

Rethinking Brotherhood: Ukraine and the Russian Foreign Policy Agenda

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On February 12, 2001, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma met Russian President Vladimir Putin for the second summit of the two countries' leaders in less than two months. Sixteen agreements were signed, including the all-important one on cooperation in energy delivery, a program of coordination of foreign policies for 2001-2007, and the program on cooperation of defense enterprises. Both sides expressed their satisfaction in a language that went beyond diplomatic politeness. The meeting with Putin "makes me confident of the future of both countries," Kuchma said. "Regardless of the complex political situation in Ukraine, we will work with the president elected legally by the Ukrainian people, Leonid Kuchma," Putin replied.¹ The opening of the presidential "hearts and souls for closer relations"² between Russia and Ukraine came in the midst of the worst political scandal Kuchma had ever experienced while in power, when allegations of the President's involvement in a murder of opposition journalist Gongadze caused collapse of the pro-presidential majority in Verkhovna Rada and mass demonstrations all over Ukraine. In spite of that, Russia's Security Council Secretary Sergei Ivanov deemed it appropriate to underscore Russia's willingness to conduct a "dialogue with a person who was really elected, according to a democratic procedure, by the Ukrainian people" and expressed his firm belief that, in doing so, Russia pursues only a legitimate national interest.³

Are Russian-Ukrainian relations truly special? Is Russian repeated offers of reintegration with Ukraine betray an imperial hangover, a manipulative scheme of a potentially revisionist

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state – or a desire to come to terms with both the joint legacy and the common problems that both countries have shared and will share in the foreseeable future? Is Ukrainian-Russian politics dependence based on sheer economic interest, or does it include considerations of political, social, cultural and ethno-demographic affinity? Most importantly, does Russian offer of partnership harms or benefits Ukraine? Without underestimating existing difficulties, I shall argue that Ukrainian-Russian partnership is indeed of special importance for both countries, and the essence of this relationship may not be reduced to an oft-cited zero-sum game of the Realist school of international relations.

Positioning Ukraine

Ukraine's special relationship with Russia goes back at least three hundred and fifty years, to the times of the Liberation War of mid-seventeenth century. Then, the tsar of Muscovy joined the Cossack Hetman to fight the Poles, and the military alliance they established soon grew up into a protectorate, which eventually led to a full annexation of Ukraine by the Russian Empire. Ukrainian strongmen were co-opted into the ranks of all-Russian nobility and occupied important positions at the court, helping the tsars to run the Little Russia, as Ukraine was then known, as any diligent vassals would. Later, Bolsheviks repeated the trick, vigorously recruiting local followers and promoting them to the positions of power throughout the Soviet Union, where culturally Russified Ukrainians both contributed to the regime's combination of carrot and stick policies and fell its frequent victims. Ukrainians, together with Belarusians, were the primary target of the late-Soviet policy of "merger of nations," which used ethno-cultural closeness of the three East Slavic nationalities to effectuate their complete absorption in a homogenized body of Russian-speaking and culturally indistinct "Soviet people." As Russian principal allies in running collective affairs of the USSR, Ukrainians were as instrumental in

maintaining cohesion of the multinational empire until its very last years of existence as they were quick to abandon the sinking ship once politics in Moscow took a decisive turn to the right.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine moved into the focus of Russian foreign policy for reasons of geopolitical, strategic, economic, and cultural character. Ukraine's importance to Russia is rivaled by Belarus and Kazakhstan only; however, in the first case, the problem may be resolved through reintegration, if not complete reunification (which Belarusian leadership supports), while in the second case, the cultural distance between the two nations is simply too great. Ukraine's geographic and ethno-cultural proximity to Russia, demographic diffusion (4.36 million Ukrainians living in Russia and 11.35 million Russians living in Ukraine), long history of peaceful coexistence and common suffering, profound economic interdependence and shared problems of postcommunist transition all make the country uniquely well positioned for close and mutually beneficial collaboration with Russia.

Russia's policy toward Ukraine is based on a postulate of strategic partnership. However, the idea has undergone significant changes over the course of the last ten years: from the emphasis on Ukraine as Russian *alter ego*, indeed the second branch on the "all-Russian" family tree, to the much closer attention to economic interdependence and geostrategic importance of the country. An early hope that Ukraine would sooner or later "come back" into the Russian embrace was thwarted by Kiev. By 1996, Ukrainian independence was no longer perceived as a quirk of history. Instead, Moscow learned to take it for a serious political fact, something to be reckoned with. Several factors contributed to this development.

The position taken by Leonid Kravchuk in Belovezhe determined both the timing and the procedure of Soviet disintegration. Although a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Ukraine has never signed the CIS Charter or the Tashkent Treaty on

collective security and restrained itself to the purely formal associate membership in the CIS Economic Union. After the December 1991 referendum on independence, the country's pledge of open borders, common economic and military space, and joint foreign policy with Russia lost much of its edge. In 1991-94, Kiev worked to distance the country from Russia and the CIS, revising the Agreement on Creation of the CIS *de-facto*. Ukraine's position undermined all efforts to transform the CIS into a working instrument of reintegration. Ukraine was the only Soviet successor state that until 1994 took an exception to the plan to transfer all nuclear weapons found on its soil to Russia. It did not go along with the Russia-proposed "zero option" for division of former Soviet assets and liabilities, according to which Moscow would assume both. Being the second largest in population and the third largest in territory among the post-Soviet states, Ukraine could bargain with Moscow in a way no one else could.

Ukraine's cooperation decides the fate of Russia's, now already half-hearted, attempts to promote economic integration within the framework of the CIS-based Eurasian Economic Community, which supersedes earlier, and equally unsuccessful versions of customs and payment unions. Should this not work, Moscow may yet become more attentive to the idea to cajole Ukraine into joining the formally announced in 1999 Russian-Belarusian Union, which in this case could be renamed the Slavic or perhaps the East European Union.⁴ Strategic and military aspects of this bilateral relationship are no less important than purely economic ones. Even now, Ukraine shares a joint air defense system with Russia, and enterprises of the Ukrainian military-industrial complex are connected by myriad links with their partners to the east.

Ukraine's importance for Russia goes beyond regional concerns. "Without a strategic alliance with Ukraine," writes an influential analyst, "Russia will not become a genuinely great power which would in reality be appreciated, respected and addressed as a real power in the new

system of international relations.”⁵ Moscow believes in the notion of strategic partnership that includes co-ordination of foreign and economic policies and close collaboration in the areas of defense and security. Of a very special interest to Moscow is Ukraine’s treatment of Russian ethnic minority and the status of Russian language in Ukraine, as of recent under increasing pressure from Kiev. While security concerns may have been somewhat alleviated thanks to the conclusion of the 1997 friendship treaty and its concomitant protocols on the final division of the Black Sea Fleet and the status of Sevastopol, a language-based politics of identity is by no means over. It is therefore necessary to look into the security, economy, and identity aspects of this periodically reiterated partnership to grasp political and social realities behind diplomatic rhetoric and to formulate a better understanding of why the strategic partnership remains in need of reiteration in the first place.

Security and Defense: Do Interests Converge?

Russian-Ukrainian partnership in the area of security has shaped out in negotiations over division of the Soviet-era military assets, which importantly included Ukraine’s denuclearization and ascent to the NPT treaty in a non-nuclear capacity. The status of the Russian naval base in Sevastopol, joint protection of what Russians saw as common geostrategic space, continued cooperation in defense industry, delimitation and demarcation of the interstate border, and common action in respect to the long-lasting consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe formed other areas of mutual concern and, eventually, understanding. Disagreements were most pronounced in such issues as Ukraine’s special relationship with NATO and its refusal to participate in the CIS Collective Security Treaty, Ukraine’s leadership of the GUUAM grouping of the CIS “dissident” countries and the U.S. inordinate influence over Ukrainian foreign policy.

In 1992, Ukraine “nationalized” between 25 and 30 percent of all heavy armaments west of the Urals and in excess of 700, 000 personnel sworn to serve the Soviet Union. Moscow did

not object to Ukraine's appropriation of most armament of the Soviet second strategic echelon, which included more than 6300 of the newest tanks, 8000 BTR wheeled armored personnel carriers, 3700 BMP tracked armored combat vehicles, more than 6000 large-caliber artillery systems, about 1500 airplanes of various types, and 320-330 helicopters.⁶ However, the Kremlin had not acquiesced to the presence of nuclear weapons on Ukrainian soil and was soon engaged in a prolonged effort to recover most valuable air and naval hardware. Ukraine's consent on the nuclear issue was preordained by the September 1993 Massandra summit, where Moscow used debt and energy leverage to pressure Kiev into obedience.⁷ The January 1994 Trilateral Agreement between Ukraine, USA and Russia extended international guarantees of security, while committing Kiev to relinquish its nuclear weapons to Russia, which was finally accomplished by mid-1996. However, division of the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) and the fate of strategic bombers, which Moscow wanted back, remained contentious issues.

The first of these was put to rest in 1999, when the BSF accords were finally ratified. After consenting to a 50-50 division, Kiev sold Moscow two thirds of its share for energy debt reduction. The swap left Ukraine with 18 percent of the ships, but most of coastal infrastructure. Russia's naval commanders have more than once raised complaints regarding technical military rationale of an effectively joint use of Sevastopol bays and facilities by the two navies, and claimed that Ukraine's insistence on measures of oversight and control compromised independent operational capability of the Russian fleet, consisting of 460 naval vessels and about 65,000 sailors and auxiliary personnel. Ukrainian dissatisfaction has more to do with the cost-benefit calculus of Russian lease payments and actual expenses incurred by the city.

The sale of Ukraine's strategic bombers and fighters back to Russia turned out a saga of its own. First, nationalist lawmakers torpedoed a potentially lucrative deal. Later, Moscow was

no longer interested, as several planes became inoperative because of maintenance problems. Agreeing on the right price had not come easy as well. The deal was finalized on mutually agreeable terms by late 1999, when the sale of 600 cruise missiles and 11 strategic bombers TU-160 and TU-95 MS contributed \$285 million toward the reduction of Ukraine's mounting energy debt to Russia. However, the debt has since grown again, which makes one think that future swaps of a similar nature may not be ruled out.

Security situation in the Black Sea is of major concern for Russian and Ukrainian policy makers alike. While the status of Sevastopol was resolved with ratification of the friendship treaty protocols in 1999, delimitation of expanses in the Black Sea and negotiations on the legal status of the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Straits continue. Russia is intent on influencing Ukrainian defense policy in the area. In Igor Ivanov's words, "Russia proceeds on the premise that the Russian Black Sea Fleet and the Ukrainian Navy should cooperate in ensuring the security of our countries' southern borders."⁸ Moscow will certainly insist on continuing exploitation of the base after its current lease expires in 2017.⁹ The material benefit for Ukraine is estimated at about \$3 billion in debt reduction as sum total of lease payments and compensation for the Ukrainian ships and fission materials sold to Russia.¹⁰ The fleet is supposed to pay cash for food and electricity, as well as other daily needs of sailors and their families. However, it often shirks on payments, which local suppliers meet with temporary denial of services and other punitive measures at their disposal.¹¹

Russia's worst nightmare would be losing the base permanently to NATO. Strong opposition to such a development by most Crimeans and political parties on the left makes this possibility remote. Yet, even relatively more innocent actions that signal growing Ukraine-NATO rapprochement are scowled upon in Moscow. If Ukraine's collaboration with NATO

targets Crimea as a venue or a symbolic arena of a collaborative effort, Russia's annoyance gets worse. This was the case with Sea Breeze-97 exercises, which originally envisaged joint action in fighting a hypothetical civil unrest in heavily populated by Russians southern areas of the country. Responding to regular NATO maneuvers in the Ukrainian sector of the Black Sea, Moscow invited Ukrainian navy to participate in several military exercises with Russia in 1999-2000.

Common action in foreign affairs has been a staple of Russian foreign policy toward Ukraine throughout the decade. Both the Russo-Ukrainian treaty of 1990 and the Agreement on the Creation of the CIS of 1991 advanced an idea of detailed co-ordination of security and foreign policies, which implicitly included Russia's vision of Ukraine's western borders as its new outer defense perimeter. At the same time, sovereignty over Crimea remained disputed by a number of Russian politicians from ex-Vice President Rutskoi to General Lebed to Moscow's Mayor Luzhkov. While trading parts of sovereignty for a tangible payoff was not wholly unimaginable, the Russian desire of control promised little. Elected on the ostensibly "pro-Russian" platform Leonid Kuchma was forced to refocus on collaboration with the West and call on the UN help in taming Crimean Russian separatism as early as 1995. When the Crimean issue was finally solved, the intermittent war on Chechnya eroded already limited support base for reintegration efforts. The more Russia tried to get Ukraine on board, the more suspicious Kiev became. The signing of the friendship treaty with Russia in May 1997 was followed by the adoption of the Ukraine-NATO Charter on Distinctive Partnership (July 1997). The bilateral Program of Economic Cooperation for 1998-2007 was balanced by the State Program of Cooperation with NATO till 2001. In 1996, Ukraine's delegation in Vienna lobbied against Russian attempts to renegotiate flank restrictions imposed by the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. In October 1997, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova, all formal members of the CIS, created a regional subgroup to oppose

Moscow. The group, known by the acronym GUAM, included Uzbekistan two years later and made several appearances at the margins of the NATO Washington summit in April 1999 and the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000.

As Ukraine moved on to become a de-facto leader of the GUAM and proposed working toward creation of a new export route for Azeri oil in circumvention of the existing Russian pipelines, Moscow grew increasingly irritated by these manifestations of exceptionalism. Part of the blame for a deepening Russo-Ukrainian split was attributed to the USA. After proclaiming the whole post-Soviet space falling into a zone of its exclusive interests (Russia's "Monroe" doctrine), the Kremlin has more than once indicated its displeasure with western interference in the affairs of "near abroad." As then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Evgenii Primakov had stated with all clarity, "any external forces" must be denied "a possibility to 'drive wedges' between Russia and other CIS countries."¹² The American encouragement of GUUAM was apparent.

The Russian parliament appeared split on the Ukrainian issue between those who advocated a tougher policy and lobbied against ratification of the "big treaty," and those who shared in the Communist belief of getting Ukraine to join the newly established Russian-Belarusian Community, now officially elevated to the status of a Union. The later group extended considerable efforts to support Ukrainian advocates of the so-called Slavic Union, such as the then-speaker of the Verkhovna Rada Oleksandr Tkachenko or the Communist leader Petro Symonenko in Ukraine's presidential elections of 1999. The Communist advocacy of the East Slavic Union continued before and immediately after the last presidential elections in Russia, specifically during several meetings of Gennadii Ziuganov and Gennadii Seleznev with president-elect Vladimir Putin.

Vladimir Putin's own views on Ukraine represent a continuation of Primakov's pragmatist line. At the January 2000 summit of the CIS Heads, Putin insisted that sovereignty of the ex-Soviet states was irreversible. His April 2000 visit to Ukraine was seen as a manifestation of Moscow's good will and generally constructive attitude. Leonid Kuchma claimed that, "despite a series of problems in Russian-Ukrainian relations," he felt "deeply satisfied" with the visit, which included discussion of increased military cooperation and was crowned with the collaborative maneuvers of the two national parts of the Black Sea Fleet.¹³ The February 2001 summit in Dnipropetrovsk saw a number of important agreements signed, including the one on linking the two countries' energy grids together and Ukraine's continued collaboration with Russia in electronic and aerospace industry. Speaking after the summit, Kuchma emphasized that "the potential of our countries is huge, and it is inseparable".¹⁴ Putin responded with a clear show of support of the embattled Ukrainian President in the midst of the worse political crisis post-independent Ukraine has seen in years, by saying that Russia should demonstrate "definite stability with our partners, and we have big plans with Ukraine."¹⁵ The new round of warming up in Ukrainian-Russian relations may significantly reshape both economies.

Economic Interdependence

The key problem in Ukrainian-Russian relations today is strategic economic interdependence of the two states. Up to 70-75 percent of the Ukraine's annual consumption of gas and close to 80 percent of its oil demand are covered by imports from Russia. When the Soviet patronage ended, Russia continued financing up to 22 percent of the Ukrainian GDP with subsidized credits. In 1995, these credits by Russia and Turkmenistan exceeded disbursements by the IMF and the World Bank combined.¹⁶ The ten-year value of Russian implicit energy subsidies to Ukraine was estimated at \$12.6 billion.¹⁷ However, debts had grown, too. By 1996, Ukraine

owed \$4.6 billion to the CIS countries and \$2.11 billion to the international financial institutions. The energy debt to Russia, restructured in 1995 with western mediation, had grown again up to \$1.4 billion by the early 2000, and \$ 2.2 billion by the end of the year. Parallel to that, Ukraine owed \$2.02 billion to the World Bank and \$2.9 billion to the IMF, and had to restructure its \$2.6 billion debt to western bond-holders.¹⁸ A pattern thus emerged: borrowing more and more in the West to pay debts to Russia and other CIS partners in a circle of ever growing indebtedness. Though somewhat offset by gas transit fees and further reduced with proceeds from several arms deals, like the recent \$ 285 million sale of 600 cruise missiles and 11 strategic bombers TU-160 and TU-95 MS back to Russia, Ukraine's gas debt nevertheless remains a problem.

Russia is no longer willing to wait. Vladimir Putin has recently demanded to end barter deals and to start settling Ukraine's debt in cash. The October 2000 Russian-Ukrainian summit in Sochi was specifically devoted to the debt issue, together with equally thorny problems of payment for further deliveries and putting the end to the chronic theft of Russian gas transiting Ukraine en route to Europe. Ukraine's desire to get a subsidized domestic price of \$15, or, as a second best, \$ 30-40 per one thousand cubic meters of gas – the price that Belarus currently enjoys – was met with the Russian demand to move toward the world-market plank of \$100. Ukraine was eventually allowed to spread debt payments over the five-year period. Yet, while agreeing to defer cash payments for new deliveries, Putin pressed for a transfer of industrial property as collateral. Recent acquisition of Ukraine's aluminum smelters by Russian businesses and the sale of the control stake in Odessa's oil refinery to Lukoil give a clear indication of what Moscow has in mind. Ukraine's gas transportation system is of special value to both countries. Russian Gazprom enjoys full support of the government in its bid to acquire, eventually, certain key elements of Ukraine's gas transit infrastructure – pipelines and/or reservoirs. Should the

more ambitious plans of ownership fail, Moscow will lobby for joint exploitation of Ukraine's gas transportation networks.

Ukraine's economic dependence on Russia is significant. Between 40 and 50 percent of Ukraine's overall trade is with the Russian Federation (see Table 1). Russia remains the fourth-largest investor in the Ukrainian economy and the second-largest recipient of Ukraine's financial investments.¹⁹ The Program of Economic Cooperation Between the Russian Federation and Ukraine has been implemented by over 50 institutions in both countries, overseeing transportation and energy, metallurgy, high-tech industries and machine building, light and food industries, and agriculture. A program of economic cooperation between neighboring regions promotes the cross-border business ties, which are crucially important for eastern Ukraine.

Products of primarily industrial use make up almost 92 percent in the structure of imports from Russia, which means that a significant reduction of supply may lead to a collapse of the national economy. On the export side, dependence is also significant. Russia remains the primary market for the export of such products as ferrous metals, steel plate and pipes, electric goods and machinery, machine tools and equipment, food, and products of chemical industry. Traditionally, more than 90 percent of all Ukraine's high-tech and high value-added goods had been exported to Russia. The capture of the Russian market in technical electronics and consumer durables by western and Asian producers precipitated abrupt deindustrialization of the respective Ukrainian sectors, with a loss of up to 97 – 99 percent of their total output.²⁰

Russia's economic dependence on Ukraine is also significant. Russia relies on Ukraine's metallurgy, agriculture, animal farming, food processing, petrochemical, shipbuilding, and aerospace industries. Through the Ukrainian pipelines, Russia exports 125 billion cubic meters of gas annually, paying between 30 and 32 billion cubic meters in lieu of transit fees.²¹ Rail transit

of Russian export goods alone amounts to 40 million tons annually. Ukrainian share in Russia's trade with ex-Soviet countries exceeds 50 percent.

In certain areas, Ukraine's position vis-à-vis Russian consumers has been close to that of a monopolist. For example, Ukraine inherited 60 percent of the former USSR's industrial capacity for production of surface ships. Until recently, more than 70 percent of all heavy steel plate used by Russian own ship yards came from Ukraine.²² Ukraine's positions are similarly strong in the market of heavy cargo and passenger-cargo aircraft of the Antonov family and in the space booster industry. In many other respects, collaboration with Ukrainian producers helps prevent the loss of industrial capacity at home. As an example of this, we may note that in the throes of the 1998 crisis, four hundred Ukrainian enterprises continued supplying Russian partners with more than 6000 names of industrial-use components.²³

Ukrainian industries are vitally important for Russian security. During the Soviet era, the republic controlled 28 percent of the Soviet total arms production. Ukraine's share was as high as 50 percent of all battleships, strategic missiles, tanks, telecommunication equipment and electronics produced in the Soviet Union. About one third of the Soviet space industry drew from here. Ukraine supplied Russian electronics and telecommunications industries with 1500 various details and components. As late as 1996, more than 262 enterprises of the Ukrainian military-industrial complex maintained working relations with Russia. The list of Ukrainian military supplies to Russia included 7228 items produced by 244 enterprises, while enterprises of Russian military-industrial complex reciprocated with 8163 items of military-related hardware and supplied 69 enterprises of defense industry in Ukraine. In the first half of 1997, 90 percent of Ukraine's total arms exports went to Russia.²⁴

Ukraine's positions in agricultural goods and foodstuffs have been traditionally strong, particularly when such items as sugar, animal meats and livestock, canned fish and meats, alcohol, tobacco, flour and pasta are concerned. Though shaken by the trade war of 1997 and the financial crisis of 1998, Ukrainian exports of foodstuffs and agricultural produce to Russia have managed to recover some of the lost ground since then. In 2000, Ukraine's exports to the CIS countries had grown at a faster rate than exports to other countries, and agricultural production registered a modest growth comparing to the year before. Because of its geographic proximity and competitive prices, Ukraine has excellent views on the Russian food market for the future.

It is naive to represent the essence of economic relationship between Russia and Ukraine as a one-sided dependence of Ukraine on a more powerful neighbor. The dependence is really mutual, and Moscow's understanding of this fact dictates its policy toward Ukraine.

Maximization of economic benefits is one major consideration. It has been calculated that, should Russia entirely lose its trade with other post-Soviet states, it could continue generating no more than 65 percent of its currently issued end products.²⁵ In 1996-97 alone, Russia's loss from under-utilized economic cooperation with other CIS countries stood at a quarter of its gross domestic product. The idea of reconstitution of a single economic space promises revitalization of industrial capacities throughout the area. Even without new investments, such a move could raise the output of core industries by more than 50 percent, while allowing to cut down the cost of electricity production by 20 percent and to save between 15 and 25 percent of production costs in metallurgy and machine building. An estimated benefit from multilateral co-ordination of foreign trade can be as high as \$ 15-20 billion.²⁶

Thus, Russia indeed sees Ukraine as a "strategic partner," as both the "big" treaty and the interstate Program of Economic Cooperation between Ukraine and the Russian Federation for

1998-2007 seem to reveal. Such projects as the joint development of the Ukrainian-Russian cargo aircraft AN-70,²⁷ the US-sponsored “Sea Launch” or a satellite industry contract “Global Star,” not to mention continuing technical exchange and collaboration of military industries and complex interdependence of the two countries’ energy sectors are all examples of a strategic level of relationship which may not be seen in simplistic terms of Russia’s dominance or hegemony. Suffice it to say that, without Ukraine and some other CIS countries, Russia’s self-sufficiency in arms production does not exceed 18 percent.²⁸

While some western and Ukrainian experts suspect Russia of a hidden agenda leading perhaps to full subordination of Ukraine, official Moscow, in the words of Putin’s recently enacted Foreign Policy Concept, prefers to speak of “different-speed and different-level integration within the CIS framework.”²⁹ In this pragmatic vision of Russian policy toward “near abroad,” Ukraine is clearly distinguished as a country that is not going to join a Russia-led Union any soon. Not a client or a privileged ally, it remains a partner of considerable strategic weight, which may also behave as Russia’s competitor and challenger in both regional and global arenas.

Politics of Language

A special aspect of Ukrainian-Russian relations arises out of Russia’s concern over the status of Russian language and minority rights of the Ukrainian citizens of Russian descent. In 1991-96 Russia had unsuccessfully pushed for the adoption of dual Russo-Ukrainian citizenship for the Ukrainian Russians and Russophones. Ukraine’s resistance was in no small part motivated by the fear of creation of the pro-Russian “fifth column” of eleven-something million citizens with divided loyalties. When this issue was finally put to rest, Moscow became preoccupied with the diminishing sphere of Russian language use in Ukraine and the future of Russian culture in the area of its established historical presence.

Kiev did give Russia some ground for concern, particularly in the area of education policies and other measures adopted with an aim to affirm the dominant status of the Ukrainian language versus the rest of languages spoken in the country, Russian in particular. It is important to understand that the language issue in Ukraine is larger than the issue of minorities. First, Russophones constitute a *de-facto* majority. In addition to 11.17 million Ukrainian Russians who named Russian as their mother tongue in the 1989 census, it was also claimed as native language by 4.6 million ethnic Ukrainians, 90 percent Jews, 79 percent Greeks, 55 percent Belarusians and 49 percent Tatars living in the country.³⁰ Second, in Ukraine Russian is more than a *lingua franca* accepted out of sheer convenience. Far from being an imported language of foreign colonizers, it is an important part of Ukrainian own national identity, which is for all practical reasons bilingual and bicultural. As late as 1997, 25.5% of the Ukrainian population thought of their ethnicity as, to a varying degree, both Ukrainian and Russian.³¹ Judging by levels of interpersonal trust and tolerance accorded to the group, Ukrainian Russians are no less central to the country's model identity than its titular nationality (cf. Table 2). Third, it is noteworthy that both Ukrainophone and Russophone communities are multiethnic, though eponymous nationalities for obvious reasons are central to each of them.

The policy of Ukrainianization in culture and education, considered by Kiev as restorative in terms of what has been seen as artificial Russification inflicted by Moscow, is met with understandable apprehension in all quarters of Russian society. This apprehension is translated into sometimes heated polemics and anti-Ukrainian invectives in the State Duma and the Council of Federation, protests coming from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and certain sour remarks from the presidential circles, Security Council in particular. An external observer can be alarmed by this frequently belligerent rhetoric, taking it as indicating a security threat, even if at

the same time denigrating concern over the status of Russian-speaking minorities in Ukraine as a “non-issue.”³² In fact, both points must be taken cautiously and indeed critically.

First, political rhetoric is a weak indicator of policy, as witnessed, for example, by successful signing and ratification of the “big treaty” with Ukraine amidst intense debate over the status of Crimea, Sevastopol, and the Black Sea Fleet in both chambers of the Russian parliament. It must be remembered that in most post-Soviet states, the Baltics excepted, legislature has demonstrated limited capacity to influence security and foreign policies, which are dominated by executive powers. The pattern of rhetorically belligerent nationalist parliament versus more balanced executive had been early established in confrontation between Boris Yeltsin and the Congress of People’s Deputies chaired by Ruslan Khasbulatov. It had reappeared after the elections of 1993 and 1995, when the State Duma showed itself more radical on the issue of “compatriots” than either the Cabinet or the presidential circles. In the current Duma, nationalist factions and individual parliamentarians that are harshly critical of what they see as an offensive against the Russian language in Ukraine constitute a minority, though a vociferous one.³³ The reins of policy are held by the Kremlin, where concerns over the status of Russian language in Ukraine appear distinct third after the concerns over Ukraine’s pro-NATO orientation and the whole plethora of issues of primarily economic character.

Second, a concern over cultural rights of Russian-speaking minorities in Ukraine may be called many things, but a “non-issue” it is certainly not. The very fact that Moscow sees a problem where Kiev sees none says volumes about incongruity of the two governments’ perceptions of a potentially very serious issue. Russian desire to promote and secure cultural rights of compatriots abroad can not be simply dismissed as a residue of “imperial” mentality. Any country would be legitimately concerned with the rights of its ethnic co-nationals found in

millions on the territory of a neighbor. Russians constitute 22.1 percent of the Ukrainian population; together with other Russophones they add up to about sixty percent of the total.³⁴ As late as 1989, 11 million people in Ukraine, that is almost one in four, importantly including 2 million ethnic Ukrainians, could not speak Ukrainian.³⁵ Russian, on the other hand, was widely spoken both as a language of choice and a preferred medium of international communication.

Moscow would like to preserve a privileged status of Russian language in Ukraine, ideally – to elevate it to the status of the second state language of the country (a point also initially advocated by the presidential candidate Kuchma in 1994). In practical-political terms, it means conservation of the linguistic situation characteristic of Ukraine circa 1989. Kiev, on the other hand, is bent on the idea to bring the linguistic, cultural, and educational infrastructure in proportion with ethnodemographic statistics reporting 72.7 percent of the population as ethnic Ukrainians. While for the Russian political community, all Russophone Ukrainians are an “integral part of Russian super-ethnos”³⁶ and, as such, require protection of their cultural rights in Ukraine, the architects of a new, unconditionally de-Russified Ukrainian identity and, increasingly, the government in Kiev invite Russophone Ukrainians to recognize themselves as victims of, to use one typical citation, “bloodthirsty Russification.” The continued existence of Russian language in Ukraine is seen by these ardent nationalists as portending aggravation of the “truly destructive consequences of the prolonged unmerciful, violent, brutal suppression and annihilation of the culture of the Ukrainian people.”³⁷

The two perspectives on the issue of minorities are clearly incompatible and in fact, opposite. Russia’s desire to claim Ukrainian Russophones as de-facto Russians (“compatriots”) is angrily refuted by those in Ukraine who see Russian self-identification of the “passport” Ukrainians as a sign of national betrayal or a sort of mental disorder, to be cured by the

paternalistic state, which takes upon itself to decide, what must be the “right” ethnicity of the affected individual. On the Russian side of the border, nationalizing policies aimed to promote the use of Ukrainian in mass media, culture and education are seen as motivated by Kiev’s desire to assimilate Ukrainian Russians into the titular community, thus obliterating their cultural distinctiveness altogether.

Statistics showing a healthy percentage of Russian schools, newspapers and cultural institutions in Ukraine does not soothe Moscow’s worries, as both sides tend to see very different stories in the same batch of figures. While Kiev operates with absolute figures, Moscow analyses proportions and tendencies, and the latter are clearly tendencies of decline. Thus, Ukraine may take pride in the fact that in one year it has published 2579 titles of books in Russian, including 52 titles in children fiction, 121 titles of school textbooks, and 205 textbooks for universities. Russians assess the fact against 653 titles of university textbooks and 494 school book titles in Ukrainian. Overall, Ukrainian prevalence over Russian is well indicated, in Russian opinion, by an average annual yield of 1000 more titles of books and 600 more titles of periodicals published in Ukrainian.³⁸

Similarly, statistics of the language of instruction in schools, while showing a tendency of growth for Ukrainian (from 47.4 percent of all schools in 1988/89 to 60.5 percent in 1996/97),³⁹ is much less favorable for Russian. The number of schools with the Russian language of instruction has been steadily decreasing nation-wide. In less than two years (1994-95), it has dropped by more than five hundred.⁴⁰ In 1998-1999, education in Russian remained available to approximately 34 percent of all students at the primary, secondary, and higher levels of education, but only 25 percent of pre-schoolers, down from approximately 50 percent on all levels in 1991.⁴¹ By 1999, the number of Russian schools in Ukraine was cut by more than one-

third, prompting minority activists to protest the government-sponsored “Russophobia” with the Council of Europe.⁴²

On several occasions, the State Duma expressed deep dissatisfaction with Ukraine’s language policies. When the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea had been rewritten to proclaim Ukrainian the sole state language of the republic, the Duma responded with accusations of “discrimination on the basis of ethnic descent and language.” In Duma’s view, Ukraine’s language policy undermined “security and peace in relations between Russian and Ukrainian peoples,” and demonstrated a desire to solve “internal... problems through severe discrimination of the Russian population of Crimea.”⁴³ On 19 July 2000, another resolution interpreted further restrictions on the number of Russian schools in Ukraine as a measure of deliberate ethnic discrimination. Vladimir Putin promised that “Russia will be more attentively, judiciously and insistently standing up for the interests of its citizens – both those who reside in Russia and those who have opted to settle down in the CIS countries, the Baltic States or the distant abroad.”⁴⁴ Moscow protested the December 1999 decision of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, which mandated compulsory use of Ukrainian “in all spheres of public life of Ukraine,” meeting it with a diplomatic note that urged Kiev to uphold the Ukrainian Russians’ right “to maintain and develop their culture without being subjected to any attempts at assimilation against their will.”⁴⁵ A May 2000 incident in Lviv, where a Ukrainian composer Ihor Bilozir was beaten to death by Russian-speaking thugs in a drunken brawl, provoked a new round of tensions over the issue of Russian language, which was all but banned in Lviv, cut further back in radio and television broadcasts nation-wide, and stripped of legal guarantees envisaged in the Law on Ratification of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.⁴⁶

While renouncing Ukraine's "policy of discrimination against the Russian language,"⁴⁷ Duma leaders continue to express hopes that Ukraine may eventually opt for giving it an official status. In the opinion of Dmitrii Rogozin, the Chair of the Duma's International Affairs Committee and the co-founder of the post-Soviet Congress of Russian Communities, Ukraine should follow the example set by Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, where "the Russian language was accorded official status."⁴⁸ This is a point shared by both leftist and rightist factions of the State Duma and frequently reiterated by people as different as Communists Gennadii Ziuganov or Gennadii Seleznev, liberal Boris Nemtsov, or nationalists Sergei Baburin or Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. The issue of language and its unobstructed use by "compatriots" unites all shades of Russian political spectrum and colors other aspects of Russian policy toward Ukraine, thus adding the weight of culture and identity to considerations of security, economy, and trade.

Conclusion

The prospects of Russian-Ukrainian relations are still uncertain, despite an important element of stability that was introduced with the signing and subsequent ratification of the "big" treaty of 1997. The uncertainty lies mainly on the Ukrainian side, as Moscow has never really hidden its desire to bring Ukraine back in a future confederation or even federation with Russia at its core. Given the millennial history of Russian-Ukrainian relations, the special role of Ukraine in a Russian Commonwealth, the current global trends toward creation of strong regional formations and the clearly emphasized assumption that the union must be achieved through a voluntary ascent of all interested parties, I would not call these plans either unrealistic or inappropriate in their essence. Neither should they be considered as foretelling the loss of Ukrainian independence or reorientation of either country away from Europe. It is a bit presumptuous for the West to think that the only, or even principal, goal the Ukrainian-Russian

alliance can serve is to maximize “Moscow’s leverage over both the EU and NATO.”⁴⁹ After all, the problem is not Russia’s mistrust of EU or even NATO: the problem is western mistrust and exclusion of Russia from Euro-Atlantic institutions.⁵⁰

Both Russia and Ukraine “have chosen a European identity, but in neither country is that identity finally fixed.”⁵¹ In the case of Russia, the unstable identity is fed by feelings of injured national pride – the expected result of exclusion from Europe, further exacerbated by condescending and frequently outright scornful attitude of the West. In the case of Ukraine, identity is all too often used as a tool of power politics and a bargaining chip in negotiations with the West. Ukraine’s foreign policy preferences tend to revolve in a circle conventionally described as a desire to have one’s cake and eat it. On the one hand, Ukraine’s “cake” (state independence, pro-Western course of development) is staunchly preserved against Russian attempts to share in. On the other hand, without Russia and Russian material involvement in Ukrainian economy the country stands little chance to survive competition with better equipped and well entrenched traders in Europe and the world.

Ukraine’s coming aboard of the Russia-Belarus Union could well advance regional security. It would put to rest Russian nationalist desire to dispute Ukraine’s rights over the Crimea and the Sea of Azov, and help in finding a long-term solution to the question of Sevastopol. No longer a “cordon sanitaire” between Russia and the West, Ukraine would finally get a chance to become a true geopolitical bridge. Building on the accumulated positive experience of the Ukraine-NATO cooperation, the whole trio might adopt a more relaxed stance toward NATO and even expand its military collaboration with the Alliance, building upon the existing agreements. Ukraine would be able to influence Russian policies at a much closer distance, therefore acting as a check on decisions that could jeopardize the grouping’s collective

standing in Europe. Questions touching upon national sovereignty of the participants would still be left within exclusive domestic jurisdiction.

Past history has taught Kiev to be cautious with Russia. Now Russia learns to be cautious with Ukraine. It is naive to expect that, in dealing with Moscow, Kiev may emulate the Baltics, while getting preferential treatment on a par with Belarus. It is equally erroneous to believe that Ukraine may blackmail anyone to support it based solely on its geopolitical importance. Both Russia and the West must be careful to distinguish between Ukraine as Ukraine and Ukraine as regime that currently presides over the country. The same distinction certainly applies to Russia. Yet, Putin has managed to somewhat restrict the heretofore unbridled power of Russian oligarchs. Ukraine needs to follow, at least to make the first step in that direction. So far, it treads the path of oscillation between western credits and Russian energy subsidies, interoperability with NATO and joint air defense with Russia, global competition with yesterday's partners and continued reliance on trade with them, and relies on foreign policy to tidy up domestic mishaps. Meanwhile, Moscow insists that "one can't enjoy Russian freebies, pinching our oil and natural gas, and simultaneously head for a Greater Romania, for NATO or elsewhere."⁵² The plans to build a gas pipeline to Europe circumventing Ukrainian territory may reflect that Russia is, after all, not immune to the seduction of isolationism and can finally heed the western advice to retreat from the "near abroad" for good. The big question is, will such a decision benefit anyone with a serious stake in a truly continental integration of Europe?

Table 1. Russia's share in Ukraine's foreign trade turnover, 1994-2000 (%) *

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000, 1 st quarter
Exports	45.3	43.3	38.7	26.2	23.0	20.7	20.4
Imports	59.1	51.4	50.1	45.8	48.1	47.6	54.4
Total	52.4	47.7	45.0	36.9	36.5	34.1	39.1

* Not counting trade in services.

Sources: S.I. Pirozhkov and A. I. Sukhorukov, eds., *Eksportnyi potentsial Ukrainy na rosiis'komu vektori: stan i prognoz* (Kiev: Akadempres, 1998), p. 129; the National Institute for Ukrainian-Russian Relations (<http://niurr.gov.ua/ru/econom/inprog/tab1_2.htm>); O.H. Osaulenko, *Ukraina u tsyfrakh u 1999 rotsi* (Kiev: Derzhavnyi komitet statystryky Ukrainy, 2000); Derzhavnyi Komitet Statystryky Ukrainy, *Ekspres-dopovid'* no. 187, 6 June 2000.

Table 2. Interethnic tolerance and social distancing in Ukraine, 1994-2000 (the Bogardus social distance scale) *

<i>Ethnic and ethno-cultural groups</i>	12/1994 N=2181	10/1995 N=1530	11/1996 N=1446	06/1997 N=1973	11/1998 N=1566	02/1999 N=1533	04/2000 N=1935
Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians	1.70	1.72	2.03	2.27	1.83	1.77	2.07
Russian-speaking Ukrainians	1.78	1.84	2.06	2.34	1.97	1.97	2.32
Russians	1.95	2.06	2.45	2.55	2.25	2.21	2.49
Belarusians	2.32	2.49	3.05	3.18	3.04	2.94	3.13
Jews	3.63	3.74	3.89	3.97	3.96	3.86	4.10
Poles	3.85	3.84	4.16	4.23	4.23	4.20	4.45
Germans	4.03	3.92	4.39	4.30	4.47	4.41	4.69
Romanians	4.27	4.40	4.38	4.51	4.59	4.48	5.03
Gypsies	5.15	5.14	5.15	5.35	5.40	5.46	5.60
<i>Average index</i>	3.60	3.67	3.78	3.85	3.82	3.78	4.06

*The index equals 1 if all respondents would admit representatives of a given group as members of their families, 7- if all respondents would deny anyone from a given group an entry to Ukraine.

Source: Kiev International Institute of Sociology online report, <<http://kiis.com.ua/>>.

Notes

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¹ FBIS-SOV-2001-0211; FBIS-SOV-2001-0212.

² ITAR-TASS, 21 December 2000.

³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. Department of Information. *Information Bulletin*, 15 February 2001.

⁴ The new Union is envisioned as a confederation of states exhibiting much greater degree of integration than the amorphous CIS, though falling short of more stringent federal arrangements. Cf. Gennadii Ziuganov's comments as reported by ITAR-TASS, 13 December 1999; interview with Russian State Duma speaker Gennadii Seleznev, NTV, Moscow, 30 September 1998 (via BBC Worldwide Monitoring).

⁵ Sergei Kortunov, 'Russia in Search of Allies', *International Affairs* (Moscow), 5, 1996, p. 156.

⁶ *Sovetskaya Rossiia*, 15 April 1999, FBIS-SOV-1999-0425.

⁷ See more on that in Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1997) and Paul J. D'Anieri, *Economic Interdependence in Ukrainian-Russian Relations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), chap. 4.

⁸ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 25 November 2000.

⁹ The Black Sea Fleet rents 18,500 hectares of the Crimean land, including 3,500 hectares in Sevastopol.

¹⁰ Ukraine has been compensated in the amount of \$ 726.509 million for its vessels and nuclear materials. The annual deduction of Ukraine's state debt for lease payments was set at \$ 97.75 million.

¹¹ The fleet currently owes close to \$ 3 million in unpaid electricity bills only. In 1998, its total debt to the city of Sevastopol exceeded \$ 10 million. A comparable sum was owed to Mykolayiv shipyard for routine maintenance. Cf. Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, *Black Sea Fleet Agreements Ratified: Problems Remain*. Occasional Report. Kiev, 1999.

¹² Evgenii Primakov, 'Rossiia v mirovoi politike.' *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*', 1998, 5, p. 8.

¹³ *Kyiv Post*, 20 April 2000.

¹⁴ *Monitoring Foreign & Security Policy of Ukraine*. Newsletter of the Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, 10–16 February 2001. Via <<http://www.foreignpolicy.org.ua>>.

¹⁵ FBIS-SOV-2001-0211.

¹⁶ Cf. Anders Åslund, 'Eurasia Letter: Ukraine's Turnaround', *Foreign Policy*, 100, 1995, pp. 127, 139.

- ¹⁷ Gregory V. Krasnov and Josef C. Brada, 'Implicit Subsidies in Russian-Ukrainian Energy Trade', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 49, 5, 1997, p. 837.
- ¹⁸ Reuters, 12 January 2000; *The Economist*, 6 May 2000; *Kyiv Post*, 28 July 2000; The World Bank, 12 September 2000, at <http://www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata/aag/ukr_aag.pdf>.
- ¹⁹ S. I. Pirozhkov et al., *Ukrains'ko-rosiis'ki vidnosyny: ekonomichnyi aspekt* (Kiev: Ukrarhbudinform, 1999), pp. 34-35.
- ²⁰ Pirozhkov and Sukhorukov, *Eksportnyi potentsial Ukrainy*, pp. 26-27, 140.
- ²¹ *Problemy neftegazovogo kompleksa Ukrainy* (Kiev: SIAZ, 2000), p. 16.
- ²² V. M. Begma, *Oboronno-promyslovi kompleksy Ukrainy ta Rosii: spivrobotnytstvo, partnerstvo, konkurentsiia* (Kiev: Akadempres, 1998), p. 110; Pirozhkov et al., *Ukrains'ko-rosiis'ki vidnosyny*, p. 73; Pirozhkov and Sukhorukov, *Eksportnyi potentsial*, p. 34.
- ²³ *Slobids'kyi krai*, 3 November 1998, p. 1.
- ²⁴ Begma, *Oboronno-promyslovi kompleksy*, pp. 98-100, 110-111.
- ²⁵ Ukraine, in a similar situation, would be left with only 15 percent of its end products. Cf. V. Kremen', *Ukrainsko-rossiiskie otnosheniia: sushchnost' i perspektivy* (Kiev: 'Ukraino', 1995), p. 21.
- ²⁶ Pirozhkov et al., *Ukrains'ko-rosiis'ki vidnosyny*, pp. 15, 22.
- ²⁷ Serial production of AN-70, projected to be 30 aircrafts annually, will start in 2002 on the basis of two plants in Kiev and Samara. *Narodna armiiia*, 17 February 2000, p. 6.
- ²⁸ Begma, *Oboronno-promyslovi kompleksy*, p. 102.
- ²⁹ A copy of the concept can be found at <<http://www.mid.ru/mid/vpcons.htm>>.
- ³⁰ Tetiana Rudnytska, *Etnichni spil'noty Ukrainy: tendentsii sotsial'nyh zmin* (Kiev: Instytut sotsiologii NAN Ukrainy, 1998), pp. 86-90.
- ³¹ V. Khmelko, M. Pogrebinskii, A. Tolpygo, E. Golovakha, N. Panina, *Predvybornye nastroeniia v Ukraine*. Sociological survey. November-December 1997. Kiev: KTSPiK & KIIS, 1997.
- ³² E.g., Roman Solchanyk, 'Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS', in Lubomyr A. Hajda, ed., *Ukraine in the World; Studies in the International Relations and Security Structure of a Newly Independent State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).
- ³³ In a telephone interview (17 September 1998), one of these politicians, Head of the Duma Committee for the CIS Affairs Georgii I. Tikhonov, accused Ukrainian authorities of harboring an idea to limit all education in Russian to the first three grades of elementary school, while completely eliminating Russian language from higher education. According to Mr. Tikhonov, "only Nazi wanted to carry out a similar plan on the occupied [Soviet] territories." Mr. Tikhonov went on to characterize Ukraine's education policies as a "spiritual genocide of the Russian people."

- ³⁴ Dominique Arel and Valeri Khmelko, 'The Russian Factor and Territorial Polarization in Ukraine', *The Harriman Review*, 9, 1-2, 1996, p. 86.
- ³⁵ Rudnytska, *Etnichni spil'noty Ukrainy*, p. 91.
- ³⁶ Sergei Kortunov, ' "Imperskoe" i natsional'noe v rossiiskom soznanii', *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 5, 1998, p. 18.
- ³⁷ *Ukrainski visti*, 31 December 1995. The citation is taken from the address "To Russian-speaking Citizens of Ukraine" by the self-named Congress of the Ukrainian Intelligentsia.
- ³⁸ *Druk Ukrainy (1997)*, ed. by T. Bronits'ka and O. Zhurba (Kiev: Knyzhkova palata, 1999), pp. 9, 17, 19, 32.
- ³⁹ Jan G. Janmaat, 'Language Politics in Education and the Response of the Russians in Ukraine', *Nationalities Papers*, 27, 3, 1999, p. 483.
- ⁴⁰ Calculated from Mykola Tomenko, *Ukrains'ka perspektyva: istoriko-politologichni pidstavy suchasnoii derzhavnoii stratehii* (Kiev: Ukrain'ska perspektyva, 1995), p. 91, appendix 2, and Bohdan Kushnir, *Iak nam buty z Rosiieiu?* (L'viv: "Za vil'nu Ukrainu," 1996), p. 81.
- ⁴¹ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 5 March 2000.
- ⁴² *The NIS Observed*, 4 April 2000.
- ⁴³ *Krymskoe vremia*, 5 November 1998, p. 6.
- ⁴⁴ *Baltic News Service*, 24 March 2000.
- ⁴⁵ *Rossiisko-ukrainskii biulleten'*, 5, February 2000, available at <<http://ceia.cib.ru/>>.
- ⁴⁶ The Law, adopted on 24 December 1999, was revoked through the decision of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine No. 1-34/2000 on 12 July 2000. The Court cited procedural errors in ratification and publication of the repealed law as the main reason behind its annulment. On the upsurge of anti-Russian feelings in Kiev and Lviv see *Moscow Times*, 26 August 2000.
- ⁴⁷ *Kyiv Post*, 3 August 2000.
- ⁴⁸ *Ukrains'ka pravda*, 30 May 2000.
- ⁴⁹ Jackson Diehl, 'Cold War Chills in Ukraine', *Washington Post*, 2 April 2001, p. A19.
- ⁵⁰ Not only Vladimir Putin started his presidency by announcing, on 5 March 2000, that Russia could one day join NATO if treated as an equal, but the idea had been seriously debated, for some time now, in Russian military circles. Cf. *CDI Russia Weekly*, 16 June 2000.
- ⁵¹ Margot Light, Stephen White and John Löwenhardt, 'A Wider Europe: The View from Moscow and Kyiv', *International Affairs*, 76, 1, Jan. 2000, p. 87.
- ⁵² *Interfax*, 25 April 2000, via *NIS Observed*, 5, 8, Part 2, 18 May 2000.