

Precommunist Legacies and the 2014 Insurgencies in Ukraine

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In 1991, the Ukrainian referendum to secede from the Soviet Union was supported by all ethnic groups and regions in Ukraine, including 54% of the population in Crimea and well over 80% in all eastern oblasts. Even as late as February 18th, 2014, the majority of Crimeans (59%) and Eastern Ukrainians (70%) wanted to remain part of Ukraine and not become Russian territories. These numbers are similar to other regions of central and western Ukraine. However, by March 16, 2014, less than a month after Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich left office (February 22), 97% of the Crimean peninsula and over 90% of Donbas voted to secede. Despite the vast majority of the population having seemingly no interest in secession or violence, these regions voted to secede and n

“Self-reinforcing or positive feedback processes” are the central theme of increasing returns (Pierson 2000, 252). More specifically, the benefits of the current institutional rules compared to alternatives increase with time. This is similar to the economic rational choice argument of transaction cost and institutional maintenance (Shepsle 1989). While an alternative

distribution of power decreased. Without local contestation St. Petersburg worked through strong-



Following Lenin's negotiation with Ukrainians and capture of Kiev, a lack of opposition permeated Ukrainian politics and economy. As the Soviets attempted to stabilize the state and temper nationalist mobilization following the 1917 Russian Revolution they continued several extractive political and economic institutions.

While agriculture also became increasingly nationalized, the kholhz structure and rural isolation provided continually higher levels of autonomy than industrial urban centers.

Western Ukraine

During the middle of the 19th century, Austro-Hungarian policies and conflict opened opportunities for inclusive economic institutions and more plural political organization.

Western Ukraine officially entered Soviet communism

tapped into regarding Russian language rights and Russian global alignment as singular political issues. With local power concentrated, the east received a very singular narrative and answer to ails. Conversely, western Ukraine lacked concentrated power and contestation permitted different narratives to become salient that attacked various populations at different moments. The latter leading to multiple parties and the former one party rule.

Following Euromaidan and the ousting of Yanukovich, Ukraine's eastern and southern political structure collapsed. Members of parliament from the Party of Regions quickly defected,

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