakia, Bulgaria); instead, the structure of the party spectrum more closely resembles that found in many Western countries, with a socially conservative nationalist right espousing economic liberalism and a state interventionist left.

Parties and the Electorate: Strategies of Electoral Competition

As noted above, using party structures to organize and channel networks of clientelist relations is nothing new in Ukraine. This was the norm during the communist period. What is different about the post-communist use of parties is that the decline of the unifying structure of the CPSU led to a fragmentation and diversification of informal networks and the rise of 'clan' politics. These clans are now obliged to compete with each other for power. Much of this competition goes on behind the scenes, but parties also play an

important role in structuring that competition. In addition to the basic function of organizing allegiances within parliament, the main function served by political parties is that of identifiability: parties provide a means whereby members of various networks can recognize one another, and they provide a convenient means of identifying different groups to the electorate.

As during the Communist period, the party label is a badge of loyalty that enables the distinction to be made between 'us' and 'them', between those who can be trusted and those who cannot. One of the defining features of clientelist networks is their opacity; they are required to conceal many of their relations to avoid public scrutiny, but in so doing, their structure is often obscure even to members of the same network. Party membership is a legitimate and readily recognizable token in a given network that allows members to distinguish those whom they can trust from outsiders. There are of course many breaches of party trust, resulting in defections, expulsions and splits, but these very processes serve as markers which enable members and non-members alike to track shifting alliances.

Parties are also of great advantage to a network in widening its reach. The usefulness of parties in this regard became apparent at the time of the 1994 elections. Though only 33.52 per cent of parliamentary candidates were party members, 50.30 per cent of those elected held a party card (see Table 2.1). Amid the confusingly long list of names on a ballot, a party label is a convenient way for voters to distinguish one name from another. Even if they have no particular allegiance to a party, the fact that a given party label is familiar through some kind of personal contact of campaign publicity may be enough to incline voters to choose it.

Party membership is thus a convenient means of enhancing identifiability *vis-à-vis* the electorate, but it is also useful in camouflaging the potential negative attributes of a candidate. In this regard the party list system introduced for the 1998 elections was particularly well-suited, for it provided parties with a means of substituting the image of the party - which could be generated by slick advertising – from the image of the individual candidates on the list. The proportion of party-affiliated winners rose from 50.30 per cent in 1994 to 74.22 per cent in 1998 (see Table 2.2).

Yet convenience cannot be equated with a positive attitude toward political parties on the part of the electorate, and the main weakness of Ukrainian political entrepreneurs is their lack of established and reliable mechanisms for maintaining and enhancing their electoral support bases. The proportion of the voting-age population which claimed that there were *no* leaders in Ukraine fit to govern the country rose from 24.7 per cent in 1994 to 35.1 per cent in 1997 (though it declined prior to the 1998 parliamentary elections to 19.8 per cent) (*Demokratychni initsiatyvy*, 1998a, p. 18; 1998b, p. 87). Not surprisingly, disillusionment with politicians in general is also manifest in views of political parties. The same survey organization found that growing proportion of the population also believed there were no political parties in Ukraine who could be trusted with power;

28.0 per cent in 1994 and 34.0 per cent in 1997 (though again the figure declined to 20.9 per cent just prior to the 1998 elections). Parties, like politicians in general, are perceived by many as corrupt and self-serving.

Table 2.2 Results of the 1998 parliamentary elections

Party	List Votes	List Seats	% List seats	SM seats	% SM seats	Total	%
Communist Party	24.65	84	37.33	38	16.89	122	27.11
Socialist/Rural bloc	8.56	29	12.89	5	2.22	34	7.56
Progressive Socialist Party	4.05	14	6.22	2	.89	16	3.56
Working Ukraine	3.06	--	--	1	.44	1	.22
Defenders of the Fatherland	.31	--	--	--	--	--	--
All-Ukrainian Party of Workers	.79	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total left	**40.63**	**127**	**56.44**	**46**	**20.44**	**173**	**38.44**
Party of Greens	5.44	19	8.44	--	--	19	4.22
Popular Democ. P.	5.01	17	7.56	12	5.33	29	6.44
Hromada	4.68	16	7.11	7	3.11	23	5.11
Soc. Democ. P. (United)	4.01	14	6.22	3	1.33	17	3.78
Agrarian Party	3.68	--	--	8	3.56	8	1.78
Together bloc	1.89	--	--	1	.44	1	.22
NEP bloc	1.23	--	--	1	.44	1	.22
P. of Nat. Econ. Development	.94	--	--	--	--	--	--
Soc. Lib. Union bloc (SLOn)	.91	--	--	1	.44	1	.22
P. of Reg. Revival	.91	--	--	2	.89	2	.44
Soyuz	.70	--	--	1	.44	1	.22
Women's' Initiat.	.58	--	--	--	--	--	--
Soc. Democ. P.	.32	--	--	--	--	--	--
Party of Muslims	.20	--	--	--	--	--	--
Spiritual, Econ. and Soc. Progress	.20	--	--	--	--	--	--
European Choice bloc	.14	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total Centre	**30.84**	**66**	**29.33**	**36**	**16.00**	**102**	**22.67**
Rukh	9.40	32	14.22	14	6.22	46	10.22
Reforms and Order	3.13	--	--	3	1.33	3	.67
National Front bloc	2.72	--	--	5	2.22	5	1.11
Forward Ukraine! bloc	1.74	--	--	2	.89	2	.44
Christian Democratic Party	1.30	--	--	2	.89	2	.44
Republican Christian Party	.54	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ukr. National Assembly	.40	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fewer Words bloc	.17	--	--	1	.44	1	.22
Total Right	**19.43**	**32**	**14.22**	**27**	**12.00**	**59**	**13.12**
Against all	**5.26**						
Independents				**116**	**51.56**	**116**	**25.78**
Invalid	**3.09**						
Total	**100**	**225**	**100**	**225**	**100**	**450**	**100**

Sources: *Uryadovyi kyr"yer*, 1998, April 9, p. 5; 1998, April 21, pp. 4-10; *Holos Ukraïny* 1998, April 18, pp. 3-9; 1998, April 28, p. 3; 1998, August 18, p. 2.

When asked 'In your opinion, does Ukraine need a multiparty system?', 43.3 per cent responded 'no', up from 29.8 per cent in 1994 and 35.5 per cent in 1997. A similar question was asked by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, which has conducted surveys in Ukraine yearly since 1996. These findings are made only somewhat less gloomy by the fact that those who thought multiparty competition was either 'not very important' or 'not at all important' declined from 32 per cent in 1996 to 25 per cent in 1999. In 1999, a plurality of Ukrainian voters thought multiparty competition was 'somewhat important' (IFES, 1999).

A sample survey conducted by the author and colleagues immediately prior to the 1998 parliamentary elections found similar results. When asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement 'Competition among political parties will make the political system stronger', 44.1 per cent disagreed, while only 42.0 per cent agreed.[2] The question obviously arises as to what characteristics those most opposed to party competition have. Multivariate analysis (not reported here) does not reveal many striking similarities among those most averse to multipartism; they do not appear to be significantly older or poorer than average; there is little indication that they are concentrated in any particular geographical location, settlement type, or gender group (once political affiliation is taken into consideration); nor do employment type or status appear to be relevant factors. The only significant sociological determinant of support for multiparty competition is higher education: those who have received education beyond the secondary level are a third again as likely to fully support the institution as those with lower education levels. There also appears to be a partisan bias in support for competitive politics; 44.8 per cent of who intended to vote for a party list from the right of the political spectrum in 1998 fully agreed with the statement on party competition, as against only 30.5 per cent of their fellow voters from the left, with centrists in between (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 Support for multipartism by party camp, 1998

Attitude	**Party Camp (defined in terms of vote intention the party list) ***			
	Left	Centre	Right	All
Strongly disagree	126 (31.0%)	66 (20.6%)	26 (19.4%)	218 (25.3%)
Disagree	53 (13.1%)	67 (20.9%)	21 (15.7%)	141 (16.4%)
Agree	103 (25.4%)	74 (23.1%)	27 (20.1%)	204 (23.7%)
Strongly Agree	124 (30.5%)	114 (35.5%)	60 (44.8%)	298 (34.6%)
All	406 (100%)	321 (100%)	134 (100%)	861 (100%)

* For definitions of party camp, see Table 2.2.
Source: Project on the Quality of Democratic Representation in Ukraine.

Table 2.3 breaks down party supporters for multipartism by party and party camp and Table 2.4 provides a similar categorization of individual party identifiers, who constitute 23.5 per cent of the total sample.[3] Among the party identifiers, 92.4 per cent indicated that they intended to vote. The figure among non-identifiers was 76.5 per cent, or 60.7 per cent of the

sample as a whole. Thus a full three-fifths of the sample were 'floating voters' available for mobilization by parties. How did these voters make up their minds? There is evidence to suggest that intimidation, bribery and coercion has played an increasing role in Ukrainian electoral politics (OSCE, 1999; Wilson, 2000; Darden, 2001). The difficulty of gathering evidence on this type of determinant goes without saying. But, corrupt practices are not likely to tell the whole story; in any competitive situation such tactics are relatively expensive, especially when parties are competing to employ them. We can therefore expect that more traditional campaign tactics will also have had an important role in determining electoral outcomes. Two such factors can be expected to have been particularly important in influencing the vote decisions: media coverage of the election and campaign advertising by parties. These will be examined in turn.

Table 2.4 The distribution of party identification by party camp, 1998

Party	**Strong Identifiers**		**Weak Identifiers**		**All Identifiers**	
Communist Party	162	51.1%	24	28.2%	186	46.3%
Socialist/Rural bloc	41	12.9%	13	15.3%	54	13.4%
Progressive Socialist Party	1	0.3%	2	2.4%	3	0.7%
Working Ukraine bloc	8	2.5%	2	2.4%	10	2.5%
Total left	**212**	**66.9%**	**41**	**48.2%**	**253**	**62.9%**
Party of Greens	14	4.4%	4	4.7%	18	4.5%
Popular Democratic Party	18	5.7%	9	10.6%	27	6.7%
Hromada	11	3.5%			11	2.7%
Social Democratic Party (United)	7	2.2%	4	4.7%	11	2.7%
Agrarian Party	2	0.6%	1	1.2%	3	0.7%
Together bloc	1	0.3%	0	--	1	0.2%
NEP bloc	1	0.3%	0	--	1	0.2%
Party of National Economic Development	1	0.3%	0	--	1	0.2%
Inter-regional Reform Party (Part of the SLOn bloc.)	0	--	0	--	0	--
Constitutional Democ. Party (Part of the SLOn bloc.)	0	--	0	--	0	--
Party of Regional Revival	1	0.3%	0	--	1	0.2%
Women's Initiatives	2	0.6%			2	0.5%
Social Democratic Party	3	0.9%	1	1.2%	4	1.0%
Party of Spiritual, Economic, and Social Progress	1	0.3%	0	--	1	0.2%
European Choice bloc	1	0.3%	1	1.2%	2	0.5%
Total Centre	**63**	**19.9%**	**20**	**23.5%**	**83**	**20.7%**
Rukh	28	8.8%	15	17.6%	43	10.7%
Reforms and Order	1	0.3%	1	1.2%	2	0.5%
National Front bloc	3	0.9%	4	4.7%	7	1.7%
Forward Ukraine! bloc	0	--	1	1.2%	1	0.2%
Christian Democratic Party	1	0.3%	1	1.2%	2	0.5%
Republican Christian Party	0	--	1	1.2%	1	0.2%
Ukrainian National Assembly	9	2.8%	1	1.2%	10	2.5%
Fewer Words bloc	0	--	0	--	0	00
Total Right	**42**	**13.3%**	**24**	**28.3%**	**66**	**16.3%**
All identifiers	**317**	**100%**	**85**	**100%**	**402**	**100%**

Source: Project on the Quality of Democratic Representation in Ukraine.

Media Coverage of Parties:

Tables 2.5 and 2.6 present data on media coverage during the 1998 election campaign compiled by the Ukrainian Monitor project. The most striking aspect of these data is the extent to which the Communists (and the left in general) were under-covered in relation to their support among the electorate. This is true for both broadcast and print media. It must be noted, however, that the Socialists nearly broke even in print coverage, and that the phenomenon of under-reporting was one that affected the Communists more than any other major party. The second most striking aspect is the over-coverage of the centrist parties, especially the government-supporting Popular Democratic Party (NDP).

National Print Media

In proportional terms the left received less than two-fifths as much of the national print media coverage as they won list votes (see Table 2.5). Centrist parties, by contrast, enjoyed almost twice as much coverage in the national press as the proportion of the list vote they eventually won. The rightist parties fell somewhere in between: they received nearly half again as much coverage as they did electoral support. Beneath these overall patterns there are some interesting features of individual party support. The lack of reporting of Communist party activities is perhaps the most noteworthy of all: the Communist share of the vote is eight times greater than its share of national newspaper coverage. The Greens - a very different party - suffered a similar print media eclipse, which did not prevent them from an impressive result. In media terms, the Greens appear to have been a true dark horse party, which may not actually have sought the limelight of investigative journalism and analytic reporting.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Popular Democratic Party was allocated four times as much newspaper space as it garnered votes. The Social Democratic Party (united) (SDP(u)) did nearly as well, with a ratio of three and a half between newspaper space and list vote share. Despite its claims of media discrimination, former Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko's *Hromada* party actually got twice as much coverage in the national press as it received votes. Though it cannot be denied that there was a strenuous effort on the part of the government and the presidential administration to limit the media outlets available to Lazarenko and his party, these data suggest that this campaign was not overly successful (it may have even had the reverse effect, creating news for other papers to cover). These three 'prime ministerial' parties (parties headed by former and current prime ministers) evidently benefited from the networks of media patronage established by their leaders during their respective terms in office.

Table 2.5: National newspapers: Percentage of political news space (Percentage of political news items)*

Party/Bloc	23/2-1/4	2/3-8/3	9/3-15/3	16/3-22/3	Avr.	List Vote (%)	Ratio avr./L V
Left							
Communists	11 (5)	2 (2)	1 (1)	2 (2)	4 (3)	**25**	.16
Soc./Rural	5 (10)	---	18 (16)	9 (11)	8 (9)	**9**	.89
Prog. Soc.	6 (10)	1 (2)	---	1 (2)	2 (4)	**4**	.50
Working Uk.	---	3 (4)	---	1 (1)	1 (1)	3	.33
Defenders	2 (1)	---	---	---	1 (0)	0	*
Workers	---	2 (2)	---	---	1 (1)	1	1.00
	24(26)	*8(10)*	*19 (17)*	*13 (16)*	*16 (17)*	*42*	*.38*
Centre							
Greens	2 (1)	---	2 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)	**5**	.20
Pop. Dem.	21 (21)	21 (28)	17 (16)	22 (28)	20 (23)	**5**	4.00
Hromada	11 (13)	11 (12)	8 (12)	8 (5)	10 (11)	**5**	2.00
SDP (U)	6 (14)	15 (12)	13 (16)	21 (18)	14 (15)	**4**	3.50
Agrarians	---	1 (2)	4 (3)	2 (1)	2 (2)	4	.50
Together	---	5 (4)	1 (1)	---	2 (1)	2	1.00
NEP	---	2 (3)	---	---	1 (1)	1	1.00
Nat. Econ. Dev't	5 (1)	---	1 (1)	4 (4)	3 (2)	1	3.00
SLOn	2 (1)	---	---	2 (3)	1 (1)	1	1.00
Reg. Revival	---	2 (2)	---	---	1 (1)	1	1.00
Soyuz	---	2 (2)	4 (2)	---	2 (1)	1	2.00
Women	1 (3)	---	---	---	0 (1)	1	.00
Soc. Dem.	---	---	3 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)	0	*
Muslims	---	---	---	1 (1)	0 (0)	0	*
Spiritual, Econ. Prog.	---	---	---	1 (1)	0 (0)	0	*
Euro. Choice	4 (3)	---	---	---	1 (1)	0	*
	52(57)	*59(65)*	*53(57)*	*63(63)*	*57(61)*	*31*	*1.84*
Right							
Rukh	11 (3)	18 (13)	15 (14)	13 (14)	14 (11)	**9**	1.56
Reforms	1 (1)	7 (8)	2 (2)	1 (3)	3 (4)	3	1.00
Nat. Front	3 (2)	4 (3)	---	---	2 (1)	3	.66
Forward Ukraine!	---	1 (2)	---	2 (3)	1 (1)	2	.50
Christ. Dem.	11 (5)	2 (2)	5 (4)	---	5 (3)	1	5.00
Rep. Christ.		---	1 (1)	---	0 (0)	1	.00
Uk. Nat. Ass.	---	2 (2)	4 (4)	---	2 (2)	0	*
Fewer Words	---	---	1 (1)	---	0 (0)	0	*
	26 (11)	*34 (30)*	*28 (26)*	*16 (20)*	*26 (22)*	*19*	*1.37*

* Newspapers covered include: *Holos Ukrainy, Uryadovyi kur"yer, Robitnycha hazeta, Sils'ki Visti, Ukraina moloda, Molod' Ukrainy, Vseukrainske vedomosti, Den', Nezavisimost, Region, Fakty, Zerkala nedeli, Sehodnya, Chas/Time.* The other major national newspaper, Pravda Ukrainy, was not being published during this period due to a government ban.

NB: Parties that cleared the four per cent threshold necessary to win seats in parliament are indicated in bold font. Party camp totals are in italics. Not all columns sum to one hundred per cent due to rounding error.

Sources: Calculated from data reported in the *Ukrainian Monitor*, 1998, No: 7-10.; *Uryadovyi kur"yer*, 1998, 9 April, p. 5.

On the right of the spectrum, *Rukh* also appears to have had a media advantage (undoubtedly partly because of the assiduous coverage of *Rukh*-supporting newspaper *Chas/Time*), though it was the Christian Democrats who had the greatest proportional success in attracting media attention (unfortunately for them, the proportions were in both cases relatively small).

National Television

A number of the tendencies evident in the print media are found in magnified form in television coverage figures: the leftist parties were at an even greater disadvantage in television time than was the case for newspaper space, and again, this was especially true of the Communists, who received an average of only four per cent of television coverage between 23 February and 22 March (see Table 2.6). The advantage enjoyed by the centrist parties, and most especially the Popular Democrats was also more pronounced in the distribution of air time. The party received on average thirty per cent of air time during this period, despite only having approximately five per cent support among the electorate - a ratio of six to one. The centrist parties as a group clearly monopolized television, gobbling up nearly two-thirds of the time allotted to party coverage. Once again, the rightist parties received moderately more coverage than their proportion of the list vote, but the discrepancy was less for television than it was for newspapers. Coverage of this camp most closely matched its popular strength.

Analysis of individual party coverage reveals that *Hromada* was at no particular television disadvantage in comparison with the proportion of the votes it took on polling day (at least when calculated in terms of the simple quantity of time devoted to its activities). But, whereas the print space it received was double its vote, the proportion of air time it was allocated was about the same as its proportion of the vote.

There are some other interesting differences in the distributions between the two media. First, the SDP(u) does not seem to have been nearly as fortunate in attracting television news as it was in securing print coverage. *Rukh* also received a lower proportion of air time than it did newspaper print; indeed the considerable advantage it enjoyed in the press corresponded with a distinct disadvantage on the airwaves. The Green party, on the other hand, appears to have experienced much less of a problem with television than with newspapers. Though the proportion of coverage it received was still less than its share of the list vote, the two figures are not very different.

Three main conclusions can be drawn from these findings. First, the media clearly favoured the centrist parties closest to the government (and former governments) - possibly because of lack of independence in the media, possibly because people in positions of institutional power have more opportunity to do things that command media attention, probably for

Table 2.6: National television: Percentage of political news time (Percentage of political news items)*

Party/Bloc	23/2-1/4	2/3-8/3	9/3-15/3	16/3-22/3	Avr.	List Vote	Ratio
Left							
Communists	1 (1)	4 (1)	1 (2)	9 (3)	4 (2)	**25**	.16
Soc./Rural	5 (12)	5 (14)	---	---	3 (7)	**9**	.33
Prog. Soc.	1 (4)	8 (3)	---	---	2 (2)	**4**	.50
Working Uk.	1 (1)	---	3 (2)	---	1 (1)	3	.33
Defenders	---	---	---	9 (2)	2 (1)	0	*
Workers	---	8 (1)	---	---		1	
	8 (18)	*25 (19)*	*4 (4)*	*18 (5)*	*14 (12)*	*42*	.33
Centre							
Greens	8 (4)	3 (4)	1 (2)	3 (7)	4 (4)	**5**	.8
Pop. Dem.	44 (48)	10 (22)	38 (33)	28 (30)	30 (33)	**5**	6.00
Hromada	1 (5)	1 (3)	7 (11)	9 (13)	5 (8)	**5**	1.00
SDP (u)	4 (7)	6 (10)	2 (11)	2 (12)	4 (10)	**4**	1.00
Agrarians	---	1 (1)	0 (2)	1 (2)	1 (1)	4	.25
Together	---	1 (3)	11 (7)	1 (2)	3 (3)	2	1.50
NEP	1 (1)	---	1 (2)	2 (2)	1 (1)	1	1.00
Nat. Econ. Dev't	3 (1)	23 (7)	7 (7)	2 (2)	9 (4)	1	9.00
SLOn	---	---	---	9 (2)	2 (1)	1	2.00
Reg. Revival	---	---	---	1 (2)	0 (1)	1	.00
Soyuz	---	---	---	9 (2)	2 (1)	1	2.00
Women	---	---	---	---	---	1	.00
Soc. Dem.	1 (1)	8 (3)	---	1 (2)	3 (2)	0	3.00
Muslims	6 (1)	---	---	---	2 (0)	0	2.00
Spiritual, Econ. Prog.	---	---	---	---	---	0	*
Euro. Choice	---	---	9 (4)	---	2 (1)	0	2.00
	68 (68)	*53 (53)*	*76 (79)*	*68 (78)*	*66 (70)*	*31*	*2.13*
Right							
Rukh	6 (1)	5 (3)	0 (4)	1 (5)	3 (3)	**9**	.33
Reforms	2 (1)	8 (11)	7 (7)	9 (7)	7 (7)	3	2.33
Nat. Front	2 (3)	---	---	1 (2)	1 (1)	3	.33
Forward Ukraine!	1 (4)	4 (8)	2 (4)	---	2 (4)	2	1.00
Christ. Dem.	6 (6)	3 (3)	9 (2)	4 (7)	6 (5)	1	6.00
Rep. Christ.	6 (1)	---	---	---	2 (0)	1	2.00
Uk. Nat. Ass.	6 (1)	---	---	---	2 (0)	0	*
Fewer Words	---	---	---	---	---	0	.00
	29 (17)	*20 (25)*	*18 (17)*	*15 (21)*	*21 (20)*	*19*	*1.11*

* Includes the following national television channels: UT-1, 1+1, TV-Tabachuk, ISTV, Inter, STB, NTU.

Source: Calculated from data reported in the *Ukrainian Monitor*, 1998, No: 7-10.

a combination of reasons. Secondly, the left did not need to rely on the (national) media to win votes. Thirdly, patterns in the distribution of print space were in most cases reflected in patterns of distribution of air time, with the exceptions noted above.

There were also several anomalies among the smaller parties. The Christian Democrats' coverage was again massively in excess of their electoral performance. The Party of National Economic Development was also remarkably successful in attracting the attention of the cameras, especially considering its ultimate demise at the ballot box.

Media coverage was thus most pronounced in the portion of the political spectrum where party identification was weakest. This meant that centrist parties could be expected to compensate for their lack of identifiers through their prominence in the press and on television. Indeed, this factor may have been one of the main reasons for the dramatic rise in centrist party support between 1994 and 1998.

Campaign Financing

According to Article 37 of the 1998 electoral law,[4] campaign financing takes two forms: state financing and private financing. The law stipulates that the central and constituency candidates are to pay for the printing of a limited number of campaign posters for parties and candidates in single-member constituencies, for the publication of programs in the press, and for air time for parties/candidates on state radio and television. The electoral commissions also have an obligation to arrange and fund meetings between party representatives/candidates and voters. According to the law, a second source of campaign finance is the individual accounts set up by parties for this purpose. Contributions to such funds can be made by the parties themselves, as well as by Ukrainian citizens and corporate bodies (*yurydychni osobi*), but not by foreign, international, or anonymous donors. State organizations (including state enterprises) are also banned from making donations to campaign funds. Details of all donations must be provided to the relevant electoral commissions. Any sums that remain on an account at the close of the campaign revert to the state budget (except under certain circumstances when an election must be repeated or re-held). No later than seven days before the elections, parties and candidates must provide the Central Electoral Commission with written declarations of the sources of the funds in their campaign accounts; information on the sums involved must be made public no later than two days before the elections.

These procedures were designed to introduce a degree of transparency into the process of campaign funding, yet they did not prove entirely effective. One of the reasons for this is a fault in the law, which does not explicitly prohibit the use of alternative sources of campaign financing. A statement on the campaign funding of the thirty parties and blocs that contested the elections was published in the state press on 26 March

(*Uryadovyi kur"yer,* 1998, p. 4-6). Seven parties, including *Rukh* and the Progressive Socialists, managed to circumvent the scrutiny of the electoral commission by simply declining to open special election accounts altogether.[5] In other cases the roundness of the figures involved strain credibility; the Party of National Economic Development, for example, appears to have raised exactly 700,000.00 *hryvnyas* for its campaign. Moreover, the Ukrainian state budget was not one kopeck better off from this fund-raising exercise, as no party declared any money left in its account at the time of the elections.

The declared figures do, however, provide some indication of the nature of the fund-raising capacity of many of the parties, both in terms of the sums involved and their sources (see Table 2.7). The way in which they used (or failed to use) their campaign accounts also provides insight into the parties' tactics and, indirectly, the nature of their support bases. The parties that declared the greatest expenditures were, unsurprisingly those allied most closely with government on the one hand (the Popular Democratic Party) and banking interests on the other (most notably the Green party).

It is also interesting to compare the amount spent with the number of votes gained. If it can be assumed that parties would have had little incentive to over-declare money spent, it is obvious that a number of parties in the campaign spent a good deal to little effect. The Party of Regional Revival (PVRU) came top in this category, spending over three *hryvnyas* from its campaign account for every list vote it won. The next most costly votes appear to have been those of by the Party of National and Economic Rebirth (PNERU), NEP bloc, and the NDP. From the point of view of the eventual distribution of seats the considerable sums spent by the PNERU, the PVRU were entirely in vain, while the single seats (all in single-member constituencies by candidates with their own separate accounts) won by NEP, the Together bloc, Working Ukraine, and Social Liberal Union (SLOn) were costly indeed, even if the only money spent on the campaign was in each case that declared to the Central Electoral Commission.

The parties on the extreme of the political spectrum, appear, on the other hand, to have been able to mobilize votes in the most cost-effective way. The Communists spent only 0.4 kopecks from their account per list vote won; though the Socialists admit to having spent ten times this, the amount involved is still minute in comparison to some of the centrist parties. Likewise, the far-right National Front and Fewer Words blocs declared having spent 1.6 and 1.0 *kopecks* respectively for every list vote. But it is the Party of Muslims that seems to have taken frugality to the extreme in these elections; although the party opened an account in accordance with the law, no money ever went in or out of it. It is difficult to believe the party relied only on state financing to manage its campaign, but ethnic solidarity among its target sector of the electorate makes a very low-cost campaign not implausible.[6]

Table 2.7: Campaign financing

Party	Declared campaign Funds (*hryvnyas*)	Sources of declared campaign funds, as proportion of total			% of the list vote won	*Hryvnyas* raised per list vote won
		Party	Individ. Donors	Corporate Donors		
Left						
Com. Party of Ukraine	**24,935**	**0.00%**	**90.01%**	**9.99%**	**24.65%**	**0.004**
Socialist-Rural blo	**106,967**	**0.00%**	**81.30%**	**18.70%**	**8.56%**	**0.05**
Working Ukraine	406,600	0.00%	4.92%	95.08%	3.06%	0.50
All-Ukrainian Party of Workers	56,558	0.39%	0.00%	99.61%	0.79%	0.27
Centre						
Green Party	**1,128,488**	**0.00%**	**0.09%**	**99.91%**	**5.44%**	**0.78**
Popular Dem. Party	**1,915,936**	**0.05%**	**0.00%**	**99.95%**	**5.01%**	**1.44**
Hromada	**190,132**	**100.00%**	**0.00%**	**0.00%**	**4.68%**	**0.15**
Social Dem. Party (United)	**529,900**	**0.00%**	**0.00%**	**100.00%**	**4.01%**	**0.50**
Agrarian Party	125,000	8.80%	10.40%	80.80%	3.68%	0.13
Together	705,935	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	1.89%	1.40
NEP	742,000	12.40%	0.00%	87.60%	1.23%	2.27
Party of National Econ. Dev.	700,000	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.94%	2.79
Social-Liberal Ass. (SLOn)	131,483	0.00%	90.10%	9.90%	0.91%	0.54
Party of Regional Revival	793,569	0.00%	4.89%	95.12%	0.91%	3.29
Women's Initiatives	28,240	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.58%	0.18
Social Dem. Party o Ukraine	5,522	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.32%	0.06
Party of Spiritual, Econ., Social Progress	3,772	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.20%	0.07
Right						
National Front	7,401	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	2.72%	0.01
Forward Ukraine!	35,000	57.14%	0.00%	42.86%	1.74%	0.08
Christian Dem. Part	217,062	0.00%	13.39%	86.61%	1.30%	0.63
Ukrainian National Assembly	30,400	0.00%	68.75%	31.25%	0.40%	0.29
Fewer Words	728	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.17%	0.02

NB: Parties that cleared the four per cent threshold necessary to win seats in parliament are indicated in bold font. The second to last column does not sum to one hundred, as it excluded votes for those parties which did not open electoral accounts (18.27 per cent), as well as invalid votes (5.25 per cent) and votes against all parties (3.05 per cent).

Sources: *Uryadovyi Kur"yer* 26 March 1998, pp. 4-6; 9 April, 1998, p. 5.

It is also instructive to examine the break-down of electoral account funds by type of donor. Two parties, *Hromada* and the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine, placed funds in their accounts directly from their party coffers; in neither case did money come from any other source. Forward Ukraine! also relied mostly on its own funds to fill its account, but only seven parties deposited any of their own money. In most cases donations came either from individual citizens or from corporate bodies, and the break-down of parties according to these two types of source may tell us something about the character of these parties. The extremely modest sums that accumulated in the accounts of the far-right National Front and Fewer Words came entirely from individual donors, as did two-thirds of that declared by the Ukrainian National Assembly. The vast majority of the money declared by the Socialists and Communists also came from individual donations. Though there are reasons to suspect that all these parties used means other than their official electoral accounts to finance their campaigns, none of these parties ran visibly expensive campaigns, and there is every reason to believe that all of them rely extensively on grass-roots support networks that do not require public monetary expenditure for mobilization. A number of the centrist parties, on the other hand, were quite open about receiving large sums of corporate sponsorship. Most notable in this respect were the NDP, the Greens, PRVU, Together, PNERU, NEP, and the SDP(o), all of which declared at least half a million *hryvnyas* and at least four-fifths of their declared funds from corporate sources (though with differing results, as mentioned above). Some of these parties are well-known as parties of bankers - the Greens, the SDP(o), and the PNERU - while the SDP(o) and Together are known to have links with industry.

Though these figures are subject to doubt on a number of counts, they may suggest the following tentative interpretation: parties at the opposite ends of the political spectrum (including *Rukh* and the Progressive Socialists) continued to rely more on ideological identification to mobilize their constituencies. This type of support is cheap in monetary terms, or at least the costs involved are not readily visible ones. (It may also not have been in the interests of the anti-capitalist parties to have been seen to be spending large sums of money). In other words, the parties that have been most consistently successful and have the highest levels of party identification operate largely in the shadow electoral economy. Many of the centrist parties, on the other hand, relied on more 'modern' electoral tactics; raising and spending large amounts of money on lavish advertising campaigns which aim to sway Ukraine's large number of floating voters. Though no one of them proved particularly successful, together they cornered much of the centrist market and as a group they constituted a significant proportion of the list vote.

Patterns of media coverage and campaign spending clearly complement party identification, suggesting that campaign strategies have been used extensively to sway floating voters in Ukraine. But it is noteworthy that the parties which have been most successful are those that have managed to

combine good campaign coverage with liberal spending and prominent candidates who are current or previous linked to government. This suggests that the combination of economic and political power that is vested in Ukraine's centrist parties represents a potent electoral weapon which is able to overcome popular cynicism and aversion of party politics. In fact, cynicism may be a significant factor in releasing voters from the constraints of principle and facilitating their attraction by parties based on economic power.

Conclusion

The development of party politics in Ukraine suggests that a successful campaign via media coverage and advertising can enable a political organization to maintain its access to state resources in the absence of a committed group of supporters. Recognizing this, a number of political leaders have used party labels as fronts for state penetration. This is a depressing story for those committed to the democratic process. The only encouraging aspect of this type of political manipulation is that it is difficult to sustain. The party machinations which took place in the run-up to the March 2002 parliamentary elections pointed to the transient nature of the party platforms that had launched the successful political bids of the main actors in 1998. The period leading up to the elections again witnessed a rush of party formation and an extensive reconfiguration of the party constellation, and it was clear that the outcome of next year's contest would be rather different from that of 1998.

The desire for political power in the absence of effective representative mechanisms has led in Ukraine to a situation in which the party system is the site of constant churn. The existence of relatively stable left and right wings is in this sense deceptive, for political outcomes are not decided in this portion of the political spectrum. They are decided by the centre, which is precisely the area in which voters are least attached to parties and most available to be swayed by slick advertising and the promise of selective benefits to supporters. This is, to an extent, true of most competitive political systems, but in Ukraine the consequence is a political elite that views the state largely as a source of wealth and the electorate as mere pawns in the process of securing access to state resources. The severe underdevelopment of independent civil society in Ukraine allows politicians to gravitate to the state, as there is virtually no organized pressure on them from 'below'.

In this context, the role of political parties is ambiguous. On the one hand, mobilization of the vote through party labels requires politicians to make broad appeals. On the other hand, it also allows party leaders to hide behind their party name, rather than accounting for their actions as individuals. Under these circumstances, we cannot say that there is true representative democracy. When the parties whose parliamentary factions

swing votes do not exist for more than once election, accountability is all but absent. Few political parties in Ukraine can be said to be acting as channels of genuine interest inter-mediation; instead, they are vehicles through which existing elites can maintain positions of economic and political power. The Ukrainian case demonstrates that though political parties may be necessary to a vibrant democracy, their mere existence in the electoral arena is certainly not sufficient to bring democracy to life. When parties act as mechanisms for personal financial gain, they may be doing more harm to civil society than good.

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