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REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN UKRAINE: SEARCH FOR UNITY

While there is a strong tendency in both policy and academia to acknowledge the importance of regions and regionalism, the approach of different academic specializations varies considerably, and regionalism means different things to different people in different contexts. The long-standing ideological divisions and lack of effective state policy regarding Ukraine's diverse regions, after it became independent, are at the core of today's crisis. Ukraine is composed of ethnically diverse regions, but unified within a single state. Ukraine is on the wedge of the Eurasian conflict and European integration, and while regional cleavages are prominent in the Ukrainian social, cultural, linguistic and political landscapes; they show no evident signs of becoming mobilized into regional separatist or nationalist movements. Significantly, nationwide dialogue should strive for unity of all Ukrainian regions based on common democratic values.

Keywords: regional differences, Ukraine, unity, state policy, ethnically diverse regions, regional cleavages, inter-ethnic harmony, reform.

Валентина Богатириць. Регіональні відмінності в Україні: пошук єдності. Нині важливим питанням для дослідження як серед політикуму, так і в наукових колах, є проблема регіоналістики та регіоналізму, підхід різних академічних кіл до вивчення цієї проблеми значно варіюється, і регіоналізм означає різні концепти для різних людей у різних контекстах. Тривалі ідеологічні розбіжності та відсутність дієвої державної політики щодо різних регіонів України, після її здобуття незалежності, стали ключовим конструктом сьогодишньої кризи. Так історично склалося, що Україна складається з різноманітних етнічних регіонів, об'єднаних єдиною державною територією. Наразі, Україна знаходиться на порубіжжі євразійського конфлікту та європейського зближення. Та попри регіональні колізії, характерні для соціальної, культурної, мовної та політичної сфер України; вони не стали яскравим проявом регіонального сепаратизму чи націоналістичних рухів. Важливо наголосити, що загальнонаціональний діалог повинен закласти засади для пошуку єдності всіх українських регіонів, ґрунтуючись на спільних демократичних цінностях.

Ключові слова: регіональні відмінності, Україна, єдність, державна політика, етнічне розмаїття регіонів, міжетнічна злагода, реформи.

Valentyna Bogatyrets. Diferențele regionale din Ucraina: în căutarea unei unități. În clasa cercurile științifice, clasa politică de astăzi, precum și în societate devine tot mai actual subiectul regionalizării și regionalismul. Abordarea diferită a acestor noțiuni are o importanță imensă în perceperea procesului de regionalizare. Diferențele ideologice durabile și lipsa unei politici de stat eficiente cu privire la diferite

regiuni în Ucraina de astăzi, a devenit un element cheie în criza de astăzi. Istoric, Ucraina se formează din diferite regiuni etnice, unite într-un singur teritoriu. În prezent, Ucraina este în pragul conflictului eurasiatic și a convergenței europene. Dar, în ciuda existenței unor conflicte regionale în Ucraina, aceasta nu este o dovadă a existenței unui separatism regional sau a unor mișcări naționaliste. De subliniat că un dialog de nivel național trebuie să stea la baza unității tuturor regiunilor din Ucraina, bazându-se pe valorile democratice.

Cuvinte cheie: diferențe regionale, Ucraina, unitate, politici publice, diversitatea etnică în regiuni, armonie etnică, reformă.

"Tolerance is the appreciation of diversity and the ability to live and let others live.

It is the ability to exercise a fair and objective attitude towards those whose opinions, practices, religion, nationality and so on differ from one's own."
(The American Heritage Dictionary
New York: Dell Publishing, 1994).

The organization of the world's [hundred – note of the author] ninety-odd states into various systems of competing and overlapping regional associations has now been a fact of international relations since late 20th century. It cannot be said that as a fact it has gone unnoticed. On the contrary, regionalism has given rise to a floodtide of literature bitterly critical of the development or determined to justify it as a necessity for world security and a support for a sagging UN structure¹.

While there is a strong tendency in both policy and academia to acknowledge the importance of regions and regionalism, the approach of different academic specializations varies considerably, and regionalism means different things to different people in different contexts. In principle such diversity could be productive and could indicate increasing maturity of the field of study. Even if we may speak of an emerging academic community of regionalism, the prevailing fragmentation is a sign of weakness more than strength. The problem is a general lack of dialogue among academic disciplines, regional specializations (e.g. European integration, Latin American, Asian, and African regionalism), as well as theoretical traditions and approaches (e.g. rationalism, institutionalism, constructivism, critical and postmodern approaches).

There is also thematic fragmentation in the sense that various forms of regionalism, such as economic, security, and environmental regionalism, are only rarely related to one another. These divisions undermine further generation of cumulative knowledge as well as theoretical and methodological developments. Indeed, the divisions and lack of dialogue lead to unproductive contestations, among both academics and

policy-makers, about the meaning of regionalism, its causes and effects, how it should be studied, what to compare and how, and not least, what are the costs and benefits of regionalism and regional integration².

In terms of interregional communication and discommunication, it is fair to state that few countries face the challenges Ukraine has. In view of the serious escalation of the conflict in eastern Ukraine since April, 2014 and its devastating impact on civilians caught in indiscriminate shelling and other hostilities, the long-standing ideological divisions and lack of effective state policy regarding Ukraine's *diverse regions*, after it became independent, are at the core of today's crisis.

The stability of the ethno-political situation within the country and decision-makers' well-elaborated measures aimed at promoting inter-ethnic harmony guarantee the advancement of democracy and serve as an important stimulus and prerequisite for the formation of a civil society in the post-Communist country. Simultaneously, the situation in this sphere of political relations is a litmus test for the alignment of the nation's political direction with the strategic goal of integration with European structures, as proclaimed by Ukrainian policy-makers and supported by a significant number of Ukrainian citizens. The European democratic standard of tolerance as the basic model for developing the Ukrainian political nation requires respect for the inter-ethnic dialogue that occurred over the last few centuries, as well as the scrupulous study of modern tendencies in this area. It is imperative to implement timely countermeasures against potential sources of inter-ethnic tension and, in the worst case, conflict between Ukraine's leading ethnic communities. At the same time, Ukraine faces not only internal but also growing external challenges to its ethno-political stability as well as threats to its territorial integrity and statehood³.

USSR collapse left millions of people with diverse backgrounds in newly created independent, national countries. Ukraine was one of them; composed of *ethnically diverse regions, but unified within a single state*. Since the first day of its independence, the leadership of Ukraine faced a challenging task of building a national identity that would unite various regions with ethnically diverse populations. The Euromaidan protests and the Revolution of Dignity aggravated deep-rooted divisions between the east and west. The new interim government not only failed to unite the country but also reinforced its division. If effective communication of the government plan is achieved it would further motivate the inspirational volunteerism that has characterized both the push and pull for reform and the response to the internally displaced person crisis, across the country.

The Maidan and the ousting of Yanukovich have triggered another wave of separatist demands in the eastern region, marked by physical violence, numerous losses, kidnapping and the takeover of government buildings by militants. Russia's direct involve-

ment in stirring separatist sentiments has given the domestic dispute a geopolitical dimension too.

Political instability that overtook in Ukraine in 2013 has spiraled into a major international crisis opposing the United States and the European Union (EU) against Russia. Since last year, Russian-backed separatist forces have battled the Ukrainian military in the east, where the death toll is over five thousand. Although Moscow denies its involvement, Ukraine and NATO have reported the buildup of Russian troops and military equipment near Donetsk. The current crisis began after massive protests over government corruption, police violence, and unfavorable economic policies brought a violent crackdown by state security forces in early 2014. In March, Russian troops took control of the Crimean region, citing the need to protect Russian citizens. In May, pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine held a referendum that prompted the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk to declare independence from Ukraine⁴.

To the point, since Ukraine's independence, regional differences and the specter of separation could be exploited for electoral gain, particularly by eastern elites. When in control of key institutions in the capital, however, eastern Ukrainian elites supported a highly centralized system of governance, as was evident during Yanukovich's stay in power. Once out of power again, elites again exploit Ukraine's centrifugal tendencies, claiming more power to the regions on an ad hoc basis. Not surprisingly, politicians that profit from the conflict over regional identity have not articulated a clear political program for decentralization, federalization or addressing language issues on a long term or compromise basis, keeping the agenda opaque and identity-based means that clientelism and corrupt practices can reign rather than actual programmatic politics.

Regional differences in Ukraine were amplified during the 1994 and 2004 presidential elections, though nothing like on the scale of events of 2014 when Russia's active involvement is moving the two neighbors ever close to direct warfare. Russia favors what it calls "federalization" – which in practice would amount to 'confederation' – to create pro-Russian enclaves within Ukraine and block Ukraine's integration with the EU by granting federal units extensive degree of power (e.g. to conduct foreign policy). In practice, this would then offer Moscow a veto over Ukraine's foreign policy.

The fact that many in the east and south have a different vision for Ukraine does not make them seek to secede their regions to Russia or federalize their country. A recent poll conducted by the Iiko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Fund in March 2014 found that support for the separation of their region and joining another state was as low as 2% in the western-central regions and highest in the Donbas at 24%. Only 8% of the rest of the east supported separatism and 7% in the south. Interestingly, only 13% of people under 30 in the Donbas support separatism: only 14% support federalization, the highest in the east is at 26%. Even in the Do-

netsk region, only 15% support federalization, whereas 50% support continuing the existing unitary state model. In fact in the Donetsk region alone, only 18% support joining their region to Russia⁵. Another survey by the 'Kyiv International Institute of Sociology', became one of the attempts to find grounded responses to the challenges of regionalism in modern Ukraine.

We can come to the conclusion, while regional cleavages are prominent in the Ukrainian social, cultural, linguistic and political landscapes; they show no evident signs of becoming mobilized into regional separatist or nationalist movements.

Furthermore, seeking national unity for different regions, the Pope appealed for unity and among all Christian Churches, describing Kiev as the cradle of east European Christianity. He told worshippers that Ukrainians should strive to create once more the situation that existed before the 1054 Schism which split Christianity into the eastern and western churches. John Paul II asked both sides to look to the past to "help restore that situation of communion in which diversity of traditions poses no obstacle to unity in faith and church life"⁶.

Ukraine is officially in the process of building a "civic nation", one whose ideals are not ethnic-based but that transcend national interests in the goal of uniting all residents as part of the Ukrainian nation. While the language policies emanating from parliament and governments in Kyiv have caused some concern in the Russian-majority cities, the slow pace of language policy change in the educational and governmental spheres, as well as the absence of any rules that target minorities for special membership qualifications have eased minority concerns about the nature of the post-1991 Ukrainian independent state.

A more effective way to reform the center-periphery relations would be through systematic and comprehensive decentralization – including devolution of budgetary resources – aimed at removing regional concerns from a bargaining process complicated by high geopolitical stakes. But this is a difficult time to engage in a thorough and systematic overhaul, due to Russia's strategy of destabilizing Ukraine on the regional, if not national level. What is needed is sufficient political will and determination of the national and regional elites to, at last, break this apparently never-ending, highly disruptive cycle. Ukraine's 'regionalism of convenience'⁷.

In general, decentralization will transfer a degree of power to local communities and authorities. This should strengthen local democracy and improve prospects for local and regional development, provided that adequate mechanisms are established to ensure accountability and transparency. The reform also requires fiscal and budget decentralization which can be achieved through amendments to the Tax and Budget codes so that local authorities have their own revenues

and budget autonomy. The new Ukrainian government has set out decentralization and reform of local government as a top priority.

In conclusion, there are a number of details that remain to be negotiated. That's why we have the process that will run for uncertain period of time. But the one thing is known for certain. We should not fetish Ukraine, by wearing Ukrainian embroidered shirts and dresses, singing folk songs or hoisting blue and yellow flag. Being a Ukrainian is to be a model of intelligence, tolerance, dignity and culture. Personal conduct and smart look we'll identify us as a unique and sufficient nation and indispensable part of a civilized socium. Ukraine is on the wedge of the Eurasian conflict and European integration. Thus, Ukraine serves as a cross-border locally and as a communicative subsystem globally. It is of paramount importance that Ukraine as a distinctive multi-lingual nation-state with polyethnic makeup, modelling 'marble cake' identity, poly-mentality, multiculturalism and multi-confessionalism should develop internal discourse for vigorous interethnic communication for national unity, and yield their own values.

While the past divides Ukrainians, the common vision of the future may reconcile them. The common vision of the future may be ensured through the elaboration of state policy on national unity, which should engage representatives of all Ukrainian regions in national dialogue. Consequently, nationwide dialogue should strive for unity of all Ukrainian regions based on common democratic values.

¹ Ernst B. Haas (1958). The Challenge of Regionalism: International Organization, 12, pp 440-458. doi:10.1017/S0020818300031349

² De Lombaerde Philippe and Söderbaum Fredrik REGIONALISM VOLUME I /Classical Regional Integration (1945–1970) /. By Philippe De Lombaerde and Fredrik Söderbaum, 2013

³ Anatoliy Kruglashov. Bukovyna: A Border Region with a Fluctuating Identity Journal of Ukrainian Studies 35–36 (2010–2011) (121–122)

⁴ Violence in Eastern Ukraine <http://www.cfr.org/global/global-conflict-tracker/p32137#/?marker=32>

⁵ Griffin Nicholas. Separatism or Regional differences in Ukraine <http://www.walesdte.ac.uk/blog/2014/05/02/separatism-and-regional-differences-in-ukraine-one-and-the-same>

⁶ Krushelnycky Askold Ukraine shuns Pope's plea for unity <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/europe/ukraine/1310324/Ukraine-shuns-Popes-plea-for-unity.html>

⁷ Wolczuk Kataryna Ukraines-Regionalism-of-Convenience. / <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2014/05/06/ukraines-regionalism-of-convenience>

Table 1.

Social and territorial identification of respondents (in view of region)

	West	Centre	Southeast	Kyiv	Crimea	IN WHOLE
By a resident of an area or a city	24,3%	21,1%	28,6%	24,5%	17,0%	25,1%
By a resident of an oblast	4,3%	5,4%	5,6%	1,9%	10,6%	5,2%
By a resident of region (several neighbouring oblasts)	0,9%	2,9%	2,7%	1,9%	8,5%	2,6%
By a citizen of Ukraine	57,8%	62,8%	47,5%	56,6%	34,0%	53,4%
By a representative of the ethnic group, nation	2,6%	0,4%	1,8%	0,0%	4,3%	1,7%
By a citizen of former Soviet Union	1,3%	5,0%	9,2%	3,8%	17,0%	6,5%
By a European	3,9%	1,7%	1,4%	0,0%	0,0%	1,8%
By a citizen of the world	0,9%	0,7%	1,8%	5,7%	4,3%	1,7%
Other	3,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,1%	0,8%
Find difficulty in replying	0,9%	0,0%	1,4%	5,6%	2,2%	1,2%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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(м. Мукачєво)ПРИКОРДОННІ РЕГІОНИ УКРАЇНИ ТА РУМУНІЇ: РЕАЛІЇ РОЗВИТКУ
Й ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ ТРАНСКОРДОННОГО СПІВРОБІТНИЦТВА

Досліджуються реалії розвитку прикордонних регіонів України та Румунії, акцентується увага на обопільній зацікавленості сусідніх країн у результатах співпраці, прогнозуються перспективи транскордонного співробітництва.

Ключові слова: євроінтеграція, Європейський Союз, транскордонне співробітництво, прикордонні регіони.

Vasyl Garagonych, Ivan Garagonych. The border regions of Ukraine and Romania: Realities of her prospects for cross-border cooperation. We study the reality of border regions of Ukraine and Romania, focuses on the mutual interest of neighboring countries as a result of cooperation prospects projected CBC.

Keywords: European integration, European Union, cross-border cooperation, border regions.

Vasyl Garagonych, Ivan Garagonych. Regiunile limitrofe din Ucraina și România: realități și perspective de cooperare transfrontalieră. Regiunile limitrofe din Ucraina și România: realități și perspective de cooperare transfrontalieră Cercetând realitățile dezvoltării regiunilor de frontieră ale Ucrainei și României, se acordă o atenție sporită interesului reciproc al țărilor vecine într-o cooperare mai fructuoasă. Sunt prognozate rezultatele cooperării, perspectivele cooperării transfrontaliere multilaterale.

Cuvinte cheie: integrare europeană, Uniunea Europeană, cooperare transfrontalieră, regiuni limitrofe.

Провідною тенденцією сучасного європейського розвитку дедалі більше стає потужний регіональний рух. Поглиблення процесів євроінтеграції і розширення Європейського Союзу сприяють приверненню уваги до прикордонних регіонів як до зон міждержавної взаємодії теоретиків і практиків транскордонного співробітництва. Регіо-

нальна політика європейських країн актуалізує роль регіонів у налагодженні взаємовигідної співпраці¹. Для сучасної України, яка є найбільшою за територією країною Європи, транскордонне співробітництво є особливо актуальним, оскільки з 25 її регіонів 19 – прикордонні, а зовнішній кордон – найпротяжніший серед європейських країн. Серед усіх держав СНД Україна має найдовший кордон з ЄС – 1152 км, через який межує з територіями чотирьох європейських країн – Польщею, Словаччиною, Угорщиною та Румунією, яка у 2007 р. останньою із перерахованих держав долучилася до Євросоюзу².

На сучасному етапі чи не найважливішим стратегічним завданням у сфері зовнішньої політики України є її наближення до стандартів і вступ до Європейського Союзу. В реалізації євроінтеграційної стратегії нашої країни чільне місце посідає транскордонне співробітництво (ТКС), яке Європейська рамкова конвенція від 21 травня 1980 р. трактує як «будь-які спільні дії, спрямовані на посилення та поглиблення добросусідських відносин між територіальними общинами або властями, які знаходяться під юрисдикцією двох або декількох договірних сторін, та на укладання з цією метою будь-яких необхідних угод або досягнення домовленостей»³.

Нині транскордонне співробітництво виступає організованою, як правило, інституційованою формою транскордонних зв'язків. На новому східному кордоні у системі відносин Схід-Захід ТКС здебільшого виконує три основні функції: практичну, комунікаційну та геополітичну.

Практична функція пов'язана з вирішенням конкретних економічних, соціальних, екологічних проблем мешканців прикордоння. Вона покликана