CHAPTER X

BETWEEN FREEDOM AND PATERNALISM AS DISCURSIVE ETHICAL PRACTICES: THE UKRAINE ON THE ROAD TO CIVIL SOCIETY

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My aim here is to present some thoughts and provide some information on Post-Communist Ukraine in connection with a "Civil Society" perspective. I would like to start with a quotation from Jacques Maritain, a famous French philosopher of the twentieth century, who spent part of his life in America. He said: "As I grow older I realize more and more how fundamental for mankind political activity is, and how deeply it depends on the most disappointing contingences."[1] This was said after the Second World War.

A little more than a few decades ago, it was a contingent fact that three persons in the world were handling their jobs at the same time: Pope John Paul II, the President of the USA Ronald Reagan, and the President of the former Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev. The world was not disappointed by this contingency. As a result of a well-done job, a new world appeared at the turn of the millennium. This new world appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was the embodiment of the totalitarian kind of social and political relations.

Among the countries which can now be found on the map of the new Europe, we can see the Ukraine. This independent state, with a population of just under 50 million and area of 603 thousand square kilometers, has a significant place in the continent's stability and development. Everybody who is acquainted with the history of Europe could ask the question, How do the two World Wars relate to the Ukraine? Would the Second World War have been possible if the Ukraine had preserved its independence after World War One?

History cannot answer this question. But human beings can think and make demands on society according to their mode of thinking and understanding. Communists and nationalists have made such demands on the social system, for example. The independence of the Ukraine and the union of its lands into a national state has been a political ideal for Ukrainians for centuries. This ideal has its origin in the national memory of the great Kyivan-Rus State of the tenth and eleventh centuries, when the name "Ukraine" first appeared in the old chronicles. It has its tradition in the powerful and independent Ukrainian Kingdom of King Danylo (in the

[1] See Jacques Maritain, *Reflections on America* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), foreword.

thirteenth century). This ideal was at its highest point during the careers of Hetman Khmelnytskyj in the seventeenth century and Hetman Mazepa in the eighteenth century (the "Hetmans" in the Ukraine were elected political leaders during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries). In the nineteenth century, a modern national movement developed in the Ukraine. Russia's response was repression, the denial of Ukrainian nationality, and a ban on the Ukrainian language (in 1863 and 1876). But a freer atmosphere for Ukrainian self-expression existed under Austrian Galicia.

After the collapse of both the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian Empires at the end of World War I, the two divided Ukrainian regions were briefly reunited in an independent state. In 1921, however, Galicia and Volynia were occupied by Poland, while smaller areas in the west were annexed by Romania and Czechoslovakia. The eastern Ukraine, conquered by Soviet Russia, became the Ukrainian SSR. In the east, Stalin's forced collectivization and the artificially introduced famine in 1932-33 led to the loss of at least seven million lives. World War II brought massive destruction and a further loss of about 12 million lives, as the Ukraine became the main battlefield between the USSR and Nazi Germany.

The idea of independence for the people's development was embodied during World War II in the proclamation in Lviv of the Ukrainian State. All the principal leaders of that time were imprisoned by the Nazi regime, but were also persecuted by Soviet authorities. Manifesting their aspiration for freedom under the German occupation during 1941-45, Ukrainians created their own armed resistance groups in 1941, which were united into a big and powerful Ukrainian Insurgent Army under one supreme command. It was supported by the entire Ukrainian people and greatly contributed to the destruction of the German armed forces in Western Ukraine and continued the struggle against the Soviet Army until 1955.

Indeed, modern Ukrainian history is the history of the Ukrainian movements for freedom and democracy. Political changes proceeded rapidly after 1989, the year that saw the rise of mass organizations – most notably the Rukh (People's Movement of Ukraine) – which pushed for definitive autonomy in the last years of Soviet rule. Following the failure of the Moscow coup d'etat, independence was proclaimed on 24 August 1991. This was confirmed by 91% of the voters in the referendum held on 1 December 1991.

DEMOCRACY AND ITS STATE SUBSTITUTION

The breakdown of the totalitarian Soviet system brought with it a democratization of life that facilitated the creation of numerous new nongovernmental organizations. This process developed in the Ukraine under the influence of nationally and culturally-oriented demands that came from within that society. When networks of civic organizations aimed at cultural autonomy appeared, the demand for economic private property was

raised. This was at the time when Ukrainians not only proclaimed their political independence but also adopted a new Constitution (1996), guaranteeing democracy and equal human rights and liberties. Its main provisions dealt with guarantees of the rule of law – by which all citizens of the Ukraine, regardless of their ethnicity and religion, are protected – and the permission of private property. The Constitution established the fundamental laws of the country and, therefore, confirmed its new statehood. The implementation of constitutional laws in daily life required the strengthening of democratic reforms. The main task was – and still is – to maintain and broaden the democratization of society by introducing human and civil rights. But this task appeared difficult to resolve.

Some observers had noted that our Constitution showed some vestiges of its Ukrainian communist past, such as a fear of the capitalist system and the importance of guaranteeing full employment, housing, and health protection. Others had noted that some "fine tuning" might still be needed to provide an effective system of checks and balances to guarantee the impartiality and independence of the judiciary, and even to clarify who has ultimate responsibility over the executive branch – i.e., the President, the Prime-Minister, or the Cabinet of Ministers. This issue has not been resolved yet (i.e., by 2003), and many people say that the President's power is increasingly authoritarian (I shall explain this later).

In any case, the fact of adopting a democratic constitution shows the existence of political consensus in the Ukraine. And in doing this, Ukrainian society has taken its place among other democratic societies in Europe. But, unfortunately, in the Ukraine things have not gone well with the implementation of the new Constitution and other laws. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the achievement of political independence in 1991, the people of the Ukraine have been engaged in the construction of a new social life in which the supreme values are freedom, human rights and democracy. This demands the development of a wide range of civil society institutions. From the very beginning of this social reconstruction, the process of democratization was understood by many politicians in its fundamental sense. But, all in all, democratic politicians have not been in the majority. On the contrary, the main reins of power remain in the hands of former communists. Thus, in a short time, the political rhetoric changed from democracy to the free market, which has been considered as the main end of the government policy regarding social transformation. It is true that, without developing free markets (which had not existed earlier in the Ukraine), democracy would not be a realistic option. Under the pressure of the need for free market reforms, the task of transforming the whole social political life has been supplanted by the rhetoric of economic transformation. The government (consisting mostly of former communist bureaucrats) was interested only in holding political power and controlling the economy by transforming only the forms of administration. At the same time, society had to undertake absolutely new tasks: to assure public stability and preserve peace, to hold down economic inflation, and to

maintain living standards. A very low level of productivity has been reached by the workers, who were forced to use the old Soviet engineering technology built mostly for the military purposes. The need to achieve a whole social reconstruction has been replaced by an interest in the redistribution of state resources. For the political authorities, it has focused on the privatization of the main economic wealth of the young state. The old bureaucracy was not removed from power. It focused on redistribution in the economic sphere, but was not interested in spreading democracy. It has not wanted to pass the reins of power to the new national-democrats.

The Soviet system was perhaps the most perfect form of closed society made by man. It penetrated into virtually everything; all spheres of human activity were under the pressure of bureaucratic requirements, and for its transformation the powerful will of social groups was needed. There has been a need for developing civil society with civic activity. The need for civil society is urgent, but the people who make up Ukrainian society know little about it. On the eve of independence in 1991, only a few intellectuals had discussed the theme of civil society – and there, only in a few magazines. Mainstream discussion has brought about the possibility of free market and economic transformation. Hence, alongside political and economic reconstruction, the need for a new type of state has become a main force in shaping the development of life in Ukraine. From the government's point of view, the main purpose of the power of the state is to redistribute property. Thus, instead of democracy, civil society, and even free markets, society remains in the control of bureaucrats.

FROM DEMOCRACY TO MARKET FUNDAMENTALISM

The contemporary democracy movement in the Ukraine had its sources in the 1960s, when Stalinist terror was revealed, and there appeared rare springs of communist opposition. This is about the so-called dissenters who, in the Ukraine, were nationalists as a rule and who brought both an intellectual opposition and a democratic movement into the Soviet state. It is important to realize that during the communist rule in the Ukraine, it was extremely dangerous for somebody to be called a "bourgeois nationalist" by authorities. This meant imprisonment and often death. This kind of repression extended only to non-Russian nationalists, and was a subtle form of political and social discrimination. In this we can find one of the sources of the decay of the USSR. And this can help us explain why the most powerful opposition against the totalitarian regime in the Soviet Union was combined with national democratic forces in the Ukraine and in other former Soviet republics. The national democratic intention to construct an independent Ukrainian state coincided with the task of building a new type of democratic society. Under these circumstances, the new democratic forces – mostly consisting of people with very different social convictions – appeared to be divided by its own ideas and illusions, in comparison with

old, well-entrenched 'Red type' nomenclature, which held its administrative ground.

Now, in 2003 – after twelve years of independence – we in the Ukraine may say that Red-type bureaucracy – but not national-democracy – has won the battle for state power. Those of us who are particularly concerned to see democracy realized, see that this seed was sown at the very moment of gaining political independence. First of all, this happened because old secret service structures, the police, and the armed forces were not disbanded or overhauled. The second reason was that national-democratic leaders and parties became allied with former Soviet officials during the move to an independent state. This involved the relativization of morality and ethics in order to gain power and to promote a free market and private property. The third reason can be discerned by the fact that a free market was for many the main factor for democratizing the country. This latter was largely supported from abroad, contrary to other intentions to spread national-democracy – namely, that initiative from 'below' should be encouraged to create free cultural and related organizations.

In the time of the great crises of the mid-1990s, the former Soviet (and now, the new Ukrainian Party) nomenclature met the problem in ways which would ensure they would hold political power (in order to keep control over the economy) and, at the same time, transform power without being deprived of the status quo. Thus, rhetoric about the free market and the temptations of private property came to take first place instead of freedom and human rights.

This was the road to oligarchic forms of economic and political power. It was well supported by the mass media, which by then already belonged to a few so-called "new Russians" or "oligarchs." The movement in this direction was headed by President Kuchma, who won the first election in 1994 owing to: a) state administrative resources in the places where power was in antidemocratic hands; b) oligarchs; c) mass media manipulation; d) Russian interest in preserving control over Ukraine; and e) collaboration of national democrats with the state administration and oligarchs. This was the road to strengthening state power around the President's administration, and aimed not at free market reforms but control over the main economic possibilities. People say the political authorities became allied with economic forces and vice versa. In this way, instead of a "velvet revolution" (as in Poland and Czechoslovakia, which had been introduced by each's national democracy movement), a so-called "nomenclature" has emerged in the Ukraine. The interiorization of totalitarian social habits continues to exercise an influence on society, mostly at the administrative level. Because of this, the intention to have a strong independent Ukrainian state – which is indeed needed for strengthening the functioning of the free market – has turned into a restoration of all old Soviet type ethics and, related to it, new but closed forms of social relations. A culture of legal ignorance has become the general practice. Today, only a few in society control more than 95% of the

country's wealth that, only a short time ago, belonged to "nobody." This was assisted by funds given by international financial organizations to various Ukrainian governments – a process that never worked well until Victor Yushchenko became Prime Minister. Such social relations, as those George Soros noted in 2002, may be characterized as a rapacious capitalism, since the most effective way to increase private capital in the absence of good starting conditions is the privatization of the state (administrative) resources. Foreign help provided by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank did not achieve its objectives as often it should have. We can judge this, for example, from the case of Pavlo Lazarenko – a former prime minister of the Ukraine – who was imprisoned in the USA.

The situation of implementing a free market in the Ukraine was more difficult and sophisticated than anyone could have predicted. On the one hand, the classic approach did not allow the state to interfere in free market development. On the other hand, in the circumstance of a lack of 'civil society' values, a free market cannot be entirely independent of state authority. The question is what kind of authority can we expect? As I have tried to show, without consideration of this question, the rhetoric about democracy and the free market could lead towards market fundamentalism (a term used by George Soros).

The Ukraine now has a rather feeble model of state capitalism based on political power, limited administrative resources, and a monopoly of the few over the many. This control of the economy is carried out by the tax administration, the police, the secret service, the prosecutor's office and also by criminal elements. Market development free from state administration and from the oligarchs has become impossible in the contemporary Ukraine.

The Ukrainian economic environment has been entirely deprived of any significant Western investment. The attempt of Yushchenko's government to change the situation and make it transparent ended with massive attacks on the government. Because of this, the Ukraine does not have any civilized form of free competition. It does not have a free market yet. Thus, bureaucracy has appropriated in its own interests, not only initial capital but the rules of the economic game and the state with its budget. This "new-old" bureaucracy has changed its stripes only a little, and it continues to hold onto political and economic means of state and social control.

National-democratic groups and political parties appear not to have been able to put into practice any significant economic changes, and have become the hostages of their dreams of freedom and an independent state. Ukrainian independence has been virtually given to former Soviet empire and openly anti-Ukrainian forces. The latter seized power, and tried to persuade chauvinistic people not to believe the democrats and nationalists, who were turned into the main culprits of the low standard of living and social instability. The conjuncture of administration and oligarchy has

become a very effective obstacle to the free market and, as a result, to democracy and civil society. Thus, the oligarchs, who are very close to political power, may be called the 'stagnarches,' and their form of ruling as the 'stagnancies.'

NEED OF DEMOCRACY AS NEED OF CONFIDENCE AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Unfortunately, in the Ukraine things have not gone so well with regard to prosperity, human rights and freedom. There is difficulty with the implementation of the Constitution. The standard of living is very low. There is hidden unemployment. Many people (about 5 million) go abroad looking for a job but nobody from abroad (or very few) comes to the Ukraine to work as a simple worker or employee. As a rule, factories, mass media (TV and the press) and the market place belong to oligarchs or those with administrative power. But the chief problem is the slow rate of change in society, and it has many aspects: economic, financial, political, moral, and ethical. The main reasons for this slow rate of change are related to the diminishing confidence between society and authority, or between people and government. This is on the one hand, an old sickness, inherited from the communist past, but it has not diminished over time. On the other hand, this is reflected in the manipulation of political parties (of which there are at least 120), indicating a decline in the level of social and political trust and responsibility. It is an unbelievable fact that the government of Victor Yushchenko – which was the first in the last several years to have been able to pay salaries on time (earlier salaries had been delayed to 3 to 6 months) – was dismissed by the parliament. This was the first Prime Minister who gained the trust of people and who continued to have the confidence of more than 58% of the voters after his forced dismissal – a removal caused by an aggressive clique of oligarchs closely cooperating with Russian political and economic concerns.

As a result, the threat of violence and the lack of public confidence have increased. The level of criminality is very high as well as the level of abusive treatment and the abuse of power. The people suffer greatly from organized crime. Major crime often goes unpunished. Political crime is taking place daily in the country. There have been politically-motivated assassinations of Ukrainians who were active in public life, demanding transparency and accountability on economic and political issues and who defended the values of democracy. This particularly has been directed towards some journalists and leaders of nonpolitical and nongovernmental civic organizations. One such person was the journalist Georgij Gongadze who was murdered almost three years ago, and this case has not resulted in any indictments in spite of the bad light under which President Kuchma has been put.

The case with Gongadze has greatly influenced society and put it into deep frustration that has been strengthened by the so-called "tape-gate"

around the President and his close advisors. At the same time there is an army of police in the Ukraine – of about 400,000 members – in addition to a huge number of people belonging to the judiciary and the prosecution branches. Because of this, many people consider that the threat of violence, the decline of the dignity of the person, and the lack of confidence in the state are now greater than even at the beginning of the road to independence. There is a gap between political life and new social needs, which remain hidden behind the mask of the authority's 'declaration' of democracy.

There is one very interesting lesson that Ukrainian society could be taught – and perhaps others would find it interesting. It is well known that the main goal of communists and communism was to eliminate private property. This goal was reached in the former Soviet Union in virtue of a very strong central authority. But now, all those, who not so long ago had acquired their authority by fighting against private property and by fiercely struggling against Ukrainian nationalism and independence – especially during the time of the imaginary independence of the Ukraine – have shown no wish either to refuse private property or to retire.

The next equally important problem confronting Ukrainian society is the bitterness related to national and ethnic issues. Recently much thought has been given to the paradox that the vision of a modern, multicultural Ukraine prolongs, rather than undermines, the colonial process – even more than the agenda that Soviet Russia pursued. Many Ukrainian intellectuals are frightened by new forms of 'assimilation,' carried out by government administrators together with the oligarchs. Even in the thirteenth year of independence, events have taken place that threaten the material basis of the existence of the Ukrainian nation as well as its language, culture, and spirituality. One famous document adopted in 1997 by the Congress of the Ukrainian Intelligentsia declared: "External and internal forces, which in the course of the last years have blocked and sabotaged in every way the process of the Ukraine's transformation into a strong, rich, socially just, and sovereign state, have today launched an all-out assault aimed at our 'Belarussianization'." Many people are anxious about the conscious refusal by political leaders and oligarchs to recognize such concepts as the national dignity of the people – and that they allow the Ukraine to be openly abused and humiliated in the eyes of the world. At the same time, some official political forces in Russia are adopting imperialistic attitudes, and even the government looks forward to the ideology of Russian exclusiveness and 'missionary' Russification. They and allied political groups in Ukraine aim at the destruction of Ukrainian society under cover of the "pan-Slavonic" and "pan-Orthodox" ideologies. For example, in a recent book, *Civil Society: origin and contemporary character* (published by the Russian Federation Institute of Public Prosecutors in Saint Petersburg in 2000), we read: "The road to Russian development in its geopolitical aspect (and on this point we can agree with I. Frojanov) is to revive the Russian Empire," which can be understood as

the form of existence of peoples, united in and on a single territory and led by the Russian people." These are the words of Mr. Frojanov: "I am deeply convinced that Russia cannot exist in any form except as an Empire. No Empire – no Russia!"[2] I would like to underscore that these words were written in a book giving the perspective of civil society in the Russian Federation! Its authors consider civil society as a positive basis for imperialistic development.

It is not an accident that today's Ukrainian state has effectively threatened the national identity of its people and of Ukrainian culture. The Constitution demands: "No one shall use benefits and privileges not established by law." But democracy, even under the Ukrainian Constitution, is not observed in government practice, and there is an absence of government good will to spread democracy in society. This has created a climate of injustice and it has resulted in deep frustration throughout society. And this, in turn, raises a question about the reality of human rights in an independent Ukraine.

In recent years, time and opportunities have been wasted, and the trust of the people has been lost because governmental authority has not carried out radical action against corruption and crime. Unfortunately, President Kuchma does not take a firm position regarding Western policy, continues to make advances to Russia, and promotes mostly Russian investment in the Ukrainian economy. Although celebrating the emergence of free markets and democracy in words, there is nevertheless destabilizing avaricious corruption in the Ukraine, accompanied by the unleashing of private initiatives under the cover of an administration that ignores common standards of human decency.

CIVIL SOCIETY ISSUES

I would like to take a look at civil society as a semiotic phenomenon. It has (according to the works of George McLean) three inseparable parts related to subjectivity or humanity as active in social life. It is about: a) *arche* or the origin of action, or of freedom as the properly human exercise of life and being; b) the pattern of values and virtues as constituted in cultural traditions which gives form to freedom; and, c) the structure of relations between people and social institutions.[3] On the whole, civil society is constituted as a process of semiosis in which the generation and the rejection of signs, significations and symbolization take place,

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[2] *Civil Society: origin and contemporary character*, ed. J. I. Kalnoj (Saint Petersburg: Russian Federation Institute of Public Prosecutors, 2000), p. 159 (in Russian).

[3] George McLean, "Philosophy and Civil Society: Its Nature, Its Past and Its Future," in *Civil Society and Social Reconstruction*, ed. George F. McLean (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1997), p. 14.

involving language-speech communication as well as discursive ethical practices.

Discourse means the assembly of signs, significations, symbols, objects, and codes which are organized in verbal, lingual, musical, and narrative texts present through speech and communication. Discourse serves as the basis for choice, selection and giving priority to one category of significations over another. Discourse is present in communities, social groups, and social and cultural traditions. Discourse works as a semiotic act which appears in events, affairs and actions that outline signs, the symbolic and objective framework of actuality, and its human perception.

Because human life takes place in a common space of freedom and necessity, there are reasons for discerning at least two discursive actions having ethical patterns, arising around contradictorily-directed social relations. Some exhibit so-called horizontal, and others vertical and hierarchical, relationships. It is possible that the values of human existence become the means for achieving another 'ethical action' or purpose. Actuality consists of at least two-dimensional discursive ethical practices.

Discursive actions or ethical practices are realized by laying stress on signs and significations in relation to: a) freedom, free will, benevolence, voluntary and self-identifying actions and, b) coercion, compulsion, necessity, subjection, submission, subordination and patron-client relationships. Not all semiotic stipulated discourses and correlated ethical practices exhibit the intention of increasing the freedom and dignity of human beings. Some ethical and cultural traditions may be promote submission or personal advantage.

If we look at Ukrainian history, we see that two contradictions in discourse-ethical practices and social-cultural traditions have come into being: those dealing with a) the freedom and dignity of human beings, and b) paternal-client relations.

The realization of democracy is not only the recognition of its formal principles into the constitution of a country. Highly organized and deeply rooted civil society is needed for democracy to become a reality. The danger of particularity and the atomization of Ukrainian society as its real condition were caused by artificial social and political values and, related to them, the "narcissism" of groups supported by the state's authority and the economic elite or oligarchs. Under today's conditions, Ukrainian society seems to be a conglomerate of "workers for salary," but in general social, public and private life has changed to a great extent.

On the one hand, observers have noted very little popular concern for the new possibilities created by political change. For example, according to polls, only a very small part of society is interested in supporting political parties and civic associations. But, on the other hand, citizens of the Ukraine generally take part in elections (the rate is about 70% of all eligible voters). Most of the population tends to conformist positions in relation to authority, both during elections and in everyday life. Because of this, the idea of justice does not mean much in society. People

very seldom and only unwillingly appeal to courts to defend their dignity or civil rights. In this way, they show a distrust in authority and, at the same time, they continue to rely on power at the local level, considering the latter like the Party before independence. On a private level, though, relationships among people are getting more trusting and close.

Ukrainian society is greatly affected by the memory of past repression, which was particularly sinister in this part of the USSR. According to statistics, one out of every three Ukrainians perished between 1914 and 1953. This concerns primarily the peasant society in the Ukraine that, during the long history of colonization, created some kind of local authority and local institutions which lay outside of government control. Institutions of peasant society in the Ukraine, before the Soviet radicals destroyed them in the 1930s, included: ritual institutions, political institutions, and commercial institutions. As a matter of fact, Ukrainian agricultural and social practices related to the local community – and the creation of so-called *hromada*, which was a voluntary association where leaders were elected for terms of one, two or three years. These elected officials decided a wide range of problems, including relief for widows and for some categories of the poor. But "*hromada* was not concerned with a leveling of wealth within the community. On the contrary, characteristic of Ukrainian peasants was a drive to create wealth, largely through an increase in the family's land holdings, through the sale of surplus agricultural products and through various home industries and services."[4] Based on agricultural production, the family was key to this system, in which there was a tight link between cultural and economic norms. Because of this, William Noll has suggested that here we have the existence of institutions of civil society in the Ukraine before Soviet collectivization, because these institutions lay outside of state control. According to the Communists, collectivization was intended not only to transform the agricultural system of the peasantry, but to alter or entirely destroy peasant culture that was the basis of all Ukrainian cultural society. One of the most far-reaching social consequences of collectivization was the famine of 1932-33 (with about 7 million victims) and the famine after World War II (with one to two million victims). One of the main aims of collectivization was "to break the civil society of peasant culture of such longstanding and to replace it with a newer Soviet culture."[5] The destructive outcome of such Soviet policy is still to be found in our society. It is worth noting that now, in 2003, the Ukraine does not have any significant monument to the memory of the victims of collectivization. The number of victims is in the millions, but their memory was acknowledged by the government only in 2003 (and not by the Communist Party, which was responsible for all these crimes).

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[4] William Noll, *Transformation of Civil Society. An Oral History of Ukrainian Peasant Culture of the 1920-1930* (Kyiv: Rodovid, 1999) (in Ukrainian), p. 10.

[5] Noll, *Transformation of Civil Society*, p. 11.

In addition to this kind of social passiveness there are, outside of the Western area, numerous monuments, street names, factories, etc., dedicated to the main culprits responsible for Soviet terror in the Ukraine. Instead of fully eradicating all vestiges of that terrible Communist past, many Ukrainian authorities and members of the so-called "intelligentsia" simply say, "this is our history." Unfortunately society seems to be indifferent, and people have become habituated to such a view.

Social tradition and ethical intentions within the frame of discourse of freedom and dignity –which can be identical with values of civil society and democracy – have strongly influenced the Ukrainian cultural actuality (*Lebenswelt*). Ethical traditions which show a paternal-client pattern (as distinct from freedom and democracy) have historically been the product of non-Ukrainian languages and cultural political institutions, and therefore exhibit an indifference, if not hostility, to the Ukrainian cultural actuality. Two distinctive ethical traditions came to be in the actuality of social and political history, and they were not brought into it by force.

It is, therefore, significant for those of us interested in the notion of civil society to recognize the importance of national consciousness-raising. This is the creation of a society that is politically aware, rather than just existing passively under the state's yoke, and so it involves pressing for reforms in areas such as intellectual life, religion, mass media, the freedom of assembly and, of course, the protection of civil rights. Since the view that "the state is above all" has been inculcated into people's consciousness in the Ukraine, it has hindered the development of civil society, but the emergence of the latter will prevent social life from oligarchic stagnation.

From the time of independence onwards, the Ukraine has travelled a road where there is an increasing number of organizations, associations and funds that have been created through the initiative of its citizens. According to data from the Center of Innovation and Development, in 1999 the Ukraine had about 30,000 registered public organizations, 800 of which had a country-wide status. But among them are those that use this persona as a mask for illegal activity. Public organizations may be classified into three main groups: a) organizations with state support and protection; b) organizations created thanks to foreign funds and dependent on ongoing investment; and c) organizations created by individual initiative, aimed at gaining and protecting their private and public interests throughout society and the state. These latter activities belong to the authentic development of civil society and now opposition state oligarchies. This has created an urgent need for a new examination of what has been termed "civil society." It is social rather than individual, for it provides the immediate context required for personal growth, interaction and fulfillment. It is civil, rather governmental, because it has a personal and humanizing character.[6] It requires personal activity, and goes beyond any particular dimension: economic, political, religious, national. Nevertheless, it includes all of the

[6] See, here, the work of George McLean.

above, and this active engagement and creative expression of the people constitutes an authentic democratic process.

The development of civil society in the Ukraine, therefore, is a desirable option, and this perspective can be identified with the discourse of freedom and the corresponding ethical tradition. This is also historically related to the maintenance of Ukrainian socio-cultural patterns of the *Lebenswelt*. Rhetoric about civil society that is indifferent to discursive-ethical freedom is also possible, but in this case, we will have a dominant political regime spreading a non-Ukrainian cultural actuality – and this will inevitably lead to the dominance of a semiosis of paternal-client ethics. This kind of civil society will fail to go all the way in promoting democracy and the primacy of human rights.

The Ukraine emerged as a civilization based on the principles of freedom, democracy, and human rights, and on belief in the Holy Spirit. Owing to an analogous belief, the great American Thomas Jefferson was able to say: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man."[7] And we might add that he put this attitude to work in American social life. Ukrainians believe in these values too. The Ukraine has tasted the freedom of belonging to Europe, to be where she has already been in her past history, and now there is 'no turning back.' This is the main hope for the Ukraine today, as it continues on the difficult road to civil society.

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[7] Letter to Benjamin Rush (September 23, 1800).