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*Great Power Politics in Eastern Europe
and the Ukrainian Emigres, 1709-42*

Political emigres, especially East Europeans, tend to be persistent. From the very outset of their exile they often spend the rest of their lives in trying to recoup (and justify) their losses. Their struggle is usually so uneven as to appear hopeless. For most of them there is no escape from what one celebrated member of their fraternity called "the garbage heap of history." Yet most emigres always seem to see a glimmer of a chance, a ray of hope that all is not lost. Perhaps a mighty power might be convinced to support their cause or domestic turmoil in their homelands might provide them with an opportunity to return in triumph. So, they politic and persevere, despite the discouraging odds, in order to make even the wildest dream of vindication a reality.

Should the fortunes of the emigres take a turn for the better, then what was a gnawing irritant for those who ousted them might turn into a considerable, even a serious threat. Therefore, few victors in any violent power struggle are so confident as to ignore altogether their defeated but surviving opponents. Indeed, it is surprising to what lengths victorious powers will go to rid themselves of their political emigres. Moreover, the resourcefulness and determination that the latter can summon up to complicate and to bedevil the well-being of their rivals is too often ignored. The epilogue to seemingly decisive victories is sometimes more drawnout and bitterly fought than is commonly supposed.

The purpose of this study is to examine a case of just such a bitterly fought epilogue—the aftermath of the battle of Poltava in 1709. This case involves what is often considered the first generation of Ukrainian political emigres and it spans the reigns from Peter I to and including that of Anna I, more precisely the time period from 1709 to 1742.

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One of the most unpleasant surprises that Peter I experienced occurred on 26 October 1708. On that day, at a most crucial point in the Great Northern War, the tsar received word that Ivan Mazepa, Hetman of Ukraine, together with a large part of the Ukrainian Cossack elite and several thousand rank and file Cossacks had gone over to Charles XII and the invading Swedes. The news was completely unexpected since the hetman was always considered one of the tsar's most faithful associates. Consternation in the Russian camp increased

when it was learned that the Zaporozhian Cossacks, a semi-autonomous part of the Hetmanate, were also going over to the Swedes. Just as the decisive confrontation between Peter I and Charles XII was about to take place, it appeared that all the Ukrainian Cossacks, numbering well over 40,000 men, might fight on the side of the invaders.¹

Fortunately for Peter, this frightening danger never materialized. Mazepa, never popular with the Ukrainian masses, failed to draw them to his side. A. D. Menshikov's unexpectedly swift raid into the Ukraine, highlighted by the destruction of Baturyn, Mazepa's beloved residence town, and the massacre of its inhabitants dissuaded those who considered supporting their hetman. It was only after his great victory at Poltava on 8 July 1709 when Charles, Mazepa and the sorry remnants of their armies were fleeing to the safety of the Ottoman Empire, that Peter became convinced that the immediate threat to his sovereignty in Ukraine had passed. Nevertheless, Mazepa and his followers, the so-called Mazepists, were not forgotten; until his dying day the tsar vengefully pursued and tried to capture them in every way and at every opportunity possible.

Let us glance briefly at the composition of this first Ukrainian political emigration. It consisted of two distinct groups: on the one hand were the Mazepists proper, mostly leading members of the political, social and economic elite of the Hetmanate. About thirty-five to forty of them, together with their families and entourages, followed Mazepa to the safety of Bender, just inside the Ottoman borders, in present day Moldavia. On the other hand were the Zaporozhians. This military fraternity, the epitome of Cossackdom, was traditionally identified with the Ukrainian lower classes and was perennially rebelling against any strict or stable form of government. Their base was the famous Sich, a fortified encampment situated on one of the islands below the Dnieper Rapids. After the Zaporozhians joined the Swedes, the Russians attacked and destroyed the Sich. The remaining Zaporozhians, numbering about 4,000, elected to follow Mazepa to Bender. For the next twenty-five years, these Ukrainian emigrants, ensconced on the crucial southern border of the Russian Empire, would continue to be a thorn in the side of four Russian monarchs.²

Peter, realizing the trouble-making potential of the emigres, attempted to liquidate them as quickly as possible. First and foremost, he wanted to capture "the new Judas, Mazepa." Numerous urgent appeals were sent to the Ot-

1. The standard study of Mazepa and his uprising is N. Kostomarov's *Mazepa i Mazepyntsy*, vol. 16 of his *Istoričeskiiia monografii i izsledovaniia* (St. Petersburg: Stasiulevich, 1885). Two recent studies on this topic are O. Ohloblyn, *Hetman Ivan Mazepa i ioho doba* (New York: ODFU, 1960) and B. Kentrschyn's'kyj, *Mazepa* (Stockholm: Söderström, 1966).

2. For an overview of the Mazepists' activities, see the second part of Kostomarov's *Mazepa i Mazepyntsy*, pp. 593-719.

toman Porte requesting the extradition of the fugitive hetman.³ How intensely Mazepa's return was desired may be seen from the amounts of money the normally parsimonious tsar was willing to expend on his account: one contemporary source notes that 80,000 ducats were offered to the Porte with an additional 20,000 for the grand vezir; another source states that 300,000 talers were offered.⁴ Even Charles was approached. The tsar offered to exchange the captured Swedish chancellor, Count Carl Piper, for Mazepa.⁵ Characteristically, the Swedish king refused what he considered to be a dishonorable offer. And, most uncharacteristically, the notoriously avaricious Porte, citing Islamic precepts of hospitality and asylum, also refused the tsar's offers. Soon afterwards, the old, ailing and disheartened hetman eluded Peter's grasp permanently when, on 22 September 1709, he died in Bender.

But Mazepa's death did not eliminate the emigres' potential for creating problems for the tsar. In fact, between 1711 and 1713, the Ukrainians, led by Pylyp Orlyk, Mazepa's successor as hetman, proceeded to create exactly the type of difficulties Peter had feared.⁶ Together with Charles they roused the Ottoman Porte and the Crimean khan into a war against the Russians, a war whose purpose was to drive the Russians out of the Ukraine. In January, 1711, Orlyk, moving ahead of the main Ottoman army, led about 5,000 Zaporozhians and over 20,000 Tatars on a raid deep into Right-Bank Ukraine. Initially the invading force scored impressive successes: several Russian garrisons were destroyed, large numbers of the local populace flocked to Orlyk's banners, and his forces moved threateningly close to Kiev. However, the Tatars, dissatisfied with the amount of booty they were taking (their dissatisfaction

3. In 1709 the tsar sent three official notes to the Porte on 10, 14, and 27 July demanding the return of Mazepa. See *Pis'ma i bumagi imperatora Petra Velikago*, IX (Leningrad: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1952), 311.

4. F. Fabrice, *Anecdotes du sejour du roi de Suède à Bender*, . . . (Hamburg: C. Herold, 1760), p. 10, and Kostomarov, *Mazepa i Mazepyntsy*, citing the Russian envoy to the Porte, Tolstoi, p. 581.

5. Kostomarov, *Mazepa i Mazepyntsy*, p. 581.

6. Pylyp Orlyk (1672-1742) belonged to a *szlachta* (gentry) family of Czech origin which emigrated to Poland during the Hussite wars and later settled in Lithuania. His education was an extensive one; initially he studied at the Jesuit Academy in Vilno and later moved to Kiev to continue his studies at the Mohyla Academy. As a result of his academic achievements and of his contacts with such men as Stefan Iavors'kyi, after the completion of his studies, Orlyk obtained a position as secretary of the consistory of the Kiev Metropolitanate and later he moved into Mazepa's chancellery. Eventually he became the Chancellor of the Zaporozhian Host and loyally followed Mazepa into exile. For a thorough survey of his political activities, see B. Krupnyts'kyi, *Hetman Pylyp Orlyk*, vol. XLII of the *Pratsi Ukrain's'koho Naukovoho Instytutu* (Warszawa: Gerber, 1938). Unfortunately, Krupnyts'kyi was unable to utilize such key primary sources as Orlyk's diary and the French and Polish archives. A study based on these unutilized sources is my unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: "The Unwilling Allies: The Relations of Pylyp Orlyk with the Ottoman Porte and the Crimean Khanate, 1710-1742," Harvard University, 1973.

reached the point where they began looting the towns that went over to Orlyk), decided to turn back prematurely; the hetman, so close to even greater successes, had no choice but to follow his allies back to Bender.⁷ The Ukrainian emigres would continue to operate on the Russian-Ottoman border, contributing in no small part to the disaster Peter encountered at Prut and to the difficulties he had in negotiating the Treaty of Adrianople in 1713 when he had to give up much of the territory that Russia had gained in the southeast. For some time the Ottomans considered turning over these regained lands to Orlyk, but the latter proved unwilling to accept empty and devastated territories.⁸

Convinced by recent events that the emigre problem must somehow be solved, the tsar tried to blackmail the Mazepists into submission. In 1714, the emigres' immediate families and relatives who had remained in the Ukraine were arrested and brought to Moscow. From there they were forced to write plaintive letters to their sons, husbands and brothers entreating them to cease their anti-tsarist activities or else their families' lives would be forfeit. When this tactic did not produce the desired results, Peter tried to entice the Mazepists (but not the much more numerous Zaporozhians) back with offers of amnesty. About a dozen of the leading emigres accepted the offers and returned to their estates in Ukraine. Almost immediately, they were arrested and sent off to Moscow. There they spent the rest of their lives, penniless and persecuted.⁹

By 1715, it appeared that the emigre problem was about to fade into oblivion. Orlyk and the remaining Mazepists, realizing that the Ottomans were not about to continue their war against Russia, decided to follow their peripatetic patron, Charles XII, back to Sweden. A few of them, Mazepa's beloved nephew and heir to his fortune, Andrii Voinarovskiy, in particular, broke away from the shrinking group and set out to seek their fortune on their own. For the Zaporozhians, the situation was much more difficult. Although they formally recognized Orlyk as their leader, following him en masse to Sweden was out of the question. Nor could they even dream of returning to the Ukraine; so great was the tsar's hatred of these "turncoats and troublemakers" that he ordered them to be killed on sight.¹⁰ The only alternative open to the Zaporozhians was, temporarily and with Orlyk's acquiescence, to accept the overlordship of the Crimean khan. In return, Khan Kaplan Girei provided them with lands and a suitable place to construct a new Sich. Thus, these intrepid frontiersmen, renowned for their exploits against the Muslim infidels, now became the vassals of the khan and thereby of the Ottoman Porte.

7. Subtelny, "Unwilling Allies," pp. 61-70.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-16.

9. Kostomarov, *Mazepa i Mazepyntsy*, pp. 648-52.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 622.

Peter was not content to let sleeping dogs lie. He ordered his diplomatic agents in Europe to hunt down and capture any Mazepists they could. A regular manhunt ensued, the first victim of which was Voinarovskiyi. (At the same time, incidentally, Peter's agents were combing Europe for his fleeing son, Aleksei.) For several years, supplied with a part of his uncle's fabulous wealth, Voinarovskiyi led a flamboyant life in the capitals of Europe. In the fall of 1716, Voinarovskiyi arrived in Hamburg. There Russian agents kidnapped him and, amidst widespread uproar, transported him to St. Petersburg. After a thorough investigation—the Russians especially wanted to know of Mazepa's secret contacts in Ukraine after the Battle of Poltava—and seven years of arrest in the capital, the unfortunate Voinarovskiyi was exiled for life to Siberia.¹¹

Four years later, another prominent Mazepist fell prey to tsarist agents. Hryhor Hertsyk, a close associate of Orlyk's, was dispatched in 1720 from Sweden to the Zaporozhians with letters from the hetman. On the way, Hertsyk, to his misfortune, stopped in Warsaw. The Russian ambassador, G. F. Dolgorukii, heard of his arrival, had him arrested on the street and, despite vociferous protests on the part of the Poles, spirited him off to St. Petersburg. After the usual interrogation and prolonged arrest, Hertsyk too was sent off into exile.¹²

The same year Hertsyk was kidnapped, Orlyk himself, disheartened by his prospects in Sweden after the death of Charles XII, left Stockholm on a long, dangerous and ultimately frustrating peregrination. His goal was to find a court in Europe that would sponsor his case, both political and personal, at the upcoming negotiations at Nystadt which would conclude the Northern War. After visiting a number of courts in Germany, where he preached about the Russian menace to Europe and expounded his plans to thwart Russian expansion, Orlyk gained nothing besides expressions of goodwill and letters of recommendation to other courts.

By now, Peter's agents had picked up the hetman's trail, and, as he moved on to Vienna, one of the tsar's favorites, P. I. Iaguzhinskii, was assigned to capture him. In Orlyk's fascinating diary we read how, warned in the last minute by highly placed friends in the Habsburg court, the Ukrainian emigre

11. For documents relating to Voinarovskiyi's kidnapping, see "Dokumenty ob Andrei Voinarovskom. . . ." *Sbornik statei i materialov po istorii Iugo-Zapadnoi Rossii*, 2 vols. (Kiev: Izd. Kievskoi Komissii, 1916), II. A Study of Voinarovskiyi's life is also available in L. Wynar, *Andrii Voinarovskiyi* (München, Dniprova Khvyliia, 1962).

12. A record of the heated Polish-Russian debates concerning the abduction of Hertsyk may be found in Warsaw in *Archiwum Głowne Akt Dawnych* [hereafter AGAD], *Archiwum Publ. Potockich*, Nr. 58, folios 299-305. For a transcript of his interrogation in St. Petersburg, see "Dopros Grigoriia Gertsika ob uchastii evo v izmene Mazepy," *Kievskaiia starina*, No. 3 (1883), pp. 13-38.

managed to elude Iaguzhinskii's nocturnal attempt to capture him.¹³ However, at the insistence of the Habsburg court, Orlyk had to leave Austrian territory and, with Russian agents in hot pursuit, moved on to Poland. There bad news awaited him: after informing him of Hetsyk's fate, the Poles made it clear that they could not guarantee the hetman's safety. Discouraged, Orlyk tried through the intermediary of his old and beloved mentor, Stefan Iavorskyi, to come to terms with Peter. But, nothing came of this attempt.¹⁴ With a notable lack of enthusiasm, the hapless emigre realized that his only alternative was to seek asylum again in the Ottoman empire.

In March, 1722, Orlyk crossed the Ottoman-Polish border. At first, the Ottoman Porte welcomed the Cossack leader with open arms. It had just learned that Peter was launching another campaign to the south and if the Russians actually attacked the Ottomans, Orlyk's services could be useful to the Porte. A ceremonial escort was sent out to accompany the hetman to an audience in Constantinople. But before Orlyk arrived in the capital, it was learned that Peter's attack was aimed at Safavid Persia, an arch enemy of the Ottomans. This changed the situation completely. Fearing that Orlyk's presence in the capital might irritate the Russians, the Porte asked him to wait in Salonika for an appropriate time for an audience to be arranged. Orlyk would wait, under virtual house arrest, for the next twelve years until the Porte decided that he could be of service to it again.

The years between 1722 and 1727 were quiet ones in the running skirmishes between the Ukrainian emigres and the Russian government. With Orlyk interned in Salonika, the remaining Mazepists scattered, leaderless, throughout Europe. Meanwhile, the Zaporozhians were sent off by the Crimean khan on long and difficult campaigns in the Kuban and Caucasus areas. The situation looked so unpromising for the emigres that, as soon as he heard of Peter's death in 1725, Orlyk again attempted to obtain amnesty from the St. Petersburg court. Because of his close contacts with the Duke of Holstein, Orlyk now had good reason to hope for amnesty from Catherine I, especially since during the first few years after Peter's death, it appeared in St. Petersburg that Mazepist emigration no longer constituted a problem.¹⁵

During the reign of Peter II and especially with the ascension to the throne of Anna Ivanovna in 1730, the Russian government realized that the Ukrain-

13. Orlyk's diary, written in Polish, may be found in Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères [hereafter *AAE*], entitled *Diariusz podrózny . . .* [hereafter *Diariusz*], Mémoires et Documents. Pologne, vols. VII-XI. For a discussion of this fascinating source, see O. Subtelny, "From the Diary of Pylyp Orlyk," *Ukrainskyi Istoryk*, 1-2 (1971), 95-105.

14. "Pismo Orlika k Iavorskomu," *Osnova*, 10 (St. Petersburg) (1862), 1-28.

15. Charles Frederick, the Duke of Holstein, a favorite of Catherine I, was personally acquainted with and quite sympathetic to Orlyk. Moreover, General Johann Szentflucht, the duke's envoy to St. Petersburg, eventually married the hetman's daughter.

ian emigres' capacity for complicating policy in such important areas as international and internal affairs and strategic planning was far from exhausted. Let us first examine the problems Orlyk would create for the Russians in international affairs.

In the final years of the second and early years of the third decade of the eighteenth century, a key issue in international politics in Europe was the forthcoming election of a new Polish king in view of the failing health of August II of Poland. As usual, foreign governments were becoming deeply involved in the selection and grooming of their own candidates. For France and Russia the future election would be especially crucial. The latter, after dramatically increasing her influence in Poland during the reign of Peter I, was now intent on having a king elected who would recognize this influence. France, allied with the English and Dutch in what was called the Hannover League, saw the forthcoming election as an excellent opportunity—if an appropriate candidate were elected—to block the alarming expansion of Russia. As August II's health continued to deteriorate, Russia allied herself with Austria and Spain. Thus, the forthcoming Polish election took on vast, all-European significance.

The candidate which the Hannover League and especially France chose to groom for the Polish throne was Stanisław Leszczyński, a protégé of Charles XII and former king of Poland who had lost his throne after the Swedish defeat at Poltava. The fact that in 1726 Leszczyński became Louis XV's father-in-law, obviously greatly influenced his selection as the League's candidate for the Polish throne. Russia, together with Austria and Spain, chose to support August II's son, August III. And so, years before August II's death, the two competing sides began mobilizing support for their respective candidates.¹⁶

How does Orlyk, isolated in far-off Salonika, fit into this all-European confrontation? It was Leszczyński who re-introduced the nearly forgotten emigre to the members of the Hannover League. After Poltava, Leszczyński also had to flee to Bender where Ukrainian and Polish emigres worked quite closely in trying to recoup their losses. Indeed, Leszczyński's contacts with the Mazepists went back even further; it was partly under his influence that Mazepa decided to join the Swedes.¹⁷ Years later, when Leszczyński was trying to convince the French that his candidacy was a realistic one, one of

16. An outstanding work dealing with this much studied topic is E. Rostworowski, *O Polska Korone: Polityka Francji w latach 1725-1733* (Wrocław-Kraków: Ossolineum, 1958).

17. See M. Andrusiak, "Zviazky Mazepy z Stanislavom Leshchynskim i Karlom XII," *Zapysky Naukovoho Tovarystva im. Shevchenka*, 152 (Lviv, 1933). See also O. Subtelny, ed., *On the Eve of Poltava: The Letters of Ivan Mazepa to Adam Sieniawski, 1704-1708* (New York: UVAN, 1975).

his crucial arguments was that he could count on the type of support in Poland that would check the expected resistance from the Russians. Recalling the consternation that Mazepa's action and Orlyk's raid had caused among the Russians, Leszczynski argued that, at the proper time, this same kind of diversion could again be arranged. This was where Orlyk and the Zaporozhians came in: the hetman had to be freed from his internment, reunited with the Zaporazhians and prepared to strike from the south at the appropriate moment. This concept of a "Ukrainian diversion" became an all-important one in the plans of Leszczynski and the French.¹⁸

How real was the possibility of Orlyk leading such a diversionary action? and was he interested in participating in such a plan? When informed of Stanisław's proposals, the hetman reacted with great scepticism: "It is a political trick," he wrote in his diary, "by means of which they [Leszczynski and the French] wish to draw me over to the French and English side . . . and use me to their ends."¹⁹ Fueling this scepticism was Orlyk's belief that Catherine I was about to grant him a pardon and return to him his vast estates in the Ukraine. There was even talk of appointing him as the next hetman in the Ukraine.²⁰ As long as he believed that these possibilities could be realized, Orlyk saw no sense in involving himself in the Poles' risky political ventures. Therefore, his reply to Leszczynski was polite but noncommittal. But Leszczynski and the French persisted. On 26 October 1726, Orlyk noted, "Last Saturday the French consul persuaded me, actually, forced me to reply to King Stanisław."²¹ The latter showered the hetman in exile with tempting offers:

The local [i.e., French] court and England have taken my recommendation concerning Your Excellency's status under consideration. Obviously all the allies united by the Hannover Treaty see, on the basis of my presentation, what utility Your Excellency's person and character can have for the common cause for which they are allied. I have also been assured of the possibility of obtaining a subsidy to ease Your Excellency's difficult situation. . . . from Your Excellency's side there should be no delay in demonstrating by means of memorials to the French, English and Dutch envoys (at the Porte) Your readiness, for the sake of the public welfare, to create a diversion against Moscow by means of a great Ukrainian revolution.²²

18. Rostworowski, *O Polska Korone*, p. 92.

19. *Diariusz*, IX, fol. 132.

20. Orlyk to Fr. Cachoda, 26 June 1726, *Diariusz*, IX, fol. 57.

21. *Diariusz*, IX, fol. 98.

22. Leszczynski to Orlyk, 7 March 1727, *Diariusz*, IX, fol. 238.

Another offer was to help Orlyk move to Bender or to Khotyn, which would bring him much closer to his family and the Zaporozhians. Commenting on these letters, the hetman remarked, "It is with such temptations that King Stanisław from France, the French and English ambassadors from Stambul, tempt and sway me. And from the [Habsburg] Emperor and the Empress of Russia I have no positive response as to my interests."²³ Leszczynski's persistence and Russian passiveness were beginning to have their effect. Soon afterwards, Orlyk heard that Catherine I had died and that Menshikov, arch-enemy of all Mazepists, was back in power in St. Petersburg. Suddenly all hopes for amnesty evaporated; Orlyk, therefore, decided to respond more positively to the overtures of the Hannover allies.

On 28 June 1727, the hetman wrote a long, elaborate epistle to Leszczynski, one which he knew would be circulated among the member courts of the Hannover League.²⁴ It contained the message the Pole and his French supporters wanted to hear: the Ukraine was ripe for revolution. As evidence, Orlyk cited the usual litany of wrongs the Ukraine had suffered at the hands of the Russians: the articles of Khmelnyts'kyi's treaty with Aleksei Mikhailovich had been systematically violated by the tsars; Cossack rights and liberties had been disregarded; Russian administrators and taxes weighted heavily on the Ukrainian population; Cossacks were sent off to sure death on the Persian campaigns or to work on the Ladoga Canal; and for those who dared to complain, there was the knout. The Ukraine had become a "theatrum carnificinae" (a forum of carnage).

As a result, thousands of Cossacks and peasants fled to the Zaporozhians, swelling their numbers. Orlyk estimated (i.e., exaggerated) that close to 60,000 well-armed and experienced fighters had gathered at the Zaporozhian Sich, "for in the Ukraine every peasant is a soldier." Emphasizing his own crucial role in this ostensibly revolutionary situation, Orlyk wrote that the Ukraine awaited him now as it had once waited for Khmelnyts'kyi. "There could be no doubt of a revolution in the Ukraine," Orlyk concluded. "The sparks are smoldering and need only someone to blow upon them."²⁵

The hetman set a high price for fulfilling his revolutionary assignment. The Hannover League, or at least the king of France, must take the Ukraine under its protection. And Russia must be forced to sign away all pretensions to her rule in the Ukraine. Moreover, generous subsidies must be provided to Orlyk and the Zaporozhians.

It would be difficult to evaluate this interesting document if we did not have Orlyk's diary to consult. In it, Orlyk reveals what he had in mind when he wrote his letter to Leszczynski. On the one hand, this experienced emigre

23. *Ibid.*, fol. 239.

24. Orlyk to Leszczynski, 25 June 1727. *Ibid.*, fol. 249.

25. *Ibid.*

wanted to maintain the Hannover allies' interest in him and his cause; therefore, he encouraged them in believing that an anti-Russian revolution under his leadership was imminent. On the other hand, he wanted to avoid a complete commitment to the Hannover League, for this would jeopardize future possibilities of gaining amnesty from the St. Petersburg court. Hence, the unrealistic demand for the League's and France's protection over the Ukraine and the expulsion of the Russians from the land. As this demand could not possibly be met, Orlyk would be able to maintain a certain distance between himself and the Hannover League. Referring to his letter, he wrote, "Let no one be scandalized by what I wrote, for politics demanded that I write thus in order that with the aid of God I could find a way out of this land."²⁶ Nevertheless, the myth of an imminent Ukrainian revolution, of a 60,000 (later the figure was raised to 100,000) man army waiting for Orlyk to lead it against the Russians, was spread throughout the courts of Europe, to the advantage of Leszczynski and the detriment of Russian interests.

The question which suggests itself at this point is whether the actual situation in the Ukraine was as volatile as Orlyk depicted it. There was a good deal of truth to his description of wide-spread anti-Russian feelings in the Ukraine. This scenario, however, was somewhat dated, for it applied much more to the situation which obtained in the Ukraine during the final years of Peter I's rule. During Catherine I's and especially Peter II's reigns, St. Petersburg relaxed and even retreated from some of its most unpopular measures in the Ukraine. As a result, at the time Orlyk wrote his letter to Leszczynski, tensions were easing markedly in the Ukraine.

A major factor in the relaxation of St. Petersburg's centralizing policies in the Ukraine was the fear, quite strong in 1726, that the Porte, urged on by England and France, would attack the Russians before they were ready for another war with the Ottomans. In such a case, a restive Ukraine with Orlyk and the Zaporozhians not far from its borders, might prove to be an extremely dangerous liability. At a meeting of the Supreme Privy Council on 11 February 1726, it was decided to make a series of concessions to the Ukrainians "to appease and coddle the local [i.e., Ukrainian] population."²⁷ As we have seen earlier, leading Orlyk on with hopes of amnesty was another way of defusing a potentially dangerous situation.

The threat of a premature war with the Ottomans and of the role Ukrainian emigres might play in such a case continued to worry the St. Petersburg government throughout the late 1720s and early 1730s. It was becoming increasingly evident that such a war would have to be waged sooner or later. Fighting the Ottomans and especially their Crimean vassals would, to a large extent,

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Sbornik Imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva*, 148 vols. [hereafter *SIRIO*], (St. Petersburg-Petrograd: I. N. Skorokhodov, 1867-1916), LV (1886), 26.

involve warfare in the steppe. And there were no greater specialists in steppe warfare than the Zaporozhians. On which side they would choose to fight could be of great significance in the upcoming conflict.

Empress Anna Ivanovna—for it was in the early years of her reign that this issue began to take on greater relevance—had reason to be optimistic on this score. After the death of Peter I, the Zaporozhians had also requested amnesty from St. Petersburg. Their advances, however, were rejected. As long as Russia was not ready for war with the Ottomans, the acceptance of Ottoman subjects, that is, the Zaporozhians, under Russian sovereignty could seriously and prematurely antagonize the Porte. For the Zaporozhians this was a difficult time: they felt as if they were “unwanted children,” their nominal leader had gone off to distant places, their immediate overlord, the Crimean khan, mistreated them because they were Christians, and the Russian empress would not listen to their pleas for pardon.²⁸ As the Polish crisis grew in the beginning of the 1730s and the possibility of war with the Ottomans loomed large, the Zaporozhians suddenly found themselves at the center of the Porte’s, St. Petersburg’s, and Orlyk’s attention.

After years of mounting tension and complicated maneuvering, the years 1733 to 1735 would bring a series of quick, decisive events which would resolve such issues as the Polish election, the Ottoman war and, in connection with these events, also that of the Ukrainian emigres. On 1 February 1733, the long expected death of August II finally occurred. Leszczynski, with French support and accompanied by Hryhor, Orlyk’s eldest son, secretly arrived in Poland to present himself for election.²⁹ As expected, the Russians prepared to intervene on the side of August III. In order to check this move, the French worked feverishly to activate the plan of a Tatar-Zaporozhian diversion in the south. Count Louis Villeneuve, the French ambassador at the Porte, reported back to his government that, “I am using all possible means to have the Tatars attack Muscovy and, to further this end, Orlyk must finally be allowed to leave Turkey to join his army.”³⁰ The Crimean khan, Kaplan

28. For the plight of the Zaporozhians under Crimean and Ottoman sovereignty, see A. Skalkovskii, *Istoriia novoi-sechi ili posledniago kosha zaporozhskago*, 2 vols. (Odessa: Stepanov, 1846), II.

29. Cf. E. Borshchak, *Hryhor Orlyk* (Toronto: Burns and MacEachern, 1956), p. 64. Hryhor Orlyk (1702-59) was the eldest son of the hetman. After serving in the Swedish and Saxon armies he entered French service and eventually achieved the rank of general in the French army. However, his specialty was carrying out secret and highly sensitive assignments in Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire for Louis XV. In this capacity he cooperated closely with and aided his father. Borshchak’s study, although based on French archival sources, is highly romanticized and not always reliable. Documentary sources pertaining to Hryhor’s myriad anti-Russian activities may be found in *AAE*, Cor. politique, Pologne, vol. 180 and in Hryhor’s family archive located in Dinteville, Haute-Marne, France.

30. Villeneuve to G. L. Chauvelin, 25 Nov. 1733, Bibliothèque Nationale [hereafter *Bib. Nat.*] in Paris, manuscripts, Fr. 7179, fol. 394.

Girei, vigorously seconded the French ambassador's efforts in this matter. Finally, on 12 March 1734, Villeneuve was able to report that the grand vezir, Ali Pasha, "decided to allow Orlyk to leave Salonika and proceed to the Crimea."³¹ However, while on his way to join "his army," Orlyk received devastating news: the Zaporozhians had decided to return to Russian sovereignty.

Ironically, the same events which finally freed the hetman from Salonika—the Polish crisis, the Russian intervention, the preparations of the khan to go to Stanisław's aid—also allowed the Zaporozhians to abandon their Tatar and Ottoman overlords. The Russians had just been waiting for a suitable opportunity to accept the Zaporozhians. Early in 1734, I. I. Nepluev, the Russian envoy in Constantinople, had been instructed to inquire how the Porte would react in such a case and to prepare arguments justifying the Russian acceptance of the Zaporozhians.³² Both Nepluev and his government agreed that this case was extremely delicate and might involve the Russians in a war with the Porte before the Polish question was settled. However, it seems that as soon as the St. Petersburg government found out about the intention of the Porte to release Orlyk, they felt justified in accepting the Zaporozhians. On 8 May 1734, the Zaporozhian Host, while still on Ottoman soil, was formally pardoned and granted the protection of Empress Anna Ivanovna.³³

This was obviously a terrible blow first of all to Orlyk whose political significance rested primarily on his self-professed ability to muster "60,000 brave Zaporozhians" to his side. But Leszczynski and his French supporters and the Crimean khan, who now realized that with Zaporozhians on their side the Russians would be much more dangerous in the next war, were also hurt badly by this development. With so much depending on his ability to assert his control over the Zaporozhians, Orlyk desperately tried to convince them that they were making a terrible mistake. In a rapid exchange of letters, the old Mazepist and the "brave and worthy lads of the Zaporozhian Host" carried on a spirited argument about the advantages and disadvantages of Russian sovereignty.³⁴

According to Orlyk, his letter to the Host arrived simultaneously with the empress's envoys bearing rich gifts to the Zaporozhians. A council was held that very day to decide whose arguments were more persuasive. The hetman contended that it was the rich gifts which triumphed over his own arguments of reason and duty. Regardless of what the scenario for the reading of the letter might have been, Orlyk's pleas were characteristically long and wordy.

31. Villeneuve to G. L. Chauvelin, 12 March 1734, *Bib. Nat.* Fr. 7180, fol. 59.

32. Secret order to Nepluev, 27 March 1734, in D. Evarnytskii, *Istochniki dlia istorii zaporozhskikh kozakov*, 2 vols. (Vladimir: Gubern. Pravlenie, 1903), II, 1154.

33. Cabinet of Ministers to General L. V. Izmailov, 26 April 1734, *SIRIO*, CVIII, 134.

34. Orlyk to the Zaporozhians, 23 April 1734, in A. Skalkovskii, "Filip Orlyk i zaporozhtsy," *Kievskaiia Starina*, No. 4 (1882), pp. 106-24.

The points he stressed can be divided into three categories: political, "ideological," and technical.

The political argument described the international political situation in terms of a great anti-Russian coalition including most of the European states and the Ottoman Empire. "Muscovy" was politically and militarily isolated and about to be overwhelmed. Orlyk chided the Zaporozhians that at a time when the Ottoman and Tatar armies were once again ready to move against the Russians and the opportunity to free their fatherland was at hand, they had allowed themselves to be fooled by false Russian promises and lured to what would surely be the losing side in the coming conflict.

Ideologically, Orlyk presented the classic Mazepist position. He recounted how, from the time of Khmelnyts'kyi, Moscow had systematically whittled away the Ukraine's rights and privileges by a combination of trickery and force. The high point of this tyranny came under Peter I when an open and vicious attack was made against Ukrainian autonomy as represented in the attempt to abolish the hetmanate and establish in its place the Little Russian Collegium which was merely a guise for putting Russians into governing positions in the Ukraine. Orlyk wondered how the Zaporozhians could be so foolish as to trust the Russians "now, when the entire Ukrainian nation, your brothers, relatives, and compatriots, woefully and tearfully lament that they did not listen to the well-meant and true warnings of the deceased Hetman Mazepa of blessed memory." Orlyk concludes this section with the warning: "Beware, honorable and worthy lads [of] the Zaporozhian Host, to what kind of friends you have gone or are about to go over to."³⁵

Finally, the hetman brought up a technical point: if the Zaporozhians leave the khanate and go over to Moscow, where do they think they will be allowed to settle? The Zaporozhians' traditional lands between the Samara and Orel rivers would remain, as guaranteed by the Russo-Ottoman treaties of 1711, 1712 and 1713, under Ottoman and Crimean jurisdiction. They could not be so naive as to think that the Russians would risk a war with the Ottomans to regain these wild plains for the Zaporozhians. Nor was there any room for them in the hetmanate. Therefore—and here Orlyk reached back for one of his old and favorite intimidations, utilized since the times of Mazepa—the Russians would resettle the Zaporozhians in the barren lands across the Volga, far from their fatherland.

Ironically, after years of languishing under Ottoman detention and bemoaning his stay "in that godless Babylon," the hetman urged "his Host" to remain under that same regime. The reason for his ire and disappointment was, as he admitted, that by their act the Zaporozhians had undercut all his political plans by irritating the Tatars and "embarrassing me before the Otto-

35. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

man Porte and the Christian allies, all of whom I have told of the bravery and strength of the Zaporozhian Host."³⁶

The Zaporozhian reply was also not without its irony.³⁷ In a polite and respectful manner the Zaporozhians stated that in case of an Ottoman-Russian war they did not wish to find themselves in a situation where they would fight on the side of the Muslims against their Christian brethren. Apparently, they were aware of their hetman's unusually strong religious feelings. They then listed some of the more concrete reasons for rejecting Tatar protection: they could not live side by side with the Nogais because the latter required too much land for their herds and left too little for the Zaporozhians; again they complained of property and livestock being stolen and of injustice in the Crimean courts; and they bitterly described how some of their comrades had been sold off to the galleys by Mengli Girei. But their greatest concern was that, should they join Stanisław and Orlyk and attack Ukrainian lands, "then . . . as usual, when some [Ukrainian] towns would be taken, the Tatar Horde would, as it had done in past years [1711 and 1713] at Bila Tserkva and the Slobodas, round up our Christian people and, returning to the Crimea, lead them into eternal slavery and then we would surely fall from the grace of God and into eternal damnation for [causing] the cries of Christians and the spilling of Christian blood."³⁸ In addition, the Zaporozhians doubted that even if the khan, "God forbid," should gain control of the Ukraine, whether he would hand the land over to Orlyk. Therefore, they advised their hetman to desist from his efforts and seek amnesty from Empress Anna Ivanovna as they had done.

According to Orlyk's son, Hryhor, the loss of the Zaporozhians left his father in "terrible despair."³⁹ The worst of it was that now the hetman was not only helplessly dependent on the whims of the Ottomans and Tatars, but that he had completely no basis on which to assert any authority or influence on developing events such as the conflict in Poland or the coming Russo-Ottoman war, events which could have the greatest significance both for his own personal fate and for that of the Ukraine. Such a situation was intolerable for him, and at the end of 1734 and in early 1735, Orlyk tried to organize a military force. With the aid of Ottoman and French funds,⁴⁰ he managed to attract close to a thousand of his old supporters, dissident Zaporozhians and

36. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

39. Villeneuve to Chauvelin, 31 May 1734, *Bib. Nat. Fr.* 7180, fol. 92. Hryhor, who had secretly visited the Zaporozhians several years earlier, was not surprised by this turn of events.

40. Villeneuve to Chauvelin, 31 Jan. 1735, *AAE*, Turquie 93, fol. 50. The French ambassador had given Orlyk 1000 sequins in addition to "24 purses" the latter received from the grand vezir. In summer of 1735 Orlyk had about 700 men.

roving Cossacks. An encouraging addition to this force was the arrival of the famous Cossack chieftain, Sava Chalyi and his unit of several hundred horsemen.⁴¹ Also, Orlyk's old Mazepist colleagues such as Fedir Nakhymovs'kyi, Fedir Myrovych and Ivan Hertsyk joined him at Kaushany, forming the basis of his staff.⁴² The khan seemed pleased enough with Orlyk's efforts again to recommend him to the French king.⁴³

In Poland, meanwhile, Leszczynski's cause with which Orlyk was so closely, if not enthusiastically, linked was losing ground and Leszczynski was preparing to flee for the second time before 'the invading Russian troops. In view of these developments, the Crimean khan scrapped the planned incursion into Polish territory in support of Leszczynski. As a result of these circumstances, and just before the outbreak of Ottoman-Russian hostilities (the Russian cabinet of ministers decided to begin the war on 27 June 1735), the hetman was forced to disband his forces. He then retired with his staff to Bender where, in the presence of the khan, he awaited new developments.

Because of a lack of funds, it was not feasible for Orlyk to carry on any military action against the advancing Russians, but he proved to be very useful to the Ottomans and Tatars as an advisor and anti-Russian agitator. Indeed, the final years of Orlyk's involvement in the military and political conflicts along the Ottoman-Russian borders were taken up with this type of activity, and the hetman proved to be quite effective in these endeavors. As early as August, 1734, as soon as Orlyk moved near Ukrainian territory, Empress Anna Ivanovna complained that: "[Orlyk] not only secretly continues to spread his intrigues and malicious suggestions against our empire, but he has been brought to the Crimean khan and there, in proximity to our borders, he creates among our Little Russian subjects unrest and incitements to unfriendly acts against us, especially (encouraging) conflict and disagreement between us and the Porte."⁴⁴ In another Russian report it was noted that the hetman's activity is especially dangerous because he "enjoys great credit at the Porte and especially with the khan."⁴⁵

As the Russo-Ottoman war progressed, Orlyk's fortunes began to rise. The Porte, prodded by the French (who, in turn were prodded by Hryhor Orlyk, a member of Louis XV's *secret du roi*"), bombarded by the hetman's memorials, and impressed by prisoner-of-war accounts of Ukrainian resentment of the Russians, began to take a greater interest in the Ukraine. In February, 1738, Orlyk was summoned to an audience with the grand vezir, Yegen Mehmed

41. Krupnyts'kyi, *Hetman Pylyp Orlyk*, p. 160.

42. Among the aging Mazepists, most of whom had been living quietly in Poland, who now joined Orlyk were Fedir Nakhimovs'kyi, Fedir Myrovych, and Ivan Hertsyk.

43. Kaplan Girei to Louis XV, 22 Sept. 1735, *AAE*, Cor. politique, Turquie 93, fol. 75.

44. Anna Ivanovna to Prince A. I. Shakhovskoi, 25 April 1734, *SIRIO*, CVIII, 134.

45. Cabinet of Ministers to Baron von Keyserling, 31 Aug. 1734, *ibid.*, p. 348.

Pasha, who questioned the hetman about the state of affairs in the Ukraine, about the size of various towns and especially about the political inclination of the "Cossack nation." Orlyk repeated the same old story: the Ukraine was just waiting for him to appear and free it from the "Muscovite yoke." After assuring Orlyk that all Ukrainian lands taken from the Russians would be left under the hetman's rule, the grand vezir asked the Ukrainian emigre to prepare a plan to entice the Zaporozhians away from the Russians and to prepare for an invasion of the Ukraine.⁴⁶ Now it was the turn of the Ottomans to place their hopes on a "Ukrainian diversion." We might add that this idea was not a novel one for the Porte. In the 1670s, the Ottomans benefited greatly in their war with the Russians from the aid of Peter Doroshenko and his Cossacks, and in 1711, Orlyk's raid, although aborted, produced good results. Therefore, in 1738, the Ottomans were willing to try again; it would be the last time.

Sometime in late 1738, Orlyk sent his project to the Porte where, according to him, it was discussed at a meeting of the Divan and approved by Sultan Mahmud I himself, as well as by Khan Mengli Girei II. An understanding was reached with the Poles which allowed the Tatars to strike against the Russians in Right-Bank Ukraine. Orlyk was sent to Kaushany to join the Tatars who were preparing for the invasion.⁴⁷ From there he made another attempt to convince the Zaporozhians to return to Ottoman protection. Without even opening the letter, the Zaporozhians, in order to emphasize their reliability, sent it on to B. K. Münnich, commander of the Russian armies. The Tatar incursion took place in February and early March, 1739. It was repulsed by the Russians. On 21 March, Münnich was able to report to Anna Ivanovna that, "In my journey through the Ukraine today, I could see the the successful repulsion of the Tatars has pleased the local population and so it will be difficult for Orlyk to fulfill his plans."⁴⁸

It would be, indeed. In the summer, peace negotiations began and, in September, the Ottomans, Austria and Russia, through the mediation of Ville-neuve, signed the Peace of Belgrade. The Porte, having no more use for the sixty-seven year old Orlyk, considered having him interned in Adrianople where he would be unable to embroil it in any international complications. In 1740, the last brief ray of hope glimmered for a moment; Sweden was preparing for a war with Russia and her resident in Constantinople intervened with the Porte to have the aged emigre moved closer to the Ukrainian border. But when this war broke out, it ended in 1741 with a quick, decisive Swedish defeat. With his last hopes gone, in poor health, deserted by his staff and nearly

46. Orlyk to Hryhor, 30 Oct. 1738, *AAE*, Cor politique 227, fol. 260.

47. *Ibid.*, fol. 266.

48. S. M. Solov'ev, *Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen*, 15 vols. (Moscow: Izd. Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi literatury, 1959-66), IX, 451.

penniless, Orlyk spent the last months of his life at the court of Nicholas Maurocordato in Iasi. On 7 June 1742, the French envoy at the Porte reported that "M. Orlick est mort. . . ."49

* * *

The career of Orlyk and his colleagues is a classic example of the political emigres' condition. Unable to accept defeat and unwilling to adapt to exile, the emigres spent the rest of their lives trying to regain their positions and their homelands. Completely dependent on the patronage of such powers as France and the Ottoman Empire, they found in this support a source both of hope and of frustration. On the one hand, their patrons' aid encouraged the emigres to continue their efforts, to believe in a chance of success. On the other hand, it also forced them to be subservient to their patrons' interests which quite often were contrary to their own. In the end, one might easily come to the conclusion that Orlyk's long years of endeavor were an exercise in futility and a failure.

But perhaps that would be judging Orlyk too harshly. Compared to what later generations of Ukrainian emigres were able to accomplish, the hetman's achievements were considerable. Most noteworthy is the high level of Orlyk's political contacts. He and his son, Hryhor, were in personal, at times very close contact with Charles XIII, Louis XV, August II, Stanisław Leszczyński, Sultan Mahmud I and Khans Devlet and Kaplan Girei, not to mention their most important ministers and advisors. Several of these rulers (Charles XII, the sultan and the khans) committed themselves by treaty to the creation of a Ukrainian state independent of Russian control.⁵⁰ Moreover, Orlyk did manage a second effort. The campaign of 1711 scored impressive successes and brought the hetman closer to his objectives. Thus, the activity of the Mazepists was not limited, as is so often the case with emigres, to the level of exhortations, manifestos and projects, but it actually had an impact on the course of events.

After the death of Charles XII, the two principal "customers" of Orlyk's services were the Ottomans and the French. For the former, Orlyk's usefulness was seen primarily in terms of the Porte's repeated attempts to create in the Ukraine a buffer against Russia's southward expansion. Because this expansion was of primary concern to the Ottomans and Crimeans, they attached considerable importance to Orlyk and the Ukrainian issue—when the Russian

49. Krupnyts'kyi, *Hetman Pylyp Orlyk*, p. 170. According to the reports of Russian agents, after Orlyk's death, two of his associates, Fedir Myrovych and Fedir Nakhymovs'kyi, stayed in the Crimea and continued, as late as 1757, to agitate among Zaporozhians and other Ukrainians against the Russians. See Kostomarov, *Mazeпа i Mazepynsy*, p. 176.

50. See Subtelny, "The Unwilling Allies," pp. 43-96.

threat loomed large. But, when it subsided even temporarily, so did Ottoman interest in Orlyk. At such times, in order not to antagonize the Russians, the Porte kept Orlyk in strict isolation and prevented all contacts with the Zaporozhians. As a result, when war broke out again with Russia, the hetman was unable to bring the Cossacks over to the Ottoman side. With the death of Orlyk, the Ottomans ceased their almost century-old attempts to create an anti-Russian Ukrainian buffer state.

The French involvement with the Ukrainian emigres and their cause was a brief one. Versailles also hoped to counter the Russian threat by erecting a barrier, one which consisted of Sweden, Poland-Lithuania and the Ottoman Empire. The role French strategists foresaw for the Mazepists and their "great Ukrainian revolution" was that of a fifth column or diversion which could be triggered the moment Russia struck against the barrier. It seemed for the French that Orlyk provided them, at little cost and no risk, with a tactical option. For Versailles, this made him both interesting and expendable.

And the Russians? What was the nature of their involvement in these affairs? For the first time, they had to deal with a political emigration, especially in the period immediately following the battle of Poltava, as opposed to individual defectors. The experience came at an awkward time. Just when the Russians were engaged in a series of crucial wars and when they were extremely conscious of their image in Europe, a group of Ukrainian dissidents roamed the continent, besmirching the honor of the tsar and plotting against his interests. Anyone who could complicate matters in such a sensitive area as the Ukraine and the Black Sea littoral, as the Mazepists did in 1711 and 1734, had to be taken seriously.

In dealing with the Ukrainian emigres, the Russian government was quite effective. The immediate arrest of the extended families of the Mazepists and their removal to Moscow liquidated the emigres' most serviceable links with their homeland. The imprisoned families then became a means of blackmailing the emigres into inaction and of enticing them to return home (where they faced immediate arrest and exile). Those Mazepists who fled to the West were exposed to unprecedented countermeasures: Russian diplomats, newly arrived in Europe, were used, as in the case of Tsarevich Aleksei, to hunt out and kidnap the greatest troublemakers. Those who were not captured were kept under Russian surveillance until they died. Thus, the pattern in the interactions of the Ukrainian emigres, the Russian government, and the Great Powers was established at the outset of the eighteenth century and it would recur, with variations, in our own times.