

The Donbas War and politics in cities on the front: Mariupol and Kramatorsk

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This paper compares politics in two cities, Mariupol and Kramatorsk, located near the frontline between Ukraine-controlled Donetsk Oblast and the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR). The DPR controlled these cities in the spring of 2014, but Ukraine recaptured them. Both cities are company towns, in which owners/managers of dominant factories, nicknamed job-givers, have a decisive voice in the city's decision-making. This paper compares how leaders of the two cities reacted to the expansion of Rinat Akhmetov's business empire before the Donbas War, and to DPR paramilitaries during the war. The two cities diverged decisively in the post-war reconstruction because Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko succeeded in splitting two major companies and making one of them pro-presidential in Kramatorsk. As a result, electoral politics in Kramatorsk became highly competitive, while one-party dominance of the Opposition Bloc (former Party of Regions) continues in Mariupol.

Keywords: the Donbas War; Donetsk Oblast; Mariupol; Kramatorsk; company town; the Opposition Bloc

This is a comparative study of how two apparently similar cities on the front, Mariupol and Kramatorsk of Donetsk Oblast, survived the Donbas War, and how local politicians integrated themselves into the restored national party system of Ukraine after 2014. Both cities are located close to the military border with the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and are the most and second-most populous cities in Ukraine-controlled Donetsk Oblast.¹ Mariupol was the oblast capital in June–November 2014, and then this status was passed to Kramatorsk. However, my selection of cases is motivated not only by their importance but rather the fact that both cities are company towns, characteristic of Eastern Ukraine. Company towns are cities where one or a few enterprises dominate the local economy, provide a significant portion of employment, support public facilities and commerce, and often have a decisive voice in elections. Company towns are perhaps a phenomenon observable in various countries, as is testified by the fact that many languages have idioms with the same meaning: *Monogorod* in Russian, *Arbeitersiedlung* in German, *Kigyo jokamachi* in Japanese, and *Gonsi shizhen* in Chinese. In addition, Russian has a widely used idiom meaning influential companies from which company towns derive – *gradoobrazuiushchee predpriiatie* (city-forming enterprise). Local political regimes in company towns are self-sustainable by nature, but at the same time, they are vulnerable

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to external aggression because they attract the attention of external actors by their abundant economic and electoral resources and also because they have a mono-cultural industrial structure and are hardly adaptable to a globalizing market. Indeed, highly self-sustainable local political regimes in Mariupol and Kramatorsk faced three serious external challenges in this century: the expansion of Rinat Akhmetov's business empire, attacks by both Euro-aidan and DPR supporters, and Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko's attempt to reintegrate these cities into the post-2014 national party system. Leaders of these cities behaved in differing manners to meet these challenges.

Though most Ukraine specialists would agree that the consequences of the Euromaidan Revolution and the following Donbas War highly depend on regional factors, including a few works I have completed (Matsuzato 2016, 2017), Ukraine studies have produced poor research results in this regard. Concerning sub-regional (local) studies of the Donbas War, I only know Yuri Zhukov's quantitative analysis (2016). I appreciate Zhukov's finding that the frequency of violent anti-Kyiv protests depended on the portion of workers employed in the machine-building industry, which was highly cooperative and complementary with its Russian counterparts. As argued below, what the city represented from among the three main industrial spheres of Donetsk Oblast seems to influence the mentality and behavior of the local population: coal-mining in Donetsk, metallurgy in Mariupol, and machine building in Kramatorsk.

Company towns in Eastern Ukraine have extremely oligarchic socio-political structures, deriving from their socialist past. The socialist regimes built factories and collective farms not only to increase gross national production, but also to create workplaces and make these enterprises responsible for maintaining lifelines and social lives in the communities where they were located. They managed public housing, provided the population with power, gas, and water, helped kindergartens and schools by supplying lunch and milk, removed snow, provided automobiles for funerals, and so forth. Even after transferring to capitalism, these enterprises and their directors (are forced to) continue to perform a significant part of their previous, public duties. This condition helped them to become powerful electoral machines or party substitutes in an era of competitive elections. They received various monikers responding to context: red directors, job-givers (*rabotadateli*), or oligarchs.

We may regard the Azov and Il'ich Steelworks in Mariupol and the New Kramatorsk machine-building Factory (NKMF) and the Energomashspetsstal (EMSS) in Kramatorsk as city-forming enterprises. Though the numbers of their employees have decreased to less than half compared to their heydays in the socialist era (as for the NKMF, from about 25,000 to only about 9000), they pay corporate pensions to their retired workers, additional to state pensions, build children's parks and cozy bus stops, and restore school buildings by spending their own corporate budget. As a result, directors of these corporations practically determine who should be the mayor and who should form the City Council majority. Though the new local electoral law adopted in 2015 decreased the probability enjoyed by representatives of city-forming enterprises of being elected as local deputies (as described below), it continues to be a rare exception that they lose the election. Even if this happens, the defeated candidates continue to work to fulfill their promises during the electoral campaign to serve voters of their electoral districts, spending budgets provided by their patrons, that is, city-forming corporations. As a result, there is a high probability of them winning the next election. It is symptomatic that when Rinat Akhmetov decided to terminate his appeasement towards the DPR in late May 2014, he accused DPR activists for not having created any workplace (*Prizavskii rabochii*: hereafter *PR*, 21 May 2014). Thus, only those who can provide the population with workplaces should be their leaders, while the concept of

obshchestvenniki (civic activists) often has a derogatory nuance in Donbas. To borrow a brilliant phrase of Maksym Efimov, an oppositional oligarch in Kramatorsk, this system makes the City Council and mayoralty “another workshop (*tsekh*)” of the city-forming factory (*Kramatorskaia Pravda*, hereafter *KP*, 11 November 2017) though he would probably do the same if he wins the mayoral election. I regard these local regimes as an extreme form not only of company towns but also of what Henry Hale terms the “patronal regime” (Hale 2014) and tentatively call it a “regime of job-givers.” This essay analyzes how these regimes ran Mariupol and Kramatorsk before, during, and after the Donbas War and overcame external challenges. Yet, to begin with, let us take a short detour to glance at the geography of the Donbas War in Donetsk Oblast and these cities’ localisms to understand the military and cultural environment in which these local regimes operate.

Geography of the war

The Donbas War was not a unitary process. Donetsk Oblast split into three military zones. The first is Donetsk City and its surrounding cities and counties (*raiony*), which have stayed in the territory of the DPR to this day (2018). The second is Mariupol with the Azov Sea Rim (Priazov Region). The third is the North, mainly composed of Krasnyi Liman, Slaviansk, and Kramatorsk.² A large forest separates the northern part of Donetsk Oblast from its central part (controlled by the DPR). This distance enabled the North to concentrate on restoration after its “emancipation” from DPR paramilitaries. Only a highway in uninhabited woods connects Ukraine’s Bakhmut (formerly Artemovsk), controlling the Ukraine-DPR border in the North, and Gorlovka, DPR’s gateway. In contrast, there is a passible steppe between Donetsk and Mariupol. Moreover, major parts of the former Novoazovskiyi and Tel’manovskiyi Counties, located between Mariupol and Russia, are controlled by the DPR. The perceived distance between Donetsk and Mariupol is much shorter than that between Donetsk and the North. Military tensions, including large-scale artillery attacks, continue on this southern front. This is the reason that the regional capital of the Ukrainian-controlled Donetsk Oblast needed to be moved from Mariupol to Kramatorsk immediately after Serhii Taruta (b. 1955) was removed from his governor post in November 2014.

The rebels’ autonomy from Russia was highest in the Center, lowest in the North, and middling in the Priazov Region. Igor Strelkov and other paramilitaries from Russia started their military operation in Slaviansk on 12 April 2014, but DPR activists in Donetsk City did not perceive this operation as their own. Despite the troubles in the North, they did not believe that Ukraine would initiate a military attack on their city of a million with schools, universities, hospitals, and other numerous social infrastructures. For them, the anniversary of the war is May 26 (the newly elected President Poroshenko’s air raid on Donetsk Airport), but not April 12. The rebels’ autonomy from Russia can be measured by the Ukrainian national-patriots’ human rights situation under occupation.³ The national-patriots were forced to evacuate from the North immediately after Strelkov seized it, because pro-Russian activists publicized lists of the “fifth column” (national-patriotic activists and organizations) whose safety they would not guarantee, while this did not happen in Mariupol and national-patriots continued to operate in the city (Borodin 2017; Nagornaia 2017). In Donetsk, though the Novorussianists seized the Oblast State Administration (OSA) building on 7 April 2014, the OSA continued to function in the city, using Governor Taruta’s personal hotels and offices. The OSA and DPR leaders continued to negotiate around the issue of seized administrative buildings. This was a peculiar dual power. The OSA was forced to move to Mariupol on June 13, after Poroshenko’s air raid on May 26 enraged and antagonized Donetsk citizens.



Local pride

Before the war, the highly industrialized and urbanized Donetsk Oblast had as many as 28 cities of regional significance (relatively large cities) and only 18 rural counties. This reveals a contrast to ordinary Ukrainian and Russian regions composed of several large cities and a few tens of rural counties. Moreover, in contrast to Dnipro, formerly Ekaterinoslav as gubernia capital since the eighteenth century, or to Kharkiv, a rare university city in the Russian Empire, Donetsk was founded as late as 1869 by English entrepreneur John Hughes as a site for his pig iron factory. Donetsk owes its development predominantly to Soviet industrialization, as is the case with Mariupol and Kramatorsk. In short, Donetsk City was *primus inter pares*, but not an unchallengeable leader, of the region.

Intellectuals in Mariupol distinguish the Priazov Region from the coal-mining Donbas. Mariupol has a history traceable at least to the Rum (Ottoman) Greek colonies. As Donetsk Oblast before 2014 accounted for about one-tenth of the Ukrainian population, the population of Mariupol was about one-tenth of Donetsk Oblast's population. Mariupol developed around the Azov and Il'ich Steelworks, which together manage "40–50% of the city's labor resources" ("Sergei Taruta"). The grandiose urban view along the city's central street seems to suggest that the USSR intended to develop this city, following the model of Donetsk and Zaporizhzhie. In the 1980s, however, the Soviet Union's

over-industrialization retarded the growth of Mariupol, which has remained a city of half a million. During the Soviet era, the two metallurgical factories were directly subordinated to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), so the first secretary of the Donetsk Oblast Committee of the CPSU could not dictate to them, which guaranteed Mariupol's significant autonomy from Donetsk (Fedai 2016). As the Donetsk people complained that Donbas was feeding Ukraine but was not rewarded properly, the Mariupol people argued that the Priazov Region accounted for about 30% of Donetsk's gross regional production but was not appropriately recompensed. Historically, Donetsk jealously checked Mariupol's economy's diversified development and Mariupol's attempt to become a separate oblast (Bulyk 2016; Cherepchenko 2016). In Mariupol, even an Opposition Bloc (OB) politician told me that "the Donbas people are coal miners, so they act as they are ordered to. We are metallurgists, so we do not act unless we are persuaded and convinced."

In the late 1860s, Kharkiv Zemstvo and merchants initiated the construction of a railway connecting Kharkiv to the Azov Sea (Port Taganrog). After 10 years, Kramatorsk was born as a branch point to couple this Kharkiv–Taganrog railway with the coal-mining Iuzovka ("John Hughes' village," or the future Donetsk) for the purpose of conveying coal to the central part of European Russia. Before long, a chalk deposit was found there. In 1887, Edgar Adelman, a Prussian entrepreneur, built a factory producing lime, alabaster, and fire-proofs. Based on these experiences of early industrialization, Kramatorsk was chosen as the site for the NKMF, another giant directly controlled by the Central Committee of the CPSU. Kramatorsk was so privileged that it did not know the *holodmor* (hunger) of the 1930s (Kotsarenko 2017; "Kak poiavilsia"). Eventually, Kramatorsk had become one of the centers of the space industry in the Soviet Union.

In contrast to Mariupol, it is difficult to find local self-praise in Kramatorsk, deriving from a constant competitive spirit against Donetsk. Rather, Kramatorsk citizens often compare their city with other less developed northern cities of Donetsk Oblast, such as Slaviansk and Krasnyi Liman. A national-patriot in Kramatorsk told me that Slaviansk had become Strelkov's bastion because Slaviansk had no industry but had many narcotic addicts and alcoholics. Kramatorsk citizens prefer to call their region Donechchina, not Donbas, because there are no coal mines in Kramatorsk (Kislitsina 2017). They are proud that Kramatorsk has (or at least had) developed a machine-building industry requiring a constant inflow of intellectual labor power. It is pleasant for Kramatorsk citizens that even visitors from Kyiv are surprised by their intellectual manner and speech and by the fact that this middle-scale city has six institutes of higher education. One of them, the Donetsk State Machine-Building Academy has become a bastion of national-patriotic media activities, despite its hard science orientation (Koval'ov 2017). It is arguable to what extent local patriotisms in Mariupol and Kramatorsk contributed to dividing their fate from that of the central part of Donetsk Oblast in 2014, but this discourse is actively used to justify the *fait accompli* after 2014.

In Mariupol and Kramatorsk, as described above, intellectuals regard the coal industry as a source of the Donetsk people's stubborn resistance to a Euromaidan Ukraine. Putting value judgment aside, I largely agree with this interpretation. To sustain coal mining in almost exhausted deposits, miners often need to crawl for hundreds of meters through very narrow branch tunnels. Every morning before entering the tunnels, they ask indeed whether they will be able to see the sun again. This labor condition creates the Donetsk people's specific approach to life and death.⁴ Near-front schools to the west of Donetsk City often suffer artillery attacks by the Ukrainian Army. The DPR quickly restores the damaged school buildings and opens them again,⁵ while I think it necessary to close

these shelled schools and evacuate children to safe localities of the eastern part of the DPR. Putting aside President Poroshenko's undisputable war crime of shelling children, I often explain to Donetsk citizens that, even under cruel Japanese militarism, children were evacuated from urban areas in the last months of World War II.

The regimes of job-givers before the war

In Mariupol, the two metallurgical factories supported Iurii Khotlubei (b. 1944),⁶ the almost unchangeable mayor during 1989–2015, with an interval in 1994–1998 when he worked in the central government. In Kramatorsk, the NKMF, under the directorship of Heorhii Skudar (b. 1942), and the EMSS, presided over by Maksym Efimov (b. 1974) since 2006, rotated the mayoral post between them. Mayor Viktor Krivosheev (b. 1937) during 1998–2006 was the NKMF's man, while mayor Hennadii Kostiukov (b. 1947) during 2006–2014 was the EMSS's man. Among job-givers in Mariupol and Kramatorsk, Skudar's authority is nationwide. Being the *de facto* chairman of the industrial director circles of Ukraine, Skudar persuaded directors to support the incumbent presidential candidate Leonid Kuchma against the Communist Petro Symonenko in 1999 (Anosov 2017). Before 2014, about 70% of orders received by the NKMF came from Russia, which shrank several times after 2014. Kramatorsk belongs to the machine-building belt stretching from Kharkiv to Rostov-na-Donu of Russia. Production by the NKMF and other heavy-industry factories of Kramatorsk is highly complementary to the Russian economy, while Donetsk's coal industry and Mariupol's metallurgy often rival their counterparts in Russia. As Zhukov (2016) argues, Kramatorsk citizens' sympathy towards Russia seems to derive from the economy, as is the case with Kharkiv, while the Donetsk and Mariupol people's favor of Russia is mainly political and cultural.

The Orange Revolution hardly affected internal politics of Donetsk Oblast and Mariupol and Kramatorsk cities. Governor Vadym Chuprun, appointed by President Viktor Yushchenko in 2005, could not manage the parliamentary elections in 2006 successfully for the Orange camp and was removed. The most significant challenge that job-givers in Mariupol and Kramatorsk faced in the first decade of this century was the expansion of Rinat Akhmetov's holding company, System Capital Management (SCM), which completely redrew the "map of ownership" in Donetsk Oblast. SCM Holdings absorbed the Azov Steelworks in 2006, and had overcome the desperate resistance by one of the last red directors, Volodymyr Boiko (b. 1938), the director of the Il'ich Steelworks, by 2010. During his resistance, Boiko supported Yushchenko in the 2004 presidential election and became an MP from the Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU). Boiko's political rebel temporarily stopped the shift of the vote from the leftist parties to the Party of Regions (POR), common for the then Eastern Ukraine. In the parliamentary and local elections in 2006–2007, a 20–40% vote in Mariupol was cast for the SPU, which had 21 seats in the City Council against the POR's 41 seats.

SCM Holdings' first target in Kramatorsk was TyazhPromKomplekt (Heavy Industry Complex), whose director was Valerii Karpenko. He owned and continues to own Hotel Kramatorsk, too. During his resistance to Akhmetov, Karpenko lost two sons.⁷ Burning with revenge, Karpenko became one of the leaders of Yulia Tymoshenko's Fatherland Party in Kramatorsk and in vain challenged Kostiukov in the 2006 mayoral election. The relative strength of the national-patriots in Kramatorsk⁸ can partly be attributed to pro-Maidan oligarch Karpenko's activities in the first decade of this century. In contrast, Maksym Efimov, the EMSS owner, made a deal with Akhmetov, passed to

him a major portion of his stocks, but stayed as its director. So did Skudar to stay as NKMF director.

Boiko's capitulation put an end to the leftist tendencies revealed by the Mariupol City Council. As a result of the 2010 local elections, the POR gained 66 of the 74 city deputy seats (89%), while both the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) and the Front for Changes (Arsenii Yatseniuk's party) only gained four seats each.⁹ Kramatorsk's situation was somewhat more favorable for national-patriots; the POR had "only" 40 of the 50 seats (80%), while the national-patriotic and leftist camp had five and three seats respectively. This situation, comparatively favorable for national-patriots in Kramatorsk, changed in 2012–2013. In Mariupol, an ecological movement Let Me Breathe,¹⁰ led by Maksym Borodin (b. 1978), activated. Mariupol was blessed with national-patriots of local origin, on whom Kyiv could rely during the Donbas War. In 2013, Yatseniuk's Front for Changes merged into Tymoshenko's Fatherland Party, but, in fact, hijacked the latter. A similar phenomenon took place in Kramatorsk, which seriously damaged the old guards of the Fatherland Party (Filichenko 2017). Karpenko was one of those who lost influence on the national-patriotic camp of this city.

The regimes of job-givers during the war

As described in the previous section, on the eve of the Euromaidan Revolution, industrial leaders in Mariupol quickly changed their orientation from Boiko to Akhmetov, while local job-givers' surrender to Akhmetov in Kramatorsk was conditional. Possibly, M. Efimov, himself fluent in German and English, began to think that his EMSS would be able to survive in the European market, while it was difficult for Skudar to reorient his NKMF from Russia to Europe. Moreover, municipal leaders in Mariupol seemed more competent than their colleagues in Kramatorsk. National-patriots in Mariupol consolidated their indigenous core thanks to the ecological movement, while reshufflings in national politics damaged the Fatherland Party in Kramatorsk. During the spring and summer of 2014, Mariupol's strategic importance facilitated the consolidation of the city's industrial and municipal leaders, while the Kramatorsk leaders appeared disarrayed during the occupation period when three mayors came and left in less than two months. There seemed to be less tactical coordination between the NKMF and EMSS than between the two metallurgical factories in Mariupol during the occupation. Efimov overtly attended the pro-Ukrainian meeting on April 17, whereas Skudar repaired the DPR's military instruments in his factory (Anosov 2017).

DPR supporters' organizations in both cities consisted of civilian and military groups; the former's name varied from city to city, while the latter was often called the People's Militia (*Norodnoe opolchenie*). The civilian group was composed of local people, who communicated with the City Council and participated in forums and other various political events. Local politicians in both Mariupol and Kramatorsk told me that unprivileged people (and accordingly jealous of the POR leaders' social status) composed the civilian group. Local politicians identify some of the civilian representatives of the DPR, such as the Kuz'menko brothers of Mariupol and Gennadii Kim of Kramatorsk, as criminals (in the ordinary sense). In the military group, there were people whom local politicians could not identify, whom they believe to be visitors from Russia. To gain a revolutionary aura, the DPR supporters propagated against prostitution, and confiscated and destroyed home-distillery (*samogon*) equipment and gambling game machines (Ol'khovaia 2017). They often used these game machines as barricades.

Mariupol

In Donetsk City, DPR activists were more indigenous and, therefore, less violent than in the North. This was one of the reasons that regional leaders pursued the risky tactic of using them as a bargaining chip in their negotiation with Kyiv (Matsuzato 2017). In contrast, Mariupol was too close to Russia to be under the illusion of “using” DPR activists for political purposes. After Yanukovich fled on 22 February 2014, the leaders of the Mariupol POR organization promptly came to the consensus that they would distinguish themselves from both the national-patriots and the Novorussianists.

A plenary session of the City Council was held on 2 March 2014, while “about fifteen hundred” supporters of the federalization of Ukraine rallied in front of the City Council building and “about twenty” national-patriots did so on the other side. The City Council Secretary,¹¹ Andrii Fedai, proposed to request the Ukrainian Supreme Rada to restore the effect of the Ukrainian Law on Languages adopted on 10 July 2012, which guaranteed regional official use of Russian as a minority language (the first task of the Supreme Rada after the Euromaidan Revolution was to abolish this law). Fedai also proposed to create a municipal police force; cease imposing one-sided interpretations of history; improve relations with Russia; inhibit the rise of nationalism, fascism, and interethnic hatred; disarm all illegal armed formations in the whole of Ukraine; authorize local self-governments to influence the appointment and removal of local state and law enforcement officers; decentralize the public budget; and amend the constitution to decentralize Ukraine. Fedai concluded his proposal by stating that “Ukraine should remain as a united, indivisible state.” The Council session adopted Fedai’s proposal as its address to the Ukrainian Supreme Rada. Making the appearance of thoroughly responding to the anti-Maidan sentiment of the East Ukrainians, this resolution carefully evaded the terms “federalization of Ukraine” and “referendum.” Mayor Khotlubei read aloud this resolution in front of the Council building, but the meeting participants could not but notice the trick. They improvised a letter to Russian President Vladimir Putin, asking to introduce the Russian Army into Donbas and requested that Khotlubei sign it. Khotlubei resisted as long as he could, but under the pressure of meeting participants, eventually signed, yet adding a word above his signature, “informed [*oznakomlen*]” (“Mariupol’ potreboval”).

A popular meeting rallied on 8 March 2014 consolidated the request for the federalization of Ukraine via a referendum. The city leaders, the Novorussianists, and the national-patriots twice held a roundtable discussion on how to respond to this request. The city leaders told the Novorussianists that there were few differences between the City Council’s resolution on March 2 and the request adopted by the popular meeting on March 8. The Council session on March 28 realized the city leaders’ intention, identifying the city’s request to be for the decentralization, not the federalization, of Ukraine and accordingly excluding any reference to the referendum (*PR*, 2 April 2014).

On 13 April 2014, DPR activists occupied the Mariupol City Council building and, from the following day, municipal officials refused to work there. Kyiv immediately included Mariupol in the list of territories for the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO); on April 16, the first operation cost three victims. Violence peaked on May 9, when the Azov Battalion of the Ukrainian Internal Army disrupted the anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. In late April, Minister of Internal Affairs, Arsen Avakov, appointed Valerii Andrushuk as the Mariupol police chief.¹² On May Day, a huge crowd came to the City Police Office and requested that Andrushuk resign, passing his position to the vice chief who promised not to disturb the preparations for the May 11 referendum. The crowd forced Andrushuk to write a statement of his resignation (*PR*, 6 May 2014).

Though this statement did not have any judicial effect, Andrushuk became deeply resentful of Mariupol's citizens. On May 8, he recklessly disclosed to his subordinate police officers a plan of operation to attack the ceremony of victory on May 9 and requested that they work for this operation. The police officers refused because the operation would surely be followed by numerous civilian victims. The then Donetsk vice governor in charge of the coercive bloc, Andrii Nikolaenko, remarks that even if the police officers did not agree with the operation, the utmost action they could take was to resign their positions and return their police IDs and guns to the state, but not to torture Chief Officer Andrushuk almost to death, take him hostage, and seize the police building (2016).

The city leadership seemed to have been informed of the military operation beforehand, so they performed the floral tribute with old veterans at 6 o'clock in the morning. Yet the then City Council Secretary, Fedai, denies this interpretation, stating that they did know that some provocation would take place but did not anticipate this provocation turning into real hostilities (2016). The 9 May Incident unbridled the escalation of violence. DPR supporters burnt the City Council building on May 10. Simultaneously, the May 9 Incident consolidated the city elites. Since the city police collapsed on that day, the directors of the metallurgical factories and the City Council leaders organized volunteer patrols, cooperating with DPR paramilitaries (*PR*, 16 May 2014). On May 14, the city and police leaders, the general directors of the metallurgical factories, and the DPR representative Denis Kuz'menko together offered flowers to the destroyed police building (*PR*, 16 May 2014). Yet the appeasement was not limitless; on 11 May 2014, the City Council did not give DPR supporters indoor places for the referendum.

After the referendum, DPR supporters began to chase Mayor Khotlubei to make him write a statement of resignation because the mayor was not authorized by the DPR, which the referendum "confirmed." At last, on May 13, they caught the mayor at Mariupol University of Technology, coincidentally with directors of the Azov and Il'ich Steelworks. All of them were visiting the university to deliver a speech to the students. A de facto roundtable discussion started, with Mayor Khotlubei persuading DPR supporters by saying that it was improbable that an independent state on the territory of the two regions of Donetsk and Luhansk could survive and that an urgent task after the referendum was to stabilize the political situation in Donetsk Oblast – a purpose which perhaps the DPR shared. The DPR representative Denis Kuz'menko replied that if they (DPR activists) fired Khotlubei as mayor, two days later, the city would lie idle, so they should find a compromise. From the floor, a DPR supporter requested that Khotlubei "pledge loyalty to us [DPR] and work with us, but without salary, because the DPR does not have money" (*PR*, 16 May 2014).

Later, Kyiv and the local national-patriots identified these appeasements – the joint patrol and floral tribute, and the roundtable discussion on May 13 – as evidence of criminal offence committed by Khotlubei and other local leaders in quest of separatism. In self-defense, the city leaders began to hide the evidence of their alleged appeasement, and they simultaneously distorted the fact that DPR supporters consisted of not only stubborn paramilitaries and Russia's puppets but also ordinary youth and intellectuals who could be persuaded by the city leaders' reasonable explanations. The May 9 Incident suffered this attempt to rewrite history. The Mariupol Incident is a historical event desired to be forgotten by both Poroshenko and the local OB, while the Odesa OB ardently takes up the May 2 Massacre internationally.

Around May 20, the Mariupol leaders and local newspapers suddenly abandoned their appeasement towards the DPR. The decision came from Akhmetov, who was not an official city leader. His article, "Happy Donbas – in United Ukraine," published

in *PR* on May 16, still had a persuading tone. Akhmetov listed four scenarios for Mariupol: staying in the present centralized Ukraine; independence as the DPR; unification with Russia; and constitutional change to decentralize Ukraine. Akhmetov argued that the results of the second and third scenarios would be the same, that is, international sanctions and the collapse of Mariupol's industry. He urged the fourth scenario. On May 19 (published in *PR* on May 21), Akhmetov began to criticize the DPR much more aggressively, calling it a ruinous choice for Donetsk Oblast. Mayor Khotlubei and the directors of the metallurgical factories followed Akhmetov. The newspaper ceased to criticize the May 9 Incident but instead started to report DPR paramilitaries' violence in detail. Perhaps Kyiv pressed Akhmetov and the other Mariupol leaders to change their mind to make the coming Ukrainian presidential election, scheduled for May 25, successful. Yet Akhmetov's "betrayal" only pushed DPR activists further to radicalism; they intensified their request for the nationalization of oligarchs' properties. Even laborers of the metallurgical factories controlled by Akhmetov did not respond willingly to the alternative peace-seeking actions proposed by him. In Mariupol, the turnout for the Ukrainian presidential election on 25 May was only 14.5%.

The Ukrainian Internal Army recaptured Mariupol on 13 June 2014, but the city continued to suffer military conflicts. In the course of the DPR's counteroffensive since late August until Minsk-I (September 5), the allied DPR and Russian troops composed of armored cars and tanks reached the eastern border of the city on August 27. Then, the city had only a few hundred troops of the Azov Battalion. Governor Taruta and the regional administration abandoned the city. "Russians could have passed Mariupol without noticing that they passed it had they only wished," told me the then Mariupol City Council Secretary, Fedai. For unknown reasons, however, the Russian Army stopped there.

Kramatorsk

Kramatorsk leaders responded to the radicalization of the Euromaidan movement in Kyiv by organizing a meeting in Lenin Square on 25 January 2014. At this meeting the director of the NKMF, Skudar, spoke that Western diplomats intervened in Ukrainian politics because they feared the long-hoped-for match of economic interests between Ukraine and Russia. The West needs Ukraine in order to make NATO closer to Russia and to transform the territories of Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia into a resource appendix. Exactly for this purpose did the West hope to stop the production of highly intellectual commodities in Kramatorsk. According to Skudar, Kramatorsk did not have a European market and, if the Russian market was closed, massive unemployment and wage arrears for public officers would be inevitable. "But this is not the West's concern."¹³ The leader of the POR fraction of the Kramatorsk City Council, Viktor Pankov (father of the future mayor), said that they rallied that day to show Europe that not only the three Galician regions, "which had occupied Kiev (Kyiv)," but that they, too, are Ukrainians. Pankov noted that the gross production of the whole of Ivan-Franko Oblast was less than that of Kramatorsk City alone (*KP*, 29 January 2014). These were the typical East Ukrainian rhetoric then shared by POR leaders, who nevertheless did not fail to emphasize that their purpose was to protect Ukraine's territorial integrity.

After Yanukovych's escape on February 22, thousands of anti-Maidan citizens rallied in Lenin Square every weekend, while "up to fifty" national-patriots held meetings in front of the statue of Taras Shevchenko neighboring Lenin Square (Rud' 2017). The meeting on 1 March 2014 requested the City Council to adopt resolutions to deny the legitimacy of the

Euromaidan government and establish budget federalism to avoid paying too much tax to Kyiv “to feed Western Ukraine” (KP, 5 March, 2014; Surnin, 29–31). After the Novorussianists in Donetsk City declared the foundation of the DPR on April 7, their Kramatorsk comrades requested the City Council to organize a referendum for the “autonomy” of Donbas. Though agreeing with some of these proposals, Mayor Kostiukov replied that he was solely interested in the city’s calmness and in the ways to “take people back from street meetings” (KP, 9 April 2014). On April 12, simultaneously with Slaviansk and Krasnyi Liman, DPR activists declared the establishment of the DPR’s authorities in Kramatorsk and occupied the City Council’s building (KP, 16 April 2014; Surnin 2015). The activists seized the police building, too, but returned it to the Ukrainian authorities to let them be responsible for the peace of the city (KP, April 23 2014). Indeed, some policemen patrolled the city wearing a Georgy ribbon, symbolizing Novorussian ideas (Honcharov 2017). As was the case with Mariupol, the Euromaidan government immediately included Kramatorsk in the list of ATO objects. The first serious ATO took place on May 3, when a 21-year-old nurse, Iuliia Izotova and fellow passengers were shot to death in a car. Thousands of Kramatorsk citizens attended her funeral, as *The New York Times* reported on 5 May 2014.

Facing these crises, Mayor Kostiukov received no orders or suggestions from Governor Taruta or from the central government. Exhausted, Kostiukov resigned on May 23. According to law, City Council Secretary Andrii Borsuk became the acting mayor. He also resigned on July 1, immediately after six citizens were killed by the Ukrainian Army’s shelling of the central part of the city (“I. o. mera Kramatorska”). After Borsuk, Andrii Pankov became the acting mayor of Kramatorsk. The present (2017) vice mayor, Svitlana Filiichenko, told me that, working as vice mayor, Pankov hid Ukrainian soldiers at his home during the occupation period and this is a reason that he was prized as the “best mayor of Ukraine in 2016” (Filichenko 2017). On July 5, the DPR paramilitaries abandoned Kramatorsk to relocate to Donetsk.

The regimes of job-givers after the war

To incorporate Eastern Ukraine into a post-Euromaidan Ukraine, President Poroshenko engineered three measures. First, his government is generously financing the restoration of front accessory cities, bordering the DPR and Luhansk People’s Republic (LPR), partly to use these cities as show windows to attract the people living in these republics. Thanks to the government’s decentralization policy, the budget that had previously been spent at the regional level began to be passed down to localities. In addition, front cities in Donbas enjoy a high probability of winning various national and international grants (Oshurko 2017). In August 2017, both Mariupol and Kramatorsk were experiencing a construction boom. The mayor of Kramatorsk, Pankov, boasted to me that their endeavor for reconstruction began to achieve results after three years since the war (2017). Poroshenko’s second measure to reintegrate Eastern Ukraine was to devise a specific electoral system for the 2015 local elections to prevent the OB’s absolute hegemony there. This is a kind of proportional system, but cities are divided into electoral districts, in which candidates from various parties compete. The number of votes cast for a party determines the number of deputy seats that the party would gain, but this number is distributed among the candidates who gained larger portions of the vote *in their own party*. Let us assume that there are six electoral districts in a city and three parties participate in these elections.

Party		A	B	C	Total
Obtained total vote		Largest	Middle	Smallest	Six
Obtained deputy seats		Three	Two	One	Six
Percentage of the vote in the district	1	50	15	35	100
	2	70	25	5	100
	3	60	30	10	100
	4	50	40	10	100
	5	50	35	15	100
	6	55	30	15	100

The bolded and italicized candidates will become deputies. It is tricky that candidates C1, B4, and, B5 gained a lower proportion of the vote than A1, A4, and A5 in the same districts, but they got elected. Moreover, if these elections were conducted in ordinary single-member districts, Party A would have monopolized the seats but, under this system, it would win only three seats.

Thirdly, as one of the founders of the POR, Poroshenko was too familiar with the *kukhnia* (internal rules) of nomenklatura politics to be romantic enough to bet on the national-patriots and thought that the only way to penetrate Eastern Ukraine was to split the existing elite community (Anosov 2017; Rzhavskiy 2017). Poroshenko co-opted M. Efimov, one of the main job-givers in Kramatorsk, on the eve of the 2014 parliamentary elections. In contrast, what he could do in regard to Mariupol towards the 2015 local elections was no more than persuading retiring Mayor Khotlubei to found a Mariupol branch of Our Region (Nash krai), a party of pro-Poroshenko state officials and entrepreneurs (Khotlubei 2016). Though Poroshenko had created the Petro Poroshenko Bloc (PPB) before the 2014 parliamentary elections, the PPB is too nationalistic to become influential in Eastern Ukraine. Therefore, he devised Our Region to penetrate the East by its pragmatic outlook. This party reminds us of Viktor Chernomyrdin's Our Home Is Russia by its target and name.

Mariupol

Unshaken support by the Azov and Il'ich Steelworks after the Euromaidan Revolution enabled the Mariupol organization of the POR to transform itself into the OB by the 2014 parliamentary elections. In these elections, the OB gained 61% of the eligible vote in the proportional district (*PR*, 31 October 2014),¹⁴ in other words, more than the POR gained in 2006 (52%) and 2012 (47%) in the city ("Parlamentskie vybory"). Presumably, Ukraine's violent attacks on Mariupol citizens consolidated their anti-Maidan vote.

Facing the 2015 local elections, the suffrage of the citizens living in Ukraine-controlled Donetsk Oblast had become a heated issue. Donetsk military governor Pavlo Zhebrivskiy requested that all citizens living in the front accessory localities, not only Mariupol but also Kramatorsk, be deprived of suffrage ("ia gotov"). He cared for local security, but central and local national-patriots joined this camp with the intention to keep the former POR politicians away from local politics. Since President Poroshenko repeatedly argued that the elections should be held in Mariupol, Zhebrivskiy changed his mind (*PR*, 18 August 2015). Yet local national-patriots, who commanded the majority of the City Electoral Committee, continued to act against conducting elections in Mariupol. Eventually, they "found falsified ballots" in the printing house of the newspaper *Priazovskii rabochii*, which they regarded as pro-OB and as being controlled by the two metallurgical factories (*PR*, 27 October 2015). Because of this event, the local elections in Mariupol were postponed.

To carry out elections in Mariupol (and Krasnoarmeisk, another city where elections on October 25 failed), the Supreme Rada needed to adopt a special law. Gaining Poroshenko's repeated support for elections ("Rada reshit"), on November 10, the Supreme Rada adopted a special bill proposed by Taruta for conducting local elections in the two cities on November 29, with 233 affirmative votes. None of the Fatherland or Oleh Liashko's Radical Party deputies and only one of the Self-Help deputies voted in favor of conducting these elections, which shows the partisan nature of this issue (PR, 13 November 2015).

Indeed, there was no chance for national-patriots to win the local elections in Mariupol. Vadym Voitenko, successor to Khotlubei, then an executive of the Il'ich Steelworks, conducted typically job-giver's elections. In late September, 2015, about 40 companies and social organizations of Mariupol concluded an agreement to create the Foundation for the Development of Mariupol (PR, 25 September 2015). During his electoral campaign, Voitenko not only made, but also began to realize, promises to the voters, spending the foundation budget, which was reported by *Priazovskii rabochii* in detail. Voitenko's camp criticized the later years of Khotlubei's mayoralty as stagnating, perhaps because Khotlubei had defected to Poroshenko's side. On November 29, Voitenko won, gaining 72.8% of the vote, while the second successful candidate only gained 8.4%. In the City Council elections, the OB gained 63.9% of the eligible vote and 45 of the 54 deputy seats (83%). Besides the OB, the national-patriotic People's Power (Sila liudei) and Our Region overcame the threshold (5%), and gained five and four seats respectively.¹⁵ While Our Region in Kramatorsk, as one of the main organizations of Efimov's oligarchic bloc, gained 20.5% of the vote ("Kramatorskii TIK") and 10 deputy seats in the City Council, its role in Mariupol looks modest. Perhaps, this weakness can be attributed to the lack of large-scale sponsor corporations. Our Region in Mariupol tries to attract some portion of the pro-OB vote by hoisting leftist slogans, such as wage rise and environmental protection. Khotlubei criticizes the OB for its obedience to the two metallurgical factories, which results in its hesitance to tackle these issues. Khotlubei recognizes as a reason for the OB's popularity a series of Ukrainophile events that the OB periodically organizes, which is also inconceivable without the sponsors' generous support (Khotlubei 2016).

After the Euromaidan Revolution, local ecologists in Mariupol joined a new nation-level party, named People's Power, which replaced the Fatherland fraction in the City Council. People's Power in Mariupol concentrates its activities on controlling tenders, orders, and other actions made by the city authorities, which proved to be an effective tactic. Kyrylo Vyshniakov, an activist of People's Power, regards the metamorphosis of the former POR into the pro-Ukrainian OB as hypocritical, remarking that the local POR collaborated with the DPR in spring 2014. Though People's Power vacillated in whether to support the cancellation of the 2015 local elections in Mariupol, Vyshniakov recognizes that the Mariupol citizens' mind drastically changed as a result of being a front city (2016).

It seems unsurprising that the OB tries to be more leftist (social democratic, according to Fedai) than the POR was, because poverty will be a central issue in Ukrainian politics in the foreseeable future, but this orientation will contradict the metallurgical factories' patronage, as Khotlubei noted. When I interviewed Fedai in September 2016, he underscored the opinion that the Kyivan authorities' slowdown in peace negotiations with Russia was intentional because Ukraine without Donbas would be advantageous for Poroshenko. Fedai said that the OB would have ended the war a long time ago were it in power. The consolidation of the OB and the growing influence of People's Power sandwich the space for the PPB in Mariupol, which could not pass the threshold in the 2015 local elections. In contrast, in Kramatorsk the PPB gained 10.6% of the vote and, as a result, six deputy seats ("Kramatorskii TIK").

Kramatorsk

On 2 August 2014, Maksym Efimov left the POR and visited Kyiv to talk with President Poroshenko, who promised Efimov the PPB's support in the coming parliamentary elections. The competition with the incumbent MP from Kramatorsk, Iurii Boiarskyi, who succeeded the NKMF's reserve seat from Skudar in 2010, was harsh. Efimov won by a hair (34.12 to 31.1%). By the local election in October 2015, the OB had restored its influence and campaigned for mayoral candidate Andrii Pankov, nominated by Skudar. Though being an incumbent MP, Efimov also ran for the mayoral post. He criticized the NKMF's monopoly of power and the lack of dynamism and development in Kramatorsk when Pankov was responsible for the mayoralty's financial management since 2010. All the national-patriotic and pro-presidential parties, such as the PPB, Fatherland, the Party of Pensioners, and Self-Help, supported Efimov (*KP*, 4 November 2015). Pankov won by gaining 52.7%, while Efimov gained 47.3% in the final round (*KP*, 18 November 2015). The elections to the City Council were held on the same day with the first round of the mayoral election (October 25). Four parties overcame the threshold: the OB, Our Region, the PPB, and the Party of Pensioners gained 23, 10, six, and three deputy seats, respectively.¹⁶ The Party of Pensioners targets pensioners and other weak strata of society, who became politically orphaned after the prohibition of the CPU.

Before long, city deputies from the OB collectively left the party and instead created an intra-council fraction named United Kramatorsk, to distance their activities from national opposition politics and to concentrate on the city's daily issues. Why did this happen? First, it was difficult to be a political opposition in the regional capital where the military-civilian administration is located (Nagornaia 2017) and possibly President Poroshenko or Governor Zhebrivskyi persuaded Skudar to make his deputies leave the OB. Secondly, Skudar does not belong to the OB's two major clans, Akhmetov's and Dmytro Firtash's, and therefore found little interest in sponsoring the OB. According to Oleksandr Voroshkov (2017), Akhmetov restructured his shrinking empire by selling Russians stocks of the NKMF and EMSS and therefore both Skudar and Efimov became more independent from Akhmetov than they had been before 2014. Another strange situation was that the OB never tried to relocate its Donetsk Oblast Committee from Mariupol to Kramatorsk though the regional capital was transferred this way as early as November 2014. An explanation is that, while Mariupol continues to have an MP from the OB, the Kramatorsk organization of the OB (POR) lost its traditional parliamentary seat when Boiarskyi was defeated by Efimov in 2014 (Ol'khovaia 2017). Since all national-patriotic and pro-presidential parties ally themselves against United Kramatorsk or the NKMF, the balance of power in the City Council turned out to be 23 representatives of the NKMF versus 19 pro-presidential deputies. As a whole, the split between the NKMF and EMSS created a much more competitive situation than in Mariupol (see Table 1).

This new political constellation produced several remarkable phenomena. First of all, this situation allows Efimov to claim that the real issue in Kramatorsk politics was

Table 1. Elections in Kramatorsk after 2014.

Year	Election		Pro NKMF		Pro Efimov
2014	Parliament	Boiarskyi (incumbent)	31.1%	Efimov	34.12%
2015	City Council	OB	23 deputies	All others	19 deputies
2015	Mayor	Pankov	52.7%	Efimov	47.3%

whether to choose old or new Kramatorsk. In contrast, in Mariupol, a traditional opposition between job-givers and national-patriots continues. Though the leader of the Mariupol national-patriots/ecologists, Maksym Borodin, says that Mariupol's future belongs not to metallurgy, but to tourism and the IT industry, this is no more than his individual consideration.

In Kramatorsk, though with hesitation, the national-patriots accepted the leadership of Efimov, a pro-presidential and enlightened oligarch. A young leader of the Party of Pensioners, Ihor Stashkevych, regards it as populism to oppose oligarchs in general (Stashkevych 2017). According to Valerii Anosov, a local PPB leader, Ukrainian history tells us that Poroshenko is a lesser evil for this country suffering military aggression because oligarchs unify and consolidate themselves more quickly because of their love of money than do national-patriots for their democratic ideas (Anosov 2017). In the meantime, Mayor Pankov tries to win wider support beyond the NKMF's traditional clients. He says that the NKMF is no longer city-forming and he could not have won the 2015 election had he solely relied upon it. During the 2015 mayoral election, Pankov asked the former lawyer and city deputy from Fatherland, Svitlana Filichenko, to help him in the electoral campaign. After being elected, Pankov invited Filichenko as vice mayor, for her own surprise. Pankov tried to create a great coalition, nominating, on the other hand, Denys Oshurko, who was the leader of the official Youth Organization of the NKMF, as the City Council Secretary.¹⁷ Pankov says that the national-patriots are a most active group of the population, so he cooperates with them (2017). This cannot but create a sense of self-esteem among the national-patriots. They often compare Pankov's attitude towards them with Donetsk governor Pavlo Zhebrivskiy's overt contempt of them (Rud' 2017).

The disappearing opposition between job-givers and the national-patriots cannot but generate dissidents from the latter camp. An example is Volodymyr Rzhavskiy, the founder of the PPB organization in Kramatorsk in 2014. He criticized illegal trans-border trade between Ukraine and the DPR-LPR protected by then Donetsk governor Oleksandr Kikhtenko in 2015. As punishment, Kikhtenko conscripted Rzhavskiy to the army. Assigned to the Mariupol military airport, Rzhavskiy continued his deputy activities. Rzhavskiy thinks that a reason for Kikhtenko's early removal from the governor post in May 2015 was his indictment of Kikhtenko's corruption. Rzhavskiy criticizes the all-faceted developed "corruption schemes" of Donetsk Oblast before 2014 for having been left intact. Young cadres have not been recruited to the regional administration and the same officers who bolstered the Yanukovych regime continue to serve to this day. The only way to overcome the corruption schemes is, according to Rzhavskiy, that foreign grant givers procure and build objects by themselves, without entrusting to their Ukrainian beneficiaries any budget (Rzhavskiy 2017). Being an eternal opposition figure, Rzhavskiy began to come closer to United Kramatorsk deputies in regard to social-economic and anti-corruption issues. The Mariupol organization of the PPB excluded Rzhavskiy from the party while leaving him as a member of the PPB's City Council fraction.

Memories of shelling

Ukraine's ATO implanted and continues to implant an unforgettable hatred of Ukraine in DPR citizens' minds.¹⁸ Similar can be said of the territories having shifted from the DPR to Ukraine's control. When DPR paramilitaries occupied Kramatorsk, their number amounted for fewer than 50. In Mariupol, they numbered more, but not significantly. They were only equipped with machine guns and bazookas. They even did not have trench mortars. It is

questionable whether there was a need for massive shelling of civilian quarters, which caused 36 civilian deaths in Kramatorsk (Ol'khovaia 2017), or for starvation tactics by destroying water supplies, closing bank accounts, and ceasing to pay pensions and salaries. Indeed, many pensioners in Kramatorsk survived the three months of siege by eating natural berries. The then Donetsk governor, Serhii Taruta, criticized the ATO for antagonizing the whole Donbas population when it was necessary to conduct a special operation targeted at separatist leaders (Taruta 2016). Some of the national-patriots in Kramatorsk told me that a significant portion of the population, especially, state servants and industrial workers, is still waiting for the DPR (or Putin) to recapture the city (Anosov 2017; Svrydenko 2017). This situation seems unnatural if we consider the Ukrainian authorities' relatively successful reconstruction policy. A possible reason is that they cannot forget the painful war experiences described above.

Partly aiming to overcome this situation, national-patriots in Kramatorsk propagate the idea that DPR (or Russian) troops themselves shelled the city during the occupation, masquerading as the Ukrainian Army. This is a peculiar interpretation, towards which even their patron, Maksym Efimov, takes an ambivalent position. Yet acceptance of this interpretation has become something like a loyalty test for national-patriots in Kramatorsk. Deputies of United Kramatorsk intend to propose that the City Council build a memorial dedicated to civilian victims during May–July 2014, as Mariupol City promptly built a memorial for victims of the artillery attack in January 2015 (*PR*, 24 November 2015). However, the issue of victims by (someone's) artillery attacks during the occupation is so sensitive for local national-patriots that United Kramatorsk deputies hesitate to make this proposal, for fear of excessively polarizing city politics (Ol'khovaia 2017).

The DPR's artillery attack on the eastern district of Mariupol on 24 January 2015 caused 31 civilian victims.¹⁹ In August 2015, Mariupol suffered another serious artillery attack on one of its settlements, named Sartana (*PR*, 22 August 2015). The memory of these repeated attacks by the DPR has perhaps changed Mariupol citizens' pro-Russian sentiment to some extent. However strange it is, though, the interpretation that the Ukrainian Army shelled the city in January 2015, masquerading as the DPR, persists in Mariupol (Borodin 2017). I myself was surprised to talk with an intellectual (lecturer of Mariupol State University) who firmly believed this self-provocation theory.

Conclusion

When socialist company towns adapted themselves in the epoch of competitive elections, regimes of job-givers emerged. This regime in Mariupol and Kramatorsk needed to respond to external challenges in this century. To resist the expansion of Akhmetov's SCM Holdings, some of the job-givers allied with the leftist or national-patriotic opposition. When this resistance was crushed, Mariupol had become an outer citadel, while Kramatorsk had become an outpost, of Akhmetov's business empire. The latter's surrender to Akhmetov was conditional. Mariupol leaders reacted to the challenges by DPR paramilitaries in a unified manner, while the Kramatorsk leaders were in disarray. During the military siege of the city, disagreements between Skudar and Efimov became visible. Exploiting this disagreement, Poroshenko succeeded in splitting the local elite in Kramatorsk and created a competitive politics, inconceivable for both pre-Euromaidan Kramatorsk and Mariupol today.

Their dual responsibilities (of maximizing production and profit and of taking care of the community) do not allow the job-givers to be indifferent to politics. At the same time, they are apolitical in the sense that the heavy dual responsibilities leave them little

room for ideological devotion. Skudar's pro-Russian sentiment seems to have little to do with pro-socialist or Eurasianist ideology. How can he be pro-European when Russians order rocket launchers from him, while Europeans even hesitate to order wind power generators from Ukraine (see endnote 13)? The job-givers and their municipal representatives did not hide their aversion to the Euromaidan movement. Yet once the situation reached a violent phase, they lost interest in geopolitical discussion but concentrated on the city's safety, maintenance of lifelines, and the normal functioning of the economy and public administration. Today, they are proud that even during the last days of the siege, they succeeded in minimizing wage and pension arrears and keeping kindergartens running. National-patriots pretend that certain actions by job-givers and municipal leaders amount to collaborationism with the DPR. In fact, they did not support the territorial changes of Ukraine, probably not because they are patriotic, but because job-givers are risk-evading by nature.

Party systems' spatial functions become extremely important when the state needs to reintegrate its territories after a civil war. In this context, we should give due credit to Poroshenko's endeavor to reintegrate the Ukraine-controlled Donbas population by elections. After decades of over-determined patronal politics, a great deal has changed in a relatively short period of time. City politics in this part of Ukraine are not only the front lines of a war – they should also be understood as a laboratory to observe the fundamental realignment of Ukraine's pre-Euromaidan national party system.

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Notes

1. The ranking of city populations in Donetsk Oblast before the Donbas War was: Donetsk with about a 950,000 population, Mariupol with 459,000, Makeevka with 351,000, Gorlovka with 254,000, and Kramatorsk with 163,000, but today, Donetsk, Makeevka, and Gorlovka comprise the DPR.
2. My understanding of the geography of the Donbas War is confirmed by territorial division of the conflict area created by Ukraine's Anti-Terrorist Operation. Accessed 8 March 2018. https://www.depo.ua/static/files/gallery_uploads/images/%D0%9C%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%8C%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B8.jpg. The Ukrainian troops are divided into five zones: Raion M defending Mariupol; Sector B targeting Donetsk and other central parts of the DPR; Sector C defending Kramatorsk and northern Donetsk Oblast; and Sector A targeting Luhansk. The mysterious Sector D covers the internal territory of the DPR, perhaps, intending diversionary operations within this territory.
3. This term "national-patriots" is not endogenous since Ukrainian national-patriots call themselves just patriots. In Ukrainian central politics, this term is becoming obsolete since the national-patriotic camp has tangibly differentiated. Supporters of Petro Poroshenko, Yulia Tymoshenko, Arsen Avakov, and Oleh Liashko harshly criticize each other. Yet, at the local level in Eastern Ukraine, these groups still continue to perceive themselves as belonging to the same camp, countered against pro-Russians, separatists, or oligarchs.
4. Based on my talk with women activists of Pillar (Oplot) at its Central Office in Donetsk City, 14 August 2017. Pillar was a military organization during the peak of the civil war, but transformed into a political organization. Aleksandr Zakharchenko had become famous as the leader of Pillar. Since the organization Donetsk Republic is becoming an ordinary party of power, losing dynamism and often accompanied by intra-party struggles, DPR leaders need a political organization more devoted to the Novorussian cause and to Zakharchenko himself. Pillar plays this role.
5. During my fieldwork in the DPR on 9–17 August 2017, I visited one ruined and two destroyed but restored schools in the western suburbs of Donetsk City. Unfortunately, I could not talk with the pupils and teachers of these schools because it was during the summer vacation.

6. The surname of Khotlubei comes from the word *khutlu*, meaning “happy” in the Urum language.
7. “Gorod ischezaiushchikh liudei;” “Valerii Karpenko.” It is difficult to reveal the truth of this kind of criminal case, but what is relevant for this essay is that Kramatorsk leaders believe that Karpenko’s sons were killed by Akhmetov’s band.
8. In the 2010 presidential election, Yanukovich gained “only” 70.87% of vote in Kramatorsk, which was almost the worst result in Donetsk Oblast (“Za kogo golosuiut kramatorchane”). In 2012, there were about 600 Fatherland members in Kramatorsk (Filichenko 2017).
9. The City Council’s official website: <http://marsovet.org.ua/articles/show/article/384>.
10. It is indeed difficult to breathe in the industrial seaside of Mariupol. The landscape of rusted iron-works built in the 1970s and the hanging mists of smog around them look like hell. Sea pollution is no less serious and it is difficult to imagine today that the Sea of Azov used to be one of the marine areas richest in sea products in the world (Solov’ev 1993).
11. Ukraine’s Law on Local Self-Government requests that the mayor chair and manage the City Council in concurrence. Since this is physically impossible, the mayor appoints the City Council Secretary to manage the Council’s business and negotiate with Council fractions. A striking variance among local self-governments emerges from how and to what extent the mayor authorized his secretary to run the Council.
12. Born in Cherkassy Oblast in 1960. He served in the police from the 1980s to the 2000s in Mariupol, Donetsk, and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts. He retired when Yanukovich won the presidential election, yet, as a civilian pensioner, participated in the anti-Novorussian movement in Mariupol. Having noticed his activities, Avakov called him back to police service (*PR*, 6 May 2014).
13. Unfortunately, this took place after 2014. Before 2014, Russian corporations ordered rocket carriers and launchers from factories in Kramatorsk to save the remnants of the Soviet space industry in this city from extinction. After 2014, for understandable reasons, production of wind generators has become a booming industry in Ukraine. A German company is building wind generators on the Azov Sea shore, but this company orders power generators from a Polish factory, while ordering cylindrical bodies and windmills (products with less additional value) from a Kramatorsk factory, and assembles them on the spot. Kramatorsk engineers protest against German investors, arguing that making wind power generators is not at all a difficult task for them, but Germans do not believe it. Observation from my tour to the Kramatorsk Factory of Heavy Machine-Tool Building on 4 August 2017.
14. In the two single-member districts of Mariupol, the former governor Taruta and an OB candidate won.
15. The City Council’s official website: <http://marsovet.org.ua/articles/show/article/2363>; *PR*, 4 December, 2015.
16. I counted these numbers by comparing *KP*, 4 October 2014 and “Spysok deputativ Kramators’koi rady VII sklykannia.” Accessed November 6, 2017. <http://www.krm.gov.ua/person/viewall/page/>.
17. The NKMF’s Youth Organization was transformed from the Komsomol of the factory in 1991 and continues to play a vital role in Kramatorsk’s regime of job-givers by, for example, organizing international conferences abroad and organizing contests of excellent workers.
18. During my fieldwork in the DPR in August 2017, I heard not a mention of the Kyiv government’s pro-NATO orientation when Donetsk citizens accused it. All spoke of victims among their relatives and friends and of damage to their properties. When they accused the West, they remarked on its cynicism in closing its eyes to Ukraine’s shelling of civilian facilities and houses in Donbas.
19. This attack took place two days after the Ukrainian Army shelled the Bosse settlement of Donetsk City with the result that eight citizens were killed. This was a violation of the silent gentlemen’s agreement between Ukraine and the DPR that Ukraine would not shell the central districts of Donetsk City, which made the DPR extremely vindictive.

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