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Prof. Clarence A. Manning, Ph. D.
Columbia University

THE ROLE OF MAZEPA IN EASTERN EUROPE

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Проф. д-р Кляренс А. Меннінг
Колумбійський університет

РОЛЯ МАЗЕПИ У СХІДНІЙ ЄВРОПІ

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проф. д-р Роман Смаль-Стоцький, дійсний член НТШ
проф. д-р Матвій Стахів, дійсний член НТШ

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THE ROLE OF MAZEPA IN EASTERN EUROPE

by

CLARENCE A. MANNING

It is not easy to define the role of Mazepa in Eastern Europe during his long life. There is no doubt that he was an attractive and powerful figure and that he had the interests of his native Ukraine at heart and served them to the best of his great ability. There is no doubt that he commanded the confidence of all with whom he came into contact, whether it was Jan Kazimierz of Poland, Doroshenko, Samoylovych, Peter I, or Charles XII of Sweden. There is no doubt that during his long hetmanate of 22 years he left his imprint for good upon Ukraine as no other hetman had done, except Bohdan Khmelnytsky, and that his rescue of Charles XII after the disastrous battle of Poltava formed a fitting climax to his career, and that he was the only hetman after Bohdan to die holding the insignia of his office, even though he was in exile. Yet it is difficult to assess his part in the events of the day.

Mazepa always has had a bad press. It started when his personal enemy, the braggart Passek, included in his memoirs the scandalous canard of Mazepa's ride and when a century later the Romantic poets of Western Europe found the story and exploited it in poems that became famous. But he fared no better at the hands of the historians. Russian historiography under both the tsars and the Communists have made him a classical example of treason in Russian history. Even Kostomarov, to please the Russian censors, pointed to his lack of character, even though he admitted that Mazepa was able to hoodwink Peter and Charles, the two foremost men of the day. Swedish historians, analyzing the reasons for the defeat of their king, have neglected to use the fullest material on the Hetman. European and American historians, knowing little and caring less about conditions within the Russian Empire, and viewing the Northern War as a contest between Charles and Peter, have slurred over Mazepa's role. Finally, all too many Ukrainian historians, defending their own views of Ukrainian history, have either

overvalued or underestimated his power and have failed to picture the Hetman against the background and situation of his times.

Mazepa's personality contributed not a little to this confusion. The Ukrainian revival took place under the influence of the democratic movement after the French Revolution. To these men Mazepa was no democrat. As he expressed in his own duma before he became hetman, he was and would be the captain of the ship of state, taking his own counsel, listening to advice, but deciding his own courses of action. Like George Washington, he intended to act in a way worthy of his post; all that he did and the palace in which he lived were to be expressions of the dignity of the Hetman. He expressed these thoughts in a style not formal and crudely autocratic like that of the tsars but in a style that was elegant and polished like that of the King of France, Louis XIV, *Le Roi Soleil*. This was in sharp contrast to the manners of the early hetmans who had risen out of the unruly warriors of the Zaporozhian Sich. It could not but isolate him from the ordinary Kozaks who preferred the simple manners of their ancestors, even though their experience in choosing hetmans of their own type often left them helpless before the agents of the tsars. Mazepa, in changed circumstances, ignored their feelings even as he acted superior to the intrigues of the officers. Throughout he was the dignified, cold, impassive hetman and perhaps only his mother, Abbess Mary Magdalen, and his closest associate, Pylyp Orlyk, appreciated the real intensity of his feelings.

Features of Mazepa's character were his almost uncanny power of self control and his ability to follow a definite course of action while seeming to pursue a directly opposite course. Until the final moment, Peter I never suspected that his trusted Hetman would not agree with his desire to wipe out the Kozak rights in exchange for personal honors. The Kozak officers did not suspect that their hetman was already completing an understanding with Charles XII at the time when they were urging him to initiate some such action as a result of the insults of Peter. Consequently, when Mazepa broke the news at Baturyn, more than one were so upset by his thoroughness that they made their way to Peter's camp.

Yet it was this capacity as well as his ability to wait that hampered Mazepa in rousing all Ukraine to the cause of Charles. The people, even the malcontents, were so astounded at the action of Mazepa that it took time for them to understand. Even the ever turbulent Sich needed some months before the *koshovy* Hordiyenko and his Zaporozhians could comprehend the new situation that seemed to have developed overnight. Mazepa, true to his philosophy, had

done nothing to cushion the blow or to awaken even a suspicion that some action might be forthcoming.

Furthermore, Mazepa was not a profound student in the theoretical sense, although he was both educated and cultured. He spoke several languages including Latin and enjoyed the lengthy orations of students in the Mohylanska Academy. Reared on Plutarch and the traditions of the Kozaks, he seemed satisfied with them. On the other hand, he was a shrewd and practical politician, able to size up the most complicated situations and adapt them to his own purposes and needs. He, apparently, after a somewhat unsuccessful start in the Polish service, ceased to experiment in his later career and instead moved along elegantly and graciously, fascinating the Muscovite leaders and impressing Western visitors by his good taste, his philanthropies, and his knowledge of events in both East and West.

With these characteristic advantages and disadvantages in mind, let us look at Mazepa's career to see what courses of action were reasonably open to him as an individual Ukrainian, at first, and later, as the responsible representative of Ukraine. The choices were limited.

As a young man employed on missions to the Kozaks by Jan Kazimierz, it was made clear to Mazepa that he could rise in the Polish service only by denationalizing himself and by joining the dominant Polish Latin Catholic majority. Vyhovsky failed, thanks to Kozak bigotry and the narrowness of the Polish szlachta. Mazepa's own family traditions were too strong to let him make this choice, and so he bowed out of the Polish service.

He joined Doroshenko and acted as his secretary (really Foreign Minister) in the negotiations with Turkey. This experience too proved unsatisfactory. The actions of the Turkish troops in Podillya showed him as well as Doroshenko that reliance upon Turkey was destructive to Ukraine. It was an embarrassing position for a young and patriotic man like Mazepa to be in, but he was rescued by his capture by Sirko and the Zaporozhians who turned him over to Samoylovych and brought him into contact with Moscow. He had only to enter the service of Samoylovych or doom himself to poverty or worse.

Mazepa rose in the Russian service, but he had no doubts as to the real situation. Samoylovych might be in theory the head of an independent Kozak state, but he was bound hand and foot to Moscow. Russian agents and informers were all around him, and, when Prince Golitsyn needed a scapegoat for his failure against Azov,

he had no scruples about stirring up a revolt of the colonels and sending Samoylovych as a prisoner to Siberia. The lesson was not lost on the new hetman. It was driven home still further when Mazepa was in Moscow at the time when Peter seized power. Neither Sophia nor her lover and Mazepa's own friend, Prince Golitsyn, could or would fight. The offers made to him by Polish and other agents were, he knew from his own experiences, mere baits to lead him into rash adventures and to force him to rely on promises which would not be fulfilled. Realizing that his only course was to seek the friendship of Peter, Mazepa determined to get it and keep it until common sense showed the possibility of another course.

For nearly twenty years, Mazepa and Ukraine could either: 1. adhere to the policy of Peter, or 2. indulge in the luxury of a hopeless, expensive revolt in which the country would have to depend solely upon its own resources. The Hetman knew well that these resources were not sufficient to carry on a full-scale rebellion. From his knowledge of Peter he knew that an unsuccessful uprising would not only be brutally crushed, but rather that such a thing would inevitably lead to the dissolving of the Zaporozhian Host and Sich and the complete elimination of Ukraine. We can, therefore, understand Mazepa's handling of Petryk who tried to base his support on the Crimean Tatars. At the same time, Mazepa realized that, if Petryk succeeded in starting a general rebellion with suitable support, it might be wise not to denounce him prematurely.

The same motives and mode of thinking are apparent in other fields of Mazepa's activity. He endeavored to improve and strengthen the economy of Ukraine, but he could take no action which would drive the malcontent officers to appeal to Peter or which would lighten the burden of the peasants to such an extent that Peter in his greed for money would make new demands upon the Hetman.

It was the same way with his army. His early experience in the West must have shown Mazepa the deficiencies of the old systems of military training. He knew that Peter was "moving heaven and earth" to introduce his troops to the then Western style of strict discipline and massed fire power. But if Mazepa introduced them into Ukraine, it would displease many of his colonels and merely lead Peter to demand that these troops be incorporated into his new Muscovite forces. Again Ukraine would be the loser in the long run.

Thus, as Hetman, Mazepa was bound to the chariot wheels of Moscow; his one hope was to retain the confidence of the tsar while

thwarting all the tsar's plans that he judged contrary to the interests of Ukraine. It was a task that tried his capacity for self control and secrecy to the limit and gives the peculiar coloration to his entire hetmanate, while leaving us in the dark as to his actual contributions to the policy of Peter and the development of historical events.

Now that we have seen the limitations on Mazepa's power as they existed in reality, let us look at some of the neighbors of Ukraine to discover what forces Mazepa could have used in the most favorable situation.

Let us start with the Zaporozhian Sich or, as their name was, the Lower Zaporozhian Army. This had become at least semi-independent of Hetman Mazepa. It drew its members from the most adventurous part of the population, but it was not subject to the Hetman's orders and voted each time what it would do. It prided itself on containing the most loyal Kozaks; yet its koshovery with his independent spirit often proved more of a disturbing element than a constructive one and hampered the movements of the hetmans in the south. It did rally to Mazepa before Poltava, but only under a special treaty which, incidentally, gives us a clearer picture of the relations of Mazepa and Charles than we have from other sources.

The changes in Moscow were almost fantastic when we compare the situation with that at the time of Bohdan. By the time of the outbreak of the Northern War, Peter had crushed the Streltsy, the old Muscovite standing army. The Streltsy had been restless all through the reign of Tsar Alexis and at one time had seriously menaced the lives of Sophia, Ivan, and Peter. Now they revolted once too often and Peter eliminated them, killing many with his own hand.

This change was connected with the religious movements in Moscow. It may be a strange coincidence, but the first delegation from Patriarch Nikon to the Orthodox East with the approval of Tsar Alexis came at the same time as Bohdan Khmelnytsky began his fight to free Ukraine. The first invitations to Kievan scholars to visit Moscow soon followed. A no less strange coincidence was the fact that Nikon, the last Patriarch of Moscow to aspire to any independent religious or cultural role, was forced from power by Tsar Alexis in 1658 at the very time when Vyhovsky seemed to be withdrawing the Host from Muscovite domination. Alexis did not, however, withdraw favor from the Kievan scholars and after Tsar Feodor burned Protopope Avvakum at the stake, the population of Moscow quieted into a sullen calm while the Volga valley was rav-

aged by fire and sword a first time under Stenka Razin, then later after the reforms of Peter by Bulavin with his slogan, "The old faith and the beard." These revolts could win the support of some of the Zaporozhians, for they offered opportunities for plunder, but they could not rouse the hetmans to assist them. We can be sure that this was not for love of Moscow, for the Kozak officers saw that, while an increase in the power of these rebels might weaken Moscow, their success would stir up a still more dangerous fanaticism in the minds of Muscovites. Mazepa sent at the Tsar's orders some troops against Bulavin, and the movement was suppressed before the alliance with Sweden was announced.

Another change of importance to Ukraine was the transfer of the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Kiev from Constantinople to Moscow. This was engineered by Samoylovych who was very subservient to Moscow, and it seems as if Mazepa was used in the negotiations. Did he approve? We cannot say, for in the beginning at least it worked to his advantage. It brought his mother and chief adviser, the Abbess Mary Magdalen, who was in charge of the most important convent in Kiev, into close contact with the Patriarch of Moscow and the ruling circles of that city. Its consequences on Ukrainian church life and education were disastrous in the long run and later facilitated Peter's excommunication of the Hetman. Yet we must remember that the seventeenth century witnessed the greatest degradation of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Moscow was able to accomplish its will thanks to the weakening of Turkey, as we shall see.

The bulk of Mazepa's campaigns with the Muscovites were again against the Crimean Tatars. Here the interests of Moscow and Ukraine ran parallel, for the efforts of both to reach the Black Sea were hampered by the Tatars. The two were competing rivals as to which would profit most by the ending of Tatar raids upon their border settlements. The Crimean Tatars were the last independent section of the Golden Horde which, as part of the forces of Genghis Khan and Batu Khan, had sacked Kiev in 1240. They were broken by Ivan the Terrible at Kazan, but they continued to threaten both countries which were rivals only in the Slobozhianshchyna. The original Zaporozhians were created to check these raids, and the feud between the Kozaks and Tatars was a long standing one. At times they made peace, but the repeated treachery of the Khans toward Khmelnytsky, when they were allied against Poland, revived ill feel-

ing and, as their power waned, both Moscow and Ukraine breathed more freely. Warfare against them was a Kozak speciality and Kozak tactics were largely developed under Tatar pressure.

The next great power which might help Ukraine was the Ottoman Empire with its capital at Constantinople. In the early part of the seventeenth century the Zaporozhian Kozaks who were at the height of their power raided the suburbs of Constantinople almost every year, burning Skutari on the coast of Asia Minor and freeing thousands of captive Christians. As Mazepa well knew, Khmelnytsky had once thought of seeking the protection of the Turkish Sultan, but had given that idea up in favor of his plan to form a strong alliance with the Danubian provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, semi-independent states under the egis of the Sultan. This had failed with the death of his son, Tymish. Doroshenko had tried to revive an alliance with the Sultan and had found sympathetic support from the Grand Vizier Ahmed Kuprili, but the Turkish occupation of Podillya had done so much harm to the Ukrainians that it had caused the downfall of Doroshenko. Worse was to come. Kuprili died; his successor, Kara Mustapha, embarked the Turks on the conquest of Vienna. When this was foiled by the charge of King Jan Sobieski of Poland with an army of Poles and Ukrainians, the legend of Turkish invincibility was broken. In the aftermath of this defeat, the imperial troops expelled the Turks from Budapest and the plains of Hungary and, even though for a moment only, seized the fortress of Beograd and penetrated the Balkans. It was in the wake of this defeat at Vienna that the Russian rulers had been able to force the Sultan to compel the Patriarch of Constantinople to turn the Ukrainian Church over to Moscow. So on every ground, it was obvious that Mazepa could build no hopes on Turkey as a permanent ally and, in addition, since he controlled only the east bank of the Dnieper, he could not easily resume the plan of Khmelnytsky for support from the Danube.

The final state on the border of Ukraine was Poland. The Ukrainians as well as Mazepa himself had had bitter experiences of co-operation with Poland and of the haughtiness and political unreliability of the magnates who stubbornly resisted any effort to give the Ukrainians those rights guaranteed by their king in solemn agreements. Although a successful general who had broken the power of the Sultan, King Jan Sobieski had shown himself unable to control the anarchy prevailing in the country. He operated under French influence and, when he died, the Poles amid disgraceful scenes of bribery and disorder practically sold the crown to Augustus

of Saxony who proceeded to govern the land for the benefit of his Saxon holdings without regard for the feelings of the Poles or the good of their country. The influence of Peter was growing among them and, taken as a whole, Poland could not be a source of support.

Under these circumstances, Mazepa could see no nation on the borders of Ukraine which could serve as a base if he decided to move against Moscow. He seemed destined to end his life waiting against hope for some unforeseen complication which would enable him to move. Otherwise, the one hope for Ukraine was the ambiguous favor of Peter who was obviously waiting for the time when a false move by the Hetman would allow him to destroy the freedom of Ukraine, abolish the Kozak organization, and carry through his long-desired policy of standardization and "Europeanization." All the while Peter called more and more Ukrainians to Moscow and tried to absorb them into his centralized state.

There was one other state that might be involved — Sweden — but the prospects for this were too remote to be considered by a man with Mazepa's sense of the probable. Sweden's interest was considerable but highly indirect. At the end of the sixteenth century there had been formed a matrimonial alliance between Sweden and Poland; both countries in the first half of the seventeenth century were ruled by kings of the same Vasa dynasty with each king claiming the double throne. The one obstacle to a peaceful solution was religion. Poland was in the hands of the Roman Catholics; the Swedes and their kings were Lutheran. The result was a series of wars which had brought Poland to the verge of ruin as the Swedes invaded Poland and asserted their claims, especially to the Polish seacoast. In addition, the Swedes held Finland and in the various wars had annexed the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea intending to make this a Swedish lake. Sweden had failed in these plans because their leader, King Gustavus Adolphus, induced to enter the Thirty Years War in support of France, had fallen at the battle of Luetzen. His successors had renewed hostilities, and Khmelnytsky had even tried by Swedish support to break from his subservience to Moscow. All this had come to nothing after the death of the Hetman, and King Charles XI of Sweden showed no inclination to renew the Swedish drive into Eastern Europe. As a result, no sensible statesman could build any hopes on Sweden; Mazepa was compelled to disregard this as an empty dream.

So Mazepa was left with nothing but Peter's personal regard for him as the sole protection of Ukraine. No one knew better than

Mazepa the unsubstantial character of that support. There were Muscovite garrisons in the principal Ukrainian cities; so Mazepa could only hope in his elegant, aloof way that the final catastrophe would be postponed until his death.

Then suddenly the entire situation changed in a way that was utterly incredible and unexpected. Charles XI had tried to solve the financial problems of Sweden by the so-called reduction of estates. He called upon the great landowners to show their rights to their property. In the Baltic area very few could do this, for they had seized their lands after the dissolution of the Teutonic Knights and had never bothered to secure any legal title. When Charles died in 1697 and left the throne to his 15-year-old son, Charles XII, all of Europe expected the young man to meet with disaster.

At this moment an adventurer, Johann Reinhold Patkul, a Latvian landowner who had been sentenced to prison in Sweden for his opposition to the financial reforms, appeared in Poland and proposed to Augustus II a war against Sweden to recover the Baltic area for Poland and, incidentally, his own lands for himself. He won the confidence of Augustus and then journeyed to Moscow where he persuaded Peter to join the proposed war. Peter accepted, but he had quite different plans for the future. Patkul also won over Frederick IV of Denmark, although he failed to interest Frederick III of Brandenburg.

When all was ready, the three monarchs declared war on Sweden in 1700. To their chagrin and consternation, the young Charles proved to be a brilliant general. In six weeks he defeated Denmark. Then turning on Peter with 8,000 men in a blinding snowstorm, he crushed an army of 50,000 Russians which under Peter's personal command was besieging a small Swedish garrison in Narva on November 20, 1700. The Northern War was well on its way. The situation was as it had been almost a century before with Sweden fighting both Moscow and Poland. The stability of Eastern Europe was again upset and anything could happen.

There is no evidence that Mazepa was aware of Peter's entrance into the alliance, and there are some hints that he shared the usual estimate of the inexperience of Charles. But he was soon greatly disturbed by the action of Peter even before the battle of Narva. The Tsar, proud of his army which was superficially trained on Western lines, could not decide whether he wanted to show the Kozak regiments to his foreign officers. He gave and countermanded or-

ders for Kozak troops to move northward, even though their movements were not authorized under the Treaty of Pereyaslav. In these maneuvers Mazepa's favorite nephew, Colonel Ivan Obidovsky, died of disease in Pskov. Yet Narva showed the seriousness of the new war, and Peter's treatment of the Kozak officers wherever they were began to arouse murmuring.

In a short time the Tsar began to use Kozak troops for his raiding into the Baltic provinces but not against Charles himself, for that monarch, having disposed of Denmark and defeated Peter's ready troops, now turned against Augustus. This produced a fantastic situation.

The Poles as a mass refused to support their king; yet he with his Saxon troops operated with little opposition all over Poland, and, when Charles invaded Poland, they declined also to support Charles. Thus Poland became the battleground of all the armies involved. The country was pillaged, and no one even protested when Charles declared Augustus deposed and forced a meeting of the diet and the election of his own candidate, Stanislaw Leszczyński, whose coronation he brought about in 1705. Charles followed Augustus into Saxony and compelled him to abdicate the Polish throne by a special treaty. Meanwhile, Peter, after some hesitation, decided that he would not allow Augustus to abdicate and would keep him on the throne despite the treaty between Augustus and Charles.

In the midst of this turmoil, Peter ordered Mazepa to invade the west bank of the Dnieper and to clear it of partisans of Charles. The Hetman obeyed; now there was the strange spectacle of a Ukrainian Hetman with Ukrainian troops occupying at the orders of the Muscovite Tsar the Polish-dominated Ukrainian territory and doing it in the name of a King of Poland who had already abdicated.

It is hard to fathom Peter's plan. His actions in the Baltic area made it certain that he had no intention of allowing the Baltic lands to revert to Polish rule, if he expelled the Swedes. Did he have the same idea in the beginning as to the west bank of the Dnieper? Peter like most of the Muscovites regarded the hetman state as an anachronism in the Russian Sea and was obviously waiting for a propitious moment to declare it publicly. He was apparently hoping that sooner or later Mazepa would accept high personal honors in exchange for his post as hetman and that this would

settle all questions. Later as he saw the attitude of the Poles toward both Augustus and Stanislaw, he may have changed his mind and looked forward to the seizure of all of Poland and its incorporation in his realm. In this case, because of the Polish-Kozak hostility, the cession of the right bank would be a needless cause of offence to the Poles.

While this situation was developing, new complications began elsewhere. In 1699, the Austrian Emperor had signed a treaty of peace at Karlowitz with Turkey, restored the conquered territory, and moved the Serb Orthodox Patriarch and some of his flock to a Serb Military Frontier in the Austrian dominions. This relieved the pressure on Turkey and allowed the country more freedom of action.

This was the prelude to the War of the Spanish Succession when Austria and the Holy Roman Empire, England, Holland, and many of the German states united to prevent Louis XIV of France from placing his candidate on the throne of Spain. Incidentally, France was trying to operate as the protector of the Christians (Catholics) in the Ottoman Empire. Louis XIV had many close ties with Sweden, and France exerted every effort to make peace between Charles and his enemies, especially Poland, for Austria had heavily backed the election of Augustus as king. The allies, on the other hand, did not want Charles, now a successful commander, to add his forces to those of France and did everything to encourage the Northern War. Marlborough even visited Charles in Saxony in 1706 to assure himself that Charles was not thinking of making peace. Peter, discouraged by the turn of events, sought help from the Western coalition, begged for their troops, and offered Marlborough at the same time the title of Prince of Kiev, Prince of Siberia, or anything else that would bring him aid against Charles. He also knew that Stanislaw Leszczynski had close ties with France as well as the backing of Charles.

Under these circumstances, what was Mazepa to do? He knew that his days as hetman were numbered. Peter had hinted and Menshikov had even brutally alluded to it. He could be sure of an honorable position for himself, but he had no intention of betraying the Host for his personal aggrandizement. That, he knew, was what obedience to the Tsar's orders really meant. He knew also that King Stanislaw was trying to open a line of communication to him by every conceivable means, by more or less veiled messengers and by

social contacts. In these, Princess Anna Dolska, the aunt of Stanislaw, was one of the more obvious. Yet her first husband had been a Wisniowiecki and a friend of Mazepa while he was in the Polish service. Her position in Polish society made it almost imperative for Mazepa to meet her in his guarding of the right bank for Augustus. Mazepa clearly saw that Stanislaw, in trying to win him over, was acting as a Pole and thought only of restoring the situation as it had been before the time of Khmelnytsky. That was equally distasteful not only to Mazepa but to all the Kozaks, officers and men alike.

As Mazepa saw it, he had no power of initiative and could take no stand in the larger problems. He could work in a smaller field; his correct course was to secure an open channel to Charles and come to a direct understanding between him and the Host with a guarantee that Charles would recognize the independence of Ukraine.

This plan was easier to make than to carry out. Muscovite garrisons were in many Ukrainian cities. Muscovite agents surrounded Mazepa and reported every visitor and action to the Tsar. Some of the colonels and other officers were jealous of Mazepa and were only too willing to report any suspicious move. Others were so openly critical of the Muscovites that they invited suspicion. Yet all the difficulties had to be overcome at one and the same time if the plan were to succeed. Once it did succeed, steps would have to be taken to arouse the population. It was only in the last item that Mazepa was out of his element, for, true to his theory of his position, he paid little or no attention to it.

Then there began a weird series of intrigues which were incredibly complicated and known only to the Hetman himself. There was a parade of Jesuit priests, Orthodox monks, Polish officers, Polish ladies, and even peasants and beggars to wherever the Hetman happened to be. They brought letters and propositions, and they returned empty-handed or with non-committal and meaningless phrases. Mazepa carefully informed Peter of the arrival of the individuals and, supposedly, the contents of their messages. When it was necessary, he arrested the hostile agents and then saw to it that they escaped under conditions that placed the responsibility on his enemies or on the pro-Muscovite members of his staff to arouse suspicion against them.

So fully and with such apparent sincerity did he report that when Colonels Kochubey and Iskra in 1708 after elaborate precau-

tions to deceive Mazepa reported their suspicions of the Hetman, they could not in their denunciation tell half of what the Hetman had already reported. Their denunciation was accordingly not believed, and they were forced to admit that they were acting merely out of jealousy; there followed a strong presumption that they were agents of either Charles or Stanislaw. It is small wonder that Peter ordered Mazepa to execute them.

It was not until the autumn of 1707 when Charles was back in Warsaw and preparing to move against Peter that he opened direct negotiations with the Hetman. Even then there was doubt as to whether he would group together Poland and Ukraine or work with them separately. He finally decided on the latter course when he found that King Stanislaw was not in a position to send him an important number of troops.

It was an anxious time for Mazepa, and the physical strain was almost more than the old man could endure. He had been carrying on the negotiations himself; for a long while even his trusted Orlyk had no knowledge except what he learned from Mazepa's letters to Peter. In addition, the Hetman's mother, the Abbess Mary Magdalen, was dying. As she had been his chief adviser, he felt this as the loss of the one person to whom he had ever been close.

He had one more very important question to settle in his own mind. What was to be Charles' plan of campaign? The King had three routes to Moscow. He could move from the Swedish possessions in Finland and for a considerable distance be covered by the Swedish garrisons there. If he did this, Peter would move his Kozak regiments to the North and, in the case of Swedish victory, Mazepa would have little to offer Charles and Ukraine would suffer.

If Charles moved by the south through Ukraine, Mazepa would have his regiments but they would be backed by overwhelming Muscovite forces, and Ukraine would be the battleground, as Poland had been earlier.

If the King moved in the center, the number of men furnished by Poland and Ukraine would largely determine which won the lion's share of the profits.

Slowly but surely Charles in his attempt to turn the left wing of Peter's forces approached Ukraine and the hour of decision was nearing. Yet the game of intrigue still went on. The old Hetman seemed unable to shake off his long established habits of secrecy,

even enough to warn trusted officers in the border cities to avoid Menshikov and treat the Swedes as friends.

It was not until Voynarovsky, who had been with Menshikov, burst in to tell him that Menshikov was approaching Baturyn either to accept his resignation as hetman or to abolish the post that Mazepa acted. On November 3, 1708, the die was cast. On the 4th, Mazepa reached the Swedish camp to announce that Ukraine was in its battle for freedom.

Within barely a week, Menshikov and an army attacked Baturyn, captured it by treachery, massacred the garrison and the entire population, and ruined the city. The news struck consternation among the Ukrainians. This was increased when Peter ordered the Church to anathemize the Hetman as Judas, declared the office of hetman vacant, and, since under the circumstances he could not abolish it, ordered the Ukrainian officers around him to elect as hetman Ivan Skoropadsky. Peter took pains to surround Skoropadsky so closely with Russian advisers that he could make no independent move.

The capture and destruction of Baturyn cast a gloom over the joint Swedish-Kozak army. This was not lifted when the news came that General Loewenhaupt who was bringing supplies had been defeated *en route*. The discomfited general arrived without the sorely needed supplies and with a discouraged and demoralized force. Mazepa understood what had happened, for the great distances involved made necessary the kind of trained men that the Kozaks could provide, and the Kozak regiments had learned by experience to scout for long distances and furnish distant protection to an army. That was their strength which had been overlooked by Charles and also by Peter in his zeal for "Europeanization."

The winter of 1708-9 proved one of the coldest in Ukraine. Charles tried in vain to combat the cold, but the sufferings of the Swedes was severe, and their already depleted forces grew smaller and smaller. At the same time, the understanding between Charles and Mazepa grew better and better. The King recognized the ability of the Hetman in his field and Mazepa learned once again the value of straight talking and thinking. By spring the two men understood each other and were ready to co-operate. Recruits began again to flow into the Ukrainian forces as the people recovered from their original shock.

In the spring too the Sich decided to throw in its lot with the allies. When the *koshovy* Hordiyenko appeared to sign an agree-

ment, the old disagreements with the Hetman were forgotten and the Lower Army fought to the end beside Mazepa and Charles. They paid dearly for it, for Menshikov led an expedition against the Sich. The garrison was overcome by treachery; the men were killed, and the Sich ruined.

The Muscovites, in the meantime, had been forced out of most positions except Poltava. This city was important if a line of communication was to be opened to the south. This idea of uniting all the Black Sea had developed in Mazepa's thinking, and it had also been urged upon Charles by French sources as a new way of linking Charles and the Western War. However, the idea was proposed and was accepted; both Charles and Peter prepared for a test of strength.

It is hard to determine the relative strength of the forces in actual potentialities. The Swedes were at a disadvantage because Charles had been wounded and was unable to lead the battle in person. The plans of Marshal Rehnskjoeld seemed on the verge of success when there came some confusion, and Peter, who was preparing to flee, seized the opportunity to turn defeat into victory. The Swedish Empire had fallen and with it fell Mazepa's hopes.

Yet even then the old man did not despair. He and his Kozaks carried Charles to safety in Turkey, and once again Ivan Mazepa showed his mastery of Kozak tactics. Menshikov in pursuit could pardon the Swedes and torture Kozaks who fell into his hands, but he remained at a safe distance from the royal party until they made their way into Turkey.

The end was sad but honorable. Peter demanded the surrender of Mazepa. Charles categorically refused, and by his own efforts and those of his European friends in Constantinople the Turks extended shelter to the defeated Hetman who a few weeks afterward died of exhaustion. The effort had been too much for the aged man; he died, as no Hetman had since Bohdan, in possession of his office; as such he received a state burial. Orlyk became his successor as Hetman of a free Ukraine, and for decades he worked in Western Europe for the cause.

It was a blow to Muscovite plans, for the Tsars had to maintain a hetman as a figurehead. When Catherine II finally felt free to wipe out Kozak liberties, it was only some fifteen years before the start of the modern revival, so well had Mazepa built.

What shall we say then of Mazepa? He knew his people and their capabilities. He knew his own limitations and the limitations of his country and its resources. He knew that he could not take

the initiative as could Charles and Peter, but within his sphere he waited for the proper moment. Against terrific odds, he emerged as an important and indeed a deciding figure in the complicated game of world politics. That is enough to insure his immortality and the gratitude of his people. Two hundred and fifty years later, when the whole world is threatened by the same Russian-Communist slavery, the world can add its applause to that of the Ukrainians and say that Mazepa fought well for his people, his country, and the human aspiration for a free and better life.



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CHICAGO, ILL.**

**Vladimir Sokolowsky, V. M. D., Ph. D.
Chairman**

**Ass. Prof. Paul Turula, Ph. D.
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