CHAPTER II

UKRAINE'S SEARCH FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY, NATURE OF ITS STATE AND SOVEREIGNTY, AND THE FORMATION OF UKRAINIAN FOREIGN POLICY
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In August 1991, Ukraine unexpectedly stumbled into independence, nobody, perhaps least of all the Ukrainians, really knew what further to expect. Indeed, the event was as much of a shock to the Ukrainians as it was to the rest of the world. Up until it actually happened they did not really demand it, expect it, or prepare for it. As a result of its suddenness, fundamental questions had not even been asked, let alone answered. In the days and weeks that followed independence, Ukrainian policy makers had to hazard a guess as to likely answer. It was this guesswork that guided policymaking and policy implementation in the days and weeks that followed, as the Ukrainian national economic political elite grabbed with both hands the opportunities presented by independence. The fact is that Ukraine lacked foreign policy elite that compounded the problem of not knowing the answers.

In this backdrop, Ukraine being one among the successor states of the Soviet Union attempted to come to terms with what it means to become an independent state. This involved an articulation of national interests to provide a conceptual basis for independent foreign and security policy. But the task of defining and articulating the national interests were proved to be difficult for Ukraine as such interests were based on its understanding of the nature of its own identity as a people and a state and on basic values such as 'democracy', 'freedom' and 'independence'. Lacking such a single unified national outlook and a system of values and interests, Ukraine was thus caught in a vicious circle: the building of a national state based on a national consensus on the identity of the state and its people which sets the framework for the definition of the national interest.

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Ukraine's attempts to resolve this dilemma were painful and sometimes counterproductive. As a result, Ukraine took its first four years of independence only just to form
a unified system of national interests and a consistent national strategy. In this context among the significant factors influencing this process are threat perceptions, analysis of the current political and economic situation and also the more traditional conception of a role in the international system. On this basis, the principal objectives of Ukrainian foreign policy were asserted but the greatest challenge that it has faced is how to facilitate cooperation with the West in the changing security environment of Europe, while maintaining positive, productive and mutually respectful relations with Russia. This proved however no easy task, particularly in the light of Russia's reluctance to treat Ukraine as an independent sovereign state and its blatant objection to an enlarged NATO that would include any of the former Soviet Republics.

Thus, though Ukraine moved on the path of democracy its own foreign and security policy were certainly limited both by internal and external factors. Internally, there are considerable divergences in the ideologies and foreign policy goals of the major political parties in the Rada (the Ukrainian parliament). The executive and legislative branches do not on the whole work very well together. Socio-political, economic and ethnic issues also weakened the abilities of the policy makers to act decisively. Externally, Ukraine was constrained by the growing tension between the West and Russia and found itself in an ever more uncomfortable geo-political position.

As these internal and external challenges have an impact upon the foreign and security policy making of Ukraine, its policy makers became vulnerable and thus its foreign and security policy decisions change constantly responding and adopting to the internal and external environment.

An attempt is made in this chapter to discuss various factors that lead to the lack of consistency in Ukraine’s foreign and security policy. The focus will be on the issue of Ukraine’s search for national identity and the evolution of its foreign policy in the context of the basic principles, objectives and the means for the achievement of foreign policy objectives. An attempt will be also made to analyze the inherent weaknesses that Ukraine possesses in relation to the nature of Ukrainian state and of sovereignty. Finally this
discussion will provide a short account of other contributing factors to Ukraine's indecisiveness.

1. Ukraine's Search for National Identity
The independence of Ukraine was coincided with the dissolution of USSR and the emergence of new geo-political environment in Central and Eastern Europe. This however, created new divisions of spheres of influence between the Euro-Atlantic alliance, on the one hand, and the Russian led Euro-Asian collective security, on the other, leaving Ukraine in a highly unusual predicament, that is on the periphery of two structurally changing systems. From the point of view of all European geopolitical trends Ukraine lies in the sphere of influence of Russian foreign policy and also in the sphere of constantly increasing interests of the European Union and the Euro-Atlantic structures. In such circumstances the fundamental question of national identity has found its centre stage as it has an important impact on the sense of insecurity or security of the political elite as well as the public of Ukraine. But due to its political and cultural diversity, economic and social crisis and its location between Central Europe and Eurasia, however, make it difficult to achieve an overwhelming domestic consensus on the issue of national identity.

On one level, the emphasis placed by the political elites on Ukraine’s European heritage, culture and history represent their efforts in trying to create a European or more precisely, a Central European Identity. Political parties like the centrists, centre-right, civic groups and parliamentary fraction, those who supported Central European identity backed a foreign policy orientation under President Leonid Kravchuk to establish close ties with European political, economic and security structures. On the other, political parties such as the Socialist parties of Ukraine and the Communist party of Ukraine held an uncompromising cold war view of NATO and its enlargement. They opposed Ukraine’s domestic transformation process and uphold an agenda for the restoration of Soviet identity both domestically and externally (Pirogov 1995:37). Differ from these two, the reformist Ukrainian leaders, those who supported Leonid Kuchma (known as pragmatist) believe in the projection of Ukrainian national identity as a non-aligned
country as the best short term solutions to Ukraine’s problems. But they also see joining NATO as part of Ukraine’s general return to Europe from which communism and Russian Imperialism tore it artificially from (Kuzio 1998:8). Europe to this group signifies democracy, civilization and a modern nation state (ibid: 8).

As there is clear cut differences in Ukrainian society on the issue of national identity whether to identify with central Europe, Eurasia or as an independent neutral country in international politics, this issue has its impact upon the policy making process, and make Ukrainian foreign and security policy more vulnerable. Therefore, it has been discussed from various angles of Ukrainian society.

1.1. Historical Background

National identity is “the identity of a territorially organized community or a polity”. The term national identity is also used at the individual level to describe the feelings of loyalty and attachment that people have towards the nation and the state. The history of Ukraine however, does not reflect these theoretical aspects of national identity in the true sense of the term, as the history of Ukrainian people and of the Ukrainian territory does not abound with continuity and constant lines of development throughout the centuries. Hardly any other nation and hardly any other territory in Europe is so disunited and divided in so many respects as the Ukraine. Its various regions look back on their own history, which often developed independently from, indeed contrary to, that of other neighbouring regions. But they could not develop a stable basis for their existence due to the lack of a clear sense of national identity among the population (Simon 1994:61) and they have lost their historic opportunity of declared independence from time to time.

Many historians believed that the name Ukraine literally means ‘boarder land/frontier land’ and appeared in the sixteenth century. Another theory is that this name has much older origin, dating from the twelfth century and is derived from the Ukrainian word ‘kraina’, which means ‘country’. Whatever the origin may be the emergence of Ukraine from the conditions of province or periphery to nation state in relation to Russia and Poland has a long history. Thus today’s Ukraine cannot be viewed simply either as a
part of historic Russia or modern Soviet space or a part of Poland. But it can be viewed that, Ukraine is intimately linked both to Russia and to the countries of central Europe and Black Sea region. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that the people now known as Ukrainians begun to call themselves “Ukrainian” and their homeland Ukraine (Szporluk 1997: 88). Before that, they were variously known as Ruthenians in Austria, Rusnaks in Hungary or little Russians (Cossacks) in the Russian empire. However, putting together of all the “Ukraines” was completed by 1954, when Ukraine gained one of Ottoman Turkey’s former “Ukraine” Crimea. It was then that Ukraine becomes a single entity with a center of its own. Thus, the question of Ukrainian identity has two dimensions.

1.1(a) The Russian Dimension

The formation of the Kievan Rus state is the common heritage for both Russians and Ukrainians. Russian frequently calls Kiev the mother of all Russian cities. The Mongols crushed the Kiev state in 1240, but from about 1340 the Mongols had to give up their possessions in Ukraine to the expanding Grand Princes of Lithuania. At the same time the Poles moved into the Western Ukrainian provinces of Galicia and Volhynia. This is where Russian and Ukrainian history separate. Russia remained under Mongol rule for 150 years, whereas Ukraine gradually became part of the Polish –Lithuanian medieval state.

The introduction of serfdom in the middle of the sixteenth century led to a significant increase in the number of Cossacks in the Ukrainian part of the Polish state. As their existence was formed a buffer against Tatar raids into the Western part of Ukraine, their existence was accepted by the Polish authorities. Gradually the Cossacks began to organize politically, and in the second half of the 16th century the Zaporozhian Sich, a Cossack stronghold on the lower Dnieper, emerged as the center of the Ukrainian Cossacks. The Zaporozhian Sich soon started to act as a sovereign power, and established foreign policy relation with the Habsburgs and pope in opposition to the Ottomans. In the long run the Cossacks’ independent policy could not be tolerated by Poland, and attempts were made to subdue them by force. This led to the famous rebellion of 1648 under the
leadership of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, who thereby gained control over most of present day Ukraine except the Western most provinces. However, Khmelnytsky needed a partner to secure his victory. The choice fell upon the Muscovite Tsar, and in 1654, the Treaty of Pereiaslav was signed (Bukkvoll 1997:62). For Ukraine, this became the defining moment, as the Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky swore allegiance to the Tsar of Muscovy. Thereafter, Ukrainian autonomy gradually diminished. Russians began colonizing left bank Ukraine and Kiev after the Pereyaslav agreement of 1654, which united this part of Ukraine to Muscovy. Colonization however stepped up with the industrialization policies of the region in the late 19th century and especially with Soviet industrialization policies of the mid-20th century.

However, in the Ukrainian historical memory, Pereyaslav led directly to a long series of disasters: the defeat of Cossack leader Majepa at Poltava in 1709; the liquidation of independent Cossack institutions later in the eighteenth century; Tsar Alexander II’s Ems Decree of 1876 that banned virtually all publications in Ukrainian; and the Ukrainian famine in the early 1930s, created on Stalin’s order (Morrison 1993: 679). Thus any Ukrainian leader who signs an agreement with Russia is immediately seen as risking a potential surrender of Ukrainian independence on the pattern of 1654. Therefore, after independence nationally conscious Ukrainians tried to develop an identity different from Russia. But not surprisingly, Ukrainians are more likely to consider themselves part of an all-Russian nation composed of Great Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians. Ukrainian nationalists call this identity, ‘Little Russianism’; they argue that it denies Ukrainians to be a ‘separate Slavic people with its own culture, language and traditions distinct from those of other Slavic nations’ (Solchanyk 1992: 19).

In spite of nationalists concern of Russian cultural influence on Ukraine, many Ukrainians those who supported integrational ties with Russia, contended that Russian – Ukrainian cultures pose no threat to one another, at least at the inter-state level (Shulman1998: 289). In an academic conference devoted to Pereyaslav Agreement of 1654 and its legacy, several participants also noted that the incorporation of Ukraine into Russia actually stimulated the development of Ukrainian culture and language and gave
rise to the idea of Ukrainian nationhood (ibid: 291). In this context, the words of V. A. Ann are worth mentioning. To him,

“For three hundred years both cultures so intermixed that separation and isolation will negatively affect each of them. This singular space exists today, too, although it is beginning to undergo corrosion.... To allow this [weakening of Ukraine–Russian cultural ties] means to hamper artificially Ukraine’s cultural development” (ibid: 291).

Thus, in spite of the fear factor of ‘neo-colonial’ cultural domination over the new Ukrainian state, Ukrainians (most particularly eastern Ukraine) are trying to co-exist with Russia and finding it difficult to develop a Ukrainian identity completely different from Russia. Therefore, Ukraine still continues to be in the dilemma of addressing the questions related to national identity and this has been getting its reflection in Ukrainian politics. The voting pattern of the 1994 presidential election is a clear example of it where the central districts on the left and right banks of the Dnieper reflected the influence of the West and East upon Ukraine respectively. Those on the right bank were more likely to back Leonid Kravchuk, who ran a campaign premised on the defense of Ukrainian national identity against Russia; and those on the left bank tended to support Leonid Kuchma, who advocated accommodation with Russia (Burant 1995: 1127).

1.1 (b) European Dimension

The history of Ukraine as a European state begins with the medieval principedom of Kiev. An ancient city on the Dnipro River, Kiev stands at the cross road of the old north-south trade routes from Scandinavia to Greece, and east-West trade routes between Europe and Central Asia. This Strategic location ensured the country’s intensive diplomatic affairs and its prominent role in Europe. In 1362, the Kiev principedom was absorbed by the grand Duchy of Lithuania and later all the Ukrainian lands were put under the direct control of the Polish Crown. At the same time, numerous merchants, notably Italians from Venice and Genoa, settled on the Black Sea Coast, especially in Crimea. Since the larger Western part of the country remained within Poland and Austria, Ukraine was thus incorporated into European politics, economy and culture. This not only helped to preserve, but even develop the sense of its national identity. Then, this has been
developed by the nationally conscious Ukrainian intellectuals, those who began to emerge at the universities of Kiev and Kharkiv in the mid 19th century. But the Tsarist autocracy, which considered Ukrainian speakers to be Russians, suppressed Ukrainian cultural and educational activities, especially between 1863 and 1905. However when in Galicia, the region of L’viv, ruled by Austria-Hungary from the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth in the late 18th century to 1918, nationally conscious Ukrainian intellectuals took advantage of the relative freedom allowed by the Habsburgs to lay the political, cultural, social and economic foundations of Ukrainian nationhood. Moreover, the Habsburgs permitted the continued existence of the Greek Catholic Church, a critical institution for the development of Ukrainian national identity (Burant 1995: 1126).

In the inter war period, Poland controlled Galicia and what are today the Western region of ‘Rivne’ and ‘Volyn’, which Russia had annexed during the partitions, despite efforts by Warsaw to Polonise the area, Ukrainian organizations took advantage of the opportunities for independent activity the regime offered to strengthen Ukrainian national identity in this region (Szporluk 1991:480-81). As Russian presence in West-Ukraine was minimal, a level of national consciousness also prevailed throughout West Ukraine and that Ukrainians throughout this part of the country look to the West and Central European countries for cultural, political and economic models (ibid.: 475). By contrast, in the eastern districts, only for a brief period during the 19th and 20th countries the nationally conscious Ukrainians had the opportunity to cultivate an identity distinct from the Russians.

Therefore, after independence the elites who shaped Ukraine’s foreign policy since its 16 July 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty within the Soviet Union until Kuchma assumed the presidency in mid-1994 understood Ukraine as a nation state with a European and more specifically a Central European identity. They gave reference to Ukraine’s role in European history from time to time that is, in the form of Kievan Rus’ at the beginning of last millenium, the dynastic ties with Europe emanating from the
period, and subsequent military alliances with European powers, to serve as the backdrop to justify the intensification of Ukraine’s ties with Europe (Wolczuk 1997: 37).

1.2. Transnational Perspective

As theoretically trans-nationalism describes the emergence of a European identity based on liberal European values, democracy, tolerance, inclusion, multiculturalism, human and minority rights even globalization and the rights of capitalists (Taras, Filippova & Pobeda 2004: 837), history may be on the side of development of trans-nationalism in Ukraine. Partitions and ruling of powerful neighbors (Poland, Russia & Lithuania) have left a multinational legacy an advantage for nurturing transnational values in Ukraine. This is more evident in the major urban centers, which have long constituted multicultural Meccas. Ukraine’s linguistic and religious communities are diverse. At the same time, identity is rooted in a traditional understanding of Eastern Orthodoxy, which gives focus to ‘the soul of the people’ an inclusive and tolerant conceptualization of society. A different rationality has thus evolved and the circumstances dictated the adoption in Ukraine of a form of transnational values. The experience of forming part of the Soviet Union has had some possibly un-intentional positive consequences as the Ukrainian Socialist Republic has experienced strong multi-nationalism and multi-cultural tendencies. While by themselves they did not lead to dominant transnational orientation, they serve as variables that can promote transnational values.

For Szporluk, the transnational dimension is paramount in the formation of modern Ukraine, and the complex interactions between Ukrainians and other European nations shaped the development of Ukraine (ibid: 839). But, the arguments made by past political and intellectual figures, with the claim that Ukraine was an Austrian invention or a Galician conspiracy, and Ukrainians were essentially south Western Russians or otherwise without any distinct identity. Szporluk therefore, contended that in order to become European it was not necessary to be a “Russian”, or a “Pole”, or an “Austrian” subject of His Imperial Majesty, but an intention to be ‘Ukrainian Europeans’ or ‘European Ukrainians’. The transnational paradigm was crucial in the past and should be in the future: ‘the new generations of Ukrainian citizens need to be raised in a national
The national spirit cited by Szporluk bears a close resemblance to the trans-nationalism of European-ness. Wolczuk has however outlined the pragmatic reasons favouring the promotion of European-ness in Ukraine. To him, Ukraine's aspirations to prosperity, modernity and security are most tangibly encapsulated in 'European-ness. The references to the Universalist culture of Europe offset and submerge the uncertainty and disagreement on what constitute the essence of Ukrainian identity. The promotion of the supranational European identity in place of the Soviet identity, offers an alternative to the identification of the population solely with Ukraine as a nation state, something that is still a difficult proposition for perhaps as many as one third of the population of Ukraine. At the same time however, the assertion of the European pedigree of Ukraine unmakes the myth of 'Fraternal Friendship' and 'commonality of interests' between Russia and Ukraine (ibid: 842).

Moreover, after independence, in the early 1990s, efforts were made to cultivate the transnational identity on historical line out of the ruins of the internationalist socialist culture. The relatively high degree of ethnic tolerance and openness to other ethnic groups of Ukrainian society worked as a sine qua non for the emergence of transnational values and provided Ukraine with solid grounding for becoming open towards neighboring states, towards Europe and towards European-ness. On this basis, strategic goals of the country were proclaimed that is to integrate into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures with the hope to institutionalize relations with the European Union, the Western European Union, and to deeper partnership with NATO, and to be active in shaping a new European security architecture, and ultimately identify itself as a European country (Kremen 1997:28). However, some key developments affected the evolution of a potential transnational identity in Ukraine.

First, the Soviet way of life was essentially internationalist. It represented the transnational idea in Soviet ideology even if it was prevented in practice. All union organizations were proto-typical not modal transnational ones. Collectivist values override individual ones, thereby requiring citizens to think in large categories. But transnational thinking was severely setback by the Soviet experience. Soviet identity was
also imperial and had to be eliminated by a Ukrainian post-imperial consciousness. In international politics, after being a subject state for centuries Ukraine finally acquired independence and could now decide for itself what foreign policy orientation to adopt.

Second, the orthodox idea of Sobornost, which had been infused with communist doctrines of internationalism, was revitalized and nationalized following the disintegration of the USSR. While some efforts to revive internationalist norms and identity on the basis of Eastern Slavic idea have taken place, they have not added up to much. As a result statism including for a time nationalizing statism has become central in forging identity and attachment. Although understandable in the Ukrainian context, statism is a hurdle to the emergence of trans-nationalism.

Third, transnational identity involves a flight of imagination from inferiority and backwardness to modernity and European-ness (Taras, Filippova & Pobeda 2004: 852). The closed Soviet system prevented citizens from being able to make social comparisons: they were limited as to where they could travel, see things for themselves and make comparisons. Over the years, however, comparing Ukraine with other countries has become a national pre-occupation. Emigration to the West, cross return of Diaspora members from abroad has made Ukrainian citizens aware of their international relevance. It has sometimes however led to a one-dimensional stereotype about European-ness and Europe’s living standards, which are out of reach for Ukraine in the foreseeable future. Such nascent transnational attitudes are illusory and counter productive. Moreover, according to Ray Taras and Olga Filippova, such transnational attitude exists in Ukraine today in a number of ways. It appears to be virtual mixing of ethnic pluralism, civic values and feeling of loyalty to the state without in any transible way transcending state borders. It is pathological, containing such shortcoming as a welcoming attitude to immigrants and to a limited degree, treating resident ethnic minorities as far away locals. It is to some degree proprietary, emphasizing ethnic Ukrainians’ defining role in the state (as seen in the adoption of just one official state language). It is consumerist, directed towards multiplying material benefits while not approximating European levels. It poses as rational, albeit of a distinct Ukrainian kind i.e. the country’s national interests are
conjoined with those of Russia. Above all it is ambivalent as there is no certainty that the historical, cultural, social and normative bases for trans-nationalism will actually be realized in the future (ibid: 852). However, in spite of all these developments, which are limiting the progress of transnational values in Ukraine, they strengthen feelings of European-ness in the minds of Ukrainian’s to develop a European identity.

1.3. Geo-Political Dimension
The political fate of Ukraine for the past few centuries was largely determined by historic upheavals resulting from the constant changes of the geo-political environment of Central and Eastern Europe. Located in a borderland between agrarian and nomadic cultures and faced with the main burden of thwarting Tatar-Mongol aggressions in the thirteenth century, the Ukrainian “post-state” became an object of division in the struggle among stronger neighbours to the West, east and south. These circumstances over the long term determined the fate of the geo-political environment of Eastern Europe, complicated the process of Ukraine’s state formation within its ethnic frontiers (Kulinich 1995: 113).

The completion of the formation of the Russian Empire and its entry into the forefront of European politics in the early and mid-seventeenth century, the division of Poland, the creation of the coalition against Napoleon in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Vienna congress of 1815, the birth of a unified German state, the Balkan wars, the onset of the fall of the Ottoman Empire, these are landmarks of European geopolitics. The World War I was also a historic upheaval that radically changed the European and world geopolitical environment. The break away parts of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires became the basis for the formation of new states in Central and Eastern-Europe and played an important role in structuring international relations in the region (ibid.: 114).

It was under those historic conditions that attempt to form an independent Ukrainian identity were made, and those attempts once again turned out to be unsuccessful. Then the consequences of World War I & II and the cold war proved to be decisive in forming the geopolitical environment of twentieth century Europe leading to
sociopolitical upheaval. Though Ukraine was severely affected by these cataclysms, there was no scope for it to secure its independent identity. However in the second phase of 1980s when geopolitical changes took place in the international environment, Ukraine came under the influence of two opposing tendencies. First, there was the process of disintegration and decentralization of the totalitarian system that existed eastward from Berlin wall. Second, there was the creation of new Central and East European countries and their entry into the existing but changing regional institutions. The process of disintegration has dominated events in Central and Eastern Europe, commencing with the collapse of military political and economic groupings and leading the break up of certain states (the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia) and to the further disintegration of their constituent parts (Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina).

However, this time Ukraine became successful in proclaiming its independence. But its appearance as an independent state in the geo-political space of Central and Eastern Europe turns to be of great significance for European security and development of regional multi-lateral relations ((Bukkvoll 1997: 1). As it is situated in East-Central Europe, bordered by Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova to the West, by Belarus to the North-East and East and have a landmass equal to France, a population of 52 million, location at the cross-road of Europe and Asia, a large agricultural and high-tech industries and extensive natural resources, Ukraine turns to be crucial for the stability of the continent. Any uncertainty in Ukraine would reverberate throughout Europe (Mroz & Pavliuk 1996: 52).

Further, as Ukraine is separated from the West by the states of Central Europe, it serves as Moscow’s ‘bridge’ to the West as well as ‘buffer’ against invasion from the West. So also, as it controls key positions in Eurasia, it becomes ‘Europe’s linchpin’ and a ‘strategic pivot’ in Europe (ibid: 52). This is what Xavier Solana, the former secretary general of NATO, had to say, “Ukraine has an absolutely unique role to play in securing stability in the continent (Bukkvoll 1997: 1). This predominantly defensive geopolitical position of Ukraine in the intricate environment of Central and Eastern Europe, however, created complex situation for Ukraine in the context of its national identity. Further, on
the one hand, Ukraine realized that the creation of a new military political alliance on the basis of the principle of collective security of the CIS, will create a new scenario in Eastern Europe as a return to the policy of confrontation between opposite blocs and renewal of bi-polarity in Europe (Holovaty 1995: 17), on the other, bringing NATO to the boundary of Russia would result in active opposition from Moscow.

Apart from this, keeping in mind the terrible experience of Ukrainians in the 20th century in relation to collectivization of agriculture, repressive role of Stalin, consequence of 2nd World War, the explosion at Chernobyl nuclear power plant and secrecy surrounding about this accident, its terrible impact upon Ukraine and finally, Russia’s insufficient respect for Ukrainian independence, Ukraine tried to uphold an independent non-bloc identity for itself. Ukraine adopted this as a means for the achievement of its foreign policy objective mentioned in its 1990 Declaration of National Sovereignty. Through this non-alignment identity Ukraine is trying to make an independent approach to foreign policy.

1.4. Economic Prospective
The economic condition of Ukraine is a key factor deterring the strength of national identity in Ukraine and the support for autonomy or independence from Russia and the former Soviet Union. Therefore, in terms of its economy, the country is aiming to look into a fast moving and evolving economic system, preparing for the battle of the twenty-first century, while simultaneously trying to escape from the clutches of its impoverished and unprepared Russian neighbour which it was once hoped would deliver economic salvation but now is seen to be incapable of providing for itself (ibid.: 18). Thus, in a pragmatic way of trying to deal with the very real economic problems Ukraine looks towards the Western institutional structures. For Ukraine, European institutions represent beacons of hope (or, indeed, salvation) and, crucially, a source of financial aid or at least facilitating access to it (Wolczuk 1997: 38). Implicit within this is the growing realization that Russia is decreasingly able to provide the economic stimulus for recovery. This is also compounded by concerns as to future Russian domestic political developments and prevailing attitudes amongst the Moscow political elites as to how internal (e.g.
Chechnya) and international (e.g. Crimea) issues should be resolved. Permeating all of these above is the fact that Russia, and its parliament in particular, is continuing to have difficulty in coming to terms with Ukraine as an independent entity (ibid.: 39).

This economic basis of Ukrainian independent identity was reflected as early as in the December 1991 referendum, which showed overwhelming support for independence explained by the expectation among many Ukrainians for economic improvement under Ukrainian statehood. Sochor believes that the outcome of the referendum ‘reflected a hope for a better economic future more than a cohesive national consciousness’. She notes that immediately before the vote for independence a poll showed that 78% of the population identified, escape from economic crisis as their main concern, far ahead of political or cultural concerns (Sochaor 1997: 136-37). Therefore, after independence in 1991, Ukraine had accepted and had begun to implement the process of transition from a planned economic system to a market based economy where the forces of demand and supply would largely determine the allocation of resources (Khmelko & Welson 1998: 76). It also made efforts to obtain a place in the West European economic spheres as an equal partner and sought to establish direct economic and trade relations.

A break away from Moscow was defined as a long-term top priority task and total integration into the European economic institutions was viewed as a strategic goal. Accordingly, diplomatic efforts were undertaken immediately to accomplish these economic objectives without delay. The first steps were rather encouraging as Ukraine was admitted to the International Monitory Fund (IMF) and the International Bank of Reconstruction (Holovaty 1995: 38). But, in its fourth year of independence, Ukraine found itself in a relatively economic vacuum, as the West, did not live up to the expectations of many Ukrainian politicians, and therefore economic priorities of Ukraine remain within the Euro-Asian geo-political sphere and became dependent upon Russia for its economic development. Though under President Leonid Kuchma pragmatic steps were taken to bring economic reforms, unfortunately Ukraine from time to time came under the economic influence of Russia. As a result, Ukraine’s Central European identity, and the identity of an independent country different from Russia became a far cry.
However, in spite of pursuing a pro-Russian foreign and exclusively economic policy it has not been able to give up its vision to project itself in terms of Central European identity. Thus, in this context, Sochor writes that ‘it may very well be that the “pro-Russian” foreign policy position is based largely on economic considerations and nostalgia for the “good old days” rather than shared identities and values (ibid: 38-39). And, Subtenlny asserts that ‘the rational for Russocentric tendencies in Ukraine is now formulated almost exclusively in economic terms (Subtenlny 1995: 194). Therefore, to some extent it can be assumed that Ukraine’s economic success and memories of common economic experiences can play a central role in the development of its national identity and pride.

1.5. Security Aspect
Disintegration of the Soviet Union have brought spectacular geopolitical transformations in Central and Eastern Europe, and a new system of international relation is being formed at the global, regional and sub-regional level. In such a scenario the independent existence of Ukraine became a determining factor for European security as its policies present challenges to both the Russian and Western policymaking. But the irony is that Ukraine itself faced security challenges comprised of socio-economic and political significance. Therefore, the debate on Ukrainian security policy and the best means to reinforce its national identity were underlined.

As Russian Ukrainian relations suddenly moved into unfamiliar setting of ‘foreign policy’, conflict started over a wide range of issues, and Russia turned to be a key problem in the way of Ukraine’s security and stability (Holovaty 1995: 38-39). Keeping in mind the century old imperial nature of Russia, the Kravchuk administration perceived Russia a serious security threat to Ukrainian independence. Thus, to remain away from an imperialist revisionist policy of Russia, Ukraine formulated a pro-West foreign policy. This policy was further strengthened after Leonid Kuchma was elected as President in 1994. Ukraine altogether projected itself as a natural component of the Central and Eastern European region and aims at overcoming its prolonged official alienation from
other nations of the continent. Ukrainian administration perceived this as an illustration of historical justice and as a return to its historic, cultural heritage (Kremen 1997: 28). Ukraine also regards cooperation with the EU, the WEU and NATO as a priority component of its national security. Thus by adopting the policy of non-alignment Ukraine firmly closed its door to the East but open to the West (Tolstov 1995: 9).

However, economic insecurity compelled Ukraine to be dependent on Russia. Later on due to the lack of economic reforms, when the availability of Western economic resources decreased, Ukrainian administration increasingly turned to Russia for assistance and in the process adopted an even stronger pro-Russian orientation on economic, political and military issues (Kuzio 2003: 31-32). Therefore, Ukraine’s identity of European-ness suffered a set back and it was continued to stagnate until the end of Kuchma’s second term in office.

1.6. Ethno-Cultural Factor
In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union new or newly independent multi-ethnic states confront particularly the challenging task of constructing state-wide national identities and revitalizing ethnic cultures that suffered from years of Russian and communist rule. Ukraine was no exception but clearly the issue of national identity was reflected in its foreign policy, cultural diffusion and cultural development. Since independence in 1991 ethnic Ukrainians who were concentrated in Western Ukraine, and ethnic Russians and Russified Ukrainians, who are concentrated in Western and Southern Ukraine, have been engaged in a struggle to define the national identity of their new country and promote the advancement of their respective cultures. They also tend to disagree on the extent to which Ukraine should be integrated with Europe and North America versus with Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Ukrainian nationalists’ foreign policy views are in part also a reflection of their hopes for European cultural diffusion and fears of Russian cultural diffusion. Thus nationalists in particular are outspoken in their call for countermeasures to what they view as the threat posed by foreign media to Ukrainian ethnic identity. They also stress
how European culture and values flowed into Ukraine as a result of Ukraine’s history of ties with Europe, beginning with what they view as the ancient Ukrainian state, Kievan Rus (ibid.: 32). They see Ukrainian social and cultural elites, as having undergone a degree of Polonisation when most of the Ukrainian territories of Kievan Rus came under Polish rule. More importantly, Poland served as a bridge for the continued transfer of European culture to Ukraine. However, after the end of the 18th century, Ukrainian culture was gradually absorbed into Russian culture in the process becoming provincial (ibid: 32). The Russian state sponsored policies that intentionally or unintentionally undermined Ukrainian culture including mass migration of Russians into Eastern Ukraine and interfering in the economic development of the region and stringent restrictions on the use of the Ukrainian language. To nationalist Ukrainians, most of the communist era, with exception of a brief cultural renaissance during the 1920s, as one of forced assimilation of Ukrainian culture into Soviet i.e. Russian culture. They also argue that, “at present Russian culture in Ukraine impedes the development of Ukrainian patriotism and the Ukrainian national identity”. In this context nationalist Volodymyr Yavors Kyi proposes that: ‘we should first of all narrow the environment of Russian culture in Ukraine. That is we should undermine the foundation, which makes Ukrainian society very susceptible to the ideational expansion of Russia (Shulman 1998: 290).

Despite the formal overthrow of Moscow’s colonial domination of Ukraine, some writers also perceived the threat of ‘neo-colonial’ cultural domination over the new Ukrainian state. Vasil Lyzanchuk, a professor of journalism at Lviv State University, expressed his fear of the continued presence of Russia in Ukraine’s informational space. To him imperial and pro-imperial means of mass-communication disgrace the Ukrainian state, its symbols, language, culture, tradition and customs. In order to demoralize the spirit of national rebirth new Russian chauvinists, hiding behind the principle of freedom of speech and pluralistic thought, foist the thought that the Ukrainian people are disappointed with independence because it was as a result of the disintegration of the USSR that life worsened, the mafia came to power, corruption developed, crime was unleashed to no limits and the terrible social explosion will soon come (ibid.: 294). Another writer fears that Russian informational imperialism in the context of
undeveloped Ukrainian mass media will lead to the 'erosion of the Ukrainian' ethno-cultural organism and the 'denationalization of Ukraine (ibid: 293). Finally, nationalists believe that Russia, through informational ties with Ukraine, provides ideological and propagandistic assistance to anti-Ukrainian ethnic Russians living in Ukraine.

Therefore, a breakaway from Russia from ethno-cultural ground was underlined in Ukrainian foreign policy. The nationalists believe that a pro-European, anti CIS orientation for Ukraine will, overall, assist in the revitalization of Ukrainian language and culture. To them integration with Europe will enrich Ukraine's culture in general, and facilitate the rebirth of ethnic Ukrainian identity in particular, given the perceived similarity and historical association between it and European culture (ibid.: 292). The head of the socio-political wing of Rukh in Lviv, Volodymyr Parubii supports a strong Western orientation for Ukraine because in the past, he claims, the West transferred to Ukraine its cultural wealth, whereas Russia culturally impoverished the country. In the current period, too, he expects cultural advantages from ties with the West which will allow Ukrainian culture to move beyond its provincial, rural character but at the same time rediscover its roots (ibid.: 292). Overall, from the above it is evident that, ethno-cultural ground has also substantial contribution in moulding Ukraine's foreign policy towards the West for the establishment of Central European identity.

In spite of all these, regarding the question of identity, considerable research have also been undertaken since the early 1990s across Ukraine. Research on identity has primarily focused on local, regional and national variants and it often inquires into differences between ethnic Ukrainians and Russians. The civic versus ethnic models of identity are regularly operationalised. A third identity model involves the juxtaposition of the civic nation with two competing ethnic alternatives: (1) Ukrainian and (2) Eastern Slavic, the integration of two ethnic groups, cultures and languages, Ukrainian and Russian into a common cultural and historical space (Taras, Fillippova & Pobeda 2004: 843).
Only a few studies have considered identities beyond the national level. One possible typology includes (1) transnational, (2) European, (3) Civic national, (4) ethno-national, (5) international and (6) local territorial subculture (ibid: 843). The first three types, which are most likely promoting integration of the country into European structures, have already been discussed. But one comprehensive psychological study of identity in Ukraine, was carried out by Pavlenko, found that between 1986 and 1996 both Ukrainian and Russian respondents turned away from a Soviet identity and ethnicity became their most important identity category. But over this period both groups also invoked civic identities less and a fall off especially marked among Russian respondents. By 1996 both groups emphasized European identity more, though in each case this category ranked behind ethnic, civic and general identity with all humanity (ibid.: 844).

However, since 1990 Ukraine has demonstrated a far greater interest in establishing European and Central European identities for itself. The motivations stem from the stronger national consciousness in Ukraine particularly in West Ukraine compared with its northern neighbour. But several factors have prevented Ukraine from forming the kind of interstate relationships that would have helped to secure Ukraine politically as a Central European country. Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary were loath to undermine their own Central European identity by associating themselves with a country, which to their policy makers represents the east. Moreover, these governments were also reluctant to anger Russia either by supporting the formation of Kravchuk’s security and stability zone or by drawing Ukraine closer to Visegrad if not admitting it as a full-fledged member. Another factor impeding Ukraine’s association with Central European states was its inability to effect economic reform. The Kuchma administration recognized it must reform the economy but his inability made Ukraine vulnerable. But protection of the nations identity is one such compelling reason, which Ukraine can make use in its nation building.

2. Nature of Ukrainian State and Sovereignty and its Foreign Policy
Given the widespread skepticism concerning the very viability of Ukraine as an independent nation state, the dire warnings about the dangers of Ukrainian nationalism,
and the question of the chances of democratic consolidation (Casanova 1998: 81), Ukraine on 28 June 1996, adopted its constitution where Ukraine was defined as a nation state which protects the rights of its national minorities and yet asserts the leading role of the titular, indigenous majority. It also adopted the semi-presidential form of government with a unitary territorial structure of local government and provided a constitutional basis for the development of a free market economy. Side by side, the state power in Ukraine is executed on the basis of separation into legislative, executive and judicial branches. At the same time, the constitution 'covers up' much of Ukraine's diversity, disunity and disagreement, by localizing popular sovereignty with the 'Ukrainian people' (Wolczuk 1996: 36).

But the path of an independent, civic territorial democratic state, which Ukraine appears to follow, was being pursued more than half-heartedly by the political elites in Ukraine (Casanova 1998: 81). To such an outcome both the external geopolitical environment and internal territorial structural conditions become favorable, as a result, the Ukrainian government constrained in its ability to shape its own foreign and security policy. However, this lack of determination, which has been reflected from time to time in Ukraine's foreign and security policy is a clear reflection of the nature its state and sovereignty that are discussed below.

2.1. Quasi-State
Foreign policy formation is a dynamic process, where foreign and domestic forces interact with each other and the foreign policy decisions influence subsequent choices and actions through feedback (Nordberg 1998: 64). An example of this linkage is in fact, as Michel C. Desch points out that, states with a high level of internal discord be it economic, ethnic or regional tends toward internal weakness in a low international threat environment. Conversely, a hostile international situation will unite an otherwise fractious state and allow it to pursue a greater degree of foreign policy cohesion (Desch 1996: 243). This has been the case with Ukraine, where an imperial Russia has helped mute internal divisive tendencies stemming from ethnic diversity and regionalism. Because of linkage, examining domestic influences separate from foreign creates an
artificial division, yet this division simplifies the task of identifying domestic factors affecting policy. Therefore, Robert Jackson levels Ukraine closer to the position of a quasi-state, a state that is juridical sovereign but lacks the political will, institutional authority and organizational abilities of statehood (Jackson 1990: 21). Quasi-states are marked by a lack of positive sovereignty; their weakness is supported by the system of international juridical statehood. In effect, they are international protectorates, unable to defend themselves and depending upon international institutions. Ukraine reflects elements of this, especially with regards to security issues. In exchange for nuclear disarmament, Ukraine demanded international security guarantees from the West and Russia. This was in order to help and cement the new and uncertain independent existence. Ukraine also possesses the internal weakness present in quasi-states. Because of its quasi-state status Ukraine remain vulnerable in its policy decisions.

2.2. Medium-Sized Power, Weak State

Ukraine’s technological advancements and military capabilities give it the potential to be a medium-sized power. Nevertheless, it is currently considered by the international community to be a weak state. Ukraine’s ‘weakness’ is demonstrated by the fact that its government, in most situations, does not have the means to oppose or appease its enemies or woo its friends (Garnett 1997: 74). Weak states, such as Ukraine, are particularly vulnerable to the interference of external actors in their domestic affairs, since they tend to seek the economic and political support of international organizations or of individual state actors. They are likely to sacrifice control of domestic activities in exchange for much-sought-after financial or political support. This course may sometimes enable the state in question eventually to lose its image as a weak state. It may, however, also be a means for external actors to increase their economic and political leverage over the said state.

The protection of the inhabitants of a state from military attack by another state is and always has been universally perceived as one of the major functions of every government. No matter what other functions are but the legitimate practice is the protection of its own population takes priority. Likewise, and just as universally, there
has always existed an inequality among countries in their ability to provide this protection. Weak states simply do not have the power to protect themselves from the military or economic onslaught of their stronger neighbours. Sometimes geographic location or topography has been a factor, but given the absence of natural defense, weak or threatened states have traditionally been forced to seek assistance from more powerful states. This in turn has presented another dilemma for weak states: whether to join an alliance with its neighbours or adhere to a policy of neutrality? If the alliance is powerful, might not the stronger members try to take advantage of the weaker state’s vulnerable position (Signer 1972: 273-74)?

However, in the case of post-1991 Ukraine, its government has adhered to a policy of non-bloc status, seeking a working relationship with the West, including NATO partnership structures (without ruling out future membership in the alliance), and detachment from the Tashkent Collective Security Agreement of the CIS, while still being involved in the economic structure of the CIS. Ukraine seeks a normalization of relations with Russia, based on bilateral negotiations (indicating a desire to bypass the CIS), while aiming to limit these relations to the economic and political spheres.

Weak states such as Ukraine, which are in the process of nation and state building, will normally seek to enlist international support in many forms, even if these are only in substantial and symbolic. States in the process of economic and political reform and whose domestic institutions are still relatively unstable will seek to obtain external support for their negative sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity. This is particularly so if the state in question feels threatened by a powerful neighbour. This has reflected in the case of Ukraine, therefore, immediately after gaining independence, the Ukrainian government pursued two major themes in its foreign and security policy. First, Kiev sought to obtain security guarantees from the world’s great powers and international institutions. In December 1994, Ukraine gained the political support of the world’s nuclear powers in return for its ratification of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In July 1997, Ukraine and NATO signed a partnership treaty largely motivated by the latter’s gratitude for Ukraine’s support of NATO enlargement. The
second major issue for Ukraine since independence has been how to obtain legal recognition of its borders to protect much of what it gained from post-World War II territorial changes. This was finally achieved in May and June 1997, when Russia and Romania signed border treaties with Ukraine. Although this was by no means the end of the matter for the Russian Duma, it showed it's reluctance to ratify the treaty. While in the case of the Romanian-Ukrainian treaty, the question of the continental shelf of Serpent Island was deferred for further negotiation, and if the two sides do not reach an agreement within two years, it will go to arbitration (Moroney 1998: 5). As a weak state however Ukraine must continue to seek ties with more influential actors and institutions that share similar economic and political ideologies so as to protect the agreements that have already been reached.

2.3. Negative Sovereign State

Negative sovereignty is a condition typical of states, which have recently achieved independence and been, recognized as sovereign entities by other international actors. It may be defined as freedom from outside interference in a state’s internal affairs. It is formal legal condition or entitlement, and is the legal foundation upon which a society of independent and formally equal states fundamentally rests (ibid.: 6). States with negative sovereignty are, for the most part, in the process of economic, political or social transition, and their precarious domestic situation imposes constraints on their international relations. Nevertheless, they are sovereign as regards their internal affairs, and thus must be accorded due respect in accordance with international law.

Positive sovereignty, conversely, can be described as ‘freedom to’ as opposed to the ‘freedom from’ (negative sovereignty) – being active and self-directing, choosing, pursuing and realizing goals. It also points towards the acquisition and enjoyment of capacities, and not just immunities, because it postulates agents and conditions that are enabling. Positive sovereignty presupposes capabilities that enable governments to be their own masters, and is a substantive rather than a formal condition. A positively sovereign government is one that not only enjoys the rights of non-intervention and other international immunities, but one that is in the position to provide political stability to its
citizens. Moreover, it describes a government that can collaborate with other
governments in defense of alliances and similar international and regional arrangements,
and reciprocate in international commerce and finance. According to Jackson, positive
sovereignty is the means, which enable states to take advantage of their independence,
which is usually indicated by able and responsible rulers and productive and loyal
citizens (Jackson 1990: 29). Positive sovereignty is the distinctive, overall feature of a
developed state, and is not a legal but a political attribute, if political is understood to
include sociological, economic, technological, psychological, and wherewithal to declare,
implement, and enforce public policy both domestically and internationally (ibid.: 31-32).

From the above definitional analysis of the concept of sovereignty, it is evident
that Ukraine can be considered to be a negatively sovereign state. The Ukrainian state
achieved negative sovereignty under international law the moment its independence was
recognized by the international community. Ukraine has the right of non-intervention, or
‘freedom from’ outside encroachment. However, since Ukraine is in the phase of political
and serious economic transition, its government is actively seeking the assistance of
external actors, and hence voluntarily relinquishing some measure of control over its
internal policy-making as a trade-off for the attainment of international assistance. A case
in point is the prescriptive approach taken by Western international financial
organizations such as the IMF and World Bank when they consider loans to applicant
states such as Ukraine. Stringent prerequisites, based on the Western-style approach to
dealing with economic crises, are attached to such loans. Moreover, the economic decrees
recently initiated by President Kuchma were intended to convince international financial
institutions that the government was working towards real economic reforms, although at
that time tougher reforms were unpopular.

Another example of Ukraine’s negative sovereignty is the decision of the
Ukrainian government to halt its negotiations with Iran over the proposed sale of turbines
for the building of an Iranian nuclear station. This decision was taken just after the visit
of US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to Kiev in March 1998 to discuss with
President Kuchma Ukraine’s pending arrangements with Iran, a country ‘unfriendly’ to
the US (Moroney 1998: 6). As a result, Ukraine suffered an economic loss by terminating the deal with Iran, but hoped to receive some kind of compensation from Western governments. From the above, it seems that Ukraine is in a particularly difficult situation; it receives much attention from the West both on account of its geopolitical position in the newly emerging security architecture in Europe, and for its potential for economic and political instability. The former may be termed positive attention, and the latter, negative. In terms of its unique geopolitical position, Ukraine has been successful in negotiating several foreign and security policy agreements, ranging from various border settlements with its neighbours to a special Charter with NATO which gives it specific recognition as an important component in future security arrangements in Europe. Yet, Ukraine is often projected in the foreign media as unstable in economic terms (due to the slow progress with reforms aimed at transition to a market economy), and in political terms on account of the Communist majority in the Rada and the inability of the executive and legislative branches to work together to implement the necessary reforms.

Moreover, these different approaches have contributed to Ukraine’s apparent lack of option in its foreign and security policy making, since the Ukrainian government is not always able to ascertain the West’s position on key economic and political matters, which could affect its ability to defend its sovereignty and independence. Therefore, Ukraine cannot seek to pursue a confident and absolute Western policy without some definite evidence of Western support for Ukrainian reforms. Any other course simply should not be expected from the Ukrainian government and indeed of a negatively sovereign state.

2.4. Transitional State

Since gaining independence in 1991, Ukraine has been a country in transition. Not only is it undergoing a server economic transition, but also a dramatic political transformation. Ukraine is no longer a centralized authoritarian regime but is attempting to become a democratic state. This however changes the fundamental nature of the state and changes the individuals and groups who have influence in the policing-making of the state.
Ukraine adopted four transition formulas such as moving from a command administrative system to a social market economy, shifting from a totalitarian political system to democracy with a civil society, and evolution from a country possessing an uneven national identity to one with a civic, unified nation and political culture (Kuzio 1998: 165). It has been facing a lot of problems. In the initial years it has faced a lack of deep knowledge of the conditions that exist in Ukraine and the specificity of its four transitions. Secondly, Ukraine’s existence as an independent sovereign state was regarded by majority of Western governments as illegitimate and somehow ‘Russian’ and applied the same prescription as those applied to Russia. As a result, the economic costs of the transition process offset the political and psychological benefits of statehood and a vision of a better future. Further, when the economic costs of transition became more acute over time public optimism about the future rapidly shrank. But soon after Leonid Kuchma became President, stabilization of the political and economic situation increased to an optimistic level.

But due to the legacy of external domination and inheritance of an unevenly developed national consciousness, the cost of the economic and political transition became particularly dangerous for Ukraine. Ethnicity and national identity also played a central role in the transition process defining its nation and state building, democratization, tradition of a market economy, practices of citizenship, existence of elites contested borders, and relations with the former metropolis. Taking these factors into account Ukraine represents a difficult case of transition one that will probably be both slow and muddled (ibid: 176).

However, most importantly, the lack of economic reform adversely affected the whole transition process and directly affects the policymaking process and makes Ukrainian foreign and security policy more vulnerable. To bring the transition process back on track Ukraine search for economic resources and look towards the West, but its reform stagnation limited its access to Western economic resources. As a result Ukrainian leadership remain engaged with Russia on economic terms and more likely make political concessions to Russia and adopt a pro-Russian orientation (Toritsyn & Miller 2002: 103),
but could not give up its European ambitions. Therefore, the process of transition continues in Ukrainian society as Ukraine’s dependence upon the east and West continues to exist without having a substantial economic reform.

Therefore, it can be said that, political and economic transition in a society that is divided and is itself in transition towards a new nation state will invariably be more complicated and slower than in societies that are ethnically homogeneous and smaller. Thus the political and economic transformation in Ukraine will be slower as it belongs to that group of countries lying in the middle between these two extremes of severely divided countries and those where identity change shape easily.

2.5. Multi-ethnic Nation State

Ukraine is inhabited by citizens of more than 100 nationalities along with Ukrainians, and the Ukrainian state guarantees all peoples, national groups, citizens who live on its territory, all political, economic, social and cultural rights (Supreme Council of Ukraine 1991:81), there are still great divisions in the society on the grounds of language, culture, regions and ideologies. On ethnic grounds Ukraine is essentially a state divided in two parts. Out of 52 million population 72.7% are Ukrainians and 22.1% are Russians. Linguistically, Ukraine comprises two overlapping parts in which 43.3% are speaking Ukrainian language and 56.6% are speaking Russian language (Wolczuk 1997:13). Ethno-geographically Ukraine is mixed with sizeable Russian minorities in the eastern and southern regions along with Kiev and an outright Russian majority in Crimea (ibid: 13). Therefore, as Russians dominate the eastern and the southern region, they are, along with the sympathy of Russian speaking ethnic Ukrainians, trying to develop a Russian language Ukrainian culture. But, on the other hand, nationalist politicians with the support of majority Ukrainophones of the West trying to build an indigenous Ukrainian language culture, denying accepting specific culture of Russian speaking Ukrainians (Khmelko & Wilson 1998: 77).

However this ethnic division of Ukrainian society has become reflected in its politics and decision-making process. Leonid Kravchuk, who gained a reputation for
spearheading nationalism, was the pioneer of Ukrainisation in independent Ukraine. During his presidency a fierce argument had begun over the key question whether Ukraine should be the state of the ‘Ukrainian people’, that is of ethnic Ukrainians alone or of the ‘people of Ukraine’, in other words, of all Ukraine’s inhabitants regard-less of their ethnic origin (Wilson 1997: 147). As Ukrainian is the only true indigenous language in Ukraine, for nationalists, Ukrainisation is more accurately described as ‘de-Russification’, that is the reversion to the more natural status-quo ante (ibid: 153). On the other hand, the anti-nationalists insisted for the existence of both the Ukrainian language culture, along with the Russian-language culture in Ukraine. Although, both the Ukrainian language law of 1989 and the 1991 declaration on the rights of nationalities guaranteed individuals ‘the rights to use their native language freely in all spheres of social life (ibid.: 154), nationalists consistently argue that the Ukrainian tongue should enjoy special privileges on its ancient land. ‘Only the language of these ethnics’, it is claimed, ‘has the legal right to play the role of a state language (ibid: 155). Moreover, Ukrainian nationalists tend to assume that Ukrainisation will be relatively a simple and even a natural process.

However, as Leonid Kravchuk while in power accelerated the process of Ukrainisation, he alienated the majority of Russian speaking people of Ukraine (Khmelko & Wilson 1998:76). During his period in office the state controlled mass-media demonstrated an increasingly negative attitude toward the public use of Russian language in the country (ibid: 77). Newspaper space and airtime were given to nationalist politicians who denied the very existence of a Russian-language-Ukrainian culture. The Ukrainian nationalist politicians also argued against granting legal status to the continued de-facto right of Russian speaking. The nationalists tried to deny Ukrainian citizens in the south and east, the right to communicate in Russian with local authorities, and to send their children to Russian language secondary schools and institutions of higher education on the territory of Ukraine, by arguing that only Ukrainian speaking Ukrainians deserve official status for their language (ibid.:78).
Therefore, as a result of this Ukrainisation a great conflict arose in Ukrainian society. A war of words between the nationalists of the West Ukraine and Communists of Eastern and Southern Ukraine took place. Even if politicians bother less about the economic problems and state building programme of Ukraine and indulge in conflict regarding the question of Ukrainisation and the existence of Russian language – Ukrainian culture.

But during the presidency of Leonid Kuchma ethnic conflict was minimized due to his pragmatic policy measures. Kuchma’s efforts strengthened relation with Russia, and Crimea and his less openly anti-Moscow stands than his predecessor helped him to establish healthier relations with top officials in Moscow and opened up new areas of economic cooperation. Kuchma’s Russian policy was to some extent, up to the expectations of the ethnic Russians living in the southern and eastern Ukraine, but not to the expectations of the nationalists of the West. Therefore, at the societal level Ukrainian politics since independence has been typically represented as a regional clash between east Ukraine and West Ukraine, while the former aims for closer ties with Russia and CIS, the later clamours for a stronger relationship with Europe.

3. Evolution of Ukrainian Foreign Policy
At the turn of the 20th Century, when the world was undergoing great changes, geopolitical unions were disintegrating, new states and new socio-political structures were forming, an independent Ukraine came into existence in 1991, and determined to occupy its due place in the world community. Being a part of the international community, Ukraine tried to define its place and role in the new geopolitical environment, and proclaimed its intention in its 1990 “Declaration of National Sovereignty” to become a non-nuclear, non-bloc regional power. Perceiving Russia as a threat from the east, Ukraine avoided its strong participation in the institutionalization of multilateral co-operation within the framework of the CIS. Developing appropriate relations with its nearest neighbours Ukraine also pursued the goal of integration into the European and Trans-Atlantic institutions. To establish itself as an actor in international politics and to make a useful contribution to security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic
area, Ukraine is trying to translate its broadly conceived goals and national interests into concrete course of action through its foreign policy.

3.1. Defining National Interest
In order to determine its role in the world community in general and in the European geopolitical environment in particular, Ukraine defined the relevance of its foreign policy priorities to its national interests since these interests guarantee her national security. So also, as it has traveled the intricate and dramatic road towards independence it considered with conviction that true independence can only be secured if the people of Ukraine are provided with reliable guarantees of its national security. Such security is not an end in itself but a means to achieve the fundamental interests of the Ukrainian people. Ukraine also considered that the highest national interest of Ukraine lies in the formation of a truly democratic civil society, where the rule of law prevails and the political, social and spiritual interests and rights of all its members are guaranteed. Thus, Ukraine tries to define its national interest in terms of its national security, which implies a condition wherein the vital interests of the individual, social groups, the society, and the state as a whole are safeguarded from external and internal threats and the Ukrainian state has the means to ensure its continuation (Kulinich 1995:116).

Attempt to this end, however, were made earlier even before Ukraine became independent. But the primary national interests of Ukraine were outlined in the first official version of the concept of national security for Ukraine, which was prepared by the state’s National Security Council in 1993 and approved by the parliament in May 1995. The national interests outlined in this document can be summarized as: ensuring the state’s sovereignty and territorial integrity; overcoming the nation’s economic crisis and developing a market economy; creating a civil society subject to the rule of law; and integration into the European and World Community.
3.2. Basic Principles of Ukrainian Foreign Policy

In order to maximize the national interests, the basic principles of Ukrainian foreign policy were outlined by the foreign ministry of Ukraine following the 24 August, 1991 Declaration of Independence. According to the foreign ministry statement, Ukraine will steadfastly uphold all norms of international law in conformity with the Universal Declaration on human rights, treaties rectified by it regarding Human Rights and other relevant international documents. Ukraine is prepared to join European Structures in the field of human rights, among them the European Convention on Human Rights (Ukrainian Foreign Ministry Statement 1991: 79). Ukraine as one of the founding members of the United Nations, in full compliance with the goals and principles of the UN charter, has declared its intention to direct its foreign policies to strengthen peace and security in the world, establishing international co-operation in resolving ecological, energy, food and other general human problems. The external policies of Ukraine, it said, will be based on generally accepted principles of international laws (ibid: 80). Ukraine is also prepared to enter into diplomatic relations with other states and to build relations with them on the basis of equality, sovereignty, non-intrusion in the internal affairs of each other, recognizing the territorial integrity and inviolability of the existing borders. Ukraine considers its territory indivisible and inviolable, and does not harbour any territorial claims against any country (ibid: 80).

In accordance with the “Declaration on State Sovereignty” of Ukraine adopted by the Supreme Council of Ukraine on 16 July 1990, and the statements of the Supreme Council of Ukraine on the non-bloc, non-nuclear status of Ukraine of 24 October 1991, Ukraine will be a non-nuclear state. It will not store and produce chemical weapons, and it will support for their universal and total ban and elimination. However, in short, the basic principles on which Ukraine conducts its foreign policy can be summed up in the following heads:

- Faith in international law and United Nations Organization.
- Peaceful use of nuclear energy and support for disarmament.
- Non-interference in the internal affairs of any state.
• Peaceful co-existence and co-operation.
• Support for the creation of a viable environment and a nuclear free world.
• Non-bloc status (ibid: 80-81)

3.3. Objectives of Ukrainian Foreign Policy
The main objectives which the foreign policy of Ukraine seeks to achieve, are outlined in the ‘Main Directions of Ukrainian Foreign Policy’, adopted by the parliament in July, 1993, are as follows:

• Consolidation and development of Ukraine as an independent democratic state;
• Ensuring the stability of the international situation of Ukraine;
• Preserving the territorial integrity of the state and the inviolability of its borders;
• The integration of its national economy into the world economic system;
• The defense of the rights and interests of the citizens of Ukraine abroad;
• Spreading in the world of the image of Ukraine as a predictable, reliable partner (cited in Lena Jonson 1995: 7).

Apart from the above, the following four priorities are also established in the fundamental directions of Ukrainian foreign policy:

• To cultivate favourable bilateral relations which can facilitate Ukraine’s integration into the wider global and European order;
• To intensify regional co-operation with such organizations as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union;
• Participation in the CIS, while rejecting CIS supra-national competencies;
• Full co-operation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies (ibid: 7-8).
3.4. Means for Achievement of Foreign Policy Objectives

For the attainment of the above objectives of foreign policy, the means that Ukraine adopted, though not quite specific, can be analyzed under the following heads:

3.4 (a) Policy of Neutrality

Ukraine adopted policy of neutrality in its 1990 Declaration of National Sovereignty to ensure an independent approach to foreign policy and to play a decisive role in the European system of international relations. Upholding this, Ukraine declared its intention to become a neutral nation in future, which was indispensable as a method to defend Ukraine’s strategic national interests, the creation and the strengthening of national independence, the preservation of its territorial integrity, and the maintenance of political stability as a pre-condition to the economic reform (Holovaty 1995: 18). It is generally understood in Ukraine that this position does not in any way contradict the general direction of processes taking place in Europe. In the capacity of a non-bloc regional power, and standing for the unity and indivisibility of Europe, in the first instance, the Kravchuk administration refused to accede to the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly in March 1992, the CIS Collective Security Act (the Tashkent Treaty) in May 1992, and the CIS Charter in February 1993. Ukraine pointed out that the creation of a new military political alliance on the basis of the principle of Collective Security of the CIS will create a new scenario in Eastern Europe as a return to the policy of confrontation between opposite blocs and the renewal of bi-polarity in Europe (ibid.: 17). So also keeping in mind the fact that bringing NATO to the boundary of Russia would result active opposition from Russia, Ukraine continues its neutrality status while developing bilateral co-operation with the countries of both NATO and the CIS (ibid: 18).

Moreover, adopting the policy of non-alignment, Ukraine tries to achieve its main national interest i.e. absolute sovereignty and independence, consolidation of statehood, protection of territorial integrity and availability of borders, and political stability and economic prosperity. Though critics interpreted Ukrainian non-alignment as a double standard tactic, as a door, firmly closed to the East but open to the West (Tolstov 1995: 9), there is no contradiction between the Ukrainian policy of neutrality and Ukraine’s
interest in cooperating with the European organizations including NATO, the member states of which have similar aims

3.4 (b) Good-Neighborly Relations and Friendship with all Countries

Ukraine has served to attain the objectives of its foreign policy by cultivating good relations with neighbouring states and friendship with all other countries by promoting co-operation in political, economic and cultural fields. For this purpose Ukraine since independence has been trying for the establishment and legal confirmation of good neighbourly relations with surrounding countries. The resolution of problems related to national minorities between Ukraine and Hungary in 1991 is a noteworthy example of this engagement, and of Ukraine’s commitment to human and national minority rights (Horbulin 1998:10). Apart from this, Ukraine also achieved a number of breakthroughs in consolidating good neighbourly relations. It also concluded basic political treaties with Russia and Romania and developed good relations with Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Iran, Turkmenistan and Moldova by signing treaties of friendship and co-operation. For instance, Ukraine signed agreement with Russia on the Black Sea Fleet, concluded a border treaty with Belarus and signed a declaration on reconciliation and unity with Poland. All these agreements are important links in the chain binding Ukrainian state to the area of stability and good neighborliness as foreseen in the 1995 pact on stability in Europe. (Ibid: 10).

Apart from all these an important component in Ukrainian foreign policy is arranging regional forms of cooperation for advancing Ukrainian interests. Ukrainian diplomacy also ensures sound and effective participation in regional instruments of cooperation within the framework of the Central-European Initiative, Black Sea Organization for Economic Cooperation and Council of Baltic Sea States. To Ukraine, participation in these associations should promote the development of multilateral interactions with the member states and positively influence the advancement of Ukraine along the road to market reforms. For the maximization of its national interests and develop cooperation, Ukraine also actively participates in implementing the pact on stability in southeast Europe, thus favouring the post-conflict rehabilitation of the
countries, which suffered from the Kosovo crisis. However, Ukraine avoided military alliances.

3.4 (c) Economic Co-operations

Instrument of economic co-operation has also been used by Ukraine for the attainment of foreign policy objectives. Ukraine has tried to promote greater economic co-operation amongst the Central and East European countries through mutual co-operation. As Ukraine has been facing economic crisis, it demonstrated the most interest in taking part in the CIS, though it has only an associate-membership in the CIS economic union. Particularly through economic co-operation with Russia, Ukraine tried to get rid of its financial crisis. Simultaneously, keeping in mind Russia's opportunities to use gas deliveries as a political tool against Ukraine, it developed economic co-operation with Turkey, Iran and Turkmenistan. So also by developing bilateral co-operation with the West, Ukraine got admission to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank of Reconstruction.

3.4(d) Temper for Peace

Finally, for the attainment of its foreign policy objectives, Ukraine has laid emphasis on peace and civilized behaviour in international affairs. It has tried to cultivate intimate relations with the neighbouring countries and concluded non-aggression and mutual respect agreements. Again, Ukraine has tried to promote temper for peace by encouraging disarmament and observing principles of non-interference in the domestic affairs of each other and promoting conditions of peaceful coexistence. Ukraine’s first President Leonid Kravchuk underscored the government’s position that Kiev will adhere to agreements on nuclear weapons, and stated that his country would gladly welcome any foreign assistance with regard to dismantling the nuclear weapons that were deployed on Ukrainian soil (Ukrainian President Inaugurated 1997: 77). He said “Ukraine has no territorial claims against foreign territory and doesn’t recognize any claims to its territory” (ibid: 77). Further, a declaration of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, made public on 25 November 1991, stated that Ukraine would participate in the implementation of all treaties and accords on the non-use of nuclear weapons, reducing
conventional weapons and armed forces and would support the ratification of treaties and accords between the USA and USSR and other states on these matters. Later on, in 1993 the Ukrainian Parliament rectified START-1 Treaty and in December 1994, its parliament also rectified the NPT Treaty in the capacity of a non-nuclear country.

But the significance of the complete withdrawal of all nuclear weapons from Ukraine’s territory and the contribution to this effect to reduce the nuclear threat and to the creation of a common security space in Europe was duly noted in the 1996 Lisbon summit declaration of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Moreover, by removing the last nuclear war-head from its territory in 1996, Ukraine became the first country in history to change from being a nuclear state to a non-nuclear one. By doing so Ukraine has demonstrated its own good will and also real possibility of nuclear disarmament as such, and has made a substantial contribution to the realization of the ideal: ‘A 21st century world without nuclear weapons’ (Kremen 1997: 29).

Despite facing many problems, Ukraine became an active participant in the international community’s efforts to settle regional conflicts in Europe. Notably Ukraine’s contribution to the international community’s efforts to implement the peace settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and its co-operation to a certain extent, in peacekeeping operations in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, under the mandate of the United Nations (Horbulin 1998:11), is also an instance of its temper for peace. On 19 November 1993, the supreme RADA of Ukraine, in response to the request by the then UN Secretary General Butros Ghali, decided to increase the already existing number of Ukrainian armed forces in Yugoslavia from 400 to 1220, with 3 infantry battalions to protect the safe defense zone in Bosnia.

Keeping in mind, the tragedies in the Balkans, Transdniester and the Caucasus, and the discussions on the future of European security on the issues of NATO and European Union enlargement, the role of the OSCE etc., Ukraine suggested for pan-European stability through strengthening regional security and establishing mutually beneficial and good neighbourly relations between individual nations. It was for this very
reason Ukraine proposed to hold in 1999 a summit meeting of the Baltic and Black Sea states on its territory. Acknowledging the future of the European Security architecture, as an important component of global security, which should be based upon principles of comprehensiveness, indivisibility and partnership and in the long run, on collective rather than unilateral acting, Ukraine is developing its active cooperation with European and transatlantic structures. So also Ukraine stands for a broad approach to European security, covering not only the military aspects but also political, ethnic, economic and ecological aspects as well. Furthermore, it supports the development of democratic processes in the region and the establishment of mutually beneficial friendly relations among the states. Side by side, noticing the Russian concerns to NATO enlargement, Ukraine also convinced that NATO enlargement should become an open, evolutionary process and during enlargement, the inherent security interests of all states in the region, including non-applicants, especially Ukraine, should be properly taken into account. No-deployment of weapons of mass destruction on the territory of the new members of the Alliance should be also considered, as this is one of the main conditions for the stability of the region.

Ukraine's temper for peace also clearly being expressed when it put forward the idea of establishing a 'nuclear free zone' in Central and Eastern Europe. Ukraine convinced that, this could soften the impact of NATO enlargement within the region, and reduce the probable increase of distrust and competition between applicant and non-applicant states. This also corresponds both to NATO's policy of reducing its nuclear presence in Europe and its assertion that there is no need, from the point of view of defense, to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new member states (Ibid.: 31). To ensure a viable environment for the future generations it expressed the need of common obligation and joint efforts for the sake of survival and the development of human civilization. So also Ukraine's peacekeepers are serving side by side with NATO and partner forces in the Stabilization Force (SFOR), providing necessary pre-conditions for durable peace. Ukraine was among the first to respond to the OSCE initiative in Nagornokarabakh by providing some of the observers for the long-term mission. Ukraine paying particular attention to the settlement of the conflict in the neighbouring
Transdniester region of the Republic of Moldova, where, ethnic Ukrainians make up the second largest population group. The fact that Ukraine, together with the Russian Federation and the OSCE, is one of the guarantors in the settlement of the Transdniester conflict shows the international community’s faith in Ukraine’s active contribution to peacekeeping efforts in Europe.

In spite of all these, being a founding member of the United Nations Ukraine steadfastly adheres to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and makes a substantial contribution to the organization’s activity in the field of maintenance of international peace and security, disarmament, economic and social development, protection of human rights, strengthening of international law etc. So also being a substantive contributor of military and civilian personnel to the UN peacekeeping operations since July 1992, over the years more than 12 thousand military and civilian personnel of Ukraine have discharged their noble mission under the UN flag. However, Ukraine has consistently conducted and determined to continue a policy directed at strengthening security and stability in the whole world.

It is evident from the preceding account that Ukrainian foreign policy is a reflection of the domestic and the new geopolitical developments in Europe. Though none of these developments can be regarded as exclusive determinant of Ukrainian foreign policy, all of them cumulatively influenced its formulation. Further, the foreign policy principles, objectives and means of achieving foreign policy goals of Ukraine is a clear indication of Ukraine’s position in the international sphere as a sovereign state. These also reflect the dynamic nature of Ukraine’s liberal, peace-loving policies in international relations. Moreover, Ukrainian foreign policy has been under-going changes on account of new international actions and reactions. But the prime factor that motivated the Ukrainian leaders in the formulation of foreign policy was the preservation of its newly achieved independence as the prime national interest.