JUPS

JOURNAL OF UKRAINIAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY

2015

Journal of Ukrainian Politics and Society

The Journal of Ukrainian Politics and Society (JUPS) is one the first blind peer-reviewed Ukrainian journals in English. JUPS is an open-access journal published bi-annually online. We invite article submissions from scholars working on developments in Ukrainian economics, history, international relations, law, politics, public policy and sociology. All methods and approaches will be considered. The journal is published by the Krytyka Institute, the scholarly arm of Krytyka, which also consists of a literary review magazine, a publishing house, and an online platform.

Our vision is to imbed the study of Ukraine in broader regional, international and transnational processes and aid the development of social sciences in Ukraine. In pursuing this goal, we hope to examine Ukraine's social, economic and political transformations in comparative perspective as a part of larger macro-systemic, political, economic, legal, historical and social dynamics.

We publish original research articles, review essays, and welcome proposals for special issues. For more information about JUPS as well as submission guidelines, please visit our website: http://jups.krytyka.com/guide-authors

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JUPS

Volume 1 Issue 1

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INTRODUCTION

Nadiya Kravets and Olga Onuch

What?

Recent economic and geopolitical crises have forced contemporary global debates regarding the role of the state and the future of society. In light of the Eurozone Crisis, continued eastward enlargement of the EU, the EuroMaidan mass-mobilization, the annexation of Crimea, the Russian sponsored war in Donbas, and the ongoing tensions between Russia and the West, these debates have been especially pertinent in Central and Eastern Europe, and more specifically in Ukraine. More than ever, there is a need for sound, scientific knowledge of Ukrainian society, politics, and economy. Recent debates on Ukraine have engaged intellectuals in far-flung places across the globe. Our discussions have been sped up by new information communication technologies, which have in turn seemingly made knowledge production, dissemination and consumption more equal. Yet, before we define the current era as the Information Age, the Age of Knowledge, or the existence of a global Knowledge Society (David and Foray 2002; Drucker 2001; Rodrigues 2003) we need to acknowledge that this process has been far from equal. Instead, as Strange (1998) has pointed out, information is in fact still distributed and utilized unequally around the world, and this is particularly true in the former Soviet space. Moreover, access to information has become a form of structural power that has created hierarchies between and within academic networks in different societies.

It has also been noted that the uneven distribution of knowledge (creation, production and dissemination) not only impacts the academia but can also have an effect on the ability of states to develop sound policies and institutions for good governance (Popper 2002). Knowledge harnessed by the governments of "western" industrialized democracies, or the "Global North" – especially through the development of statistics – has been said to have helped in the creation of conditions that promote national development (Foucault et al. 1991). Crucial in this process is the harnessing of knowledge produced by social scientists in the creation of *governmentality* or a form of power that functions through "institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections," and has populations as its target (Foucault et al. 1991, 102). Or to put it otherwise, the goal of reaching an "open society" must rely on equally open knowledge about both institutional and extra-institutional political practices and policies that can only be achieved through a systematic and scientific approach (Popper 1988; Popper 1979; Popper 2002; Popper, Shearmur & Turner 2008). One can argue that it is perhaps even more important to develop such scientific knowledge in democratizing contexts such as contemporary Ukraine. And although we acknowledge that not all knowledge that is pursued will help improve the state's ability to govern more effectively or increase general well-being in societies, recognizing that there is indeed a link between the rigorous analysis of socio-politico-economic phenomena and the application of insightful findings to social problems faced by states is crucial if we intend to increase the "quality of

government," expand "state capacity," and thus, remedy a state's weaknesses, as in the case of Ukraine (Holmberg and Rothstein 2012). Thus, it can be argued that the development of social sciences is a vital aspect of contemporary societies in Eastern Europe and specifically in the case of Ukraine.

It is important to acknowledge that the production and engagement with global social scientific knowledge has, in fact, been deeply hierarchical. It has been dominated by "western" academic institutions that oftentimes act as gatekeepers. Scholars from other parts of the world rarely sit on the editorial boards of top-ranking western journals that define major disciplines in the social sciences. Crucially, this western-dominated social science has been increasingly English speaking. However, recently with the advent of open access platforms, a change is in the air and it is coming from both directions. Western academic institutions are increasingly eager to hear, empower and integrate with academic institutions and scholars in emerging economies in the "South" and in the "East." And academics from democratizing contexts like Ukraine are also actively seeking to create their own English-language journals, so that their voices can be heard by global audiences. It is in light of these larger social and academic developments that in May of 2013 the idea for the Journal of Ukrainian Politics and Society (JUPS), Ukraine's first peer-review, English-language, scholarly journal was born and launched by its editors as a product of the Krytyka Institute, a non-profit research institution of its parent – Krytyka Magazine.

Why?

The need for academic journals, like JUPS, in Ukraine became evident to us and other social scientists who were both from Ukraine or interacted regularly with Ukrainian academics. We experienced firsthand that while on one hand, excellent Ukrainian scholars (aside from a small handful) were rarely known in western academic circles and thus, not integrated into western scholarship; and on the other, we observed a need for further development of the state of social sciences in Ukraine. Judging from these conditions, Ukraine (as well as other post-communist states) in regards to social sciences needs both local development as well as further integration into the global academia. We launched the journal with these goals in mind. But how does one go about promoting the development and exposure of social sciences in Ukraine?

Scholars in Ukraine, as well as in the greater region, face several obstacles in conducting and communicating their research so that their findings have an impact both domestically and abroad. First is the matter of language. For numerous historical reasons at present the language of globalization, international communication and science is English. Although we can critique this reality, this will only delay the integration of Ukraine's scientific community into the global academia and allow the dominance of Anglophone scholarship to define approaches, narratives and discourses about what is taking place in Ukraine, as we have seen over the last year. This issue has been a serious setback for evidence-based policy making during the ongoing crises faced by the Ukrainian state. When foreign academics, and the

governments they advise, were not able to access existing Ukrainian scholarship on important topics such as political preferences, behavior, national identity and foreign policy due to linguistic issues, it led to the creation of policies based on limited and even flawed knowledge (House of Lords, European Union Committee 2015). Thus, we must provide tools and aid to allow more Ukrainian scholars to publish their scholarly findings in English. Thus, promoting their engagement in a dialogue with western academic circles, and even promoting their ability of becoming agenda-setters. JUPS will seek to do just this. We will provide translation and editorial services for exceptional social science research by academics based in Ukraine.

The second obstacle is that not all scholars in Ukraine have been trained in the same language of western academic style, presentation, formulation and organization of social science research. The way one presents one's research question, analysis and findings has evolved in the social sciences. There is an increasingly greater emphasis on the clear presentation of one's ideas by situating them in and engaging with existing empirical and/or theoretical work and, most importantly, by being systematic and explicit about the methods and data one used to arrive at his or her findings. This template allows us to better assess research, by easily identifying what and where it adds to existing knowledge and, crucially, allowing it to be tested and replicated. Some, especially early career, scholars in Ukraine have not yet been trained to think and present their research in this manner (as some of the submissions we recently reviewed illustrate). And thus, JUPS seeks to aid in the promotion of best practices of systematic and scientifically sound social science research, especially coming from Ukrainian scholars.

The last major obstacle, and not mutually exclusive to the two detailed above, lies in the limited access that Ukrainian scholars have to existing social science (more broadly) and sub-disciplinary literature that they work on. To properly situate one's research and formulate questions that require investigation necessitates engagement with existing theories and empirical findings. Access to such accumulated scholarship largely rests in academic books and journal articles, to which Ukrainian libraries have little access. Moreover, library databases that carry the necessary academic journals (even Harvard University with one of the largest libraries in the world) find it hard to finance its journal subscription service (up to $3.75 million a year). Thus, it is crucial to make scholarship easily and freely accessible. While we cannot change this system or fund access to academic scholarship in Ukraine more widely, we can provide open access to scholarship by demonstrating a level of scientific rigor and excellence. JUPS's mission is indeed to be entirely open access and distribute scholarship that is accessible to academics globally with few limitations.

Thus, we launched JUPS in hopes that the journal will: enable the dissemination of excellent academic scholarship focusing on Ukrainian society, politics and economy, and create stronger linkages between scholars who work on Ukrainian topics globally and those in Ukraine.

How?

As mentioned above, these goals can be best accomplished with the introduction of double-blind peer-review as a concept and practice into Ukrainian academia and with an open access, online system of publication.

Based on our discussion with experienced colleagues in the field, most social scientists in Ukraine do not have their work reviewed by their peers in an anonymous manner, and instead the review or *рецензія* is done by a colleague or colleagues who are approached by the author or by the journal editor with few concerns about the anonymity and objectivity of the review process. This practice, of course, does not allow for truly critical reflection and also contributes to the proliferation of unoriginal research, because few submissions are rejected. Double-blind peer-review, as practiced by JUPS, means that neither the author nor the reviewer knows each other during the review process, and it is not until the publication of the article that the identity of the author becomes known.

Secondly, housing the journal online and allowing the subscription at no cost has major advantages not only for scholarship in Ukraine, but is also the growing trend in academia, globally. Printing journals is expensive, and library subscriptions limit the audience and the impact of one's research. Thus, by making JUPS open access and online, we hope that scholarship published with us will have a greater impact both in Ukraine and abroad, promote greater exposure to existing literature, and crucially inspire more journals like JUPS to be set up in Ukraine. Incidentally, following the launch and the presentation of JUPS in October 2013 at the Fulbright Program Office in Kyiv, we have already observed an impact, and we have been told that this presentation has inspired others to set up blind, peer-reviewed, English, online, open access journals in Ukraine, such as the Kyiv-Mohyla Humanities Journal, Kyiv-Mohyla Law and Politics Journal, Social, Health, and Communication Studies Journal; and we hope that many more will come. Moreover, we hope to see further collaboration between these publications.

In this Issue. . .

The present issue is composed of three essays and three articles. Although the essays are commissioned pieces from members of the editorial board who were asked to reflect on the state of their discipline and the study of that discipline in Ukraine (and were themselves subject to peer-review), the three articles were solicited through an open call for submissions and present findings from authors' original research and were subject to extensive peer-review. We have accepted for publication, only those articles that we felt demonstrated a certain level of academic rigor – and we should note that our acceptance rate for this issue was approximately 15 percent. Essays by Paul J. D'Anieri and Oxana Shevel reflect on the study of politics in Ukraine and on the study of Ukrainian politics more broadly. Together, these two timely contributions stimulate a debate about how the discipline of Politics or Political Science could develop in Ukraine. And for those who already are working on Ukraine, the authors highlight what still needs further

exploration especially in the academic study of politics and policies of the country. In a sense, the authors are presenting a challenge to scholars of Ukrainian politics and society, and we hope that future submissions will rise to this challenge.

The essay by Rory Finnin eloquently points out how little Ukraine, especially its Humanities, is actually known by scholars in Europe, or western academia more broadly. As Finnin notes, Ukraine's art, culture, and history are often not treated as "official objects of knowledge," but they should be, he argues, if one wants to understand what holds together and animates Ukraine, the largest European country. Thus, a second challenge is posed to those who study Ukrainian society and culture; Finnin calls for an international study of Ukraine, placing its art and culture in comparative perspective. Thus, although the Iron Curtain physically fell in 1989, it's full destruction in the minds of scholars and societies in the West and East has not fully occurred; these groups should rediscover the shared histories, artistic movements, literary genres, and other cultural connections between them.

Two of the articles in this issue address policy reforms, and, given the ongoing reforms agenda in Ukraine following the EuroMaidan mass-mobilization, we hope that the conclusions of these authors will contribute to this process. The article by Benjamin Kutsyuruba and Serhiy Kovalchuk draws our attention to an important process of education reform and the approximation of Ukraine to the European Union's standards of teachers' education. The authors argue that thus far, the reform has been more declarative, and few of the reforms necessary have actually taken place. The article by Anna Postelnyak evaluates the effect of higher gas prices that Ukrainians have been paying for gas imports from Russia since 2009. She demonstrates that higher gas prices have, for the first time in Ukraine's independent history, pushed the country's energy sector towards reform. This has been achieved, she argues, through the reduction of consumption, introduction of energy saving technologies, and market demonopolization. Postelnyak demonstrates that the current government in Kyiv is further intensifying these transformations, but acknowledges that they are a hard sell to a population that will suffer a price hike in the immediate term. However, she argues that in the long term this same population will be able to reap the benefits of lower prices, stable supplies and the crucial delinking of energy trade from politics, domestically.

Lastly, in her article on perhaps Ukraine's most controversial and memorable export of the recent decade, Jessica Zychowicz attempts to shed new light on the radical feminist organization FEMEN. Zychowicz argues that FEMEN have chosen a particular repertoire of protest and have thus been able to deliver their activist agenda to a wider audience. As argued by Zychowicz, although FEMEN is now a global brand, whether their methods will advance local and global gender equality remains a subject of debate and controversy, both within Ukraine and abroad.

We hope that you will enjoy perusing this issue and invite our academic readers to submit their own work!

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POLITICAL SCIENCE AND POLITICS IN UKRAINE AFTER THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

Paul J. D'Anieri

The European revolution of 2014 has once again opened up the prospect of far-reaching change in Ukraine and highlighted how much change is needed if Ukraine is to become, what many people in the country hope for—a "European country." At the time of this writing, even the borders of the country are unclear, and the prospect of war looms. Scholars of Ukrainian politics face two related sets of questions. One set relates to explanation: how do we explain what has happened, and more generally how do we explain how Ukrainian politics works? A second set focuses on policy: what measures, and by whom, can lead to more positive outcomes for Ukraine?

These two questions highlight two distinct but connected practices of political science: explanation and prescription. In the abstract, political science is a *science*, and its practitioners are *scientists*, and our goal is simply to explain how the world works, not to change it. This notion of science, linked broadly with positivist approaches to social science, is particularly characteristic of the academy in North America, but is widely influential elsewhere as well. Inevitably however, in social science as well as in natural science, we hope to shape the world, not merely understand it. We have some notion of what a better world would look like, and we use science to help build it. This not only guides the scientific questions we ask but prompts us to move beyond narrowly specific scientific problems to policy prescriptions.

I have been asked to focus in this essay on North American approaches to Ukrainian politics, and so the essay begins with a broad characterization of how North American political science has approached Ukrainian politics. I then illustrate this characterization by surveying four of the major issues that have faced Ukraine (institutional design, identity politics, protest and revolution, and foreign policy), and explore what political science has had to say about the nature of these problems, about the possible solutions, and about the challenges currently facing the country. Then, I point to some of the inherent difficulties in applying political science to these problems. The point is not that we should not use social science to address social problems, for the alternative is to make decisions based on hunches or superstition. If social science has not led to progress in Ukraine, it is not because political scientists studying Ukraine have failed, but rather that the nature of social problems and of social science inherently limits the ability of social science to solve practical problems. In the conclusion, I focus on one of those problems—that of power politics—which causes particular problems for a problem-solving approach to political science. Focusing on the role of power politics in Ukraine will help us understand some of the ways in which Ukraine deviates from our expectations, and will help us to craft more appropriate recommendations.

The Study of Ukrainian Politics in North America

Delineating what constitutes the study of Ukrainian politics in North America is doubly tricky. Political science as a discipline is notoriously undisciplined, and North America is neither homogeneous nor isolated in an academic enterprise that is increasingly transnational. First, there is not much homogeneity in approaches or views among North American scholars of Ukraine.[1] Ukraine became independent just as a heated debate was taken place among North American political scientists about the relative merits of "area studies" versus "political science" (Bates 1997). The first focused on deep, contextualized knowledge of a particular country that crossed disciplines, while the second focused on using objective categories to compare phenomena cross-nationally and if possible quantitatively. Area studies seems to have lost that battle, but not completely. Nuanced qualitative research has contributed a great deal. At the same time, there is a strong current of post-positivist and critical theory approaches that prevents political science from having a single uniform epistemology and method, as is the case in economics. Further diversifying the study of Ukrainian politics in North America is that authors from a diverse array of disciplines beyond political science have contributed to the discussion. These include not only other social sciences, but also the humanities and law.

Second, there is no clear dividing line between what is written and published in North America and what is written and published elsewhere. Scholars and ideas flow quite freely across borders, so that scholars working at North American universities have a great diversity in their national origins, native languages, and educational backgrounds. Similarly, scholars educated in North America come from many countries and work at institutions all over the world. The "melting pot" or "mosaic" that characterizes the US and Canada in general apply to universities and scholarship as well. Barriers to the free flow of ideas do exist, the two most salient being language and the unaffordability in much of the world of many prominent journals, but academic borders probably mean less today than at any time in the past.[2] This relative absence of barriers is a benefit to scholars and to scholarship, but it makes it difficult to generalize about approaches geographically.

With those caveats in mind, I would suggest that if there is a North American approach to political science (and to Ukrainian politics), it is a political science that is largely (but not exclusively) *positivist* and *problem-solving*. It is positivist in that it sees as its aim the development and testing of falsifiable causal hypotheses about the political world. There is wide variety in how formally the hypotheses are stated and how they are tested, but the idea that underlies much of North American political science is that political phenomena are rarely unique. Instead, each instance can be thought of as one case among a larger universe of cases, which can be compared to yield generalizations about causes and effects. The rest of this discussion focuses on this admittedly narrow conception of "political science" in "North America." Framing the problem this way both makes the discussion manageable and makes it possible to construct some debatable arguments about the literature, rather than simply producing a long annotated bibliography.

A prominent example, as it relates to Ukraine, is the enormous literature on democratization. We assume that "regime type" is a variable, devise ways to measure it, and then set about finding the independent variables that might explain variation in the dependent variable. We test our hypotheses using methodologies ranging from qualitative comparisons to statistical studies. From this perspective, Ukraine may be just one case contributing to a comparative or large-n research design. When we write about democracy (or the design of election systems, or identity politics) in Ukraine, we bring theory and findings developed and tested in cross-national research, expecting that what is true elsewhere will be true in Ukraine. We also use Ukraine—sometimes by itself, more likely in comparison with other cases—to refine broader cross-national theories.

This political science is problem-solving in the sense that it links the study of politics to solving problems in the real world. In practice, much political science, explicitly or implicitly, is interested in understanding how the political world works precisely so that we can shape outcomes. Explanation in such research is a means toward the end of *prescription*—identifying the policies and practices that will lead toward goals that are considered worthy. This means that the agenda for research is often driven by the substantive concerns of the day. In this respect, political science does not differ from much of the natural sciences, which are often pursued and funded due to the promise that they will solve practical problems. We seek to provide "usable knowledge" (Lindblom & Cohen 1979).

For example, since there appears to be some negative relationship between strongly presidential systems and democracy, many scholars have advocated that Ukraine weaken its presidency. In Ukraine, the variation over time in the formal strength of the presidency has allowed us to study the question comparatively across time within Ukraine. The salience of this connection between political science and practice was demonstrated vividly in January 2014, when protesters and opposition leaders in Kyiv modified their demands to focus on the reinstitution of the division of powers between president and parliament that had existed under the 2004 constitutional amendments (RFE/RL 2014; personal communication, Kyiv, December 2013), as though they had been carefully reading Henry Hale's comparative research (2011) on the division of powers in divided executive systems.

Research Questions

What has this approach accomplished, and what has it failed to do? Among the scientific successes have been providing a much improved understanding of Ukraine's identity cleavages, anticipating the dangers of strongly presidential powers, and predicting the effects of different election laws. Among the unsolved problems is our inability to pin down the sources for variation in democracy over time in Ukraine (we can describe the variation but not really explain it). Nor have political scientists (or intelligence agencies) had much success predicting revolutions. Political scientists have not been able to design formal institutions that resist being subverted by preexisting informal institutions (Allina-Pisano 2008). We have not been able to devise policies to reduce corruption that can actually be

implemented successfully in Ukraine's political conditions, and we have not been able to devise foreign policies that make the country's location an advantage rather than a liability. Scholars might reasonably respond that they have indeed identified such policies, but that they have not been adopted. Thus, the problem of designing good policies becomes a problem in designing the conditions for adopting good policies, and so on. The problem of unwillingness or inability to implement the sensible recommendations of political scientists is returned to in the third part of this essay.

Among the questions that Ukraine faces today, and has faced for the past twety-three years, are four that are indicative of the scope of political science and of the problems facing Ukraine. Reviewing research and policy on these questions helps illustrate what political science has and has not accomplished, and what the agenda looks like as this new journal is launched. Addressing these four issues is not meant to imply that other issues are less important; it is simply intended to contribute some breadth to the discussion. These four issues illustrate the value and the shortcomings of viewing Ukraine in comparative perspective and of using comparative research to inform policy.

Institutional Design

The post-communist states, and the states of the "third wave" more broadly, have driven an immense literature on institutional design. The notion that constitutions and other formal rules can channel politics is not inherently North American, but this perspective has been particularly prevalent in US political science for two reasons. First, most Americans understand their own experience in terms of the genius of the constitutional framers in 1787, and see much of what followed as constrained by that document. Second, a huge and successful body of literature has studied the formal rules of the US Congress to show how the rules channel behavior and shape outcomes.

The debate about executive arrangements in the constitution has been typical. In asking about the ideal institutions for Ukraine, we tend to ask, "what works best in general," the underlying assumption being that there are general rules, and that the traits that Ukraine shares with other states are more salient than those in which it differs. Much of the literature has centered on the relative prerogatives of the president and parliament, and while considerable controversy remains, the general consensus is that the stronger the presidency, the weaker democracy (Linz 1990; Stepan & Skach 1993; Linz & Valenzuela 1994; Easter 1997; Frye 1997; for application to Ukraine, see D'Anieri 2006a). Most of the democracies of Western Europe have parliamentary systems with presidencies that are ceremonial. In this literature, the US is considered an historical exception, but Ukraine is not.

A similar application of institutional design concerns the rules for parliamentary elections. Here again, political scientists have applied lessons gleaned more broadly to the case of Ukraine. A key question in the 1990s, when the parliament was fragmented and therefore ineffective, was what kind of electoral laws were likely to promote consolidation of parties and formation of a workable parliamentary majority. Much attention was focused on the effects of the "mixed" system that

Ukraine adopted, in which half the members were elected in single-member districts and half were elected according proportional representation. The broader literature was applied to Ukraine, and the Ukrainian case was used to contribute to the broader understanding of mixed systems (Herron 2002).

In other respects as well, the comparative literature applied to Ukraine with good practical effect. In particular, the argument that a proportional representation system would strengthen parties led in part to the move from a full single-member district system to the mixed system and then, in 2006, to a fully proportional system. Moreover, it was understood correctly that the threshold for representation in a PR system would affect the number of parties that were represented in parliament and the fragmentation or consolidation of the party system. Unfortunately the same knowledge was available to aspiring autocrats as well as democrats, and under Viktor Yanukovych the country moved back to the mixed system in 2011.

In sum, comparative research on institutional design has had a solid record when applied to Ukraine, both in explaining outcomes and in helping design institutions to achieve certain outcomes. From the perspective of early 2014, it appears that there is much work to do. There is widespread acceptance of the dual-executive model, and the debate surrounds the relative prerogatives of the president and the prime minister (Protsyk 2003; Sydorchuk 2014). It is remarkable that in this respect, the European revolution of 2014 was initially neither particularly European nor revolutionary: protesters demanded not to adopt a European parliamentary system, but rather to reform the dual executive model so widespread among the autocratic regimes of the former Soviet Union. They sought a return to the 2004 "Orange" constitution that had led to non-stop conflict between president and prime minister until Yanukovych was elected in 2010 and subordinated the prime minister. Pressing questions today are whether the dual-executive model can be made more functional and more resistant to subversion, and whether these goals can be accomplished without weakening executive authority to the extent that important reforms cannot be implemented. It remains to be seen whether more support for a parliamentary system will emerge.

Identity Politics and Regionalism

Questions of identity politics and regionalism just hit the front pages of newspapers around the world in 2014, but they have been at the center of academic discussions about Ukrainian society and politics for decades (Wilson 1997; Arel 2006). In the post-Soviet era, key practical questions have centered on the ethnic versus civic basis of statehood, language policy, the implications of regional divisions for politics, and the potential for violence or separatism.

To study Ukraine's ethnic, regional, religious, and linguistic divisions, political scientists and sociologists deployed two of the preferred tools of modern social science, the survey and multiple regression. Large-n surveys offered the potential to empirically measure identities across Ukraine. Multiple regression and its variants offered the ability to parse out the independent influences of different components of identity on political attitudes and voting behavior. Language, religion, and ethnicity often overlap with region of residence in Ukraine, making it challenging to

discern which of these identities may be driving the others. Quantitative approaches allowed scholars to reveal patterns that were otherwise invisible. Most notable was the finding that region played a strong driving role—independent of language, religion, and ethnicity—in driving political values (Barrington 1997; Kubicek 2000, Barrington & Herron 2004).

Qualitative research uncovered an important distinction between Ukraine and many other multi-ethnic societies, namely that Ukrainian and Russian identities in Ukraine are not exclusive categories, but rather are often blurred or blended. This was widely confirmed once surveys began allowing respondents to choose multiple responses on identity questions. Many Ukrainians identified with both nationalities, and spoke both languages, which is not surprising given the significant amounts of intermarriage and the blurring of the two languages into the "surzhyk" often heard in Kyiv. Similarly, religious identities and affiliations were often not seen as opposing one another, but rather as different places in a common community. This blurring of compatible and sometimes overlapping identities made the dynamics of identity politics in Ukraine different from those in many other countries in significant ways that were not appreciated in the early 1990s. For example, David Laitin (1998) applied a cross-nationally derived rational choice model of language use and predicted that Kyiv would become a Ukrainian-speaking city, something that at least so far does not appear to be imminent. The empirical clarification of the nature of identity in Ukraine might be regarded as one of the major accomplishments of the social scientific study of Ukraine.

Beyond characterizing the salience of different sources of attitudes, political scientists sought to identify the implications of these divisions and to recommend policies that would strengthen democracy despite the internal identity cleavages. Some who focused on linguistic and ethnic divisions advocated tolerant language policies, on the grounds that the Russian-speaking community was too large and too concentrated to be ignored (Shulman 2002). This advice clashed with that of advocates of promoting Ukrainian language (Hrycak 2006). The essential difference, however, was not analytical but normative: some took the status quo as a starting point of analysis, whereas many advocates of Ukrainianization saw the status quo as the result of past Russification policies and therefore as, at least partially, illegitimate.

The events of 2014 have put identity politics at the top of the agenda again in Ukrainian politics. The question of how to design institutions that can cope with Ukraine's regional diversity is now a matter of the survival of the state. This is an issue on which there has been considerable cross-national research, especially in the literature on "consociational democracy," which has yielded useful insight on Ukraine (Norris 2002; Stepan 2005, Stepan, Linz & Yadav 2011, Chap. 6). The study of identity politics across countries and the design of institutions is vexed by the fact that, identity cleavages can persist peacefully for many years and then quickly become activated with violent consequences. Were the events of 2014 simply a matter of time or were they fundamentally avoidable? This is not simply an academic question, as further ethnic violence and separatism are still very possible.

Early indications are that perceptions of the Euromaidan and the February 2014 revolution vary significantly by region. Russia's use of ethnic conflict as a fig leaf for its invasion of Crimea further raises the stakes for identity politics. Moreover, the de facto federalization of Ukraine during the Euromaidan protests, when several regional administrations were seized by local forces—first to resist Yanukovych, then to resist the interim government—indicate that questions that remained in background for Ukraine's first two decades now must be squarely faced. One of the key dilemmas surrounds federalism: on the one hand, a federal system might give different regions sufficient autonomy to dampen secessionist sentiment. On the other, once secessionist sentiment receives a certain level, a federal system facilitates separation, as shown both in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea. Here is a place where cross-national research might be brought to bear. When does federalism help preserve a diverse society, and when does it not?

Another question that we now need to address is how the likely annexation of Crimea (and perhaps other regions) will affect subsequent identity politics in Ukraine. Two questions in particular loom large. First, how would it affect the balance of forces in Ukrainian elections? Crimeans voted in a large majority for Viktor Yanukovych in 2010, and throughout the post-Soviet era have voted for anti-reformist candidates. Without them, it will be much harder for a candidate whose support is based in eastern Ukraine to triumph. This in turn could reshape the dynamics of political competition at the national level. If one or more of the much more heavily populated eastern oblasts were separated from Ukraine, the electoral consequences would be dramatic. Second, which political forces and which causes will be empowered and disempowered in the response to the annexation of Crimea? Will nationalist politicians insisting on Ukrainianization gain influence, on the grounds that weak national identity is a security threat? Or will supporters of regional autonomy and linguistic pluralism gain influence, on the argument that only these policies will keep the country together?

Protest and Revolution

Protest and revolution have spurred a massive amount of research across the disciplines of history, sociology, and political science. There are enduring debates not only about the causes of revolution, but on the nature of revolution and the meaning of the term. It remains very difficult to explain after the fact (let alone to predict) when protests begin, when they will dissipate, to what extent authorities will repress them, and when revolution will occur.

In Ukraine, some of the most basic questions have been salient. Many scholars, for example, have expressed skepticism that the Orange Revolution was really a revolution at all, because rather than sweeping away the existing institutions, the pact reached in 2004 occurred within them and largely preserved them. To the extent that the definition of revolution includes major social change, what happened in 2004-5 clearly does not meet the standard. The events of 2014 provide a telling contrast. The most significant agreement—that underpinned by EU mediators in which Yanukovych would remain in power and elections would be moved up—

collapsed rapidly when it was rejected by forces in the street and when the security forces defending Yanukovych disappeared from the streets. The Yanukovych regime simply collapsed and for several crucial days, there was no effective state power in Kyiv. Order was maintained by restraint and by non-state "self-defense" forces. The re-formation of state power was completely improvised and driven by power in the streets rather than by any agreed upon process. Whether these changes look revolutionary in retrospect remains to be seen.

Beyond the conceptual lack of clarity as to what was a revolution and what was not, explaining these protests, and characterizing them, has proven challenging. In discussing 2004, there remains disagreement over the basic driving force behind the protests. The dominant view focuses on transnational diffusion of protests and on the role of the protesters in the streets (Beissinger 2007; Bunce & Wolchik 2010; Hale 2005; Kuzio 2006; McFaul 2005; Tucker 2008). A minority focuses on elite competition, and sees the protesters in the streets and the transnational actors as having been mobilized largely by counter-elites (D'Anieri 2007; Way 2008). In many respects, this debate reflects the broader debate in the social movement literature about the relative importance of mobilization capacity and political opportunity structure in explaining variation in the incidence of contentious politics.

The contrasts between the 2004 and 2014 "revolutions" await a full scholarly study, but on the surface, they look quite different. Among the lessons of the 2004 events was the importance of elections as a "focal point" facilitating mobilization (Tucker 2008). So while many analysts were looking forward to the potential for protest surrounding the 2015 presidential elections, a more minor event—Yanukovych's decision to spurn an EU association agreement—spurred the protest. It would have been hard to predict the initial outbreak of protest, since it would have been hard to predict that Yanukovych would go so far down the aisle with the EU before running from the altar. It would have been harder to predict, at the outset, that Yanukovych and the security forces would bother assaulting the tiny protest, or that their assault would have such a mobilizing effect on Ukrainian citizens, or that snipers would open fire on protesters, and so on until the February 2014 revolution. Path dependence, which seems to characterize this case, makes prediction extremely difficult (Jervis 1991-1992, p. 42-3). Path dependence also hinders general explanation, for it seems that every one of these crucial decisions, had it been made differently, could have led to a different outcome. This leads to a proliferation of necessary conditions for revolution to occur. Political science cannot solve the autocrat's dilemma—when to repress protest. Nor can it reliably tell opposition leaders when protest will succeed. Even in Russia, where the Putin administration has strived to learn and implement every possible lesson about avoiding protest and revolution, Vladimir Putin was unable to prevent massive protests after the sham election that returned him to the presidency in 2012.

Immense effort will no doubt be expended documenting, describing, and explaining the revolutionary events of 2013-14 in Ukraine, but protest will also likely be a huge policy question looking forward as well. Two of the last three changes of presidency in Ukraine have been resolved in the streets. In this respect, protests appear to have as much legitimacy in Ukraine as elections. Building democracy

will not be easy in such circumstances, and reforming an economy may be even harder, as aggrieved individuals have well-tested means of challenging the state, and the state has neither the means nor the legitimacy to repress protesters. More ominously, protests and the ejection of leaders by protests do not necessarily contribute to liberal democracy. All these phenomena, and the capacity of the Ukrainian state in particular, are subjects that merit deeper analysis than they have received. Both in the study of Africa and in the study of the post-communist states, state strength and state-society relations have been central issues (Beissinger & Young 2002), but this topic has been relatively neglected in the case of Ukraine.

Foreign Policy

International politics is often seen as a distinct discipline from the rest of political science, because it deals not with politics within sovereign states, but among them, and a long line of scholars has contended that these are two fundamentally different kinds of politics. Nonetheless, the study of international politics does, especially in North America, aspire to be a social science and to connect social science to policy goals. In this field, much less has been done in Ukrainian studies than in many of the topics considered by comparative politics. There have been relatively few studies of Ukrainian foreign policy that are explicitly social scientific. Some have applied theories from the broader study of international politics to Ukraine (D'Anieri 1999; Moroney, Kuzio & Molchanov 2002; Kravets 2011). Others have included Ukraine as a case in a comparative study and illuminated Ukraine in the process (Abdelal 2001). But much more of this research has been focused on particular policy problems and has examined them with little if any specific reference to broader patterns or theories of international politics. This is the field in which the North American study of Ukraine has been most "traditionalist" in its approach.

For Ukraine, foreign policy is an area—more so than many areas of domestic politics—in which the unique and hard-to-compare aspects of the country's situation appear to outweigh the easily compared aspects. The problem of denuclearization is a case in point. There are very few comparable cases, and except for Belarus and Kazakhstan, they occurred in vastly different circumstances. Nonetheless, we might hope for more. In particular, there exists the potential for comparative or large-n analysis within Ukrainian foreign policy. We now have four presidencies to compare, various institutional arrangements, and some issues that have been dealt with repeatedly over twenty years. These are ripe for comparative analysis. However, these areas tend not to be the ones that interest us most, and that is not likely to change the relationships with Russia and Europe will continue to dominate the agenda, and recent events imply a fundamental break that will make comparison with previous years difficult. Two ongoing issues point to the continuity in Ukrainian foreign policy over time, even as Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territory represents a fundamental discontinuity.

One is the economic and political relationship with Russia. Several early studies (Motyl 1993; Garnett 1996; D'Anieri 1999; a more contemporary study is Balmaceda 2013) pointed to the fundamental dilemma that Ukraine faces in its relationship

with Russia: how to square Ukraine's deep economic interdependence with Russia with its desire to be politically independent of Russia. That is a problem that states around the world face, but few face it as starkly as Ukraine. Even in 2014, as Russia seizes Ukrainian territory, Ukraine finds itself needing to preserve the flow of energy to Ukraine, and the availability of Russian markets for Ukrainian goods. A great deal of advice about how to reorient Ukraine's economy toward the west will no doubt be forthcoming, and cross-national comparison has much to contribute. The question is whether Ukraine has the state capacity to implement such policies, for these policies have been self-evident for two decades, with little progress to show.

A second issue is the relationship with Europe. As Abdelal (2001) has shown, post-communism turns conventional thinking about nationalism and foreign economic policy on its head. Conventional analysis holds that nationalism in economic policy is equivalent to the promotion of autonomy and rejection of integration and supranationalism. Abdelal showed that for some of the post-communist states, nationalism was expressed by integration with Europe. This phenomenon is particularly salient in Ukraine today, when the question of joining Europe drove a revolution and then an invasion. How will the cataclysmic events of 2013-present shape attitudes toward Europe, and will the desire to join Europe build support for badly needed reforms?

The Obstacles to Successful Political Science on Ukraine

In many respects, the substantive questions of 2014 mirror the questions we have been asking since 1991. Ukraine's inability to make progress has left it addressing the same problems over and over again (D'Anieri 2011). Few predicted the Orange Revolution, few predicted the February 2014 revolution, debate continues over institutional design, and no one has been able to chart a viable path to judicial reform, sustainable economic growth, or a workable foreign policy strategy. If the goals of social science as generally practiced in North America are to explain how politics works and to prescribe polices to achieve desirable goals, we might ask why we have not accomplished more.

In this section, I propose a simple answer to that question: the project of political science as conceived of in North America is a very difficult one, and there are numerous barriers to success. This has little to do with Ukraine in particular, although Ukraine does have some particular challenges. Skeptics of political science often point out ways in which the project seems futile. Not one, but two important articles entitled "Is a [the] Science of Comparative Politics Possible," with the philosopher Alisdair MacIntyre voicing extreme skepticism and the political scientist Adam Przeworski (2009) being positively inclined while demonstrating important limits.

Below, I highlight eight inherent barriers to successful explanation and prescription. None of these points are new; all have been made by other scholars in other contexts. I simply apply them to the study of Ukraine. Moreover, none of these barriers invalidate political science as a discipline or diminish its utility in informing

policy discussions. Indeed, political science is essential to the critical evaluation of competing policy proposals. Whether we admit it or not, policy prescriptions are always based on some understanding of causes and effects. Political science seeks to make those understandings explicit and to test them empirically. It is better at falsifying questionable theories than at definitively proving truths.

1. Problems of Comparison

MacIntyre points out that, due to cultural differences, the same concepts rarely mean the same thing in different countries. Therefore it is very difficult to actually compare the same things in different countries. "Democracy" is likely just such a term. Thus cross-national surveys asking respondents about democracy may inadvertently compare different ideas. MacIntyre claims that different formal institutions likely play different roles in different societies. This kind of critique is at the heart of "area studies" based critiques of applying cross-national findings to Ukraine.

The problem has been more salient in some areas than others. The finding in the comparative literature—that strong presidencies correlate poorly with sustained democracy—has fit well with Ukraine's experience; the problems that arose in Ukraine are similar to those that emerged elsewhere. However, as noted above, the somewhat unique relationship between the Ukrainian and Russian languages have made it harder to apply cross-nationally derived findings on language policy. Similarly, research in Ukraine shows that institutions, intentionally or otherwise, often end up performing different roles than envisioned in cross-national analysis (Allina-Pisano 2008).

2. Isolating Variables

Przeworski (2009) points out that many factors in which we are interested tend to correlate with one another: wealth, democracy, rule of law, and civil liberties. This makes it very difficult to isolate these variables as one would do in a pure scientific model. The rarity of such "natural experiments" impedes the specification of clear relationships among many of the phenomena that concern us. This difficulty in disentangling correlated phenomena leads to a very prominent problem in crafting recommendations for reform: it is essential to sort out causes from effects, and to identify which steps are prior to others. This is a serious issue in Ukraine, where numerous "chicken and egg" issues exist. For example, combatting corruption depends on building a strong state, but the state cannot easily be strengthened when it is so corroded by corruption. Similarly, separating the closely related concepts of nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, and region has proven tricky.

3. Competing Priorities

In contrast to situations where important variables correlate with one another, there are situations in which important priorities seem to contradict one another. Two variables that seem, to some, to be in tension are state strength and democracy. In many western democracies, strong states were built under autocracy, and were later liberalized. Ukraine is trying to build a state and democracy at the same time. Some wonder if this is possible, but few are willing to choose one over the other,

especially since the argument that a strong state is required before democracy can be built (or before a market economy can be built) seems to justify autocracy. In Ukraine, a case in point was the adoption of the constitution in 1996, when many Ukrainians (and western observers) supported Kuchma's coercive adoption of a highly presidentialist constitution on the grounds that this concentration of authority was needed to overcome opposition to reform in the leftist-controlled parliament.

4. Values and Goals

Social science does not have anything to say about what values and goals policy *should* pursue. Thus many major questions for a newly independent state are not subject to political science, and some of the findings of political science are trumped by normative goals. In the case of Ukraine, this is evident in the sphere of ethnic politics and language policy. Predicting the effects of a particular language regime is an empirical question; choosing a language policy is primarily a normative question. Unfortunately, these two kinds of issues were sometimes conflated, and there has been some tendency to advocate the empirical argument that best supports one's normative position. Political science may be able to address the causal questions, but it cannot address the value questions. Similarly, there has been a great deal of mixing of normative preferences and analytical arguments in the area of economic reform and in the related area of relations with Europe and with Russia.

5. Scholarly Disagreement

The kinds of debates on which social scientists thrive undermine the ability of policy makers – from constitution writers to corruption fighters – to apply political science effectively. There remains considerable uncertainty about many of the causal relationships that concern us most. What causes democracy? What causes economic development? If democracy and development are correlated, what is the relationship—is one driving the other, or are both driven by some third variable? Scientific debate is not unique to political science—it occurs in physics as well—but because we are so eager to apply findings to policy, scientific disagreement is especially salient. Efforts to use political science to inform policy are hampered by the paucity of unambiguous answers to the most important questions.

6. The Problem of Agency

Another problem that hampers the application of political science to policy is that of agency. Even if we can clearly identify the causes of a particular phenomenon, if we cannot manipulate those causes, we cannot influence the outcomes. A good example is research on geography and democratization. It has been widely noted that, among the post-communist states, there is a correlation between geography and democracy, with those located further to the west, other things being equal, scoring higher on democracy measures (Kopstein & Reilly 2000). To the extent that geography, by itself, is having an effect, there is not much one can do. To the extent that geography is a surrogate for other factors, there may or may not be hope: if the key factor is a favorable reception from the European Union, than change is possible; if the key factor is historical connection to the Roman Empire,

then nothing can be done. A central underpinning of almost all North American research on Ukraine is the belief that Ukraine *can* become a liberal democracy in the foreseeable future.

7. Collective Action Problems

A great many of public policy issues are beset by collective action problems, in which cooperating makes sense only if one can be assured that others will behave the same way. For example, while it is fairly easy to state that citizens and officials should not engage in corruption, for the citizen hoping to get a permit to renovate an apartment, refusing to pay a bribe is irrational if no one else changes their behavior. Corruption is not, therefore, reduced and the citizen loses the opportunity. A related example is macro-level economic reform. It takes a determined and powerful actor to enact far-reaching reforms, but no actor may have sufficient power to do so. Gaining the assent of other power holders is necessary, but these politicians are all competing for power with one another, and have much incentive to avoid being perceived as responsible for unpopular decisions. What all these problems have in common is a suboptimal outcome that is a stable equilibrium. The implication is that for social scientists, identifying the "best" policy is not the hard part as this does not fully solve the problem. A large literature in political science has elaborated the conditions that make collective action problems easier or harder to solve, and has identified institutions that can facilitate reaching solutions. Yet, many collective action problems continue to resist solution. This problem connects to that of agency discussed above: the nature of collective action problems is that no single agent has the ability and incentive to solve the problem unilaterally.

8. Power and Interest versus Reform

The final and perhaps most significant problem is that which the realist international relations scholar Hans Morgenthau (1946) memorably characterized as *Scientific Man versus Power Politics*. The application of political science to solve problems assumes the desire to solve achieves certain goals, such as the creation of democracy, the increase in economic growth, and the maintenance of international security. And while there is considerable debate over both of the normative goals, that debate is still grounded in goals that are assumed to be public and shared. Much of politics, however, is not about shared goals, but about private goals. If everyone is concerned with building democracy, we can focus on the question of how. But for many actors, and not only the most venal, private goals compete with public goals. Government decisions affect wealth and privilege. This gives people an incentive to try to control the government, and this desire spills over into a desire to design institutions that will favor their control over government. This of course is not unique to Ukraine, and furthermore, it is a problem that social science cannot solve.

Conclusion: Political Science in a World of Power Politics

While collective action problems are in principle solvable, zero-sum games cannot be solved cooperatively. They can be solved only through the exercise of

power. Nearly every governmental decision has distributive consequences, in terms of which people win office, which firms get contracts, which workers get benefits, or which industries find a more congenial playing field. In each case where there are winners and losers, we can expect rational, self-interested actors to pursue their interests. Who wins is determined by who has power, and thus power becomes an end in itself.

Viktor Yanukovych's presidency was emblematic of this phenomenon. Having captured the state, Yanukovych and his associates sought to put the state to work pursuing their private goals. They also revised Ukraine's constitution to make it harder for others to compete with them for power. Moreover, events to some extent validated their concern—when their power flagged, they were ejected from power and forced to flee the country. However, the problem of power is much more universal—one need not envision a Yanukovych or a Kuchma for the problem to be profound. Even Viktor Yushchenko, who was generally regarded as being somewhat oriented to the public good, found that in order to pursue the public good he had to have power. To increase his power, he needed diminish that of others, and when it came to power, his allies (i.e. Yuliya Tymoshenko) seemed a lot like adversaries. Tymoshenko—whose public-mindedness is debated—encountered the same dilemma; she needed to undermine Yushchenko to preserve her prerogatives. Thus, it is the case that the publicly-minded, almost as much as selfish people find themselves confronted with the need to acquire power.

The problem of power is important especially where it intersects with the problem of institutional design. The institutional design literature assumes that institutions channel power, and that the goal in designing institutions is to promote and protect democracy. In many countries, Ukraine included, the opposite of both these propositions is just as likely to be true. People designing institutions are often concerned with maximizing their own power, not necessarily building democracy. Or rather, in designing democracy, they seek to do so in ways that maximize their own likelihood for success in competitive politics. The problem is not unique to new democracies, as the example of drawing US congressional districts demonstrates. Precisely because institutions define who has power and what "counts" as power, those with power seek to enact institutions that preserve and extend, rather than limit, their power. Therefore, power shapes institutions as much as institutions shape power.

In this version of political science, the theoretical question is "what determines who wins in the contest for power," and the policy question is "what means will help the side that I prefer triumph?" In this Machiavellian perspective, the "real" political scientists are not the academics, but rather the competitors for power and the political technologists and strategists they employ.

In the "consolidated democracies" it seems that the overall institutional framework—formal and informal—manages to channel efforts at private gain *within* the existing institutional framework, rather than at its expense. In Ukraine, the opposite is the case. Twice in fifteen years, autocrats have been able to subvert nascent democratic institutions, and street protests have been necessary and

sufficient to determine who would be president and to force revision of the constitution. This lack of institutionalization deprives politics of the regularized interactions on which positivist political science depends. Ukraine's relatively de-institutionalized power politics resembles international relations as much as the domestic politics of the advanced industrial states, where comparative politics has been most successful.

Does the role of power in Ukrainian politics mean that political science is irrelevant? Not at all. As a long line of work attests, the problem of power complicates the project of applying political science to public policy but does not reduce its importance. The literature on institutional design is a case in point. The challenge, as shown in the Federalist Papers, is not to design perfect institutions for a perfect society, but rather to design institutions which function well *despite* the problems of power and interest described above. The separation of powers among distinct parts of government is designed largely to make ambition counteract ambition, so that the result is acceptable, if not perfect. Applying political science to these problems is likely to be superior to applying untested hunches.

With Ukraine once again in a post-revolutionary situation, Ukrainian elites and citizens, backed by western elites and academics, profess the goal of building a European-style democracy in Ukraine. It is not enough to ask what has worked in the well-institutionalized free-market democracies to the west. It is also necessary to ask how to get to a position of deeply institutionalized democracy from the de-institutionalized power politics, which currently characterize Ukraine. This is a problem to which political scientists and politicians alike need to pay more attention.

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Notes

A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the 19th World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, April 2014. The author is grateful to the participants in that discussion and to two anonymous reviewers for their comments, and to the journal editors.

[1] In this context "North America" is really shorthand for "Canada and the United States." Those two countries have produced far more scholarship on Ukraine than Mexico or any of the Caribbean countries.

[2] The multinational character of our discipline is in clear evidence every spring at the annual meeting of the Association for National Studies, and that conference's organizers deserve credit for ensuring that it is far more inclusive than most academic conferences in North America.

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UKRAINIAN STUDIES IN EUROPE: NEW POSSIBILITIES

Rory Finnin

The field of Ukrainian Studies is dogged by an epistemological problem. Like nature, knowledge should abhor a vacuum. Academic research should gravitate toward big, unknown, complex things. But if the recent crisis has made anything clear, it is that Ukraine remains Europe's *terra malecognita*: large, diverse, understudied, badly understood. At times I illustrate the problem to my students by way of an interdisciplinary analogy: imagine a physicist in 1991 who discovers in her laboratory a new particle, the largest of its kind in a particular system. This particle affects the movement and trajectory of its neighbors and sits at the system's nexus. Then the physicist notes something even more astounding: the particle is held together in a peculiar way. Most other particles have at least one particular feature that causes them to cohere; this particle does not. Now imagine leagues of other physicists who shrug their shoulders and return to business as usual.

This has been the story of Ukrainian Studies in European higher education outside of the Slavic-speaking world since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Ukraine is the largest country within the continent, situated at a geopolitical crossroads and bound together not by one language, or one church, or one ethnicity, or even one historical inheritance. Yet at an institutional level, the academy has largely shrugged its shoulders in response to Ukraine's emergence as an independent state in 1991. It tends not to recognize the country and its people as an official object of knowledge, perpetuating instead a public outbreak across the continent of 'reverse hallucination', a condition of not seeing what is there with respect to Ukraine. As I write this essay, Russian forces are amassing along Ukraine's eastern border. To the casual European observer, they might as well be poised to invade a black hole. This problem exists despite the dedication of accomplished European scholars like Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, Alexander Kratochvil, Michael Moser and others too numerous to mention here. It also exists despite the activity of the Ukrainian Free University in Munich and of such curricular initiatives as the Ukrainicum summer school at Greifswald and the Ukrainian course at the *Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales* in Paris. Above all, the problem exists because of a persistent failure in the academy to interrogate the value-bound choices of research in 'area studies' and to disentangle intellectual merit from often ossified perceptions of politico-cultural power. In other words, the problem is a prevailing logic by which might is not only right, but read.

This much has been abundantly clear to all of us in Ukrainian Studies, Baltic Studies, African Studies, and so on for some time. Less clear has been our collective response, which has at times bordered on defensive, for understandable reasons. Rather than chronicling this history or detailing the state of Ukrainian Studies in Europe – which could amount to an exercise in shaking a fist at the sky – I would

like to make one or two brief and modest suggestions for the future. In general, I am convinced that the international study of Ukraine has tremendous upside, provided we take more academic risks, engender more creativity and connection, and above all market for the public a multiethnic, multicultural Ukraine ripe for innovative interdisciplinary and comparative study.

1.

Engaging the public and letting the intellectual case lead the way: this is all very well and good. But even a cursory glance at dissertations and theses on Ukrainian topics recently produced in Great Britain, for instance, reveals the challenge of our practical follow-through. The very disciplines that can overcome the limitations of language and of geographical and historical distance to reach the public efficiently and effectively – the disciplines of the humanities – are woefully underrepresented. Beyond a few recent notable exceptions, doctoral theses on Ukrainian literature, film, music and visual art have been rare over the past two decades. In British scholarship, Ukraine largely appears as a creature of politics and economics – but not culture.

In one sense, the study of Ukrainian culture stands at the intersection of general crises in the humanities and in Slavic Studies. Its relative neglect should not come as a great surprise, but it is quizzical all the same. Political Ukraine owes its very existence to culture – to Cossack *dumy*, to folk music, to popular ethnography, to Romantic poetry in the Ukrainian vernacular that invited, seduced, and cajoled readers into the national project. This fact is precisely what makes the study of the Ukrainian language a *sine qua non* for any student and scholar of the country. It is a matter of simple professional competence. Without a knowledge of Ukrainian, one cannot speak or understand the language of the modern Ukrainian national idea. Similarly, without a knowledge of Russian, one cannot speak or understand the language of a significant part of living, breathing Ukrainian society. We have to promote the former, embrace the latter, and provide both at the curricular level, with short-course pathways for Yiddish, Crimean Tatar and Polish wherever possible.

In another sense, the study of Ukrainian culture stands directly in the wake of over two hundred years of colonial exploitation. We can debate the historical position of Ukraine as a political and economic colony, but its existence as a cultural colony of its neighbors is not in doubt. Today distant echoes of the imperial practices of provincializing Ukrainian culture and of the anticolonial practices of politicizing Ukrainian culture continue to resound in Slavic Studies. These are practices that reductively cast artists as either zeroes or heroes, as unworthy of scholarly attention or unassailable beyond certain norms. They can stifle conceptual innovation and lead to intellectual inertia. Beyond the work of scholars in the Ukrainian diaspora, for instance, it is very difficult to find published English-language scholarship on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Ukrainian literature. The work of Taras Shevchenko, one of the most extraordinary and extraordinarily influential artists in modern European history, is rarely broached. This neglect – as outrageous as it is – presents us today with a remarkable opening and an

opportunity for reinvention and scholarly entrepreneurism. I am very intrigued by, for example, the application of the digital humanities and 'computational criticism' to colonial Ukrainian literature, which could jettison it out of the provincial-political realm and into a new constellation of ideas about transnational exchange and global culture. In general, whatever our methodology, we need to revisit Ukraine's colonial-era culture with the same sense of excitement and open-ended potential as we do its postcolonial-era culture – to read, say, Mykhail' Semenko or Valer'ian Pidmohyl'nyi as we do the ever-popular Serhii Zhadan.

We also need to facilitate and enable more readings of – to continue the analogy – Semenko or Pidmohyl'nyi *alongside* Zhadan. Today Ukrainian literary fiction is flourishing at a rate unseen since the 1920s, and a number of scholars have recently offered brilliant close readings of this more recent work, particularly in the context of Memory Studies. Going forward, we would do well to encourage our students to leverage this vibrant interest in the contemporary period in the service of more 'vertical' contextual analyses that can join postcolonial production with colonial pretexts – Oksana Zabuzhko and Lesia Ukrainka; Iurii Andrukhovych and Ivan Kotliarevs'kyi; etc. – in a variety of interpretative frames.

2.

Availing ourselves of the intergenerational, intertextual, interlinguistic vibrancy of Ukraine's culture is to use a master key. It opens all manner of doors, particularly with the public. Without question, a buzzword in our field should be public outreach, particularly in the age of Facebook, Twitter and iTunesU. As scholars we are understandably conditioned to view anything beyond our teaching and research as a career-killing waste of time. But the future of Ukrainian Studies depends on our ability to generate more career, publication and funding opportunities for our students and to grow a more diverse audience over the long term. Here in Great Britain, our colleagues in Polish Studies and Russian Studies can build critical mass by collaborating with such institutions as the Polish Cultural Institute and Pushkin House, which engender public interest in Poland and Russia with concerts, exhibitions, film festivals, translation initiatives and the like. These colleagues can also expect that a visitor to any High Street bookstore will discover, for example, literary Poland and literary Russia among the texts on its shelves.[1] We have no such luxury, nor can we afford to wait for one. *Koly – iak ne zaraz, i khto – iak ne my?(When if not now, who if not us?)*

All of us in Ukrainian Studies therefore have a stake in fostering the study of culture and showcasing cultural products for public consumption. Doing so pays intellectual and practical dividends. We unveil new research horizons, reach new audiences, and recruit new colleagues by developing the profession of Ukrainian-to-English literary translation and by regularly organizing film screenings, concerts, or art exhibitions in collaboration with Ukrainian partners. At Cambridge, for instance, one of our annual public offerings is an evening of musical performances and literary readings in tribute to and in support of *Vsesvit*, the oldest active literary journal in Ukraine. Founded in 1925 by Oleksandr Dovzhenko, Vasyl' Blakytnyi, and

Mykola Khvyl'ovyi, the journal has translated over 4,000 works from 98 literatures of the world into the Ukrainian language.

Over the course of the *Vsesvit* evening, we read selected texts in their original languages – Catalan, Yiddish, Hebrew, Armenian, Georgian, Russian, Polish, Italian – and then in English translation and in the Ukrainian translation published in *Vsesvit*. Our audiences bring to the event a variety of linguistic competencies and disciplinary backgrounds. Many are there to discover the Ukrainian language for the first time. Others are undergraduate and graduate students in our Ukrainian Studies programme who approach the selected texts as opportunities for further comparative study: Adam Zagajewski's reminiscences of L'viv/Lwów, Hayim Nahman Bialik's elegies for the Jewish community in Volyn, Aharon Appelfeld's representations of the Ukrainian peasantry in Czernowitz/Chernivtsi, Mykola Bazhan's interpretations of classical and Romantic Georgian literature. In other words, events like the *Vsesvit* evening present Ukraine both as a cultural centre and as a cultural interstice, a site of artistic creation and translation. They elicit attention from diverse publics and from a particular constituency whose significance, in my view, is often underestimated in Ukrainian Studies: the undergraduate community.

In nearly six years at Cambridge, we have had well over one hundred undergraduates enrolled in our various course offerings. Some come to us with no prior knowledge of a Slavic language, meaning that Ukraine is the first stop on their intellectual journey through Eastern Europe. A growing number of our undergraduates go on to pursue topics in Ukrainian Studies at the graduate level, by which time they have already critically assessed the conventional wisdom about *translatio imperii*, 'historical' vs. 'non-historical' nations, and the like. As it stands, Ukrainian Studies in Europe is predominantly a graduate teaching enterprise. The field would be well served by more directed appeals to undergraduates and even to students in advanced secondary schools. In fact, national affiliates of the International Association of Ukrainian Studies may wish to consider including the post of 'Schools Liaison Officer' among the leadership and to formalize this outreach to younger communities.

3.

To this point I have simply suggested that the field of Ukrainian Studies in Europe embrace the cultural and engage the public and the undergraduate community with more purpose, ambition and direction. I would like to conclude with a self-evident but nonetheless important observation. London, Berlin, Vienna are only a short flight away from Kyiv and Kharkiv. This relative geographical proximity underscores our collective responsibility to work in active partnership with students and colleagues in Ukraine, to the extent possible. Here we seek to follow in the footsteps of our colleagues in the United States and in Canada. Programs and initiatives in Ukrainian Studies can only succeed and flourish if they cultivate deeper bilateral relationships with Ukrainian cultural and educational institutions and with the people of Ukraine – especially now, as the country bravely embarks on a new chapter in its history.

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Notes

[1] A quick, simple visit to Blackwell's Online is instructive: a search for in-stock books under the heading 'Russian literature' yields 131 results and under 'Polish literature', 16 results. An identical search for books under the heading 'Ukrainian literature' yields no results at all.

UKRAINIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE STUDY OF UKRAINE WITHIN AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE: HOW SIMILAR, HOW DIFFERENT?

Oxana Shevel

The objective of this essay is to compare key characteristics, pathways of development, and challenges facing the discipline of political science in the West (primarily in the US) and in Ukraine, to consider the causes of these differences, and to reflect on what it would take for political science in Ukraine to overcome the challenges it has faced in the post-Soviet period.

Political Science in Ukraine: Stability or Crisis?

There are not many published studies on the state of Ukrainian political science as a discipline, and those that exist differ in their conclusions. Among Ukrainian practitioners of political science who have written on the topic in recent years, there seems to be a consensus opinion that the discipline has reached a "period of stability," having emerged out of the formative decade of the 1990s when the discipline had to be essentially developed from scratch in post-Soviet Ukraine (Rudych 2003b; Rudych 2003b; Matvienkiv 2008). This conclusion is supported by pointing to such facts as the establishment of the discipline within academic institutions and its formal recognition by the Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Education, definition of key research topics and methods of the discipline,1 publication of many textbooks and monographs dedicated to political science, launching of political science periodicals, establishment of research institutes, professional associations, and the growing number of professional political scientists who were granted kandydat and doctor of political science degrees.

By contrast, assessment of Ukrainian political science by scholars based in the West, Western scholars working in Ukraine, and Ukrainian scholars more integrated into Western political science community is a lot less sanguine. In a scathing assessment of the state of the political science discipline in Ukraine one such scholar characterized Ukrainian political science as a "deeply provincial pseudo-science" that is "on a far periphery of world political science." (Kudelia 2012). Responding to this assessment, another scholar, while taking issue with the broad juxtaposition of Ukrainian and Western political science as, respectably, "bad" and "good", agreed that in Ukraine during the last twenty years, "the quality of political science research has not reached either European or American levels {of quality}, and description of known realities has not transformed into their explanation" (Matsievskyi 2012).

The reasons for such criticisms of the state of the field of Ukrainian political science are several. First, the very conclusion that Ukrainian political science is on the periphery of world political science is not a subjective opinion but is based on the fact that very little Ukrainian political science output has received professional recognition on the basis of the global gold standard of scholarly quality – the peer-review process. There are no peer-reviewed political science journals in Ukraine (the lacunae the Journal of Ukrainian Politics and Society would be filling), and very few Ukrainian political scientists have published in peer-reviewed outlets in the West. Among nearly a thousand people who defended kandydat or doctoral dissertations in political science in Ukraine between 1991 and 2012, less than a handful have published single-authored monographs with a Western academic press, less than a dozen contributed to edited volumes, and around two dozen have published articles in peer-reviewed journals (Matsievskyi 2012). The peer-review process is demanding and lengthy, and because of this most Western political scientists do not have publication records of ten-plus books and hundred-plus articles. Such numbers, however, are not uncommon among senior and even mid-career political scientists in Ukraine and elsewhere in the former Soviet space. But quantity does not automatically equal quality, and seeing biographies with hundreds of publications is more likely to raise skeptical rather than admiring eyebrows Western colleagues.

In addition to the lack of peer-reviewed publications by Ukrainian political scientists - an objective marker of the weakness of Ukrainian political science - critics have identified additional problems with the discipline. Several in particular are worth highlighting. The first set of problems has to do with largely descriptive and non-comparative nature of most studies (Kudelia 2012). And while Masievskyi is right that "not all studies published in the West give new knowledge, and not all texts published in Ukraine are purely descriptive" (p. 10), the study of Ukraine by political science in Ukraine, unlike in the West (especially in North America), is not "puzzle-driven" (more on that below) and largely not comparative. Even though some Ukrainian political scientists acknowledge the importance of comparative work, such comparisons are for the most part descriptive rather than theoretically-driven. If, as will be discussed below, in Western political science comparative research generally seeks to critically assess and further advance social scientific causal theories, Ukrainian political scientists see the goals of comparative work quite differently – seemingly in documenting differences and similarities, and locating the "best" systems and models of development. Thus, Rudych states that comparative research "constitutes quantitative and qualitative juxtaposition of similar events and processes: government institutions, parties, electorates, with the goal of determining their common characteristics and specifics and of searching for the best forms of political organization and the most optimal ways of establishing social-political system" (Rudych 2003b).

The reasons behind non-comparative and descriptive nature of much of political science research in Ukraine are manifold - from lack of the tradition of critical thinking in social sciences in the Soviet period (when many of today's political scientists received their education in fields such as scientific communism, Marxist-Leninist philosophy, and history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) to,

perhaps understandably, focus on the travails of state-building in Ukraine in the post-Soviet period. As Kudelia notes, the lack of foreign language skills also limits Ukrainian political scientists to consuming either domestic or Russian scholarship, while Russian political science suffers from some of the same pitfalls – descriptive, non-comparative, atheoretical, and normatively oriented (Gel'man 2014).

This leads us to the second and related set of problems with Ukrainian political science – its atheoretical and often normative nature. In fact, what constitutes political science theory is understood quite differently in Ukraine and in the West. As will be discussed below, in Western context, theory is generally seen as instrument of knowledge that helps to think systematically about the realities of political life, and the validity and utility of political science theories is ascertained by systematically testing theories against empirical evidence. The "best" theory would be the one(s) which best withstands such an empirical test, not the one(s) that best support a particular normative ideal or ways to achieve it. By contrast, in political science theorizing in Ukraine, "personal beliefs often replace theoretically grounded conclusions, descriptive analysis (publitsystychnyi opys) is presented as analytical research, and clear scientific hypotheses are replaced by abstract claims and banal generalizations" (Kudelia 2012).

This lack of empirically-tested social scientific theorizing is also rooted in the Soviet past, in particular in the non-empirical nature of the disciplines from which post-Soviet political science arose. In the Soviet period, political science as a separate discipline did not exist, and the disciplines from which many of today's political scientists originated (philosophy, jurisprudence, logic) were not utilizing empirical research to test causal theories (Umland 2013). As a result, Umland states that, "on the one hand, in post-Soviet political science there accumulated a surplus of theoretical, philosophical, historical, definitional and conceptual discussions. On the other hand, there is a striking lack of primary empirical research."

At a more general level, many Ukrainian political scientists fundamentally may not understand what contemporary political science is all about, what methods it uses, and what questions it asks (and does not) (Kudelia 2012; Umland 2013). Ukrainian (and more generally post-Soviet) political scientists, according to Umland, "have a tendency to see political science research as an intellectual, opinion-based, literary and/or interpretative exercise instead of an analytical-empirical and comparative one." Similar problems plague political science textbooks published in Ukraine. According to Matsievsky, most published textbooks are characterized by "conceptual poverty" and "lack of a clear methodological base" (Matsievskyi 2004). Instead of showing how existing political realities can be analyzed through different theoretical lenses, the textbooks have "normative-descriptive approach" whereby "some 75%" of the content consists of "regurgitation of dry theory" and the remainder on explanations of realities in Ukraine (Matsievskyi 2004).

The normative bend characteristic of Ukrainian political science seems to be purposeful rather than accidental, since political scientists themselves – in contrast to their Western colleagues, as will be discussed below – see normative recommendations as one of the key goals of political science research. Thus,

authors of one textbook state that "political science has a normative-guiding function ... to answer the question 'what's better? What choice should be made?" (Matsievskyi 2004). Another Ukrainian political scientist argues that "a key task of political science is its teaching-educational function, the formation of high political consciousness and political culture of citizens, especially among the younger generation" (Rudych 2003b).

The normative bend and fundamental misunderstanding of Western political science methods also affect the range of topics to which Ukrainian political scientists gravitate – and avoid. Many Ukrainian political scientists believe that "the social and political designation of a political scientist consists in the maximum support of the idea of statehood in general and one's own statehood in particular" (Kholod 2001, p. 18). Dedication to support of statehood is in no way problematic as a personal political position, and also understandable in the environment of a new state, but it can cause problems when it comes to political science research. First, as Matsievskyi correctly points out, political science, as well as other social sciences, cannot and does not have a clear ideal or norm to which political system or political behavior must conform. If unconditional support for one's statehood is a normative must, this can create a situation whereby political scientists can shy away from studying such phenomena as corruption and abuse of power by state leaders (Matsievskyi 2004). Another problem stemming from normatively oriented research agenda is identified by Umland who notes that there is a lacunae in the study of the far right in Ukraine (Umland 2013). Umland argues that it is caused by the patriotic orientation of many scholars: "historians and social scientists who consider themselves patriots are inclined to treat the cult of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalist) {cultivated in} the Halytchyna and in the Ukrainian diaspora with understanding or even sympathy," and to see "extremist ethno-nationalist tendencies existing in Ukraine as, perhaps excessive, but at the same time at least partly understandable, safe, or even desirable manifestations of Ukrainian national identity and pride." As a result, scholars come to see "criticism of Ukrainian nationalism – even of its most extreme manifestations - as corresponding to the ideology not of the European but of the Soviet Union, and being an expression of not Western but Russian preferences" (Umland 2013).

American Political Science and its Study of Ukraine

So how does the state of affairs of Ukrainian political science described above compare with the state of affairs in Western political science, in particular Western political science that studies Ukraine? As mentioned at the start, by Western political science this essay primarily speaks of American political science. Focus on the US can be justified by the fact that Western political science is rather unipolar, with about 80% of political science researchers and instructors in the world working in universities and institutions located in the United States (Sartori 2004, p. 794). Yet this is not to say that non-US political science does not deserve attention, or that without such attention this analysis is admittedly incomplete. I would recommend that readers interested in the development of political science

in continental Europe consult other sources, for example (Kinnvall 2005). Within the discipline of American political science the study of Ukraine falls primarily to the sub-field of comparative politics, the defining features of this subfield make the most relevant comparison with the field of political science in Ukraine.

The key problems of Ukrainian political science, as discussed above, are that most of the works tend to be normative, descriptive, atheoretical, and non-comparative. American political science has not been immune to the very same problems. In fact, one can say that these very problems characterized much of American political science from its inception in the second half of the 19th century through the inter-war period, and it is only in the post-WWII era when American political science and the comparative politics subfield became more value-neutral and embraced theory-driven comparative empirical inquiry.

Consider what the discipline looked like in the early decades of its existence. As Blyth notes, in the late 19th and early 20th century before WWI, political scientists took "inspiration from the Prussian state as the model of good governance and proper public administration," and "sought to draw general lessons from this single case in order to develop better models of governance." (Blyth 2006, p. 493). The focus on formal state institutions and the search of the best model of governance made the discipline descriptive and normative. As Dryzek observed, "From Francis Lieber, appointed to the first American professorship in history and political science at Columbia in 1857, to Woodrow Wilson and well beyond, the main practical task of political science was seen as the establishment of a unitary national state accompanied by a virtuous national citizenry" (Dryzek 2006, p. 487) – the goal very similar to what some Ukrainian political scientists set for themselves today, as discussed above. If, in its first decades, American political science was both descriptive and normative, concerned with advocacy for the best institutions, in the inter-war period American political science became "the study of irrelevance" (Blyth 2006, p. 493). It retained the state-centric focus and attention to descriptive analysis of formal institutions, but failed to predict any of the cataclysmic events of the period such as the fall of great powers, the rise of fascism and communism, and world wars – and even to study these major events of the time (Blyth 2006).

It was in the post-WWII period when the discipline underwent fundamental changes. Even though different time periods of the past seven decades can be associated with the dominance of a particular methodological approach (behavioralism, state-theory, new institutionalism, rational choice, etc.), and adherents of these approaches at times have engaged in heated debates with each other, the overall goal of the discipline has become to explain causes of important political phenomena and variations in this phenomena across countries and regions of the world. What would it take for new post-colonial states to democratize? For underdeveloped countries to develop? Why some states managed to establish and maintain democratic forms of government while democracy in others fell to military coups and authoritarianism? Why ethnic conflicts rage in some ethnically diverse societies but not in others? These are the types of questions the field of comparative politics has been seeking to answer, and this "focus on consequential political outcomes – justice, representation, order, democracy" is what distinguishes

political science as a discipline these days (Laitin 2004, p. 790). And even when proponents of different methods have disagreed on what constituted best causal explanations, they have generally remained united on the kinds of questions the discipline should be asking and how it should go about answering them – by systematically collecting and analyzing empirical data, and letting such analysis rather than one's normative persuasions become the basis on which the validity of alternative theories is judged.

Disciplinary consensus around these fundamental principles of political science disciples is evident in what has become known as the Perestroika debate that has been raging in American political science since the early 2000s. The Perestroika movement has argued against the dominance of formal methods of rational choice theory, game theory, and statistical analysis and marginalization of qualitative research and area studies. At the same time, key scholars associated with the movement such as Larry Diamond fully agree that "good work in political science cannot be merely descriptive or exclusively country-focused. … To really know a country or region well, to do good work in area studies, one must know the relevant theories of comparative political development or governance, and one must have a concern either to examine those theories in the light of the country experience, or to extend or reformulate theory from country or cross-country experienceor, ideally, both. Otherwise, we really are only doing history, and not very good history at that" (Diamond 2002, p. 4-5).

To recap, in the words of Keohane, political science has become "the study of politics through the procedures of science" (Keohane 2009, p. 359), with science understood not in a narrow sense ("requiring mathematical formulations of its propositions, precise quantitative testing, or even experimental validation") but in a broader sense as "publicly known sets of procedures designed to make and evaluate descriptive causal inferences on the basis of self-conscious application of methods that are themselves subject to public evaluation" (Keohane 2009, p. 359).

When specifying key defining features of contemporary political science, in particular of its comparative politics subfield, puzzle-driven research needs to be mentioned. Puzzle-driven research is a central element in political science inquiry, including the study of Ukraine within comparative politics. What is a puzzle and why it is an important ingredient of high quality political science output? As Keohane explains, when we observe something that "does not fit with our preconceptions based on established theory," we have identified a puzzle. "Great leaps forward in political science," Keohane continues, "often take place when someone sees puzzles, when others have only seen facts." (Keohane 2009, p. 360). In other words, instead of researching how democracy works in a particular country, a better question would be to puzzle over why among countries similar on several dimensions (say, economic development, geopolitical position, ethnic homogeneity etc.) some managed to establish functioning democracies while others did not. Identifying true puzzles requires knowledge of both empirical realities and existing theories. It also requires constant critical thinking about existing theories, including the most established ones. American political science welcomes this and teaches graduate students to think along those lines. As Keohane put it in this lecture to

graduate students, "none of our sacred cows is immune to criticism!" (Keohane 2009, p. 362). This culture of critical thinking was entirely absent in social sciences in the Soviet period, and is still sorely lacking in Ukrainian political science.

Yet another feature that sets Western and especially American political science apart from the state of the discipline in Ukraine is the role of teaching. Even though the professional reputation of political science in the West is built principally on written work, virtually all top-ranked Western political scientists are in teaching positions at colleges and universities rather than spending their careers at research institutes and think tanks (Keohane 2009, p. 360). By contrast, in Ukraine many, if not most, publishing political scientists are based in research institutes and think tanks.2 How can this difference impact the quality of the work produced?

Responding to Kudelia's point that Ukrainian political science is for the most part descriptive and normative, Matsievkiy advocates distinguishing between "academic (university) research and expert (analytical) research." The latter is conducted in think tanks and research institutes and, according to Matsievskiy, is primarily empirical – and thus presumably unfairly criticized by Kudelia (Matsievskyi 2012). However, the distinction between academic and applied political science is not uniformly accepted as valid. Some Western scholars have indeed been critical of American-style political science for its perceived failure to develop the applied branch that would "confront the theory-practice relationship" (Sartori 2004, p. 786). On this view, there is a distinction between theoretical and applied political science, and the failings of one branch do not mean another branch is plagued by the same problems, as Matsievskyi argues. However, other Western political scientists have disagreed with Sartori's position. In a rejoinder to Sartori, Colomer argues that comparing political science with economics and criticizing the latter for not developing an applied branch like the former is misguided because the effective applied branch of any science or social science discipline can develop only after the discipline has achieved a high level of theoretical consistency, usually following long trajectory of cumulative knowledge, as economics (a discipline older than political science) did before applied economics developed in the last two or three decades (Colomer 2004, p. 793). In this case then, applied research without theoretical research "is neither science nor a contribution to cumulative knowledge or intellectual, material, or moral progress of human beings. Atheoretical applied teaching can transmit, at most, certain tools and skills based on practitioners' experience (in business or in electoral campaigns or in whatever else)" (Colomer 2004, p. 793). Going back to Ukraine, the weak state of academic and theoretical political science would be a hindrance to the development of quality applied political science, and the latter would be able to develop only after the former is firmly established as a unified discipline with high level of theoretical consistency.

Finally, the fact that, unlike their Western counterparts, many Ukrainian political scientists are not active teachers may also hinder the development of the discipline. Keohane argues that it is not accidental that virtually all top-ranked Western political scientists are in active teaching positions. Teaching undergraduates compels one to be able to put social science arguments into ordinary language, which in turn helps to see weaknesses of theoretical arguments such as lack of clarity, redundancy,

circular reasoning and others. Teaching also exposes political scientists to new ideas from "younger and more supple minds – as long as the students are sufficiently critical of the professor's views." (Keohane 2009, p. 360). So the fact that few political scientists in Ukraine are in active teaching positions, along with the lack of the classroom culture of critical thinking and fear or challenging authority, may be contributing to identified problems with the discipline.

What are the Lessons and Possible Ways Forward for Political Science in Ukraine?

So what can be done to bring Ukrainian political science from the periphery into the global disciplinary mainstream? This essay has not set out to provide recommendations for reforming the discipline in Ukraine but rather to compare the state of affairs of political science in Ukraine and in the West, primarily in America. The task of reforming the discipline, starting with taking the very decision that reforms are indeed needed, is something that Ukrainian political scientists will need to consider. Comparative analysis in the essay however raises some questions Ukrainian colleagues may want to think about.

One such question is how scholars' personal political beliefs and ideologies (be they patriotic or, say, of a pro-Russian orientation) affect the quality of political science research and the discipline at large. As a relatively new state, and especially a state currently facing an aggressive irredentist Russian neighbor, the situation Ukrainian political scientists find themselves in now is not directly comparable to the situation of colleagues in Western states. However, it is not that dissimilar from American political science in the late 19th and early 20th century when American political science as a discipline was founded not to dispassionately study politics but, as discussed above, to advance a political agenda, namely the realization of "state will", understood as creation of a unitary nation state with virtuous citizenry. In pursuit of this goal, scholars studies tried to expose "corruption, patronage, party machines, parochialism, and regionalism" of American institutions (Dryzek 2006, p. 487-488).

Ideologically-motivated choice of topics and the presence of normative ideal and educational objectives towards the society and its citizenry of early American political science closely echo contemporary criticisms of Ukrainian political science discussed in this essay, such as avoidance of certain topics (far right, government corruption, etc.) and the perceived need to further patriotism and political consciousness of the citizens. Ukrainian political scientists thus might decide that if their American colleagues went through this stage without harming the discipline, why cannot they as well. The problem is, however, that when American political science was going through this phase of normatively-driven research, global political science essentially did not exist and, thus, American political scientists were not outliers of the disciplinary mainstream. In fact, whatever they did was the mainstream. Today, however, to defend normatively-oriented research would relegate Ukrainian political science to the periphery of the global community of political science scholarship, since in its methods and approaches the discipline

moved far away from where American political science was at the turn of the 20th century. With simultaneous pursuit of patriotism and social science problematics, Ukrainian political scientists need to think about which one they want to prioritize and be cognizant of the consequences of this choice.

One final question to end this essay: are the fates of Ukrainian democracy and Ukrainian political science related? In other words, can Ukrainian political science flourish and successfully compete on the global arena if democracy fails to consolidate in Ukraine in the post-Maidan era? It is true that some important theoretical advances in political science have emerged in non-democratic settings (transitology theory, for example, originated in Latin America, but there authoritarianism was punctuated by periods of greater pluralism). However, the bulk of high quality contemporary political science output is produced overwhelmingly in Western democracies, which raises the question: if the success of one is dependent on the success of the other? Some political scientists argue explicitly that this is the case. If political scientists do their job, Keohane argues, they will be "irritating to political leaders, since we illuminate their deliberate obscurities and deceptions, we point to alternative policies that could be followed, we question their motivations and dissect the operations of organizations that support them and governments over which they preside. They will try to buy us off or, failing that, if not prevented from doing so, shut us up. As a result, we have a symbiotic relationship with democracy. We can only thrive when democracy flourishes, and democracy – in a smaller way – needs us, if only as a small voice of dispassionate reason" (Keohane 2009, p. 363). Perhaps Ukrainian political scientists can move the discipline along by helping advance democracy in Ukraine through their commitment to democratic pluralism when it comes to topics and questions they pursue, and by striving for objectivity in seeking answers to these questions. The goal of objectivity can never be fully realized, Keohane reminds us, but we should strive for it nevertheless "because otherwise people with other preferences, or who do not know what our values are, will have no reason to take our findings seriously." (Keohane 2009, p. 363).

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Notes

[1] Rudych notes in this regard that there has been a debated in Ukraine whether political science should be a separate discipline or, because it studies questions also addressed by other social sciences, political science was essentially political sociology rather than a distinct discipline. Rudych also notes that discussion took place over whether "scientific nationalism" should form the basis of Ukrainian political science, and whether Ukrainian political science should be conceived as a discipline specific to Ukraine (since in every country the study of politics is tied to national specifics). According to Rudych, the outcome of these discussions was to reject the idea that nationalism needs to be a theoretical and practical foundation of state-building in Ukraine, and also to reject the conceptualization of political science in Ukraine as a Ukraine-specific discipline. Instead, a "Ukrainian political science school" needs to be created that would contribute theories and other intellectual products that would be distinct from what other schools have to offer and thus would be the forte of

Ukrainian political science (Rudych 2003b).

[2] In Ukraine there are 47 recognized think-tanks, which place Ukraine 25th in the world and 3rd in Eastern Europe (Matsievskyi 2012).

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STATED OR ACTUAL CHANGE IN POLICY TERRAIN? REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE BOLOGNA PROCESS IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

Benjamin Kutsyuruba and Serhiy Kovalchuk

Abstract

The Bologna Process became embraced by the Ukrainian government as one of the mechanisms to achieve the goal of changing its system of education from the Soviet to the European model. However, research points to significant discrepancies between official reports and practices, as well as inconsistencies in the Bologna Process implementation in Ukraine. Of particular interest for gauging the impact of the Bologna Process on higher education policy frameworks in Ukraine amidst the declared transition to the democratic European system is the area of teacher education. Uniquely positioned at the crossroads between the higher education and primary and secondary education systems, teacher education is significantly affected by transformations and reforms pertaining to both areas. Through the systematic review of the extant literature and documents, this paper analyzes the history of Bologna Process implementation in Ukraine, reviews achievements and challenges of educational reforms in teacher education, problematizes the nature of educational transformations based on recommendations that ignore the significance of local needs, and posits that greater attention to the actual vs. stated outcomes of Bologna-initiated policies and reforms in teacher education is needed.

Key words: *Ukraine, educational reform, Bologna Process, EU-Ukraine, teacher education*

The frameworks of globalization and internationalization have impacted academic programs, institutions, innovations, and practices around the world. The launch of the Bologna Process marked a new era in higher education reforms in Europe. The reorganization, that is sometimes called "the most profound revolution in European higher education" (McMurtrie, 2006, p. A39), is well underway with the commitment of 47 signatory countries across the European continent to create an integrated European Higher Education Area (EHEA) with the aim of harmonizing the higher educational systems in Europe. However, as there is no uniform pace for countries to implement the proposed changes, there exist Bologna leaders and laggards (Börzel 2003). Countries with the established systems of higher education, such as Italy, Spain, and Germany, are taking a longer time, while most of the former Eastern Bloc countries have enthusiastically embraced reforms (Charbonneau 2009).

Similarly to other Eastern European countries, the education system in Ukraine has been undergoing considerable transformation over the last two decades. Since the collapse of the former USSR, "the vector of changes [in the system of

education] focused on transition from the 'Soviet school' model to the democratic European one" (Ministry of Education of Ukraine, 1999, p. 3). Because of its strategic importance for the governmental aims, education was one of the first social spheres to witness frequent (and sometimes, chaotic) transformations after the country gained independence. Education, like the Ukrainian society in general, has experienced a focal shift from totalitarian Marxist-Leninist ideology to democracy and pluralism. The new societal realities required profound educational reforms, including the structural organization of secondary schools, universities, curricula, and teacher and educational administrator training programs at all levels (Koshmanova & Ravchyna 2008).

Since the announcement about Ukraine's intention to sign the protocol to join the Bologna Declaration in 2005, both European and Ukrainian educators voiced concerns about the impact of the Bologna Process on the country's higher education system and its integration with EHEA (Artyomenko 2005; Kotmalyova 2006). After Ukraine joined the EHEA, Bologna Process quickly became one of the mechanisms for the Ukrainian government to achieve its goal of reforming the system of higher education in line with European standards (Stepko 2004). As officially reported to the UNESCO European Center for Higher Education, the top priorities of education policy in Ukraine have become further development of the national education system, its adjustment to new economy, and its integration into the European and global community (Kremen & Nikolayenko 2006). These goals initiated a series of declarations and efforts toward implementation of reforms in the field of higher education in Ukraine. The government expressed commitment to an international effort to harmonize higher education by redesigning the curriculum, switching to a three-cycle degree structure, and submitting to cross-national mechanisms of quality assurance (Kremen & Nikolayenko 2006; Clement et al. 2004).

The picture that emanates from the Ukrainian government reports and policies and official Bologna Process documentation (e.g., Bologna National Report Ukraine 2009; Bologna Stocktaking Report 2009; Ministry of Education and Science 2010; Nikolayenko 2007) is that Ukraine has become, in Börzel's (2003) terms, one of "leaders" in the implementation of Bologna Process provisions. However, researchers have pointed to the discrepancies between official reports and practices, as well as inconsistencies of Bologna Process implementation in Ukraine (Shaw 2013; Shaw et al. 2011a). Furthermore, despite the fact that there have been multiple studies problematizing the implementation of Bologna Process across the contextual mosaic, the recommendations issued by international organizations continue to obviate or ignore the local needs of signatory countries. Hence, implementation efforts within the post-Soviet context are further complicated. We envision these complications, discrepancies, and inconsistencies as indicative of a tension of stated vs. actual outcomes, a dilemma that virtually all policymakers grapple with in any policy development and implementation process.

Of particular interest for gauging the impact of the Bologna Accord on higher education policy frameworks in Ukraine amidst the declared transition to the democratic European system is the area of teacher education. Uniquely positioned at the crossroads between the higher education and primary and secondary education

systems, teacher education is significantly affected by transformations and reforms pertaining to both areas. Therefore, through the systematic review of the extant literature and documents, consisting of academic research, program evaluations, conceptual reviews, government policies and statutes, and official Bologna Process reports, this paper reviews the history of Bologna Process implementation in signatory countries and in Ukraine, analyzes achievements and challenges of educational reforms within the context of teacher education, problematizes the nature of educational transformations based on recommendations that ignore the significance of local needs, and posits that greater attention to the tension between actual and stated outcomes of Bologna-initiated policies and reforms in teacher education is needed. In line with the transitological call for exploring moments of educational metamorphosis and seeking to make distinctions between generic and unique factors in post-socialist contexts (Cowen 2000; Silova 2010; Tőkés 2000), this article regards the effects of Bologna Process on government policies and practices in higher education institutions within their complex social, geographical, and institutional settings.

Implementation of the Bologna Process

The aims of the Bologna Process are to expand access to higher education to more of the European population, to better prepare students for the labour market, to promote lifelong learning, to attract increasing numbers of non-European students, and to represent a fundamental underpinning to European democracy (Floud 2006). The breadth of higher education activity that the Bologna Process covers is considerable, spanning, amongst other things, the architecture of qualifications through to doctorate level (thus incorporating qualifications frameworks, credits and learning outcomes) as well as notions of institutional autonomy, student involvement, higher education as a public good, and lifelong learning (Birtwistle 2009).

Through the critical and deconstructive lenses on governmentality, a number of critics (Fejes 2006; Fejes 2008; Nóvoa & Lawn 2002; Nóvoa 2002; Simons & Masschelein 2006) argued that higher education restructuring is conducted in the form of fabrication or standardization of higher education and is governed discursively through the neo-liberal governmentality rather than legislation. Furthermore, they have claimed that signatory states have taken the narratives about harmonisation of higher education for granted by seeing the process as inevitable.

Various analyses documented educational reforms prompted by Bologna Process and the ways its principles have been adopted by and implemented in the various signatory countries (Curaj et al. 2012). The variability in implementation mainly exists due to the fact that the Bologna Process is not endowed with legal obligations. In other words, the signatory countries are not bound by any conditionalities or legal requirements and are encouraged to implement the Bologna policies through the benefits of cooperation and the future benefits of the expected EHEA outcome (Luchinskaya & Ovchynnikova 2011). Thus, the "colourful rainbow" (Zgaga 2009, p.

93) of varieties within European higher education systems constitutes segments, which can prove as barriers to faster and more efficient implementation of new higher education philosophy proposed by Bologna.

Lažetić (2010) argued that a voluntary nature of the Bologna Process leads to uneven implementation. Specifically, the Bologna Process seeks consensus about policy formation at the European level but leaves the implementation to nation states and institutions which are only indirectly involved in policy formation. He concluded that a key challenge of the Bologna Process is keeping up the political momentum and interest of political leadership and policy entrepreneurs for the reform process while preventing it from becoming overly bureaucratic. Scholars noted evidence of convergence of higher education policies, especially in terms of "architecture" of higher education systems (e.g., degree structures) and the use of specific policy instruments (e.g. national quality assurance and accreditation schemes) (Elken et al. 2010).

However, the Bologna Process independent assessment (Westerheijden et al. 2010), the Trends reports by the European University Association, Bologna stocktaking reports, and Eurydice reports indicate the persisting diversity in higher education systems (Elken et al. 2010). This diversity exists due to inherent contradictions of the Bologna Process with respect to convergence-diversity nexus and the differences in the national historical and cultural contexts, goal ambiguity and bottom-heaviness of higher education institutions (stemming from complex, multi-layered involvement of the professionals/actors with a large degree of autonomy) (Huisman 2009). The implementation process has mainly been uneven due to the different contexts, orientations, funding schemes, and demographics of each signatory nation (Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency 2012a). Discussing the impact of cultural, institutional, and socioeconomic factors on higher education systems and adoption of the Bologna Process, Heinzeand Knill (2008) concluded that the more dissimilar the cultural, institutional, and socioeconomic characteristics of countries the less convergence between them in adopting and implementing the Bologna Process. As implementation structures, approaches, accomplishments, and challenges tend to be context-specific for different signatory countries, we will now turn to the discussion of the impact of the Bologna process in Ukraine.

Bologna Process Policy Implementation in Ukraine

According to the then-Minister of Education, Nikolayenko (2007), the implementation of Bologna underpinnings in Ukraine revolved around the following basic directions: Quality Assurance (QA); three cycle system of education; and qualifications framework (QF) in EHEA. The government reported on the significant steps in implementing the regulations of Bologna Process and preparing the Action Plan of their implementation up to 2010. The lists of key developments in Ukraine since 2005 have been detailed in the Bologna National Report (2009), Bologna Stocktaking Report (BSR) (2009), and 2010 European Neighbourhood Policy Implementation Report (European Commission 2011a).

Based on the examination of the national and stocktaking reports to trace the Bologna Process policy implementation in Ukraine, Luchinskaya and Ovchinnikova (2011) concluded that Ukraine had been active in some aspects of implementation and sluggish in others. For instance, the Bologna Stocktaking Reports rated Ukraine's progress in recognition of foreign degrees and implementing the ECTS as 'very good' and 'excellent' in 2007 and 2009. Ukraine was among the eight countries that have reached a high degree of implementation, with ECTS being applied in more than 75% of their programmes and higher education institutions, for the purpose of both credit transfer and accumulation and credit points based on both learning outcomes and student workload (Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency 2012b). As for the achievements in the adoption of the new degree system (two-cycle), the ratings for Ukraine, compared to other Bologna priorities, have been the highest in the 2007 and 2009 BSRs. The implementation of quality assurance had mixed ratings for Ukraine as only some HEIs produce a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality, have made arrangements for the internal approval of programmes and awards, and describe their programmes in terms of learning outcomes. No Ukrainian HEIs design student assessments of HEIs to measure the achievements of the learning outcomes, but all of them publish up-to-date information on the programmes they offer. Ukraine also received high ratings for student involvement in quality assurance (Bologna National Report Ukraine 2009).

Kwiek (2004) noted that it may be relatively easy to change laws on higher education, especially if the arguments of catching up with the West are used for promotional purposes, but changing laws is not enough to reach the objectives of the Bologna Process, although it may be understood in this way by many government officials. Therefore, it is not surprising that Ukraine has faced significant challenges with regard to the implementation of the Bologna Process (Zaspa 2008). Major challenges for Ukraine, as outlined in the 2009 BSR included: development of a NQF compatible with the EHEA overarching framework; introduction of the innovative institutional structure, three-cycle system and joint degrees; establishing programmes for foreign students; aligning university programmes with Bologna structure; development of the national qualifications framework for lifelong learning; creating mechanisms for recognition of prior learning; implementation of the Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO format; creation of the national quality assurance agency in compliance with European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) with aim of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) membership and inclusion into the EQAR; increasing outward and inward mobility; assuring portability of student grants and loans; provision of equal access to higher education; adapting curricula to labour market needs; promotion of cultural values and democratic ideals. Stemming from this long list of challenges, two questions that beg our attention are whether there is a lip service to the reform implementation and whether the reform rhetoric moves faster than its implementation? (Marga 1997; Shaw et al. 2011a)

Therefore, given the different tradition in higher education and the political and cultural context, the process of introducing the new model of tertiary

education promoted by the EU partners remains challenging in the Eastern Partnership countries (European Commission 2011b). The main factors affecting the implementation were the transition period and difference in the organization and structure of higher education from Western and many Eastern European countries (Zgaga 2009). The system of higher education was centrally planned and administered under the Soviet system, had strong links with the labour market and an emphasis on science and technology, and underwent substantial reform during the post-Soviet transition (Luchinskaya & Ovchynnikova 2011). As recent studies have shown, the results remain patchy, and implementation efforts have been complicated by significant differences in the organizational path dependence of Ukrainian universities as compared to their Western counterparts (Shaw et al. 2011b; Shaw et al. 2011a).

Drawing from different studies on the implementation of the Bologna process in Ukraine, Shaw (2013) provided two hypothesis of its failure. Her first hypothesis is associated with a flawed implementation of the reform caused by a number of factors such as a top-down, rushed, unsystematic, and disorganized process of curriculum redesign; a lack of training and support which would provide faculty and university administration with an understanding of the reform and its mechanisms; façade rather than substantive implementation of the reform; and, finally a low remuneration of faculty. Her second hypothesis stems from an idea of "a fundamental mismatch between the existing logic of university governance rooted in a Soviet model of higher education and the logic presumed in the European reforms" (p. 7). Shaw argued that a flawed implementation of the reform can be caused by the fact that the "Soviet" model of higher education governance in Ukraine was not accommodated to the needs of the Bologna process. In other words, the Ministry of Education introduced fundamental ideas of the Bologna process in the environment not susceptible to it and has not taken any measures yet to reform it. As a result, an implementation of the policy rhetoric aimed to catch up with Europe has had a quasi-character in the context of Ukraine.

Other analyses on Ukraine's adoption of the Bologna Process have addressed specific challenges with regard to the implementation process, and have focused on both positive and negative outcomes. In his discussion of the higher education reform under the Bologna Process, Nikolayenko (2007) noted that the adoption of the Bologna Process has led to increased training, creation of more scholarships, improvement in accessibility, and increased interuniversity mobility within Ukraine. However, a number of problems still existed, including the need to create a system of quality assurance, the lack of provision of international mobility by students and staff, and the lack of communication between universities and employers and public associations. Similarly, weighing the pros and cons of the Bologna Process for the system of higher education in Ukraine, Goodman (2010) pointed out that participation in the Bologna Process had the potential to strengthen Ukraine's standing in Europe, promote linguistic diversity, and facilitate goals of European integration. As for the potential negative consequences of the process, Goodman focused specifically on the dominance of English under the Bologna process and the negative effects this may have on the Ukrainian language. Zaspa (2008) reported

issues surrounding the funding of higher education institutions to implement the Bologna Process, the influence of markets and privatization on the quality of professional education, and the impacts on the amount and quality of research produced by universities that are undergoing the transformation process.

In a recent case study on the perceptions of education practitioners and administrators of the implementation of the Bologna Process at a selected higher education institution, Kovtun and Stick (2009) highlighted the implementation shortcomings and disadvantages. These included excessive centralization of the administration, insufficient training and resources, participants' attachment to the old system, decreased quality of education and loss of tradition. They concluded that the Bologna Process appeared to benefit the students more than the professors through the increased mobility and employability for students and the development of autonomous learners. Lytvyn (2009), on the other hand, emphasized the negative consequences of the Bologna Process on the students. In particular, she discussed how many students felt that the way Ukraine was implementing the Bologna Process was disruptive to their education. Lytvyn suggested that rather than adapting the Bologna Process to fit Ukrainian standards, Ukraine should adopt the European standards outlined in the Process. Furthermore, institutions of higher education should focus on the tools of the Bologna Process instead of using existing structures to achieve the goals. She concluded that these recommendations would solve problems such as inconsistency in grading, degree recognition, and course requirements.

In the study of Ukrainian professors' perceptions of the Bologna Process, Telpukhovska (2006) found that, while many reforms were welcomed as useful and necessary, their implementation was complicated by the current economic and social conditions of the country. Studying the impact of the Bologna Process on academic staff, Shaw et al. found that public statements regarding the reform process differ from actual organizational practice, that the shift from a traditional teacher-oriented institution to a research institution has not been efficiently supported by instructional and structural redesign, that the academic staff have become overburdened with teaching and research duties, and that the reform process has been underfunded (Shaw et al. 2011b). In their analysis of the transformation process that Ukraine was undertaking to adhere to the Bologna Process, Makogon and Orekhova (2007) argued that the adoption of the Bologna Process was an example of the corporatization of international education that was ultimately resulting in the commodification of education in Ukraine. They concluded that the fact that academic institutes have been transformed into 'businesses' would have a profound effect on individual states, globalization, and the internationalization of education. This negative outlook complements Goodman's (2010) conclusion that the Bologna Process is a mechanism of bureaucratic control over the education system of its members and a form of political hegemony over members who are not in the EU.

Education Reforms and Teacher Education in Ukraine

Ukraine has a complex history regarding teacher education and related reforms. Because teacher education is located at the crossroads between the higher education and primary and secondary education systems, transformations and reforms in both of these areas need to be considered in order to understand its current state. As the country made a transition from a totalitarian Marxist Leninist ideology to democracy and pluralism, changes that occurred at the societal level greatly affected education (Zhulynsky 1997). The declaration of Ukraine's intention to transform into a democratic state with the regulated market economy gave birth to the strategic plans to reform education as part of a nation-wide transformation. Due to the capacity and potential of education to articulate and instil new norms of social and cultural behavior in the newly formed country, the system of education was one of the first spheres to be subjected to the reforming process (Wanner 1998). Similarly, reform of the teacher education sector was stated as the main goal of the state policy in the sphere of education (Ministry of Education of Ukraine 1992). This policy encompassed the formation and strengthening of the potential of primary and secondary school teachers and comprehensive financial and material support for pedagogical cadres and their social protection. However, significant economic, political, and social factors negatively affected the implementation of those policy guidelines (Kutsyuruba 2011a). As reported by the World Bank, the economic collapse of the 1990s had substantial long-term adverse effects on Ukraine's education system, which, together with the implications of the economic reforms had created new challenges to reform the education sector (World Bank 2011). Furthermore, the nature of educational reforms in Ukraine was fragmentary and yielded only a partial transition to the new paradigm of education set by the Ministry of Education policies.

Three major directions of initial education reforms in Ukraine were identified by Fimyar (2008): a) change of the language of instruction in schools from mostly Russian to Ukrainian; b) adjusting secondary education to a 12-year basic education cycle in line with European standards; and c) assessment policy reform. According to the 2010 European Neighbourhood Policy Implementation report (European Commission 2011a), particular attention in recent years was given to all levels of education, with new reform plans to accelerate convergence with the developments in the EU. Reform objectives included strengthening educational governance, improving quality and accessibility, and ensuring the continuity of education levels and financing. The government identified pre-school education as a new reform priority and adopted a concept for a state programme of pre-school education development to 2017, with objectives and benchmarks closely aligned with those of the EU's Education and Training 2020 targets. The ministry of education and science initiated secondary curriculum reform with the adoption of two state programmes 2010-15 to improve ICT, science and mathematics education and to enhance teaching skills. Furthermore, secondary education was reduced from 12 to 11 years in 2010, thus reversing the reform of 2001. Subsequently, these reforms were instrumental in changing the policy terrain guiding the country's teacher education programs.

Teacher Education System: Contextual Information

Teacher education system of Ukraine consists of pre-service and in-service training. Pedagogical universities, pedagogical colleges, and classic universities provide pre-service training while a statewide network of in-service teacher training institutes organizes a professional development of in-service teachers (European Commission 2011b; Ministry of Education and Science 2010; Oliynik & Danylenko 2005; Shchudlo 2012).1 Both pedagogical institutions and classic universities work toward preparing teachers, but they differ in their focuses and the amount of pedagogical knowledge and experience with which they provide their students. Pedagogical colleges specialize in training pre-school and primary school teachers. In addition to educating pre-school and primary school teachers, pedagogical universities in comparison to pedagogical colleges also prepare secondary school teachers. This overlap in teacher preparation between pedagogical colleges and universities was inherited from the Soviet system and has not undergone any changes yet.2 The main difference between pedagogical and classical universities in preparing teachers is an amount of pedagogical studies and student teaching experience to which they expose students. In classic universities, this amount is much smaller in comparison to pedagogical colleges and universities. Classic universities which see its main role in training academic cadres, not pre-school or school teachers, offer its students an opportunity to mainly work in a system of secondary education by offering some pedagogical courses and student teaching opportunities. Some classic universities can have pedagogical institutes as a part of their structure. As a rest of higher education institutions, pedagogical colleges and pedagogical universities are a part of a centralized higher education system controlled by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES 2010).

The Ministry of Education requires in-service teachers to undergo professional development training every five years at a regional in-service teacher-training institute (MoES 2010). In addition to the required professional development, many in-service teachers have begun to participate in training sessions and programs organized by domestic and international non-governmental organizations sponsored by aid agencies. They in turn represent a new venue of professional development of teachers, especially in the context of limited and outdated curriculum and financial resources of in-service teacher training institutes, whose curriculum is set by the Ministry of Education and whose work is financed by local budgets (European Commision 2011b; MoES 2010).

Current system of teacher education has been surrounded by many issues that either specifically pertain to it or to the rest of higher education in Ukraine. One of its relatively recent issues has been an academic quality of students who enter its programs. Their academic quality is often much lower in comparison to students who become admitted to prestigious programs in economics, law, foreign relations, informational science and other ones in classic universities. This, in turn, is associated with a decline of social status and prestige of teaching profession after the collapse of the Soviet Union and a low compensation in Ukraine, trends that are also common in other post-Soviet countries (Gorshenin Institute 2011; Shchudlo 2012; Silova 2009), and further decreases the quality of students entering

pre-services teacher education programs and graduates of these institutions entering schools. Another issue stems from an inability of many teacher educators to practically adapt to new educational demands such student-centered learning, utilization of interactive teaching approaches, and formation of critical thinking and inquiry skills among teacher candidates (Koshmanova & Ravchyna 2008). They keep focusing on content rather than practice-based instruction utilizing traditional transmissive methods of teaching impeding formation of knowledge and skills crucial to democratic education. Other issues that affect teacher education programs along with the rest of higher education system are underfunding (which impedes upgrading of facilities and technological resources, updating of teaching resources, improving faculty's professional development, and increasing their salaries), bureaucracy (which influences a quality of faculty's preparation for courses and deprives of time for academic work), corruption, and the inconsistent implementation of the articulated educational reforms (Fimyar 2010; Osipian 2009; Shaw 2013). Despite the above issues, content and practices of teacher education programs are changing but not as fast as one might want to or as policy documents declare. They are in the process of transition impeded by faculty's beliefs and by a lack of leadership, vision, knowledge, skills, and resources necessary for the implementation of the declared educational reforms.

According to a comprehensive study on teacher education in the Eastern Partnership countries initiated by European Commission (European Commission 2011b), the major teacher education reforms achieved to date in Ukraine were: introduction of specialised education in secondary school; competence-based approach to learning; the content of national education; and, implementation of programs and projects at national and regional level related to modern technology of education. As for the problematic areas, highlighted were difficulties of education sector's collaboration with the private sector to develop innovations in schools. Other limitations included: stereotypical thinking about teaching among teachers; the fear of publicly violating the state standards for educational training for teachers; reluctance of some teachers and school managers to innovate; insufficient financial support for schools; low quality teaching practice; and an overall difficult social and economic situation of the country.

Bologna Process and Teacher Education

The results of the European Commission study indicated that some of the Bologna targets have already been executed to varying degrees in the area of teacher education. These included progress in adjusting the multi-level degree system to meet the European three-level system of academic degrees, as well as approving the qualification levels in regards to curriculum at the Bachelor of Education level and working towards establishing a permanent system for Master of Education programs. In addition, Ukraine was complimented for undertaking a complex system of quality assurance of teachers and providing professional development, whereas Ukrainian teachers are mandated by law to advance their qualification at least once every five years in the post-graduate teacher training institutes.

Of high significance were also support systems, known as banks, which have been put in place to disseminate innovations in information and communication technologies to aid in teaching strategies among teachers. Finally, the report noted the importance of the draft law on higher education for the prospects in the field of teacher education. In addition to successes and achievements in implementation of Bologna process, this report highlighted struggling areas, such as upgrading the threshold of qualifications to enter the teaching profession; increasing teachers' salaries; updating the curriculum; improving classroom practice; modernizing in-service teacher education to respond to teachers preferences and demand of the labour market; creating incentives for teachers to remain in the profession; and developing a continuous support system throughout the professional lives of teachers.

In summary, the European Commission report concluded that in terms of ensuring convergence with EU standards and implementation of the Bologna Process principles, the needs for developments in the area of teacher education closely aligned with the overall directions of higher education reform in Ukraine. Some of the recommendations as to how the Ukrainian teacher education system can continue to modernize and meet the goals of the Bologna Process included: increasing the use of modern teaching strategies in regards to information and telecommunication technologies; ensuring that the content of teacher education is in line with the demands of schools; encouraging collaboration between schools and university teachers; implementing education monitoring by research groups and organizations; increasing popularity of professional development programs; and adopting valid regulations governing innovative educational activities.

Several studies assessed the impact of Bologna Process on teacher education. The prevalent belief among scholars is that educational reforms in Ukraine had thus far resulted only in the superficial transformations of the teacher education curriculum and the introduction of some innovative teaching methods courses; whereas more changes are needed to ensure the successful implementation of the Bologna Process to the system of teacher education (Koshmanova & Ravchyna 2008). Pukhovska and Sacilotto-Vasylenko (2010) claimed that while the Ukrainian government has adopted programs that support the integration of Ukrainian higher education into the Bologna Process, this has not been achieved in regards to teacher training programs. They attributed this to such external factors as insufficient funding and issues surrounding implementation, such as a limited capacity to plan, manage, monitor, and evaluate these programs. As a result, they argued, teacher educators have not been prepared to assimilate the methods and approaches which adhere to the Bologna Process; these principles are based on Western pedagogical theories and many teachers had difficulties finding ways to incorporate them into their practice. Along the external factors there are also teacher educators' stereotypes formed within a Soviet educational system which impede an implementation of the declared change (Koshmanova & Ravchyna 2008).

The calls to further reform teacher education have come from a number of scholars. Writing around the time Ukraine was preparing to sign Bologna Accord, Shestavina (2004) argued for the need to modernize Ukrainian education system

and expressed hope that adherence to the Bologna Process would facilitate this. She gave special mention to the teacher training programs utilized by various institutions of higher education in Ukraine and the necessity to get these programs up to European standards. Scholars emphasized that the traditional pedagogic models used to train teachers, established under the Soviet system, were no longer suitable for students in the context of educational democratization, since they were aimed at the transmission and reproduction of learning material and thus did not contribute to the formation of critical thinking skills, were characterized by teacher-centered and content-based pedagogies, and were often formal and distant from societal realities. In the context of democratization, attempts to integrate in the European educational space and global market economy, Ukraine needed to search for effective ways to adapt the national traditions of teacher training to meet the demands made by these processes (Baynazarova 2005; Marchenko 2010). Furthermore, arguing that Ukraine should considerably reform its education system, Koshmanova found that tolerant attitudes and behaviours were not fully accepted by Ukrainian educators and that most educational policies and practices were still monocultural and ethnocentric (Koshmanova 2006; Koshmanova 2007). Koshmanova and Ravchyna (2008) posited that, successfully managing and implementing such a large change aside, many educators believe that the main difficulty of the Bologna educational reforms in Ukraine had been found in the authoritarian style of relationships teachers have with students. These beliefs were grounded in 'banking education' models and behaviourist educational psychology and served to contribute to the problem of perpetuating authoritarianism in classrooms. They concluded that these beliefs may generate obstacles for Ukraine's integration with Europe.

Studies examining teacher education reform in Ukraine have also taken a comparative approach, using other European nations as models that Ukraine can look towards. Sacilotto-Vasylenko (2008) used the goal of lifelong learning to analyze the evolution of teacher training under the context of the Bologna Process in France and Ukraine. In regards to Ukraine, the examples of recent educational changes that could be interpreted as lifelong learning strategies included short teacher training modules called 'thematic courses', school-based training and consultancy, external professional development programs and projects, and distance in-service training. Despite these developments, the author criticized the teacher training policies as they do not integrate the idea of teacher empowerment, which she considered to be the main condition for positive educational change, and concluded that the educational system in both countries remain rigid and bureaucratic, where teacher professional development depends mostly on administrative decisions. Rolyak and Ohiyenko's (2008) study also explored lifelong learning as a key goal that teacher training institutes in Ukraine should work towards. Comparing the Ukrainian teacher education system with those of Scandinavian counties, they claimed that their successes and progress may help with addressing the challenges in the teacher training system in Ukraine, particularly in the areas of candidate selection into teacher education programs and the low status teacher education has in universities. Other scholars were more specific in that they held teacher education programs in Finland (Khustochka 2009) and Germany (Folvarochnyi 2011) as

models for Ukraine to emulate in order to ensure successful implementation of the Bologna Process.

Problematizing the Nature of Teacher Education Reforms

Yet it is important not only to study the processes that facilitate and hinder a multidimensional process of educational reform aimed at the harmonization of higher education and its alignment with the European educational standards, but also problematize the nature of this educational transformation. While this problematization can be taken in multiple directions ranging from bureaucratic and haphazard character of the reform to the lack of expertise and insufficient financial provisions, we only focus on the recommendations issued by international organizations such as the European Commission (EC) and posit that these recommendations often ignore the local needs of the post-Soviet society.

The EC report on teacher education in the countries of the Eastern Partnership (European Commission 2011b) approached the process of educational transformation or democratization in teacher education in terms of structural changes (e.g., decentralization); modernization of educational content and teaching approaches; establishment of educational standards and benchmarking; upgrade of the assessment and monitoring systems; integration of information and communication technologies; development of a continuous support system throughout the professional lives of teachers; and the creation of incentives for teachers to remain in the profession. According to this report, the former socialist countries need to establish close cooperation with non-governmental organizations and business sector and to better respond to the demands of modern school, labour market, and constantly changing world. Such framework of educational democratization is common across post-socialist countries (Holik 2010; Mincu, 2010; Psifidou 2010). It also points to the global governance of a certain educational system from a distance, whereas education becomes a global rather than a national development (Robertson 2012). Moreover, the emphasis on the alignment of teacher education with the demands of the labour market suggests the potential establishment of market-oriented teacher education programs and the reduction of educational democratization to a mere satisfaction of the needs of the knowledge-based economy.

For example, a newly adopted national educational program for preparing elementary school teachers (Ministry of Education Science Youth and Sports 2012b) contains such new courses as foundations of computer science with the elements of coding/programming and information technologies, as well as expands the allotment for such course as foreign language learning. These changes in teacher education programs are provoked by the changes implemented in the elementary school curriculum which in turn points at the attempt to prepare a competent individual able to meet the needs of the technologically advanced global society. These changes were also reflected in a draft of the concept paper on the development of continuous teacher education program (Ministry of Education Science Youth and Sports 2012a). The draft states that all teacher education

programs should prepare teacher candidates to freely use information technologies in the educational process. It also emphasises the need to prepare elementary school teachers to teach foundations of computer science and foreign language. Another sign of a market-oriented approach to teacher education or at least a sign of the presence of market ideology in teacher education can be a course on professional competitiveness offered by some teacher education institutions. For example, a leading teacher education university in Ukraine offers such a course to the elementary teacher candidates in order to inform them about possible career pathways in the field of education (e.g., public school teacher, private school teacher, tutor, or nanny), what expectations for each career pathway are (e.g., in addition to the subject matter knowledge, a teacher at the private school should also be proficient in one foreign language), and what their income could be depending upon the career pathway that they decide to pursue (Personal Communication, March 4, 2012). These examples show how market ideas and needs are starting to penetrate teacher education programs in Ukraine. The emphasis on the needs of the knowledge-based economy and desire to align the national higher education system to a European model run a risk of overlooking other important local needs.

In times when Ukraine's democracy is struggling to emerge amidst the rise and decline of civil liberties and media freedom, weak adherence to the rule of law, and unstable civil engagement (Freedom House 2012; Freedom House 2011a; Freedom House 2011b), there is a great need to strengthen its democratic polity. Teacher education can play an important role in this process by preparing new generations of teachers who could institutionalize new curriculum, develop democratic structures in schools, form more actively engaged citizens and, by extension, contribute to the transformation of a post-authoritarian society. The prominence of this role for teacher education programs lies in the context of underdeveloped citizenship attitudes and weak understandings of civil society among teacher candidates and teachers in Ukraine.

For instance, the vast majority (70%) of teacher candidates (n=300) at one pedagogical institute in Koshmanova's (2006) study held a conventional view of learning, and had little knowledge about civil society or of what role they could play in building it. Many of them believed that their responsibility was to develop students' patriotic feelings about Ukrainian history and culture, perceiving democratic values in terms of patriotism. Some of these teacher candidates also believed that citizenship education should not be connected with school teaching and learning, but instead should be organized around extra-curricular activities. Seventy percent of the young teachers (n=4,000) surveyed in Zhadan's (2000) national study had not been involved in any civic actions. Less than 55% of them took part in the elections. Only 15% of the surveyed believed that it was important to uphold human rights. This research shows that many teacher candidates and teachers have a conservative rather than change-oriented political role. Much needed cultivation of "civic professionalism" among teacher candidates and teachers – which "extends beyond the private world of the classroom to the public sphere" and "focuses on contributing to the sustainability of democracy in a unique way through the education of future citizens" (Kennedy 2005, p. 3) – under

the aforementioned recommendations might be reduced to the technical role of satisfying the demands of a competitive global market.

The reduction of civic professionalism of teachers to a technical role in the educational process can be illustrated through the introduction of the national standardized external testing in Ukraine in 2008 – an instrument to standardize an admission to higher education institutions and to combat a rampant corruption in the admissions process ensuring fair access to higher education (Kovalchuk & Koroliuk 2012). The recent study about the goals and outcomes of the educational process conducted among secondary school teachers and students (n=300) by the Center for Educational Monitoring (Center for Educational Monitoring 2012) showed that the preparation of students for the standardized external testing is the first main educational goal among teachers. Other goals constituted improving the students' ability to plan out their personal lives, consolidating knowledge for successful completion of year-final tests, and developing skills to translate and use the acquired knowledge in practice.

Despite the need for further comprehensive research on the impact of the standardized external testing on teaching profession and teacher education programs, preliminary findings from the Center for Educational Monitoring study already point to the reduction of teacher professionalism to a mere test preparation. In its study report on Ukraine, the EC acknowledges the importance of special training for teachers in educational measurement, "aimed at successful implementation of the independent evaluation of students' learning outcomes" (European Commission 2011b, p. 78). While it is further acknowledged in the report that "apart from international experience, the search for solutions should take into account: social needs, the developmental level of the economy and the heritage of science, culture and education" (p. 96) the process of integration into the European educational area and issued recommendations do not address local needs produced by a socio-historical context of the society.

Conclusion: Stated vs. Actual Outcomes of Teacher Education Reforms

Summing up the discussions in this paper is the sentiment that "there is no 'one size fits all'" answer to the question on the role of the Bologna Process for the so-called transition countries (Zgaga 2009, p. 94); local national realities and circumstances always need to be taken into account to understand the implementation of this process in individual countries of EHEA. Or, in the words of Kvit (2012), "to understand the way things work in Ukraine, one must remember that it is a post-Soviet state with its own features that cannot be compared to any other system in the world." Designed to meet the needs of a centrally planned economy, the Soviet Ukraine's education system had been characterized by high funding for education, high literacy levels, a majority of graduates with solid basic knowledge, a large core of skilled workers available for the industrial sector, and cultural and scientific achievements. However, the post-Soviet systemic problems remained, characterized by declining quality of education and low efficiency (World

Bank 2011).

Today, Ukrainian educational system, including teacher education, is undergoing a reform informed by a new policy rhetoric which is in turn an " emergent hybrid [of] communist-neoliberal rationality" built on the ideas of national identity and consciousness, "catch[ing] up with a developed Europe," and market economy (Fimyar 2010, p. 85). In her analysis of Ukrainian educational policy documents, Fimyar showed how policy rationalities – which underlie discourses that inform educational reforms – point to the departure from the old 'Soviet' educational system and its realignment to catch up with Europe. The implementation of the Bologna Process can be viewed as one of the strategies to align and harmonize a Ukrainian higher education system closer with European standards and thereby modernize educational structure and content, educational governance and quality monitoring system of higher education. The state has taken the rhetoric of restructuring of European higher education for granted and presented it as an inevitable process (Fejes 2008; Nóvoa 2002) for the educational reforms in Ukraine. Yet, as we discussed above, despite the new policy rhetoric, its implementation or practice has been rudimentary and inconsistent.

Teacher education in Ukraine is uniquely positioned at the intersection between the higher education and primary and secondary education systems, and thus is significantly affected by reforms pertaining to both areas. As for the Bologna Process impact, official government reports and Bologna reports indicated a number of positive changes in the system of higher education in Ukraine. For example, the Bologna National Report and Bologna Stocktaking highlighted significant steps at the national policy level to accelerate convergence with the developments in the EU. Similarly, the report by European Commission on primary and secondary education in Eastern Partnership countries noted the progress Ukraine has made in terms of aligning its teacher education programs to the standards set out by the Bologna Process. However, as posited by Kovtun and Stick (2009), though some accomplishments are notable, certain Bologna provisions might still be 'on paper' alone, thus emphasizing the presence of a number of implementation challenges in Ukraine.

The implementation of Bologna Process in Ukraine in general, and in teacher education in particular, has not been a smooth undertaking and some reforms have not taken root in the education system due to a number of reasons. First, although the Bologna Process was indeed an external push to strengthen national reform process, the nature of educational reforms during the transitional period has been characterized by the struggle between forces of progress towards innovation and forces of a reactionary past (Kononenko & Holowinsky 2001). Therefore, reform endeavors were more bureaucratic than substantive (Nikitin 2008) and lacked the unity of direction and solid foundation (Kutsyuruba 2008).

Secondly, one of the most destabilizing factors in Ukraine during its independence period has been a frequent change of governments (Lunyachek 2011). Accordingly, the change of ministers of education, whose personality influenced the development of education, and shifts in political orientations of office-holders, had a dramatic

impact on reforms in Ukraine. A vivid example was introducing in 2001 and reversing in 2010 of the 12-year secondary education reform, which undoubtedly exerted uncertainty and turmoil in teacher education programs. Frequent changes of governments led to chaotic administration of the policy process, based on a 'fire-fighting' approach, with the focus of government on immediate problems rather than sustained policy-making (Fimyar 2008; Krawchenko 1997).

Related to the above, the third reason was the need for more time to implement innovations offered by reforms in the educational sphere. Many of the reforms were perceived to be introduced haphazardly and without proper preparation, attempting to destroy and discard the existing base without a clear idea of how to create the foundation for future development (Kutsyuruba 2011a). Implementation difficulties encountered in Ukrainian education and teacher training system can be attributed to the gap between the political decisions and the local realities; in other words, the reforms occurred more quickly than the abilities of educators to accommodate themselves to the new demands (Pukhovska & Sacilotto-Vasylenko 2010). Moreover, the changes pushed by the state policy directives were often not straightforward and reflected the complexities, contradictions and ambivalences of the post-Communist era (Wanner 1998).

Fourthly, the formal structural aspects of Soviet education were easier to reform than the practices instilled by the values of the Soviet system (Wanner 1998). Dyczok (2000) argued that the pace of change and reforms in Ukraine was affected by the fact that many educators and administrators were products of the previous education system and not familiar with alternative models. Practices and institutional cultures of post-Communism in education remained fairly unchanged since the Soviet times, thus creating greater disparity between education policy declarations and actual practical changes (Wolczuk 2004).

Fifthly, economic uncertainty of the post-Soviet era characterized by significant cuts in educational budgets and lack of resources for educators negatively affected the progress of reforms. Analyzing the post-Soviet transition of Ukraine in regards to its educational system, Holowinsky stressed the inadequate funding for educational reform (Holowinsky 1995). Similarly, the European Commission report on teacher education in Ukraine outlined difficult social and economic situation of the country as one of the main limitations for innovations in teacher education. Consequently, the status of teaching profession has degraded, leading to the departure of skilled teachers from schools in search of more lucrative careers (Kutsyuruba 2011b) and increased intake of low-performing students into pre-service teacher education institutions.

One of the main problems of higher education in Ukraine is its quality, as indicated by the fact that country's most prestigious higher education institutions have low indices in the world university ratings (Lunyachek 2011). Lunyachek argued that the reason is not only imperfect licensing and accreditation, but also lack of impartial external assessment of students' knowledge by independent institutions, low academic motivation of students, an outdated resource base of the absolute majority of higher education institutions, corruption and bribery, and insufficient

individualization of education. As a result, graduates of Ukrainian higher education institutions may be unable to take full advantage of the benefits provided by the Bologna Process.

Lastly, the introduction of the Bologna Process and recommendations associated with it and not only, as we have shown, often ignored the local needs of Ukrainian society. Reform recommendations provided by international organizations and adopted by local actors (European Commission 2011b; Silova & Steiner-Khamsi 2008; UNICEF 2011) usually aim to align a national educational system with the global educational trends and the needs of global market economy. As a result, local needs begin to compete with the global agendas and might be moved to the margins in the educational reform process. Perhaps, as Bargesian (2000) noted, the incomplete reform implementation resulted from the Westerners' assumptions that transition in socialist countries is characterized by development toward a market society and that many important, even structural, features of post-socialist societies will only be temporary.

Helpful in understanding the changing policy terrain and teacher education reforms in Ukraine is the distinction between policy as stated and policy in use (Sergiovanni et al. 2009). As opposed to policy that is created and mandated by policymakers, policy in use refers to policy that is created as guidelines are interpreted, mandated characteristics are weighed, differential priorities are assigned, action theories are applied, and ideas come to life in the form of implementing decisions and professional practice. The discrepancies in Bologna Process policy implementation progress as stated in official reports (macro level) and actual outcomes of the policy in use in higher education institutions and primary and secondary schools (meso and micro levels), vividly describe how policy statements are interpreted and felt by stakeholders that are directly affected by them. Moreover, the policy effect tends to lose its strength as policy guidelines move deeper into the institutional structures. Thus, institutional factors, contextualized by local national realities and circumstances, have the ability to not only hinder coherent implementation of reforms but also contribute to the purely formal or bureaucratic implementation of reforms. Therefore, greater attention to the actual vs stated outcomes of Bologna-initiated policies and reforms in teacher education is needed through the detailed analyses of how specific policies affect institutional adherence to and implementation of the Bologna Process. Further problematization and comprehensive research into the implementation accomplishments and challenges at the level of higher education institutions charged with preparation of future teachers and subsequent effects of new teacher force on schools level would be illuminating of the actual outcomes of the changing policy terrain in teacher education in Ukraine.

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Notes

[1] As of the beginning of 2011/2012 school year, teacher training in Ukraine was offered by 68 higher education institutions: 26 universities [including some solely pedagogical universities], 6 pedagogical institutes, 22 colleges, and 14 pedagogical schools [currently, most pedagogical schools have been reorganized into pedagogical colleges] (Shchudlo 2012). No current statistics is available.

[2] Curriculum of pedagogical institutions usually consists of four main components: academic studies (courses that are relevant to student's major. For example, history, mathematics or chemistry), pedagogical or educational studies (courses that provided students with knowledge about teaching techniques and mastership, child's psychological development, and educational theories), general studies (courses that are aimed at a general intellectual development of students. For example, philosophy, sociology or political science), and student teaching or school practicum.

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FORCED TO BE FREE? THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE TRANSITION TO EUROPEAN NETBACK GAS PRICES FOR UKRAINE'S ENERGY DEPENDENCY

Anna Postelnyak

Abstract

This paper proposes a theoretical framework for understanding how Russian gas prices for Ukraine shape the dynamics of the Russo-Ukrainian bilateral gas trade and, by extension, Ukraine's evolution as an independent state. It posits a negative correlation between the price of Russian gas and the extent of Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia, which rests on three pillars: Ukraine's high gas consumption, its energy poverty, and Russia's status as a monopolistic supplier of energy to Ukraine. The paper also discerns a positive correlation between Ukraine's dependency on Russian energy and its political and economic vulnerability to Russian pressure. The framework suggests that Ukraine's transition to oil-linked gas prices since 2009 has reduced politico-economic and energy dependency upon Russia, thereby improving Ukraine's relative position in terms of the asymmetrical Russian-Ukrainian interdependence in energy and politico-economic matters. However, Ukraine's ability to benefit from these gains in practice will remain contingent upon its capacity to gear its political institutions towards serving the interests of the state, rather than those of dominant business-administrative elites.

Key words: *Ukraine, energy, energy reforms, gas prices, energy dependency*

On January 19, 2009, Russia and Ukraine signed a contract setting the price at which Ukraine would purchase Russian gas for the next decade. The agreement terminated the 2009 gas war—a dispute over gas prices that prompted Russia to withhold gas supply to Ukraine and Europe for over two weeks. It also committed Ukraine to purchasing Russian gas at high oil-linked prices, which was bound to significantly impact its gas-intensive economy. Competing business-administrative groups in Ukraine spun the conflict's outcome in ways that furthered their respective agendas. The government of former President Viktor Yanukovych portrayed it in starkly negative terms, stressing its role in exacerbating Ukraine's suffering in the financial crisis in that it inflated the fiscal deficit through higher energy import costs, and destabilized the economy. Like his predecessors in the office of Ukrainian president, Yanukovych argued that high gas prices are inimical to Ukraine's state interests in order to further his own and his allies' personal ends, while tacitly ignoring the extent to which the previous pricing mechanism had helped generate the kind of Ukrainian economy that could be severely crippled by a shock in a single source of energy supply. Meanwhile, the 2009 contract's purportedly disastrous consequences was used to legitimize the jailing of its chief architect and key opposition figure Yuliya Tymoshenko, as well as to justify the president's refusal to meaningfully reform Ukraine's inefficient and corrupt energy sector. This prolonged Yanukovych's access to energy-related rents, and has helped

bring the Ukrainian economy to the verge of collapse in recent months.

Yanukovych's ability to exploit the 2009 gas contract for propaganda purposes was bolstered indirectly by a near absence of scholarly publications assessing and contextualizing its impact. At the time of writing, only the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies and Margarita Balmaceda have produced relevant studies on the subject (Pirani, Stern & Yafimava 2009; Pirani 2011; Pirani 2012; Pirani 2013; Balmaceda 2013). However, these works have focused either on gauging the impact of Ukraine's domestic politics on its energy policy, or on the effects of the external shock of higher gas prices on various domestic developments. Only limited attempts have been made to theorize how these have combined to affect the larger Russo-Ukrainian energy relationship in its historical context. This paper's contribution is that of a theoretical framework for conceptualizing the relationship between the price of Russian gas for Ukraine, the latter's energy dependency on Russia, and the impact of this dependency on Ukraine's political and economic development. While the framework does not purport to provide an exhaustive account of Russo-Ukrainian energy and politico-economic relations, it may provide a useful lens for understanding the interaction between Russian gas prices and Ukraine's multifaceted vulnerability to Russian pressures.

The theoretical framework presented herein is formulated through historical analysis of Russo-Ukrainian energy relations both prior to and after the transition to oil-linked gas prices in 2009. It suggests that there exists a negative correlation between the price of Russian gas and the extent of Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia, which rests on three pillars: Ukraine's high gas consumption, its energy poverty, and Russia's status as a monopolistic supplier of energy to Ukraine. In addition, it discerns a positive correlation between the extent of Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia and its political and economic vulnerability to Russian pressure. Consequently, Ukraine's transition to high oil-linked gas prices since 2009 has reduced its energy and politico-economic dependency on Russia, rendering it freer to pursue a more pro-Western foreign policy, and providing impetus for domestic institutional reform. However, Ukraine's ability to benefit practically from these gains will remain contingent upon its capacity to gear its political institutions towards serving the interests of the state, rather than those of dominant business-administrative elites.

After analyzing the dynamics of the Russo-Ukrainian gas trade up to 2009, this paper will conceptualize and evaluate the theoretical framework in light of subsequent developments. While it considers the many facets of the Russo-Ukrainian asymmetrical interdependence in energy and politico-economic matters, its primary focus is on Ukraine's many dependencies in this relationship and their links to the price of Russian gas—the fuel with the largest share in Ukraine's energy mix. Throughout, "low gas prices" refers to prices for Russian gas that are below the level of European netback—that is, gas prices at the border with the European Union (EU). "High gas prices" refers to those prices that are tantamount to European netback levels and linked to the price of oil.

Russo-Ukrainian Energy Relations Prior to 2009

The Soviet Era

Urbanization, industrialization, and electrification were key tenets of the Soviet Union's development strategy. As an integral part of the USSR, Ukraine became a key participant in the transformation of the former Russian Empire from a backwater on Europe's fringe into an industrial powerhouse, not least through its provision of gas—a fuel necessary for industrial development (Pirani 2011). Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Ukraine produced almost half of all Soviet natural gas, with production peaking in 1975 (Pirani 2012; Chow & Elkind 2009). From that point, however, its easily accessible reserves began depleting and in the 1980s Ukraine quickly transitioned to being a net importer of gas from other Soviet republics—in particular from Russia (Pirani, Stern & Yafimova 2009).

The development of heavy industry and manufacturing plants on Ukrainian territory rendered the economy gas-intensive at a time when its own energy prospects were deteriorating. However, Ukraine's membership in a socialist state that included energy-rich republics like Russia ensured it access to cheap and plentiful energy while the Union lasted (Park 2011; Pirani 2012). In the USSR, energy was distributed to enterprises and municipal residences on the basis of need, and its costs were kept well below world energy prices to facilitate industrial development (Goldman 2008; Park 2011). Soviet Ukraine was thereby able to develop gas-intensive sectors under the assumption of energy abundance, even while the republic itself was becoming increasingly reliant on fuel imports from the West Siberian gas fields.

The accessibility of Russian gas produced a surfeit of Ukrainian fuel consumption and made feasible the postponement of technical upgrades that would have improved energy efficiency. By 1990, the energy intensity of the Ukrainian economy had become more than twice that of the world average (Stuggins, Sharabaroff & Semikolenova 2013). Meanwhile, Soviet Ukrainians, having been reared in a climate of plentiful energy, came to view Russia as a reliable supplier of gas, and considered cheap energy a basic social service (Aalto, et al. 2013; Park 2011). They also learned to accept Ukraine's energy-intensive economy as the norm.

In addition to its reliance on Russian energy, during the Soviet era Ukraine became embedded in a system of gas and oil pipelines that saw Russia as the union's most geopolitically important and energy-rich member (Balmaceda 2006). No direct pipeline connections were built between Ukraine and any of the Central Asian republics, some of which would in due course become net exporters of fossil fuels, including to Ukraine.1 As was the case with political relations, Russia mediated energy among the USSR's constituent members through their structural subordination to it in the gas pipeline system.

Ukraine nonetheless acquired strategic significance denied to the other republics, due to its geographic location as a sizable 'borderland' between Russia and Europe, enabling it to become an integral player in Russo-European energy relations. For the economically stagnant Soviet Union of the 1970s, exports of

gas to European states became a crucial financial band-aid that helped postpone structural economic adjustments. Unlike intra-Soviet energy transfers, the Russo-European gas trade rested on "market principles", or rather their closest equivalent in a sector that to this day lacks a unified global market. In Europe, Moscow was able to link gas prices to those of oil and, given oil's escalating value in the wake of the 1973 OPEC oil embargo, derived tremendous profits. Ukraine's position as the conduit for over 90 per cent of Russo-European gas transit and its extensive gas storage facilities, strategically located near the USSR's Western border, made it a linchpin in pan-European energy flows (Balmaceda 2013).

1991-2008

After the implosion of the USSR, Ukraine's importance as a transit state and a large consumer of Russian gas, coupled with Russia's bleak economic outlook and desire to nurture a friendly regime in Kiev, enabled it to secure the perpetuation of relatively low Russian oil and gas prices. Until 2009, this arrangement helped conceal from the Ukrainian public the full implications of the fact that with independence Ukraine renounced its membership in an energy-rich state and had become energy-poor (Pirani 2007; Balmaceda 2013).

In the 1990s, Russia's economic collapse rendered it particularly reliant on exports of fossil fuels to Europe (Pirani 2012). This came to furnish as much as 60 per cent of Russia's export revenue and 45 per cent of its federal budget (Chernavsky & Eismont 2012; Kryukov, Tokarev & Yenikeyeff 2011). Having inherited sovereign control over the gas pipeline system and storage facilities on its territory,2 independent Ukraine was in a position to either sabotage the flow of gas from Russia to its most lucrative Western markets or, conversely, enable the Russian gas export monopoly Gazprom to reap the highest profits in Europe by affording it low transit and storage fees.3 As independent Ukraine became the fifth largest gas importer in the world, the country also emerged as a very large and potentially lucrative foreign consumer of Russian gas in its own right (Balmaceda 2013). The post-1991 energy relationship between Ukraine and Russia thus became characterized by an "asymmetrical interdependence" (Balmaceda 2013, p. 93-94), whereby Ukraine remained reliant on Russia for roughly half of its energy needs, while retaining leverage over Russia's energy sales in Europe and in Ukraine itself.

In theory, Ukraine could deploy its status as a crucial gas transit state and gas importer to mitigate its energy dependency by insisting on several things: a more transparent energy relationship with Russia, contractual and geographic diversification of its energy imports through Russian gas pipelines,4 and Russian cooperation in helping Ukraine devise and implement a coherent national strategy for transitioning to European netback prices. However, domestic political developments, including the early capture of the Ukrainian state apparatus by powerful business-administrative groups with vested interests in the continued availability of cheap Russian gas (and the obfuscation of Russo-Ukrainian energy dealings), precluded any mitigation of Ukraine's energy dependency until the external shock of high gas prices in 2009.5

During the transition from the Soviet command economy to a more laissez-faire

system, and the concomitant privatization of state assets, Ukraine's gas-intensive chemical fertilizer plants, steelworks, and other industries of Soviet provenance were rapidly snatched up and redistributed among a few competing groups of business elites with ties to the president (Balmaceda 2013). Given Ukraine's long isolation from international quality standards, its low export prices hinging on low input costs became its major source of competitive advantage in global markets. For the gas-intensive industries, keeping gas prices low through cheap imports from Russia—the country that could provide the cheapest gas possible—became the easiest path towards profit maximization. In the process, elites imperceptibly vested millions of Ukrainians employed in the gas-intensive industrial sector (particularly in Ukraine's Southeast) with an economic stake in the maintenance of genial relations with Russia (Balmaceda 2009) and, indirectly, in the enrichment and empowerment of the oligarchs themselves.6

While guaranteeing a standard of living tolerable to the population, the low gas price regime served as a disincentive for Ukrainians to conserve gas and resulted in the overconsumption and over-importation of the commodity from Russia. It also breathed life into uncompetitive sectors of the Ukrainian economy, enabling them to muddle through without significant reforms (Balmaceda 2009). As a result, the first decade of Ukrainian independence passed without the emergence of any major domestic economic actor with a vested interest in energy supply diversification, and with Ukrainian energy consumers remaining generally insulated from economic pressure to adjust to the underlying reality of Ukraine's post-1991 energy scarcity.

From 1991 to 2005, Ukraine's internal political configuration—notably the weakness of its democratic institutions and lack of meaningful public oversight of the government's workings—severely crippled its ability to manage its energy inefficiency and its dependence on cheap Russian gas. In particular, it made possible the institutionalization of a two-tiered gas pricing mechanism for domestic energy consumers that, by making energy available to the public and residential sectors at heavily subsidized prices, would lead to Ukraine's exorbitant consumption of Russian gas for years to come and the extensive theft of Russian gas transiting through Ukraine (which led to disputes with the Kremlin); the allocation of lucrative gas sales for the Ukrainian industrial sector to private gas distributors linked to powerful politicians rather than state-owned Naftohaz Ukrainy, generating endemic bankruptcy in the latter; the introduction of intermediary companies into Russian-Ukrainian energy relations, including Central Asian gas exporters like Turkmenistan, complicating dealings between the trade partners; and the development of a barter system to maintain gas deliveries from Russia and Turkmenistan into Ukraine, despite its recurrent liquidity crises which inflated gas prices and fuelled corruption (Balmaceda 2013). Ukraine was neither passive nor purely reactive in its dealings with Moscow, as its politicians and business elites played an active role in shaping the country's energy prospects in ways that benefited them.

These policy outcomes, and particularly the way they fostered opportunities for illicit activities, combined to greatly complicate the dynamics of Ukraine's energy dependency (Balmaceda 2009; Pirani 2011). Given the inherent opacity of illicit trade, the notorious absence of the rule of law in both countries, and collusion

between competing cohorts (Russian and Ukrainian) of corrupt politicians and Gazprom officials, it became impossible to reliably quantify the exact amount of Ukrainian state debt for Russian gas (Balmaceda 2013). Further, as Ukraine's energy sector became a breeding ground for corruption that implicated its major political figures, reform became increasingly difficult; since most politicians could be implicated in energy-related rent-seeking, any meaningful attempt to raise the issue would have spelled the end of any number of careers. Most crucially, Ukraine's authoritarian, corrupt, and non-transparent domestic political environment hid from the public the extent of the country's energy-related woes, including the true cost of nominally cheap Russian gas. This will be discussed in greater detail below.

It should be noted that the relationship between Ukraine's domestic politics and its energy relationship with Russia was bidirectional. While bad governance served to exacerbate Ukraine's energy dependency, this circumstance, and importantly the availability of low Russian gas prices, made it politically inexpedient for politicians to make the uncomfortable choice to refuse cheap gas. This is not least due to the fact that such a manoeuvre would temporarily slow down growth in Ukraine's most important economic sectors, and expose the decision maker to powerful opponents would could easily exploit the public's ingrained sense of entitlement to cheap energy. Independent Ukraine effectively found itself trapped in a vicious cycle, in which cheap gas bred venal politicians, who bred cheap gas.

Although profits from the deft exploitation of Ukraine's energy dependency were mostly pocketed by select individuals with connections to top-level Russian and Ukrainian politicians, its costs were foisted upon the Ukrainian public in a variety of more or less covert, and more or less monetized, schemes. These included "state guarantees, high inflation, a devalued currency, and growing budget deficits and foreign debt", as well as a besmirched international reputation as an unreliable trade partner, an increasingly non-transparent economy, state corruption, and a growing number of political concessions to Moscow as Ukraine slowly recovered its economic and geopolitical clout following the dramatic rise in post-1998 oil and oil-linked gas-prices (Balmaceda 2013, p. 104; Goldman 2008; Pirani 2012). In the 1990s, Russia's weakness and the the dominance of pro-Russian voices in the Ukrainian Rada under President Kuchma rendered Russo-Ukrainian energy relations underpinned by low prices acceptable to both parties.

By offering energy discounts for naval infrastructure in Crimea, Russia was already exploiting Ukraine's energy dependency to extract political concessions (Balmaceda 2013). The dawn of the new millennium, however, brought the exogenous shock of steeply rising oil and oil-linked gas prices in Europe, and Ukraine's endogenous political transformation that culminated in the Orange Revolution. While the former rendered Russia more assertive as it sought to re-impose its control over the members of the former Soviet Union (FSU), the latter made Ukraine increasingly unwilling to participate in Russian-led reintegration schemes in the post-Soviet geopolitical space.

Because a major increase in energy costs would have immediately destabilized the fragile gas-intensive Ukrainian economy, so long as the generally pro-Russian

Kuchma regime was in power (1994-2005) Russian gas prices for Ukraine, while rising, remained low (Nygren 2008). Meanwhile, both Gazprom and the Russian government, through foregone profits and tax revenue, effectively subordinated Russia's immediate financial interests to its long-term political aspirations, as well as to the personal interests of select politically powerful individuals in the Russian government and Gazprom—individuals who sometimes colluded with Ukrainian politicians and oligarchs to extract rents from Ukraine's energy dependency (Balmaceda 2013). However, as the prices for gas in the European market rose steadily throughout 1998-2006, and as Ukrainian politicians began deploying anti-Russian rhetoric in the lead-up to the Orange Revolution, the particular configuration of state, corporate, and personal interests in the Kremlin and Gazprom that had until that time fostered relatively stable low gas prices for Ukraine, was unsettled. A process of disorderly reshuffling ensued, culminating in the 2006 and 2009 gas wars.

The causes of the 2006 gas war can be traced to contemporaneous and mutually reinforcing transformations in both Russia's and Ukraine's official energy policies, the shifting dynamics of the complex bidirectional relationship between the Russian state and Gazprom, the upsetting of existing cross-border rent-seeking schemes in the energy sector by the newly elected regime of President Yushchenko, and possible attempts by actors in both countries to foster artificial energy scarcities and insert new actors (Balmaceda 2013). Among Ukraine's new team of "Orange" politicians—notably Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko—there was a sudden outpouring of anti-Russian and pro-NATO rhetoric. This prompted the Kremlin to doubt that its policy of subsidizing Ukrainian energy imports since 1991 was paying off. Members of the new Ukrainian government quickly moved to redistribute energy-related rents among themselves, quarrelling and disturbing status quo rent-sharing schemes that included Russian partners (Balmaceda 2013). In the process, Yushchenko came to demand the raising of tariffs on Russian gas transit through Ukraine, which, due to the linkage of the price of gas imports to transit tariffs in the Russo-Ukrainian energy agreement, escalated into a broader conflict. Through Gazprom, Russia retaliated with a firm insistence that Ukraine begin paying almost four times as much for its gas imports. Meeting resistance, it responded with a three-day gas cut-off.7

Both prior to and after this conflict, Gazprom was not a passive foreign policy tool of the Russian government. Instead it was steered by close Putin ally Alexei Miller, and the state had more than half the company's stock in its hands. These realities, coupled with the fact that Gazprom's corporate interests demand not only charging its foreign energy customers high gas prices, but also appeasing the Russian state[8], suggest that Gazprom cannot be considered an independent active generator of Russia's new energy stance towards Ukraine, though it certainly helped foster it. The Russian state effectively permitted Gazprom to insist on its corporate interests—and Russia's financial interest—of raising the export prices to Ukraine as, with recalcitrant 'Orange' elites in Kiev, there was no longer good reason to forego this revenue. This was especially the case as, by 2006, Russia had grown strong enough that it no longer had to subsidize the Ukrainian economy in order to

extract key concessions.

The 2006 gas war concluded with a weakening of Ukraine's leverage over Russia. It also prompted public indignation over Yushchenko's apparent weakness in the face of Russian pressure and rumours that he used the deal to pursue his own and his allies' interests at the expense of the state. The new contract committed Ukraine to charging Russia low gas transit and storage fees, and to pay increasingly more for Russian gas; between 2006 and 2008 the price of Russian gas imports doubled, though it remained significantly lower than the level of European netback. Meanwhile, no clear mechanism for negotiating the terms of future price increases was established, paving the way for further altercations, which would culminate in the gas war of 2009 (Balmaceda 2013). RosUkrEnergo (RUE), a new intermediary with ties to both Gazprom and Yushchenko, acquired a monopoly on all gas imports flowing into Ukraine from both Central Asian and Russian sources, arrogating to itself tremendous profits for unnecessary services. As a result, any gains in Ukraine's energy independence due to the ostensible geographical diversification of energy supply were offset by needlessly high prices and further obfuscation of the country's energy dealings (Balmaceda 2013).

The result of these measures was that the Ukrainian economy did not, as expected, take a hit, but in fact continued growing due to record-high world prices for its exports. However, the terms of the conflict's resolution largely discredited 'Orange' politicians (those who believed in the necessity of maintaining low Russian gas prices as well as those committed to breaking the cycle of dependency) in the eyes of the Ukrainian public and Western observers. Because during the crisis to counter the Russian gas cut-off Ukraine diverted quantities of Europe-bound gas for its own consumption, it exposed itself to charges of corruption and criminal activity from Russia and Europe alike. The resultant perception that Ukraine was engaging in illicit activities at Europe's expense raised yet another barrier on its already perilous path to strengthening relations with the EU, and effectively doomed the new government's pro-Western foreign policy to failure. All of these developments benefited Russia, as they helped to isolate Ukraine from the West and fundamentally undermined the credibility of pro-Western factions within the Ukrainian political system. In essence, the course and outcome of the 2006 gas war illustrates how Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia made it possible for this external actor to significantly affect the course of Ukraine's domestic and foreign policy, while setting the stage for the gas war of 2009.

Conceptualizing Ukraine's Energy Dependency: The Theoretical Framework

On the eve of the 2009 gas war, Russia still supplied over 70 per cent of Ukraine's gas and was its only major supplier of energy through the intermediary RUE.9 Meanwhile, Ukraine's energy intensity remained twice that of neighboring Poland and, in 2008, when (at its peak) the Ukrainian GDP ranked 45th largest in the world, Ukraine was the world's sixth largest consumer of gas. It devoured more of the precious resource than the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia

combined (Chow & Elkind 2009). With the main Ukrainian economic sectors still relying on supplies of cheap Russian gas, it became impossible not to question the meaning of the country's nominal independence (Balmaceda 2008). However, while detrimental to its claim to sovereignty, Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas was rendered rational by fiscal concerns, and given Ukraine's domestic political environment. The following paragraphs illustrate how, prior to 2009, Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia can be seen as resting on three pillars: the high gas intensity of the Ukrainian economy, Russia's status as a monopolistic supplier of gas to Ukraine, and Ukraine's energy poverty. Each pillar contributed to Ukraine's fumbling approach to foreign policy and economic development.

After 1991, Ukraine's gas-intensive economy was a luxury that it could afford only because cheap Russian gas remained available and insulated it from financial pressure to diversify its energy mix. Cheap gas also enabled Ukraine's exports to remain competitive without significant structural economic reform or innovation. In effect, the continued availability of cheap natural gas enabled the Ukrainian economy to remain "frozen in seemingly permanent transition" (Chow & Elkind 2009, p. 79), as it offered no material incentive for businesses to incur the costs of improving energy efficiency, or for residential customers to conserve energy. It also sent confused and distorted price signals to economic actors, making it rational to continue investment into the already-developed, gas-intensive industries instead of incurring the costs of entry into other sectors that would have been truly competitive in global markets without Russian subsidies.

As cheap gas could only enter Ukraine through Russia, that country could not but remain Ukraine's only major external supplier. Artificially low Russian gas prices discouraged attempts to look for other suppliers and other sources of energy in general, many of which had become available due to technological breakthroughs in the 2000s. While some European countries began to take advantage of deliveries of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from North Africa, the Middle East, and Canada as a substitute for Russian supplies, for Ukraine investment in the construction of a LNG terminal would have seemed an unnecessary cost in light of the availability of cheap Russian gas. This abundance also helped keep Ukraine energy-poor by discouraging investment into exploration of the country's own shale gas deposits. To assess and extract shale gas which, by the 2000s, remained its only domestically available gas source, Ukraine would have had to make sizable investments into the necessary technology or to improve its domestic business environment to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). As with building an LNG terminal, these were seen as superfluous costs as long as Ukraine could import Russian gas cheaply.

In short, by 2009 it had become clear that Russian energy had only been nominally cheap; Russian gas in fact carried with it many invisible "costs". Low prices not only helped keep Ukraine's economy energy-inefficient, undiversified, and vulnerable to sudden shocks in energy prices, but also fuelled corruption in the Ukrainian political system and rendered Ukraine extremely vulnerable to Russian pressure politically. This was true both on the visible level of interstate relations, and beneath the surface. Circumstances visibly came to a head in the aftermath of the Orange Revolution, when Russia exchanged energy discounts for assets

in Crimea (possibly influencing the peninsula's ultimate secession from Ukraine in 2014). Beneath the surface lay Russian actors' impact on powerful Ukrainian business-administrative groups.

On the basis of these observations a theoretical framework for understanding the interaction between the price of Russian gas for Ukraine and its energy and politico-economic dependencies on Russia can be formulated. The historical record to 2009 suggests that, given Ukraine's domestic political configuration, including the political prepotency of industrial interests, low Russian gas prices structurally underpinned Ukraine's exposure to arbitrary interference from Russia in its economic and political affairs. In particular, the availability of cheap Russian gas rendered reasonable Ukraine's over-consumption of Russian gas imports, as well as Russia's continued status as the monopolist exporter of gas to its energy-poo neighbour. These consequences in turn enabled Ukraine's energy dependency to translate into economic and political dependency on Moscow. The development of the Russo-Ukrainian energy relationship prior to 2009 in effect suggests that the price of Russian gas and Ukraine's energy dependency were negatively correlated, with declining prices corresponding to an increase in energy dependency. It also indicates that there was a positive correlation between Ukraine's energy dependency and its political and economic dependence on Russia, as the more Ukraine relied on Russian energy for maintaining its economy, the more its economic and political stability became vulnerable to Russian interference.

With the signing of the January 19 deal that committed Ukraine to paying European netback gas prices starting in 2010 (after an initial doubling in tariffs in 2009), the 2009 gas war effectively ended the low gas price environment and ushered in its opposite—a high gas price environment in Ukraine, as in the rest of Europe. 10 By acquiescing to European netback, Ukraine committed itself to paying the oil-linked price of gas at which it is sold at the border with the EU (the EU base price) minus the transportation costs between Ukraine and this border (Pirani 2013).11 This shift enables a test of whether or not Russian gas prices negatively correlate with Ukraine's energy dependency in general, and whether or not Ukraine's energy dependency positively correlates with its economic and political dependence on Russia—that is, if the opposite of what held in a climate of low gas prices continues to hold when gas prices are high. I propose to investigate this with the help of four hypotheses:

1. High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to reduce its consumption of gas in absolute terms, diminish its relative proportion in the country's overall energy mix, and lower the energy intensity of its economy through investments in energy efficiency.

2. High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to diversify its sources of energy supply in order to bypass Russian or Russian-controlled suppliers.

3. High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to seek to boost its domestic gas output and thus become less energy-poor.

If any of the first three hypotheses hold—which would amount to a reduction

in Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia—then it is also possible to formulate the fourth hypothesis:

4. By diminishing Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia, high gas prices would decrease Russia's political and economic leverage over Ukraine.

Before proceeding with the test, it is imperative to mention the potential impact of a major confounding variable, the effect of which on Ukraine's gas consumption might approximate the impact of high gas prices suggested by the theoretical framework. This confounding variable is the global financial crisis of 2008 that, by 2009, contributed to a 15 per cent contraction in the Ukrainian economy (Svoboda 2011; Balmaceda 2009). The financial crisis catalyzed a sharp decline in demand for Ukraine's gas-intensive steel, chemical, metallurgical, and machine exports (Balmaceda 2009; Aslund 2009), which diminished industrial gas consumption. Although the contemporaneous occurrence of the financial crisis and the 2009 gas contract makes it nearly impossible to disentangle their unique effects, the confounding impact of this variable on each hypothesis must be considered separately before proceeding with the analysis of events after 2009.

Hypothesis 1: High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to reduce its consumption of gas in absolute terms, diminish its relative proportion in the country's overall energy mix, and lower the energy intensity of its economy through investments in energy efficiency.

The potential effect of the confounding variable is potent here, since it is virtually impossible to say definitively if an absolute decline in Ukraine's gas consumption after 2009 would reflect the effect of high gas prices, or simply a decrease in demand for Ukrainian exports abroad. Even a decrease in the relative proportion of gas in Ukraine's overall energy mix can be attributed to the effect of the financial crisis, as it would disproportionately affect the gas-intensive industries and potentially induce fuel-switching away from gas. However, if the financial crisis were the reason for the absolute and relative declines in Ukrainian gas consumption, one would expect to see a correlation between fluctuations in the size of the Ukrainian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Ukrainian demand for gas. Specifically, one would expect that as the Ukrainian GDP grew and the economy recovered, the country's gas consumption would also grow. Meanwhile, investments in improving the energy efficiency of businesses are usually made with a long-run calculus of costs and benefits in mind due to the large financial outlays involved. Since business owners are likely to consider the effects of the financial crisis more or less temporary, it is unlikely that they would seek to make long-term investments to improve energy efficiency on the basis of a recession alone. Consequently, evidence of investment in the improvement of business energy efficiency cannot be primarily attributed to the effects of the financial crisis.

Hypothesis 2: High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to diversify its sources of energy supply to bypass Russian or Russian-controlled

suppliers.

Efforts to diversify suppliers of gas usually entail immediate and direct costs, as investment into importing arrangements from new sources necessitates the construction of nonexistent infrastructure, investment in new technology, and the establishment of new diplomatic contacts. An economic recession leaving both the government and the Ukrainian business sector cash-strapped is thus likely to discourage efforts at supply diversification. Thus, evidence of increased efforts to diversify sources cannot be attributed to the effect of the financial crisis.

Hypothesis 3: High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to seek to boost its domestic gas output and thus become less energy-poor.

The same logic that applies to hypothesis 2 applies to hypothesis 3, as efforts to boost domestic gas production entail costs to the government and business for the exploration and extraction of shale gas—the only gas Ukraine has left—or for reaching out to potential foreign investors, which would be a more likely prospect at the end of a recession. Moreover, a recession that would depress gas consumption in gas-intensive export industries and thus gas demand can be expected to deter the appearance of new domestic gas suppliers. Evidence of increased efforts to find domestic sources of gas therefore cannot be attributed to the effects of the financial crisis.

Hypothesis 4: By diminishing Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia, high gas prices would decrease Russia's political and economic leverage over Ukraine.

The financial crisis, which launched Ukraine into its worst recession since the 1990s and impoverished its government, might be expected to make Ukraine particularly eager to accept any Russian discount on the price of gas. Thus, the financial crisis might temporarily increase Russian leverage over Ukraine and thereby offset any gains accruing from its decreased energy dependency on Russia. The findings for hypothesis 4 are thus particularly vulnerable to distortion by the confounding variable.

Testing Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1: *High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to reduce its consumption of gas in absolute terms, diminish its relative proportion in the country's overall energy mix, and lower the energy intensity of its economy through investments in energy efficiency*.

Since 2009, Ukraine's gas consumption has fallen significantly in absolute terms. In 2009 it decreased by 21.8 per cent compared with the previous year, from 67.3 bcm to 52.8 bcm (Pirani 2011; 2012). Although in 2010 it rose again modestly to 57.6 bcm (Pirani 2012), the following year imports fell to 40 bcm, only to diminish to 33 bcm in 2012 (Olearchyk & Buckley 2013). These figures suggest that between

2009 and 2012, Ukraine's annual gas consumption averaged at 45.9 bcm/annum, compared with about 73.6 bcm/annum between 2003 and 2008 (Pirani 2012). Thus, in the aftermath of the 2009 gas war Ukraine was consuming on average 27.7 bcm less gas per year than previously, with its absolute consumption falling by almost 40 per cent. This is a considerable and unprecedented reduction in light of the country's previous consumption patterns. Ukraine was projected to import only 24 bcm of Russian gas in 2013 (Tuohy & Bulakh 2013), with its consumption in the first quarter amounting to a 17.4 per cent reduction compared with the same period in 2012 (National Radio Company of Ukraine 2013).

These numbers reveal consistent annual reductions in Ukraine's consumption of Russian gas, despite the fact that by 2010 its economy had begun to recover (Matsuki et al. 2012). While Ukraine has not yet recovered its pre-2009 GDP levels and in fact entered a mild recession in 2012 (Olearchyk 2013a). Whereas its GDP fluctuated yet has risen overall, its gas consumption declined. This suggests that cuts in Ukraine's gas consumption were not prompted by the recession primarily, but instead by the new high gas price environment—the only new factor that can account for the observed changes after 2009.

There is also evidence that savings in gas consumption arose partially because the share of gas in Ukraine's energy mix fell. Gas-intensive industry and electricity generators have cut demand by diversifying towards other fuels like coal. This has decreased the relative significance of gas in total energy consumption (Pirani 2011; Olearchyk & Buckley 2013). In general, while in 2007 gas accounted for about 47.9 per cent of Ukraine's energy landscape, by 2013 its share had gently fallen to about 40 per cent (Apergis & Payne 2010; Natural Gas Europe 2013b).

Further, sensing that the principle of higher gas prices has become an entrenched fact of Russo-Ukrainian energy relations, Ukraine has begun to seek not only short-term, but also long-term strategies for reducing its heavy reliance on gas such as enhancing its renewable energy capabilities. The Yanukovych government worked to build wind energy potential in Crimea and to accelerate the development of Ukraine's hydro, biomass, photovoltaic, and geothermal energy sources (Kudrya & Pepelov 2011). The context of rising energy prices seems to have generated some investor enthusiasm, with DTEK, Ukraine's largest power generator, launching construction of a large wind park in Zaporizhia in 2012 (Pirani 2011; KyivPost 2012). In addition, there seems to have been a rise in public awareness of the need to develop more renewable sources of energy, with Ukraine hosting renewable energy summits such as the Ukraine Renewable Energy Development Summit (December 2012) and the annual Ukrainian Energy Forum. The latter was launched in 2010 to invite discussion on Ukraine's energy situation and ultimately to move forward by adopting sustainable development strategies.

In addition to fuel source diversification, by 2012 Ukraine began to work toward improving the energy efficiency of its gas pipeline infrastructure, in part by turning to Europe for funds and expertise. In 2009, Ukraine secured EU financing to upgrade its GTS (Balmaceda 2009) and on May 3, 2013 it held roundtable talks with the EU regarding the future development of Ukraine's gas market (The Wall Street

Journal 2013). In part as a result of these measures, through efficiency investments Ukraine has succeeded in decreasing its consumption of so-called "technical gas"—gas that is lost in the pipeline system due to various inefficiencies and problems—by about 37 per cent (Olearchyk & Buckley 2013; Pirani 2013).

In 2013, the energy intensity of the Ukrainian economy remained high and the country stayed among the world's eleven most energy-inefficient economies (Tuohy & Bulakh 2013). However, high gas prices seem to have nudged Ukraine's industrialists to invest in improving fuel efficiency in their sector (Pirani 2011). Although it is impossible to disentangle the effect of the financial crisis from that of high gas prices, in 2009 overall industrial demand for gas fell by more than 41.9 per cent, while industrial output contracted by about 30 per cent. This suggests that gas consumption declined more steeply than production (Aslund 2009; Pirani 2011). Pirani (2013) has indicated that at least some of this decline can be traced back to business' investments in improving efficiency through technological upgrades.

In sum, as the framework suggests, after 2009 Ukraine decreased its consumption of Russian gas in both absolute and relative terms, and improved the efficiency of its economy. This is because it became rational to consume less of a product that had significantly risen in price.

Testing Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2: *High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to diversify its sources of energy supply to bypass Russian or Russian-controlled suppliers.*

The end of low Russian gas tariffs prompted efforts in Kiev to erode Russia's status as a monopolistic supplier of gas to Ukraine. This applied alike to Russia's role as the point of origin of imported gas, its role as an intermediary player in gas flows from the Central Asian gas exporters, and its political clout in the area (Pirani 2013). In particular, Ukraine has begun investing in infrastructure aimed at decreasing reliance on conventional natural gas, of which Russia remains the only viable major source in Ukraine's geographical vicinity, while building partnerships with European countries to import small quantities of their fuel. In 2013, Ukraine scheduled the construction of three coal gasification plants and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal, which would enable it to receive as much as 5 bcm of gas—equivalent to about 17 per cent of its annual energy needs—through non-conventional, non-pipeline means (Olearchyk & Buckley 2013). Ukraine also succeeded in arranging imports of small volumes of fuel from Slovakia and Germany, and began developing capacities to import from Hungary at prices which appear lower than those charged by Gazprom and in volumes that could potentially meet one fifth of gas requirements (Pirani 2013; The Wall Street Journal 2013). According to former Minister of Energy Eduard Stavytsky, by diversifying Ukraine's gas suppliers and undermining the Russian export monopoly, Ukraine's bargaining position in future gas price negotiations with Russia will be enhanced, rendering Ukraine less dependent on Russian energy (The Wall Street Journal 2013). These findings are consistent with the framework presented here, as they reveal that after

2009 Ukraine began working to diversify its energy suppliers to reduce exclusive reliance on gas flows controlled by Russia.

Testing Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3: *High Russian gas prices would make it rational for Ukraine to seek to boost its domestic gas output and thus become less energy-poor.*

Since 2009, Ukraine has attempted to increase its domestic gas output as a means of mitigating its reliance on Russian gas (Olearchyk & Buckley 2013). Having depleted its easily accessible gas deposits, it has had to develop capabilities for reaching "hard gas" like shale (Natural Gas Europe 2013b). Before 2009, Ukraine was ignorant of the extent of its shale deposits, but has in recent years learned that these might in fact constitute the third largest in Europe (Reuters 2012). According to former Energy Minister Stavytsky, within a decade these deposits have the potential to make Ukraine self-sufficient in gas (Olearchyk & Buckley 2013). This would drastically decrease its energy dependency and possibly make it a net exporter of shale by 2025 (Olearchyk 2013c; Olearchyk & Buckley 2013; Natural Gas Europe 2013c). To explore and extract hard gas, which requires the application of cutting-edge Western technology, Ukraine awarded three production- and revenue-sharing agreements in 2012 to Royal Dutch Shell, Chevron, and Exxon Mobil (Natural Gas Europe 2013c; 2013d).[12] At present it is far too early to share in Stavytsky's enthusiasm entirely. The technical and environmental concerns pertaining to shale drilling, the uncertain impact of political upheaval in Ukraine, and Gazprom's avowals that Ukrainian shale projects would not threaten the company's position in the Ukrainian market, all complicate a rosy outlook (Olearchyk & Buckley 2013). However, Ukraine's attempts to develop its shale deposits are nonetheless steps towards mitigating its energy poverty, in line with hypothesis 3.

Testing Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4: *By diminishing Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia, high gas prices would decrease Russia's political and economic leverage over Ukraine.*

The confirmation of the first three hypotheses amounts to a reduction in Ukraine's energy dependency. We can now investigate whether this circumstance has, in turn, reduced its political and economic reliance on Russia. As noted above, the distorting impact of the major confounding variable—the financial crisis—is potentially major, as the event (from which Ukraine is still recovering) may exert additional and unique pressures on the country to yield to Moscow's demands in exchange for financial relief. The same can be said of many other factors, including Ukraine's domestic political structure, which in practice could render the country pliable to Russian pressure and offset gains in energy independence. However, these complications do not obviate the fact that reductions in energy dependency might still result in gains for Ukraine in terms of politico-economic independence. The following should be construed as tentative reflections on the post-2009 dynamics of this relationship.

The April 2010 agreement between President Yanukovych and President Medvedev to exchange a twenty-year extension on Russia's lease of a Crimean naval base for a small, temporary reduction in the prices at which Russia sold its gas to Ukraine, has been sometimes interpreted as an indication that gains in energy independence did not alter Ukraine's pliability to Russian political pressure (Charnysh 2013; Conde & Martins 2010). However, the agreement came so soon after the conclusion of the 2009 gas contract that it would be unreasonable to expect a significant reduction in Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia by mid-2010. Further, it is not at all clear that the conclusion of the agreement was foreseeably detrimental to Ukrainian interests or was concluded against its will as a simple result of Russian energy pressure. While naval bases on its territory were in some ways an affront to Ukrainian sovereignty, and proved to be a stepping-stone in Russia's eventual takeover of Crimea, the so-called Kharkiv Accords helped Ukraine through the recession by keeping its gas bills lower than they might have been.

Nonetheless, the stalemated Russo-Ukrainian discussions on Ukraine entering the Russian-led European Economic Community (Customs Union) represent a clear attempt on Russia's part to reintegrate the FSU under its leadership by exploiting Ukraine's dependency on Russian gas. President Putin has consistently promised much lower gas prices for Ukraine if it accedes to the Union (BBC World News 2013). However, in acceding Ukraine would have put a decisive end to the prospect of moving closer to the West which, as the recent "Maidan" protests have shown, is favoured by a broad cross-section of the population. Despite the seductive "carrots" of much cheaper gas, and the "sticks" of ultimatums that Ukraine immediately repay its purported debt to Gazprom,13 former President Yanukovych consistently refused the Russian offers. While the decisions of Ukrainian politicians have been influenced by a variety of factors—a topic on which meaningful research has yet to be done—Ukraine's gains in energy independence were of rhetorical use in resisting Russian pressure. Politicians threatened to dispute the Russian energy debt charges through international arbitration, as Ukraine had acquired against Russia "more leverage than ever in the past" as a result of its preliminary success in diversifying its gas suppliers and reducing consumption (Olearchyk 2013c). Similarly, Ukraine's former Prime Minister Mykola Azarov referred to these successes as the "strong new cards" that Ukraine could use to bargain in disputes with Russia (Olearchyk 2013b). At minimum, on the level of formal governmental discourse Ukrainian officials appeared confident that the country had made real progress in reducing its energy dependency. They deployed this in defense of what they saw as Ukraine's politico-economic interest in abstaining from the Customs Union.

With the severance of the "umbilical cord" of cheap Russian gas which, since 1991, nurtured elements in Ukrainian society that kept its domestic and foreign policy largely frozen in the Soviet era, we can now expect to see changes in both spheres. By eliminating one of the Ukrainian industrial elite's pro-Russian sympathies, while at once increasing the importance of Ukraine as a large and very profitable market for Russian energy exports, higher Russian gas prices have improved Ukraine's position relative to Russia in terms of their asymmetrical

interdependence in energy and politico-economic matters. As a result, in theory Ukraine has become freer to pursue a pro-Western foreign policy if it so desires—a factor which may have played a role in enabling the 2013-2014 "Maidan" protests. The ties that Ukraine has been able to forge with European states for the import of their gas, financing, and expertise in gas sector reform can be used as a springboard for a more comprehensive rapprochement with the EU. On a domestic level, having to court outside investment into the non-conventional gas sector has brought to the fore a need for Ukraine to improve its business climate. This could be beneficial to the Ukrainian economy as a whole by necessitating greater transparency. Similarly, investments in improving the energy efficiency of Ukrainian industry may make the economy more resilient, dynamic, and secure in its future prospects, instead of riddled by fear of chaos during a spike in gas prices. Ukraine's political system may also be subject to a push for meaningful democratization as a result of economic reforms and greater cooperation with the West. In fact, this outcome, while far from certain, is a necessity if Ukraine is to benefit fully from the new opportunities afforded by its altered energy relationship with Russia.

As the history of post-1991 Russo-Ukrainian energy relations makes clear, Ukraine's domestic political configuration, and particularly the ability of successive business-administrative groups to take state institutions hostage and exploit them for private gain, have consistently prevented the country from fully reaping the benefits of its asymmetrically interdependent energy relations with Russia. As result of the 2009 gas war, Ukraine's potential leverage in energy matters vis-à-vis Russia has increased. However, the extent to which this development will translate into practical reductions in Ukraine's politico-economic dependency on its Eastern neighbour will greatly depend on the extent to which its political institutions will be geared towards pursuing state interests. It will also hinge on the general skilfulness and uprightness of its politicians, who in turn depend on the quality of the country's educational and legal institutions. Also of crucial significance will be whether Ukrainians choose to consider the full (rather than the nominal) costs of cheap Russian gas for development and appreciate that Ukraine can successfully adapt to high energy costs—it has in fact already begun to do so—or whether they instead choose to focus on the inevitable short-term costs of transition to a new energy and economic model. A high gas price regime does not amount to a magic formula for fixing Ukraine's numerous problems, but it provides an unprecedented opportunity for the country to make a decisive, positive break with its past.

Conclusion

Since 2009, Ukraine has taken concrete steps to decrease its energy dependency on Russia by working to reduce imports of Russian gas, undermine Russia's status as a monopolistic energy supplier, and mitigate its energy poverty. In the process, the country began consuming less Russian gas in absolute and relative terms, investing in improving the energy efficiency of its gas-intensive businesses, diversifying its sources of gas supply, and encouraging exploration of non-conventional domestic gas. As a result, Ukraine's diminished reliance on Russian gas after 2009 has

featured as a discursive weapon in Kiev's efforts to resist joining the Moscow-led Customs Union, and in general has rendered Ukraine freer to pursue a more pro-Western foreign policy and reform its domestic institutions. These findings suggest that it is possible to conceive of Russo-Ukrainian energy relations in terms of a theoretical framework whereby the price at which Ukraine buys its gas from Russia negatively correlates with the extent of Ukraine's energy dependency on Russia, while its energy dependency positively correlates with Kiev's political and economic vulnerability vis-a-vis Moscow. Nonetheless, whether or not the Ukrainian public will benefit from the recent changes in the structure of Ukrainian-Russian energy relations will remain crucially dependent upon domestic politics. It is to be hoped that the election of President Petro Poroshenko will be a steppingstone towards a meaningful democratization of Ukrainian governance, and particularly towards increasing public oversight of the work of state representatives. Such a development will be necessary to prevent future hijackings of public institutions by a self-seeking elite. While enabling some domestic reform, a regime of high gas prices will ultimately depend on additional, exogenous support for meaningful political change if it is to be fully exploited by Ukraine as a whole, for the benefit of its people.

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Notes

[1] Of particular importance here is Turkmenistan. At various points throughout the 1990s and 2000s it would supplied gas to Ukraine through intermediaries operated by individuals on both sides of the Russo-Ukrainian border, but only through the Gazprom-owned gas transit system inside Russia.

[2] Despite the contemporaneous construction of the Yamal-Europe gas pipeline, which would bypass Ukraine and instead traverse Belarus on its way to Europe, Ukraine kept its share of the Russo-European gas transit at about 80 per cent (Pirani 2007).

[3] Cheap gas storage in Ukraine enabled Gazprom, which lacked similar infrastructure in Russia, to manipulate its gas supplies to—and thus prices in—the European gas market (Balmaceda 2013).

[4] Ukraine's imports of small quantities of gas originating in Turkmenistan since independence cannot be construed as a successful supply diversification scheme. This is because that gas was either transited through Russian gas pipelines on its way to Ukraine, or was labeled as 'Russian' gas and sold as such. In practice, this enabled Russia to indirectly remain a monopolist supplier of gas to Ukraine.

[5] For a comprehensive overview of domestic political factors that have shaped post-1991 Russo-Ukrainian energy relations and perpetuated Ukraine's energy inefficiency and dependence on Russia, see Balmaceda (2013).

[6] The civil war in Ukraine's Southeastern region, including pro-Russian separatism, can be partially traced back to the importance of cheap Russian gas for the viability of the region's energy-intensive economy. This economy became threatened in the aftermath of the so-called 'Maidan' protests elsewhere in the country, which prompted a hike in the price of Russian gas for Ukraine.

[7] Ukraine was asked to immediately switch from paying $50/thousand cubic metres of natural gas (mcm) to paying $160-$230/mcm (Pirani 2007; Goldman 2008).

[8] The Russian government provided Gazprom with a variety of perquisites that furthered its competitive advantage domestically abroad (Balmaceda 2013).

[9] The rest of the gas consumed in Ukraine was produced domestically. However, "Russian" gas could originate from Central Asia, before being purchased by Gazprom and sold to Ukraine (Balmaceda, 2013).

[10] Ukraine would pay European netback minus 20 per cent in 2009 ($360/mcm) and 100 per cent European netback in 2010 ($450/mcm). In 2008, Ukraine was only paying about $170/mcm (Svoboda 2011). Although Yanukovych succeeded in securing a temporary 30 per cent discount on Russian gas and amended some other clauses of the contract, he was unable to alter it in substance and Ukraine remains bound by most of its provisions, including the European netback pricing mechanism.

[11] It should be emphasized that the 2009 negotiations ushered in the high gas price environment for Ukraine specifically, as many other countries were able to actually lower the prices they were paying for Russian gas in bilateral negotiations with Gazprom around the same time, citing technological breakthroughs and the increased availability of gas on spot markets as justifications for lower prices.

[12] The Shell deal in particular was the largest agreement of its kind in Europe and has already led to drilling for gas in Eastern Ukraine, although its future is uncertain (Tuohy & Bulakh 2013). Crucially, Ukrainian officials referred to these deals as being part of Ukraine's broader effort to boost domestic gas production, diversify sources of supply, and make its gas-intensive heavy industry more energy-efficient.

[13] In January 2013, just a month after Yanukovych's refusal to discuss integration, Gazprom issued Ukraine a $7 billion bill for the gas that the country should have imported according to the "take or pay" clauses in the 2009/2010 gas contracts (Olearchyk 2013c). The issue of unpaid bills only emerged after Yanukovych's refusal to discuss further integration, and was in any case of dubious credibility as Ukraine has argued that its total gas consumption reaches the volume it agreed to buy if one combines the gas imports of Naftohaz Ukrainy, and those of new private companies that began to import gas from Russia in the aftermath of Naftogaz's 2011 unbundling (Natural Gas Europe 2013a).

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PERFORMING PROTEST: FEMEN, NATION, AND THE MARKETING OF RESISTANCE

Jessica Zychowicz

Abstract

The politics of the women's protest group Femen, viewed as a media protest performance, reveal how the group has adapted the pop cultural staging of the Orange Revolution to their brand. Femen's controversial topless methods have instantiated widespread debates around the diverse meanings of feminism both in Ukraine and among global audiences after the group's move abroad in 2012. The findings in this article represent three years of ongoing research including original interviews, extensive analyses of blogs, news reports, photographs, and firsthand observations of activities by Femen and other feminist groups in Ukraine. By putting on display the dialectics of the commodification of female stereotypes, Femen's performances expose the mechanisms in the mass media branding and marketing of protest. The controversial aesthetics of the group's parodies illustrate the rhetorical limits at the intersection of local and global forms of civic expression.

Keywords: *protest, new media, aesthetics, feminism, political theory*

In 2008 four young Ukrainians named Anna Hutsol, Inna Shevchenko, Oksana Sashko, and Roman Zviazsky living in the city of Khmelnytskyi formed a feminist protest group. Femen has since gained notoriety worldwide for their controversial topless protests that once featured mostly street theatre, but now primarily consist of flash-mob performances circulated online. Members are mostly women in their twenties and thirties, the group lists twelve active members, and over four hundred non-active members on their website. Femen originally aimed to bring greater awareness to sex-tourism in Ukraine, though their performances now target a broad range of issues they define as patriarchal. Within Ukraine, Femen are arguably the most prominent, and also the least popular, activist group to emerge after the Orange Revolution. While theatrical displays of public dissent are hardly new to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, topless feminist protest there is nearly unprecedented. Other feminist commentators in Ukraine are ambivalent about Femen's tactics and opinions among activists and scholars' range from outright rejection, to skepticism, to tentative collaboration.

Early Femen protests often featured iconic references to politicians from the paradigmatic street protests and populist campaigns that the group's members recall from the Orange Revolution, which took place during many members' childhood years. Femen activists have staged several parodies of sex work on Kyiv's Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) where thousands of peaceful demonstrators camped in winter to protest an unfair election in 2004. Members have dressed up as Yulia Tymoshenko during her trial in 2011 and have mocked Putin by stealing the symbolic ballot box that he presented in Moscow before his reelection. In addition to commenting on domestic and regional politics, Femen has

also appeared at events of global prominence including the G8 leaders summit, meetings at the Vatican, and court hearings in Quebec regarding the public display of religious symbols. The group's ambiguous stance "against all dictatorship and religion" (Femen 2013) has provided them with extant rhetorical strategies through which to attach their image to news stories on causes indirectly related to civil rights. For example, they have "protested" commemorations of the Chernobyl disaster, institutional responses to the swine flu epidemic, municipal water shut offs in Kyiv, etc. In 2012 Femen relocated their headquarters from Kyiv to Paris and Berlin. The globalization of Femen's activities has manifested a global conversation around the group in which their topless performances have become a flashpoint for much deeper anxieties about national independence, gender identity, and sexual liberation.

The debates around Femen's methods have also instantiated a media fetish for the group that merits closer academic attention as an instance of public discourse on gender and globalization. Femen's blog alone has manifested an archive of mass-media representations of their feminist brand in which observers and critics may trace a range of nationally significant symbolic systems. Transnational feminist scholars have debated the role of representation in mediating dialogue on gender rights. Especially important have been critical examinations of neoliberal policies and re-entrenchments of East-West divides in the postcommunist context (Gal & Kligman 2000). Femen's visual language continues to translate, and mistranslate, across national contexts and has unleashed a battle over representation that is airing a range of gendered and racial stereotypes often perpetuated by mainstream media. Emergent conversations on the line between replicating versus overturning mainstream images of women have clustered around the Femen brand in a telling way. My aim in this article is not to propose a defense of Femen's negative reception or to abet their political intentions, but rather, to present a close analysis of the role of the mass media in their project in order to contextualize them within a broader ethical framework. Femen's symbolic capital can be developed into a platform for dialogue that is more sensitive to cultural and social differences by critically evaluating the vehicle – the mass media – through which the group stages their protest performances.

The data and analysis in this article is based on three years of ongoing research on feminism in Ukraine. My findings are based upon original interviews, analyses of blogs, court documents, news reports, photographs, and firsthand observations of activities by Femen and other feminist and LGBT activist groups in the region. I first conducted interviews with Femen leader Anna Hutsol in Kyiv in 2011 and met with former Femen member Angelina Diash, also in Kyiv, in summer 2013. I have interviewed feminist and lgbt activists from Ofenzywa and the NGOs Krona, Insight, Igliyo, and the Kharkiv Gender Museum, in addition to Ukrainian feminist scholars at Kyiv-Mohilya, Kharkiv Center for Gender Studies, and feminist activists unaffiliated with any of these groups. Major media outlets examined for this article include: The New York Times, BBC, The Atlantic, Radio Free Europe, The Huffington Post, The Guardian, Kyiv Post, Kanal 1+1, Ukrainian Pravda, The Moscow Times, Pravda, Izvestia, Correspondent, Le Monde Diplomatique, and Der Spiegel.

In the opening sections of this article I offer a theoretical framework for reading the functionality of the signs and symbols in the design and marketing of the Femen protest brand. In parts three and four, I trace the historic links in Femen's development to the discursive environment of the Orange Revolution and Anna Hutsol's background in marketing, leadership, and the ideological design of the color revolutions. Contextualizing Femen's performance rhetoric within other stagings of Ukrainian nationhood by pop performers of the same time period, I show how the former appropriates these styles for their own mythmaking of themselves as dissidents. Lastly, I provide an analysis of Femen's impact on local feminist debates, paying attention to a shift in receptions of the group after their move abroad. Reflecting on Femen's recent marketing of themselves as "sextremists," I reveal an impasse in their movement in which the exclusion of a plurality of women's voices from their marketing of protest has challenged their brand's unique purchase on the media. Offering a close analysis of the formal devices in Femen adapted to digital journalism and network technologies, new directions emerge in which the lived experiences of the group's members, as well as the symbolic capital they have leveraged, provide insight for transnational feminisms concerned with media stereotypes and the (mis)translation of gender ideologies across cultural paradigms.

Who are Femen?

During the period of September 2008 - 2012 Femen staged approximately fifty-five street protests. The majority of these actions took place in downtown Kyiv on Maidan Nezalezhnosti, but other significant sites in the city included: Parliament (Verkhovna Rada); SBU Headquarters; Pechersk Court; Turkish, Russian, Georgian, Saudi Arabian, and Polish Embassies; Kyiv polling stations; the Cabinet of Ministers; the Ministry of Health; the statue of Lenin on Khreshatyk, the private residence of the Ambassador of India; Olympic Stadium; and Kyiv-Boryspil International Airport. Before acquiring an office in Kyiv in 2011, Femen members met regularly to conduct planning sessions, interviews, and other activities in a privately owned café near Khreshatyk named Café Kupidon. In 2012 the group opened offices in Berlin and Paris. Hutsol has cited that their primary sources of monetary support are from private donors (Hutsol 2011). It has also been noted that the group has been funded by a musician named DJ Hell and the owner of KP Media Holding Company Jed Sunden (Prymachyk 2010). From October 2011 to the present Femen has staged approximately forty street actions outside of Ukraine. Countries where Femen's core members or women affiliated with the group staged protest-performances linked by method and symbolism include Belarus, Russia, Poland, France, Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Tunisia, Brazil, India, and Canada. The themes of Femen's international protests have included sexual harassment policies at the Euro Cup, freedom of the press and censorship more generally, the Olympic committee's stance on Islamic law, the wearing of the veil, human trafficking, and the Catholic Church's stance on gay marriage. The slogans and titles of Femen's protests are exaggerated, depreciatory, and devoid of any actual discrediting aim. Their debut protest, "Ukraine is not a Brothel!" set the tone for later initiatives such as "Happy Dependence Day Ukraine!" "KGB Euro" and "Sex Bomb."

Femen's leader Anna Hutsol, like many of Femen's members, comes from Ukraine's middle class and uses Russian and Ukrainian interchangeably. She has worked in marketing and has also received training from a U.S. Dept. of State leadership program. During the Orange Revolution she was involved with the democratic youth movements PORA and Young Rukh, formed in 1993 in response to an increasingly reactionary government. In 2009 Anna Hutsol reported to newspapers that she would run for office someday and that she would create "the largest all-women party in Europe." (Femen Livejournal 2011). In my interview with Hutsol in 2011 she was less ambitious and concrete in her goals for Femen, commenting that "since topless protest has become more difficult in Ukraine, we need to fight harder to prove that women can protest here." (Hutsol 2011). According to Article 14 Ch. 173 of the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offence, public nudity is listed as a minor hooliganism and is punished accordingly, with a modest fine or a few days of administrative arrest. After Yanukovych entered office, Ukraine's social and political climate became increasingly conservative. In 2009 the Code was amended to allow for more frequent arrests. At that time Femen activists faced several short jail terms for their public transgressions, though they were usually only held in custody for a few hours or days and maintained a relatively benign relationship with local police. In fact, smiling policemen standing by and then calmly cuffing Femen activists became a consistent backdrop in the photos and videos of the group published online, on television, and in world newspapers. For a time, the multiple arrests and prompt release of Femen activists assisted the group more than posing any real physical threat or state barrier to further street protest. These minor arrests aided Femen's media output by facilitating their performative framing of themselves resisting various ideological regimes. In making the police appear harmless before the public, Femen mirrors prior movements in the region, such as Poland's Pomarańczowa Alternatywa, that also used street theatre to push the boundaries of "minor hooliganism" as a criminal charge. Many of these groups humorous tactics served to make police appear harmless before a generalized public, and in the process, were able to air very real public fears around state authority.

In recent years, Femen has faced more serious encounters with police. In early 2011 three Femen members were kidnapped and taken to a forest after a demonstration they held in central Minsk in which members parodied Lukashenka's repressive policies on the steps of Parliament by wearing his signature moustache and epaulettes. Femen activist Inna Shevchenko describes her thoughts while being covered in gasoline and threatened by Belarusian state secret security agents:

> "I suddenly saw the huge potential of this. Maybe it's strange to say this—I know some people already think we're kamikaze—but that's why I now say I'm more of an activist than a person, because I know that tomorrow I could be killed" (Cochrane 2013).

Since that time the group has faced more criminal charges in Ukraine on several counts, including defamation of public property for cutting down a cross allegedly erected in honor of Stalin's victims. In summer of 2013 the group's office in Paris was anonymously burned. Shortly thereafter, three members, including Anna Hutsol,

were anonymously attacked and beaten on the streets of Kyiv. Femen's changing relationship with the police has coincided with a radicalization of their image and an overall reduction in the frequency of their protests in real time.

These changes in Femen's structure have also accorded with the rise of Internet use in Ukraine. An extensive social media profile and several collections of cartoons, glamour ads, leaflets, and other cultural artifacts comprise an impressive archive of the group's half-decade long history. Since their founding Femen has documented their activities on two blogs. In 2010 Femen streamlined their virtual identity by adding Facebook, Twitter, and a website with an .org address to their online presence. The group has been blocked for nudity on some social media sites. Facebook suspended their account early on, but only temporarily, and their livejournal.com blog in Russian switched to read-only in 2012. Paintings, drawings, and popular graphics by Femen member Oksana Sashko, in concert with outside artists' works, contributed to the media forums through which Femen continued to perform their movement. Over time, the group's increasing contact with the media outlets reporting on their street activities melded with the group's virtual design as they switched nearly all of their operations to five-minute flash mob photo opportunities, professional studio sessions, and extensive blog entries. Many of their "flesh mobs" began to last just long enough to create enough footage for an online campaign. Nonetheless, the length of Femen's public appearances shrunk in disproportion to their fame. International journalists began to regularly contribute texts and images to Femen's online networks, as artists and filmmakers created artworks and short documentaries about the group's activities. In more recent years, the group co-published a book with a French journalist in which they outline a radical ideology for a social movement in popular overtures to past feminist theories without any context or application (Ackerman 2013). The same year, a journalist at The Atlantic published a separate book based on his firsthand accounts of Femen's headquarters in Paris (Tayler 2013). This latter publication portrays Femen's core members as media laborers and underwriters; it is reported that they are paid living wages out of a fund with Inna Shevchenko being the primary PR and accounts manager fully invested in maintaining a public image based on highly reproducible media protest imagery. The contradiction between Femen's internal management, versus the external image of antiauthoritarianism they present to audiences necessitates a closer look at the group's conceptualization of politics, and their brand architecture as performers calibrated for news media platforms. The group is not registered as an NGO, party, or publicly traded entity and has not made public the sources of their funding. Anna Hutsol reported in a personal interview that the majority of their funding is from Canadian sources, though there is no verification of this; early on Hutsol reported in public interviews that private donors DJ Hell and owner of KP Media Jed Sunden had supported their activities. By no small measure, by design Femen and the mass media maintain a symbiotic relationship. Where are the political stakes in Femen's experiment as a performative public spectacle? How do they differ from other celebrities in their blending of theatre with protest?

Conversations on the politics of public nudity have expanded since the global protests of 2011. Femen's aesthetic has become a signifier for dissent that does

not signify any clear political demand. In one respect the hyperbole and even amateurish quality to Femen's slogans resemble the design of reality TV shows, in which audiences are provoked to question how much of the production is staged, versus spontaneous. The centrality of news media rhetoric to the Femen phenomenon has instantiated a larger feminist debate about the possibility of protesting the commodification of the female body through nudity. Within this broader debate, a focus on legitimacy vis-à-vis the meaning of the term feminism reveals deeper anxieties over the translation of ideas tied to gender and sexuality across national contexts.

The anger that Femen's protests have elicited expose fissures in the public discourses driving media stories that pin progress to civic idealism, and script what is considered appropriate/inappropriate behavior. Earlier feminist interventions into mass-media imagery of women engaged with images of the female body as the origin, not only the symptom, of violence toward women in society. The founders of the 1970s Los Angeles based feminist media performance collective, Ariadne: Social Art Network, claimed that: "It was violence—in the media and in society—that gave birth to feminist media art." (Lacy & Labowicz, 1985, p. 123-33). The main difference between these prior feminist mass-media activist groups, and Femen, besides geopolitical locale, is in the latter's sarcastic and overt approach to violence in which they amplify through mockery the narratives they claim to undercut. Another important difference is the group's calibration for a virtual format, which helps to maintain the gap between their populist descriptions of their movement online, versus their generally negative public reception as an actual movement representing a constituency of women.

When nude protest exploded as a global trend during the events of 2011, Femen's project in Kyiv suddenly gained much wider publicity. The group responded by streamlining their online merchandising, marketing themselves as "New Amazons," and by networking with feminists beyond Ukraine's borders. The Iranian feminist activist Maryam Namazie briefly joined Femen and helped them with their initial protest activities in Paris. Her work in the group included helping to organize a calendar featuring feminist activists from several initiatives around the world, bringing together Femen and the Canadian based group Slutwalks in support of Egyptian student Aliaa Magda Elmahdy's posting of a nude photo of herself on Twitter.[1] Femen's early use of media networks to spread their name became a key element of their strategy. After Inna Shevchenko cut down a cross in Kyiv in response to Pussy Riot's "punk prayer" in the summer of 2012, the group shifted their operational epicenter from Café Kupidon in Kyiv to a former theatre in Paris. At this point, Femen redesigned their media image a second time, changing their campaign from relatively lighthearted political puns, into a militaristic idea of feminism they describe as "sextremism" for which they have been widely criticized. The first protest to feature this image was a demonstration with the Parisian Egyptian activist Safea Lebdi and Maryam Namazie in front of the Eiffel Tower in August 2012 against the inclusion of nations practicing sharia in the Olympic Games.[2] Slogans painted directly on Femen activists' bodies in black warpaint featured heavily in this protest and thereafter became a regular feature of their trademark brand. Femen has since

been rightly scrutinized for their negative perspective on the wearing of the veil. In late 2012 Lebdi and Namazie publicly split with the group due to difficulties linked to the decision-making processes internal to the group. In my interview with former Femen member Angelina Diash in Kyiv in July 2013, she discussed several related issues in her experiences with Femen as one of their earliest members and, at the time, their only African-Ukrainian member. In Femen's performances, images of the body are framed within spectacles of mainstream politics through a hybrid of the commodification processes and campaigns that produce politicians and celebrities.

Sign and Symbol in the Femen Brand

Femen's street performances have emerged within and through a virtual economy of image and cultural commodity. Their scripts, costumes, and protest sites are illustrative of media apparatuses that shape the fantasies within which citizens imagine and practice national identity. Within Ukraine, Femen's performances are a spectacle stemming from a broader phenomenon that Alexandra Hrycak calls "cognitive liberation" in describing the local ideological landscape of women's activism after the Orange Revolution:

> "[the] favorable shift in political opportunities, together with the public's recent experience of successful civil disobedience, might contribute in Ukraine to a cascading process of 'cognitive liberation' that would further open up the political system to new demands by groups that had previously remained politically marginal" (2010, p. 159-160).

During the initial years of Femen's existence, their parodies carved out picaresque plots from an Orange past in the political foibles, stunts, and facades they staged on the streets of Kyiv.

The dissonant codes in Femen's protests are speech acts in a visual vocabulary that parries with commercialism and its shaping of citizenship. A sign, unlike an icon, which always has a one-to-one relationship with the object it signifies, can have an indirect relationship with the object it represents. Femen manipulates the symbolic contexts within which icons and signs appear. They encode multiple layers of meaning in each sign they incorporate into their work, oftentimes creating new significations by cross-referencing the original referents of two or more distinct signs. In many cases, Femen will accomplish this linguistic play within the bounds of the language of global corporate branding. Oftentimes, Femen activists will paint icons and slogans borrowed from commercial brands on their bodies. For example, in April 2010 Femen responded from censorship from Google by painting the company's copyrighted logo onto their naked breasts and circulating the resulting image throughout the Internet. By painting Google onto their bare skin, Femen produced dissonance between the sign "Google" and its index. By changing the sign's context, Femen re-indexed the Google symbol's original meaning as a copyrighted logo for a search engine into a signifier for the commodification of the female body. The resulting image contains within it a struggle with the representation of resistance itself, with being not-quite, yet still containing residuals of the signified.

By painting brand names on bare skin, Femen conflates ownership over the body with ownership over the brand; in effect, they interrogate the ideologies that have accumulated within the brand through its circulation. It is worth noting that Google, unlike automobiles or lipstick, is a neutrally gendered product. In this instance, by painting a gender-neutral icon onto their breasts, Femen produced dissonance between the body and its commodification in social commentary on profit and enterprise. By not naming any viable cause, real platform, or pragmatic aim, Femen's topless spectacles of feminist resistance put on display the accumulation, value, profit, and exchange of women as symbolic capital in a larger economy of politics and media entertainment.

Underlying Femen's happenings are deep anxieties about branding as a modern, global language. Writing on art and industry, Teodor Adorno remarked that cultural hegemony claims its field of influence through material shored up in capital flows. Art is illusory. He clarifies the classical opposition between the material and immaterial as the central theme in all cultural production:

> "Clearly the immanent semblance character of artworks cannot be freed from some degree of external imitation of reality, however latent, and therefore cannot be freed from illusion either" (1997, p. 103).

Where art always suffers from a degree of both imitation and illusion—that all art involves some element of camouflage—captures the central paradox in Femen's claiming to transcend the reification of the female body through bodily expression. Their painting of certain brands, usually involving two round "OO" shapes on their breasts displaces advertisement with all sorts of associations ranging from comedy, to erotica, to farcical plays on materialist appropriations of power, to many other frames that gesture toward the duplicity and hidden discourses in the links between advertisement and ideology. In one example, activists employed the word "Facebook" in response to the company's decision to block nudity on the group's page. This uneasy relationship between replicating and eluding advertisement can be further traced in the Femen brand itself. Femen's professionally designed, custom logo is ironic—an image of two breasts cast as a Cyrillic "Ф" (Фемен/ Femen) filled in with the colors of the Ukrainian flag. As a feminist brand, Femen is positioned in a contradictory relationship with earlier feminist theory on women and capitalism where scholars have noted, along the lines of Luce Irigaray, that women are symbolically exchanged within circuits of use value and exchange value, depending on their social status (Irigaray 1985).

Transnational feminism has recently renewed interest in interrogating the critical relationship between politics and the artistic image debated by the Frankfurt School during the cultural turn of the 1970s.[3] Scholars have stressed the emerging links between citizenship and electronic media in mediating post-socialist national imaginaries. Some scholars of Europe have noted that digital media has become a generative component of civic culture by liberating minority voices (Aniko Imré 2009). The search for a more critical model of the contemporary public sphere is useful for engaging a flexible notion of "the political" to account for Femen's formation and ongoing activities as a media performance that complicates

assumptions around art/politics. As public performers, Femen's protest-parodies are unconventional challenges to the affective identifications that drive ideological frameworks.[4] Marxist-feminist theorists continue to ask whether artistic practices can play a critical role in advanced capitalist societies. Political theorist Chantal Mouffe critiques Habermas' public sphere for not taking into account the minority view and the representational conflicts (doxa) within society that can have material effects. She positions art as anterior to the majority view: "critical art is art that foments dissensus, that makes visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate" (2013). Mouffe's definition of critical art aligns with a broader school of thinking on the topic including Jacques Rancière in his claiming symbolic dissensus can provide a challenge to hegemony. Along this line, representational strategies can reveal sociocultural inequalities by estranging audiences from what may be otherwise taken for granted as a norm, revealing where such norms serve to uphold a status quo that not all are privy to. This concept of art-activism raises several additional questions regarding Femen as to the range of representations that critical art is able to foster, and the limitations and wider effects of a feminist protest brand like Femen in discourse about women in mainstream politics.

Beyond Orange—Protest After 2004

Femen activists often reflect on the Orange Revolution when narrating their personal experiences and motivations to protest. Inna Shevchenko waxed nostalgic while looking back on the Orange protests of her childhood: "I was just a girl then, but for the first time in my life I understood that we could have democracy in our country" (Tayler 2012). There are additional practical connections between Femen's founding and the ideological design of the color revolutions. The Serbian-based political consulting group CANVAS (Center for Applied Non Violent Actions and Strategies) was instrumental in coordinating the slogans, platforms, and imagery of the many youth movements involved in the rallies and events around the electoral failures that sparked each of the revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan.[5] Georgia's Velvet Revolution, known abroad as the Rose Revolution, contributed to the aesthetic course of the revolutions that followed. Paul Manning (2007) traces how a popular cartoon series functioned to open up spaces for debate in student-led campaigns and protests. He describes the cartoons as a tactic students used to detach themselves from any formal party affiliation, calling their performative politics a "visual spectacle" of "opposing metarhetorics (and their associated logics of reception), and between rhetorics and the representational economies in which they operate" (p. 175). Though Manning points out how the symbols through which "the Georgia of Roses" came to signify a peaceful rebellion, as opposed to Georgia's violent protests in 1989, ultimately, there was nothing new to this strategy. Underlying Femen's parodies of figures, slogans, and other images associated with the Orange Revolution's more mainstream party politics and even youth movements, is a history of music, humor, street theatrics, and counter-cultural formulations. Their rather cynical, even offensive, pokes at the representational strategies deployed in the pop campaigns of the Orange Revolution are equally tied to the media spectacles that produce politics for consumers and audiences.

Absurdist street theatre has a rich history in the former Eastern Bloc and Post-Soviet regions, where art – as experiment, industry, museology, lifestyle– has often functioned as a haven for reinventing the very idea of a dissident culture. In Poland in the 1980s Pomarańczowa Alternatywa, lead by Major Frydrych, mocked the regime by staging large scale public Soviet-style parades in which participants dressed as orange dwarves. During the economic transition period of the 1990s later on, Ukraine's avant-garde group Bu-Ba-Bu staged a rock opera spoof called "Chrysler Imperial" in the Western Ukrainian city of Lviv in which participants expressed sentiments that were as skeptical of the shock of free market capitalism as they were of state authoritarianism. Both of these prior examples epitomize the development of the East European avant-garde over time and its subjecting the rhetoric of the public sphere to its own doctrines. Femen employs similar rhetorical devices. Polish art critic Piotr Piotrówski (2012) uses the term "agoraphilia," to capture a certain anxiety, even fetishization, around the borderline between art and politics, action and thought, and the real and the existential in Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish contemporary art. In these contexts, he argues, art takes on a recursive function as artists act upon a desire to shape public life in the wake of the repressive regimes of the twentieth century. . The publicity and debates around Femen among their audiences and opponents collapses any stable genre in attempting to "read" a critical narrative into their project or account for their intentions as artists or activists (or both). Femen's ubiquity, at first on Ukraine's streets and newspapers, then abroad, and online has served to produce the illusion of an actual movement making realistic demands. The contexts, rhetoric, and debates of the illusion reveal shifting ideas around national belonging and transnational feminisms, and thus, the transcripts that circulate and come to constitute legitimate social and political resistance.

In an article for the nation's industry journal Art Ukraine, Nataliya Tschermalykh (2012-2013) places Femen's parodies within the context of Ukraine's repressive anti-homosexual propaganda law and reactionary institutional practices limiting free speech. She explains the group's aesthetic and their eventual emigration abroad as products of a neoconservative regime. The expressions of popular anger at she sees in Femen's actions contextualize the group as symptomatic of a much broader system of oppression and censorship, which the Euromaidan demonstrations that would take place in Kyiv later that same year would make painfully apparent to global observers. Had Femen been killed or seriously imprisoned for their stunts, as Pussy Riot was, would public responses to them have changed? By contrast, Femen's nudity and offensive behavior reveal the "moral precepts" underlying media scripts for dissidence appear hegemonic in and of themselves. Upon closer examination, their nudity makes a caricature out of the operative terms for speaking, writing, and protesting various civic interests where those terms are folded into teleological social narratives that restrict the public sphere.

It is significant that members of Femen often state in interviews that the Orange Revolution was a turning point in their lives, recalling the early 2000s with both inspiration and great disappointment (Hutsol 2011). The Orange Revolution supplied a watershed for protest in Ukraine. What was unique about the dissident culture

of the color revolutions was its production: the branding of pop celebrities that stood in for revolutionaries on mainstream stages.[6] The playful, cartoonish visual language in Femen's feminist brand descends from the same political architecture that encompassed the slogans, imagery, songs, and celebrity figures that served to imagine an Orange moment. Femen's beginnings as a parodic retrospective of the now-faded "ideals of the Maidan," as the aims of the revolution were then popularly referred to, grew from an Orange iconography popularized during the revolution. For example, their mock reality TV show "PMS: Post-Maidan Syndrome" featured members asking random passerby in the street to undress "for the country" in a talk-show format about future directions the nation could take. The playful tone of Femen's early activities exposed the rhetorical mechanisms of the Orange moment by putting the places and slogans of those years into sharp relief with the repressive civic conditions for street activism under Yanukovych. Viewing the kitsch in Femen in these critical contexts, audiences are positioned to think about the group's image as a function of the lived experiences of its members, and in broader terms, the production of politics through media.

Hutsol has described her group's topless technique as a litmus for civil liberties: "The reaction to a nude protest is a measure of freedom in a country: we were not arrested in Switzerland, but we were almost killed in Belarus" (Neufeld 2012). The political spectrum Hutsol presupposes, with Belarus counterbalanced by Switzerland, circumscribes Femen as a non-national entity poised against a relativist notion of state repression. This reasoning is also ideologically rooted in an Orange past. In the Orange Revolution, Yanukovych's Russian-leaning party stood in sharp contrast to Yushchenko's pro-European platform as both leaders formed their bases from a highly bilingual population. Considering this fact in light of Femen's manifesto and its overstatement to "fight against all forms of oppression," Hutsol's comparative notion of civic freedom abets what cultural historian Sergiy Yekelchyk (2007) has noted elsewhere with regard to the social outcomes of the Orange Revolution. In contrast to interpretations that split protesters as being for or against the "civilizations" that these two leaders apparently stood for, in actuality, very few harbored any East/West leanings, most people simply wanted greater egalitarianism.[7] When Kuchma declared that Yanukovych had won the elections, Yushchenko swore himself into Parliament inside the Ukrainian Rada. In a textbook example of revolution, Ukraine suddenly had two sovereigns claiming the same territory. Michael McFaul (2006) has pointed out how the peaceful gatherings on the Maidan in 2004, in responding to a falsified election, resembled 1991 by affirming Ukraine's autonomy through enacting constitutional law. The Euromaidan demonstrations of 2013-14 ultimately testified further to this autonomy. Demands for a referendum on Ukraine's E.U. Accession Agreement, and then general elections, even after ousted President Yanukovych revealed the limits of his state by violently using police forces against protestors, deserves recognition as a powerful instance of Ukrainian citizens' perseverance in the democratic process.

What was unique about the Orange Revolution was the consistency and branding of its campaigns. As a relatively new nation-state, the longer-term outcomes of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine for shaping dialogue about civil

rights have been arguably more lasting than the Yushchenko's term in office and the slow dissipation of his promised reforms. Within this context, Femen's identification of themselves with the legacy of the Orange Revolution is a legitimization of their group's basic right to peaceful protest. Though Hutsol's conceptualization of her group and her own self-identification with feminism changes often, her consistently positive associations with the Orange Revolution have remained stable over time. While Femen's performative stunts have had very little direct impact on policy since their formation, their ongoing public narratives of their experiences vis-à-vis the Orange Revolution lend historical continuity to the broader changes that moment stood for.

Formed in 2008, Femen comes after the "official" story of the Orange Revolution. Many mark 2006 as the Revolution's official end, when Yushchenko introduced his former rival Yanukovych to the Supreme Rada as Prime Minister. Interviewing Hutsol in the summer of 2011, days after Yulia Tymoshenko had been put on trial for brokering a covert gas deal with Putin, she was ambivalent about the legitimacy of the mounting street protests around the trial.[8] Hutsol informed me that Femen would be reenacting a McDonald's queue near the courthouse. Topless Femen activists would dress in fast food uniforms and yell "Free Cashier!" ("Vilna Kasa!") from atop one of the many minivans (martshrutkas) parked along the streets as makeshift barricades. The scene echoed the Orange Revolution when the youth group PORA barricaded Yanukovych's motorcade from being able to access the Parliament building. Observing the protests in downtown Kyiv around the trial for several days over the course of a week, I noted that while hundreds of demonstrators had gathered at the courthouse, nearly everyone was organized into neat camps and rows of rival parties. Except for Femen's brief interlude, nearly all of the protesters were middle aged and reflected the older Yushchenko vs. Yanukovych split from 2004. One woman I spoke with in the crowd informed me that many demonstrators in front of the courthouse were being paid for their efforts. From the opposite side of the street, where I stood among curious passersby, the scene appeared just as ambivalent as Hutsol's ironic "Vilna Kasa!" Femen's early protests, as nude spectacles on Kyiv's streets, stood in stark contrast to the visibly orchestrated nature of these other protests. Positioned as a media event for online viewers, Femen's snapshot topless stunt atop one of the parked minivans near the courthouse, and their immediate arrest, remapped in physical space where the public imaginary around what is "possible," not necessarily legible, as protest, is shaped by what is permissible to think, say, and do in public spaces.

Pop Culture Contexts—Chervona Ruta, Ruslana, Serduchka

Femen's early humorous street theatre capitalized on a particular, folk-inflected rhetoric that has shaped Ukraine's pop industry over the past decade. The Chervona Ruta music festival that took place in 1989 upon the founding of the youth pro-independence movement Rukh, and again in 1991, eight days before the dissolution of the Soviet regime, set a precedent for popular displays of the nation. The festival took place in Zaporizhzhia, the historic location of the Cossack host. Performers

appropriated the freedom-loving figure of the Cossack and his anachronistic qualities in drafting a myth about independence and survival to legitimize Ukraine's newly won independence as a modern nation-state (Wanner 1998). Western-style rock music, already established as a language of dissent in the Soviet Union, became the lingua franca of the festival. Religion also played a role as Orthodox priests dressed in black robes opened the night with a ceremony in the center of the stadium. Throughout these performative recoveries of a "lost" identity, participants placed preeminence on the Cossack's anachronistic qualities in reorientations of Kyiv Rus' as a western-leaning frontier to mollify present troubles by airing the Soviet past. The alternative cultural memories that festival organizers attempted to achieve provided a lasting conceptualization of national autonomy. The liminal national rhetoric they instantiated through pop, based in nostalgic images of folk culture, eventually fused with the official language of the state (Wanner, p. 140).

The different ways in which Ukrainian pop music celebrities projected national identity later on, during the Orange Revolution, pivoted on a similarly ambiguous, ethnic symbology contrasted against an undesirable Soviet past. Where Chervona Ruta's Cossacks had once "uncovered" Ukraine's lost history beyond its Soviet one, during the Orange Revolution, pop stars preached a "true Ukraine" founded in tribal history, whose democratic potentials had been suppressed over time. These performances complemented political elites' accommodating signals to the E.U. at the time, as pop artists depicted individualism, progress, and freedom differently for domestic versus Western audiences. The indigenous Carpathian styles adopted by the pop singer Ruslana in her song "Wild Dances!" for which she won the Eurovision contest in 2004 was, for the general listener, according to Marko Pavlyshyn, "a proclamation of solidarity with the prevailing values, beliefs, and practices of the civilizationally dominant West" (2006, p. 14). For domestic audiences, Pavlyshyn notes, the song approvingly distanced folk culture from "sharovaryshchyna," an ossified notion of folk life once common in socialist depictions of national culture. Ruslana's images of the Carpathians rested on a fusion of Hutsul instruments, leather costumes, and live wolves in an eroticized rendering of a "wild" frontier. Among domestic audiences, this glamorized portrayal of Western Ukrainian folkways passed muster, in part, as a familiar tale about overcoming hardship rooted in 19th c. Romantic depictions of peasant life. Ruslana's blending of 19th c. Carpathian folk culture with the Amazon myth predates Femen's combination of these two archetypes. The Amazon woman, like the Cossack, emerged within a constellation of folk inflected pop performance in Ukraine that Femen has since adopted as a liminal protest site within which they experiment with political iconicity as a commodity itself. Ruslana's caricature of folk life differs from Femen, however, in that hers is devoid of any specific references to actual events or contemporary political figures. Where pop stars associated with the Orange Revolution once reflected the heightened euphoria of that moment, seeking to merge Ukraine "with others in the culturally heterogeneous contemporary world," by contrast, Femen's protests later on are far more cynical.

Blending glamour with the grotesque, Femen's style turns on parody, and the not-quite-deliberate faux pas. The absurdism and camp in Femen's performances also

have antecedents in the singer Verkha Serduchka's experimental stage identities. Part of a broader fascination with transgender performance as a mainstream genre in Ukraine, Serduchka rose to fame quickly during the late-1990s and early 2000s. What set Serduchka apart from other stars' gender crossings was his creative use of "surzhyk," a mix of Ukrainian and Russian spoken in villages. Serduchka's usage of the vernacular in audacious skits about daily life in post-Soviet Ukraine expressed a freedom to be oneself completely in public, in contrast to the Ukrainian state's fixation on official language. Serduchka's irreverent humor purged the fetishization of an "authentic" Ukraine in the mid-2000s by presenting audiences with "a carnivalesque, liberating take on the very real cultural and political tensions caused by the imposition of political correctness" (Yekelchyk 2010, p. 219).

Added to Serduchka's liminal linguistic and gender identities is also the fact that the neoliberal nation-building projects dominating the periods leading up to and during the Orange Revolution often equated modernization with Europeanization. The polarization of Russia and Europe often features in Serduchka's humor as a superficial posturing by political elites, which indeed reflects the way many Ukrainians whom identify with both of these cultures experience the situation. Not unlike Femen, Serduchka often presupposes a wide gap between the popular voices of his characters, and the officialdom of post-Soviet statehood. However, an important difference between the public receptions of Serduchka, and Femen, is the controversy that never arose around the formers' stage persona as a transgendered citizen. The former's gender identity was less important than his national hybridity. Serduchka completely sanitized his image after protests erupted in Ukraine following his 2007 performance at Eurovision in which he sang, "I want to see . . . Russia goodbye!" lyrics that are relatively mild compared with Femen's overtly anti-Putin sentiments. The widespread acceptance, even fetishization, of Serduchka's blending of genders and languages spun around his bodily hybridity mapped onto a national hybridity that many mainstream consumers could identify with (Yekelchyk 2010). By contrast, Femen's dystopian performances of female nudity are a more radical counter-image to the optimism of the Orange Revolution.

The notion of becoming European in Yushchenko and Tymoshenko's joint campaign during the Orange Revolution argued for a "return" to Europe as a cure-all for Ukraine's domestic ills. Similar notions were reflected in Ukraine's hosting of the 2012 Euro Cup soccer championship. Femen's media stunts in 2011 during the preparations to host the Cup disrupted the utopian scripting of an equal partnership that elites signaled to Europe at the time. Femen's shows achieved another means of attention by desacralizing the branded symbols associated with the event. On tour, the group spotlighted the Euro Cup as a forerunner for sex tourism by hyperbolizing the dark undercurrents of the sex industry. While every Femen performance on their Euro Tour included symbols specific to each country they visited, each of their "shows" pitted stereotypes of the nationalism displayed by European soccer fans against a cynical caricature of Ukraine as a dangerous sexual playground. In Warsaw, two members parodied the cartoon logo of the championship, the Polish and Ukrainian hooligan twins "Vladek" and "Vladko" in a live performance of the mascots screwing, fighting, and drinking beer. The branding

of Ukraine and Poland as cartoon "twins" thus provided a point of departure from which to critique the asymmetries in Ukraine's relationship with the E.U. Acting out these asymmetries as sexual conquest, Femen increased their visibility online by attaching their own brand to the marketing of the soccer championship.

Going abroad, Femen adopted a system of operations resembling a franchise by streamlining their social media presence and merchandising. The Ukrainian folk flower garlands, red boots, and blue-and-yellow colors of the Ukrainian flag defining their brand architecture came to serve as templates for rotating colors and images from other national contexts in their logo and slogans. As Femen's European caper catapulted the group into world presses, the group continued to manage the status and shape of that popularity. Olga Plakhotnik and Mariya Mayerchyk have remarked on their interviews with Anna Hutsol that, "the measure of a successful Femen action is a popular action." (2012). As celebrity activists, Femen extends and plays upon individual fantasies and anxieties about collective identities; and thus, perhaps expectedly so, critical receptions of the group have remained highly unstable.

Feedback Loops—Femen's Internationalization and Contested Feminism

The internationalization of Femen's campaign has proceeded in three main phases since the group's activities connected with the Euro Cup. The first phase occurred after the women's protest performance group Pussy Riot's "punk prayer" against Putin's regime in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior on February 21, 2012. The following October, the day of Pussy Riot's verdict, Femen activist Inna Shevchenko cut down a large wooden cross in central Kyiv constructed by the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church on public land to memorialize victims of Stalin's policies. Femen claimed theirs was an act of solidarity with Pussy Riot in protesting the Russian Federation's sentencing of the female collective to two years in prison for "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred." Pussy Riot member Maria Alekhina replied by pointing to key differences between her group and Femen, "we may share the same immediate appearances and general stance against authoritarianism, but we look at feminism differently, especially in our actions. We have never stripped and never will. The recent action in cutting down the cross, unfortunately, does not create any feeling of solidarity" (Masyuk 2012). Where Pussy Riot's action aimed to symbolically unravel the unification of church and state in Russia, Femen's material desecration of the cross as a civic symbol discursively diffused the act across three signifiers: the nation, an abstract female body performed by Shevchenko standing in the position of the cross she destroyed, and the missing persecuted Soviet bodies that the original cross apparently represented.

By contrast, the sacrificial bodies represented by Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alekhina, and Yekaterina Samutsevich in the Pussy Riot case have manifested in the live violence inscribed upon them by the ongoing state and public rituals around their punishment. The systematic purging and affirmation of authority in the Pussy Riot trial, as opposed to Femen's act, signified the three women's bodies

as both objects of violence and sites of resistance. Anya Bernstein has argued these points within the context of Russian public discourse on the body and its sanctity/profanation as an extension of the church-state nexus:

> "the sovereign power sacrifices Pussy Riot to the narod, the opposition sacrifices them to the government, and the narod performs an apotropaic sacrifice while longing for a sublime sovereign power" (2013).

The untranslatability of "narod," meaning both nation and people, but also containing the mythic quality of both of these concepts, functioned on the level of collective sacrifice in the Pussy Riot case. Where Pussy Riot's "punk prayer" concentrated general anger at a defective regime, Shevchenko's act generalized that anger to an individual instance of transgression against the Ukrainian state as surrogate for "all religion and patriarchy" (Femen 2013). The ontological difference between these two acts renders the second less threatening to any actual political hierarchy in its performative overtures to authority. Far lighter punishment has been leveraged on Femen than on Pussy Riot. After the cross incident, Inna Shevchenko was forced to emigrate to Paris, though the group was able to continue their operations abroad with intermittent activity in Ukraine.

The second major phase of Femen's global push began in Paris, where they set up a "feminist training camp" and reframed their ideological positioning in a campaign they termed "sextremism." Their initial activities in Paris involved a partnership with Iranian-born activist Maryam Namazie and Safea Lebdi, though both split with the group later on. In late 2012 fierce public backlash erupted in response to Femen's anti-Islamic stance and their targeting of the mandatory wearing of the veil and the inclusion of nations practicing sharia law in the lineup for the Sochi Olympic Games. As their image grew ever more radical, anonymous participants began joining in their photographed activities. Their growing number of followers on social media expanded their rhetorical ability to enter global news media streams on any number of topics. In May 2013 a trial was held in Tunisia involving a young woman associated with Femen named Amina Tyler for posting nude photos of herself on Twitter. Femen activists protested topless outside the central courthouse in Tunis. The event went nearly unnoticed. By this point, it became clear that Femen's "sextremism" had severed them from their original Ukrainian context and gained them many opponents. A Facebook group entitled Muslim Women Against Femen formed in response to Femen's controversial imagery equating patriarchial systems across cultural contexts. Many argued that the group's "sextremism" played into imperialist ideologies about "rescuing" Muslim women by glossing over specifics in actual debates about banning the veil. The group's depictions of Muslim women's struggles lost them credibility in the eyes of journalists who reported on all aspects of their triangulation by women-of-color feminists, whose voices were not represented in the anti-Islamic rhetoric Femen proffered. The situation proved that the language of the Femen brand was not calibrated or expressive enough to capture a symbolic backlash. Femen came to an impasse in their purchase on the media.

The third chapter of Femen's saga began in summer of 2013. In late August, Femen's Paris headquarters were burned by an unidentified source. The group

posted online that the Ukrainian secret services (SBU) had increased monitoring around their activities. A few weeks later, Anna Hutsol, Alexandra Shevchenko, and Roman Zviazsky were physically assaulted and beaten on the streets of Kyiv by unknown men they claimed were connected with state security services. The assaulted members were taken into custody and promptly released. Soon thereafter, the group publicized that Roman Zviazsky had been masterminding their activities in an abusive exercise of power. They then announced plans to cease all activity in Ukraine (Interfax-Ukraine 2013). The high level of violence directed at Femen, coupled with the group's maintaining a very ambiguous relationship to domestic politics in their native Ukraine, only served to further position the group within the global mass media at a pivotal juncture in Ukraine's history. Yanukovych's decision to begin the process of E.U. accession in November 2013 had long coincided with an overall increase in the domestic monitoring and targeting of protest activity in Ukraine. Based on the present analysis one of two outcomes seems likely in Femen's case: either the group will continue to maintain their toehold in the media as a radical performance based group within the entertainment industry abroad; or, they will make a concerted effort to politically legitimize their image, possibly by working with other social activists on Ukrainian focused projects. The second outcome would entail greater transparency to a wider constituency and the group's openly coming to terms with their feminist critics. This second route might mean risking the group's publicity as a brand name, potentially dissolving their spectacle of protest and its circulation, both resting upon the feedback loops in the marketing of politics within the mechanisms of the mass-media.

Transnational Feminist Vocabularies: Limitations and Opportunities

The political and social fissures around Femen in Ukrainian society have manifested dissent over more deeply embedded local discourses on gender. My ongoing interviews with feminist scholars and activists in Ukraine over time have revealed shifting opinions on the group after their move abroad. The consensus among feminist scholars on Femen has moved in the direction of viewing the group as performance-based and unmoored from local valences of the political spectrum (Tchermalykh 2012).[9] Considering the notion of "the political" in Femen's subversive media stunts, the group's performances conflate the idea of feminism in the realm of realpolitik, where the very idea of "good" and "bad" feminism gets folded into other economic and social development agendas. Their foibles in promoting and/or undermining any consistent gender ideology are symptomatic of deeper conflicts in society. They have provided points of contention for transnational dialogue about gender in Ukraine, where local terminologies differ from Western notions of equality and difference. Where scholars have pointed out that neoliberal discourses have overlooked women in the shift to a market economy, it is exigent that transnational feminisms continue to take into account the full range of possible meanings of alternatives that do not fit familiar, linear narratives of progress (Phillips 2008). It may be less useful to categorize Femen as feminist or not, than to critique their strategies as calibrated for the spheres of media and pop.

Critiquing Femen in this way involves shifting conversation away from the state as representational entity, toward media technologies, globalization, and the roles that these factors play in advancing and manipulating messages about rights and freedoms. One starting point is to return to prior assessments of the public transformations brought on by mass-media in the shift to postcommunism outlined in the early nineties, if only to remain ever vigilant as the speed and quantity of information increases online that "the apparent plurality and openness of mass media veil the fact that certain issues remain undiscussed, some perspectives suppressed" (Gail & Kligman 2000, p. 3). Initial debates about Femen by Ukrainian feminist scholars in Krytyka in late 2011 and early 2012 took account of some of these issues by contextualizing the group within the etymology of feminism in the shift from Soviet to Post-Soviet regimes (Gapova & Soroka 2011; Dmitreyevna 2011; Lisyutkina 2011). Some underlined Femen's value in bringing visibility to important concerns about sex tourism, but pointed out the group's rhetorical limits as a political coalition alien to other feminist projects in Ukraine (Rubchak 2011; Rubchak 2012). Others classified the group as spectacle without any practical social application, but at the same time were ambivalent about the group's puns on local stereotypes as a way of airing the very idea of feminism in the post-Soviet context (Mayerchyk & Plakhotnik, 2012).

Since these early assessments of Femen, the group's global symbolic capital has developed as a site in which the invisible antagonism between official, versus popular voices in the media within and about the post-Soviet context has become more apparent. Interviews conducted over the following years with Ukrainian social activists of the younger generation concerned with a range of civil rights issues, not all immediately tied to gender and feminism, reveal a stated concern with a lack of critical attention to social causes within the region (Tchermalykh July 2013). In our information paradigm, in which the accrual of capital through the economy of images and text online rapidly transverses national borders, Femen's reverting attention to themselves in a controversial, and especially in terms of their appropriation of a mainstream body image, particularly unorthodox "feminist" manner synthesizes local protest experiences, mass publicity, and irony in an illusion of their own popularity. This would seem, in and of itself, the core structure of their performance. Staging appearances of massive proportion, throughout their existence, the group has been reported on as being larger than life. It has been estimated Femen has 5,000 members, 300 of them active, across 10 countries (Tayler 2013). The outright disavowal of Femen by international critics has served another role: regardless of the group's actual size or stated intentions, the anger in the wake of their acts has radicalized networks of skeptics and activists, many of whom have taken to task the meaning of the terms feminism and gender on their own terms.[10]

Agata Pyzik contextualizes Femen's inappropriate linking of Islam with oppressive patriarchy as an instance of misrecognition and miscommunication in a much longer story of complex East-West cultural relations (2013, p. 141).[11] She locates Femen within a much broader, overarching analysis of the extremity of the post-Soviet context and, in her view, its relegation to unimportance by the West. Pyzik's

intervention into the debate is informed by her own position as a Polish immigrant living in the UK. Femen's (mis)identification of women's own agency within Islam mistakenly reproduces an impoverished message of suspicion of Western hegemony and its mythologized divisions between East and West. A powerful critique can be unfolded out from this particular observation when thinking about Femen in terms of media activism. If Femen performs as "rescuing" Muslim women, it is because the West, for its missionizing attitudes about democratizing the Arab world throughout the 2000s, when Femen formed, has created the conditions for this critique. The affinities Femen assumes by overidentifying with the subject-position of Muslim women has produced images that resemble similar photos circulated at the time of the Iraq war. This is not to lend Femen a free pass for their social offenses, but only to sound a note of empathy and irony in light of the deeper discourses of which their shock tactics are symptomatic.

Activists I have spoken with in Ukraine concerned with gender issues are ambivalent as to whether Femen has contributed to ameliorating Ukrainian women's actual daily lives, though many agree the group has made a lasting impression in world news. Some have found that social tolerance toward gender minorities has decreased in Ukraine, with an increase in visible LGBT and feminist activism in the period since the Orange Revolution (Martsenyuk 2013). The situation is also likely due to the effects of Yanukovych's repressive regime and the marriage and reproductive policy debates that had taken place as target issues in the lead-up to the next election cycle. In 2013, protests erupted on both the left and right around the legislation of an anti-gay propaganda law. Artists and intellectuals have come under fire in Ukraine as well, with increasing shutdowns and targeting of museum exhibits featuring LGBT and feminist themes by activists and officials associated with the far right.[12] Some women's initiatives are less concerned with specific policies, and are more focused on generating forums for professional development. In 2009 feminist Oksana Kis' drafted a letter to reduce the stigmatization of women's hiring and employment practices in the professional, business, education and government sectors. Mobilizations around International Women's Day by the Kyiv-based feminist group Ofenzywa have also continually put pressure on fair labor practices. In the city of Kharkiv the Museum of Women's History and Gender Movements has pioneered efforts to create new archival databases in the historiography of women's experiences in the 20th century and regularly partners with researchers, activists, and social workers (Isaieva 2011).

Transnational dialogue about Femen could help to instantiate more intersectional critiques of media representations across cultural and national contexts. In July 2013, I met with former Femen member Angelina Diash in Kyiv. Diash is a university student, a theatre performer, an actress, and university student originally from Khmelnytsky, the same city as Anna Hutsol, where she was recruited to join Femen by members Inna and Sasha Shevchenko in 2009. Diash is African-Ukrainian and informed me that she experiences constant harassment by local police and passersby for the color of her skin, stating that, "the situation is especially difficult because Ukrainian is my native language, I was born here." (Diash pers.comm 2013). When I asked her why she decided to join Femen, she replied, "I saw a chance to

fight racism, to find justice for women because they should be equal to men, and a community I could belong to." While Femen gave her a sheltered space for engaging politics, that space was limited: "Everyone would sit around trying to decide what an action would look like and then Anna Hutsol would create it her way with Zviazsky." In late 2011 Diash left Femen, narrating her choice to do so by expressing that Femen filled a time and a place in her life in which she needed to escape the "constant psychological pressure" she faces as a racial minority in Ukraine. Her personal narrative is a powerful testament to her own agency: she was able to successfully maneuver her life opportunities by joining Femen, but strengthened her individual convictions by eventually choosing to leave the group in order to apply the skills she gained there to new experiences in other venues.

Since their formation in 2009, Femen's pop underpinnings have come under increased scrutiny, even as the national symbolism in their image has receded. Feminist scholars have vocalized concerns about Femen's topless images being poised for the male gaze, noting where the transmission of a social message through female nudity risks being lost on consumers. An important exchange of information is being channeled through the Femen "brand" as a platform for debate about the meanings of feminism within the venue of the mass media. In one example, several months after Femen's foray in Warsaw, a Polish art-activist group named The Krasnals! posed as actual prostitutes disgruntled with Femen for stealing their business (The Krasnals 2013). Activists created Femen-style photographs featuring a large phallus, dressed in revealing workers' overalls, and held signs with slogans such as "Poland Welcomes You!" The photos were circulated online and news outlets reported on the event as a protest by actual prostitutes. The dissonance, or "slippage" between image and word in The Krasnals! copycat protest played upon the language of Femen's brand and its limited applicability to actual sociopolitical struggles. Nevertheless, public receptions of Femen, of which The Krasnals! hoax is but one example, evidence two critical outcomes of the former's overall experiment: increased discussion around the asymmetrical branding and transmission of protest by the mass media for consumption; and second, awareness of the subsumption of minority issues into sleek mainstream campaigning that Femen's "feminist brand" makes visible.[13] It remains to be seen how Femen's symbolic capital might evolve future backdrops for more critical commentary on media representations of women by participants, audiences, and critics ambivalent about the group.

Conclusion

Femen employs camp and simulacrum within satires cast in the mass media and its internal logics of erotic identification, alienation, and consumption. Formulaic to the culture markets in which the group first arose, Femen simultaneously adopts and parodies the folk-inflected rhetoric inherited from Ukrainian pop performances dating prior to the Orange Revolution. Their deferral of signs plays upon conventional pop culture by airing audiences' fantasies and fears around protest, state authority, and national belonging. Symbolically, Femen's performances unfold on two intersecting planes: as a wry retrospective of the pitfalls of the Orange Revolution, and as a pun on feminism that, in the group's controversial displays

of the female body, exposes the underlying cultural mythologies that differentiate women from men, and East from West, in competing discourses which signify progress differently. The group's more recent shift to a "sextremist" image and their internationalization in virtual space has extended Femen's politics from commentary on Ukrainian women's rights, to global contestations over the meaning of the term feminism. The group's protest aesthetic may be observed across feedback loops in which audiences contest what feminist protest "should" or "could" look like by replicating, rejecting, and mocking Femen's aesthetic in word and image. Thus, the group's format and aesthetic vocabulary contains problematic aspects when considered as an actual social movement. As a feminist brand, however, Femen manifests how dissidence itself has become a commodity in the contemporary sociopolitical environment driven by images, icons, and mass information.

Femen's false sense of universalism certainly deserves critique, and yet it would be a grave mistake for critics to completely overlook the deeper cultural divides within Femen's story. Dismissing the group's members entirely outright as naïve, or their experiences as silly happenstance, reinforces the subjugating categories that replicate patterns of condescension by Western and antifeminist critics, and thus only perpetuates the traps that are so antithetical to transnational dialogue about gender. The colonial gaze that falls upon those regions that were once, not so long ago, referred to as "the second world" is still pervasive within the stories circulated through consumer media and the scripting and production of dissidence in narratives that serve to justify Western hegemony. Perhaps the lesson to be gained from the Femen phenomenon is what it can offer us as a litmus for debate about citizenship as a function of media. Looking past Femen's smoke and mirrors as a broad political organization in order to see them for what they are offstage, a handful of young women with sharp marketing technology skills, begs further critique. Are the twin risks to the free flow of information and creative debate greater than Femen's offensive jabs, their dark humor, reactionary sloganeering, and their twisted overtures to human rights? To be critical of gender and feminist issues in the face of growing corporate media, perhaps we need to think twice when Femen conveys to their audiences, even while alienating them, that no one is listening. Paying close attention to Femen's branding can help parse out the rhetorical limits of Femen's problematic commodification of their own bodies, while still avoiding replicating the pervasive condescension toward "non-Western" societies so pervasive in the marketing and production of protest for mass media. There is no easy route for the kind of double-edged analysis I am suggesting. For now, I believe it worthwhile to begin to consider Femen as symptomatic of the Orange revolutionary moment in which they arose, a moment whose effects may no longer be unfolding as silence around pressing issues, but as too much noise. An information war is now taking place alongside the violent battles in East Ukraine. For global scholars and activists concerned with civic and human rights infringements of all sorts, we will need to work even harder to nuance the terms of public debate by and about women if we are to transcend divisive categories of identity—if we are to insist on peace.

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Notes

[1] The author thanks the following University of Michigan units for providing funding support to develop this project: Rackham Graduate School, the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, and the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. She also would like to express her gratitude to the Association for Women in Slavic Studies for additional research support and members of the U-M Slavic Department, U-M History Department, IRWG, Univ. of Western Michigan Sociology, Ohio State University, University of Toronto and two anonymous reviewers for their feedback.

[2] Slutwalks began in April 2011 in Toronto, Canada as a street demonstration in which participants dress in revealing clothing to protest against explaining rape through a woman's appearance (Slutwalks 2011). The idea has since spread to several countries. Co-founder Sonya JF Barnett from Toronto designed the calendar in which Femen activist Alena Magelat posed alongside activists from a range of other groups in response to the controversy over Aliaa Magda Elmahdy (Namazie 2012).

[3] Safea Lebdi is a founding member of the French women's rights organization Ni Putes, Ni Soumises.

[4] For example, Nancy Fraser's (2013) reevaluation of neoliberal discourses and Second-Wave feminism in which she examines the role economics has played in suspending cultural specificities within "the political" in contemporary feminist conditionings of global solidarities that transcend national borders.

[5] Claire Bishop gives a detailed overview of the art commodity in European visual culture post-1989, examining the search for artistic equivalents for political positions and the collective creative process in light of different imaginings of citizenship (2012). Russian critic Alek D. Epstein places Pussy Riot in a similar vein of critique, asking how action, agency, and audience function in emerging performances that aim to collapse conventional frames for public speech.

[6] CANVAS has since come under scrutiny as having provided consulting and branding in the Arab Spring and for receiving financial support from private multinational corporations invested in by Western governments (Rosenberg, 2011).

[7] Ruslana, Grynholy, Okean Elzy, Mandre and others contributed to a common aesthetic of Ukrainian independence based upon a diverse blend of 19th century folkways, European jazz, myths and legends from Kyivan Rus', Orthodox liturgical music, and other genres that remain distinct from, or ardisassociated from the Soviet period.

[8] Yekelchyk claims political elites' campaigns in the lead-up to the Orange Revolution adopted ethnic models when beneficial to solidifying their power bases. By contrast, he argues, nation-builders in Parliament and voters on the left and right wanted democratic reforms which embraced civic models over ethnic ones. In late 2000 a set of private tapes brought to light Kuchma's fraudulent and criminal behavior. In February 2001, protestors formed a small movement called "Ukraine Without Kuchma!" After Tymoshenko joined the anti-Kuchma movement, other oligarchs in parliament soon engineered her dismissal, however, she later emerged as a charismatic populist leader and went on to establish her party, BYuT. Yushchenko remained Prime Minister until April 2001 due to a coalition of oligarchs and communists in Parliament working in his favor. Both of these two leaders would go on to unite the Orange opposition (Yekelchyk 2007).

[9] Tymoshenko remained imprisoned under Ukrainian jurisdiction from 2011-2014, despite large-scale Western governmental and NGOs' grievances over her sentence. Ongoing domestic protests by Ukrainian citizens achieved little in changing the course of her internment. In autumn of 2013, Tymoshenko issued a public statement that she would be willing to accede her Ukrainian citizenship if this would lift the obstacle that her jail term then posed for Ukraine-E.U. integration. She was eventually released as part of a broader set of negotiations in the wake of the events of the Euromaidan. This move became part of a larger process of creating an interm government over which Poroshenko would be elected to reside.

[10] In summer of 2013 a far-right radical group calling themselves Hommen adopted Femen's aesthetic to stage an anti-same-sex marriage rally in the streets of Paris, evidencing further how Femen's aesthetic circulates distinct from the actual political demands and platforms that usually accompany the divisions between right-leaning and left-leaning policies directly concerning gender issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage, and fair hiring practices.

[11] The most well known example is Pussy Riot's punk prayer performance inside Moscow's Christ the Saviour Cathedral on February 21, 2012. The location and the lyrics of Pussy Riot's song "Mother of God, Drive Putin Away" mirrored Femen's earlier protest in front of Christ the Saviour on December 9, 2011, in which they dressed in burlap peasant costume pants and held posters reading "God Chase Away the King" and "God Get Rid of the Tsar."

[12] Pyzik writes, "it seems a typical case of mutual misunderstanding, with each side blind to each other's concerns: Femen doesn't see racism behind their calling patriarchy 'Arab,' and the Western pro-underprivileged women of color feminists see in Femen only the distasteful theatre of naked boobs, which overlooks their needs, not seeing how they remain blind to the postcommunist reality Femen represent" (p.141). I would add that for the misunderstanding to become clear on all sides, Femen's members would need to open dialogue, which would thus break the "fourth wall" of their media spectacle.

[13] The first step in a wave of artistic censorship occurred with the banning of the Visual Cultures Research Center (VCRC) from Kyiv-Mohilya Academy in 2011 by University President Sergiy Kvit for the contemporary local art exhibit Ukrainian Body. This act of censorship sparked street protests and international petitions for intellectual freedom. The VCRC temporarily relocated to the historical Kino Zhovten' (October Cinema), but lost their residency there in summer of 2013. The future of the group remains unknown.

[14] The Guardian, The Atlantic, The New York Times, Kyiv Post, The Moscow Times, Pravda and many other Western and Russian media outlets reported on Femen in 2009-2011 as the piedmont of feminism in Ukraine. Subsequent reports on the group overturned this notion; many instantiated debates on whether or not Femen is able to transmit a feminist message through their displays of the female body in mainstream media.

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