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29 September 2022

Retrieved on 19th October 2022 from www.nihilist.li
Translated by Ksenia Mejta. Edited by K0tyk.

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Who are the Ukrainians?

Dmitry Mrachnik

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Who are the Ukrainians? Have you ever had this question on your mind?

I think nobody will argue with the statement that a Ukrainian is somebody self-defining as a defender of this country's independence. Somebody between Tauria and Polissia; between the Carpathians and Donbas. There are no naturally born kings and aristocrats here. The only reign here is the will for as much freedom and individualism as possible in today's conditions.

Ethnically, you can be Russian, Belarusian, Polish, Tatar or anybody else, and your origin is generally irrelevant here, as long as you strive for the independence of our space, defy the authority of arrogance and rank, live honestly and don't bother your neighbors.

So, the Ukrainians are the ones who have accepted the relevant identity built around simple cultural-political values: live according to the truth, knock down the ones who have reigned too long, and keep your hands away from the borsch of another. If the point is to preserve Ukraine as a phenomenon, such identity is much more advantageous than any of its competitors.

Little sects struggling for national purity inevitably lose, as their followers are driven to convert to "the Russian faith" since it en-

courages chauvinism much stronger. In other words, if you are an ethnicist, keep in mind that sooner or later your work—on bullying everything without enough connection to the Rus or the Slavs—will play a role of a bridge to the arrogance of Great Russia.

Ukrainianness doesn't actually provide any strong roots for Russian-like chauvinism, since on our territory it simply doesn't benefit you. Congratulate yourself on your pure blood all you want, but in the long run, it won't give you any privilege—in your career, love, politics etc, you win either by your talent or your money.

Your status in Ukraine has little to do with your surname or your descendance from somebody rich who hasn't worked a day in their life. Your status in Ukraine comes from your earnest work and refusal to tolerate unfairness. The most Ukrainian person is the one who has the balls to fight any exploitation.

Blood purity by itself gives you nothing, since in Ukraine, the capital isn't given to you by the right of birth after having been accumulated by native-born families for centuries.

Your ancestors might have been princes or hetmans, but all it gives you is a confidence boost in role-playing games. Descendance from cossacks or from rebels (uprising peasants) has much more respect, and even that is among only those few people for whom your origin has any value. One who takes pride in their origin is one who has done nothing to be proud of.

Thus, glorifying the role of your origin, you gather around yourself some not very educated and not quite hard-working people, i.e. all those who would easily switch to a group where origin is rewarded with many more narcissism points. For example, to a group of admirers of the USSR or the russkiy mir.

Among the mass of admirers of the USSR and Russian imperialism, you won't find a drive to education or personality-matching work—generally, these people are sloths bitter at the entire world, who believe they deserve to be masters just because of how refined and handsome they are.

Ukraine is the Motherland of rebels and insurgents, of people from the grassroots, who have got little but their striving for justice and their veins filled with courage to fight for freedom and dignity. Nobody cares about noble pedigrees, since they have no political or financial meaning. Only your identity matters—who you are today and for what you are fighting.

To be a Ukrainian is to fight for freedom and justice, and to maintain your cultural assets. Anything else is the void—fads and bullshit jobs that feed power to the “Great-Russian” or Soviet resentments. A fighter for national purity will only end up in cahoots with the enemy coming to destroy our nation.