

Ukrainians and Poles

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Europe's road to Muscovy passed through Warsaw and Kyiv (Kiev). Despite what one reads in books, the Renaissance and Reformation did reach Muscovy, if by this most indirect route. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Orthodox clerics trained in the rhetoric and languages of the Polish Renaissance and Reformation settled in Moscow. As Muscovy's political power extended across eastern Ukraine and Kiev with Hetman Bohdan Khmelnyts'kyi's rebellion against Poland (1648–54) and the Treaty of Eternal Peace between Muscovy and Poland (1686), Orthodox clerics came to terms with their new position in a highly backward Orthodox state. Alexis Mikhailovich (r. 1645–76) saw them as people capable of improving Muscovite administration, and encouraged the emigration of learned Ukrainians. Iepifanii Slavynets'kyi was an early arrival, in 1649. Symeon Polots'kyi taught Alexis's children Latin and Polish. The occasional Polish Jesuit was allowed to dispute with the Orthodox, as did Andrzej Kwieczynski before he was sent to break rocks in Siberia in 1660. Disputation itself was an import from Poland, and at this time Polish and Latin were understood to be the languages of reason. Latin itself was learned from Polish translations, for example of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses'.

Ukrainian clerics such as Stepan Iavors'kyi and Teofan Prokopovych were indeed engaged in some fundamental transformations: of themselves as they reoriented Ruthenian Orthodoxy to Moscow, and of Moscow as they reoriented public life and political thought to the West. Such men introduced the baroque, not only in rhetoric, but in architecture, ceremonial and secular public displays. Stepan Chyzhevs'kyi, an alumnus of a Jesuit collegium, arranged Moscow's first theatrical production. Finding an absence of political thought, Ukrainian clerics formulated Muscovy's first theories of tsarist rule. Polots'kyi's 'Russian Eagle' was a baroque (in every sense of the word) apology for Muscovite rule of eastern Europe. Lazar Baranovych presented Alexis with his 'Spiritual Sword' (1666), which described the tsar as the protector of all Rus and the heir of Volodymyr – although in 1671 he concluded his massive

Polish-language *Apollo's Lute* with an appeal to the old Polish-Lithuanian fatherland. The *Sinopsis*, the first Russian history book, was produced in Kiev around 1674. Most famously, it presented an elaborate account of the transfer of legitimate rule from Kiev to Vladimir-on-the-Kliazma to Moscow. It described Rus as a larger nation embracing different groups of Orthodox believers, whose local traditions deserved respect.

Polish influence was perhaps greatest under Tsar Fedor (r. 1676–82), who married two women with Polish connections, and under the regency of Sophia (1682–9). Sophia's reign was the heyday of Jan Andrzej Bialoblocki, a Polish convert to Orthodoxy who led the Moscow Baroque and taught Latin to the boyars before setting out to negotiate with the Chinese (or their Jesuit envoys) at Nerchinsk. Not all of Sophia's foreign policy plans were crowned with success. She staked her rule on an alliance with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth against the Ottoman Empire, and its failure in the Crimean campaigns brought her down. When she was succeeded by Peter (r. 1689–1725), Polish and Ukrainian churchmen had been at court and in Muscovy for two generations, and a certain kind of Westernisation was well under way.¹

Ukrainian clerics, for example, all but controlled the Russian Orthodox Church. To be sure, Patriarch Iaokim managed to have the leading Latin Sil'vestr Medvedev executed, and the Jesuits expelled. Yet even as the possibility of a radical Latinisation of the Russian Orthodox Church disappeared, its fundamental Ukrainisation remained. Peter's church reforms involved his preferences for certain Ukrainian clerics over others. His agents, Teofan Prokopovych and Stefan Iavors'kyi, brought a group of Ukrainian clients to the heights of the Russian Church. When Iavors'kyi was discredited in the tsarevitch affair, the church leadership was replaced at the Synod of 1721. Again, the house-cleaning was carried out by Ukrainians, this time mainly by Prokopovych.

Ukrainian churchmen in left-bank Ukraine (east of the Dnieper River) lost any institutional distinctiveness but preserved regional differences. The Kiev metropolitanate was reduced to the Kiev region itself, and placed under the jurisdiction of the Moscow patriarchy. One by one, Kiev's former dioceses placed themselves directly under the protection of Moscow. The first to go was Lazar Baranovych and Chernihiv (Chernigov), although his Chernihiv school continued its baroque curriculum and he continued his work in the Polish language. Likewise, the Kiev Academy preserved a curriculum modelled on those of Jesuit academies, and served as a point of transmission of Polish

¹ P. Bushkovitch, *Peter the Great: The Struggle for Power, 1671–1725* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also Natalia Iakovenko, *Ukrains'ka shliakhta* (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1993).

trends to Muscovy, even as Polish models themselves shifted from baroque to neoclassical. Latinate and classical motifs also appeared in Ukrainian religious art of the period, for example in the Pokrova icons placing the Cossack officer class under the mantle of the Mother of God.²

Although the alliance between Ukrainian Cossacks and Muscovy is dated from the agreement at Pereiaslav (1654), nothing like a Cossack state aligned with Moscow existed before Peter's time.³ The Cossacks profited from Pereiaslav to free themselves and much of Ukraine from Poland, but then under Hetman Doroshenko aimed for an alliance with the Ottomans. Only when Moscow and Warsaw allied against the Ottomans in the Treaty of Eternal Peace (1686) did the situation stabilise somewhat. Henceforth Muscovy held the left bank and Kiev, while the right bank fell to Warsaw. The left-bank lands controlled by Cossack officers became the Hetmanate, the largest autonomous region of Muscovy. The Hetmanate did not include the Zaporihizian Sich and its free Cossacks, tied still more loosely to Muscovy. The Cossacks, like Ukrainian churchmen, had adopted Polish modes of thought, but this did not mean that they wished Polish rule for themselves. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth under King Jan Sobieski failed to develop a sensible policy towards left-bank Ukraine, and the Cossacks feared that any return of Polish rule would mean a worsening of their position. After the Treaty of Eternal Peace (1686), they migrated in the tens of thousands from right-bank (Polish) to left-bank (Russian) Ukraine.⁴

In the 1690s, the Polish option remained, as a cultural model in Ukraine and as a potential ally for Muscovy. In the Hetmanate, nostalgia indeed increased with time. Cossack officers hazily recalled the Polish period as one of freedom, appropriating for themselves the liberties of Polish nobles. Cossacks accepted the myths of Sarmatian or Khazar origin now widespread among Polish nobles. The Hetmanate under Ivan Mazepa (r. 1686–1709) revealed that Polish cultural influence could increase as Polish political power waned. Mazepa himself studied in Warsaw and served King Jan Kazimierz of Poland. As Hetman he funded the reconstruction, in baroque style, of ancient Ukrainian churches at Chernihiv and Kiev. Mazepa enjoyed good relations with Peter, who for his

2 S. Plokhy, *Tsars and Cossacks: A Study in Iconography* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001). See also F. E. Sysyn, *Between Poland and the Ukraine: The Dilemma of Adam Kysil, 1600–1653* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985); D. A. Frick, *Meletij Smotryc'kyj* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

3 An introduction to the Pereiaslav debate: John Basarab, *Pereiaslav 1654: A Historiographical Study* (Edmonton: CIUS, 1982).

4 S. Plokhy, *The Cossacks and Religion in Early Modern Ukraine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

part wished to make Poland his ally. Yet the alliance, when it came, reduced rather than increased the influence of Ukrainians and Poles in Moscow.⁵

Peter met King Augustus II of Poland at Rava Rus'ka in August 1698 and persuaded his new friend to join him in an attack on the Swedes. Together they plotted what became the Great Northern War, Muscovy's great triumph, Poland's great failure and Ukraine's last moment of choice. When Peter moved against Sweden, the Swedes responded by invading Poland and dethroning Augustus. A considerable part of the Polish nobility formed the Confederation of Sandomierz, which fought to restore Augustus and drive out the Swedes. Even though such confederations were a legitimate part of the Polish constitutional tradition, their emergence usually revealed internal division and civil strife. Although the Confederation of Sandomierz was ultimately successful, Poland itself fell into a state of civil war and was henceforth never again an important ally of Russia.⁶

The Polish collapse was also a fateful moment for the Cossacks. In October 1708 Hetman Mazepa allied with the Swedes, bringing along perhaps half of his men from the Hetmanate and most of the fighters of the Zaporizhian Sich. They were routed along with the Swedes at Poltava in June 1709, and Mazepa fled with King Charles of Sweden to Ottoman territory. Peter's response was milder than is generally remembered: he took it upon himself to appoint Hetman colonels, and only in 1721 tried to abolish the office of Hetman and place political authority with a Little Russian College. This experiment lasted only six years, for in 1727 Peter II allowed the return of the office of Hetman, and for the next forty years the Cossack State enjoyed considerable autonomy. In secular political thought, Hetman Bohdan Khmelnyts'kyi returned to symbolise the alliance with Moscow. Emperors and empresses, in particular Tsaritsa Elizabeth, began to appear in Pokrova icons, as leaders enjoying the protection and intercession of the Virgin Mary.

This was a Latin touch long since native in Ukraine, but alien to Moscow, although feminine protection of another kind played a role in relations between Muscovy and the Hetmanate. Elizabeth (r. 1741–61) consorted with the Ukrainian Cossack Oleksii Rozumovs'kyi, whose brother Kyrylo was elected Hetman in 1752. Kyrylo's rule gave the Hetmanate much of the appearance of a state. He was able to increase the formal powers of the Hetman, introduce standard uniforms for his Cossacks and restore the traditional Cossack

5 O. Subtelny, *Mazepists: Ukrainian Separatism in the Early Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

6 For the immediate background see Antoni Kaminski, *Republic vs. Autocracy: Poland-Lithuania and Russia, 1686–1697* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993).

capitals, Hlukhiv and Baturyn. The military organisation of the Cossacks became a form of civilian rule over the population. As the Hetman became a civilian ruler as well as a warlord, his officers took up duties such as tax collection. This capped a longer social transformation, in which the Cossack officer class became the new ruling class of left-bank Ukraine.

Most of them were arrivistes. Most of the native great nobility had been killed or forced to emigrate during the Khmelnytskyi rebellion. Although the Cossacks led that rebellion in the name of the people and profited from peasant rebellions, in times of peace they sought to establish themselves as the new nobility. Hetmans endorsed monarchy and opposed the tradition of election by their men. In good *szlachta* style, Cossack officers insisted on their own rights vis-à-vis the Hetman, but then sought to control territory and bind peasants to the land. In the 1760s, the Society of Notable Military Fellows became a closed estate at the summit of Cossackdom, including 2,400 but excluding about 350,000 Cossacks. These elite officers asked that the tsaritsa recognise their traditional rights, which they identified as the rights of Polish nobles.

Catherine II (r. 1762–96) had a different conception of the future of the Russian state. Whereas the Cossacks sought to garner for themselves rights that they regarded as traditional, Catherine set out to recreate Russia as a centralised political order. Both of these ideas could be understood as reform, but practice revealed their essential contradiction. In 1763, Cossack notables gathered in imitation of a Polish *sejm* (parliament/assembly), and planned a revival of ancient Polish and Lithuanian institutions. They imagined a separate legal system for themselves based upon the old Lithuanian Statutes, and a personal union of the Hetmanate with the Russian Empire. Catherine's response was rather severe. The following year she forced the resignation of Hetman Rozumovs'kyi and abolished the Hetmanate as such.⁷

A decision made by the greater power was discussed in an open forum, Catherine's legislative commission of 1767–8. Here the Cossacks' intellectual appropriation of the Polish system they themselves once militarily destroyed reached its logical extreme. The most articulate defender of Cossack rights, Hryhorii Poletyka, claimed that the Ukrainian leading classes always had rights, which he identified with the golden freedom of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In his retelling, only religion had divided Ukraine from Poland, which otherwise shared a single social and political system. The idea of the

⁷ Z. Kohut, *Russian Centralism and Ukrainian Autonomy: Imperial Absorption of the Hetmanate 1760s–1830s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988).

traditional rights of nobles, invented or not, had always been alien to Muscovite traditions. Now it presented itself as a barrier to Catherine's ambitious plans.

Yet Catherine was able to win support for the elimination of the Hetmanate. Her military victories over the Ottomans and her annexation of the Crimea reduced the military importance of the Cossacks. The Zaporizhian Cossacks, free men living south and east of the Hetmanate, were simply eliminated by a Russian surprise attack in June 1775. In this situation the creation of Russian provinces in Ukraine from 1781 was accepted for lack of any practical alternative. This amounted to the elimination of real or imagined Ukrainian distinctiveness, as these provinces were part of a single centralised system. In 1786 the Ukrainian dioceses were secularised, as the Russian had been before them. The Kiev Academy, which taught a classical curriculum in Polish and Latin, was suddenly transformed into a theological school with Russian as the language of instruction. The introduction of conscription in 1789 ended any local particularities among fighting forces.

The Cossack elite accepted these fundamental transformations almost without resistance. Precisely because they defined themselves as a ruling class, they were able to accept local power on new terms. Russian reforms facilitated their claims to own land and peasants. Centralised administration opened new posts in provincial capitals. Forced to abandon the utopia of traditional Polish rights, the Cossacks happily accepted a new status as members of the Russian *dворянство* (according to the 1785 Charter of the Nobility). The costs to Ukraine were greater, perhaps, than the costs to the Cossacks. Peasants became serfs, and the Jews were expelled from Kiev. Yet many Cossacks found that the end of traditional rights associated with Little Russia was amply compensated by the opening of new horizons in Great Russia.

Cossacks began imperial careers in Petersburg. The precedent for such a move had been set under Peter and Elizabeth, and in the 1770s and 1780s the Bezborod'ko, Zavodovs'kyi, Kochubei and Troshchyns'kyi families sent their most promising sons to the capital. In the 1790s a much larger group followed. They found a great empire with great needs. Ukrainians filled the ranks of the civil service, provided most of the notable educators, most of the (non-foreign) doctors, most of the composers, most of the journalists, and many of the great writers (Gogol arrived in 1828).

As had the clerics of the seventeenth century, the clerks of the nineteenth century brought with them historical schemes that explained their individual choices. Oleksandr Bezborod'ko was associated with the Little Russian idea of the plurality of Russian peoples, whereas Viktor Kochubei argued for a

ruthless self-assimilation. Although these Ukrainians often knew Polish, the Polish political option collapsed along with the Hetmanate. The late eighteenth century was the period of the partitions of Poland, which important Ukrainians now observed from the heights of Petersburg. Petro Zavodovs'ky, the Ukrainian who served as the Russian Empire's education minister, captured the drama of the affair in 1794: 'Poland will cease to exist in Europe, like stars that have disappeared from the heavenly sphere.'⁸

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth did indeed cease to exist the following year, partitioned between Prussia, Austria and Russia. Catherine was the main agent of Poland's destruction, although the final outcome was far from inevitable. She had supported her former lover, Stanislaw Poniatowski, in the 1764 royal elections. His victory heralded both reform and Russian influence, both of which were inimical to the conservative Polish-Lithuanian nobles united in the Confederation of Bar. About 100,000 nobles fought 500 engagements between 1768 and their final defeat in 1772, after which thousands of them, although Polish citizens, were exiled to Siberia. Poland was partitioned for the first time that same year.

The twenty-three years between the first and the final partitions are often seen as the final gasp of a decadent Polish political system, doomed to failure and awaiting only the proper stage for a final dramatic collapse. In fact, these were two decades of enthrallingly ambitious and successful social and political reform, led by a king who had to negotiate between the desires of his Russian patroness and the needs of his loyal subjects. Stanislaw August Poniatowski created a system of administration for the crownlands, created a state treasury from practically nothing, reformed the military and built a cadet school, rebuilt Warsaw as a proper European capital and sponsored translations of European scientific and philosophical literature.

The political classes and educated elites he essentially created in these twenty years took an interested part in the constitutional debate that began in 1789. Its culmination, the Constitution of 3 May 1791, was not only the first written constitution in Europe, it was a surprisingly progressive legal foundation for a renewed Polish political and social order. It would have transformed Poland into a constitutional monarchy, in which property rather than noble birth would determine voting rights. It replaced the traditional rights of nobles, easily manipulated by the great magnates and outside powers such as Russia, with civil rights clearly defined. Polish noble opponents announced the Targowica Confederations and invited the Russian army to restore the previous

8 D. Saunders, *The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture, 1750-1850* (Edmonton: CIUS, 1985).

order. After a few battles, the Polish parliament was forced to accept a second partition, in June 1793. In March 1794 Tadeusz Kosciuszko launched a massive national uprising, the last great military effort of the old Commonwealth. His troops were as many as 70,000, and he routed the local Targowicans and won victories against both Prussian and Russian forces. With a constitution and with an army, Poland was again a potential political and military rival to Russia, and Catherine initiated the third and final partition as soon as she could bring the necessary forces from the Ottoman front. Poland's last king, Stanislaw August Poniatowski, abdicated in November 1795.⁹

Russia gained about half of the territory of the extinct Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. But for the sliver of Ruthenian territory that Austria called eastern Galicia, it inherited all of the lands inhabited by eastern-rite believers. The way was open for a 'gathering in' of the 'Russian' peoples, including the Belarusians and Ukrainians. Russia also became the country with the largest population of Jews, replacing Poland in this role. Poland had provided Jews with a relatively tolerant haven for half a millennium, and Polish kings and nobles had elaborated a sophisticated and transparent system of communal toleration for the Jews.¹⁰ Last but not least, Russia became the country in the world with the largest population of Poles, more than half of whom were Russian subjects after the territorial adjustments of the Congress of Vienna (1815). Poles represented not only a large native nobility with a long tradition of rights as an estate, but also a recent experiment in constitutionalism and experience (in Napoleon's Duchy of Warsaw) with new models of French civil law.¹¹

Although about 30,000 Poles (and a third of the students of the university at Wilno) fought with Napoleon against Russia, Alexander (r. 1801–25) was rather patient. The Congress of Vienna created a Kingdom of Poland, usually known as the Congress Kingdom, which included Warsaw and some of central Poland. Its borders were those of Napoleon's Duchy of Warsaw, minus Cracow and Posen. Although it contained only one-seventh the territory and one-fifth the population of the pre-partition Commonwealth, it came to be seen as a Polish state. It was governed as a constitutional monarchy, with the tsar as monarch. Local legislative business was handled by a Sejm, the local language of administration was Polish, and the Congress Kingdom boasted a

⁹ A. Zamoyski, *The Last King of Poland* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1992).

¹⁰ M. Rosman, *Founder of Hasidism: A Quest for the Historical Ba'al Shem Tov* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); G. D. Hundert, *Jews in a Polish Private Town: The Case of Opatów in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1992).

¹¹ E. C. Thaden, *Russia's Western Borderlands, 1710–1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

separate schools system and (most fatefully) army. Lithuania was separated from Poland, although native institutions such as the school in Wilno, the law code and the local dietines were allowed to continue. Although Alexander took these arrangements seriously, disappointment with his suspicious and polonophobic successor, Nicholas (r. 1825–55), brought the November uprising of 1830.¹²

The end of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had transformed the masses of the landless gentry from conservatives (dependent on the support of rich nobles and so suspicious of the king and reforms) to radicals (protective of whatever rights were offered in the new system, and idealising the previous order). The uprising was fought to protect the constitution from Nicholas, and included in its rhetoric the Decembrists and all oppressed people of Europe. It began as a military conspiracy and seemed for some months to have a serious chance of success. Russian victory brought considerable reductions in local autonomy, codified by the ‘Organic Statute’ of 1832. To the east, historical legacies of Rus, Lithuania and the Commonwealth, such as the Uniate Church and the Lithuanian Statute, were undone by the Russian Empire. About 10,000 Poles (still a political notion, many of them were east Slavs and some were Jews) departed the empire, in the Great Emigration.

Beyond the frontiers of Russia, these Russian subjects established a vibrant and furiously contested world of émigré politics, centred in Paris. From without they hoped (mostly in vain) to influence the course of events within the empire. The main trends were monarchist (associated with Prince Adam Czartoryski, 1770–1861), republican (associated with the historian Joachim Lelewel, 1786–1891) and Romantic (associated with the poet Adam Mickiewicz, 1798–1855). It is worth noting that all of these trends were of political thought, rather than of ethnic identification. Czartoryski represented a great Lithuanian noble family, Lelewel’s father was German and Mickiewicz was of Belarusian-Lithuanian (and perhaps Jewish) origin. Although they disagreed about much, all took for granted that the resuscitated Polish state would be a political project embodying political ideals.

Czartoryski’s followers saw monarchism as a means to build a more modern social and political order. Karol Hoffman, for example, argued that a monarch was needed to build the cities and the middle classes. The monarchist ‘Party of 3 May’ associated itself with the Constitution of 1791, and argued that a true monarchy mediates between the nation and power. The tsar, in other words,

¹² S. Kieniowicz, A. Zahorski and W. Zajewski, *Trzy powstania narodowe* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1992).

was a false monarch. One of Czartoryski's followers, Józef Bem (1794–1850), was commander-in-chief of the revolutionary Hungarian forces in Transylvania in 1848. Monarchism was thus seen to be a progressive idea, although insufficiently so for Lelewel. His ideal was the native Slavic commune, whose pacific traditions remained alive in Poland and Ukraine, though they had long since been crushed by Muscovite despotism.

Romantic nationalism, as exemplified by Mickiewicz, also treated Russia rather as a political perversion than a national enemy, and emphasised not so much Polish national uniqueness as the Polish national mission. The 1830s and 1840s were the high tide of political Romanticism. Its lovely conceits are better remembered than the Germanic (even when written in Polish or French) Hegelianism of the Polish national philosophers. Yet the experience of disappointment with Russian rule and failure in rebellion led these men to rather interesting positions. They tended to be more open to German ideas than French philosophers, and vice versa; and more versed in both than the Russians of their day. August Cieszkowski, for example, was one of the most interesting of the Left Hegelians, known in his time for his Theory of Action. Like his colleagues, he sought to unite theory and practice, and wrote on matters of political economy and education.¹³

Yet these ideas were difficult to apply in Poland. To take a crucial example, the number of secondary school students in the Congress Kingdom declined by 50 per cent between 1829 and 1855. Even so, people of Polish education played a prominent part in the scientific life of the Russian Empire. Attainment in science or culture did not require national commitment, and indeed created some room for manoeuvre between nation and state. Some, such as Wincenty Wiszniewski (1797–1856), chose a realm of science in which national questions were transcended: he travelled the length and breadth of European Russia, choosing 273 points from which to chart the heavens. Poland had metaphorically 'disappeared like a star from the heavenly sphere', but a Pole used the vastness of Russia to chart the true locations of real stars.

The sublimated national energies of rebellious Poles with complicated careers served Russian science, as in the case of the Chodźko brothers. The younger brother, Aleksander (1804–91) took part in the national philosophic conspiracies of Wilno University, and had to leave the city. He studied eastern languages in Petersburg, became a Russian diplomat and wrote scholarly works on Persian and Kurdish languages and poetry. The elder brother, Józef

¹³ A. Walicki, *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982).

(1800–81), was also a Vilnius conspirator, and enlisted in the Russian army without breaking these ties. In 1830 he was asked to lead the insurrection in the Vilnius area, but his superiors had the wit to transfer him to Moldova. After another transfer in 1840, he became the leading topographer of the Caucasus. Another student conspirator provides further evidence of the pattern. Jan Prosper Witkiewicz (1808–39) was sentenced to death, had his sentence commuted to military service, learned eastern languages, became the adjutant of the governor-general of Orenburg and led secret missions to Kabul. He was a favourite guest of the Persian shah, a companion of Alexander Humboldt and, of course, the soul of the Polish community in Orenburg.

Others Poles chose Russian state service from conviction, and added to the intellectual elaboration of the Russian idea rather than to the development of intellectual life in Russia. Tadeusz Bulgarin (1789–1859) fought on both the French and the Russian sides in the Napoleonic Wars, settled in Petersburg in 1816 and published the popular Russian-language ‘Northern Bee’ from 1825. Though increasingly a Russian nationalist, he maintained good relations with Poles such as Mickiewicz. Józef Sękowski (1800–58), professor of oriental studies at Petersburg from 1822, played a similar role as editor of the popular ‘Reader’s Library’. He broke all contacts with Polishness after the failure of the November uprising. Both men helped their broad Russian readership consider the national mission of the enlarged empire, not least with respect to Ukraine.

The partitions of Poland brought right-bank Ukraine, lands west of the Dnieper, into the Russian Empire. These lands had been divided between Russia and Poland for the previous hundred years, and would continue on different trajectories within Russia for the next hundred. In left-bank Ukraine, the full integration of the old Hetmanate in the early nineteenth century was unsurprisingly softened by a sentimental remembrance of the old order. This took a sharper turn with the publication of the *Istoriia Rusov* in 1846, for this history (which had been circulating for twenty years) treated the Cossacks as the true people of Rus, and the empire as a usurper. Kharkov University (founded in 1805) was east of the old Hetmanate, and intended to anchor Ukraine in a new and more European Russia. In the event, it served to transmit a general European trend that emphasised local particularities: Romanticism. The greatest Ukrainian Romantic, Taras Shevchenko (1814–61), published his ‘Kobzar’ in 1840. Shevchenko composed in Russian as well as Ukrainian, and recent scholarship draws attention to the importance of Warsaw, Wilno and Polish Romanticism to his own poetic sensibility.

It is artificial to speak of a break of Ukrainian traditions with the downfall of the Hetmanate (which was never really a state, nor did it cover much of Ukraine), or of a renaissance of Ukrainian culture with Kharkiv Romanticism (which was founded only a generation after the dissolution of the Hetmanate, and beyond its former borders). Almost all culture in 'Ukraine', or 'Little Russia', or 'southern Russia' can be interpreted as consistent with Ukrainian political traditions or with Russian centralising trends. There was no inherent reason why cultured Ukrainians could not continue to provide Russian culture with a centre of gravity. The failure of Catherine's co-optation had political causes: the Crimean War (1856) and the perceived need for further state-building reform, and the Polish January uprising (1863).¹⁴ Only at this rather late date did important connections emerge between left-bank and right-bank Ukraine, as, for example, when the populist Volodymyr Antonovych renounced right-bank principles in favour of an allegiance to the Ukrainian people in his 1862 'Confessions'.

What were these right-bank principles? Unlike left-bank Ukraine, right-bank Ukraine preserved its Polish upper and Jewish commercial classes. The political order that the left-bank Cossacks wished for in the eighteenth century actually survived in Poland, although of course the Poles ruled and the Ukrainians were almost entirely peasants. Under Russian rule this arrangement was challenged. In 1831 the Commission on National Education, which had organised schooling for Poles in the eastern partitioned territories, was closed. In 1833 the Polish lycée at Krzemeniec was shut down, and its priceless library of 34,000 volumes (including the collections of the Royal Palace in Warsaw) was transferred to Kiev. An 1845 order forbade nobles from providing Polish schooling for peasants. After 1831 about two-thirds of the local Roman Catholic monasteries were liquidated.

In 1840 the Lithuanian Statute was annulled, on the grounds that it was foreign to Russia. Ironically, this statute (written originally in Chancery Slavonic) represented an east Slavic legal tradition stretching back to Kievan Rus, broken only by the Russian Empire of the nineteenth century. The legal status of the bulk of the Polish nobility of right-bank Ukraine was attacked more directly. The policy of declassification of nobles, pursued consistently for two decades after 1831, deprived about 340,000 men of noble status, leaving only about 70,000. Ninety per cent of these possessed neither land nor serfs, meaning that right-bank Ukraine was left with about 7,000 great landholding Polish nobles. These in their turn exploited new laws on property to expel

¹⁴ P. Bushkovitch, 'The Ukraine in Russian Culture,' *JfGO*, 39, 3 (1991): 347–50.

their poorer noble brethren from the land they had tilled for generations or centuries.¹⁵

Polishness in west Ukraine, then, was represented by rich and often ruthless landowners. Antonovych, originally a Polish noble himself, was denouncing just this tradition when he joined the ranks of the Ukrainian populists. These landholders did, however, resist further incursions of the Russian state. They became, in a peculiar way, modernisers, exploiting Jews and Poles as their leasing agents and increasingly as the managers of their sugar-beet refineries. Petersburg attempted to counterbalance them by encouraging Russians to settle, but few Russians ever felt that they could join this society. Landholders circumvented legal restrictions on selling land to Poles by a variety of stratagems, including the leasing of land to Jews. Precisely this Polish predominance discouraged Petersburg from establishing local assemblies (*zemstva*) before 1911, for fear that they too would be controlled by Poles.

Petersburg and the Kiev governors thought to use the Ukrainian (or as they saw matters Russian) peasantry against the Polish landowners, but this was a double-edged sword. Peasants encouraged to revolt by imperial promises then had to be quelled by imperial soldiers. The land reform of 1861 raised the temperature everywhere, for peasants did not get enough land to prosper and found the (Russian-style) collective reallocation of land frustrating. Ukrainian peasants wished to know just where their individual plots were, and of course also wished to continue to use common lands to which they had enjoyed rights for centuries. Meanwhile, landless Polish nobles, abandoned by their more prosperous brethren and ignored by imperial law, also began to press their claims. Violence in right-bank Ukraine peaked in 1905–7, when 3,924 peasant uprisings were recorded. Although the declassification of nobles and the redistribution of land are usually seen as modernising steps, in the tsars' Volhynia, Podolia and Kiev provinces the Polish landlords remained atop a very traditional social order.

In central Poland (the Congress Kingdom) and in Lithuania (the Kovno, Vitebsk, Vilna, Grodno, Minsk and Mogilev provinces), modern politics emerged from the defeat of the January uprising of 1863.¹⁶ Unlike the 1830

15 D. Beauvois, *Pouvoir russe et noblesse polonaise en Ukraine, 1793–1830* (Paris: CNRS editions, 2003); D. Beauvois, *Le Noble, le serf, et le revizor: La noblesse polonaise entre le tsarisme et les masses ukrainiennes (1831–1863)* (Paris: Editions des archives contemporaines, 1985); D. Beauvois, *La bataille de la terre en Ukraine, 1863–1914: Les polonais et les conflits socio-ethniques* (Lille: Presses universitaires de Lille, 1993).

16 T. Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); T. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863–1914* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996).

uprising, which began as a more or less organised military conspiracy, the 1863 uprising resulted from elevated hopes for political reform and lack of agreement between Poles themselves. The abolition of serfdom in the Russian Empire began furious debate in Poland on the land question, which soon became a more general discussion about the prospects for the resuscitation of local institutions. Andrzej Zamoyski was the leading voice in this debate, and was associated with the call for a 'moral revolution'. His political adversary, Aleksander Wielopolski, thought less of their countrymen, and believed that only a firm deal with Petersburg could create the foundation for reform. In this he had considerable successes: he gained the tsar's approval for land reform, a quasi-university in Warsaw and equality for the Jews.

Yet he was helpless to stem the expectations of conspiratorial radicals ('Reds'), who expected much more, and who gained support in the cities in 1861 and 1862. Wielopolski forced the issue by trying to conscript them, which led to a doomed revolt. Once military forces were in the field, moderates ('Whites') felt obliged to join the uprising, often against their better judgement. The short-lived National Government promised land to the peasants but had mixed success in their recruitment to the cause. The uprising was the high point of Polish-Jewish patriotic co-operation, as many Jews fought and died for the cause (although most Jews, like most Polish peasants, simply kept their heads down). Although many Russian radicals sympathised with the Poles, the dominant reaction in Petersburg was shock. The drastic Russifying measures that followed the uprising's defeat in 1864 forced the Warsaw intelligentsia (the term was popularised at this time) to reconsider their position in the empire.¹⁷

It was one of isolation, for Poland received very little international support. Warm words from Paris and hot declarations of the First International Workingmen's Congress hung in the air. Although Roman Catholicism was the religion of most Poles, the Vatican was not the ally of Poland in such moments. The Romantic messianism of Mickiewicz was popular among Poles but of course heresy for Popes. After the uprising the Roman Catholic Church within the Russian Empire was further humbled. By 1870 not a single bishop sitting in 1863 remained in his diocese. The Polish Church was subordinated to a Catholic College in Petersburg. The remnants of the Uniate Church (of Eastern rite but Western hierarchy) were absorbed by the Orthodox Church. By the turn of the century many Catholic parishes were unable to meet the

¹⁷ P. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland 1795–1918* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974).

elementary spiritual and pastoral needs of their members. Nevertheless, the Roman Catholic Church was unchallenged in central Poland and retained 1359 churches beyond the boundaries of the old Congress Kingdom in 1914.

The main intellectual response to the catastrophe was a resolutely secular school of thought, known as Polish positivism.¹⁸ The positivists drew the term from Comte but more of their ideas from Spencer. Their leading light was Aleksander Świętochowski (1849–1938), who spoke of ‘internal independence’. Warsaw positivists hoped that society (a civic Polish nation) could be made to function like a self-sufficient organism, despite the fact that it lacked its own state. They counted on industrialisation to create a new Polish middle class, and on education to spread national culture as well as technique. Industrialisation was a reality. In the 1870s and 1880s certain parts of the Congress Kingdom became centres of the industrial revolution in Russia. Yet progress itself remained out of reach, no matter how committed intellectuals remained to science. Science itself was the new faith, and even if some of the miracles forecast in Bolesław Prus’s great positivist novel *The Doll* were eerily achieved by Marie Curie (née Maria Skłodowska), technical achievements failed to end moral debates about the future of the nation.

The positivists’ ambition to substitute scientific research for Romantic yearnings was realised in an extraordinarily direct manner by exiled rebels of 1863. Both Aleksander Czekanowski (1833–76) and Mikołaj Hartung (1835–83) made the journey to Siberia on foot, and collected and classified beetles along the way. Jan Czerski (1845–1915) explored Siberia for thirty years, describing dozens of unknown mammals. Michał Jankowski (1840–1912) explored the arctic on skis and in self-made boats, settled on Askold Island and ran the mine and meteorological station, then moved to the mainland and pioneered the acclimation of plants. A more literalised positivist hero is scarcely to be imagined, unless it is Adam Szymański (1852–1916), of a later generation and himself a positivist, who was sentenced to life in Yakutsk after a denunciation, and within three years had gained admission to the Russian Geographical Society for his scholarly work in geography.

Yet educated Poles of the positivist era made scientific careers in official institutions as well, without the mediation of deportation. Some of the most prominent of these served in the army, the institution that defeated the January uprising. Tomasz Augustynowicz (1809–91), the military doctor and syphilis researcher, assembled the empire’s largest botanical collection. Jan Minkiewicz

18 J. Jedlicki, *A Suburb of Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999); Stanislaus Blejwas, *Realism in Polish Politics* (New Haven: Yale Concilium on International and Area Studies, 1984).

(1826–92), head surgeon of the Caucasian Army, published 150 papers in geography and other fields, in one of them closing the circle of his many interests by comparing his own description of the river Rioni to that of Hippocrates. Leon Barszczewski (1849–1910), a colonel, won a gold medal at the 1895 Paris exposition for his photographs of minerals. Bronisław Grąbczewski, a general, discovered several minerals and insects. The greatest military entomologist of all was General Oktawiusz Radoszkowski (1820–95), president of the relevant imperial Society. While the Polish rebels (and entomologists) Czekanowski and Hartung walked to Siberia, their compatriot General Radoszkowski (entomologist) built Russian fortifications in Poland.¹⁹ (By the way, a beetle was the crucial symbol in Prus's other great positivist novel, *Pharaoh*.) At all events, here nationality and scientific interests were no guide to political actions.

Positivists had counselled Poles to turn their gaze from 'the heavenly sphere' to the ground beneath their feet. Yet 'work at the foundations' might reinforce the state rather than build the nation, or it might have no social consequences at all. The modern Polish political activists of the 1880s and 1890s took science very seriously, but placed their faith rather in organised action. The National Democratic movement (usually dated from the founding of the National League in 1893) also used Spencerian ideas, but emphasised competition between groups rather than harmony within individual organisms.²⁰ Although their organisation was elitist and conspiratorial, they counted on educating the Polish-speaking masses to a proper Polish identity. Although both of the leading thinkers, Roman Dmowski and Zygmunt Balicki, were non-believers and former socialists, the movement came to be increasingly identified with the Roman Catholic faith. Jews were seen at first as difficult to assimilate, and then as essentially inassimilable. As the percentage of Jews in the lands of the Congress Kingdom grew from 9 per cent in 1827 to 15 per cent in 1909, and as Jews emigrated to Warsaw in the 1880s and 1890s, this question was impossible to avoid.

Socialists had a different answer. Polish Marxists agreed with nationalists that science could guide politics, and that science revealed a world of competition: but between classes rather than nations or races. Assimilated Jews could work as equals within the socialist movement, and nowhere else. Yet Polish Marxists disagreed among themselves about the central national question: should Poland be restored, or should Poles simply play their part

¹⁹ Notes on Polish scientists in the Russian Empire here and elsewhere drawn from Artur Kijas, *Polacy w Rosji od XVII wieku do 1917 roku: Słownik biograficzny* (Warsaw: Pax, 2000).

²⁰ B. Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

in a world proletarian revolution? Rosa Luxemburg (1870–1919) argued that national questions distract the working class, while Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz (1872–1905) maintained that nation-states were a natural stage on the way to socialism. Luxemburg’s Social Democrats were the smaller group, although they formed the core of the Communist Party of Poland formed after the First World War. The more patriotic Polish Socialist Party of Józef Pilsudski (1867–1935) was by far the more important organisation in the 1890s. During the revolution of 1905 his party split into two fractions, one counting on revolution and the other on armed conspiracy.²¹

Although socialism in Poland had to confront peculiarly Polish questions, in its origins it was in considerable measure a Russian import. The generation raised after the failure of 1863 had to grant that the Russian populists, and the socialists, were a model worthy of emulation. Interestingly, Russian populism also took a special national course in Ukraine. Many of the great students of Ukrainian culture were themselves populists, sometimes of Russian or Polish origin, who ‘went to the people’ and found the people to be Ukrainian. The 1876 ban on the publication of books in Ukrainian and other measures led to the emigration of Ukrainian scholars and activists from Kiev to Austrian Galicia, where their populist ideas filled the needs of an emerging Ukrainian national movement. Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi (1866–1934) wrote his great synthesis of Ukrainian history as a professor in Lwów.

Ukrainian politics in Russia was forced towards the centre, but remained preoccupied with the peasant, who in Ukraine was or wished to be a farmer. Like a dozen or so national groups within the empire, Ukrainians exploited the occasion of 1905 to request a measure of decentralisation. Some activists pressed for an assembly in Kiev, very few had more radical hopes than federalism and socialism. Like many others, the Ukrainian neo-Kantian legal scholar Bohdan Kistiakovs’kyi (1868–1920) believed that a rule-of-law state was the best resolution of national questions. Most of the legal concessions granted by the Dumas were reversed by the end of 1907. One lasting change was Stolypin’s agricultural reforms, which were greeted enthusiastically by peasants in right-bank Ukraine. Many finally got their land, and kept it until starved out by Stalin’s collectivisation.

Polish ambitions during 1905 were exceptional. Two fairly mature political parties vied with each other to determine the revolution’s national meaning. The Polish Socialist Party generally sought to exploit the occasion to win

21 T. Snyder, *Nationalism, Marxism, and Modern Central Europe: A Biography of Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz, 1872–1905* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998); N. Naimark, *History of the ‘Proletariat’* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1981).

independence. The National Democrats, who in principle also wanted a Polish state, believed the situation should be allowed to mature. Piłsudski travelled to Tokyo to enlist the support of Japan against Russia; Dmowski travelled to Tokyo to thwart him. The greatest Polish statesmen of their day had a Japanese picnic. The National Democrats sought to exploit the Duma by passing legislation that supported Polish culture, but all their gains were reversed by 1907. The most pathetic moment was perhaps Stolypin's appeal to Dmowski that the latter 'admit that the greatest blessing is to be a Russian citizen'. Here was a great misunderstanding: Dmowski was willing to co-operate with the Russian state because he believed in that state's inevitable collapse.²²

The deeper irony is that Poles played an indispensable role in the intellectual and physical construction of the Russian Empire. By this time about half a million Poles lived beyond the borders of the old Commonwealth, and notable Polish explorers and scientists pushed as far east as it was possible to go. Russia's fantastic borders were quite literally placed on maps by Poles: by geologists such as Karel Bohdanowicz (1864–1947), the most thorough explorer of Asian Russia, Leonard Jaczewski (1858–1916), who studied volcanic activity in eastern Siberia, and Józef Morożewicz (1865–1941), who described the Magnetic Mountain; or by sailors such as Józef Trzemeski (1879–1923), who spent a ten-month frozen winter north of the Arctic Circle and proved the existence of a legendary island, and Andrzej Wilkicki (1858–1913), the naval general who left the systems of signals and lamps that allowed those who followed to navigate the Arctic Sea. Poles also built the empire on land. Ksawery Skarżyński (1819–76) built the rail lines between Warsaw, Petersburg and Moscow, and then Andrzej Przenicki (1869–1941) designed bridges for the capital. Kazimierz Elżanowski (1875–1932) tunnelled through the Caucasus and also built the rail line from Samarkand to Tashkent. Tadeusz Niklewicz (1877–1956) built the port of Vladivostok.

As Russian and Ukrainian nationalism emerged in the early twentieth century, both placed the cradle of nationhood in Kiev. The Russian archeologist who studied Kiev's St Sofia, the spiritual centre of these national histories, was in fact a Polish architect, Karol Majewski (1824–97), whose major professional task was the design of modern state buildings in Petersburg and Moscow. Whether such work is understood as culture or civilisation, the sheer force of Polish achievement within the late Russian Empire is undeniable. Just as seventeenth-century Ukrainian clerics from Kiev adapted to new predicaments by conceiving for Muscovites a theory of rule that left a dignified place

²² E. Chmielewski, *The Polish Question in the Russian State Duma* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1970).

Ukrainians and Poles

for Ukraine, and eighteenth-century Cossacks turned the end of traditional rights into an honourable role in tsarist expansion by migrating to Petersburg, so nineteenth-century Polish men and women, responding to dilemmas of modernity, helped, directly or indirectly, to modernise Russia. The story is rarely told thus. The afterglow of a collapsed empire casts mainly shadows, and the Ukrainian and Polish questions are seen darkly in the fading light. Indeed, no Russian empire could survive without Ukraine, and no Russian state with European aspirations could avoid a challenge from Latin and Catholic Poland. Yet over the centuries, the main work of Ukrainians was constitutive, and the main direction of Polish activity was creative.