Roots of Political Turmoil in Post-Soviet Ukraine: Neopatrimonial Patterns of Political Participation

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Abstract

The political behavior of Ukrainian citizens largely depends on the social practices existing in the framework of a neopatrimonial regime. Patron-client relations are determined historically and are deeply rooted in Ukrainian society. But this is not a unique specificity, such patterns of political participation can be found in many other countries in different parts of the world. In order to overcome the neopatrimonial logic of social development, Ukrainian citizens should cardinally modernize the patterns of political participation using the experience both of consolidated (what should be done) and failed (what should be avoided) democracies.

'Neopatrimonialism' as a distinct term was introduced in political science by Shmuel N. Eisenstadt in his 1973 book, *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neopatrimonialism*. This is a modern form of the traditional order, in which an office of power is used for personal uses and gains, as opposed to a strict division between the private and public spheres—a mixed system, where elements of patrimonial and rational-bureaucratic rule co-exist and are sometimes interwoven (Eisenstadt 1973). In general, a neopatrimonial regime can be characterized as a form of organization in which relationships of a broadly patrimonial type pervade a political and administrative system which is formally constructed on rational-legal lines (Clapham 1985). Neopatrimonial rule, as well as patrimonial rule, can be defined as "a regime where the rights of sovereignty and those of ownership blend to the point of being indistinguishable, and political power is exercised in the same manner as economic power" (Pipes 1974, 22). Neopatrimonial continuity in the country is evidenced by three factors: the concentration of political power, the award of personal favors, and the misuse of state resources (Von Soest 2007).

Studying various patterns of neopatrimonial social behavior, we can find interesting parallels between post-Soviet and postcolonial countries. Though it should be accented that the republics of the USSR were not colony like and never had such status in the pre-Soviet times as well (with the exception of some Central Asian territories), the patterns of political participation, based on patrimonial traditions, have much in common. That is why certain experiences of the Asian, African and Latin American countries can be very useful for the better understanding of Ukrainian realities.

Also interesting historical parallels can be found that help to understand better the phenomenon of neopatrimonialism. Thus, Richard Joseph studying the Second Republic in Nigeria used the concept of prebendalism ('prebend' is a state office in feudal Europe and China, which an individual procures either through examinations or as a reward for loyal

service to a lord or ruler). According to this concept the easy adaptation of traditional patron-client relationships to the pursuit of modern material goods means that the features of prebendalism and clientelism are mutually reinforcing. To get and keep clients, one must gain a prebendal office, and to be sure that in the distribution of such offices he or his kin has a reasonable chance of procuring them. On the other hand, clients must be gathered together to make their collective claims as well as to prove that the aspirant patron is a person of consequence whose co-optation would be rewarding to the political entrepreneurs (Joseph 1987, 56-57). Liping Wang and Julia Adams (2011) studied the patrimonial patterns of political participation as a means of post-medieval modernization. Adams, describing patrimonial politics in the modern world, argues that "these forms of rule have their pros and cons and under some circumstances they can support the politico-economic rise of the state, as they did with Holland in the seventeenth century and England in the eighteenth" (Marudas 2011).

Post-Soviet Clientelism in Terms of Neopatrimonial Regime

Neopatrimonialism is a label often used to describe African states, sometimes, as a way of explaining why they have 'failed' to effect neoliberal market reforms (Erdmann and Engel 2006). However there are a lot of common features that can be found in countries going through different kinds of transformation—postcolonial, post-Soviet, post-revolutionary, postwar. Thus, the situation, described by the Nigerian scholars regarding their country can be used for the description of the realities of post-Soviet Ukraine as well: "whole essence of independence—the end of alienation, the raising of the standard of living, gaining control of both personal and national destinies of oneself and one's nation is highly regrettable. This is because the masses have been severely frustrated—neither their material nor moral conditions have improved" (Shopeju and Ojukwu 2013, 266).

Many people distrust democracy because of its potentials for legitimizing majority tyranny. Popular rule on all political matters is a recipe for majority tyranny, just as minority rule on all political matters is a recipe for minority tyranny, which is even worse because it promises greater tyranny and does not even attempt to honor the ideal of equal political liberty (Etzioni 1995, 154). This confusion and the crisis of ideological interest perhaps the most important factors leading to the adoption of the neopatrimonial rule.

The question of who and how participates in politics is as (or even more) important as the question of how many people participate. The characteristics of participants help us to interpret the meaning of political activism. Thus, dissatisfaction may stimulate individuals to participate in order to redress their grievances, or it may lead to alienation and a withdrawal from politics. Whether the satisfied or dissatisfied participate more casts a much different light on how we interpret participation. If participation influences policy results, then the pattern of action suggests which citizens are making their voices heard by policymakers and which interests are not being represented (Dalton 2006, 50).

Post-Soviet transformation has led to the formation of a neopatrimonial regime in Ukraine, in which political participation is shaped by the scheme “patron-client,” and political parties play the role of patronage networks. This modern form of political participation is largely determined by the respective traditions of the Soviet period and partly pre-Soviet as well. Richard Pipes argues that the Russian Empire was a patrimonial system with certain modifications until 1917 (1974, 24). But social relations of this kind existed in Ukrainian lands that did not belong to the Russian Empire as well (Mclean 2011). Patterns of social interactions formed in earlier times were suppressed by the Soviet modernization, but survived and revived after the collapse of the USSR.

Aleksandr Fisun, analyzing the key features of the post-Soviet political development through the neopatrimonial concept, identified three basic principles of neopatrimonial

systems: 1) the political center, independent and separate from the periphery, concentrates political, economic and symbolic resources, at the same time closing access to these resources and opportunities to control them to all other social groups; 2) the state is managed as a private possession (patrimonium) of ruling groups—government holders, which privatize the various social functions and institutions, making them the sources of their own private incomes; 3) ethnic, clan, regional and family ties are reproduced in the modern political and economic relations, determining the methods and principles of their functioning (Fisun 2004).

In Weber's ideal antipode of patrimonialism the main driving force of progress is legal bureaucracy (Mommsen 1992, 46). In neopatrimonial political systems, an individual rules by dint of personal prestige and power. Authority is entirely personalized, shaped by the ruler's preferences rather than any codified system of laws (Bratton and Van de Walle 1997, 61). Moreover, in neopatrimonial regimes bureaucracy is often illegal. Thus in Ukraine new administrative shadow sub-institutions appeared, some of them borrowed from the criminal world, and traditional ones revived. These sub-institutions emerged in government bodies, state agencies and companies, political parties.

In a patrimonial system, "there is an unspoken hierarchy with little specialization or specification of output and uncertain reporting channels" (Shopeju and Ojukwu 2013, 266). All crucial decisions are adopted not by offices, but by persons, who often have no legal authority and professional competence. That is why these decisions are as a rule anonymous, do not count many important objectives, often spontaneous and have high potential of corruption. For example, when Nikolai Azarov formed his cabinet under the presidency of Viktor Yanukovych, many newly appointed ministers were almost unknown not only to the public, but to the experts as well, beyond the very narrow circle of insiders.

According to Julia Adams "patrimonialism is just another name for rule based on family households and alliances among them" (Marudas 2011). In this context it is interesting

to note the statement that the true sovereigns of Ukraine were about 300 families that control about 90% of country's wealth, which was very popular among Ukrainian politicians and journalists. These 'noble' families controlled political parties as well, using them as means of legal representation of their economic interests in the legislature and other government bodies. In 2012, the sons of the President (Viktor Yanukovych, Junior), prime-minister (Oleksii Azarov), and general prosecutor (Artem Pshonka) as well as the sister of the chief of the President's Administration Yulia Liovochkina were elected to the *Verhovna Rada* representing the Party of Regions along with the relatives of smaller patrons. At the same time, the *Bat'kivshchyna* (Motherland) parliamentary faction had in its ranks the children of dead or retired politicians—Andrii Pavlovskii, Andrii Shevchenko, Lesia Orobets, Leonid Iemets. Also the aunt of Yulia Tymoshenko Antonina Uliakhina and the wife of Yurii Lutsenko Iryna Lutsenko should be mentioned among family affiliated the *Bat'kivshchyna*'s deputies. Some 'noble' families were represented in Ukrainian parliament by two generations. Thus, Hryhorii Kaletnik was a member of the Party of Regions, while his son Ihor and his niece Oksana belonged to the Communist Party of Ukraine. Oleksandr Tabalov and his son Andrii have become famous when they decided to change their party affiliation just being elected as candidates from the *Bat'kivshchyna*. They got the nickname *tushka* (carcass) that came into common use regarding party traitors.

Roett (1972) more than forty years ago argued with the example of Brazil that a patrimonial society is based upon a highly flexible and paternalistic public order, in which the spoils of office are used by ruling groups to reward friends, co-opt potential and actual opponents. The neopatrimonial order, and Ukraine is a good example of this, is even more flexible. It is based on the complicated combination of formal and informal, sometimes criminal, institutes, some of which are archaic (*kumovstvo*—relations based on baptismal parenthood—godfather or godmother), others are very modern (intellectual property). Patrons

can use both legal justice and criminal notions to provide their economic and political interests or suppress their opponents by means of law enforcement as well as by outrage.

Patron-client system is a multi-level system of personal relationships built on asymmetric interdependence of patrons and clients, based on the mutually beneficial exchange of resources with the certain selectivity in access to key resources and markets. The typical motivation of a patrimonial ruler: “to ensure or at least prolong his survival in office, the distribution of rents (income) in exchange for loyalty becomes his major means for developing political support or trust” (Shopeju and Ojukwu 2013, 269). Patrons rely on the subordination and dependence of the clients. Thus, clientelism is the exchange of goods and services for political support, often involving an implicit or explicit quid-pro-quo (Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno, and Brusco 2013). Clientelism refers to a complex chain of personal bonds between political patrons or bosses, and their individual clients or followers. These bonds are founded on mutual material advantage: the patron furnishes excludable resources (money, jobs, food, goods, access to infrastructure) to dependents and accomplices in return for their support and cooperation (votes, attendance at rallies). The patron has disproportionate power and thus enjoys wide latitude on assets under his control (Kettering 1988).

In general, the economic and administrative resources of patrons are exchanged for political and electoral loyalty of clients. Francis Fukuyama (2011, 439) describes it as political recruitment based on the two principles of kin selection and reciprocal altruism. Moreover, clientelism is typified by exchange systems where voters trade political support for various outputs of the public decision-making process (Roniger 2004). In the framework of a patron-client network there is a hierarchy of patrons, each with his/her own clients, indirectly dependent on the common guarantor, which ensures the patrimonial rules and referees the interactions of patrons moderating their concurrence and preventing outrage.

The assumption that mainly the poor and marginalized members of society are drawn into these problem-solving networks as a pragmatic means to find solutions to their everyday concerns, since they often have limited access to formal sources of assistance, is very popular in the social sciences. So, it is believed that a precarious economic system impels or compels people to focus on immediate consumption and to forsake more long-term and abstract gains (Migdal 1988; Auyero 2001). However in the post-Soviet neopatrimonial systems, clientelism is a principle of organization mainly not for the poorest, but the richest social groups. The Ukrainian example shows that this principle can be effectively used at the very top of the social pyramid. In fact, all Ukrainian 'parties of power' were organized under neopatrimonial principles. In this model of social organization patron-client networks function mainly not to satisfy basic needs of the lower strata (as a rule, this occurs only during election campaigns), but to provide exclusive opportunities of enrichment to the highest one by the means of government rents.

In political science, rent-seeking is traditionally more often associated with government regulation and misuse of governmental authority (Tullock 1967; Krueger 1974). However, in neopatrimonial society it has much wider meaning. "Rent is not merely an income earned by landlord, but is in general a reward for ownership of all natural resources" (Ibrahim 1997, 157). I would add that of social and administrative resources as well. In the realities of post-Soviet Ukraine ministries, customs, tax and police offices, local administrations, even state hospitals and universities are capitalized and used by public authorities for private money making.

Patron-client networks perform quasi-political functions, they become an extra-legal source of legitimate services (contract enforcement, protection of property, investment insurance, arbitrage etc.) that the formal state is supposed to provide, but does not. This state has much in common with a business, in which all members are shareholders and whose

dividends are paid in accordance with what one has invested in terms of effort (Randall and Theobald 1985, 59). In fact, the Ukrainian situation is very close to the Nigerian one, where clientelism "is, indeed, the very channel through which one joins the dominant class and a practice which is then seen as fundamental to the continued enjoyment of the perquisites of that class" (Shopeju and Ojukwu 2013, 268).

Powell (1970) and Randall and Theobald (1985) suggested that at the core of the patron-client relationship lie three basic factors which both define the relationship and help to differentiate between it and other power relations: 1) the patron-client tie is developed between persons who are unequal in terms of status, wealth and influence; 2) the formation and maintenance of the relationship depends on reciprocity in the exchange of goods and services; 3) the development and maintenance of the relationship depends on personal (face-to-face) contacts between the two parties. In my view, the last point is true for relatively small systems—family-like clienteles. But when the neopatrimonial system grows to the scale of a complicated network and takes under its shadow (sometimes illegal or even criminal) but tough control various state institutions, it demands specialized managers.

Professional brokers play a very important role in neopatrimonial politics. Their main function is to build up the appropriate legal and ideological framework providing the clientelist circulation of resources, and to make up a democratic facade for the neopatrimonial regime. They serve as top-rank officials, diplomats, lawyers, political strategists, journalists and editors, top-managers in state corporations and companies, army and police officers, sometimes even party leaders. The brokers may target resources not exactly as patrons would wish; the resulting principal-agent problems can have important implications for understanding how clientelism works (Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno, and Brusco 2013).

In post-Soviet Ukraine unofficial power brokers become especially influential actors during the centralization of the neopatrimonial system. Thus, terms from the criminal slang,

such as *rieshala* (resolver—a manager resolving issues by means of corruption), *kassir* (cashier—a shadow financial manager collecting bribes in favor of political authorities), *smotriashchii* (watcher—a criminal authority controlling certain territory), *obshchak* (common shadow fund of the criminal gang) and others, have come into public use in Ukraine, characterizing the functioning of the patrimonial net, headed by Viktor Yanukovych, though such shadow officers existed long before him (since the beginning of the 1990s), and after his removal brokers continued to exercise their functions serving the new patrons under the old rules.

The Evolution of Post-Soviet Neopatrimonialism

"Post-Soviet states in the majority began the process of democratization and marketization in the absence of a significant number of essential national and state characteristics, which are necessary conditions for the successful implementation of the project to create a market economy and liberal democracy" (Kuzio 2001, 171). The political changes that led to the collapse of the USSR, upgraded the political class significantly with Soviet-era dissidents, democratically minded intellectuals, and reform-minded economists. However, these changes affected primarily the upper levels of the power pyramid, where people from the second and third tiers of the Soviet *nomenklatura*—Kimitaka Matsuzato (2001) called them meso-elite—took places. In general, the political class in the majority of post-Soviet republics, including Ukraine, had not undergone drastic rotations in the beginning of the 1990s.

Consolidation of the state-administrative elite actually led to its transformation into a coherent political class with its own interests (the key being to maintain power for the purpose of augmenting private property), and mechanisms for their implementation. This privatization of power determined the real and not declarative meaning of transition. Together, the top bureaucrats and businessmen formed the political class on the principle of

clientele, clan, family relations or through the concentration of government and business functions in the same hands directly (Bielashko 2010, 251). As a result of such transformation, a new social order (with the corresponding ruling stratum) was formed, defined by Mikhail Afanasiev (2000) as the new patronat.

The concept of 'party of power' appeared in the Ukrainian political lexicon in the early 1990s (Wilson and Yakushik 1992). However, it has not been thoroughly developed in political science. The state-administrative elite sometimes was considered as an organized political force, which established its own system of social and political attitudes, values and interests (a certain kind of ideology), a hierarchy of leaders and resource base (Bilous 1993).

In fact, during the first phase of Ukraine's post-Soviet transformation (1990–1996) political power was taken by the 'pragmatic' part of the state-administrative elite lacking both principles and ideas. "Pragmatism, which substitutes ideology, provides a room for maneuvering and allows a party of power to adjust flexibly to an ever-changing environment" (Meleshevich 2007, 195). The ruling stratum avoided political conflicts and generally tried to keep distance from public politics. Certain parts of this 'party of power' were tending toward different sets of ideological and political preferences, and their ideological orientations, as a rule, were determined by fluctuations in political and social conjuncture.

For a long time in post-Soviet Ukraine there were no rigid barriers between the ruling and opposition elites. In fact, very often the true goal of opposition party leaders was not to change the current government, but to integrate with it. On the other hand, formal membership in the ruling camp did not always mean access to public resources. All this determined the absence of clear dividing lines in Ukrainian politics. Party leaders changed their patrons depending on the situation. Party organizations at different levels followed them from one political camp to another, creating situational (sometimes quite unexpected) coalitions. Gradually the distinction between government and opposition has become clearer,

but some fluidity is preserved to this day. To a large extent this peculiarity is determined by the fact that the most powerful patron-client systems have inter- or supra-party character. Patrons usually desire to expand their clientele, and clients are often inclined to have more than one patron, thus sharing loyalty and diversifying possible risks.

In the first half of the 1990s, political parties played only a modest role in governance and allocation of public resources. Patron-client networks formed on a non-partisan basis were more effective. However, when Leonid Kuchma had become a recognized by all guarantor of the neopatrimonial rules of political game during his first presidential term (1994–1999), these networks integrated gradually in a unified system. Political class started to look for more appropriate forms of its structuration after the consolidation of the state, formally marked by the adoption of the Constitution of Ukraine on June 28, 1996. The most powerful patrons as well as ambitious *nouveau riche* desired to legalize, stabilize, and insure their high social status using the institute of political parties. Introducing the proportional system of parliamentary elections resulted in a radical increase in the influence of political parties, not only in politics, but in the economy as well. “From political clubs they gradually turned into a weapon of political struggle. And all the sooner as greater economic interests were behind the struggle” (Rogovets 1999, 18-19).

This changing status of political parties, which became the major and then the sole mechanism of formation of representative bodies, has led to the growth of opportunities for their leaders. They turned into exclusive providers of access to the legislature and local councils (representative bodies of the self-government). Rostyslav Pavlenko (2002) pointed out: “By themselves, the parties are perceived as a kind of machine for the ‘transportation’ of certain groups of politicians in parliament to open access to at least formal participation in decision-making”. In this context, party leaders serve as ‘drivers’ and ‘conductors,’ offering

to ambitious and wealthy citizens rapid entry into public policy in exchange for certain resources.[1]

When party leaders acquired more leverage, the competition between them increased. Pretty soon the conflict of interest in the struggle for public resources became antagonistic. The contradictions between financial and industrial groups that supported various party leaders, caused by economic competition, moved to the fore of the Ukrainian political arena.

The period 1998-2006 constitute a time of parliamentary migrations. The first such 'shadow auctions' connected with the movement from the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine to the *Hromada* (Community), whose patrons were Pavlo Lazarenko and Yulia Tymoshenko, started from 30,000 dollars initially plus 1,000 monthly, but grew quickly in tens in response to a constantly growing demand for additional votes needed for successful bargaining in the amorphous parliament. The number of deputies groups increased from 8 to 14, leading to collisions and provoking conflicts (Yurchuk 1999). Deputies switched factions in the *Verhovna Rada* as soon as they received a more interesting proposition. The record belongs to Volodymyr Nechyporuk, who changed his faction affiliation eleven times during two parliamentary convocations. He was a member of six party factions (three in each convocation) and three deputies' groups, as well as an independent (twice for several months) (Ofitsiina Ukraïna s'ohodni 2014).

Every public leader of a nation-wide patron-client network is the hero of a certain myth that is essential for the formation and maintenance of electoral array. Joseph Campbell (2004) marked the most common for such myths formative stages of this kind of hero: 1) failure and exile; 2) initiation (wandering, getting some new sources of power[2]); 3) glorious return. In Ukraine these myths looked very effective, because largely they ensured the victories of the former prime-ministers in the presidential elections of 1994 (Leonid Kuchma), 2004 (Viktor Yushchenko) and 2010 (Viktor Yanukovych). Other politicians who

held the highest public offices, but had to leave them (ex-chairmen of the *Verkhovha Rada* Olexandr Moroz and Arsenii Yatseniuk, former prime-ministers Pavlo Lazarenko, Yevhen Marchuk, Anatoly Kinah, Yulia Tymoshenko) also used these patterns building their party projects and/or election campaigns. The similar image-making strategies were used for the promotion of party leaders at the regional level, whose campaigns got the greatest publicity and caused resonance in Ukraine (Mikhail Dobkin and Arsen Avakov in Kharkov, Aleksei Kostusiev and Leonid Hurwitz in Odessa, Spiridon Kilinkarov in Lugansk).

In a decentralized neopatrimonial regime under Viktor Yushchenko's presidency there was stiff competition for the right to redistribute power and property between three patron-client networks, each with its own guarantor and its own hierarchy. One of them was led by the President, the others by Yulia Tymoshenko (prime-minister in 2005 and 2007-2010) and Viktor Yanukovych (prime-minister in 2006-2007). Each of these three networks had facades in public politics represented by political parties—the People's Union *Nasha Ukraïna* (Our Ukraine), the *Bat'kivshchyna* and the Party of Regions respectively.

After the constitutional reform of 2004 and the complete transition to the proportional system of the election of the *Verkhovna Rada* and local councils, parties actually got carte blanche to restructure the political regime. But its essence, the essence of the neopatrimonial mode, was untouched. Moreover, the structure of patron-client networks became simpler but on the other hand more formal: they were officially affiliated with political parties led by patron-guarantors. At the same time, the political nature of appointments to top-managerial positions in state companies, banks and corporations (*Naftogaz*, *Ukrnafta*, *Oshchadbank*, *Ukreximbank*, *Ukrspecexport* etc.) became evident in practice. So, neopatrimonial patron-client relations have become more obvious, in fact, as corresponding political practices were officially adopted and received legal justification in the electoral and administrative legislation.

Yushchenko's neopatrimonial network began to degrade when he was still in the office. With the start of the presidential campaign in 2009, when it became obvious that he would lose the election, his clients began to search for new patrons. Working at the Yushchenko's campaign in that election, I witnessed the clashes in the regional party headquarters of the *Nasha Ukraïna* on the question of whom to support—Tymoshenko or Yanukovych. In the end, receiving on the fifth place in the first round of presidential election with only 5.45% of popular vote, Yushchenko, in fact, officially lost the status of patron and looked for guarantees to one of his more successful competitors.

Patron-client networks of the second tier tried to make use of contradictions between 'megabloks.' At the same time their leaders constantly emphasized self-sufficiency, and tried to play out the so-called 'golden share'. However, as the experience of Olexandr Moroz and Anatolii Kinakh revealed, this strategy was very risky. It led either to loss of independence and incorporation into the 'megablock' (the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine) or to political marginalization (the Socialist Party of Ukraine).

After Viktor Yanukovych became President a consolidation of the neopatrimonial regime began in Ukraine. Yanukovych did his best to build an integrated patron-client system led by a single guarantor. The questionable abolition of the constitutional reform and return to the Constitution of 1996 provided the legal framework for the regime consolidation. At first glance, the regime established in 2010 was very similar to the one that existed in Ukraine during the presidency of Leonid Kuchma. But comparing these two neopatrimonial regimes we find a principal distinction in the patterns of clientelism. This distinction, in my point of view, determined the stability of Kuchma regime and caused the collapse of Yanukovych's.

Leonid Kuchma was mainly a guarantor, not a patron himself. Oligarchs had more or less equal opportunities to gain and use power and property. Even when Kuchma gave some preferences to his son-in-law Viktor Pinchuk, he at the same time provided benefits to other

oligarchs, such as Rinat Akhmetov and Igor Kolomoiskii. Political parties sponsored by oligarchs proclaimed official support for presidential initiatives or formally declared that they are in opposition (there was special term coined 'constructive opposition'). Kuchma never had his own party, being a supreme arbiter in the political contest. He preferred to have a set of propresidential parties, the leaders of which would ensure their loyalty to the guarantor to get more neopatrimonial benefits.

Viktor Yanukovych did not try to be a fair guarantor, but the main beneficiary of the patron-client relations, building in his neopatrimonial pyramid as many networks as possible. He promoted the Party of Regions to become a hegemon in Ukrainian political system. Oligarchs could have their groups of clients in the *Verhovna Rada*, but only informally—within the PR faction, and they should fulfill all instructions from the President Administration including voting on principal issues. The principal position of the PR leaders was no allies, only satellites. Leaders of other parties could get seats in parliament either as non-party members or by joining the PR to become clients of Yanukovych. Thus, the Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine (United), the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, the *Viche*, the Republican Party of Ukraine, the *Syl'na Ukraïna* (Strong Ukraine) and a number of smaller groups and organizations were actually absorbed by the PR, though formally some of them continued their independent existence. In these conditions, all political and economic forces that were not subordinated to the neopatrimonial pyramid led by Yanukovych and his inner circle were pushed into opposition. Even while continuing to declare loyalty they became enemies of the President and his party.

Unlike Kuchma, Yanukovych concentrated not on power, strengthening it by a system of checks and balances among the most influential social groups imposed by the president, but on property. "A leader sought to gather all power, political as well as financial, in his own hands. This leader came to power in democratic elections, to be sure, but then altered the

system from within… In power, this leader, this president, remained a thief, but now on a grand, perhaps even unsurpassed, scale… He wanted to be not only the president but the oligarch-in-chief" (Snyder 2014).

As Viktor Yanukovych became more and more powerful, the neopatrimonial network built by Yulia Tymoshenko during her years in power declined. When Tymoshenko went to a tough opposition, many of her clients quickly found a new patron and declared loyalty to Yanukovych. Symptomatically, this trend of 'flexibility' characterized political participation not only of businessmen urgently in need of a strong 'cover,' but of many local party leaders of the *Bat'kivshchyna* as well. After the imprisonment of Tymoshenko, Arsenii Yatseniuk led the *Bat'kivshchyna*. He tried to become a new patron for Tymoshenko's network and integrate it with his own, represented in politics by the *Front Zmin* (Front of Changes). There was a series of scandals and some ambitious leaders were forced to find new political shelter. Some of them found it in the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reforms (UDAR), and Vitalii Klichko became their new patron.

The desire of the inner circle (the Family) of Viktor Yanukovych to build a centralized and highly consolidated neopatrimonial pyramid, ignoring the interests of other influential groups, caused growing discontent in Ukrainian society. "A closed particularism will generate more frustration, and thus is more vulnerable to a severe crisis that will shake the whole system" (Mungiu-Pippidi 2006, 93). This centralization was the main factor behind the indignation of a broad array of social groups, whose economic, social and political positions deteriorated as they could not find entry into the consolidated 'party of power.' When the number of such groups reached critical level, the ruin of the neopatrimonial pyramid became inevitable. A set of provocations—and this discontent blew up with a popular protest of unprecedented force and brutality.

In my view, Ukraine's European integration was regarded by powerful interest groups largely, if not mainly, from the perspective of neopatrimonial decentralization. Oligarchs not included in the inner circle and not affiliated with the Family wanted to preserve some autonomy. That is why the *Euromaidan* was supported not only by opposition parties and their traditional sponsors accustomed to diverse political risks (Kolomoiskii, Firtash, Poroshenko, Taruta), but by a wide range of regional patrons and sub-patrons.

So, Yanukovych had two ways to preserve the status of neopatrimonial guarantor: to decentralize his regime or to suppress brutally all who were not loyal. He chose the force variant but continued to bargain trying to avoid the escalation of violence that had already begun. The thief proved unable to become a dictator. "He did something he probably had not, when the day began, intended to do: He signed an agreement in which he promised not to use violence. His policemen understood, perhaps better than he, what this meant: the end of the regime. They melted away, and he ran for his life" (Snyder 2014).

Political Parties as Patron-Client Systems

In the post-Soviet period elite (top-level) social networks that existed in the USSR were transformed into structured patron-client systems. All more or less influential political parties were established in post-Soviet Ukraine as public superstructures over such systems. No wonder that political participation was and still is perceived by a considerable part of their members (including leaders) mainly as a vehicle to gain access to public resources. Even radical parties, grouped around a certain clear idea and/or a charismatic leader, as a rule, can be classified as a certain element of one or another patron-client network (Bielashko 2009).

"In the process of their organizational development, parties of power have evolved from the informal type of this phenomenon to their formal variety retaining all their distinguishing characteristics" (Meleshevich 2007, 197). The main structural elements of a post-Soviet 'party of power' are teams that group around their leaders and compete for the

division of spheres of influence and proximity to the centers of decision-making with the aim to increase their resource bases and enlarge the clienteles. Among such political organizations should be mentioned the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the *Hromada*, the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine (united) (SDPU(u)), the Agrarian Party of Ukraine (APU) later renamed the People's Party of Ukraine (PPU), the Party of Regions (PR), the *Bat'kivshchyna*, the Block of Petro Poroshenko (BPP). The main public function of this kind of political party is to ensure popular support, at least passive, preventing protest activities, for the presidential and governmental initiatives, both at the legislative level and regarding their implementation on the ground. Their informal mission is to preserve and promote the favorable positions of the corresponding patron-client network within the legal framework of the neopatrimonial regime.

A characteristic feature of the Ukrainian party system is that opposition parties are developed not as principal alternatives, but merely as alternative patron-client networks. They (in the broad sense, including satellite NGOs, 'friendly' media and companies controlled by their 'shareholders') position themselves almost like the 'parties of power', only with some epithet added to the word 'power'—'honest,' 'future,' 'new,' 'national,' 'fair,' 'truly democratic,' 'people's,' 'European' etc. Ukrainian politicians are guided by the neopatrimonial logic. "A culture of privilege reigns in societies based on particularism, making unequal treatment the accepted norm in society. Individuals struggle to belong to the privileged group rather than to change the rules of the game" (Mungiu-Pippidi 2006, 88). No wonder that upon coming to power they begin to use public resources for their own networks, taking them from their political rivals, or more correctly—competitors. That is why elite cleavages in post-Soviet Ukraine can be identified exactly by their positioning either inside or outside the neopatrimonial distribution of power and property. Instead of the classic divisions between moderates and radicals, liberals and conservatives, leftists and rightists, Ukrainian

parties are characterized mainly by the results of the competition between patron-client networks (Bielashko 2009).

Ukrainian parties, both the ruling and the opposition ones, based on patron-client principles, do not require an ideology as an instrument for their internal consolidation. Party affiliation "is motivated not at all by a new ideological certainty about liberalism, nationalism, republicanism or conservatism, but by group material interests and personal relationships" (Baziv 1998, 58). For the majority of the parties ideology has mainly an external setting—for voters and foreign partners. That is why ideology is developed just so far as is dictated by external necessity. Attempts of ideological distinction between the PDP and the *Hromada*, the PDP and the SDPU(u), the *Za Iedynu Ukraïnu!* (For United Ukraine—electoral bloc for the parliamentary election in 2002) and the SDPU(u), the Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko (BYuT) and the *Nasha Ukraïna*, the PR and the *Bat'kivshchyna*, the BPPP and the *Narodnyi Front* (the Popular Front) were largely utilitarian in nature aimed to mobilize different segments of electorate.

The ability of political parties to become the primary mechanism of political participation and to establish themselves as the key institutions of the political system is an important determining factor of democratization and democratic consolidation (Beyme 1985; Stokes 1999; Diamond and Gunther 2001, Lawson 2010). Ukrainian parties failed to counter effectively authoritarian tendencies, but significantly softened the character of the regime that emerged due to 'rollback of democracy' in 1995-2001. Political parties have become a decisive factor in the 'second wave of Ukrainian democratization' (2001-2005). But then, in the role of the key political actors, parties began to demonstrate destructive tendencies trying to take unlimited control over state institutions (2005-2010). It led to the flourishing of political corruption: "One year after the widely acclaimed Orange Revolution in Ukraine, one could already buy, though not very cheaply, a seat in the Ukrainian parliament" (Mungiu-

Pippidi 2006, 86). And Ukrainian parties failed again to prevent the second 'rollback of democracy', which started in 2010 with the illegal cancellation of the constitutional reform. Moreover, political parties (ruling as well as opposition) generated authoritarian tendencies and corruption in Ukrainian society. They have become not only an important factor of democratization, but of oligarchization as well, making threats for the national security. According to Alla Voloshyna, a senior analyst of Transparency International Ukraine, 80 percent of Ukrainians considered political parties as corrupted institutions in April, 2015, when the government proposed to introduce the state financing for parties without proper fuses for political corruption (Voloshyna 2015).

Ukrainian party leaders directed their political activity largely (some of them exclusively) at filling themselves comfortably into the existing neopatrimonial system, achieving a connection with the most influential patron (ideally, the powerful head of state), obtaining resources to provide for their own ambitions and the loyalty of their own clients. It should be mentioned, that the circle of clients more often than not coincides with membership in the relevant (headed or supported by the patron) party. Even the Party of Regions officially controlling the majority in the *Verkhovna Rada* was just a facade of the 'party of power' grouped around Viktor Yanukovych, some of whose influential members preferred to remain in the shadows or declared their non-partisanship. The *Bat'kivshchyna* played and is playing the same role now. Moreover, even patrons of small parties try to play neopatrimonial games (Leshchenko 2014).

The positions of a party largely depend on the status and influence of the patron of the corresponding neopatrimonial network. Thus, in 2005 Yanukovych lost power after the presidential election, but preserved his influence. And the Party of Regions preserved its positions as well. In 2014 Yanukovych lost authority, and the PR fell into a deep crisis. The neopatrimonial pyramid lost its patron and began to fall into ruin. It is interesting to compare

the situation in the PR parliamentary faction. In 2005, several deputies left it, but several others joined, so, the overall number of members remained. In 2014, the PR faction lost 85 of its members from 205 in first two weeks after the runaway of Yanukovych (Gridasov 2014). And those deputies remaining in the PR faction were looking for the new guarantor. Keith Darden characterized the situation very emphatically: "Ukraine's parliament actually has a dubious legitimacy. Former members of the Party of Regions actually wander in search of a master. It is not a fact that they represent their constituents" (Kuz'menko 2014).

Notwithstanding formal standardization of 'political game' rules, the European tendency of divergence of regional political modes took place in Ukraine. Within tough contradictions existing among the central authorities, regional patrons tried to limit their party activity. The local and regional elites of Ukraine rarely competed, coming from party principles, but often used party tools in their struggle for power. Before 2006, when the proportional system was introduced for elections to city, district and regional councils, parties actively discussed socially meaningful questions, but did not have a major influence on the decision-making process at the local and regional levels. Then the situation changed cardinally. But this change was mainly formal. Informally, neopatrimonial relations were preserved as the main factor in the development of territories. In fact, parties were incorporated into these relations providing a political and legal framework for competition between patrons interested in publicity and public representation of their interests. At the same time, ambitious local party leaders tried to establish themselves as new patrons forming clienteles based on the distribution of municipal resources (allocation of land plots, budget spending, building and other administrative permissions etc.).

Khoziaistvenniki or *hospodarnyky* (economic managers) of the old school had to adapt to the new realities of party centered local politics. And not all of them appeared to be ready for the change. Thus Oleksandr Omel'chenko, who was mayor of the capital city of Kiev and

a powerful municipal patron, could not reorganize his clientele and was defeated totally with his party, the *Yednist'* (Unity) by more effective and dynamic patron Leonid Chernovetskii, whose 'young team' politically included in the party bloc carrying his name, built an efficient electoral clientele (Derevyanko 2006).

Since the middle of the 2000s the regional, city and district organizations of the main parties were generally subordinated to the most ambitious patrons. Sometimes they became official party leaders, but more often preferred to stay in the shadows. Moreover, the most powerful patrons usually tended to control, at least loosely or vicariously, organizations of different parties in order to maximize their influence and minimize political risks.

The situation in Ukrainian parties in the middle of the 2010's can be compared with the American realities of the 1970's as described in these words: "The traditional parties are effectively closed political organizations whose operations frustrate broad citizen participation in politics. For the most part a handful of party notables, key office holders and party professionals actually control the party organizations within the states and at the federal level" (Saloma and Sontag 1972, 6). That is why the programs of Ukrainian parties are often purely formal documents, which are rarely implemented in real life. "Election programs of parties are mainly opportunistic in nature and not intended for long-term, or require hard work for their implementation" (Zhdanov and Yakymenko 2003, 6).

In the neopatrimonial politics citizens, and ordinary party members among them, usually have no impact on the nomination of party candidates. In post-Soviet Ukraine there were only few examples when delegates made some changes in the list of candidates proposed by the party leadership at the party congress. Several parties initiated open primaries to select the best and the most appropriate candidates, but these initiatives were no more than PR projects directed to attract voters who have substantial knowledge of Ukrainian politics, but make their political decisions based on non-rational factors.

Ukrainian parties have no formal means to screen the candidates they offer the voters in terms of their ability to govern. They have not developed continuing talent-hunt programs for staffing government posts, either nationally and locally. There were many such projects started by different parties in the electoral context, but none of them gave any fruitful results to improve the governance.

Party schools for political leadership help to increase the level of competence of the functionaries. However, in post-Soviet Ukraine, competence never was a decisive factor of political career. In order to make a successful career in Ukrainian politics one should find a patron who is sufficiently influential and persuade him or her of one's usefulness. If one already has a powerful patron, there is no need to study and develop leadership qualities. If one has none, one should find someone, otherwise knowledge and experience would be of no help. That is why many graduates of Ukrainian party schools appeared in other political organizations looking for more effective ways of political participation and personal development.

In the politics of post-Soviet Ukraine, the planning horizon rarely exceeds two years and largely depends on the electoral cycles. The main aim of party activities in this short-term perspective is to grab as many influential state positions as possible and keep them as long as possible, thus maximizing the resource base of the corresponding patron-client network. "The electoral politics of post-Communism, in short, has in a historical instant grown into a multicausal and multiphased game of great richness and intricacy" (Colton 2000, xi). Neopatrimonial politicians being sufficiently sophisticated themselves are not interested in sophisticated voters. In fact, party leaders are often simply afraid of active, initiative, and responsible citizens, because they ruin their monopoly on politics. "For voters to make meaningful decisions, they must understand the options on which they are deciding. Citizens also need sufficient knowledge of the workings of the political system if they intend to

influence and control the actions of their representatives. In short, for citizen politics to be purposeful, the electorate must have at least a basic level of political skills" (Dalton 2006, 15). In order to minimize the rational patterns of political participation, namely electoral choice, neopatrimonial rulers and affiliated party leaders widely use manipulative techniques, some of which are very complicated and expensive. That is why the public activity of Ukrainian politicians is directed mainly not on persuasion, but on emotional mobilization of the target audiences of electorate.

Timothy Colton identified four kinds of post-Soviet electoral uncertainty: 1) the volatility of behavior that "reflects both effervescence within the elites and the fickleness of the citizens they woo"; 2) the integrity of electoral process; 3) the reversibility of systematic reforms "to which untrammeled campaigning and voting are life-giving oxygen"; 4) the voter hesitancy (2000, 8–12). This uncertainty forms the substratum for the flourishing of various manipulative techniques. Samuel Popkin wrote that "the use of information shortcuts is... an inescapable fact of life, and will occur no matter how educated we are, how much information we have, and how much thinking we do" (1991, 218). Agreeing with this point, we should note that the situation when neopatrimonial rulers permanently and consciously distort the picture of politics misrepresenting political decisions and their consequences is very far from democratic ideas and ideals. In fact Ukrainian media holdings controlled by oligarchs have become big information factories producing shortcuts (often distorted) in favor of their patrons.

Unlike the consolidated democracies, where citizens vote to decide rather small issues, in the post-Soviet realities "the battle is about graver and more incendiary concerns—dysfunctional and insolvent institutions, individual freedom, nationhood, property rights, provision of the basic necessities of life" (Colton 2000, viii). This strengthens greatly the disruptive power of media manipulation, and makes it a means (at least potential) of ruination

of the society. In this situation political participation of the party leaders unavoidably becomes symbolic. Thus, public opinion in post-Soviet Ukraine apparently lacks a general ideological structure, and few Ukrainian voters use ideological concepts to structure their belief system. However, the general rule of electoral structuration works pretty well: most voters do not express sophisticated ideological views, but they still can locate themselves within a broad ideological family, or tendency (Westholm and Niemi 1992). So, the main demand for successful political leaders is to create symbols that will be the most appropriate and motivating for voters belonging to the corresponding tendency.

On many issues of long-standing political concern, even those determined by ideology, voters apparently do not have informed opinion or often any opinion at all. Most Ukrainians do not judge political phenomena in ideological terms, or use these terms in very different senses. “People unsure in themselves and of their surroundings often procrastinate as long as possible in making decisions” (Colton 2000, 12). This factor also works in favor of manipulation.

American scholars wrote sixty years ago: “In any rigorous or narrow sense the voters are not highly rational” (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954, 310). This irrationalism is exploited by neopatrimonial rulers to minimize citizens’ influence on politics, and reduce their political participation to limited number of formal actions. Political parties controlled by oligarchs impose their own agenda on society, while NGOs and civil initiatives are still weak and as a rule can mobilize citizens only for protest actions or non-political activities.

Another old thesis that “the mass electorate is not able either to appraise its goals or the appropriateness of the means chosen to secure these goals” (Campbell et al. 1960, 543) was confirmed in neopatrimonial Ukraine during parliamentary by-elections held on December 15, 2013. Just at the time of mass protests against the Yanukovych regime, the ‘party of power’ won in four out of five electoral districts, including the center of Kiev.

Hundreds of thousands people protested on the *Maidan*, but they were unable to make impact on a by-election held in the immediate neighborhood, not only because they did not have the proper mechanisms of influence, but also because they did not believe in the necessity of such activity.

Those Ukrainian voters who were sophisticated enough to make grounded conclusions concerning politics often did not take part in the election. Other sophisticated votes supported outsiders who could not mobilize mass electorate. Studying electoral behavior of the Russian citizens in the 1990s, Timothy Colton discovered that "greater consciousness leads to greater denial of democratic governance" (2000, 2). This conclusion, in general, could be applied to Ukraine as well. As a result the most politically educated citizens had minimal impact on politics and were not represented in the legislature. So, sophisticated voters did not form the Ukrainian political mainstream. Moreover, they were often out of the mainstream themselves, being on the margins of the political process.

Conclusion

Ukraine needs urgently a new social contract based on a system of compromises regarding the most acute, and contradictory issues. This statement was true in the beginning of the 1990s and has not become less applicable in the years since Ukrainian independence. To make this grand deal possible, Ukrainian society should produce a new kind of political culture based on autonomous participation—in fact, create a new kind of citizenship, principally different from the existing one. "Subjects obey. Citizens choose. The signal accomplishment of the epic 'transition' in the former Soviet Union—in counterpoint to a sorry economic record—is the political feat of having converted so many subjects into citizens" (Colton 2000, vii). To become citizens, inhabitants of Ukraine should have a unity of purpose, a common goal that is determined not by ethnicity, language, region, social status, professional or educational background, but by a common vision that takes into

account and moderates different group interests. Democracies are governments whose "actions have been in relatively close correspondence with the wishes of relatively many of their citizens for a long period of time" (Lijphart 1984, 2). Without such a consensus it is impossible to count on the fruitful transformation of the post-Soviet institutes and changing of neopatrimonial patterns of political behavior.

The key point of such a social contract is the legalization of social interactions, the installation of formal rules (and sanctions for their violation) into political practices instead of informal ones based on the neopatrimonial culture. The legal framework has to be a source of dominant norms, not the democratic facade for feudal-like patron-client relations. In fact, we should talk about the nationalization of state institutions as an obligatory precondition of sustainable political and economic development. So, the Ukrainian political class had to adopt a more rational and effective strategy—not to grab new resources, but to preserve and protect existing ones. Oligarchs could become either politicians or businessmen, but in any case they had to legitimize their assets through the recognition of their (both the assets and the owners) social value by the citizens.

"The lack of success in curbing corruption, combined with ever more widespread discussion of the issue, renders voters extremely cynical and threatens to subvert public trust in emerging democracies" (Mungiu-Pippidi 2006, 86). According to the research conducted by the Sociological group "RATING" soon after the removal of Yanukovych, 63% of respondents said that first of all it was necessary to carry out reforms against corruption; about 40% clearly supported the emergence of new leaders in Ukrainian politics (Socio-political Expectations 2014). So, to ensure the success of the post-Soviet transformation, Ukrainian society had to demonstrate zero tolerance of corruption. All political actors and state institutions had to function transparently and always be under tough public control. It means, first of all, a cardinal change in norms assessment. The unequal treatment of citizens

by the authorities should not be an accepted norm in Ukrainian society. Political and civil activity should be directed not to affiliate with a privileged group, but to change the rules of the game. Even the best model of the separation of powers does not work, when citizens not attain the separation of power and property, breaking the neopatrimonial cycle. Electoral revolutions can lead to consolidated democracies only if they are followed by revolutions against particularism, and nothing short of such a revolution will succeed in curbing corruption in countries where particularism prevails (Mungiu-Pippidi 2005).

It was very indicative that during the negotiations between the President and the opposition leaders that took place in January and February 2014 the sides did not discuss any principal issues dividing and undermining Ukraine. Local and regional self-government, status of the Russian language, corruption—all these major issues were not on the agenda. After the failure of Yanukovych there were no such discussions as well. Opposition leaders that obtained power as a result of the mass uprising were interested mainly in gaining power resources, not in the principles of the post-crisis regulation. And what is even more significant, all above mentioned and other important issues—land market, judicial reform including popular election of judges and/or prosecutors, protection of parks, recreation areas, and other public zones, tax reform giving preferences to small business, transparency of the fiscal authorities etc.—were not among the main topics for political and expert discussions. They were a matter of priority concern only for rather small groups of political and civil activists outside the mainstream of Ukrainian politics. This situation had not been changed even with the separation of Crimea, uprising in Donbas, bloody clashes in other regions, and strong foreign pressure. The main reason for such chronic inadequacy of Ukrainian elites to the urgent needs of society was their immanent unwillingness and inability to put pubic interests ahead of private ones.

The Ukrainian political class has been different greatly both from the elites of consolidated democracies and of other post-Soviet states, where politicians can have contradictions but share the same values with the majority of citizens, adhere to common standards and stable patterns of behavior. This specificity was determined by the mechanism of elite socialization, in which education and recruitment played a significant role. Ukrainian elites actually had no mechanisms for their own political socialization. As a result, the Ukrainian political class in general remained ideologically amorphous and atomized (Bielashko 2010, 260). That is why it has been unable to provide grounds for the new social contract aggregating and consolidating group interests.

Ukrainian politicians continued to play shadow games even after the autonomous (and mainly non-party) participation of active citizens caused the revolt against the political system: the regime was changed, the system remained. The principles of power distributing were still formed under the patterns of neopatrimonial bargaining, and the redistribution of property was taking place under the same patterns as well. The appointment of new governors by the chairman of the *Verkhovna Rada* (national parliament) and acting President Oleksandr Turchynov has been very indicative in this context. Oligarchs Igor Kolomoiskii and Serhii Taruta were among the nominees representing different party clienteles from the *Bat'kivshchyna* and the *Svoboda* (Perevozna 2014). The obvious aim of these appointments was to strengthen the positions of the new 'party of power' headed by Tymoshenko, Turchynov, and Yatseniuk in strategically important Dnepropetrovsk and Donetsk regions. Another hot spot was the distribution of energy resources—gas, oil, and coal. The schemes existing during the rule of Yanukovych have been changed according to the interests of new beneficiaries (Nesterov 2014). The consequences of such politically motivated economic decisions were very destructive. Oleksandr Bondar was true stating in March 2014: "If to 'freeze' the system again replacing 'their' oligarchs by 'ours,' we'll have an explosion,

instability, default, impairment of assets, the danger of complete nationalization..." (Radchenko 2014).

Ukrainian parties as they have evolved up to 2015 could not provide the citizens with effective mechanisms for positive and constructive political activity. Social activism grew drastically in the previous decade, but politics remained neopatrimonial. In fact, political parties did not accelerate Ukraine's social development, but slowed it. They appeared to be unable to give adequate responses for dramatic challenges. Parties failed to solve the crisis caused by an insincere and parasitic foreign policy. Moreover, namely they created its preconditions and then aggravated the subsequent problems provoking violence and unrest. The conclusion made for American politics in the early 1970s was applicable to Ukraine in the middle of the 2010's: "citizen parties represent the most desirable direction for party modernization and an essential political goal" (Saloma and Sontag 1972, 7).

The closure of the political system, the lack of 'social elevators' capable to provide effective elite renewal, and the constant inflow of fresh ideas, thoughts, methods, staff have become major problems for Ukraine. This problem can be solved by expanding the social base of the recruitment of party leaders, establishing a permanent monitoring of their activities both by party members and voters, introducing more effective mechanisms to guide the rotation of party leadership. Elections, both national and local, play a very important role in these processes largely determining the format of party leadership and legitimizing it. "Voting is the consummate act of citizenship" (Colton 2000, vii). Ukrainian citizens should become responsible consumers of democracy as well as adherent producers of it in order to avoid repeating past mistakes.

Another way to improve the situation and open access into the politics to new leaders is to promote different social activities, develop institutions of civil society and practices of the horizontal interactions of citizens. This creates new grounds for producing leaders and

broadening the framework of political participation. In Ukraine, however, the appearance of many new political leaders did not provide an answer to the question about the constructive patterns of political behavior. The drastic and cruel political revolt that occurred in February 2014 did not promote the modernization of Ukrainian society. Moreover, the rotation of government due to the popular uprising brought to power people from the past, not from the future. While few reform-minded ministers tried to create a universal legal framework on the example of the Western European model, others continued to obtain benefits from the neopatrimonial practices.

The revolt has not led to the establishment of new political parties dedicated to the modernization and universalization of social life. Moreover, existing parties and the party system in general have entered a deep crisis. Citizens did not trust them, did not believe anymore in the parties' ability to change the situation for the better, they were looking for other, often nonconventional, mechanisms of political participation. And what is even more important, party leaders did not demonstrate any desire for the cardinal changes expected by the citizens. It means that at least in the medium-term perspective, Ukrainian political parties continue to act as patron-client systems, forming multilevel networks with complicated hierarchies, and hardly competing for the right to redistribute power and property. The further evolution of the Ukrainian party system depends on the parties' ability to perform properly their primary functions based on the broad autonomous political participation of the citizens and refuse the non-appropriate ones that usually are determined by their neopatrimonial nature and have a high potential of corruption. Without performing this primary function, it is impossible for Ukrainian parties to become effective and universal mechanisms of political participation deeply rooted in the society and able to give adequate responses on the dramatic challenges of the 2010s.

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[1] It is interesting to note that ten years later Mr. Pavlenko became a member of the Ukrainian parliament by means of the 'machine' of the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reforms (UDAR), using Vitalii Klichko as a 'driver'.

[2] The powerful foreign patrons are an important feature of this myth in Ukrainian interpretation. The second important feature—is a support of subnational patrons ('red directors,' millionaires, oligarchs, party leaders), who thus demonstrate their readiness to be clients of the future guarantor.