



**Ukraine after 20 Years of Independence:
Models of Development, Narratives of National Identity,
and Crisis of Legitimacy of Power**

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Introduction

Twenty years ago Ukraine gained its independence and started its path towards a free market economy and democratic governance. Where is it now after the change of four presidents and the Orange Revolution? There is a vast literature on the process of development and the various aspects leading up to the current political, economic, and socio-cultural situations in Ukraine. This report aims to create a comprehensive view on Ukraine after twenty years of independence by presenting prevailing conceptual narrative models of Ukraine as employed by Ukrainian and foreign experts, main narratives of national identity, and the sources of a legitimacy crisis in Ukraine. In addition to assessing the potential for conflict in Ukraine, this report also discusses some ideas for conflict prevention and resolution.

Method: The main method of this research is a semi-structural interview consisting of 6 questions regarding: an assessment of the current situation in Ukraine, its national identity, the politics of language and history, history textbooks, and possible future developments within Ukraine (note: this paper analyzes answers to the first question regarding the current situation in Ukraine). Each interview lasted between 1.5 to 3 hours. In addition, the author used participant-observation method during several academic round-tables and political discussions, monitored major TV programs that present political discussions (Shuster Live, Freedom of Speech), and analyzed data available at the libraries and on the websites of academic institutes and independent research centers.

Sample: The aim of this research was to interview people who represent the “1.5 diplomacy” level: scholars, political leaders, and journalists that are active in the political sphere and have an impact on political discourse. The author used purposive sampling of experts with elements of snowballing. For snowballing, 7 independent entry points were used. In addition, 3 widely recognized experts were asked to assess the list of interviewees to insure that the sample included major experts and equally represented all political and scientific groups. The final sample consists of 58 interviewees, 53 in Kiev and 5 in Simferopol, Crimea. Among them are 7 Directors or Chairs of foreign foundations, 16 are Directors or leading scientists at the academic institutes within the Ukrainian Academy of Science (including the Institute of Philosophy, Institute of History, Institute of Sociology, Institute of Political and Ethnographic research, Institute of World Economy, etc), 10 are Directors or leading experts at independent think tanks and research centers, 7 are faculty members of leading Ukrainian Universities, 9 are political leaders (members of Government, Deputies of Verhovna Rada (Parliament) and Directors of the Institute of National Memory and the National Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Ukraine), and 4 are journalists. Among respondents, 48 are Ukrainians and 10 are foreign

experts from Europe and the U.S. The gender representation is influenced by the specificity of the academic and political spheres in Ukraine: among respondents 47 are male and 11 are female.

Models of Ukraine

Seven models of current situation in Ukraine are identified:

- state without a national idea and a common identity;
- a country in an unfinished transition;
- degradation of the society;
- a divided society;
- Ukraine as a colony or “wild capitalism”;
- a post-colonial and post-genocidal society; and
- a frontier state.

The Ukrainian and foreign respondents are similar in defining the major conceptual models of Ukraine, but interpretations of the narratives differ significantly.

Ukraine as a state without national identity

100% of Ukrainian respondents: This narrative model emphasizes the absence of a common national identity, national ideology, and a unified nation-state concept. The original communist leadership who brought independence to Ukraine continued to use Marxists-Leninist theories of the society, bypassing public discussions around the state as a nation. Instead, the government and the society, concerned about economic wellbeing as a higher priority, saw and acted as if Ukraine was a purse for their own profit. The creation of a national identity was also obstructed by conflicts around the role of Ukraine's Soviet past in the development of the current nation. It resulted in a power elite that care little about Ukraine and its prosperity, nor resolving ethnic and regional tensions, and lacked a clear concept of international relations.

100% of foreign respondents: this narrative describes Ukraine as a country with the mentality of a Soviet era and Soviet type of Government. The democratic institutions are just a façade completely disconnected with reality, and where corruption permeated all spheres of life. This duality is preserved by the Government and the oligarchs. There is a semi-functioning democracy without rule of law, accountability of Government and Parliament, nor a culture of democracy. Civil society is in an embryonic stage with scarce

civic responsibilities, is poor in community agency, and is self subjected to paternalistic attitudes toward the Ukrainian Government and the European Union.

Country in an unfinished transition

79% of Ukrainian respondent: This model narrative describes Ukraine as captured in the unfinished process of transformation without a clear vision where it should be heading. This undulating process is pulling Ukraine from crisis to crisis punctuated by some inspiring periods like the Orange Revolution. The communist past deeply impacts the current reality; people still have a Soviet mentality, view the Government as a paternalistic provider, and are waiting for a strong personality that will magically create change. The Government itself still reflects Soviet styles of governing, inhibiting a democratic parliament by under-developing the party system and not addressing the needs of society. The level of civil society is low; democracy is weak, and unconsolidated. Thus, this model narrative notes that communism is very difficult to overcome and the current Government makes little if any efforts to change the situation.

100% of foreign respondents: This narrative describes Ukraine as a country without a national identity, open to influences from Russia and extremist organizations.

Degradation of the society

77% of Ukrainian respondents: This narrative describes Ukraine through the list of major problems representing the degradation of the society: decline of economy, corruption, failing state aspects, degradation of education and culture, loss of human potential, and declines in agriculture.

Divided society

47% of Ukrainian respondents: This narrative model describes Ukraine as a divided society, with the differences deeply rooted in history, culture, mentality, and aspirations for the future. The political entrepreneurs are actively using these ethno-cultural divides to take attention from economic problems and class divisions. The influence of Russia sharpens the conflict. There are 5 general explanations for the schism: a pro-Soviet narrative of the divide between Ukrainian nationalists and the rest of the population, a pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian narratives of ethnic divide, a narrative of divide between pro-Western and Soviet orientation, and finally, a narrative of multiple identities within Ukraine.

50% of foreign respondents: This narrative describes Ukraine as divided culturally and mentally into pro-Russian and pro-Western groups. The Orange Revolution was unsuccessful in uniting the country and the new government is pro-Russian.

Ukraine as a Colony

42% of Ukrainian respondents: This narrative describes Ukraine as a colony for oligarchs who accumulate their capital through the exploitation of internal resources. This concentration of capital is supported through the structural changes in political, legislative, and financial systems. Oligarchs do not care about Ukraine, do not invest in its future or development, and are interested only in temporary capital gains. The gap between the wealthy and poor is growing, people are treated as slaves, and systems of social support and security have been abandoned. Ukraine is building a model of wild capitalism guided by the images in Marx's books with omnipotent oligarchs, absent middle classes, and powerless workers.

80% of foreign respondents: This narrative describes Ukraine as a colony of oligarchs, who have built the brutal capitalist system described by Marxists textbooks, abusing power to concentrate money in their own hands. People are treated as slaves and are becoming increasingly impoverished.

Frontier state

15% of Ukrainian respondents: This narrative posits that the long experience of being a frontier state impacts Ukrainian ability to deal with internal problems and move forward.

10% of foreign respondents: They note that Ukraine "Tried to play role of buffer between Russia and the West and lost in this game."

Post-genocidal and post-colonial country

8% of Ukrainian respondents: This narrative describes Ukraine as post-genocide and post-colonial country with a perverted mentality, an absence of human values, and persistent dominance of Soviet values. As all post-colonial societies, Ukraine is divided by different identities with language and history deemed to be the sources of conflict in the society.

Achievements

Ukrainian experts mentioned the following achievements of Ukraine: Ukraine preserved its independence (29%), has a peaceful character of transition, with an absence of aggressive confrontations and conflict, and supports tolerance (21%), has a free political culture and is absent of authoritarian regime traits (12%), and provides increased prospects and opportunities to travel abroad (6%).

The foreign experts stated the following: Ukraine is a free and pluralistic society (20%), had more diversity in the economy, had changes in economic and social services (20%),

was an independent state with some potential (20%), and is experiencing peaceful development (10%).

Narratives of national identity

The analysis revealed 6 distinct and consistent narratives:

- a dual identity;
- being pro-Soviet;
- a fight for Ukrainian identity;
- a recognition of Ukrainian identity;
- a multicultural-civic narrative; and
- a Crimean Tatars' narrative.

Each narrative was analyzed by defining the core of the narrative represented in 90-100% of respondents within each of six types. Each narrative is characterized by three main features:

1. it is very coherent and articulate, with strong internal logic and justification of its legitimacy;
2. it is connected to a specific conception of power and morality; and
3. it is different from other narratives and in many features is opposite to other narratives.

All these features of the narratives lead to the perception of the society as a zero-sum game where one narrative should prevail over others.. It produces aggressiveness, enemy 'hunts', antagonism, and hostility among different groups of citizens. At the same time, all these features of the narratives ensure that there cannot be an overwhelming victory of one narrative over others, nor a satisfying compromise between them.

Dual identity

*(28% of respondents)*The dual identity narrative describes Ukraine as a country with a dual identity of two equal ethnic groups. People supporting this narrative are proud of their Russian culture and heritage, and insist that it is different from the Russian culture in Russia. They see the country as divided by regional differences and believe that Ukrainian nationalists are the ones who are increasing tension in the country. The Russian language is under threat and must be established as a second official state language. Regions have different legitimate histories and approaches to the past which impedes the development of a common national identity. History textbooks should be corrected to remove Ukrainian nationalistic interpretations.

Pro-Soviet narrative

(7% of respondents) Those who profess the pro-Soviet narrative center their views on a reassessment of the history of the Soviet Union and want to increase national pride and unity by the incorporation of Soviet achievements into the core of the country's national identity. Ukraine is portrayed as a multicultural society where all conflicts are provoked by nationalists. The narrative confirms Ukrainian as the only state language but stresses the importance of support for a liberal policy toward the Russian language. The historic narrative of the country should include both positive and negative assessments of the Soviet past; thus, history textbooks should be changed to correct the present one-sided interpretation of history.

Fight for Ukrainian identity

(23% of respondents) The narrative "Fight for Ukrainian Identity" describes Ukraine as a homogenous culture of ethnic Ukrainians with some enclaves of pro-Soviet Russian population resulting from colonization and immigration. Ukraine is a post-colonial, post-genocidal society that was able to survive, preserve its culture and language, and achieve independence. But Ukrainian culture, language, and history are still under threat from its pro-Soviet population and the present Government, which is supported by Russia. The major divide in the society is between authentic Ukrainian democratic values and pro-Soviet Russian totalitarian ideals. It is important to protect Ukrainian language and history from the pro-Soviet Russian population and create policies of enforcement for Ukrainian language as the only state language.

Recognition of Ukrainian identity

(23% of respondents) The narrative "Recognition of Ukrainian Identity" describes Ukraine as a homogenous culture of ethnic Ukrainians with small ethnic minorities: Russians, Crimean Tatars, and Hungarians. Society is united by the deep democratic traditions of Ukrainian culture, which is different from the Russian totalitarian regime of the Soviet era. The majority of people speaks the Ukrainian language and accepts Ukrainian as a single state language. The Russian-speaking population has all the opportunities they need in order to preserve their language; tensions are provoked only by manipulation of the issues by Russia. Despite regional difference in interpretation of history, Ukraine has one common historic past, distinct from Russia. Ukraine should defend its independence from Russian influence in politics and education.

Multicultural civic concept

(16 percent of respondents) The 'Multicultural Civic Narrative' describes Ukraine as a multicultural society with equal ethnic groups who should build a civic, not ethnic, meaning of national identity. This society is a result of the efforts of all Ukrainian citizens, united by the idea of independence. The civic concept is undermined by Ukrainian and Russian nationalists as well as by the pro-Soviet population. The Ukrainian language as a state language unites Ukraine but it should not be enforced. The choice of using the Russian language in other spheres should be a free choice. The historic narrative as a basic foundation of Ukraine's common identity should be built on ideas of citizenship and should reflect multiple voices of Ukrainian history.

Narrative of Crimean Tatars

(5 respondents) The 'Crimean Tatars' Narrative' states that the restoration of Crimean Tatar cultural autonomy and preservation of Crimean Tatar's nation, language, and culture is the aim of the Crimean Tatars. This aim is strongly connected with Ukrainian independence, development of democracy, and membership in the European Union. Russia and pro-Soviet, pro-Russian, forces in Ukraine divide the country, restore a Soviet mentality, and pose a threat to both Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar culture and language. The Ukrainian language should be the only state language but the Crimean Tatar language should be supported and protected. The history of Ukraine should include the Crimean Tatar narrative, and include positive attitudes toward their ethnic group.

Table 1: Structure of narratives

| Categories | Dual identity | Pro-Soviet | Fight for Ukrainian Identity | Recognition of Ukrainian Identity | Multicultural civic | Crimean Tatars (CT) |
|--------------------|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| Pride | Russian culture in Ukraine: spirituality and deep values | History of Ukraine including achievements of Ukr. SSR. | Ukraine recovered as Phoenix and is fulfilled with liberal nationalism | Free country with deep democratic traditions | Achievements of Ukrainian people, beauty of the land. | A chance to become a democratic country |
| Identity dynamics | Yushchenko: Imposition of Ukrainian identity. Yanukovich: Absence of ideology | Yushchenko: wrong politics of memory. Yanukovich: absence of national concept | Yushchenko: right policy but did not do enough Yanukovich: Pro-Soviet and Russian. | Yushchenko right policy but did not unite nation Yanukovich: influenced by Russia | Yushchenko: worked against unity of people Yanukovich: employs Soviet myths | Yushchenko: Right policy but no representation of CT Yanukovich: pro-Soviet, ignores needs of CT |
| Identity | Dual identity with two equal ethnic groups. Threat to Russian identity. | Multilayer identity that needs incorporation of positive achievement of the past. | Ukrainian nationalism as a core. Threat of Soviet pro-Russian mentality | Ethnic state of Ukrainians with small minorities. Different from Russia. | Multicultural shared society that should build civic identity. It is offset by nationalist and pro-Soviet groups. | Restoration of CT cultural autonomy rests on Ukrainian independence from Russia, development of democracy |
| Common | Christian culture and independence | Common destiny and independence | Ukrainian culture and territory | Ukraine's own way of development | Common territory and independence | Motivation to leave better |
| Divide | Between East and West region. Ukrainian nationalism as a trigger. | Between two ethnic groups based on history of 20th century. | Between authentic democratic Ukraine and pro-Soviet migrants | No real divide, tensions provoked by Russia | Based on the social ideology, language, and territory. | Between pro-democratic and pro-Soviet forces enhanced by Russia |
| Language | Dividing factor, discrimination of Russian language. Need for bilingual law. | Ukrainian as a state language with the support of and liberal policy toward Russian | Ukrainian as a state language is under the treat by Russians and must be protected | Ukrainian as commonly accepted state language. Problems developed by politicians | Ukrainian as a state language with the liberal policies of its enforcement and freedom for Russian language | Ukrainian as a state language is under the treat by Russians, protection and support of CT language |
| History | Two regions with two histories and approaches to the past | Need to be build on the balances assessment of 20 th century | Ukrainian model of history is threatened by Soviet myths | Need for common history different from Russian | Multiplicity of shared history with civic component | A fight between East and West; CT history is excluded |
| History text-books | Good change based on the need of revisions and | Good change based on the need of a balanced | Return to Soviet values that will produce resistance | Result of the influence of Russia, will provoke conflicts | Naked patriotism instead of civic perspective | Need equal presentation of all ethnic groups |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|----------|--|--|--|--|
| | corrections | approach | | | | |
|--|-------------|----------|--|--|--|--|

All these narratives rest on opposing interpretations of various features of society and critiques of some current government policies. Thus, Ukraine is perceived as a multicultural society in the 'Dual Identity Narrative', the 'Pro-Soviet Narrative', the 'Multicultural-Civic Narrative' and the 'Crimean Tatars' Narrative'. However both of the Ukrainian Narratives describes the country as a mainly homogeneous society of ethnic Ukrainians. The definition of 'the enemy' is absent only in the Multicultural-Civic Narrative, while the Dual Identity and Pro-Soviet Narratives posit Ukrainian nationalists as an enemy.. The "Recognition of Ukrainian Identity" and "Crimean Tatars' Narrative" posit Russia as an enemy. The "Fight for Ukrainian Identity" narrative sees an enemy in the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine as they are influenced by Russia.

Yushchenko's policies are perceived as an imposition of Ukrainian ethnic identity in the "Dual Identity", "Pro-Soviet", and "Multicultural-Civic" Narratives. However, they are seen as correct policies that were not completely enforced in the "Fight for Ukrainian Identity" narrative, and as a right policy that nevertheless was not explained well and did not include different stories by the "Recognition of Ukrainian Identity" narrative and by the "Crimean Tatar's" narrative. Yanukovich is described as not having any concept of national identity or national idea in the "Dual Identity" and "Pro-Soviet" narratives, while all other narratives describe him as pro-Soviet and pro-Russian.

The concept of civic society (as opposed to an ethnic society) is developed only in the "Multicultural-Civic" narrative. It is almost absent in the "Dual Identity", "Recognition of Ukrainian Identity" and "Crimean Tatars'" narratives. The civic society concept is considered a threat in the "Pro-Soviet" and "Fight for Ukrainian Identity" narratives. The interpretations of history, and the status of the Russian language, completely differ among the narratives.

The major differences are visible between the "Dual Identity" narrative and both Ukrainian narratives. Golodomor is interpreted in the "Dual Identity" narrative as a result of the class struggle that took place in many parts of the USSR and in both Ukrainian narratives as a unique genocide committed by Russians against Ukrainians. The decline of the number of people with Russian identity is interpreted in the "Dual Identity Narrative" as a result of pressure and imposed lower status of Russian identity and in both Ukrainian narratives as a free choice of people who have a double identity. The fact that the Russian language is used by people more often than Ukrainian is interpreted as a need to introduce second language rights in the "Dual Identity Narrative"; and as a need to protect the Ukrainian language in both Ukrainian narratives. The possibility of introduction of the Russian language as a second state language is perceived as a way to reduce conflicts in the "Dual

Identity Narrative”, but it is seen as a way to divide the country in both Ukrainian narratives.

This mapping of narratives includes a dimension reflecting a concept of national identity represented by a civic concept (a liberal ideology); and an ethnic concept (a primordial ideology). This second dimension can be termed as a “homogeneous- heterogeneous society”.

Figure 1. Map of the narratives



This map places the “Dual Identity Narrative”, “Crimean Tatars’ Narrative” and “Fight for Ukrainian Identity” narrative in the heterogeneous *society/ethnic concept* quadrant. The “Pro-Soviet” and “Recognition of Ukrainian Identity” narratives are placed in the *homogeneous society/ethnic concept* quadrant; and the “Multicultural-Civic Narrative” is placed in the *heterogeneous society/civic concept* quadrant. This mapping has several advantages: it provides an opportunity to place all narratives on the map and to recognize what narratives are missing in the society. The map shows that five out of six narratives rest on a primordial ideology and employ ethnic concepts in the development of the national idea. Only one narrative, the “Multicultural-Civic” one, represented by 16% of respondents, is based on a liberal ideology and civic meaning of national identity. Nevertheless, this narrative recognizes the ethnic diversity of Ukrainian society. Thus, the intellectual landscape of Ukraine is deficient in civic liberal ideologies that define society as a community of equal citizens independently of their ethnicity, language, or religion.

Crisis of Legitimacy

The crisis of legitimacy in Ukraine is a contradiction between a blatantly cruel system of capitalism dominated by a few oligarchs, and the lingering remnants of a Soviet mentality. Two strategies are used by the Government to stoke the crisis. First, increased identification with ethnic or regional groups are instrumentally used by the Government to take attention from economic and class issues. Second, the incorporation of a Soviet meaning of power into the new national identity and presentation of it as core norms, beliefs, and values of the people of Ukraine competes with alternative Ukrainian identity concepts.

While a Soviet identity in its blatant form could not be accepted in the Ukrainian society any longer, the use of ethnic differences in the society and the incorporation of the Soviet meanings of power into a new national identity helps the Government to moderate the existing crisis of legitimacy. These two strategies and the major mechanisms of this

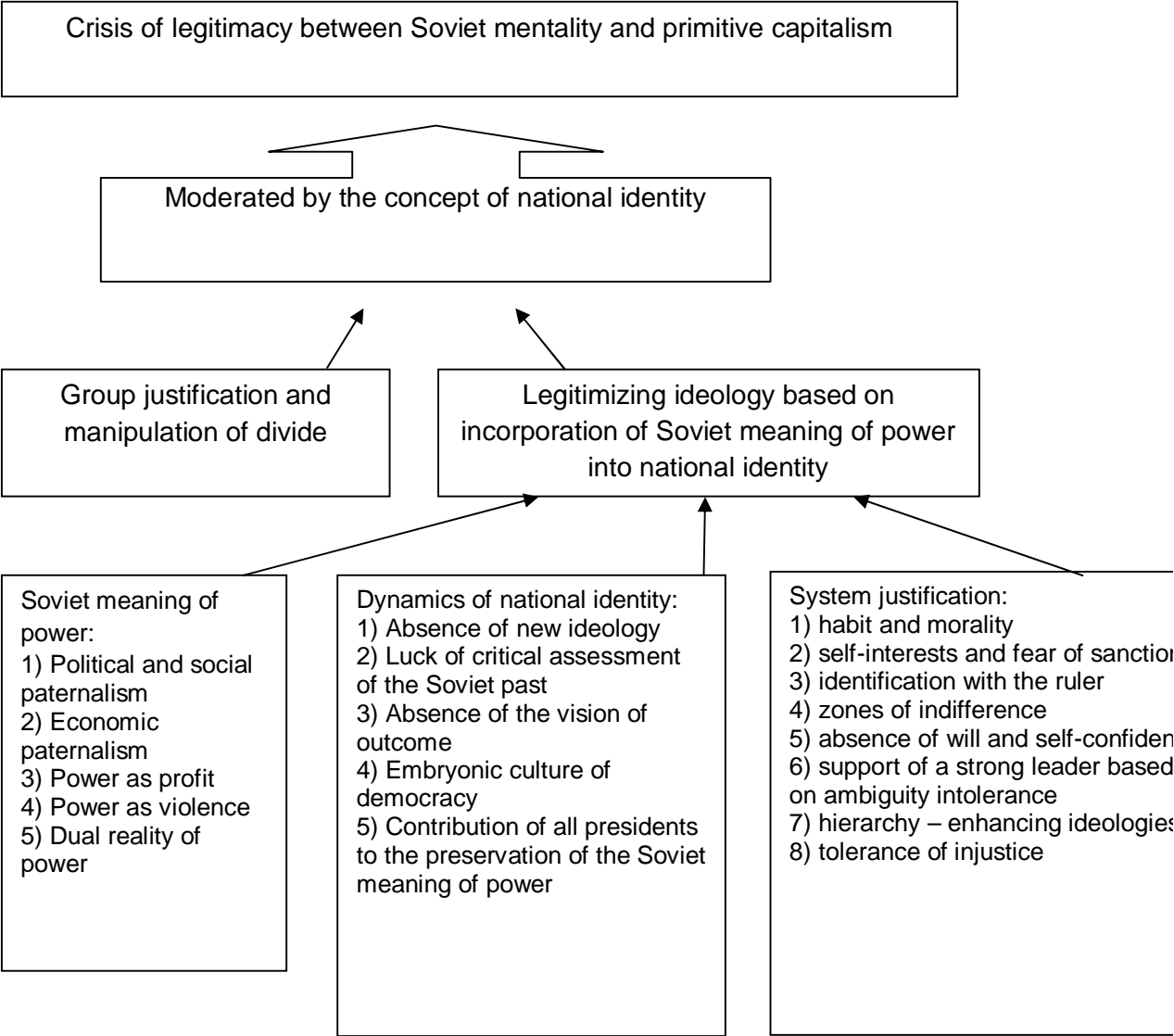


Figure 2. 1- Crisis of Legitimacy

One strategy is to use people's tendency to cope with crisis through increased identification with ethnic or regional groups. Despite different interpretations of the ethnic and regional divides, the respondents in the interviews agreed that the Government is instrumental in using it as a tool of taking attention from economic and class issues and thus from the legitimacy crisis in society. The second strategy is the incorporation of the Soviet meaning of power into a new national identity. The Ukrainian President and his Government support and promote Soviet norms of power among the population and present them as core norms, beliefs, and values of the people of Ukraine.

The main features of the Soviet meaning of power that are incorporated into Ukrainian national identity are political, social, and economic paternalism; perceptions of power as a source for profit and violence; and the dual reality of power with the gap between official narratives of power and real life. Thus, Ukrainians are described as a tolerant, patient people, who value personal and family wellbeing above all, historically live their own life, and while they do not trust the government, they subsume to its power. The process of incorporation of the Soviet concept of power into national identity is facilitated by the process of national identity formation that helped to preserve the Soviet perception of power, because of the absence of a new ideology, a lack of critical assessment of the Soviet past, an absence of the vision of outcome, an embryonic culture of democracy, and contributions of all the presidents to the preservation of the Soviet meaning of power. People justify the system as legitimate and fair for many reasons: out of historic habit and deemed moral obligations, self-interests and/ or a fear of sanctions, identification with the ruler, zones of indifference, an absence of will and self-confidence, desire to support a strong leader based on ambiguity intolerance, hierarchy – enhancing ideologies, and a general tolerance of injustice.

The obedience of subjects is not constant and is a result of an act of volition; thus all government is based upon consent. The degree of control of the government depends on (1) the relative desire of people to control it, (2) the relative strength of independent organizations and institutions, and (3) people's relative ability to withhold their consent and assistance (Sharp 1973). Thus, freedom is not given by a ruler but rather it is established by the strength of will of the subjects and the social structures of the society. In Ukraine, the society is not united, not organized, has no identity of "us", no civic accountability, nor even any real interest in such matters. Civil society levels are very low, as reflected by an almost total absence of civil society organizations, limited opportunities for civic responsibility and participation, and few demands from the society. Even the Orange

Revolution failed to build a civil society with civic responsibilities and citizen agency, resulting in replacing a “bad tsar with another tsar.” Further efforts to increase civil society options are stymied by the vertical systems of social connections, including the Soviet-style of Government and party system. Thus, incorporation of the Soviet meaning of power into national identity in Ukraine impedes the development of the only force that can destroy it- a mature civic society.

Thus, Ukraine is still a country in transition, deeply rooted in its Soviet past and deficient of a national idea, a common national identity, and any objectives for development. Despite the apparent peaceful character of past developments, the Ukrainian society is characterized by structural violence (Galtung, 1969), relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970, 2007), weakness of state (Collier, 2007; Rotberg, 2003, 2003a), and communal (ethnic) conflict (Azar, 1990; Gurr, 1970, 2007; Korostelina, 2007).

Recommendations:

The analysis of the experts’ narratives’ leads to several suggestions on conflict prevention and resolution. They are as follows:

1) The absence of a national idea and common national identity was mentioned by all experts as a major source of the current problems. This crisis of attempting to unify disparate national conceptualizations results in an absence of a clear vision for the transition and the final societal outcomes, slowing the processes of transformation and increasing economic deprivation. The lack of a nationally conscious elite, corruption, and growing ethno-cultural and class divides contribute to the crisis. Most of experts emphasize the “black and white” mentality, an absence of inter-community and government dialogue, a search for an enemy, and the development of zero-sum approaches to Ukraine’s national identity among the different groups. Thus, a national dialogue on a common national idea, national identity, and visions of progress can reduce the effects of structural violence, relative deprivation, weakness of state, and communal (ethnic) conflict.

2) Salient national identity resulting from an emerging common national idea will increase the cohesiveness in the society and motivate people to contribute to the national wellbeing. This, in turn, should contribute to the development of civic society and better democratic governance.

3) The finding of a common national ideology is the mechanism for the development of democratic society. The increased civic participation and civilian agency should lead to a rise in government accountability and a decline in corruption at all levels resulting in the

reduction of the effects of structural violence, relative deprivation, weakness of state, and communal (ethnic) conflict. A national dialogue will also help to insure that a common national identity incorporates democratic values thus increasing the culture of democracy in the society. Democratic development is one of the major factors that impede the effects of structural violence, relative deprivation, weakness of state, and communal (ethnic) conflict.

4) Only through systemic dialogue can the common ground be established and a cohesive national identity develop; one based on unifying ideas, including ideas of civic society and a civic concept of national identity, human rights and equality of every citizen independent of his or her religion, ethnicity, and language. One of the major threats to a civic based national narrative is the “Pro-Soviet Narrative” That narrative masks the idea of a common identity of citizens who comprise a Ukrainian society. A major difference is the horizontal relations (the active participation, agency of people, and civic responsibility) in the former democracy-focused systems, versus vertical relations (paternalism, submission to the state, and blind patriotism) in the latter, Soviet-style systems. Thus the national idea should include civic education and the increase of a democratic culture among citizens of Ukraine.

5) The escape from Soviet constructions of power is possible by changing existing norms and beliefs in the society. This norm change rests on a redefinition of existing themes and the introduction of new ones (Richards and Swanger 2009). These may include generative themes whose syllabic elements could be recombined to form new themes, thus generating a culture of democracy. These may also include invader themes that completely alter the Soviet meaning of power; hinge themes that connect the existing meaning of power with learning one or more of the elements of a culture of democracy; and losable themes that provide a cultural change through everyday conversations. Thus, the five main features of the Soviet concept of power- (political, social, and economic paternalism, perception of power as source of profit and violence, and dual reality of power with the gap between official narrative of power and a real life) should be challenged through gradual redefinitions and connections with the themes of democracy and democratic participation in Government. This change can be produced through communicating with one another and acting ‘in concert’ (Arendt 1970).