

When we put forth the idea of a country in 2006 the concept of functioning institutions are used to describe it. However this concept was not truly applicable a century before as a country existed based on its rulers, centuries long economic traditions, military capability, religion, and natural resources to name a few. The 20th century was an era of often violent transformation throughout the world with the most influential concepts being the advancement of Wilsonian ideals and global acceptance of codified international law. This process of change placed the Ukraine in a grueling meat grinder in 1906 and the outcome in 2006 is remarkably different than results found in the rest of the world. As the modern world evolved, Ukrainians dug in their heels in the black earth.¹

The leadership and direction of the Ukraine has been from top down and influenced from Russia's hierarchy. Local control has and continues to be in the form of a "hetman". The most notable and notorious aspect of a hetman is his willingness to switch allegiance to whomever offers the best deal. In understanding Ukrainian politics this concept is an inseparable characteristic. To the rest of the world in 1906 little was known of the Ukraine and their identity as a people. First one must examine the three parts of the Ukraine's structure in 1906 before starting a detailed description of the century's changes.

In the western half of the Ukraine an trickle of Hellenistic concepts

1 The Ukraine contains 30% of the earth's precious black earth reserves.

and Jesuit missionaries, Zemstvo / village social structure, and an economy based on the richness of the earth formed the basis for society.² The last half of the 19th century involved major changes in the life of the peasantry there. Freedom from serfdom brought economic hardship as peasants lost the right to graze livestock and use the forest resources for free. Combined with 60% increase in the population, poor harvests in 1905, and landlords who had become rich on sugar beet production, tensions developed in the impoverished villages.³ This primitive market economy excluded the peasants and with the burden of taxation, conscription, and corporal punishment fermented revolt. Traditionally a grain producing culture, the sugar beet demand had dramatic effects on peasant society. Due to worldwide modernization of agriculture, grain production boomed producing declining prices. Wealthy landowners sold off 40% of the land to raise money for facilities used in sugar beet production resulting in a switch of labor demands.⁴ Women and children were the main choice as workers leaving the male population faced with uncertainty while the zemstvos became wealthy.⁵ Work in these agro-factories was also of a temporary seasonal nature.

During this time revolts were present in over 40% of the villages.

2 The zemstvo or local landowners councils were responsible for the basic infrastructure such as roads, schools, and medical services. During this time 70% of the wealthy landlords were of Polish descent.

3 Sugar beets were the boom industry in the Western Ukraine. Urbanization demanded sugar for alcohol production dramatically changed the economic structure. The variety of sugar beets were introduced from Germany as well as the Prussian-style land owner-enterprise.

4 From the time of emancipation to 1906, sugar beet output increased 385 times from 5.73 to 22,113 metric tons.

5 Women and children were paid 20 kopecks per day, men 35 kopecks.

There was an influx of political propagandists mainly from the the social democrats and political newspapers were available to the peasantry. The abolition of serfdom had brought some compulsory education to the peasantry, and with the recent development of Ukrainian language in print and literature, the early concept of nationalism was being forged by a hammer of resentment against their Polish masters.⁶ The revolts in 1906 had no political focus and were generally short lived and directed at landowner property. The local rebellions consisted of batrak peasants as a kulak class had not developed yet from Stolypin's newly introduced reforms.⁷ The local zemstvos responded harshly to the numerous uncoordinated local uprisings and this unrest percolated for decades until crushed by Joesph Stalin in the 1930's.

In 2006 the region faces some of the same basic problems and similar structure. The men are once again allowed into the forest and the materials are now exported to Europe. Light manufacturing of value added consumers goods has replaced sugar beets but is still mainly employing the female population. Ukrainian nationality is strongly embedded and religiously oriented to the West. The tragedy remains is that these loyal century long tillers of the black earth to this day are denied ownership of the land as the government keeps control of the best soil for its collective farms. The government has declared this a natural resource and private ownership is

6 The first Ukrainian bibles were printed in 1903.

7 Impoverished batrak peasants were easily distinguished by linden tree bark shoes their wore.

disallowed. The diaspora community in North America have began reconnecting with the motherland. With this one would hope western liberal ideals would slowly transfer to the region. The century of disconnection have evolved into two concepts of Ukrainian. Often the visitor is confronted with inability to communicate though both speaking Ukrainian and faced with a the reality of an impoverished land nothing like the tales of migrated ancestors. The region stands the most to gain by orientating to the European Union economically.

Looking to the eastern Ukraine we find a quite different situation. In 1906 the region was a major focus of Czarist Russia process of industrialization. Mining and iron production dominated the region though there was a fair amount of agriculture in the Don Bass. The unique influential aspect at this time was the influx of Russians, both peasants and manager engineers.⁸ Towns were built around the factories and mines producing a different scenario for social development. The new class of laborers kept ties with their villages often leading to disaster for the factories. The engineer managers though instructed to follow Czarist policy often ignored orders and were more concerned with profitability. By 1906 the area had good rail transportation and was exporting almost one third of the extracted coal. The small eastern Ukrainian agriculture sector was more

⁸ The engineer managers demographically consisted of 2/3 Great Russians, 10% Polish, and the rest German and Jewish. The 1881 assassination of Czar put restrictions on who could enter facilities of higher education crating a disproportionate number of Great Russians in engineering. This flood of Russians carried the Russian Orthodox faith with them.

efficient in grain production and combined with the rail system, better links to the Czarist government, was able to export grain onto the world market.

The new industrial villages created a new set of problems. Village ties left factories and mines abandoned at harvest time and the need to be with family. The life of the peasant changed dramatically as wages were increased due to high coal prices and factories improved housing so families could join the workers. Additional measures such as surrendering of malapropism and payment through credit accounts at overpriced factory stores left this new class of worker indentured to the factory.⁹ These communities were penetrated by political activists but they were more radical than than social democrats roaming the western countryside. Grievances and riots were not directed at the zemstvos but instead started at the local tavern and drifted towards the factory stores they were indebted to. The engineer managers had closer ties to Czarist regime as compared to the land owning class in the west and support for suppressing disturbance and eliminating the radical political elements was handled by the Okhrana.¹⁰ Life for the worker may appear dismal but the Czar did set up regulations and bureaucratic oversight for obtainment of at least minimum conditions.¹¹

9 Propiskas are internal passports used in Russian from Czarists to modern times. they record a persons address and work history. Free movement as we know it in liberal societies and economies is not permitted

10 The Okhran, although loyal to the czar, this secret police force was financed by local businesses needing their services.

11 Additional penalties for workers included loss of a days pay for being 15 minutes late, paying for broken tools, and dues to gang leaders.

The upper echelons of eastern Ukrainian society changed too. The zemstvos invested in light industries to support growth in the region. Simultaneously they were saddled with the additional burden of their traditional support for local infrastructure. The local zemstvos paid over 50% of the taxes to support roads, school, and medical care and often tried to avoid doing so. The zemstvos continued to try to shift the tax burden to these new industries while keeping control of the monies would be spent. The Russian engineer manager class and Czarist bureaucracy benefited most from the modernization in the region. The overall uniqueness is that it was the first area in Czarist Russia to be capital-based society as compared to the traditional peasant-based aimed at survival.

Advancing a century we find the raw materials industries having development into heavy industries laying idle. These once booming industries produce goods with low value added in an era of global competition. The region is highly developed in the sense of infrastructure, electricity, road, railroads, and an abundant educated work force able to produce finished products. This is in stark contrast to 1906 with labor shortages and production of raw materials. Local control for maintaining the current infrastructure is now taken to an extreme as government has instructed businesses it is their responsibility. Basically if the roads are poor and your electrical lines fall down, you must contract and pay for someone to repair them. These failing industries also carry a heavier burden of taxation and

higher utility rates. The sovietization remains in that consumers and agriculture in the region pay utility rates 25% less than businesses. Non-paying consumers are never disconnected. Labor protection laws are extremely strict placing additional burden on industry. Modernization is needed yet no one will take responsibility or foot the bill, Czarists times seemed better in that respect. The small towns that developed along industry have produced a population that is now 90% urbanized torn far from peasant roots.

After this general review of a century of change to further understand the Ukraine, let us compare various aspects in table form.

<i>item</i>	<i>1906</i>	<i>2006</i>
currency	Russian ruble (gold standard based)	Hryvnia (not convertible)
constitution	The Russian Fundamental Law 23 April 1906	Constitution of the Ukraine 28 June 1996
government	Monarchy (limited parliament) -will of the Czar	Democratic Republic -will of the people
corruption	bureaucratic	societal- raked #3 in world
population regulation	use of internal passports	use of internal passports
political parties	not allowed	multiple – none having over 20% of voters
major religions	Catholic, Uniate, Russian Orthodox	Catholic, Uniate, Russian Orthodox
parliament	Duma (St. Petersburg)	Rada (Kiev)
copyright	Yes	No (constitutionally guaranteed)

<i>item</i>	<i>1906</i>	<i>2006</i>
population	27.9 million	52 Million
birth rate	rising	declining
economy	cash based	cash based
state language	Russian	Ukrainian
suffrage	universal male suffrage	Universal at age 18
basic education	mandated	mandated
higher education	regulated	available
military service	conscription	conscription
Conscientious Objector Status	no	yes
sovereign state	no	yes
foreign policy objectives	aligned with Russia	regional cooperation with Europe, Russia and Black Sea area states
crops	wheat, barley, corn, sunflower, beets	wheat, barley, corn, sunflower, beets
livestock production	rising	declining (consumers can not afford meat)
death penalty	yes	no

A overall summary of the Ukraine in 1906 would be of nation joining the industrial revolution at a later stage, in 2006 it was failed socialist experiment. The lacking components in this modernization are the liberal institutions that create an efficient and balanced society. In 2006 we find only the ancient institutions of religion, corruption, and clans sustaining daily life. Comparing corruption in the past one see it as a method to move things forward in Czarists bureaucracy. Modern day corruption in the Ukraine functions only to keep the status quo. The isolation of Ukraine

from involvement in world affairs has dramatically changed. Its place in the global economy today has switched from raw material for industry to the smuggling of Asiatic drugs and Ukrainian women as European consumer goods. The influx of early 20th century investment and technologically skilled individuals has reversed course. The brain drain trail needs only reach Poland and Hungary where skilled workers are paid 20 times Ukrainian wages.

In 1906 foreign direct investment received some cooperation and protection from the Czarist bureaucracy, today the multi-party legislative system restricts and continually confuses investors with changes in rules and regulations. A century ago the region could export products to cash rich countries in Europe. The current market for the majority goods that are exportable are to less developed and expanding nations at lower prices. The boom in 1906 can only be recreated by the introduction of foreign investment and technologies to modernize the resources. Unfortunately the Ukraine is in the China syndrome stage, when investors make decisions on the idea that they can't afford not to be investing in the early stages of a new potential market. Needless to say many early investors in China lost everything due to rushing in and not understanding the culture, regulations, or lack of rule of law. This Asiatic fog engulfs the foreseeable future of the Ukraine.

Commonalities for the two periods seem to make up the majority of

this analysis. Patriotism is at an all time low, first after the loss of face as an empire in a defeat to Japan, and now at the loss of an Empire based on a social experiment. The 1906 economy benefited those in power and today the former communists and oligarchs share the wealth the privatization of the nation's public property. Low wages for both periods combined with the idea of surviving day to day promotes excessive alcohol consumption and a low rate of personal savings. Competition once thought of as inefficient under the Czar is again deionized as high unemployment destroys local industries competing in a global economy. Oddly enough the memory of the Empire's naval forces destroyed by Japanese shells rusting at the bottom of the Straits of Tshumi have been replaced by the rusting fleet at Stavropol. The use of eliminating political rivalries continues as a century ago

The boom of 1906 preceded the revolution and was encored by the big-bang theory after the revolution's demise. Neighboring Poland suffered a similar historic fate under the Russian boot yet responded to modern economic theory. The Ukraine, while lighting the fuse poured water on the powder to soften the explosion. Then as now the lack of liberal institutions and government strangulation arrest the long overdue development of the Ukraine. Efforts are being made to adapt but as under Nicolas II everything is filtered and adapted to what the authorities believe is needed. The historic link between the will of the Kremlin and the kneeling of the Ukraine is the final component over the span of a century. The idea of an

independent Ukraine is how the the Ukrainians view themselves, yet century of stagnant political order survives. They look outward towards the European pasture but are unable to take an Asiatic herd there.