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DEMOCRACY, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND VALUES IN POLAND, RUSSIA, AND UKRAINE

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This study examines political culture in Poland, Russia and Ukraine. The research question is to what extend social-economic development of these nations as well as the changing values of the population affect political views of the people. The data analysis allows making the following conclusions. First, economic growth does not lead directly to formation of the democratic culture. Although the Russians, who experienced the economic boom in the 2000s, express a high opinion of democracy, as far as the specific parameters are concerned (approval of a strong political leader, subordination to the rulers, free elections, civil rights, gender equality), their views are distant from more democratic persuasions in Poland and Ukraine. Second, prominence of secularrational views does not imply acceptance of the democratic principles. The Poles, the nation with a traditionally Catholic culture, demonstrate more democratic views than the Russians, the society where the atheistic ideology dominated for seventy years. Third, the contemporary culture of self-expression does, in fact, correlate with predominance of the democratic principles. Because freedom of choice implies absence of excessive restrictions, any restraints imposed by the government are met with disapproval and resistance of the people, moving society step-by-step towards a more democratic model. As our analysis indicates, the Poles have advanced on this path farther than the Ukrainians and the Russians. To the extent to which economic conditions in Russia and Ukraine improve, citizens of these countries would shift from the culture of survival to the culture of self-expression and to the more democratic views. Keywords: social-economic development; traditional values; secular-rational values;

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The state of democracy in any society depends on its political culture. If citizens of a nation support democratic norms, this nation would stay on the path of democracy but if a large part of the population is indifferent or hostile to these norms, democracy would be unstable in such country. Of course, political culture is not the only condition of democracy. The political institutions such as legalconstitutional order, strong legislature, independent courts, free mass media, and competitive elections also define the state of democracy. However, in absence of a genuinely democratic political culture, functioning of such institutions would have a merely decorative nature and the very notion of democracy would lose its meaning.

From that standpoint, the political culture in the new democratic nations of the Eastern Europe and the former USSR represents a particular interest for scholars.

Until the end of 1980s, a communist ideology, which was inimical to democracy, dominated these countries. In the last thirty years, the dramatic, revolutionary changes swept these nations moving them towards freedom and liberty. To what extent have the democratic values taken roots in these countries?

This article explores political values in three countries: Poland, Russia, and Ukraine. According to the World Value Survey (WVS), two types of political culture dominate the region: a democratic culture in Poland (as well as other former communist countries of the Eastern Europe) and an authoritarian culture in Russia (as well as some other former republics of the USSR), with Ukraine located in between these two poles [1]. Other estimates are consistent with this study. According to *Index of Democracy* compiled by "The Economist", the contemporary Poland is an incomplete democracy, Russia is an authoritarian regime, and Ukraine is a hybrid regime [2]. As stated by the US non-governmental organization *Freedom House*, Poland is a free country, Russia is an unfree country, and Ukraine is a partially free country [3].

Although such assessments do not make much a surprise to the analysts and the media commentators, from a standpoint of comparative studies of the political development they do not seem as obvious or predictable. For more than fifty years social scientists followed the thesis of a well-known political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset who claimed that social-economic development of a nation is the main determinant of democracy [4]. This is a rather compelling cliam. However, if we accept this thesis, the level of democracy in Poland and Russia should be comparably high, whereas the contemporary Ukraine should be far from democracy. Yet, the data indicate that this is not the case.

How can we account for such discrepancy? From a standpoint of American political scientist Ronald Inglehart, economic factor does not have a direct and immediate impact on political culture. It is certainly important, but only in the last instance. In reality, other factors such as values and value orientations mediate the impact of the economic development on political culture. According to Inglehart, economic growth first improves quality of life, which transforms people's values in a direction of greater appreciation of freedom, which, in its turn, fosters commitment to democracy [5,6,7].

This mechanism works in two ways (Diagram 1). On the one hand, a transition of the society to the industrial economy and the urban lifestyle leads to the spread of education. An educated and well-informed person usually holds a more independent and critical view of society than an illiterate or semi-literate person who accepts many things at face value. Correspondingly, as much as educational level of the population improves, the grip of traditional beliefs, particularly religion, weakens, whereas the role of a secular-rational worldview increases. For an educated person, there are no infallible authorities or absolute truths, so he or she is more committed to the ideals of freedom and democracy.

On the other hand, economic development and improving living standards create a condition of the so-called "existential security," or a sense that one's life, health, and personal safety are not seriously threatened and that people have enough means of livelihood and are protected under the rule of law. In such conditions, citizens do not have to be preoccupied about their daily survival; they are more concerned with their personal development and self-expression. As much as society moves from material values to the so-called post-material values, the role of personal autonomy and self-determination increases and so does the demand for democratic institutions and norms.

Diagram 1. A Model of Democratic Political Culture of Ronald Inglehart.



The main objective of this study is to examine how the social-economic development and current value orientations of people in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine affect the political culture in these countries. To accomplish this objective I will first briefly describe the political views of citizens of these countries. Second, I will examine whether or not social-economic development of these countries affects people political views. Third, I will explore the secular-rational values and if these values foster democratic views in these countries. Fourth, I will analyze the self-expression values and if they affect political culture. In the conclusion, I will sum up the findings of this research. In my analysis I will use the data of the World Value Survey, which is available online [1].

Democracy or Authoritarianism? Political Views in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine.

As the data of the sixth wave of the World Value Survey (2010-2014) indicates, citizens of the abovenamed East-European countries appreciate existence of a democratic political system. Concretely, 73,9% respondents in Poland, 67,3% in Russia, and 79,7% in Ukraine believe that is it good or fairly good to have a democratic political system. The estimates of importance of democracy on a 10-point scale are 8,70 in Poland, 7,43 in Russia, and 7,83 in Ukraine. That indicates that citizens of these countries approve democratic institutions, at least at the verbal level. However, even the general estimates show that respondents in Russia hold a somewhat lower opinion of democracy than respondents in Poland and Ukraine.

Ν	Variable	Values	Poland	Russia	Ukraine
			2010-	2010-	2010-
			2014	2014	2014
1.	Having a democrat-	Very good	18,0	20,8	37,8
	ic political system	Fairly good	55,9	46,5	41,9
		Fairly bad	12,5	12,6	12,2
		Very bad	2,4	4,6	4,9
2.	Importance of	Mean (10-point	8,70	7,43	7,83
	democracy	scale)			
3.	Having a strong	Very good	2,7	26,0	29,2
	political leader who	Fairly good	17,3	41,0	42,1
	does not have to	Bad	40,7	16,1	20,5
	bother with parlia-	Very bad	31,7	5,4	8,2
	ment or elections				
4.	People obey their	Mean (10-point	4,19	6,53	5,47
	rulers	scale)			
5.	People choose their	Mean (10-point	8,73	8,28	8,43
	leaders in free elec-	scale)			-
	tions				
6.	Civil rights protect	Mean (10-point	8,42	8,18	8,30
	people's liberty	scale)			
	from state oppres-				
	sion				
7.	Women have the	Mean (10-point	8,85	8,37	8,44
	same rights as men	scale)			

Table 1. The Political Views in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine

The respondents' answers to more specific questions confirm the general pattern. Most respondents in Russia (67,0%) and Ukraine (71,3%) support having a strong political leader, but that does not hold in Poland (20,0%). Needless to say, such a high appraisal of a personality of the leader (but not of the institutions) is antithetical to a genuine democracy. The assessment of a situation when people obey their rulers is also characteristic: 4,19 in Poland, 6,53 in Russia, and 5,47 in Ukraine. The importance of such characteristics of democracy as free elections (Poland: 8,73; Russia: 8,28; Ukraine: 8,43), civil rights (Poland: 8,42; Russia: 8,18; Ukraine: 8,30), and gender equality (Poland: 8,85; Russia: 8,37; Ukraine: 8,44) reveal a robust pattern of a higher appraisal of the democratic norms in Poland, a somewhat lower estimate in Russia, and Ukraine placed in the middle.

Social-Economic Development and the Spread of Democracy

According to a classic version of democracy theory developed by S.M. Lipset, the measure of democratization of a certain state hinges upon the level of its social-economic development: the higher the level of the social-economic development, the more democratic political system [4]. Numerous studies of social scientists have generally confirmed this thesis [8, 9, 10]. Yet, an analysis of the statistical data pertaining to Poland, Russia, and Ukraine suggests that a causal link between the economy and the politics may have a rather complex nature. In his article, Lipset used four parameters of social-economic development: wealth of a nation, industrialization, urbanization, and education [4]. Let us examine these parameters of social-economic development of Poland, Russia, and Ukraine from 2000 to 2015. According to the World Bank data, national wealth of Poland and Russia, as measured by the gross national product per capita was comparable, and from 2011 to 2014, i.e. exactly when the sixth round of the WVS was conducted, its value among Russians was even higher than among the Poles. The GDP per capita in Ukraine was considerably lower [11].



The level of industrialization may be measured by the percentage of economically active population employed in agriculture: the lower this share, the higher is the share of people employed in industry and services, and, correspondingly, the level of social-economic development. According to this indicator, Russia is the most industrially developed country, Poland goes next, and Ukraine is the last.

Comparison of educational attainment across three nations, as measured by the World Value Survey (2010-2014) as a percentage of adult persons with college education shows that such percentage was higher in Ukraine (28,3%), followed by Russia (25,9%) and Poland (17,8%). As far as urbanization is concerned, measured as percentage of urban dwellers among the whole population, the numbers for 2011 were the following: Russia (73,8%), Ukraine (68,9%), and Poland (60,9%) [1].

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Thus, across all four parameters of social-economic development Russia is at the same level as Poland, if not higher. Ukraine is behind its neighbors, particular as far as national wealth and industrialization are concerned, although it is also obvious that Ukraine is an urbanized nation with highly educated population. Now, if one accepts Lipset's theory of democracy, the Russian citizens should have as democratic value orientations as the citizens of Poland, being far ahead of the citizens of Ukraine. In reality, as the WVS data indicate, this is not the case. Such an apparent discrepancy shows that Lipset's theory of democracy does not provide a compelling explanation to the differences in political views across three countries. In these nations, economy does not directly define political culture of its citizens. Most likely, its impact is more indirect in nature.

Value Orientations: Traditional and Secular-Rational Values

According to a new version of modernization theory advanced by Ronald Inglehart, the social-economic development does determine political views but its effect is mediated by other factors. Before economy affects political views, Inglehart argues, it transforms people's value orientations [5, 6, 7]. One dimension of value orientations involves traditional vs. secular-rational values. In a preindustrial, agrarian society, human well-being depended largely on the natural conditions. Because the causes of natural phenomena were unknown, people explained these phenomena by intervention of supernatural forces. The traditional beliefs and customs governed such societies. Correspondingly, the most important values included religion, family, deference to authority, absolute moral standards, and conformity.

Advances in science and technology lead to erosion of traditional norms and institutions. For an educated person there are no absolute norms and unshakable moral authorities. All norms and institutions of society should be rational and effective. Correspondingly, a modern person is oriented towards such secular values П. И. Осинский. Демократия, авторитаризм и ценностные ориентации в Польше, России и на Украине

as rational behavior, individual success, rejection of religion and absolute norms. The growth of the educated middle class results, according to Inglehart, in spread of the democratic views and modern political culture.

Nonetheless, the actual value orientations in Eastern Europe indicate that things are as not as simple. If we assume that dominance of secular-rational values leads to forming democratic views, then the nation with the most democratic views should be, without a doubt, Russia whereas the nation with the least democratic views should be Poland. If compared with Poles and Ukrainians, a greater percentage of Russians has doubts in importance of religion. A proportion of nonbelievers is also higher in Russia. Next, a percentage of Russians who believe that family is important (85,5%) is somewhat lower than corresponding proportions in Poland (92,1%) and Ukraine (92,0). Finally, a proportion of people who believe that science and technology make our life healthier, easier, and more comfortable is higher in Russia and Ukraine, than in Poland. Thus, we observe a seemingly paradoxical phenomenon: a society with a more traditional culture (Poland) has more democratic views than a society with a stronger legacy of the secular-rational views (Russia). That means that predominance of the secular culture does not make people's views more democratic.

		Ukraine.			
Ν	Variable	Values	Poland	Russia	Ukraine
			2010-	2010-	2010-
			2014	2014	2014
1.	Important in life:	Very important	45,7	14,3	26,3
	religion	Rather important	33,9	27,5	34,5
		Not very im-	15,1	30,5	26.5
		portant	4,8	22,4	12,8
		Not at all			
		important			
2.	Do you believe in	Yes	92,2	73,3	87,8
	God?	No	4,7	15,1	12,2
3.	Important in life:	Very important	92,1	85,0	92,0
	family	Rather important	6,4	12,7	6,6
		Not very im-	0,3	1,3	1,3
		portant	0,3	0,5	0,1
		Not at all			
		important			
4.	Science and tech-	Mean (10-point	7,63	7,77	7,78
	nology are making	scale)			
	our lives healthier,				
	easier, and more				
	comfortable				

Table 2. Traditional and Secular-Rational Values in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine

Value Orientations: Survival and Self-Expression Values

Second dimension of values, per Inglehart, deals with a dilemma of survival versus self-expression. The value orientations of survival include, in his opinion,

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material goods, personal safety, intolerance to dissent, distrust of other people, a low regard of civil rights, and willingness to accept authoritarianism. The value orientations of self-expression, on the contrary, include civil rights and liberties, appreciation of opportunities to openly express one's opinion and identity, trust of others, a concern about natural environment, and support for gender equality.

As a rule, value orientations are formed in the childhood years reflecting the conditions of one's upbringing. For instance, if a person experienced a shortage of material goods, in a later life material goods would represent a great value for him. If a person did not experience shortage of material goods as a child, he or she would take these goods for granted and would be concerned with other, non-material values.

A shortage of material goods, particularly when such goods are allocated by the state, reproduces dependence of a person upon the state, paternalistic mentality, rejection of non-conforming behavior and of non-traditional views. A strategy of survival in a paradigm of welfare paternalism considers such views and patterns of behavior as unacceptable. A high standard of living, particularly when one's earnings have nothing to do with state structures, on the contrary, is associated with high degree of autonomy and independence of thought and action. Any violation of rights and liberties by the state is viewed by such person as inadmissible intervention in his life. Thus, the value orientations of survival reproduce an authoritarian political culture whereas value orientations of self-expression typically foster a democratic political culture.

An analysis of value orientations of self-expression in Poland, Russia and Ukraine points to a higher measure of self-expression among the Poles than among the Russians and the Ukrainians who are still oriented towards survival. How do we know that? To begin with, an imperative of survival leaves a person little free time because most of the time is spent for making one's livelihood. For self-expression, on the contrary, free time is a necessary condition. As Table 3 indicates, citizens of all three countries believed that it is important to have free time. Yet, 85,5% of Poles believed that free time is very important or fairly important whereas only 74,6% of Russians and 80,5% of Ukrainians shared this opinion. Next, the Poles enjoy a greater measure of freedom and control over their lives (6,67 in 10-point scale) than Ukrainians (6,56) and Russians (5,95). Correspondingly, Poles are more satisfied with their lives (7,09) than Russians (6,17) and Ukrainians (5,90). When asked about qualities important for a child, a greater proportion of Poles pointed to tolerance and respect to other people (82,6%) and self-expression (41.0%) than analogous numbers of Russians (63.5% and 35.1%) and Ukrainians (59,9%) and (32,3%). Only 23,5% of Poles choose material values as a priority whereas 52,7% of Russians and 46,2% of Ukrainians prioritize such values. The only finding that contradicted a general pattern was related to trust to people. Only 22,2% of Poles believed that people should be trusted, which is lower than an equivalent proportion of Russians (27,8%) and Ukrainians (23,1%). Perhaps, a greater mistrust to other people comes from that fact that Poles represent a homogeneous, traditional culture, which currently experiences a large influx of migrants and refugees. Nonetheless, the general pattern is obvious: the Poles are more oriented towards self-expression than the Russians and the Ukrainians.

Ν	Variable	Values	Poland	Russia	Ukraine
			2010-	2010-	2010-
			2014	2014	2014
1.	Important in life:	Very important	35,0	29,4	36,9
	leisure time	Rather important	50,5	45,2	43,6
		Not very important	11,6	18,5	15,4
		Not at all important	4,0	5,1	4,0
2.	How much free-	Mean (10-point	6,67	5,95	6,56
	dom of choice	scale)			
	and control over				
	own life				
3.	Satisfaction with	Mean(10-point	7,09	6,17	5,90
	your life	scale)			
4.	Most people can	Most people can be	22,2	27,8	23,1
	be trusted	trusted	75,6	66,2	70,3
		Need to be very			
		careful			
5.	Important child	Mentioned	82,6	63,5	59,0
	qualities: toler-	Not mentioned	17,4	36,2	41,0
	ance and respect				
	for other people				
6.	Important child	Mentioned	41,0	32,1	32,3
	qualities: self-	Not mentioned	59,0	67,9	67,7
	expression				
7.	Post-materialist	Material	23,5	52,7	46,2
	index	Mixed	64,5	41,8	50,1
	(4 items)	Postmaterialist	7,0	2,1	3,7

 Table 3. Value Orientations of Survival and Self-Expression in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine

Conclusion

What are the main findings of this research? First, contrary to the original Lipset's claim and consistently with a more recent Inglehart's argument, economic development does not lead directly to formation of the democratic political culture. If that was the case, the political views of the Russians would not have been different from the views of the Poles. The reality is far from that. Whereas the Russians express a generally high opinion of democracy (albeit not as high as the Poles or the Ukrainians), as far as the more specific parameters are concerned (approval of a strong political leader, subordination to the rulers, free elections, civil rights, gender equality), the views of the Russians are still distant from a democratic political culture.

Why did the economic growth in Russia in the 2000s fail to sustain democratic political culture which began to form in the 1990s? The problem is that benefits of Russia's economic success, which resulted mainly from the high world prices on the hydrocarbon fuel, became distributed unevenly among various strata of the

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Russian society. The Russia's elite has benefitted from the windfall revenues more than the rest of the society. Economic inequality in Russia as measured by the Gini coefficient (Diagram 3) remained higher than in Poland and Ukraine. The improvement in living standards of the 2000s was significant in the large cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg but not very visible in the middle-sized and small towns and the rural areas. Thus, the economic growth of the first decade of the century has had a relatively minor effect on the living standards and political views of most Russians.



Second, prominence of the secular-rational views does not necessarily imply popularity of the democratic culture. As the WVS data indicates, the Poles, the nation with a traditionally Catholic culture demonstrate more democratic views than the Russians, the society, where the atheistic ideology dominated for about seventy years. It seems that weaker moral-religious convictions result in lower immunity to the authoritarian rule, whereas strong moral-religious convictions allow distancing oneself from an unjust authority and provide fortitude to resist tyranny. The independent status of the church, as the Polish experience shows, may be conducive to forming an oppositional, democratic culture. Recently Inglehart himself acknowledged that dominance of secular-rational views, characteristic of the first phase of modernization associated with industrialization and bureaucratization of society does not necessarily lead to genuine emancipation of people. Rational-scientific views are perfectly compatible with ideology of authoritarianism and totalitarianism. It is only second, postindustrial phase of economic modernization, associated with growing predominance of the values of self-expression, that lead to spread of the humanistic views, tolerance, and the democratic culture [7].

Third, the contemporary culture of self-expression does, in fact, correlate with predominance of the democratic principles. Once again, culture of self-expression implies a relatively high level of social-economic development and living standards. According to Inglehart and Welzel, whereas the industrial phase of modernization leads to secularization of the institutions of authority, the postindustrial phase of modernization leads to emancipation from the institutions of authority [7]. The traditional institutions such family and religious community lose their grip over an increasingly autonomous individual.

According to German sociologists Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, the modern society is undergoing a profound transformation shifting from preeminence of the "communities of need" (such as family or a religious community) to the "elective affinities" (such as social networks) [12]. Because freedom of choice implies absence of excessive restrictions and limitations, any restraints imposed by the government, which tries to preserve its control over society, are met with disapproval and resistance of the people, moving society stepby-step towards a more democratic model. As our analysis indicates, the Poles have advanced on this path farther than the Ukrainians and the Russians. To the extent to which economic conditions in Russia and Ukraine improve, citizens of these countries would shift from the culture of survival to the culture of selfexpression, and, correspondingly, to the more democratic views. If, on the contrary, the social-economic situation in these countries deteriorates, people would be preoccupied with the strategy of survival and stay aloof of the democratic views.

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Данное исследование рассматривает степень зрелости политической культуры в трех странах: Польше, России и на Украине. Главный вопрос исследования – в какой мере уровень социально-экономического развития общества, а также преобладающие ценностные ориентации населения воздействуют на политическую культуру в этих странах? Анализ данных приводит к следующим выводам. Вопервых, социально-экономическое благополучие в той или иной стране не ведет автоматически к формированию демократической культуры граждан. Если бы это было так, то взгляды россиян в этом отношение мало бы отличались от взглядов поляков. На деле же, в то время как россияне выражают общую позитивную оценку демократии, что касается ее конкретных параметров (оценки роли сильного лидера, подчинения руководителям, свободных выборов, гражданских прав, гендерного равноправия) взгляды россиян все еще далеки от демократических идеалов. Во-вторых, распространенность в той или иной стране светского мировоззрения не означает популярности в ней демократических убеждений. Граждане страны с традиционно сильным влиянием католической церкви (Польша) демонстрируют более демократические взгляды, чем граждане страны с доминирующей в прошлом атеистической идеологией (Россия). Очевидно, что ослабленная роль морально-религиозных убеждений ведет к пониженному иммунитету к авторитарным формам правления. В-третьих, в отличие от культуры выживания, которая существовала в (бывших) коммунистических странах на протяжении ряда десятилетий, современная культура самовыражения действительно сопряжена с преобладанием демократических начал. Поскольку свобода самовыражения предполагает отсутствие запретов и препон, то ограничительные меры власти, которая стремится сохранить контроль над обществом, встречаются с неодобрением и вызывают его сопротивление, постепенно продвигая общество к более демократической модели. Как показывают данные нашего анализа, поляки продвинулись на этом пути дальше, чем украинцы и россияне. В той мере, в какой экономическое положение в России и на Украине будет улучшаться, граждане этих стран будет постепенно переходить от культуры выживания к культуре самовыражения, и соответственно, к более демократическим взглядам. В настоящей работе были использованы данные Всемирного обзора ценностей, которые находятся в свободном доступе в интернете.

Ключевые слова: социально-экономическое развитие; традиционные ценности; секулярно-рациональные ценности; ценности выживания; ценности самовыражения; политическая культура; демократия; авторитаризм; индивидуализация.