

AN UPDATE ON THE UPCOMING
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

THE GENESIS OF UKRAINE'S
INDEPENDENCE

THE CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS
OF PROBLEMS IN THE DONBAS

i n t e r n a t i o n a l e d i t i o n

The Ukrainian Week

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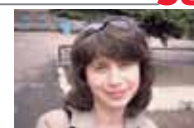


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Chief Editor Alla Lazareva

Editors Anna Korbut, Natalia Romanec, Shaun Williams

E-mail office@tyzhden.ua

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Тиждень

In-Depth Defence

The advance of Russians in the Donbas has halted the movement of the Ukrainian army eastward and intensified the panic in our rear. However, the shock will soon pass, and society may have no option but to prepare for a cold winter and a lengthy military confrontation

Author:
Dmytro Krapyvenko

Discussions about the Russian invasion in Ukraine are somehow reminiscent of mass auto-training or a spiritualist seance. When the Russian army seized Crimea, only the lazy in Ukraine didn't talk about the fact that the Kremlin launched military aggression. And almost immediately, there were rumours in the form of expert opinions: that they are supposedly moving to the other side of Perekop, and that Kyiv will be seized from the northern direction of Chernihiv. In other words, an invasion seemed imminent. Then there was a mass seizure of police stations and local authorities in the Donbas, organised by the "little green men" (read: Russian special forces). Then – a full-fledged war, which was once again characterised as Russian invasion. And when its regular units filled the territories controlled by separatists, the words "Russia has begun military aggression" rang in Ukraine from high tribunes and in family kitchens. There is no need to look far for examples: at the time when Russian soldiers seized Novozovsk and its outskirts, killed our soldiers in the Ilovaysk cauldron, even President Petro Poroshenko dared to say that "the point of no return will be (that's right, in the future tense! – Ed.) war with Russia". So it emerges that the events of the last six months were not yet war. So what was it – international training with the participation of Battalion Task Forces of the Russian Army?

Every new wave of Russian incursion provokes the "prophecies" that Putin needs: a corridor to Crimea and Transnistria, eight "Novorossiya" oblasts, Kyiv as "the mother of all Russian cities",



Ukraine in its current borders, the former republics of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact countries. Judging by the ambitions and "imperial grandeur" of the Kremlin leader, he needs the world, preferably the whole world. And he will seize just as much as he is allowed to. How is a different matter. If the takeover of Ukraine is a matter of tanks and planes, he could already have conquered it in April. He had all the necessary resources and grounds, including legitimacy added in his eyes by the pretext of protecting "fellow countrymen". But obviously, Putin is not interested in "Ukraine at any cost", he needs a loyal territory, where the Russian World will be welcomed and the Russian flag will be kissed. The experience of the last war with Georgia, when Russian tanks came to a halt 60 km from Tbilisi, but finally withdrew to the territories of the "independent" South Ossetia and Abkhazia, also teaches us this. Of course, there were sufficient tanks

The residents of Mariupol join in the construction of fortifications on the outskirts of the city

to cross the whole of Georgia to Batumi and reach the waters of the Black Sea. However, even such a relatively small, but extremely disloyal country was not of interest to the invaders.

Putin has quite a few other means to keep Ukraine in the orbit of its influence (this is where a good few European politicians see the place of Kyiv). The breakdown of the ratification of the Association Agreement with the EU is also his victory. It is true that with this victory, the immediate membership of Ukraine in the Customs Union is not a given, but it is time won for new manoeuvres and schemes, and not only on the Donetsk front. Destabilisation in the rear is also a plan that has been implemented quite successfully. Moscow did everything for Ukraine to suffer an economic knockdown, and with winter nearing, its consequences will become ever more noticeable. This could result in mass dissatisfaction among the people

and social protests. This is probably what the Kremlin is counting on. There are frequent attempts to organise a so-called Utility Tariff Maidan, the slogan of which is supposed to be the struggle against the impoverishment of the population, but as the experience of the first such actions showed, they transform into a manifestation of solidarity with separatists either directly or indirectly. The organisers of the systematic anti-war movement are dancing to the same tune, so do chaotic rebels who confuse actual lustration with the settling of scores with the authorities. Fortunately, such manifestations are currently marginal. However, with generous sponsorship, economic downfall and the protraction of the war, all of these protests could have the effect of a delayed action mine, capable of exploding hundreds of kilometres from the front.

Actually, in the current war, its line is not very clear. Yes, we have a map of the Donbas and the dislocation of hostile forces on it. But is everything okay in our rear? Is Kharkiv so safe, where anti-Ukrainian actions remain open, where the Mayor does not hide his support of Putin and terrorist acts near the city are no longer a rarity? Is it a coincidence that the separatist card is being played (currently on the level of just media buzz) in Zakarpattia? Have the Family-owned mass media stopped their operations in Ukraine? No, they continue to spread their publications, preparing the grounds for their owners to get either revenge or spread disinformation and escalate panic.

Ukrainians, both regular citizens and politicians, should already have learned the enemy's habits. Putin has a great fondness for distracting manoeuvres, or, as he himself says, asymmetrical responses. After the loss of Crimea, we began to build reinforcements at Perekop, while Russian weapons have flowed like a river in the Donbas; the whole world, waited with bated breath for "peaceful solutions in Minsk", and in the meantime, tanks from Russia were crossing the Ukrainian border en masse. Naïve and peace-loving citizens breathed a sigh of relief after the announcement that Poroshenko and Putin had agreed to a ceasefire in the Donbas. At the same time, the Kremlin once more

reminded us that "it is not a party to the conflict". The "seven point" plan for the peaceful regulation of the region, proposed by the Russian President is also, in all likelihood, a smokescreen, to be followed by the yet another military provocation.

The army, even the whole of Ukraine is forced to go on the defence. It is important that, as they say in the military, it goes deep. In other words, defence must be firm enough for the opponent to still risk being encircled and to stop the advance, even if it uses great force to break through. Military leaders have probably already learned this from their experience on the border with Russia, which is full of gaps. It appears that the political leadership has also understood this – Premier Arseniy Yatseniuk announced the start of the "Wall" project, the purpose of which is to protect the Ukrainian border from Russia. Actually, defence is everyone's private matter. You can undergo preliminary military and medical training without waiting for a call-up: there are currently such opportunities in large cities. It is foolish to count on the government "giving" us something. We must prepare for the winter, when problems with heat and electricity could emerge, as is generally the case in countries at war. It is also worth maintaining information defense, because the advance of the enemy is as noticeable in this sphere as it is in the Donbas right now. It is also sometimes necessary to defend ourselves from the government, the actions of which can be not very professional and insufficiently decisive. It is necessary to put pressure on it. But we should still refrain from "Maidan" methods: today, a burned-out or destroyed administrative building plays directly into the hands of the enemy.

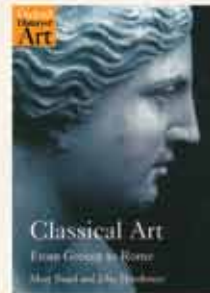
Happy patriotism and yellow-blue colours on fences can "wither" under the influence of numerous external circumstances, and autumn-winter defence will not be as emotional and enthusiastic. We will have to practice patience and nerves more than courage and patriotic slogans. All of us have already had a chance to see that "beautiful" wars can only be found in the cinema, generally made by mediocre directors. ■



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Have No Illusions

With the old election law in place, the parliamentary campaign cannot radically upgrade the Verkhovna Rada now. Still, it will make it more adequate to the challenges faced by the state



Author:
Oles
Oleksiyenko

On August 25, President Petro Poroshenko signed an edict disbanding the parliament for failing to form a government coalition for a month. The early election is scheduled to take place on October 26, and the election campaign already kicked off on August 28. Thus, in addition to the war against Russia's aggression in the Donbas, the country's attention will be riveted to another

top issue – the internal “front”, the fight to upgrade parliament and make it capable of rising to the challenges of the hard times in which Ukraine has found itself. These two topics will be evolving hand in hand.

It is already clear that the election will be regulated by the old Law On the Election of Members of Parliament of Ukraine (passed on November 17, 2011) which foresees closed party lists,

a ban on political blocs and electing half of MPs in first-past-the-post (FPTP) districts. This system will prevent new parties from entering the Verkhovna Rada and will strengthen the positions of long-time heavyweights, representatives of large business and simply oligarchs' henchmen who will be able to grab the majority of seats in the FPTP districts.

Ukrainians should not hope to see a major overhaul of the Verkhovna Rada, something the Maidan demanded. Even if a number of new characters appear in parliament, many representing Poroshenko's Solidarnist (Solidarity) party and Oleh Liashko's Radical Party, they will be controlled by well-known old-timers. It is equally clear, however, that the new parliament will still be much better than the one we have now – with much fewer communists and Party of Regions members and no odious anti-Ukrainian individual MPs who were elected in the Crimea earlier.

Representatives of new political forces formed by the Maidan's activists have minimal chances of being elected on their own. At the moment, there are no recent opinion polls that would give an idea of how Ukrainians' electoral preferences changed over the summer. Nevertheless, a poll carried out by the Rating Sociological Group in early July showed that 23% of the respondents (from among those who would participate in the election) would vote for Solidarity, 13% for Liashko's Radical Party, 11% for Yulia Tymoshenko's Batkivshchyna (Fatherland), 7% for Vitaliy Klitschko's UDAR and 5% for Anatoliy Hrytsenko's Hromadska pozytsiia (Civic Position). Svoboda (Freedom) and the Communist Party would each win 4%, while Serhiy Tihipko's SylnaUkraina (Strong Ukraine), the Party of Regions and Arseniy Yatseniuk's Front zmin (Front of Changes) would collect 3% each. Olha Bohomolets' Kolo narodnoi doviry (Circle of People's Trust), the Right Sector and Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadovy's Samopomich (Self-Help) would each receive 1-2%, while the Democratic Alliance and Lesia Orobets' Nove zhyttia (New Life) a measly 0.3%.

Based on proportional lists, they would be able to make it to parliament either by uniting to form a quasi-bloc (official blocs are not actually allowed) based on one of the parties or by joining the lists of better-placed political forces (Solidarity, UDAR, Batkivshchyna or the Civic Position). These forces would be interested in this move as it would give them a chance to claim they are bringing new people to the Verkhovna Rada. They would likely be willing to offer civil activists a share of spots on their lists, even among the top five.

Activists and representatives of new political forces stand an even smaller chance of winning the election in the FPTP districts. The reason is that big business is expected to offer strong competition and that supporters of new parties are few and far between (usually no more than several per cent in any such district). An additional factor is that the division line between the government and the opposition is less clear now. The current government continues to occupy the pro-European, democratic niche and has not yet drawn the ire of society as was the case in the past.

According to Yulia Tymoshenko, her party's main task in new parliament will be to "for the first time, create a pro-European, democratic constitutional majority" that will "clearly stay on the right course of the country's development". This may be the only chance for Batkivshchyna to squeeze itself into the government as President Poroshenko may forge a majority without Tymoshenko's MPs or at least without most of them.

Liashko's populist party may be an even more dangerous opponent to Poroshenko than Tymoshenko's party. Hrytsenko's Civic Position is also likely to join the opposition.

Svoboda is balancing on the 5% threshold (needed to pass to Parliament) and risks losing the election. Recent polls show that support for pro-Russian forces – the Communist Party, Strong Ukraine and the Party of Regions – is likely to grow as they find ways to persuade a large number of citizens in southern and eastern regions who are not going to participate in the election or do

not have a clear preference at the moment. A Rating poll carried out from June 28 to July 10 showed that voter turnout is likely to be the highest in Central and Western Ukraine (around 80%) and the lowest in the Donbas (27%) and Southern Ukraine (37%). 30% of the respondents were not certain or did not know who they would vote for.

Thus, pro-European political forces may turn out to be under-represented as compared to poll figures. Polls carried out during the election campaign may very soon start reflecting this trend.

Serhiy Tihipko's Strong Ukraine has high chances of making it to the Verkhovna Rada both in the FPTP districts and under the proportional system. Despite his undisguised opportunism, he has done the best face-keeping job of all the key figures representing the previous regime.

In the FPTP districts, the election may be won by a number of candidates representing the Party of Regions (the remainder of the old Party of Regions now controlled by oligarch Rinat Akhmetov) and the Party of Development (a new party formed by Serhiy Liovochkin from the old Party of Regions and headed by Yuriy Miroshnychenko, former representative of Viktor Yanukovich in parliament). They are unlikely to be elected under the proportional system unless, as rumour suggests, they form one political force. Their chances largely depend on whether the residents of the Donbas regions now controlled by terrorists will return to Ukraine's electoral field. Without this core support base they are unlikely to enter the Verkhovna Rada.

The Communist Party of Ukraine still has a chance, albeit only under the proportional system. Its representatives will like lose in the FPTP districts in southern and eastern Ukraine to representatives of big business who either won there in the previous election or were the Party of Regions' MPs. Meanwhile, the communists are facing a threat of a different kind as their political force may be banned in the midst of the campaign, leaving them no time to regroup.

On August 26, Petro Symonenko, the leader of Ukrai-

Voter turnout is likely to be the highest in Central and Western Ukraine (around 80%) and the lowest in the Donbas (27%) and Southern Ukraine (37%). 30% of the respondents were not certain or did not know who they would vote for, a Rating poll carried out in June 28 to July 10 showed

nian communists, said that the political council of his party worked out several ways in which party members will be able to participate in the election if the party is ultimately banned. On September 4, the District Administrative Court of Kyiv will continue considering the lawsuit to ban the Communist Party filed by the Ministry of Justice. It would be best to eliminate it as the Kremlin's staunchest fifth column in Ukraine as close as possible to the election date in order to disorient its supporters and essentially eliminate their voices from the overall count. Otherwise, the removal of the communists from the race would boost the standing of such pro-Russian projects as the Party of Regions and the Party of Development.

The election in the Donbas will be a precarious affair. Mykola Okhondovsky, head of the Central Election Commission, has said that the vote will definitely be organized in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, adding that "a key task in this context is to have MPs elected in all single-member constituencies there (21 in Donetsk Oblast and 11 in Luhansk Oblast)." To this end, the boundaries of districts and their

AS OF TODAY, REPRESENTATIVES OF NEW POLITICAL FORCES CREATED BY CIVIL ACTIVISTS AND THE MAIDAN STAND MINIMAL CHANCES OF BEING ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT IF THEY RUN ON THEIR OWN

centers will have to be altered in order to open at least several polling stations [in each district] where voters will be able to cast their votes."

On the one hand, this will be important for legitimizing new parliament as elected in all regions of Ukraine, except the temporarily occupied Crimea. On the other hand, there is a risk that MPs in these districts will be elected by a much smaller proportion of voters as compared to other districts. Some odious supporters of the previous regime may benefit from this setup. ■

The Ex-President's Baggage

A slew of hindrances prevent the money stolen by Viktor Yanukovych and his regime from returning to Ukraine. These must be removed as soon as possible



Author:
Olha
Vorozhbyt

On August 14, when protesters came to the Parliament to push the legislature to pass the lustration bill, it voted, then passed in the first reading, another important act: the draft law to amend the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure of Ukraine. If adopted, it would make punishment for specific crimes against national security and public safety, and for corruption-related offences, inevitable. The bill's long and dull title hides a crucial mechanism for Ukraine today – it allows criminal prosecution in absentia. “It is currently impossible to have a verdict, or to confiscate the accused person's property for that matter, unless he or she is physically present in court,” is the Prosecutor General's Office excuse. Thus, this mechanism is vitally important in Ukraine's efforts to recover the funds plun-

dered by the functionaries of Yanukovych's regime. They are currently all in hiding from investigation, so the judges have no way to convict them in Ukraine and confiscate their stolen property at home, or to assist in international investigation of money laundering by former Ukrainian officials.

“If, for example, law enforcement officers investigate money laundering in Austria, they have to prove, that these gains are ill-gotten and originate from Ukraine. Ukrainians themselves have to investigate the illegal means by which they were gained,” clarifies Daryna Kaleniuk, an expert in the recovery of stolen assets and Executive Director of the Anticorruption Action Centre. Her view is shared by Gretta Fenner, a Swiss expert on corruption and Managing Director of the Basel Institute on Governance. “The most important thing is to conduct your own

financial criminal investigations,” she says in a commentary for *The Ukrainian Week*. “Some people expect foreign jurisdictions to do some kind of magic, but they will only start working when Ukraine has done its own homework.” On August 11, Ms. Fenner and Prosecutor General Vitaliy Yarema signed an agreement authorizing the International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR) of the Basel Institute on Governance to assist Kyiv in the search and recovery of the assets that were stolen by the former president and his closest allies. ICAR cooperates on such issues with the governments of 15 countries, albeit does not name them for security considerations. According to Gretta Fenner, ICAR experts will assist the Ukrainian government in the recovery of assets, not only from Switzerland, but also other parts of the world. They will help the Ukrainian Pros-

ecutor's Office in its domestic investigations and in the development of strategies, in cooperation with other entities, to establish good working contacts and arrange meetings. "A Ukrainian delegation will shortly be visiting Switzerland to meet with representatives of Lichtenstein and other parties; simply establishing contacts between these people is an important part of our work," she says.

WHAT WILL BE RECOVERED?

According to the Prosecutor General's estimates, the former regime took some USD 100 bn abroad. This figure is hugely different from the currently known funds that lay frozen abroad on accounts in Switzerland (EUR 137 mn), Lichtenstein (USD 30 mn), Great Britain (EUR 17 mn) and Austria (USD 8.3mn reported in April). "We have not yet found where this [gap] comes from, and we are facing a number of challenges," Fenner says. Therefore, they will focus on the countries for which they already have some data, she adds. This will facilitate the process.

According to a recent report in the Wall Street Journal, Ukraine has already applied to Switzerland, for assistance in the recovery of assets that were sent to its territory by Yanukovich's allies. It is considered to be one of the countries that are most willing to cooperate with Ukraine in the repatriation of illegally gained and exported funds. "In the last 15 years, our country recovered a total of almost USD 1.8 bn to their countries of origin, in other words, more than any other financial centre in the world," states Franz Schneider from the Swiss Embassy in Ukraine, in a commentary for *The Ukrainian Week*. Seven criminal cases against representatives of the former regime are already being investigated in Switzerland. However, to help law enforcers abroad, Ukraine must conduct profound investigations and prove the guilt of those, whose capital we want to recover. There is currently little progress in this.

The EU announced the freezing of "funds and economic resources, which belong to, or are in the possession of" eighteen Ukrainian ex-officials back on March 5. In Ukraine, meanwhile,

not all of them have as yet been officially notified of the charges. For instance, Andriy Portnov, the former Deputy Chief of Staff for Yanukovich, mocked the current Prosecutor General for his statements of putting Portnov on the wanted list while in fact, Portnov claimed, he wasn't. On August 15, the Pechersk Court in Kyiv satisfied Portnov's lawsuit against Prosecutor General: it ruled the statements of Portnov's alleged involvement in the murders of protesters on the Maidan in winter false and in violation of Portnov's rights, and ordered Prosecutor General to refute the claim that Portnov was on the wanted list. This is a dangerous precedent, particularly after Portnov was the first to file an appeal to the European Court in Luxembourg against the imposition of EU sanctions on him. There are now 14 such claims. Ex-premier Mykola Azarov and his son Oleksiy; Ukrainian businessman Serhiy Kurchenko who disappeared from public view shortly after Yanukovich fled Ukraine; ex-Energy and Coal Minister Eduard Stavitskyi; Chief of Staff for Yanukovich Andriy Kluyev and his brother Serhiy; Viktor Yanukovich and his two sons; ex-Prosecutor General Viktor Pshonka and his son Artem; ex-Tax Minister Oleksandr Klymenko and ex-NBU Chair Serhiy Arbuzov also thought they did not deserve sanctions. If at least one of them wins the trial, sanctions against all former officials on the list will be in doubt, as will the freezing of their assets.

At the same time, legal action will delay the return of funds to Ukraine. As was explained to *The Ukrainian Week* by a European Court official, such processes generally take up to two years, while the court hearing lasts 12–18 months after the case is submitted. "An example of the quickest recovery of assets was the Abacha Case in Nigeria – it took more than five years. So I really don't expect that we will be able to recover the capital for at least three more years," Fenner says. According to Franz Schneider, the recovery of assets depends on the circumstances of each specific case, as well as on the parties that request the recovery and return the money.

According to the Prosecutor General's estimates, the former regime took some

USD 100 bn
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This figure is hugely different from the currently known funds that lay frozen abroad on accounts abroad

The investigation on Nigeria's ex-President Sani Abacha took place immediately after his death in 1998, and it was proved that he had stolen USD 3–5 bn. The decree of his successor, General Abubakar, facilitated the return of USD 800 mn to the nation's budget, and after lengthy negotiations with Switzerland in 2004, a further USD 505.5 mn were returned to Nigeria for projects to overcome poverty, but under the supervision of a third party determined by the World Bank.

According to Gretta Fenner, the recovery of assets is first and foremost politics, and so are its mechanisms. The parties involved must be assured that the recovered assets will not be stolen again. The process will also depend on the country in which the assets are located. "More than likely, friends of Russia will be less willing to cooperate," she says. Moreover, a model needs to be developed to transfer these funds to Ukraine. In another successful case, the recovery of stolen Kazakh funds, the money was used to set up BOTA Foundation, a charitable organization. According to

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE RECOVERY OF ASSETS IS TO CONDUCT UKRAINE'S OWN FINANCIAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Daryna Kaleniuk, Ukrainian activists proposed a similar scheme in 2013 for the recovered capital stolen by former Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko.

Today, recovering even the smallest of the above-mentioned frozen amounts is a necessity for Ukraine, particularly when taking into account the funds required for the restoration of the ruined Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts. However, we have to keep in mind that the return of exported assets requires extraordinarily painstaking work, which, first and foremost, takes efficient investigation of these cases in Ukraine. Therefore, the law must be finally passed which would allow conviction of the representatives of Yanukovich's criminal regime in absentia and confiscation of their property. ■

The quickest recovery of assets was in the Abacha Case in Nigeria – it took more than

5 years

Golden Protection

For the key EU and NATO members to become truly interested in Ukraine, it must act to greatly increase their economic presence inside the country

Author:
Oleksandr Kramar

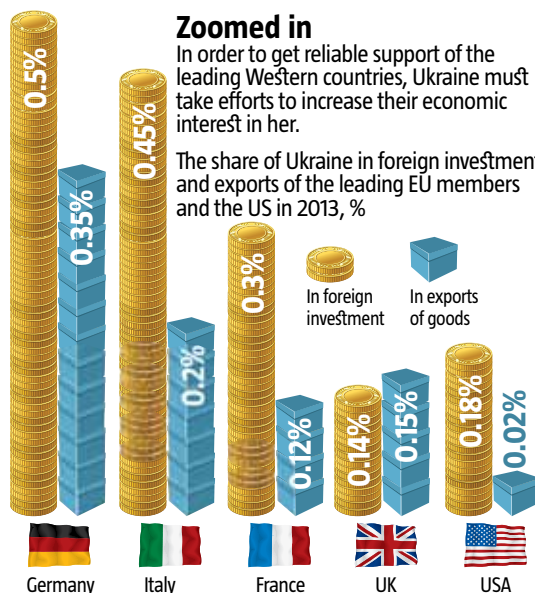
Ukrainians have been complaining that the biggest Western powers are not doing enough to protect Ukraine against the Russian threat. It sometimes seems that Western countries are ready to forge any compromise with Vladimir Putin only to have the Ukrainian issue off their agenda and keep face at the same time. In some cases, they adopt a thinly disguised pro-Russian stance.

However, the obvious reasons for this status quo cannot be ignored. As long as concern for Ukraine is fueled only by the idealistic notion of common values, legal aspects (violations of international law) or the irrational motives of a geopolitical rivalry with Russia (whose relevance is dubious to many in the West), support for Kyiv will be limited, unstable and often declarative only.

In the majority of leading powers, all these aspects crash against the stern reality of a pragmatic view: the economic value of our country remains minuscule in their eyes. We are neither an important supplier of some strategic raw materials or products, nor a major sales market for their goods, nor an investment target for their key companies. Thus, the threshold of losses/expenditures they are willing to incur for the sake of keeping Ukraine in Europe's orbit remains very low. Ukraine must think about ways to change their attitude to its security in the future.

A SALES MARKET

Ukraine's sales market remains extremely small for the biggest Western powers. In this aspect, we lose not only to our western neighbours, but also to Russia.



Source: Lyubomyr Shavalyuk's estimates based on the State Statistics Committee data and Central Intelligence Agency. The World Factbook

The EU members must now choose between relations with Russia and Ukraine. Western penetration is much lower in Ukraine than in Russia or other neighbour countries.

For example, Russian imports were merely four times bigger than Ukrainian imports in 2013 (USD 318bn and USD 77bn, respectively), but American and Dutch deliveries were nearly six times higher to Russia than to Ukraine, German 6.7 times, British and Italian seven times and Canadian and French 7.5 times higher. Leading Western states have decided to step up economic sanctions against Russia, which are hurting their trade relations, not because Ukraine is more important, but because Russia is not a priority market to most of them. For example, in 2013 Russia received a mere 3.3% of total German exports, three% of Italian, 2.3% of French, one per cent of British and American each and 0.4% of Canadian exports.

We have been even further behind our western neighbours. For example, Germany exported 7.8 times and France 5.5 times more to Poland than to Ukraine, even though Poland's overall import volume was 2.7 higher than that of Ukraine. Turkey imported three times more than Ukraine overall but four times more of German goods. Hungary and Slovakia imported roughly as much as Ukraine did in 2013, but Germany's share in their imports was 3.2 and 2 times bigger than in Ukraine. In general, Romania imported less than Ukraine but 1.8 more from Germany. Mexico, which lies half across the world, imported nearly twice more from Germany than Ukraine did.

Our market is more important to Polish and Romanian exporters: Russia and Ukraine account for 5.3 and 2.9% of Polish exports and 2.5 and 1.3% of Romanian exports, respectively. To Polish producers, the Ukrainian market comes close to that of Russia and such large EU states as Italy (4.3%) and France (5.6%).

PRESENCE OF CAPITAL

For a long time, direct foreign investment was viewed by Ukraine as primarily an economic matter, as a source of speeding up economic growth and modernizing the outdated structure of the economy. However, in the face of Russian aggression Ukraine is learning to look at it also as an important element of guaranteeing national security. Ukraine has neglected this potential until the last minute and large businesses from the leading Western countries have had weak penetration into the Ukrainian market.

As of early 2014, the EU states (without Cyprus) directly invested a mere US 25.4bn dollars (less than EUR 20bn) in Ukraine. This is even less than the volume



Source: Central Intelligence Agency. The World Factbook

of EU products sold on the Ukrainian market in 2013. These sums are negligible to the key Western powers. To compare, the total volume of foreign capital investments made by companies amounts to USD 4.85tn in the USA, USD 1.88tn in Great Britain, USD 1.87tn in Germany, USD 1.49tn in France, USD 1tn in the Netherlands, USD 0.68tn in Italy. Only a fraction of one per cent went to Ukraine.

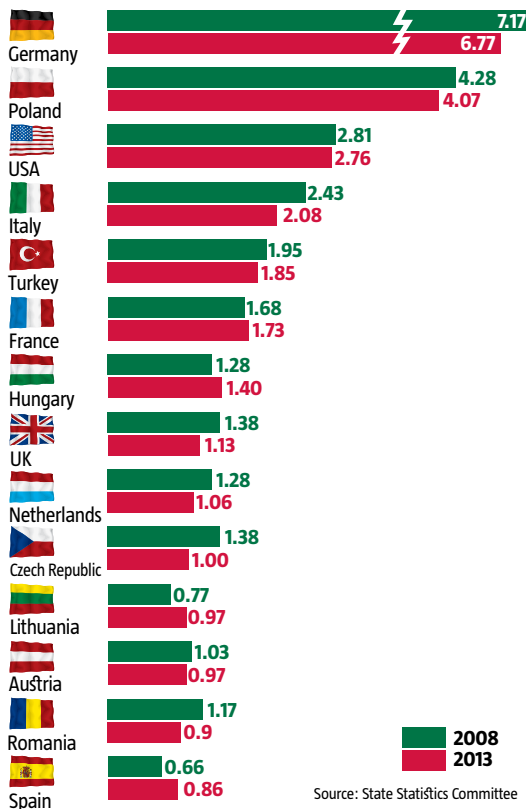
And even these investments are largely limited to sectors with rapid capital turnover or serve merely as a cover for companies registered in European countries or in the USA by Ukrainian or Russian oligarchs and for other businesses from these countries. At the same time, Ukraine still lacks serious investments in the production sector from powerful transnational corporations from the USA, Germany, Great Britain, France and the Netherlands or adequate presence of their banking institutions. This would mean capital investments that come to stay and generate genuine interest in the future of the country to which they go.

Powerful American concerns have not dared to invest in our industry. Some of them looked closely: General Motors expressed interest in AvtoZAZ; Motorola considered making an investment in Ukraine but withdrew with a scandal. Coca-Cola remains a sole exception. Only two countries invested over USD 1bn in Ukraine as of 2014: Germany (USD 5.4bn) and the Netherlands (USD 2.3bn). However, a lion's share of German investments (USD 4.8bn) came as a purchase of Kryvorizhstal by Mittal Steel Germany GmbH, a subsidiary of the Mittal Steel corporation. Germany invested a mere USD 112mn, Great Britain USD 84.5mn and France USD 40mn into Ukraine's machine building industry.

That big business has not come to Ukraine from the key NATO countries in all these years is a result of intentional blocking by Russian oligarchic and other big businesses and their close Ukrainian partners. The latter cannot, for the most part, be considered national businesses, because they are closely tied in various ways to Russian companies

Negative dynamics

Deliveries of goods to the Ukrainian market by the largest exporters that are EU and/or NATO member-states in 2008-2013, USD bn



or banks which, in their turn, are totally dependent on the Kremlin.

As a consequence, a number of sectors were stalled; Ukraine's economy became financially dependent on Russian credit resources; cooperation with Russian producers was perpetuated with devastating effects for the efficiency of the Ukrainian economy and national security in strategically important sectors. As it declared a Western vector in its economic and political integration, Ukraine remained in the quagmire of the Russian business space and continued to be viewed through its prism by big businesses in all leading Western states.

In order to lay down the foundations for Ukraine's real, rather than declarative, entry into the Western economic space, Ukraine needs to oust Russian business and that of pseudo-Ukrainian oligarchs who are totally dependent on cooperation with Russia's government-owned or semi-governmental financial-industrial groups and key banks. In general, some

universal solutions affecting the entire economy are needed, something along the lines of a recently adopted draft bill on the management of Ukraine's gas transportation system: Russian companies were supplanted from a number of strategic sectors and replaced with Western companies. This is a vital and urgent measure that needs to be taken in those sectors that are usually considered key to national security: from energy to telecommunications and finances.

At the same time, if Ukraine wants Western business circles, and ultimately states, to be serious about its future, it has to do whatever large Western capital wishes in order to attract it. This capital must come in large enough volumes so that it would be forced by its own economic interests to lobby its governments to adopt an active policy on Ukraine. This policy will be genuine and truly serious only when backed up by real economic interest.

If Western businesses fail to come to Ukraine en masse, the Ukrainian market will for years remain too small for Western products due to the low purchasing power of most Ukrainians who do not have truly efficient jobs. In this situation, Ukraine will be doomed to economic degradation and loss of the ability to resist the Russian threat which will only increase, rather than subside, as long as Ukraine de facto remains in the shadow of Russia's economic and business space. That the Association Agreement or even full-fledged

WESTERN CAPITAL MUST COME IN LARGE ENOUGH VOLUMES SO THAT IT WOULD BE FORCED BY ITS OWN ECONOMIC INTERESTS TO LOBBY ITS GOVERNMENTS TO ADOPT AN ACTIVE POLICY ON UKRAINE

EU membership cannot, on their own, stand in the way of this trend is corroborated by a number of countries that have joined the EU but continue to be easily manipulated by the Kremlin through both government and formally private capital totally dependent on its will. ■

Side Effects

Vladimir Putin's bet on aggressive chauvinism and revanchism consolidates the West and unnerves satellites. More and more Russians begin to doubt it as well



Author:
Oleksiy
Oleksiienko

Vladimir Putin's growing confidence that the West will not react strongly to his military aggression in Ukraine provokes him to stop hiding his contempt for the borders established after Russia's defeat in the cold war, for the international law and the norms of his vis-à-vis, and even threaten his allies.

In the recent multilateral meeting in Minsk, he expressed annoyance at the stance of his Customs Union satellites. He ac-

cused Belarus of re-exporting European goods to Russia which Moscow sanctioned. Then, he expressed doubts over Kazakhstan's statehood for the latter's support of Ukraine in Minsk. Finally, he said that he could "take Kyiv in two weeks" in a conversation with José Manuel Barroso.

Meanwhile, Putin's ever more obvious bet on Russian chauvinism and revanchism is slowly triggering factors that doom his regime to a fall and Russia to a

collapse, even if they unfold over a long period of time.

CONSOLIDATING THE WEST

The EU and NATO are still reluctant to take any decisive action to provide military, or at least full-scale economic support to Ukraine in the conflict with Russia. However, they are preparing for a long cold war with the Kremlin in the near future. Alexander Vershbow, Deputy Secretary-General of NATO, recently wrote on Twitter that "Russia be-

came a nationalist and revisionist power”, therefore the NATO Summit in Newport, Wales, was to open a new chapter in the Alliance’s history, with new spending on defence and a new perception of Russia.

If NATO drags Moscow into yet another arms race, accompanied by the growing sanctions against it from G20 states, the collapse of the already weak Russian economy will be a matter of a few years. This will hardly seriously help Ukraine in protecting her independence in the short run, but it will certainly push Russia to a collapse of economic, military and political blocks it has built on the post-Soviet terrain.

TROUBLES IN THE REAR

The chauvinist hysteria fueled by Putin causes growing concern not only in the West, but in national republics of the Russian Federation, and in its allies.

Mintimer Shaymiyev, ex-president of Tatarstan, one of the largest national republic in the Russian Federation, has already disapproved of the surge of Russian national chauvinism. After the game of the Moscow Spartak FC against Kazan-based Rubin, when several thousands of Spartak began to sing “Russians, forward!” in the capital of the republic with over 53% of Tatars and 40% of Russians, he said: “Four thousand fans come from Moscow and shout ‘Russians, forward’. How can you come to Tatarstan, or any other (national – Ed.) region and shout such things in the multinational Russia? What should we shout then? Tatars, forward?” His concerns are understandable: in the 1990s, Tatarstan had the second strongest separation movement (after Chechnya). Today, it is growing more and more discontent with Russian nationalism.

Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, has sent a signal to Kazakhstan which will hardly pass unnoticed in Russia’s relations with it. On August 29, he said that Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan’s President, “accomplished a unique thing: he created a state on the territory where there had never been a state. In this sense, he is a unique person in post-Soviet statehood” in his speech at Seliger, the all-Russian youth fo-

rum. Apparently, he hinted that, after Nazarbayev or earlier, the issue of preserving sovereignty or territorial integrity of the state which Nazarbayev created “out of nothing” could be raised. In April 2008, during his meeting with George W. Bush and a comment on the opportunity of NATO MAP for Ukraine, Putin said that “Ukraine is not even a state... Part of its territories is Eastern Europe, but the greater part is a gift from us.” This were not mere words about gifted territory, as we all have seen this year in Russia’s efforts to acknowledge statehood of “Novorossiia”.

Kazakhstan has seen attempts of military takeover and separation of its eastern part. On November 19-20, 1999, the Kazakh National Security Committee arrested the terrorist group called Rus. It was made up of former military who had fought in wars in Transnistria, Tajikistan and Chechnya, led by Viktor “Pugachov” (his documents indicted that he was a Russian citizen registered as Viktor Kazimirchuk in Moscow). The group was arrested to long terms in jail, but the mechanisms used in Crimea and the Donbas today prove that Russian Nazis won’t find it hard to revive yet another group of “rebels” in depressed regions of Kazakhstan.

Overall, Kazakhstan has 65% of Kazakhs and 21.5% of Russians. However, the local population is still a minority in a number of northern regions while the majority is Russian-speaking people resettled from Europe. For instance, North-Kazakh Oblast has 50% of ethnic Russians (34.2% of Kazakhs); Kostanai Oblast has 42.1% of Russians and 38.8% of Kazakhs, etc. – all these are on the border with Russia. In the East-Kazakh Oblast where Russian separatists attempted a coup in the 1990s, have 37.5% of Russians versus 58% of Kazakhs, compared to almost 50:50 in the 1999 Census.

The Russian population in Kazakhstan hardly speaks Kazakh and is hardly motivated to learn it. The share of people who can speak it among the Russians is virtually the lowest out of all ethnic groups living in the country: according to the 2009 cen-

sus, only 6.3% of them can read and write in Kazakh. Shortly after the annexation of Crimea, Russian MP Vladimir Zhyrinovski said in parliament that “Russophobic sentiments are cultivated” in Kazakhstan and they are “totally anti-Russian” in Kazakh textbooks. So, it was Kazakhstan’s turn after Ukraine, he said.

Kazakhstan got the hint right, as proven by the statement of its President Nursultan Nazarbayev in an interview for the national Khabar TV channel. In it, he stressed out that his country would not be part of the organization that threatens its sovereignty because “our independence is our dearest treasure for which our ancestors fought”. “First of all, we will never surrender our independence. Second of all, we will take every possible effort to protect it,” Nazarbayev said.

Meanwhile, more and more Russians begin to realize the price of their country’s aggression for their own wealth.

According to a poll by Levada Center on August 22-25, the Russians are slowly returning to reasonable thinking. Compared to the March results, they no longer feel as happy about annexation of Crimea. Fewer Russians now approve of annexation and are willing to sacrifice part of their personal income to support the new region. The share of those who would by no means want to face financial losses because of the actions of the Russian leaders has grown from 19% in March to 28% in August. Only 17% of those polled are willing to feel some financial restraints caused by Crimea, compared to 26% in March. The share of respondents who believe that the annexation of Crimea and aggression in the Donbas make Ukrainians hate Russia or its leaders has exceeded 60%.

This does not take into account the Russian troops returning home dead or badly injured, and officially qualified as “insurgents” who died while on a leave. Despite attempts to hide this, the Russian media are already reporting hundreds of killed. The number of the injured in Ukraine is reportedly around 1,000. Hospitals in Rostov and St. Petersburg are filled with them. ■

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At the beginning of
September, the press
service of the Russian
Defence Ministry
announced massive
trainings of strategic
missile forces near
the Kazakh border.
These will involve
over

4,000
troops
and
400
pieces
of military
equipment

Over
60%
of Russians realize
that the annexation
of Crimea and
aggression in the
Donbas make
Ukrainians hate
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Levada Center
reports based on its
August 22-25 poll

Lustration Over the Ocean

Ukrainian activists are pursuing the lustration of state organs of professional frauds. Yet another place where lustration of corrupt individuals has to occur is among the Diaspora of the United States

Author:
Zenon Zawada

Instead of observing the political drama in Ukraine with popcorn in hand, the Ukrainian community in the U.S. should be rolling up its sleeves and removing scoundrels from leadership positions on its own side of the ocean.

Those Westerners directly or indirectly involved with the Yanukovich regime must not only be condemned by the Diaspora community, but they must be removed from positions of influ-

ence lest they do any more damage to Ukraine, particularly her image in the West.

The most obvious target of a Diaspora lustration effort is Adrian Karatnycky, who will go down in history for his extensive and unabashed cheerleading and apologizing for the Yanukovich administration.

It's worth reviewing just a small sample of the nuggets of political insight from this self-styled guru, who continues to ad-

vertise himself as an objective analyst of Ukrainian politics and is still being published in the world's top publications, most recently in the Wall Street Journal.

Karatnycky penned so much fawning of Yanukovich & Co. that describing it all would take too much space. (Those interested can read his entire archives at: atlanticcouncil.org). It's worth focusing on Karatnycky's assurances that Yanukovich would

The most obvious target of a Diaspora lustration effort is Adrian Karatnycky, who will go down in history for his extensive and unabashed cheerleading and apologizing for the Yanukovich administration



never resort to dictatorial, authoritarian methods.

Immediately when Yanukovich and his entourage came to power, Karatnycky assured us that “five years in the political wilderness has taught them that the world does not end with the democratic rotation of power, nor does it put anyone's massive fortunes at risk.”

As early as May 2010, when the authoritarian path that Yanukovich was taking was apparent to all objective political experts, Karatnycky accused those comparing the administration to authoritarians and dictators of fomenting hysteria. Such comparison “confirms my thesis of the excessive rhetoric adopted by normally sober analysts of Ukraine's politics.”

He lamented, “instead of benefiting from acknowledgment for this generally positive

state of affairs and for his positive economic steps, Yanukovich is being subjected to increased international criticism.”

“In short, there has been a tsunami of articles suggesting Ukraine is about to become a vassal of Russia led by an unchecked tyrant who has seized control of most media content,” Karatnycky wrote in May 2010.

Yet despite that “tsunami” of opinion, the political “expert” from the Atlantic Council chose to instead focus on Yanukovich's “openness to criticism and his willingness to correct mistakes,” as someone “not inclined to become a second-rate administrator of a Russian province.”

“My interactions with Ukraine's entire political spectrum for the past two decades persuade me that, with the exception of their cultural and linguistic policies, the Yanukovich team is essentially on the right track.”

When Yanukovich was demonstrating his propensity for violence, Karatnycky was apologizing, tritely pointing out that he “sternly rebuked” Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko “for excesses in policing demonstrations.”

As for Zakharchenko, he was part of the president's entourage of “well-educated, highly professional 30 and 40-somethings,” Karatnycky insisted, as if pulling this spin directly out of a Party of Regions talking points e-mail.

Regarding the now infamous criminal charges for damaging the Maidan's tiles, “these are appear to be focused on alleged damage done to Kyiv's central square and do not constitute wide ranging reprisals against protest leaders and participants.”

Perhaps they protest too much,” Karatnycky obnoxiously wrote of Yanukovich's critics. “Anxieties about a Russia-influenced reassertion of authoritarianism are not likely to be borne out.”

Karatnycky sung Yanukovich's praises even during the politically motivated prosecution of Yulia Tymoshenko, lauding him for allowing her to travel to Brussels as “a sign of change.”

Admittedly, Karatnycky's cheerleading took a less arrogant

tone once Yanukovich's leading political rival was thrown in prison. But he kept pulling his twine nonetheless, insisting that “Ms. Tymoshenko's wrong-headed prosecution obscured the significant record of progress,” including lowered taxes, reduced government subsidies and heightened corruption prosecutions.

Even until the very bitter end, Karatnycky could not bring himself to use the “a” word about Yanukovich, still couching any criticism by referring to his fallen hero as a “semi-authoritarian” ruler.

At this point criticizing Yanukovich for his steps away from Western values, Karatnycky still had his “amputee's itch” for defending someone who has all the signs of being a client, though Karatnycky denies having any financial ties to the Party of Regions or its sponsors, directly or indirectly.

WHEN YANUKOVYCH WAS DEMONSTRATING HIS PROPENSITY FOR VIOLENCE, KARATNYCKY WAS APOLOGIZING, TRITELY POINTING OUT THAT HE “STERNLY REBUKED” INTERIOR MINISTER VITALIY ZAKHARCHENKO

Indeed his defense, as is the defense of all the “repenting” Regions entourage, is trite and predictable. Karatnycky informed me by e-mail that he was critical of Yanukovich when he abandoned the course to Western integration.

It took him until December 2012 (more than a year after Tymoshenko's imprisonment!) to “start sending warning signals,” when they were apparent to millions of people in 2004 and to all objective political analysts by the summer of 2010.

“I thought honestly that Yanukovich had learned from the Orange Revolution that the Ukrainian public would not permit the usurpation of power. I was proved wrong,” he wrote me in late July. And was he wrong! ■

So much so that most of the claims in more than a dozen pieces have proven to be farcical, both then and in hindsight.

Yet playing the “earnest believer” card isn’t credible for anyone supporting the Party of Regions. When confronted with evidence of corruption and murder among the Donetsk clan as early as 2005, Karanytsky insisted there was “no proof,” as reported by Dr. Taras Kuzio, a research associate at the University of Alberta.

Just following the Orange revolts, Karatnycky interviewed Akhmetov, producing a flattering article on him for the Wall Street Journal. That year, Karatnycky launched the Orange Circle, a defunct organization of Ukrainian Diaspora leaders committed to “networking the friends of democratic Ukraine.”

Among the supporters of the Orange Circle was the Donbas Fuel & Energy Co, (currently DTEK), owned by Akhmetov. This sponsorship is the only proven financial link between Karatnycky and any of the dons of the Party of Regions. Yet Karatnycky denies to this day having any financial ties to Akhmetov.

We now see what a “friend” Akhmetov is to democratic Ukraine, having allowed separatists and Russian soldiers to terrorize and murder the people of his native Donbas, where not being able to walk the land and breathe the air would be his worst sanction. Ironical that he uttered those words in December.

But given Akhmetov’s alleged criminal history (I say “alleged” because documentary films, investigative television news reports and books are not enough proof for Karatnycky), the Orange Circle’s patrons, including Canadian business executive James Temerty, should not have been surprised at how he handled the terrorists.

How does Karatnycky explain his cheerleading for the Yanukovich administration? Karatnycky insists his texts were “analysis.”

Indeed much of his praise for Yanukovich & Co. is tactically cushioned with light criticism and disappointments, often fo-

cused on shortcomings in the cultural sphere (a safe area given that the Party of Regions spit on these issues).

This balancing act that Karatnycky is trying to claim as astute analysis is really as process of covering his own tracks. For an apology for Yanukovich, he can point to a criticism, which is very often contradictory.

The end product can look quite ridiculous. “Despite the use of administrative resources and a far from level playing field, political pluralism is alive and well in Ukraine,” wrote Karatnycky, even after Tymoshenko’s imprisonment and the substandard parliamentary vote.

“Evidence of corruption and cronyism abounds,” Karatnycky wrote, just one year after praising Yanukovich for “extensive prosecution of current govern-

Yet Karatnycky is able to get away with it because he remains a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, a respected Washington think tank whose stamp of approval confers legitimacy to someone who at best is a hired gun. If he was never paid, his writings would qualify him as an incompetent.

Shockingly, the Atlantic Council is entirely satisfied with his work. Ignoring my questions of how Karatnycky became a senior fellow and what would be the procedure to remove him, spokeswoman Taleen Ananian instead forwarded me a statement from its president and CEO Frederick Kempe.

“Adrian Karatnycky is widely known as one of America’s leading experts on Ukraine,” he said. “We are proud of the work the Atlantic Council team, along with Adrian, is currently doing to advance the freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine.”

Unfortunately, the Atlantic Council leadership has yet to understand the dangers Karatnycky poses to forming public opinion on Ukraine. Those less familiar with the on-the-ground situation in Ukraine actually start believing the tripe that a cheerleader like Karatnycky churns out, with the Atlantic Council’s endorsement.

The inability to sort out the truth early enough, amidst the smokescreen created by those like Karatnycky, about those with alleged violent histories such as Yanukovich and Akhmetov enables them to accumulate enough power to do even greater damage, as demonstrated by the tragic deaths of the EuroMaidan and the current war in Donbas.

By continuing to pose as an expert, Karatnycky is a threat to objective political analysis on Ukraine that’s desperately needed in a time when the Russian government is producing fraud and falsehoods on a daily basis. He is also a threat to informing the Diaspora community, who trusted his failed Orange Circle effort with tens of thousands of dollars.

If he’s demonstrated his willingness to promote one authoritarian government, then there’s nothing to stop him from finding

THE INABILITY TO SORT OUT THE TRUTH EARLY ENOUGH, ABOUT THOSE WITH ALLEGED VIOLENT HISTORIES SUCH AS YANUKOVYCH AND AKHMETOV ENABLES THEM TO ACCUMULATE ENOUGH POWER TO DO EVEN GREATER DAMAGE

Michael Sawkiw, Jr., the president of the U.S. Holodomor Committee, declined to respond as to whether his organization will return the

\$2.5mn donated by Mr. Firtash to build the Holodomor Victims Memorial in Washington

ment officials on corruption charges.” I guess the prosecution wasn’t “extensive” enough.

Indeed to the objective political observer, if Karatnycky wasn’t getting paid for his cheerleading, then he missed a golden opportunity to make some serious cash off his “analysis.”

Karatnycky is now hoping to put all that behind in the past. In the EuroMaidan aftermath, he’s given speeches at Harvard University and at the Fashion Institute of Technology in Manhattan about the reasons for Yanukovich’s fall.

Since Yanukovich’s ouster, he has published in the Wall Street Journal and New Republic writings on the Donbas war. Normally, someone with all the appearances of a hired PR gun would not be allowed to pose as an objective political analyst, writing for such prestigious publications.



Borys Gudziak, the American-born former rector of UCU, is another Diaspora leader in Firtash's web

another gang of (alleged) criminals to offer his services to.

Someone whose ties to the Yanukovich regime are more clear-cut is former First Lady of Ukraine Kateryna Yushchenko. As recently as October 2013, she and her husband were guests of honor at a celebratory banquet organized by the Ukrainian-American Archives and Museum of Detroit.

It's understandable that these honest folks are desperate. Their museum is located in the city of Hamtramck near central Detroit, which is a war zone no less dangerous than present-day Luhansk. And to them, gaining the ear of someone as fabulously wealthy as Mrs. Yushchenko is among their few hopes in finding new digs for their museum.

But for those of us living in Ukraine proper, the Yushchenkos are those people who teamed up with Yanukovich to defeat Yulia Tymoshenko in the 2010 presidential elections.

The reward they gained from their unholy alliance was the right to live in a luxurious state dacha in Koncha Zaspia immediately after Yanukovich's victory. It's reasonable to suspect there was an exchange because the Yushchenkos fled their dacha around the same time that Yanukovich fled Ukraine.

Living in a dacha that costs an impoverished country

\$3.75mn a year to maintain – when you own privately several luxurious residences – is one degree of boorishness.

But having secured the dacha as part of a political alliance with the man who tried to become dictator, maiming a few thousand people in the process, is downright abominable, and no matter amount of wearing their embroidered shirts and flaunting their Ukrainian kitsch will erase that.

The Ukrainian-American Archives and Museum of Detroit should relinquish its ties with the Yushchenkos, as should any Diaspora organization. Indeed it's high time for Diaspora leaders to admit their mistakes and wipe their slates clean of the sponsors of the murderous Party of Regions and its partners in crime.

Unfortunately, too many Diaspora leaders are open to cutting political deals or accepted lucrative donations from the likes of Firtash, another Party of Regions sponsor.

They have also resorted to the "Karatnycky defense," insisting they had no moral scruples in dealing with the Regions sponsors because they had no criminal convictions.

Of course, such evidence as Firtash admitting his relations to Russian mobster Semyon Mogilevich, Number One on the FBI's

Most Wanted List, was not enough to raise concern.

And of course, they didn't expect that the U.S. government may "soil" Firtash's clean status soon, filing charges of bribery, money laundering, threats and intimidation and other crimes that could earn him up to 55 years in prison.

For his troubles, Firtash is blaming the same U.S. government that the Diaspora leadership is lobbying to provide more aid to Ukraine: "What is important is that there is a geopolitical struggle between the U.S. and Russia under way. The U.S. needs an enemy abroad to solve problems at home and Ukraine happened to become a battlefield."

Michael Sawkiw, Jr., the president of the U.S. Holodomor Committee, declined to respond as to whether his organization will return the \$2.5mn donated by Mr. Firtash to build the Holodomor Victims Memorial in Washington.

"Obviously we're very disturbed about all of the allegations, and we're concerned about the support of individuals like Firtash," UCCA spokeswoman Roksolana Lozynskyj said in April, as reported by London's The Globe and Mail. "However, the project is under way."

Another Diaspora leader in Firtash's web is Borys Gudziak, the American-born former rector of UCU who is now the eparch of Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Eparchy of Paris. Firtash donated \$4.5mn to build the Striyskiy Park campus. He said then that he hopes it wouldn't be Firtash's last gift.

Just how these Diaspora leaders, Sawkiw and Gudziak, got in touch with Firtash remains a mystery. Sawkiw has repeatedly declined to say who approached whom, and UCU has never revealed the relationship's genesis.

Whether these Diaspora leaders, Sawkiw and Gudziak, deserve condemnation for accepting money from Firtash has long been a debate in the community. But a criminal conviction might finally put that debate to rest and put Firtash off-limits as a source for financing, once and for all. ■

Gas tycoon Dmytro Firtash donated
\$4.5mn
to the Ukrainian Catholic University to build the Striyskiy Park campus in Lviv

NATO Flexes Its Muscle Memory

Russia's aggression in Ukraine has made NATO's summit in Wales the most important since the end of the cold war

As originally billed, the summit looked likely to be a humdrum affair. But a meeting of the NATO alliance in Newport in south Wales on September 4th and 5th, intended to mark the end of combat operations in Afghanistan, now looks likely to be one of the most important gatherings in the organisation's 65-year history. From the moment in March when Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, sent his troops into Crimea, thus beginning the first forcible annexation of territory in Europe since the second world war, it has been clear that NATO is back in the business it was created for: collective territorial defence.

Mr. Putin has given NATO a shot in the arm just as its relevance was being questioned, and not for the first time. Although the alliance reached a peak of activity in 2011 with six operations in three continents (Afghanistan, Kosovo, Libya, a training mission in Iraq, counter-terrorism operations in the Mediterranean and counter-piracy off the Horn of Africa), most are now over or winding down. Russia's military modernisation and menacing large-scale exercises close to NATO's borders worried the alliance's northern and eastern members. But most Europeans were more concerned about falling living standards than external threats to their security.

Even without the urgency added by Russia's recent actions, NATO's outgoing secretary-general, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, a former Danish prime minister, would have argued in Newport for European governments to halt the decline in their defence budgets, and to spend them more efficiently. But similar pleas in the past have fallen mainly on deaf ears. Just four of NATO's European members (Britain, Estonia, France and Greece) come even close to meeting a commitment made in 2006 to spend at least 2% of GDP on defence, and only five have met another, equally important one to spend 20% of their budgets on modern equipment.

After the inconclusive results of 12 years of effort in Afghanistan, the era of large-scale military interventions far from Europe was thought to be over. A small American-led NATO residual force is likely to stay on for a few years to "train, advise and assist" the Afghan army in its continuing struggle against the Taliban (if security agreements can be signed quickly by Afghanistan's new president). But despite the widening arc of instability across the Middle East and north Africa that followed the upheavals of the Arab spring and the rise of the jihadist Islamic State, addressing such complex threats through the creaking consensus-bound structures of NATO has seemed too difficult. The campaign in 2011 to remove Muammar Qaddafi from power in Libya, although successful in its immediate aims, exposed both divisions within the alliance and gaps in capability that fed America's frustration with feeble European military spending. It also left behind an unhelpful mess.

As for America, new strategic guidance prepared for Barack Obama in early 2012 had complacently referred to "most European countries" as now being "producers of security rather than consumers of it". It recommended taking advantage of a "strategic opportunity to rebalance the US military investment in Europe" towards Asia to meet the challenge of an assertive China. Re-energising an alliance that some in Washington believed was a relic of the cold war was low on the president's list of priorities.

All that has now changed. Ukraine is not a member of NATO (indeed, preventing it ever becoming one is a principal aim of Russian policy) and therefore does not enjoy the protection afforded by Article 5, the vow taken by every member to regard an attack on one as an attack on all. But Mr. Putin's declaration of the right to take action wherever he believes the interests of Russian speakers are endangered directly threatens the Baltic states, which are members. Estonia, Latvia and Lith-



NRF would have
13,000 well-
equipped troops.
Within it a
multinational force
of brigade size
(about 5,000 troops)
will be deployable at
the first sign of
trouble without the
usual requirement
for consensual
political approval

uania, which joined NATO in 2004, were part of the Soviet Union until its dissolution in 1991 and all have ethnic Russian minorities. After the seizure of Crimea, Mr. Putin's attempt to establish the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine as a Russian satrapy by fomenting and arming a separatist rebellion demonstrated the "hybrid warfare" techniques that the Kremlin might use to destabilise the Baltic.

The reaction to Mr. Putin's aggression has so far been mostly economic, with sanctions successively tightened. But it was immediately clear to Mr. Rasmussen and the alliance's leading military officer, the supreme allied commander in Europe (SACEUR), General Philip Breedlove of the US air force, that NATO would have to respond too. That meant providing immediate reassurance to the alliance's most vulnerable frontline states, while getting all 28 members to agree on the nature of the threat to Europe's security and the measures needed to counter it. It meant, above all, demonstrating that Article 5 remained the unshakable pillar of the alliance, at a time when doubts had been raised about whether, say, the Dutch or German governments would really send their troops to fight for Estonia or Romania.

Some of those measures have already been put in place. The air-policing operation over the Baltic states was quickly bolstered with additional jet fighters. Mr. Obama

visited Warsaw in June and announced a USD 1bn package for stepped-up military exercises and training in eastern Europe, with additional rotations of American troops in the region (he will also make a symbolic stopover in Estonia before the summit). At about the same time, General Breedlove was asked by the North Atlantic Council, NATO's political decision-making body, to develop a credible deterrent to Russian adventurism that could be put into action after the summit.

A potential problem for Mr. Rasmussen was that even after the seizure of Crimea, NATO's members had disagreed about the extent of the threat posed by Russia. Propaganda from Moscow about a spontaneous uprising that Russia only belatedly supported had seemed plausible to some; in Germany, history inclined many towards a policy of *Russland verstehen*—understanding, indeed sympathising with, Russia. Germany's chancellor, Angela Merkel, born in the country's communist east, has few illusions about Mr. Putin but is rarely willing to get very far ahead of pacifist-inclined public opinion. A naive new Italian government, acutely conscious of its fragile economy's dependence on Russian gas, also hoped to avoid confrontation.

SETTING THE TRIPWIRE

NATO can only act by consensus, and some members feared that basing troops in Poland and the Baltic states would breach agreements reached with Russia in 1997 under the Founding Act, which formally declared an end to hostile relations. At a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in April, a call from Poland for 10,000 NATO troops to be stationed on its territory was rebuffed. Some did not want to hear Mr. Rasmussen's message that years of attempts by NATO to make Russia a strategic partner had failed, and that under Mr. Putin Russia saw NATO only as an adversary.

But as evidence mounted of Russia's engagement in the increasingly bloody insurrection in east Ukraine, the arguments of NATO's doves seemed ever more feeble. The big shift in public opinion came in July, when separatist rebels shot down Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 with advanced weapons supplied by Russia. "Those clinging to an optimistic

view of Russia had to recognise it had not worked; they had no answer," says a senior NATO diplomat. The alliance must be prepared to deal with an antagonistic Russia for a long time, says Mr. Rasmussen. "I would caution against thinking this is just about Putin. It is deeper-rooted in Russian society."

The result is that General Breedlove is unlikely to face much political resistance to the deterrence package he sets out at the Newport summit. A "readiness action plan" has been drawn up with the aim of enabling NATO to respond rapidly to an Article 5 crisis. A compromise has been reached between those who think basing NATO forces permanently in the east and north of Europe, close to Russia's borders, would breach the Founding Act, and those who argue that Russia's own actions mean the act is already a dead letter: General Breedlove will propose pre-positioning command and control, logistics specialists, heavy weapons and ammunition, probably at an existing base in Szczecin in Poland (see map). The idea, he says, is to be able to "travel light but strike hard if needed". The base is likely to be staffed on rotation, with troops from different member countries moving in and out. Frequent, large-scale exercises will signal NATO's preparedness and maintain the crucial interoperability between national forces that was forged in Afghanistan.

An important element of the plans is to hold the newish NATO Response Force (NRF), which has 13,000 well-equipped troops provided on a rotating basis by members at its disposal, at a much higher state of readiness than before as the "spearhead" for the alliance's future deployments. Within it a multinational force of brigade size (about 5,000 troops) will be deployable at the first sign of trouble, possibly within hours, on the order of the SACEUR without the usual requirement for consensual political approval.

The intention, says Mr. Rasmussen, is to ensure that "any potential aggressor will know that if they are to attack one of our allies, they will not just meet national troops, but they will meet NATO." The implication is clear: foes will have to reckon with a tripwire force that will trigger a response from the whole alliance. As one senior NATO official puts it: "There is extraordinary muscle

memory in this organisation. We can still tool up pretty fast."

A potential complication is that the hybrid warfare practised by Russia in Ukraine is more ambiguous than a conventional armed attack. General Breedlove says NATO must be ready for the "little green men"—special forces without sovereign insignia who cross borders to create unrest, occupy government buildings, incite locals and give tactical advice to separatists, thus destabilising a country. In an interview published on August 17th he told Germany's *Die Welt*: "If NATO were to observe the infiltration of its sovereign territory by [anonymous] foreign forces, and if



AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE PLANS IS TO HOLD THE NEWISH NATO RESPONSE FORCE AT A MUCH HIGHER STATE OF READINESS THAN BEFORE

we were able to prove that this activity were being carried out by a particular aggressor nation, then Article 5 would apply."

NATO may no longer be scrabbling about looking for a role, but Jens Stoltenberg, a former Norwegian prime minister who takes over from Mr. Rasmussen in October, will still have to grapple with many of the same old problems that afflict the alliance. Mr. Rasmussen says that ahead of the summit about half of NATO's members have committed to no further reductions in defence spending, though that is, for many, a far cry from meeting their commitment to spending 2% of GDP. Nor, despite Mr. Obama's insistence that he sees Europe's security as indivisible from America's, is there likely to be much change in America's strategic preoccupation with China. Mr. Obama affects to see Russia more as a troublesome regional power than as a military and political rival like the Soviet Union of old. Whether NATO will play much of a role in Europe's turbulent Middle Eastern back yard is also doubtful.

But for all its shortcomings, NATO retains an extraordinary ability to reinvent itself in the face of new threats. With enemies like Mr. Putin, its continued relevance is not in doubt. ■

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Wag the Dog. Russian Style



Author:
Leonidas
Donskis

The extreme power of manipulation, in terms of public opinion and imagology, and its political and moral implications are well revealed by one film that has contributed to the critique of today's controlling political structures. This is Barry Levinson's film *Wag the Dog*. The film tells us the story of Hollywood producer Stanley Motss and Washington's spin doctor Conrad Brean, who are supposed to save the White House due to the President's scandalous romance.

The duet of Dustin Hoffman and Robert De Niro reveals with skill a world of people who are talented, but also amoral and value disoriented. At any rate, the revelations of instrumental mind and instrumental morality are not the only merits of this great film. Created in 1997, it foreshadowed a military campaign in Yugoslavia (the film mentions Albania) during the height of Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky's sex scandal. Of course, it would be silly to claim, wearing a serious face, that the war in Yugoslavia was required because of U.S. domestic politics, and as a means of smothering the scandal. "Pacifist" Western Europe wanted this war perhaps even more than "militaristic" America. The U.S. was the wand that was used to solve the problem.

But this film leaves an impression due to its emphasis on something else – it just so happens that a war can be fabricated. Just as, as it turns out, one might direct public opinion in such a way that a war would be wanted or even much desired. Create an artificial crisis, sacrifice a few dozen innocent lives to a political Moloch, increase people's sense of insecurity – and, everyone, in a flash, almost overnight, will want both a firm controlling hand, tough rhetoric, and, perhaps, even war. In short, something similar to being beyond good and evil.

In fact, the film in question predicted something even more dangerous and sinister than it was able to

articulate and address along the lines of what its characters said. In the modern world, manipulation by political advertisement is not only capable of creating people's needs and their criteria of happiness, but also of fabricating the heroes of our time and controlling the imagination of crowds through successful biographies and success stories. These abilities make one pause to think about "velvet" totalitarianism – controlled manipulation of consciousness and imagination disguised as liberal democracy, which allows the enslavement and control of even the critics.

Yet the question remains whether these forms and methods of manipulations, brainwashing and conditioning can be used by dictatorships, thuggish regimes, and rogue-states more successfully than by democracies with all their marketing techniques and paraphernalia. *Wag the Dog*, like other similar productions of cinematography, rests on the assumption of infinite manipulations as an offshoot or a side effect of mass de-

mocracy. In so doing, it missed the point that military regimes can have much more success in this than their democratic adversaries. In fact, this is high time for the West to wake up and see the world around us for what it is. We are witnessing the resurgence of real rather than velvet or imagined totalitarianism in Russia. Public opinion was made and remade there as many times as the regime wanted it to be, and hatred for Ukraine was manufactured in accordance with the need for an enemy. Ukrainian "fascists" become the appropriation of the term that best describes its user, for the more Russian propaganda speaks about Ukrainian fascism, the more resemblance Russia itself bears to Nazi Germany with all its hatred as a method to approach reality, Goebbels-type propaganda, and toxic lies.

Never before has George Orwell's *1984* and its vocabulary been as relevant as it is now, due to the sliding of Russia into barbarity and fascism with incredible speed and intensity. A series of interrogation scenes between O'Brien and Winston Smith with all allusions to the Communists and the Nazis as the naive predecessors of Oceania, who had an ideology and who allowed their victims to become martyrs, sound now as the best eye-opener since Putinism entered the phase of war and terror: the Newspeak, two minute hate, and the jackboot trampling on the human face for the sake of unlimited power have finally acquired the points of reference.

It is fascism with no real ideology, for a set of tools to boost the morale of its thugs and terrorists consists of

**FOR THE RUSSIAN
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the worn-out clichés and recycled slogans largely borrowed from Italian and Hungarian fascisms with some Serbian inserts from the times of Slobodan Milosevic, and with Nazi cherries on top. Irredundantism, the need to reunite the disunited nation, the world turned against the righteous people, the necessity to

defend history for the sake of its reenactment – these are all ghosts and specters of the 20th century fascism.

The tragedy of Russia is that its population falls prey to the Kremlin's spin doctors with their ability to create virtual and TV hyper-reality that had overshadowed reality for the masses. Ukraine for the Russian incarnations and successors of Goebbels, such as Vladislav Surkov, has become exactly what Albania was for Barry Levinson and his film – a piece of virtual reality fabricated for the sake of domestic policies. The funny thing is that the excessive and obsessive use of the term "fascism" appears as a form of cognitive dissonance of Russian fascism: be quick to apply your own name or title portraying your enemy – then you will appropriate the name and will absolve yourself from it.

It is no consolation anyway. And it doesn't work this way. Once a fascist, always a fascist – no matter what you say about your adversary. ■

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Caution and Restraint. To Be Continued...

Why it would be wrong for Kyiv to expect blanket solidarity from the West



In 1941 Winston Churchill, Britain's wartime Prime Minister, and Franklin Roosevelt, the American president, issued a key document, known as the Atlantic Charter, which defined the principles for the postwar world. Central to the document, which was the forerunner to the United Nations charter, were the principles that no state should be allowed to conquer the territory of another and that no international borders should be changed by force.

After the allied victory in 1945, these principles became the core values which America and its European allies pledged to uphold. They also lay at the heart of the NATO military alliance, set up in 1949 to stop any potential Soviet aggression against Western Europe.

Author:
Michael
Binyon,
UK

By and large, those principles have remained the essential pillars of peace and stability in Europe since 1945. Of course, borders have been changed – Yugoslavia has split into six different states, Czechoslovakia has divided into two nations, East and West Germany have reunited and former Soviet republics have all won independence. But most of these changes have been peaceful, or have happened with the consent of the populations. And NATO has successfully prevented any state unilaterally annexing any other – despite the crises provoked by Soviet interventions in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

That is the reason why the Russian annexation of Crimea has caused such a crisis in East-West relations, and why Russian support for separatists in Eastern

Ukraine is proving so worrying. Western public opinion is little bothered about Crimea rejoining Russia – people argue that the majority of the population is Russian, most Crimeans would vote to join Russia (despite the referendum being rigged), and Crimea was part of Russia in the past. But the principle of changing the borders by force has upset Western governments, as it is a clear violation of the Atlantic Charter and of the United Nations.

Ukraine says Russia has repeatedly violated the charter by sending men and vehicles across the border to help the separatists, and that the unauthorized crossing of the Russian aid convoy into Ukraine violated its sovereignty.

Western nations and NATO agree. Last week Britain summoned the Russian ambassador in

London to the Foreign Office to “clarify” reports of a military incursion. The Prime Minister, David Cameron, told President Poroshenko of his “grave concern” at the latest move. And Philip Hammond, Britain’s Foreign Secretary, said he was “very alarmed” by the incursion.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the NATO secretary-general, confirmed the incursion of military vehicles into Eastern Ukraine, despite Moscow’s denials, and spoke of a “continuous flow” of Russian weapons and fighters into eastern Ukraine.

But Western governments have nevertheless stopped short of calling these moves an “invasion”, and NATO members have made it clear that there will not be an armed response. Why? There are several reasons explaining Western restraint.

First, Ukraine is not a member of NATO, and there is therefore no obligation on other NATO members to come to its aid if it is attacked. Public opinion is strongly opposed to any direct conflict with Russia, which could quickly escalate. As Cameron said last month, Britain was not going to “launch a European war or send the fleet to the Black Sea” over the Ukraine crisis. He insisted that the West had to stand up to Russia, and said the lessons of the First World War showed that aggression had to be stopped. But Britain was going to use its economic, rather than military, power to deter Moscow. Similar arguments have been made in Berlin, Paris and Rome.

Secondly, it is obvious that any Western military response would swiftly escalate the crisis. Western governments are still hoping that a diplomatic solution may be found, even if this may take a while. Angela Merkel, the Germany Chancellor, is the key figure in attempts to negotiate a face-saving solution that would allow President Putin to abandon the separatists in Eastern Ukraine. Britain believes such moves are more important than an immediate military response – largely because previous crises in Europe, such as Bosnia and Kosovo, have led to long and costly military engagement.

Thirdly, although there is widespread Western support for the Kyiv government, this support is not unconditional. There is con-

cern at the scale of casualties that have resulted in the use of Grad and other heavy weapons against population centres in Donetsk and Luhansk. Britain has not condemned the Russian aid convoy, despite suspicions that it might be used for military advantage, as there is recognition that civilians in the east are suffering severely, irrespective of whether Kyiv or the rebel leaders are to blame.

It would be wrong for Kyiv therefore to expect blanket solidarity from the West. Commentators have repeatedly pointed out that the Kyiv government has been unable to curb corruption, has allowed some extreme right-wingers to play a political role and has still not undertaken the economic reforms essential if Ukraine is to recover from its present disastrous economic state. Such comments are not used to justify Russian propaganda or to undermine Ukraine’s accusations against its neighbour. But they do explain why there is little public enthusiasm for total solidarity with the Ukrainian cause.

At the same time, European governments are angered by accusations that they are being blackmailed by Russia because of their economic dependence on the Russian market. Britain insists that while Russia is a significant source of jobs, trade and investment, it accounts for a far smaller proportion of investment than many other countries. Just 2% of Russian foreign direct investment goes to Britain – compared to 37% invested in Cyprus, 16% in the Netherlands and 3% in America. The total value of Russian-owned assets in Britain is £27 billion, which is only 0.5% of total European-owned assets in the country.

Britain imports almost no gas from Russia (although it imports a lot of coal), and Russia imports only 3% of its goods from Britain, compared to 20% from China, 15% from Germany and 6% from France, Japan and America. Only 1% of British exports of financial, business and insurance services go to Russia – compared with 37% exported to the European Union.

In London itself, Russian involvement is higher: Russians buy 2% of the city’s prime property, and a number of very rich Russians, including Roman Abramovich, live in London. Russian flota-

tions on the London Stock Exchange account for a significant amount of money. And some big British energy firms, including Shell and BP, are still negotiating large contracts with Moscow.

At the start of the Ukraine crisis, Britain, France and Germany were reluctant to impose large-scale sanctions on the Russian economy. But the shooting down of the Malaysian airline changed attitudes. Britain insisted that even though it might suffer, it wanted more widespread sanctions in the aftermath of the air disaster as the West needed to show an effective response to Putin.

There is little difference in policy towards Ukraine between the coalition government and the opposition Labour Party. Labour has been strongly critical of Cameron’s policies in the Middle East and the crisis in Iraq and Syria, issues that currently preoccupy British public opinion much more than events in Ukraine. But Labour has not suggested it would take a softer line with Moscow, should it come to power in next year’s general election.

The fact is that the world finds it difficult to focus on two crises at the same time. The stunning victories of the Islamic State, the beheading of the American journal-

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THE PRINCIPLE OF CHANGING THE BORDERS BY FORCE HAS UPSET WESTERN GOVERNMENTS, AS IT IS A CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE ATLANTIC CHARTER AND OF THE UN

ist, the fears of radicalization of young British Muslims and the calls for renewed British and US intervention in Iraq are making the headlines, overshadowing the fighting in Ukraine. This, however, may make it easier for the West to play a quiet role in the search for a diplomatic solution, away from the glare of publicity. Everyone knows that it will cost a huge amount to rebuild the infrastructure in eastern Ukraine. Western governments are not willing to pay out large sums to achieve this. That is why they are urging all sides to halt the fighting and the destruction before the costs grow any higher. ■

Poor Russia



In 1991, protesters tried to knock down the statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the founder of Cheka whose bust now rests in Vladimir Putin's office. Today, it is scheduled for restoration (worth over EUR 500mn) and could be installed at Lubianska Square again

PHOTO AP

Author:
Philippe
de Lara,
France

Unpredictable tactics is the Kremlin's worst weapons. From day one of the Maidan, it has been unnerving Ukrainians and all those in the world who realized that Ukraine is the place where the future of Europe is being decided. Everyone is still going to sleep at night wondering what he will read in the news tomorrow. Ukrainian philosopher Kostiantyn Sihov claims rightly that Russia's tyranny of spontaneity should be resisted, while further thoughts should focus on the revival of Ukraine and the Donbas in the long run (this appeal is addressed not only to Ukrainians,

but their foreign friends as well). Yet, Russian unpredictability is not only tactical weapons in the "unconventional war" against its neighbour, but a proof of deep weakness undermining Russia since 1991.

The biggest country in the world has no idea what it is and what it wants to be. Putin certainly has limited intellect and confuses the real world with an image created by reports of his secret services. Yet, he has constructed his own interpretation of Russia's existential problem and encouraged his people to believe that he would solve it, turning into a blend of Russian

nationalism (Slavophile and Stalinist at the same time) and Eurasian imperialism, lamenting of a victim ("we have a bad life and nobody likes us") and imperialistic aggressiveness ("our missiles are a decade ahead of America's").

This ideological cocktail is a mix of opposites: tsarism and Bolshevism, Russian Orthodoxy and Slavic-Aryan neo-paganism, moral conservatism and obscure preaching of Aleksandr Dugin known as the father of Eurasianism; and peculiar modern fascism. The only consistent activity in this ideology, as ever in the totalitarian past, is the construc-

tion of an image of the West and its “fifth column” as a mortal foe blamed for all bad things that happen to Russia. This looks like a parody of the USSR, but a USSR-2 is not comparable to the original with its power. It is an outcast on the global international arena (described as rogue state in English), obsessed with an ambition to become powerful – a ridiculous yet scary one, as reminded to us by the blood of Ukrainians spilled in this non-linear war since February. How has Russia get there?

The answer is both simple, and complex. The simple answer is that Russia is sick as a result of no self-analysis of Communism. The Soviet regime was criminal. In 1991, it faced a defeat from its Western rival not only politically, but morally too, ruined by dissidents or, in other words, a European ideal of civilization. Germany, on its part, revived after 1945, and turned into a normal country exactly because it conducted its portion of self-analysis (even if it was imposed by its bitter defeat in the war). The Nuremberg Trial was the most important aspect of it, followed by German trials over Nazi crimes. Germany worked on history and memory of its entire society non-stop. There may be some facts, monuments or aspects on school programs that it missed, but Germany has generally rescued itself. Russia, by contrast, delved into amnesia, then into rehabilitation of the Soviet past which turned grotesque through guilty conscience and lack of culture. Russia failed to conduct its trial over Communism. Lost in this amnesia and rejection of reality, this country will remain miserable and dangerous. This will not be Russia, but a zombie of the Soviet Union.

In 1991, protesters tried to knock down the status of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the founder of Cheka whose bust now rests in Vladimir Putin's office, the government asked them to not ruin the 11-ton sculpture because it could damage the surrounding objects if it fell down. The protesters waited patiently for the construction crane to lift the monument and put it in a Moscow park. Today, it is scheduled for restoration (worth over EUR

500mn) and could be installed at Lubianska Square again. Restoration is too weak of a word to describe the sinking of Russia in the Soviet past. Times of dissidents are back now; Russian culture, freedom and grandeur have found shelter in the noble souls of few persecuted writers and artists, as well as historians and guards of memory who continue their work despite obstacles and intimidation from the government. Not all have yet become lackeys like Valeriy Gergiev (Soviet and Russian conductor, born into an Ossetian family. In 2012, he was registered as Vladimir Putin's trusted person in his presidential campaign – Ed.).

Why does Russia refuse to analyze its Soviet tragedy? To remain this way is not a choice in favour of homo sovieticus, nor is it fatality. It is fear. Fear of a country that does not know what it is and what it wants to be. Whatever the options of Russian identity (i.e. its limits, rights and mission), they are all wrong. Do the Russians want to be an ethnically uniform nation, or a multinational empire built as a prison of nations or as a temple of “friendship between nations” (the wording is different, the sense is identical)? Do they want to join the community of European nations, or do they prefer to create an alternative civilization, a response to the crisis of liberal democracy?

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, a chauvinist, a supporter of the Great Russia, and a genius writer, aptly described this anguish of mind in his last works where he promoted aggressive installment of the empire (including in Ukraine) and rejection of imperialistic ambitions that were always damaging to his country (adding “unnecessary external objects”), self-isolation to revive Russian culture by protecting it from the flow of international events and “building of a moral Russia” by turning its back both to the Soviet disaster and the Western decline, all at the same time. “To be or not to be – for our nation?”, will the word “Russian” still be in dictionaries a century from now? Like Thomas Mann in his pan-Germanic period, Solzhenitsyn has some prophecy in glorifying the “Union of East

Times of dissidents are back now; Russian culture, freedom and grandeur have found shelter in the noble souls of few persecuted writers and artists, as well as historians and guards of memory who continue their work despite obstacles and intimidation from the government

Slavic nations”: he sees in this the controversies of the Russian project, its ambivalence between a normal nation and a religious superpower (“the goal of the great empire and moral health of the nation are incompatible... we should strive not to expand, but to preserve our national spirit and the territories that are left for us”). Solzhenitsyn realized how dangerously naive the phony slogans of Russian kindness and public sentiments, and was still affected by them. Ukraine is certainly the blindest spot in his prophesy. Solzhenitsyn was blinded so it is sometimes hard to read his works. But we should overcome anger and disappointment and read them over and over again. This will allow us to finally understand the Russian sickness, to find a way to break the spell that keeps Russia bound in its aggressive delusions today, and to return it to the community of nations.

Putin's strength is not only his arrogance and cynicism of a spy. It is also the result of his

AFTER THE USSR COLLAPSED, RUSSIA DELVED INTO AMNESIA, THEN INTO REHABILITATION OF THE SOVIET PAST WHICH, FILTERED THROUGH GUILTY CONSCIENCE AND LACK OF CULTURE, TURNED GROTESQUE

ability to be the voice of the existential and geopolitical sickness of his nation, and to encourage the Russians with his powerful nonsense to hope that they will find some kind of a way out. Yet, this sickness reveals weakness in the heart of Russian aggressiveness, the weak spots on which we, Europeans, have to start a dialogue with the Russians who actually want de-Sovietization. Unlike Ukrainians, these are not the whole nation, but a few individuals – who hold the future. Political and economic sanctions are necessary; they will prove their effectiveness if they are wide- and far-reaching enough. Yet, we have to keep in mind another tool: trial over Soviet Communism. ■

These young men from Lenino village in Zhytomyr Oblast, are trying to show the world that it is Ukrainian. All three were on the Maidan, two were injured. They want a better life but not all of the country is ready for it just yet. The village could return to its old name, Stavky – ponds in Ukrainian. But the local community objects. Almost all locals live here with memories of the huge kolkhoz they had once worked in. Now, its ruins stand plundered by these locals. Meanwhile, the young dwellers of Lenino are painting the village welcoming sign blue and yellow, the colours of the Ukrainian flag

Text and photo by Viktor Marushchenko



Independence. Reboot

We can now state this: after 2014, society perceives Ukrainian Independence Day in a completely different light. This holiday, which was previously associated with backroom bureaucratic procedure, has now gained truly heroic substance. The most radical change in the understanding of this historic date is in the Donbas. And this pertains to both sides of the conflict, pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian.

Until recently, the dwellers of this region on the border with Russia largely viewed Independence Day as just another day-off. The signing by Leonid Kravchuk, the first president of the independent Ukraine, of a piece of paper known as the Belavezha Accords hardly evoked any patriotic feelings in Eastern Ukraine. The unheroic obtaining of independence in 1991 became the start of the largely unheroic existence of the country, which in subsequent years experienced difficult economic and political crises, treason and finally war. The economic collapse experienced by the Donbas in the 1990s formed a skeptical and openly hostile attitude of the majority of the local population towards independence itself.

Unlike other parts of Ukraine, the Donbas had no history of battle for Ukrainian statehood until 2014 on its territory. This, among other things, allowed separatists to talk about the distinct place of the region. Until present days, Donbas has never been a centre of national resistance, unlike Cherkasy Oblast, Zaporizhia, Kyiv, Halychyna, Volyn or Transcarpathia, so it did not appreciate the sovereignty of the country that it was part of, as its own accomplishment. It was only the bloody conflict that began this spring which made the region a field of battle with an aggressor and turned into a real war for independence.

New heroes of Ukrainian resistance have emerged there, as have new figures in the chronicles

of state-building. The names of Donbas residents had been sparse in Ukraine's statehood history until today, but they are there now, never to be removed. Today, these people are fighting for freedom for their land in the battle with Russian mercenaries. If they are victorious, their children and grandchildren will no longer see the Donbas as a Russified post-Soviet territory, but as the land that their fathers and grandfathers shed their blood for. Combat is sacralising this region. Previously, the question "Do we actually need that Donbas?" often resonated in Ukraine. Now, after so many sacrifices, saying something like this is blasphemy as regards those who have died.

The towns and cities that had been occupied and experienced military action, and were liber-

ated towns and cities liberated from terrorists and the underworld. For the patriotically-minded community there, it has become a long-awaited celebration of victory in a tough battle. And for Ukraine's enemies – not a "historic misunderstanding", but a logical step in Ukraine's national liberation strife.

People in the liberated eastern cities – Kramatorsk, Sloviansk and Severodonetsk – wear Ukrainian symbols and are getting used to peaceful life once more, something they were not used to during the weeks of siege and constant shooting.

Only refugees, continuously arriving in liberated cities, saving themselves from shooting and predatory tyranny, are a reminder that the war is going on nearby; that no-one knows when it will end. Perhaps now, in the 24th year of independence, the residents of the Donbas will learn to appreciate peaceful life.

And they will understand how lucky they were then, in 1991, when we became an independent state without having to go to war, something that Dubrovnik and Vukovar were not lucky enough to experience. Our bloody Milosevic was twenty years too late, but he did finally appear to teach us to fight and value freedom.

"We want peace. Let everything remain as it is, let's live in Ukraine, if only the others don't return and start shooting again," the residents of Sloviansk told me, when I asked about their position on what had happened. Terrorist Strelkov and his group, which captured and held the entire city hostage, helped people to appreciate the value of life in an independent democratic country, where human rights are worthwhile.

Ruined homes in the neighbourhoods of Ukrainian towns and cities and the bombed village of Semenivka will become monuments to this war for independence, in which the Donbas is our main field of battle. ■



UNLIKE OTHER PARTS OF UKRAINE, THE DONBAS HAD NO HISTORY OF BATTLE FOR UKRAINIAN STATEHOOD UNTIL 2014 ON ITS TERRITORY. THE BLOODY CONFLICT THAT BEGAN THIS SPRING TURNED INTO A REAL WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

ated by the Ukrainian army, have a completely different status. Their residents experienced war first-hand. The predatory tyranny, which emerged on the captured territories, quickly sobered those who naively expected that "to separate and no longer feed Halychyna" would be a great step to happiness and prosperity. The orators who promised them a happy life and sowed hatred against their fellow citizens, turned out to be your average rogues, because they threw themselves at robbing and taking everything that came across their path to Russia.

Independence Day finally gained real substance in the

"Is There Any Other Way?"

The Ukrainian Week speaks to proactive young Ukrainians – soldiers, volunteers and activists – to find out what they think of as their major accomplishment, of their peers in politics, and of leaving Ukraine

Interviewed by
**Valeria
Burlakova**



Taras Matviyiv, 25: "We are dreamers"

Activist, coordinator of the Search Initiative of Maidan that works with the families of people who disappeared during the revolution of dignity

Accomplishments

This is our victory, even if incomplete. We have been searching for those who disappeared on the Maidan for over six months now. We never thought it would last this long. We were never trained to do this kind of activity. And there are just few of us. But we have results. These are someone's saved lives. The biggest reward is the gratitude of friends and families of the people we found.

We must be dreamers, like most Maidaners. But that's what keeps us going.

Young politicians

I can't say anything specific about the generation overall. I'm sure that young people who have gone through the hell of the Maidan have strong immunity to old viruses, and a different, realistic vision of this world. But we have yet to meet the expectations that we, in the first place, have for ourselves.

Emigration

I've had many chances to leave Ukraine. I was invited to study abroad at university. I also have friends abroad... My upbringing has kept me where I am. My relatives, my grand-grandparents went through the war on both sides – the Soviet one, and the insurgent one. I have no moral right to leave Ukraine. And, honestly, I never thought that I could leave Ukraine and never come back.



Oleksandr Rudomanov, 21: "It's more exciting to live here"

Journalist, volunteer

Accomplishments

We've just sent ten

power generators to the frontline. We got everything the 95th Airmobile Brigade needs. Even binoculars! Now, we have a storehouse at 11A, Kyoto Street, in Kyiv where we collect aid for our soldiers. We accept everything from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays, send stuff to the anti-terrorist operation area, and help artillery and tank units.

Young politicians

If they are from Svoboda or Democratic Alliance, I may believe that they're ok. Young politicians from Batkivshchyna or the Party of Regions are no different from the others, I believe. It's all done for money there.

Emigration

I once thought of it, I was very depressed. But it's more exciting to live here! That's why I didn't leave. You always have someone to struggle against, be it criminalized police or corrupt officials.

Serhiy Boyko, 22: "I took part in the Ukrainian revolution"

Diplomacy student, was injured on the Maidan twice; preparing to leave for Eastern Ukraine in the Sich unit

Accomplishments

I haven't invented a vaccine from all diseases or a recipe to create a perfect man. But I can state proudly and confidently: I took part in the Ukrainian national liberation revolution where the nation of fighters and creators was born, not one of slaves and fools.

Young politicians

Over half of today's politicians in Ukraine, from deputies in local councils to the president's closest allies, are young or joined politics at a young age. That never stopped them from robbing and killing average Ukrainians. Oles Dovhyi, one of the youngest politicians (he was in the team of Leonid Chernovetsky, the notorious ex-mayor of Kyiv – Ed.), was one of the most corrupt officials involved in huge embezzlement schemes. It doesn't matter how young or old one is. What matters is the principles the person has. Everyone decides for him or herself how to live at any age. It's up to everyone individually to care only about his personal interests and steal everything, or to do good things, serve the people and ideals.

Emigration

I had this idea when I was in high school. I thought that I was living in a country ruled by the anti-people regime that lies to everyone and robs everyone, from people with small salaries to big companies. In a country where the cops were raping, torturing and murdering people in police stations. In the "Ukrainian" country where the Ukrainian language was seen as an object of mockery, unnecessary, even hostile to some. At the same time, I thought that we had a slave nation that either intentionally turned a blind eye to all these atrocities or was ready to tolerate all this. I was so disgusted that I wanted to just quit all this and go someplace else, to a better country if there is one. Then, I realized that this is my land where I was born and raised just like my parents and grandparents. This is my home. Escaping from its problems would be my personal weakness and loss. This would make me embarrassed before my ancestors, and my descendants, and before God, and before myself. We have to struggle. We shouldn't flee ourselves, but make the anti-Ukrainian scum flee.





Anastasiya Cherevko, 33: "When your husband is injured, you don't run around looking for another one. It's the same with your country..."

Entrepreneur, founder of the All-Ukrainian Volunteer Movement organization

Accomplishments

Volunteering is my civil position. It's my personal responsibility for everything that happens around me, in the place where I live. I began my independent life in 2000, I had a successful career in banking and wasn't really interested in our politics. Now I realize that we have ended up in such dreadful position exactly because so many educated, smart and responsible people focus on their own business or career and don't take any efforts to actually influence processes in the state. There is one good phrase for it: "Something develops properly only if you work on it hard enough." This is true not only for business owners or parents, but for every citizen as well. I've been running my own business for the past five years, creating assets out of human capital, including in the area of financial education and business development. At tough times, I have to combine my professional life and my activity as a citizen. As volunteers, we now focus a lot on helping those involved in the anti-terrorist operation and IDPs. We are also working on three new projects: the School of Patriots to educate aware citizens and new political leaders; Open Ukraine! to develop domestic tourism in Ukraine oriented at boosting its economic development; and the All-Ukrainian Congress of Civil Organizations to unite initiatives and create a single civil platform for joint building of a self-governed state.

Young politicians

I talk to many young people who are 10-15 years younger than me. I also watch my older son. He's 14. I can learn a lot from them. The most important thing is that they are closer to the needs and the consciousness of the modern time. I believe that young executives (I myself became one at 23 back in 2003), provided that they are responsible, are a good solution for Ukraine. Fortunately, responsibility is something that can be revealed very quickly. Does the person come to meetings on time? Does he stick to the promise? Does he send questions by an agreed deadline? It is extremely important for us, as citizens, to carefully consider such details in politicians, and to exercise our right to fire an irresponsible employee in politics. When people speak of younger versus older officials, they mention experience as an important factor. I see it differently: it's better to have none, than to try and change old experience. We had an EBRD project in the banking sector that was very different from conventional banking. It had one rule: don't hire experienced employees; we preferred to hire graduates, or a waiter, and train them. Old ways of thinking, just like old habits, are extremely difficult to change. Most people need great shocks to actually change.

Emigration

I lived in Finland for over six months in 2008 where my father has lived for quite a while now. My sister lives in Prague. I often think why I'm not moving somewhere, even though I really like to travel to these countries. Now I think I know why. Ukraine needs our care, our help. It will survive, heal itself and will be happy! And it's great to live in a happy country! I see that Ukraine is now very modern, in terms of its internal potential: my compatriots are reaching ahead, they have a huge desire to develop and grow. I don't feel that in Europeans. That's why we have a great opportunity to catch up with them, provided that we still accomplish many things.



Mykola Smirnov, 30: "I just went there"

Activist, charged for breaking the fence around an illegal construction site by the Yanukovich regime; member of the Kyiv Rus battalion, now getting treatment at the military hospital

Accomplishments

Why did I volunteer to go to the frontline? I don't know... I just decided to protect and defend my land. That's what the previous generations of Ukrainians did. Like the UPA fighters. Indeed, defending Fatherland and family is probably the key step in everyone's life. Is there any other way?

Young politicians

I'm sure that politics is a dirty system that crushes and changes people to fit it. All people, regardless of their convictions and generations. It breaks people sooner or later, in a month, six months, a year. Whoever gets into that system will most likely turn into a corrupt scoundrel he used to criticize before politics.

Emigration

Our country is beautiful. I would like to travel more here, to see all towns and cities, every corner. Leave Ukraine? No, never.

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Volodymyr Vasylenko:

"Our independence was not pure luck, it was inevitable"

Interviewed by
Bohdan Butkevych

Volodymyr Vasylenko was a proactive member of historic events that led to the revival of Ukrainian state independence. One of the most respected Ukrainian international lawyers, a diplomat, Professor at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and Ambassador Plenipotentiary from Ukraine in the past, he was one of the people behind the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine. *The Ukrainian Week* speaks to Mr. Vasylenko shortly before the Independence Day.

U.W.: The patriotic community in Ukraine tends to believe that Ukrainians had done nothing for their independence back in 1991, did not struggle for it and got it for free.

In fact, our independent statehood did not come to us out of the blue: Ukrainians had spent centuries before fighting for it desperately, sacrificing millions of lives for it. Nobody resisted Russia as much as we did. Our independence is not pure luck; it was inevitable. Voltaire wrote back in the 18th century that Ukraine always longed for freedom. Ever since Bohdan Khmelnytskyi was the Cossack Hetman, Ukrainians would start a new round of struggle for their freedom every 10-15 years. The new stage began in the 20th century when Ukraine's national liberation struggle evolved into the statehood of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR), Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR), and Carpathian Ukraine. The locals would defend the independence of these states with weapons in their hands. Once Ukraine found itself in the USSR, it entered the darkest period in its history. It witnessed systemic repressions that peaked in the Holodomor, a genocide. Ukrainians



PHOTO: ANDRIY LOMAKIN

did not give up; their resentment evolved into OUN, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, and UPA, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Their struggle went under the slogan "Freedom to the man! Freedom to the peoples!" all the way until the 1960s. Then it ended, and the resistance seemed to be over. But the dissident movement of the Sixtiers emerged, focusing primarily on the preservation of Ukrainian identity.

After all, the more the communist system degraded (in fact, it had been self-ruinous from day one of its existence), the more favourable the environment got for a new stage of Ukrainian national liberation movement which gradually grew nation-wide and became fatal for the Soviet Union. The rallies demanding abolition of the commu-

nist regime and revival of Ukrainian independence in the late 1980s involved millions across Ukraine. The most proactive campaigners were members of *Narodnyi Rukh* (the People's Movement of Ukraine). When someone says that our independence was merely an outcome of the August 1991 putsch, this person picks one event out of its general historic context which had actually triggered it. The cause of that putsch was in that Ukraine refused point blank to sign the new Union treaty. Without it, it was impossible to preserve the Soviet Union. This was why the most reactionary part of the Kremlin establishment organized the coup; they were trying to preserve the Soviet Union by force. But it was too late.

By the way, it is important to realize one thing: the creation of

the USSR in 1922 as a union of republics was largely a concession to Ukrainians who were reluctant to accept the Bolshevik occupation and continued their desperate struggle against it. This forced Vladimir Lenin to agree to Ukraine joining the USSR as a sovereign republic with the right to exit it, and not as part of the “united and undivided Russia” as proposed by Joseph Stalin.

Obviously, this right to exit was only formal. But the mere fact of having such provisions in the Soviet Constitution was a huge benefit to the liberation movement and played into its hands greatly. As soon as this movement found the right moment, it used this provision as the ground for its independence struggle.

U.W.: Still, there is a lingering impression that, in addition to all geopolitical and economic aspects, Ukraine is something of a personal phobia for Russia.

Indeed, we are a “pain in the neck” for Russian chauvinists, hence such panicky reaction to any of Ukraine’s attempts to “leave”. Muscovy has been obsessed about Kyiv ever since it began to move towards the establishment of the Russian Empire. This is because Ukrainian historic and cultural heritage is the foundation for Russia’s state building (see p. 46). You can replace the roof, the windows or the doors in a building, but you can’t replace the foundation because it will change the building altogether and make it a totally different one. Remember Putin’s slogan: “The collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century.” It was that for Russia, and the imperialist-minded chauvinist that Vladimir Putin is. From the Ukrainian perspective, the collapse of the Soviet Union was the triumph of our national liberation movement. Just like the Battle of Poltava was a triumph for Russia and a tragedy for Ukraine.

U.W.: Some claim that the communist Ukrainian nomenclature had a crucial role in Ukraine’s independence when it played its tricks in fear of Boris Yeltsin who was radically against Communists.

That nomenclature, including the sovereign communist part of it, was forced to agree to independence under the pressure of the

people. I think Ukrainians would have torn them into pieces if they had not voted for independence. Just recall the huge crowd in front of the Verkhovna Rada on August 24, 1991. Obviously, the Communists were also trying to secure themselves from Boris Yeltsin who banned the Communist Party. But that was not nearly the key incentive.

The Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine had been passed on July 16, 1990. Between that date and August 24, 1991, when the Act of Independence was adopted, the then parliament, the Communists included, passed dozens of acts that formed the legal carcass of the new Ukrainian State. Interestingly, these acts included some very important ones that ruled almost all proceeds from taxes to stay in Ukraine. Thus, in the last year of the USSR, Ukraine virtually stopped funding all union structures, thus contributing greatly to its collapse. So, there were reasonable people among the Communists.

Another crucial moment was their attitude to the signing of the new Union treaty. Mikhail Gorbachev viewed it as a tool to preserve the USSR. What Moscow offered ran counter to the provisions of the Declaration of State Sovereignty, so the then Ukrainian leadership rejected the idea. They realized very well that the USSR was

BIO

Volodymyr Vasylenko is an expert in international law, a statesman and academic. Born in 1937 in Kyiv, he graduated from the Law Department of the Kyiv Shevchenko University in 1959, and earned his L.D. in International Law in 1964. In 1972-1992, he worked as legal advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was delegate to the founding meeting of the People’s Movement of Ukraine (Narodnyi Rukh Ukrayiny), and member of the assembly committee and the First Convention of the Great NRU Council. In spring 1990, he prepared the first draft Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine, then participated in the drafting of the final act as consultant to the Verkhovna Rada. In 1992-1995, he served as Ukraine’s Ambassador to Benelux and representative to the EU and envoy to NATO. In 1998-2002, he was Ambassador to Great Britain and Ireland. Mr. Vasylenko represented Ukraine at the UN General Assembly many times. In 2001, the UN General Assembly elected him member of the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia where he worked as a judge until January 2005. In 2006-2010, Ms. Vasylenko represented Ukraine at the UN Human Rights Council. In 2010, he was Ukraine’s envoy to the International Court of Justice in the Romania versus Ukraine case. He is currently member of the People’s Committee to Protect Ukraine, a merited lawyer of Ukraine, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine, Doctor of Law, and professor.

falling apart, and many had realized long before the putsch that it was time to flee that communal apartment. In 1991, the interests of the Ukrainian national movement and part of the Communists briefly coincided. These Communists did not include Oleksandr Moroz, Petro Symonenko, Tkachenko, Kriuchkov and others, the most reactionary party members who openly claimed they could not think of Ukraine beyond the USSR. I must admit the role of Leonid Kravchuk

FROM THE UKRAINIAN PERSPECTIVE, THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION WAS THE TRIUMPH OF OUR NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT

(the first president of the independent Ukraine – Ed.) who clearly sensed that it was better to leave the USSR in advance, peacefully and quietly, than wait until it would take blood to exit. He demonstrated colossal skillfulness in this. When I asked him back then, why the hell he wanted to participate in the talks on the new Union treaty, he answered: “We must win some time and prepare a serious foundation for our independence.” He was great at walking the fine line, hiding behind obscure statements. Many criticize him today for his overly cautious reaction to the putsch in the Kremlin, and they are right to some extent. However, he should be given credit for his conduct when General Varennikov arrived at Kyiv demanding him to impose the state of emergency in Ukraine. The then First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, Stanislav Hurenko, called Leonid Kravchuk and demanded him to come to the Communist Party Central Committee office for the meeting. Kravchuk replied that Varennikov should come to the Parliament if he wanted to meet with the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada (Leonid Kravchuk was in that position at the moment – Ed.). When the meeting eventually took place at the Verkhovna Rada, Kravchuk made it clear that he would not support any actions of the putschists and said that there was no reason to introduce the state of emergency in Ukraine since the Ukrainian government was acting

perfectly in line with the Constitution. The General left at that.

Thus, it was Kravchuk's consistent implementation of the Sovereignty Declaration supported by the nation that served as the key to the revival of Ukraine's independence.

U.W.: Unfortunately, the party nomenclature and its oligarchic descendants were never removed from power in the past 23 years. Moreover, Ukraine's government elite is now a mix of "the 1980s Komsomol" and people who were shaped by the bandit-tormented 1990s. Why did national democrats fail to remove them from power?

Communist structures in Ukraine were established with a huge endurance capacity because the Ukrainian SSR was the key element of the entire USSR, a diamond in the crown of the empire. As a result, it is extremely difficult to struggle against the nomenclature, especially given the massive destruction of the Ukrainian elite throughout the 20th century. That is what makes Ukraine different from all European post-Communist states. There is a widespread speculation here that blames all of Ukraine's problems on its independence: it is said to have left Communists in power that were later replaced by oligarchs.

In fact, this system dates back to the time of Leonid Brezhnev when part of the Communist nomenclature got aligned with criminals and law enforcement authorities. This resulted in the shadow economy, shaped by the nomenclature and criminals, which was legalized when Ukraine gained independence. Having stolen all party money first, then all public money, these wild beasts rushed to rob the country: that was the only thing they knew. Meanwhile, national democrats failed to do their best. Instead of choosing a tougher yet more constructive policy, they hopped into internal squabbles and took no efforts to somehow engage the opponents, at least the reasonable ones I mentioned above. They even failed to nominate a single candidate in the first presidential election although I still believe that Kravchuk would have won it anyway. He was supported by both pro-Communist people, and moderate national democrats because he had never



Once elected President, Leonid Kravchuk offered his runner-up Viacheslav Chornovil to become prime-minister with the right to appoint his Cabinet. Chornovil rejected the offer

previously resisted the People's Movement openly, nor had he made any Ukrainophobic statements before.

As an eye-witness, I can tell you what you won't hear often. After he was chosen the president, Kravchuk offered Viacheslav Chornovil (one of the most important members and the first leaders of the People's Movement – **Ed.**) to become prime-minister and the right to appoint his Cabinet. Chornovil rejected that because he did not want to have anything to do with a "Communist". This was a totally irresponsible move that dealt a huge blow to Ukraine's attempts to build a democratic country. I can comprehend that many years in prison (a dissident, he was imprisoned and exiled by soviet authorities several times for three to six years each – **Ed.**) had urged him to not accept anything linked to Communism, but he was a statesman, a candidate for presidency, a member of parliament. Couldn't he have tamed his emotions and made state interests a No1 priority?

The democrats made another tragic mistake. Leonid Kravchuk suggested that Ukraine held early parliamentary election as his initiative. It would have definitely left most Communists out of the Ukrainian parliament. Yet, the democrats did not want to take the pain: they thought the Communists would do whatever they wanted them to. Thus, another chance for de-Communisation and lustration was

wasted. A parliament with Communists would not even have considered anything close to lustration. Eventually, all this led Leonid Kuchma, a creature of Russia whose campaign the Kremlin openly funded and supported by all means, to power. According to General Oleksandr Skipalsky, Chief of Military Intelligence at that point, Kuchma's ascend to power in 1994 was a special operation of Moscow which was not happy even with the moderate Leonid Kravchuk as Ukraine's president. The Kremlin arranged a trade war through a huge increase in fuel prices, bribed the elites and made agreements with the dissenters. I remember how upset and confused Leonid Kravchuk was in the summer of 1994 when he came to Brussels to sign the EU Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Ukraine.

Kuchma can be considered the father of today's oligarchic system in Ukraine. He knew the criminal record of Viktor Yanukovych, and yet he appointed him the Governor of Donetsk Oblast so that Yanukovych provided him with support of the region in the 1999 presidential election. In exchange for this favour, Yanukovych was appointed prime-minister, so the door to top echelons in government opened for him. Kuchma essentially created the Yanukovych regime that eventually participated in the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Unfortunately, Leonid Kuchma, Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Ya-

nukovych are the ones to blame for the fact that the way to power had been blocked for actual patriots of Ukraine all these years. As a result, the real elite have found themselves on the sidelines.

Many say that Leonid Kuchma was a statesman. This is partly true as he actually did a lot to develop the administrative hierarchy. However, he was not building Ukraine, but a firm hierarchy of power for himself. When he announced later that he had not become president to serve as Moscow's vassal and even made an attempt to turn to the West during his second term in office, did not change the situation dramatically. Instead, it triggered the special operation of the Russian FSB with the Gongadze tapes (Kuchmagate scandal – **Ed.**), the one targeting Kuchma personally and Ukraine in general. Russia thus tried to keep Ukraine in its orbit and block its return to Europe.

As to Viktor Yushchenko, he was just repainting the façade of the system he had inherited in Ukrainian colours. He left the task of strengthening the foundation of Ukrainian statehood absolutely unattended. Public and objective assessment of Ukraine's top officials and condemnation of their actions that damage the country are a guarantee of moral healing of society and strengthening of the state.

U.W.: All elites, at their early stages, are made of the most aggressive, entrepreneurial and relentless people. Ukraine is no exception. However, it is still hard to see any signs that the local elites are transforming from their early stages to the real state elite, or that any rotation is likely. What should Ukrainian society do to enhance the process? What if the actual patriots return from the front-line in Eastern Ukraine and bring order with an armed hand?

The government elite in today's Ukraine is still a product of the Soviet system. An antipode to it is the patriotic national elite brought up based on democratic values. The government elite is just part of the national elite, the latter containing many well-prepared and patriotic people. Today's clan-based approach to top appointments in the government should be replaced by the approach based on the involvement and proactive cooperation of all elements of the national elite

who should meet five criteria: professionalism, patriotism, prudence, ability to work hard, and the will to work hard. Ukrainian elites have been rotating in a natural way overall. The government elite, by contrast, has been shaped on a clan basis, involving primarily business companions, family, friends and others who see the state as their personal wallet. Therefore, Ukraine needs rotation of elites, a natural one would be the best even if it takes some time.

However, it is now urgent to amend the election legislation to introduce proportional system with open lists of candidates. It will allow every voter in his or her constituency to choose a specific candidate rather than for the party list which oligarch-financed functionaries compile as they see fit. This approach (it is used in the UK, for instance) would allow Ukrainians to get new people in the next parliament and to launch the cleaning of all government structures.

It would certainly be desirable to campaign in peaceful circumstances, at least in order to allow patriots who are now fighting in Eastern Ukraine to fully participate in the election process. However, even if the anti-terrorist operation does not end soon, the general election should still take place. As the British experience shows, it only takes time to transform yesterday's pirates or robbers into respectable members of society with state-oriented mindset. But Ukraine cannot afford to wait a few centuries. Therefore, quick and well-thought decisions are necessary. Lustration based on international experience and adjusted to local circumstances could help. Meanwhile, civil servants should be paid better to prevent corruption, including political one. Criminal liability for the servants who commit crimes should be increased, too. Being in civil service while committing a crime is an aggravating circumstance in case of incomppliance.

U.W.: What can we do to overcome the profound mistrust for the state that has been around for very long and has deepened after the Maidan?

It is typical in Ukraine to blame any problems on the state, to say that it's the bad guy. In reality, though, it is not the state as such but

the quality of its elites in power that is the problem. State institutions in Ukraine are similar to those in any other state: the issue is the quality of their work. Therefore, criticism should focus on specific representatives of the government who use the state apparatus for their personal enrichment, not the state as a whole. This total criticism of the state is part of the Kremlin's manipulation technique. We are still facing a massive propaganda war that aims at spreading mistrust for Ukraine as an independent state. This propaganda is utilizing slave mentality and nostalgia for soviet life of those who are willing to trade liberties for a piece of sausage. This very particular creature of the Russian mindset that evolved in the Soviet era is unfortunately widespread in today's Ukraine, primarily its most problematic regions.

An average person with such mindset is scared and has one stereotype: he or she blames everything on the Ukrainian state because it has become independent from the Moscow master. This stereotype is very dangerous and misleading, its real aim being to hammer into the heads of Ukrainians a thought that they do not need any

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TODAY'S SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT BEGAN UNDER BREZHNEV WHEN PART OF THE COMMUNIST NOMENCLATURE ALIGNED ITSELF WITH CRIMINALS AND LAW ENFORCERS

sovereignty or independence.

In fact, most of our problems stem from the lack of our own independent state for many years, hence the lack of an opportunity to develop properly in line with our national interests and needs. Statehood is a natural state of any nation. Without it, it is doomed to disappear. We must realize that Russia has constantly been waging a humanitarian aggression against us. Now, it has transformed into a military one. Ukraine will survive as a normal state if it manages to resist this aggression properly. To do this, all of Ukraine's society and government structures have to consolidate efforts. ■

Stanislav Kulchytsky:

"Psychological dependence on Russia turns Ukrainians into Little Russians"



PHOTO: ANDRIY LOMAKIN

Interviewed
by
Roman
Malko

Historian Stanislav Kulchytsky speaks to The Ukrainian Week about why the Kremlin needs Ukraine, what threat the annexation of Crimea poses for Russia, what the essence of the problem in Ukrainian-Russian relations is, and how the political Ukrainian nation is emerging

U.W.: It has been 23 years since the collapse of the USSR. Every newly-created state has developed in its own way. Why have the paths taken by them been so different that they have led to the Ukrainian-Russian war?

– I will restrict myself to three former Soviet republics, which cover almost the whole territory of

Eastern Europe: Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. The great Ukrainian thinker, Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, as well as, independently from him, renowned English historian Arnold Joseph Toynbee, stressed that Ukraine is located on a fault of civilizations. One of Lysiak-Rudnytsky's books is actually titled *Ukraine Between East and West*. The fault has impacted the nature of developments in our country. Ukrainian regions failed to come to a consensus about geopolitical choices. On the eve of the Euro-Maidan, 67% of the population in the west and centre of Ukraine voted in favour of integration with the European Union, while 68% of citizens in Southern and Eastern Ukraine expressed the desire to become a member of the Customs Union. Five rounds of voting in the presidential elections of 2004 and 2010 politicized this sociological pattern. Presidential candidates declared the vector they were striving for, while the electorate voted predictably: the west and centre largely voted for Viktor Yushchenko (and for Yulia Tymoshenko in 2010), and the east and south – largely for Viktor Yanukovich.

The existence of enterprises with workforces numbering many thousands and specific flow of privatisation have led to the emergence of an economic oligarchy in Ukraine. Ukraine became an oligarchic but democratic country. In contrast to political oligarchs, who during the Soviet era were members of the Soviet Union Communist Party Central Committee, today's economic oligarchs are not a consolidated centre of power, so they do not pose a significant threat to democracy. Their efforts are directed towards competitive struggle - note on-going duel between Dmytro Firtash and Ihor Kolomoyskyi in the mass media. However, oligarchs are economically dangerous, because they do not allow real reform.

At the opposite end, Belarus is undergoing post-Communist transformations. Soviet order has been preserved to the maximum extent, which poses the threat in the future of the same uncontrollable chaos that other countries experienced in the “evil 1990s”. But I like Alexander Lukashenko. He does not exploit the Soviet legacy to the same extent as the presidents of Ukraine or Russia who throw crumbles to the people and the budget, but leave most for themselves and their allies. In other words, Lukashenko’s dictatorship makes social sense. The state must limit those, who want to become rich at the expense of their neighbours, who are paupers.

For years now, we have not wanted to look at ourselves in the mirror. We must now acknowledge that Soviet society in the third generation was not immune to life in a market economy. Recall the anxiety about MMM, a notorious Ponzi scheme in Russia and Ukraine. Former Soviets are used to looking at the state as a provider. We often use the term “paternalism”, unaware of the fact that Communist leaders had revived the Ancient Roman relations of patron and client for society as a whole.

Imperial structures have survived in Russia. Take the “brotherhood” of former KGB employees. Their consolidation accelerated in the late 1990s. A clear hierarchy of power has been recreated in the 15 years of Putin’s rule. When new masters of life appeared – the oligarchs, this powerful clan of officials quickly expropriated them or forced them into subversion. In contrast to the Soviet regime, the current Russian one is devoid of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the resulting economic dictatorship. In other words, society has the right to private ownership. Vladimir Putin’s political dictatorship is based on an economy that is almost completely independent of business activity. The extraction of raw materials with its subsequent sale abroad can hardly be considered business activity. The gas rent in US dollars is used to buy nearly everything, from Mistral ships to toothpicks. Russia has vast natural resources, which allows Putin’s regime to rely on paternalism and controlled mass media, rather than on coercion. Since the Russian economy is integrated with the Eu-

ropean economy, the regime permits the existence of individual islands of liberal thought. As a rule, he does not make short work of them on his own, but by shaping public opinion respectively.

U.W.: What makes Ukraine so attractive to high-placed officials in the Kremlin?

The Russian president is trying to restore the Soviet Union, the collapse of which he referred to as the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century, in a different form. Transnistria, Georgia, Ukraine, where next? Ukraine was always at the top of the Kremlin’s plans. The Bolsheviks agreed to view the population of Eastern Europe as three separate, but at the same time, related nations. However, today’s Russian chauvinists are in solidarity with pre-revolutionary ones and deny Ukrainians the right to independent existence. They lay claim to everything: territory, the population and history.

You have to understand that the danger to the existence of Ukrainians as a separate nation is not simply rooted in the ever-present aggressive intentions of Russian leaders. In the case of Ukraine, this intent is intensified and encouraged by the objective to satisfy the desire of a significant share of Russian citizens, not to be torn away both physically and mentally from the Ukrainian people. I shall explain this concept with an example.

In March 1917, there was a manifestation of many thousands of local Ukrainians in St. Petersburg to commemorate the Shevchenko anniversary, and for the first time, Russians saw the “Ukrainian issue” materialized. The cadet newspaper Rech (Speech) responded to this event with an editorial, which described the persecution of Ukrainians under Tsarist rule. The list of persecutions ended with the following sentence: “Bureaucratic ignoramuses, in their unofficial acts, were able to ridicule the Ukrainian language, which has its own history and literature – one of the most spiritual creations of a Slavic tribe that is closest to us by blood and lineage, inseparably connected to us through historic ties.” The compassion towards Ukrainians was completely sincere. But just one word – “inseparably” – in the quoted sentence, convincingly showed the

subconscious attitude of the liberal Russian intelligentsia towards the “Ukrainian issue”. During the Russian Revolution, cadets proved themselves to be the most consistent defenders of the “one and indivisible” Russia.

Where does the essence of the issue of Ukrainian-Russian relations lie, from the historic perspective? Once upon a time, there was an empire in Eastern Europe, with its centre in Kyiv, but it collapsed,



WHILE BEING A TRAGEDY, THE WAR WITH RUSSIA IS A POWERFUL INCENTIVE FOR UKRAINIANS TO UNITE

and the development of its peoples took different paths. The mission of gathering the lands of this medieval empire was then undertaken by a different centre from within its former borders. A new empire formed over the course of several centuries – from Alaska to the River Vistula. Its representatives claimed that it was connected to the original one by the ancient ruling Rurik dynasty. They built a grandiose monument commemorating the “millennium of Russia” in Novgorod in 1882 and declare that Ukrainians and Belarusians were the ethnographic offshoots of a single Ancient Rus people – the Russian one. The historic myth about this people still continues, even in independent Ukraine, through the efforts of individual academicians. It is one of the foundations of the Russian World ideology.

U.W.: In other words, both good and bad relations with Russia are equally dangerous for Ukraine. Given the length of our border with Russia, is it possible to avoid the “inseparability” in which our northern neighbor strongly believes at all?

It’s not hopeless. There are three dimensions to relations between countries: national, socio-political and economic. The economic dimension regulates the market, the socio-political one defines self-confidence of the people, plus international law, while the national dimension is determined by various phobias or branches. It so happens that in our relations with Russia, the most important of these is the very dangerous national dimension. Look at the verbal battles between »

For 23 years now, we have avoided looking in the mirror. We must acknowledge that the third generation of the Soviet society was not immune to a life in market economy.

Just recall the massive anxiety about MMM, a notorious Ponzi scheme. Ex-Soviet people were used to seeing the state as a provider. We often mention the term “paternalism” but fail to realize that Communist leaders had revived the Ancient Roman pattern of patron and client relations on the nationwide scale in the Soviet Union

“katsapy” and “khokhly” (derogatory terms for Russians and Ukrainians respectively) in internet commentaries... Putin has revived Hitler’s practice of demonstrative protection of his citizens in neighbouring countries – in the name of “sharing one blood”. I still remember those happy Volksdeutsche children in German and Romanian-occupied Odesa that we, hungry children, looked on in envy. The Russian President even perfected this practice, announcing that “fellow countrymen” are not necessarily Russians; simply to speak Russian is enough to become one. He subsequently annexed Crimea, under the pretext of protecting the Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine. Such action is a complete contradiction of the socio-political dimension of intergovernmental relations, but this is a separate issue for discussion. I just want to say that building intergovernmental relations on the basis of nationalism is extremely dangerous for the president of a multi-national country with an antidemocratic social order.

Russian nationalists have always portrayed the followers of Stepan Bandera (Banderivtsi), Symon Petlyura (Petlyurivtsi) and Ivan Mazepa (Mazepyntsi) as the enemy – in other words, they picked the most passionate followers of the idea to liberate Ukraine from Russia’s hold. The Ukrainian people experienced multi-million losses, but the battle with the enemy has hardened them. It is also hardening them now.

At the same time, Ukrainians shouldn’t be flattered too much. The current situation is aggravated from the north, but also has an internal context. Ukrainian civil society (political nation) is only just coming into being. The war with Russia is a tragedy but it has become a powerful incentive for the citizens of Ukraine to unite.

Before the Maidan, in July 2013, the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences conducted an opinion poll. The question was “Who do you consider yourself to be, first and foremost?”, offering several options for an answer. 50.6% selected “Citizen of Ukraine”. A third selected “Resident of a village, district, city or region”. Since independence, the share of those who think of themselves first and foremost as citizens of a specific region has grown

Son, enroll in the school of Red Seniors, and Soviet Ukraine will be protected. A poster from the 1920, the era of “Ukrainization”



(30.8% in 1992). The only relief is that aggressive nationalistic propaganda, like the one coming from the Svoboda MP Iryna Farion, is not popular among Ukrainians. In 2013, only 2% of those polled considered themselves to be, first and foremost, representatives of their nation rather than country.

U.W.: You mentioned the annexation of Crimea in the context of intergovernment relations. Do you have anything new to say about this?

To understand the significance of the annexation of Crimea in full, view this action of Russian leaders in the context of the past century.

MODERN RUSSIAN CHAUVINISTS ARE IN SOLIDARITY WITH PRE-REVOLUTIONARY ONES AND DENY UKRAINIANS THE RIGHT TO INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE

The slogan about peace without annexation and contribution became popular in the final years of the First World War. The victors did not pay attention to it then and two decades later, were faced with a new world war. Two years after it began, in August 1941, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill announced the Atlantic Charter, which guaranteed the development of world order after a crushing defeat of Hitler’s Germany on the basis of three principles: territorial integrity, the abandonment of the use of

force in international relations and the establishment of a collective security system. On January 1, 1942, the 26 countries that were fighting against Germany and its allies, pledged their adherence to the declared principles and signed two words under the Declaration: United Nations. The word-combination became the name of the organization, which now monitors compliance with these principles of the global order.

As a result of the Second World War, the Soviet Union acquired some territories, for legal or historic reasons for each. The only exception was part of Eastern Prussia and Königsberg (Kaliningrad). However, at that time, the allies were destroying this province as a centre of German militarism and compensated with it for the territorial losses of Poland after the shift of its borders to the Curzon Line as per the Entente in 1918. Joseph Stalin succeeded in snatching part of the ruined province before Poland got it.

Dozens of states were created and collapsed after the adoption of the Atlantic Charter, but there wasn’t a single case where any country, using its military advantage, annexed part of the territory of another country. Putin brought “peace-keeping” military contingents into Moldova and Georgia, but did not dare to declare the areas where they were stationed parts of Russia. We must clearly understand this: the annexation of Crimea was the first blatant violation of the world order declared by the Atlantic Charter in 75 years.

I just learned about the initiative of a Chinese newspaper (all of them are the mouthpieces of the

government of course) to launch a programme for China's territorial acquisitions in the coming 50 years – by 2060. According to journalists' forecasts, the Chinese will conduct six wars, during which they have to win back lost territories, particularly those taken by the Russian Empire, covering an area that is almost three times the size of Ukraine – 1.6 mn km². Nothing extra, only that which was lost. But after gaining an absolute military advantage over its neighbours, the leaders of this country could also be urged to take territory which China did not lose to Russia. The Crimean precedent has created this possibility.

Vladimir Putin understands this better than anyone else. So he started a “hybrid war” in Eastern Ukraine immediately after the annexation of Crimea. There was no longer talk of annexation, no matter how ardently local mercenaries ran around with Russian flags. The purpose of the Russian president was to weaken the Ukrainian government. It was supposed to have withdrawn the demand for the return of Crimea, and this rejection should have appeared voluntary. It was only by these means that Russia could have avoided accusations in the criminal violation of world order.

However, it emerged that Putin's assumptions were built on sand. He suffered his first defeat during the presidential election in Ukraine. Petro Poroshenko convincingly defeated his opponents in the first round. This was not his accomplishment, but he showed that he had no intent to bow to the Kremlin's will, in other words, he was ready to carry out the will of the people. Putin faced his second defeat when a new Ukrainian army suddenly appeared within a matter of months. This army began to liberate the Donbas from Russian mercenaries. The third defeat was when the wrath of the world community materialized in the form of sanctions.

In contrast to the Soviet Union, the economy of Russia is completely dependent on the world. The gradual build-up of sanctions leading to international isolation threatens the aggressor country with a future economic and political collapse. Russia is already forced to pay a high price for the annexation of Crimea.

U.W.: How should we, Ukrainians, behave towards our Russians who have Ukrainian passports? There is no point in hiding the fact that some unpleasant feelings have already reared heads on both sides.

It's good that I will answer your question as someone who used to have “Russian” as nationality in my Soviet passport. It would still be there today if Ukrainian passports indicated this detail. I got my passport during Stalin's lifetime and wanted to be a Pole, after my father. However, my mother (born in Odesa, but descended from Akkerman Armenians) was horrified, because she knew that Ukrainian Poles and Germans were exterminated or deported. It emerged that my father was of Ukrainian origin, initially Polonized, but deported to the Caucasus and Russified after the 1830 uprising (this did not save him from arrest in 1937). The certificate on nationality was kept by the family and presented to the police.

All of us are burdened not just by the general atmosphere now, but by the Soviet past that developed political hierarchy of ethnic origin, placing Russians as ethnic nation No 1, followed by titular nations of Soviet republics and titular nations of autonomous republics as No 2 and 3 respectively. Soviet authorities needed enemies, so that with their elimination, they could keep all others obedient. At first, the enemies were people from pre-revolutionary privileged classes. Then, representatives of nationalities descending from neighbouring hostile states like Poland and Germany, or with many relatives abroad like Jews. For the third generation, Sovietized profoundly by then, terror could be replaced by “preventative measures” (which Vladimir Putin is engaged in). The fourth generation are people, who have spent most of their lives in independent Ukraine. These are the ones from whom we sometimes hear: reinstate the “nationality” column in the passport, I'm a Ukrainian and proud of it!

All this helps us justify one simple concept with which the Constitution of Ukraine begins: “the Ukrainian people is the citizens of Ukraine of all nationalities...” There was no civil society (which is referred to as political nation in the national dimension) in the Soviet Union. The Ukrai-



Nikita Khrushchev, 1935

nian nation-society is being created before our eyes, passing through critical dates: 1989–1991 (gaining of independence), 2004–2005 (Orange Revolution), 2013–2014.

Whoever wants to politicize ethnicity again must remember that it wasn't us who accomplished the collapse of the Soviet Union, but the Russian intelligentsia, and the crafty nomenclature man, Boris Yeltsin, who joined it. Today, it is on our maidans that we are protecting

IN THE PAST 75 YEARS, THE ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA WAS THE FIRST BLATANT VIOLATION OF THE WORLD ORDER DECLARED BY THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

democracy and shedding our Soviet past not only from ourselves, but from the Russian nation as well.

In conclusion, I will remind you of one aspect expressed by an ethnic Russian but a Ukrainian writer Mykola Fitylov (Khvylovy): “Away from Moscow!”. He did not speak against the Russian people. He called on Ukrainians to be themselves because he understood that psychological dependence on Moscow turns into political dependence and makes Ukrainians Little Russians. ■

Inevitable Rehabilitation

Sovietism is deeply rooted in the Donetsk prairies. Unless it is liquidated, the region will see no progress or solution to the current situation

Author:
Denys
Kazansky

Ukkraine has changed significantly in the 23 years since the declaration of independence. In 1991, it was simply the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, albeit formally independent of Russia, but at the same time, steeped in Sovietism. In 2014, an entirely different country has arisen. Most regions of Ukraine, which were once part of the “red belt” and voted for Communists and Socialists in elections, have changed fundamentally and become steadfastly blue-yellow. The Communist Party of Ukraine even won the 1998 parliamentary election in Chernivtsi with 20% of the vote. Today, something like that is unimaginable.

Ukrainians have experienced a reformatting of consciousness over the years of democracy. Life without censorship and totalitarian control has changed the nation. It has taught us to value freedom and human rights. However strange it may seem though, the complete opposite has occurred in certain regions of Ukraine, even in a democratic society. The Donbas, instead of gradually becoming more Ukrainian, has slowly transformed into a centre of Soviet reaction.

Since it was more convenient for the regional elite of Eastern Ukraine to cooperate with Russia through corruption and old criminal connections, than with other European countries, financial-industrial groups in the Donbas have opted to preserve Soviet traditions in the region, creating a true centre of Soviet imperial reaction there, and, after many years, a source of guaranteed trouble for Ukraine.

THE INCUBATOR OF INTOLERANCE

First of all, today, the Ukrainian authorities must think not only about the liberation and rebuilding of the Donbas, but about fundamentally changing its essence,

rebuilding the region in its entirety and ridding it of the encumbrance of Soviet totalitarianism.

This is no easy task. And it is not that most of the people of the Donbas do not accept the concept of a united Ukraine. If they just hated Ukraine, this could be written off as a result of the particularly complex history of relations with Ukrainians. The problem, however, is that people in this region hate the entire world.

The local population speaks with loathing of Europeans and Europe, decisively brushes off any tolerance and lenience, accepts and praises violence, repression, torture, ethnic cleansing and religious persecution. All this is not against Ukrainians alone, but against people from the Caucasus and Baltic States, Poles, Asians, Africans and Americans. The list of nations and peoples they think of as odious is very long, but the residents of the Donbas can also quickly and easily come to hate

regions, and the Donbas itself. It has already become a victim of its own prejudices and hurt feelings. To leave it unreformed once more is to simply preserve the sickness and wait for the next destructive relapse.

It is still too early to talk about the liberation of the region. The war continues. But reform plans must be ready beforehand. Meanwhile, unfortunately, officials are only talking about the amounts they are ready to reclaim within programmes to restore Donetsk and Luhansk. They are talking about billions, but spending such funds to rebuild the old, reactionary Soviet Donbas is a crime. Painting a shrapnel-hit statue of Lenin blue and yellow in your average Donbas town will never resolve the problem of separatism.

SPECIAL ECONOMICS

How did the Donbas become the nest of Soviet reaction? The problem stems not only from the history of Eastern Ukraine and the treason of local politicians, but also from its economic specificity. The brutal economic crisis, which boiled in Donbas in the 1990s, devastated its cities. Here and there, industrial output fell 60–70% and never returned to its initial levels. The epidemic of closing mines has ruined the infrastructure of mining villages and led to mass unemployment. The arrival of capitalism in a region that was designed by the standards of a socialist economy could hardly affect it differently, but the locals cared little for what experts tried to explain to them. They were enraged by capitalism and Ukraine, which brought it to them. Rogues and criminal leaders quickly realized how they could take advantage of the large-scale discontent, using Soviet rhetoric as their weapon. The seeds of separatism and anti-Ukrainian sentiment fell on fertile soil. They declared that inef-



UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS OF MINER VILLAGES HAVE CULMINATED IN THE PRESENT SOCIAL EXPLOSION AND WAR, AS WELL AS MASSIVE COLLABORATION OF THE LOCALS WITH SEPARATISTS

their neighbours on the slightest provocation. For example, the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) militants in Slovyansk killed eight parishioners of the local Protestant Church, in spite of the fact that they were native residents and Russian-speakers.

We can spend a ton of time thinking about why the Donbas has become this incubator of intolerance and why it didn't resist those, who so assiduously spurred society towards this moral decline. Obviously, this abnormal state is a threat to both the surrounding re-



fective reforms were machinations of the enemies of the Donbas. Revisionist sentiments were used as easy lifts to power and usurpation. The rest is history.

The ideas of Ukrainophobia, Stalinism, ultra-nationalist black-hundredists, and of Soviet militarism have not simply remained here, but have found new, young supporters, reinforced with due propaganda. It appears that this stronghold of Soviet reaction does not intend to renounce its destructive misanthropic rhetoric, until radically re-organised. Decisive elimination of all sources of Donetsk separatism must be begun immediately. After all, a large portion of the region's territory has already been liberated from pro-Russian rebels.

Donetsk's Soviet imperialism did not exist on its own, or in a vacuum. Its bacteria have long been evolving in a relevant nourishing environment made up of mining villages with their primordial criminal spirit, cult of force and hard drinking. Soviet officials who united in cartels, first with people employed in workshops, then with criminal gangs. Obso-

"The Party of Regions will save interethnic peace and agreement"

lete industry with no prospects, its directors cultivating the old order of the outdated system. No wonder that the coal-mining and industrial parts of the Donbas have become the centres of separatism today.

The lack of real reform further aggravated the problems of the Donbas. The process of mine shutdown transformed into predatory robbery. At the same time, there has been no real restructuring of the coal industry. It remained

tomed instead. Populist politicians echoed that. Reforms were stopped short. This vicious circle threw the Donbas into ever greater poverty and rage.

THE GUIDELINES FOR TRANSFORMATION

Reforms in the Donbas should be bold and decisive. They can start with the cleansing of the local authorities and the fundamental reform of the administrative division. Donetsk Oblast is vast, with a population that is two to three times higher than that in most other Ukrainian oblasts. In this case, the size and economic potential have become the factors playing into the hands of separatists. It was easier for them to interact and find a common language. This is why Donetsk has to be divided into at least two parts. Debates are already in place to set up Pryazovska Oblast, and they are right. The demarcation of borders will break down groups.

Economic transformations have to be most radical. The Donbas must be reformatted economically before its mentality is tackled. There is a popular concept of restructuring in economics. This means total re-

REFORMS IN THE DONBAS SHOULD BE BOLD AND DECISIVE. THEY CAN START WITH THE CLEANSING OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE FUNDAMENTAL REFORM OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

state-owned, unprofitable and archaic. Miners considered any innovations to be evil and demanded all attempts to change the archaic system to be stopped, striving to hang on to the calm and absurd world to which they were accus-



structuring and the re-equipping of enterprises; quite often, complete liquidation of old plants and facilities, and the construction of new production lines. For the archaic industry in Donetsk, restructuring is the only option.

Once and for all, Ukraine has to decisively get rid of unprofitable coal mines. It is worth the pain because it can't get any worse than it is now. Unresolved problems of mining villages have culminated in the current civil unrest and, ultimately, war, as well as the large-scale collaboration of the local population with separatists. There should be no more state mines and corrupt coal schemes in Ukraine. All mines and enrichment plants must be transferred to private ownership or closed. All kopanky, the illegal mines, must obtain licenses and operate legally. These "model areas" should be declared tax-free zones for several years and foreign investors should be invited to build new enterprises there from scratch. Chinese investors would be preferable since they already have the leverage to put pressure on Russia, and fueling separatism in the zone of their interest would no longer be as easy as it is now. What can

The process of mine shutdown has grown into predatory robbery. At the same time, no real restructuring of the coal industry has taken place. It is thus hardly surprising that the coal-mining zones of the Donbas have become the centres of separatism today

Chinese investors build in Ukraine? For example, in Crimea, the Chinese are currently building a massive plant to make corn-based mixed fodder. In Russia, they are building an automobile plant to assemble inexpensive Lifan vehicles. Such facilities could be built in the Donbas as well. The Chinese have long been interested in the local agricultural sector, which is developing in Ukraine and produces plenty of material for further processing.

Another thing to consider carefully is the optimal use of funds to restore that which has been destroyed by war. There is probably no point in re-building the five-storey buildings in the suburbs of Shakhtarsk and Torez, extremely depressed towns even before the war. The workforce is already leaving the Donbas. Reversing this outflow is hardly worth the efforts. This region was over-saturated with industry during the Soviet era. Now, This legacy is naturally ageing and declining. In addition to that, the Donbas is over-populated. There are more miners than there is coal. After the conflict, the Donbas can expect a mass exodus of people and a reduction in the population by several hundred thousand people.

It is time to think about ways to help them settle in other oblasts, where there are more prospects.

The residents of old dying villages would benefit more from being resettled. This will save money on the restoration and subsequent support of their infrastructure when their future is quite doubtful. In many, houses have had no central heating or water for the last 15 years. This is a solid fact.

In order to resolve the problem of the Donbas and to develop a plan to reconstruct it, the government could establish a relevant ministry and announce a tender for projects for immediate revival of the economy in Eastern Ukraine. This will not solve all the problems that have accumulated over the years in one fell swoop. But with a team of foreign professional economists and crisis managers are involved, successful steps could quickly give positive results. Coupled with consistent de-Sovietization, they should change the face of the Donbas within three – five years. We need a clear business plan, which we don't yet have.

When it comes to reforms, political will of reformers is always what matters most. It is also what all Ukrainian leaders unfortunately lack. ■

Oksana Mikheyeva:

"We must drag people out of the media coma"

Oksana Mikheyeva is a historian and lecturer from Donetsk with significant experience in the research of her region, also as a sociologist. She was forced to move to Lviv because it was dangerous for pro-Ukrainian people to remain in Donetsk, even if they were not actively involved in political or military activity. *The Ukrainian Week* speaks to Ms. Mikheyeva about the humanitarian future of the region.

U.W.: What needs to be done to "cure the Donbas" in the sense of humanitarian policy? How and by what means can the brains of those zombified by the "vatnik" ideology be saved?

The concept of curing is a little premature. First of all, these people should find themselves on territory controlled by Ukraine. When it comes to prospects, then first and foremost, I would like to propose we move away from such terms as "sick Donbas", populated by "zombified vatniks" (see p. 44 for explanation) who must be "cured". Unfortunately, in recent times, Ukrainian society has created a whole range of offensive branding for people. Beginning to work with people who have long been fed with specifically designed information by labelling them defeats the purpose. The population of territories that have now turned into a war zone is clearly not as uniform and unanimous as seen in the mass media that focus on the most scandalous images of vatniks. Stigmatisation provokes negative feelings in everyone: those who do and don't support the concept of the Donetsk People's Republic, the DNR.

Using the concept of the "sick Donbas", we stay within the paradigm of geographic differences. Meanwhile, these differences

**Interviewed
by Bohdan
Butkevych**

have long been a result of the potential of consumers to think critically rather than of access to information. Access to the Internet, for example, is not a guarantee that a person will choose controversial texts in pursuit of the truth. Readers tend to collect ideologically close messages in the diverse flow of information and reject those that are not. Eventually, they remain in their own paradigm even if they contact with the full flow of information. When society polarizes and forces everyone to demonstrate their position, and in a situation where subtones began to fade out completely, I saw the image of a matrix – Russophile or Ukrainophile, a kind of periodic table with strict hierarchy of elements. Any information that does not fit into this system is simply rejected, not even as an oppositional one, but as one that is, in principle, impossible, absurd, etc.

"CLEANSING PROVOKES PEOPLE AND CREATES AN OVERALL UNEASY ATMOSPHERE WHERE PEOPLE REPORT EACH OTHER AND SETTLE SCORES"

I think it is very important to research how firm systems of worldview are constructed, why they turn out so monolithic and inflexible, and some information is acceptable while other is blocked out entirely in them.

As far as changes are concerned, I feel that the most reliable means to save fellow countrymen – not just in the Donbas, but in Ukraine as a whole – is to gradually withdraw them from a media coma. I'm not talking about "armed people" and supporters of terrorists now. It is

necessary to talk with regular citizens, gradually appealing to their rationality, not as if they are sick. At the same time, it is best to talk directly, face-to-face. Reasonably and convincingly. We should not forget that under current conditions, the average resident of Ukraine, oversaturated with emotionally charged information, is choking on its volume, and in truth, continues to be in an information vacuum, because at the moment, he or she can neither understand what is happening (the war has not been declared officially but it is happening and taking lives), nor what awaits us in the future. In this sense, I think that a well thought-out, realistic and publicly announced programme for the future development of the Donbas could become an extremely effective means of "treatment".

U.W.: What should the education policy be at all levels, from school pupils to college students? What teaching methods can be used to instill patriotism and avoid the most conflicting subjects?

I think that we've reached a stage where we cannot avoid them. If there is no dialogue on the level of society, if we do not help people to find their historical memory in the overall vision of the past, we shall remain doomed to manipulation of our consciousness through distortion of facts that occurred in the past socially significant events. I won't say that nothing has been done as regards this in Ukraine, but a lot has yet to be done. At the same time, intense pressure in education, particularly in high school, should not be permitted because it will no longer be high school.

U.W.: Where can lecturers be found, given that teachers in the Donbas are often unreliable (many cases are known when teachers in schools and high schools promoted separatist, anti-Ukrainian, anti-American and anti-European ideas – Ed.)? Particularly in higher education institutions, some of whom have become true sources of separatism, such as your own Donetsk National University. Is it worth conducting illustration in this sphere, and if so, how?

BIO

Oksana Mikheyeva is a historian, sociologist, lecturer and member of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. Born in Kirovohrad in 1971, she graduated from the History Faculty of Donetsk National University. Until recently, she lectured at the Donetsk State Management University. She holds a PhD in History Sciences and is a member of the the International Association of Humanitarians, the Donetsk Branch of the Shevchenko Scientific Society, the Sociological Association of Ukraine and the editorial staff of *Ukraina Moderna* (Modern Ukraine) and *Skhid* (East) magazines

From my experience of studying Soviet society and especially its system of repressive bodies, for me, the notion of “unreliability” and “source of separatism” are terrifying, because this is the rhetoric of a society, which chooses repressions as the main means of forming patriotism and, God forbid, unanimity. I was a student in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The Soviet Union collapsed and independent Ukraine was born before my eyes. Of course, the challenges of that time also significantly impacted teaching at higher education institutions. And I consider my clear advantage to be the fact that my mentors were people who had different views: from those who did not show any particular reaction to events, to those who were critical of the innovations or, on the contrary, those who welcomed them gladly and saw the opportunity to speak on forbidden subjects and study the “blank spots of history” as a breath of fresh air. Something important that I gained, was the awareness that such diversity in the interpretation of events was practically possible, and with time, also the understanding of the fact that the thoughts and conclusions of lecturers, which were seen as being funny and antiquated from the point of view of young revolutionary-minded people, now seem more worthy of attention, taking the current times and experience into account.

I think it would be great to gradually turn society to the possibility of co-existence of different views. I realise that this is difficult to do under war conditions, because the escalation of division into “ours” and “theirs” is almost inevitable. And ultimately, this will be a long process, because the fear that a certain directive can be used and implemented with the use of weapons will im-



pede true satisfaction from diversity for a long time.

As far as lustration in the education system is concerned, as someone who is pro-Ukrainian, I would like to see it revived and cleansed – preferably as soon as possible. However, no sooner do I begin to imagine a lustration mechanism under current condi-

ing administrative positions and forming juries for PhD defenders, which produce the same kind of academics. It's a vicious circle. In practice, I'm almost sure that the lustration process will transform into a regular bureaucratic procedure at the higher education institution or secondary school level, whereby those who should undergo lustration in the first place, will decide the fate of those who should stay. What are adequate grounds for lustration? Where is the line between the right of the citizen of a democratic state to express his/her view and the “separatist activity” that is a threat to the integrity of a country and its statehood? Could this be a matter for consideration by various public committees or panels, or it is something the courts should look at?

As my experience of studying processes that are almost similar to the cleansing of Soviet entities in the 1920s shows, such a situation provokes people and creates an overall uneasy situation whereby people report each other, settle scores, do chicanery, etc. The positive result is statistical, rather than actual. Such a state of affairs induces

“THE AVERAGE RESIDENT OF UKRAINE, OVERSATURATED WITH EMOTIONALLY CHARGED INFORMATION, IS CHOKING ON ITS VOLUME, AND IN TRUTH, CONTINUES TO BE IN AN INFORMATION VACUUM”

tions, than I transform into an opponent of such actions. Ukrainian higher education has long been filled with people who secured their academic status with bribes. The number of such people increased continuously and as far as I'm concerned, has reached a critical point. Without talent and inclination for scientific work, most find themselves hold-



negative feelings in those who are “cleansed” and those who stay, because people understand that they can end up in the same situation as soon as policies change again. By protecting the values of democratic statehood for ourselves, we have to remember that within its limits, a citizen has the right to express his/her views and stand up for them in discussions. We should not lessen intellectual potential of young people, particularly on the university level. By this time, the student must already have a mature and stable perception of the political sphere that will allow him or her to filter what lecturers say off-topic, and to see it as expression of the lecturer’s individual opinion. Such lustrations actually deprive students of the opportunity to comprehend different positions and choose their own. As a result of it, some slowly claim the right to think and select on behalf of others: thus, step by step, a democratic society disappears and a totalitarian one emerges.

It’s even more complicated in secondary schools, because there, we are talking about children, whose political socialization is

still developing. At this level, the pupil generally absorbs information about politics uncritically, so a wonderful opportunity appears to influence their consciousness. But even here, I don’t think that the prospects for lustration are optimistic. Surely we have sufficient great and patriotic teachers, who would be ready to fill the vacancies left by “the unreliable”? For example, try to find a qualified geography teacher.

U.W.: Is it worth bringing in teaching personnel from other oblasts?

No, in my view, it is far better to make teaching mobility a reality. The strategy of sending teachers to “acculturate backward regions” is more likely to be rejected, while true mobility will strengthen the country’s unity through the exchange of positions, dialogue and the demonstration of the desire for mutual understanding.

U.W.: In your opinion, what should the new information policy in the Donbas be?

I think the entire country needs one. If we come up with different information policies for certain regions again, we shall never have the sense of being a united country. You know, I torture myself when I read how users comment publications about key developments in Ukraine (of course, they are not sufficiently representative to form a distinct public opinion, but they show the sentiments in society). When I read how people comment on events in Crimea, and later in the Donbas, I start reflecting about the fact that Ukrainians do not have a “sense of state”. People, albeit in words, prove capable of giving up territory: “Let them take it, Crimea is expensive and I’ve never been there anyway” or “Who needs the Donbas? It only hampers our development”. But this is worth thinking about: what is the next region that will become a hindrance? And what is Ukraine to us then? I have an optimistic view of an integral information policy. As shown by my experience of coordinating positions on the level of different regions of Ukraine, it is often sufficient to select the right synonyms to resolve the problem. ■



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The Union of Tops and Bottoms

Trying to figure out what on earth happened with the Donbas over the recent decades one cannot ignore the peculiar partnership between the masses and the rulers of the region

There are two distinctive groups of population in the Donbas. We shall call them the *vatniks** and the suits (or "burgundy jackets", if you will, those were the "uniform" of choice among the nouveau-riche businessmen and all kinds of criminal and semi-criminal characters back in the 1990s).

Vatnik has become a derogative term for the paternalistic lumpenized population (aka *Homo Sovieticus*), completely devoid of own initiative, incapable of taking responsibility even for own life and wellbeing. This demographic is totally dependent (first and foremost mentally) on the authorities that are perceived as a sacral phenomenon, the be-all and end-all. To vatniks Soviet Union exemplifies perfect state system.

Their needs are almost entirely limited to eating, clothing, dwelling and fairly primitive entertainment: a drink, a fight and a game of football. "Lofty matters" tend to irritate them or sometimes even infuriate. They see the Russian Federation as a contemporary form of the USSR, very much in line with the Soviet slogan of the 1930s: 'Stalin is today's Lenin'. The vatniks take well to both the hand-outs and the punishments from whoever is the authority in power, while a liberal and humanistic system of government is utterly alien to them, and is perceived as weak and generally pathetic. A simple unpretentious living, in which the authorities are there to tell you what to do, is held as the ideal. They are hostile to those who have beliefs contrary to the party line, those who dare to stand out in a crowd, those demonstrating nonconformist behavior.

Author:
Ihor Losev

A peculiar electoral system based on administrative leverage, criminal terror, powerful propaganda, intimidation and bribing, and profound corruption in all agencies, as well as the lack of any control, have been shaping a specific electoral system in the Donbas for decades. Any voting, decentralization or abolition of state administrations can only take place there after this system and its components are eliminated

Luckily for Ukraine, vatniks do not make the majority of population in the Donbas. They, however, represent a considerable and a very significant segment of the society in those parts, the base masses for all pro-Russian and pro-Soviet movements and moods. The "suits" are the modern elite of the Donbas, the new money that emerged in the time of primitive accumulation of capital and social miscegenation between yesterday's nomenclature of the Communist Party, the law-enforcement, courts and special services, the Komsomol and industrial enterprise directors with the underground entrepreneurs and thugs. At the time such processes took place all over Ukraine, but in the Donbas they took completely grotesque forms due to the cult of everything Soviet and the orientation on Moscow as the social and cultural Mecca in the worldview of the Donbas suits.

On the rest of the Ukrainian territory the situation was somewhat tempered by the existence of nationalistic and patriotic ideological movement, by Ukrainization, even if it was often purely symbolic. Meanwhile in the Donbas, much like in Crimea, there was no Ukrainization to speak of, whatever some over-impressionable locals would have you believe.

As the local suits of the Donbas marked their territory it was decided that Russian and Soviet identity should be the only one welcome in Donbas. And since it perfectly matched what the local populous had been raised on for seven decades of the communist rule, this ideology rather seamlessly glued together the alliance of the vatniks and the suits, which



eventually led to the creation of the "DNR" and the "LNR" (militias that call themselves Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics – Ed.). Yet neither vatniks would be able to pull this off on their own, nor the suits. The latter wouldn't have the social "ground forces", the masses that can be led.

It's only as a result of their alliance coupled with the crucial impulse from Kremlin the phenomenon of powerful armed insurgency could come into being, organized by Russia using the Donbas suits and the local vatnik "biomass".

Moscow journalist Yevgeniya Albats, who published a great deal of incriminating articles about the Cheka/State Political Directorate/NKVD/Ministry for State Security/KGB during Perestroika, also did some research on how Nazis came to rule Germany in the 1930s. Albats reached a conclusion that Hitler, who never managed to get more than 40% of votes in elections, had zero chance of coming to power, if it wasn't for the financial and industrial elite, namely Krupp, Thyssen, Flick and the others, betraying the Weimar Republic and engaging in all kinds of machinations to put the Nazi leader at the reins. The efforts of small merchants, the plebs, the vatniks alone wouldn't be enough... Similar phenomenon occurred in the Donbas. Without the help, the cooperation, the funding and the instigation by the suits, without their active servitude to Kremlin the war raging today in the region would never have happened.

It wouldn't be possible without the financial and industrial elite of



the Donbas betraying Ukraine. Interestingly enough, according to the People's Deputy Mykola Rudkovskiy, in one of the towns of the Donbas the deputy head of the municipal administration complained: 'We were told that we only needed to rock the boat just little bit to get bigger budget subsidies. Nobody thought that we'd end up being bombed'.

Clearly, she wasn't told that by random strangers, but by the "seniors" of the Donbas.

Therefore it becomes crystal clear that without a fundamental change of the ruling circles the region's future looks bleak. One of president Poroshenko's advisors having returned from the Donbas enthusiastically proclaimed that 'Nothing can be done at the Donbas without Akhmetov!' On the contrary, nothing can be done to the Donbas while there are the likes of Akhmetov, Yefremov, Levchenko, Lukyanchenko, Rybak, Shtepa, Kravchenko, Samsonov... And I'm not talking about personalities so much as the general phenomenon.

These "kings", "counts" and "barons" of the Donbas, accountable to no one, turned the region into a territory of financial and industrial feudalism, into a state within a state, an island. Playing the part in Kremlin's geopolitical game in Ukraine, it will forever be reanimated as a kind of anti-Ukrainian, pro-Moscow black state.

They are unable to realize that such short-sighted games inevitably lead to the collapse of the Donbas itself, because Moscow only needs it as a ram against Ukraine, as a modern incarnation of the



The former mayor of Slovyansk Nelia Shtepa and ex-secretary of the Donetsk City Council Mykola Levchenko are two perfect examples of the phenomenon referred to as the Donbas "elite" characterized by constant instigation of Ukrainophobia in the region, as well as questionable interpretation of luxury

Donetsk-Kryvyi Rih Republic (that used to be a Bolshevik separatist quasi-state formation in the East of Ukraine after the October Coup). The Donbas on its own represents zero value for the Kremlin.

So far the Yanukovich's mafia is trying its best to save the ruling circles that nurtured separatist and pro-Moscow moods in the Donbas for 20 years and are now cooperating with the DNR and the LNR. Yuriy Miroshnychenko, the former Parliamentary Representative of Yanukovich, practically wept at a recent talk show demanding amnesty for those residents of the East that cooperated with terrorists and separatists. But it rapidly became clear that the residents he had in mind were not the likes of Vasya the plumber, who suddenly pinned on some separatist insignia on his clothes in the state of deep hangover, nor the likes of Fedya the mechanic, who decided that he had nothing better to do than grabbing a shotgun. The ones that Miroshnychenko had in mind are the mayors of the Donbas towns and the heads of local administrations that sided with the DNR and the LNR. The Party of Development of Ukraine (the recently renamed infamous Party of Regions) is keen to preserve its trusty nomenclature and therefore to preserve its reign over the region so that things forever stay the way they were.

No lustration in the form of election (Poroshenko's naïve dream: "elections are the best kind of lustration") is going to work there. A special electoral system was shaped over the years, one that relies on administrative resource,

criminal terror, media as a powerful brainwashing machine, total corruption of all bodies, complete lack of any independent control. Techniques of intimidation and bribery were perfected. Only after this system is completely demolished, only after a radical de-separatisation any elections and any decentralization of power can be carried out in the Donbas. Doing this now is nothing short of political suicide for Ukraine in the East.

What really should be on the agenda right now is the radical overhaul of local authorities in the Donbas through appointments rather than election. Otherwise we'll see the triumphant coming to power of same old suits and vatniks with black and orange insignia. If the Americans, the Brits and the French held free elections in the West Germany in 1945, the Nazi Blockleiters, Gauleiters and Reichsinspektors would, no doubt, come out victorious. Eventually elections were held there, but only after profound denazification. The new Donbas elite must be formed from those local residents and the Donbas natives that took up arms and joined volunteer battalions to protect the sovereign Ukraine. These are the best officials for future Donbas administrations, the local bodies of Interior Ministry, the Security Service and the Prosecutor's Office.

The media of the Donbas must be reformed radically. And not only by means of encouragement, but also through prohibition and penalties: all the separatist and terrorist media must be closed, those responsible for DNR and LNR propaganda must be punished. It is also extremely important to overhaul the education sphere in the region, because the idea put forward by the Party of Regions member Mykola Levchenko that every region can have its own version of history and its own set of heroes is unworkable within one country. When it comes to cultural policy, it cannot be based on the dominance of cheap Russian pop. A lot should and can be changed if there is a political will for it in Kyiv. As was aptly put by Yevhen Horodnichyk of Lozova town, Kharkiv Oblast, the wounded soldier who is currently recovering in hospital: "The East needs a different policy on a state level. If things are left as they are, sooner or later it will explode again." ■

* *Vatnik* (aka "telo-greika") primarily stood for the kind of wadded jacket seen on a typical representative of Soviet proletariat, hence the meme

The 19th Century in Ukraine: Assimilation Impossible

That turbulent period taught Ukrainians that the ideals of national freedom and solidarity must not be squandered on attractive slogans about social equality, “land and freedom” or “land to peasants”

At the end of the 18th century, following the abolition of the autonomy for the Zaporizhian Host by Catherine II of Russia and the liquidation of the Cossack Hetmanate, Ukraine was integrated into the Russian pan-imperial state system with its unified methods of rule and a government that combined the powers of autocracy and police. Russian tsarism brutally broke the terms of the Pereyaslav Treaty signed in 1654 which made Ukraine recognize the protectorate of the Russian tsar but allowed it to preserve its authentic social system. As a result, the “state of the Cossacks” lost the last remaining fragments of its statehood.

“TO BE OR NOT TO BE” A LA UKRAINE

Shortly after, Ukrainians faced one crucial question: will their country continue to exist as a separate national organism, or will be it swallowed by the greedy northern neighbour? The latter did not simply entail a change of the model of relations between Ukraine and Russia that had existed until then; it would have *de facto* put an end to national existence of Ukrainians. This was the aim of the Russian Empire, and the key message of the “common history of the two nations”, something the Russian politicians and the likeminded Ukrainians like to talk about today. However, historical background makes the debate on whether Ukraine had been a colony to Russia or had been dependent on it in any other way pointless, even if it still is a stumbling block for some researchers into social relations. The nature of Ukraine’s relations with Russia has nothing in com-

Author:
Yuriy
Tereshchenko



CONSERVATISM OF UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY AND THEIR MEMORY OF NATIONAL HISTORIC TRADITIONS PRESERVED THE VALUES THAT INSPIRED UKRAINIAN ELITES TO STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

The Romanticism novelists of the 1820-1840s were the ones to express Ukrainian spirituality. They most often descended from well-known Cossack nobility families that had played an important role in the history of the Cossack hetman-ruled Ukraine

mon with the conventional relations of colonial states like England, France, Spain or Holland, with their colonies. Russia had been pursuing a task that no other colony in the world cared for: it had been taking every effort to completely Russify Ukraine and abolish its national organism. For more than 300 years, Russia tried to gradually destroy Ukraine’s national and cultural individuality and to barbarize it by imposing its own social system and lifestyle on Ukraine.

For a long time, Ukraine had two main names: Rus and Ukraine. Subsequently, “Rus” turned into a historical one while “Ukraine” firmly entrenched itself as the national name (many other European nations had gone through similar changes). Conscious or not, reluctance to understand this results in mistaken definitions of the time when Ukrainians emerged as an ethnos, or is used as an argument in blatant xenophobic speculations.

Moscow, in turn, cynically tried to appropriate the name “Rus” when establishing its statehood, even if it had no territorial prerequisites for that. The name later turned into “Russia”, the Greek equivalent of the name “Rus”. In the following centuries,

Russia manipulated the stolen name in an attempt to appropriate the rich cultural and socio-political heritage of the Old Kyiv State which had never been Russia’s.

Peter the Great, widely regarded as Russia’s “modernizer”, realized that he needed to rely on a powerful socio-cultural foundation to “Europeanize” Muscovy. He did not have one in his own country, but Ukraine had it and was under his control. Lacking national statehood and cultural accomplishments that were common with Europe, Moscow tried to “borrow” Ukraine’s civilization accomplishments, Old Kyiv statehood tradition, its culture and European recognition. It was in the time of Peter the Great that Russia’s diplomacy began to ardently promote the new term “Russia” and “Russians” in the West to replace the commonly known “Muscovy” and “muscovites”. Thus, Peter the Great ordered his associate, Duke Aleksandr Menshikov, to send a circular to the Russian diplomat, Prince Dolgoruki: “In all newspapers our state is written as Muscovy, not Russia. Therefore, please specify that it [the state] should be named Russian. All other courts have been sent the same notice.” The identification of the Russian Empire with the political and cultural heritage of the old Rus-Ukraine was ultimately embraced in the course of the 18th century when the Russian Empire was on the rise. The formula of a “united undivided Russia” was integrated as the foundation into the imperial ideology and became a tool separating Ukrainians from the Old Kyiv statehood they had created. This separation was implemented through merciless Russification.



A portrait of a Ukrainian by Vasyl Tropinin



A Ukrainian girl by Mykola Rachkov

RURAL UKRAINE AS A FORTRESS OF IDENTITY

Despite the assimilation campaign of the Russian Empire and a wide range of tools it used to crush national identity, Ukrainians preserved their individuality and the memory of their historical past. Rural Ukraine played a crucial role in this, relying on authentic aspects of physical and mental life that developed over many generations. It gave birth to one of the oldest agricultural civilizations in the world, developed firm and long-standing foundations for national existence, and kept them alive and present up until modern times despite all historic hindrances.

Rural Ukraine was very different from rural Russian in the way it cultivated land, was part of the European cultural values and law, and organized labour and everyday life more effectively, and in terms of social psychology. An important socio-economic ground for Ukrainian individuality was the dominating ownership of land by families in Ukraine compared to almost nationwide community ownership in Russia.

Excessive centralism in the Russian Empire prevented it from overcoming the gap between the community-dominated Russia and the individual property-dominated Ukraine. Bolshevism accomplished more by pushing Ukrainian peasants into *kolkhozs* and launching the Holodomor as an unprecedented genocide to crush the active and passive resistance Ukrainians posed to the assimilation offensive of the empire. Nevertheless, Ukrainian peasants managed to preserve their typical lifestyle and unstoppable urge to cultivate new lands almost intact. As a result, Ukrainians ultimately settled down on the coasts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, and began to cultivate those.

Ukrainians used a wide range of tools in their organic resistance to Russian centralism, including occasional insurgencies, killings of landlords and officials, and mass rallies that occasionally took a distinct national tone. One such event was the Kyiv Cossack Campaign in 1885 involving 500 villages in Kyiv Oblast. It proved that Ukrainian peasants unconsciously preserved their historic memory and national consciousness. ■

The mindset preserved in the rural environment later served as important ground for the national revival of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Despite difficult socio-economic conditions, conservatism, spirituality and respect for national historic traditions helped Ukrainian peasants preserve the crucial complex of values that inspired Ukrainian elites and their struggle for national identification. This rural factor was a permanent source of human resources, as well as spiritual and material power for the Ukrainian movement.

Many observers of the time noted complete rejection of imperialistic order by Ukraine amidst generally loyal attitude to the institute of the Russian monarchy. "I did not find a single person out of all people I spoke to in Malorossiya who were favourable towards Russia; everyone was obviously dominated by the spirit of opposition," General Aleksandr Mikhailovskii-Danilevskii wrote in 1824 after his visit to Ukraine.

Many other observers of Ukrainian life echoed this, including German geographer and traveler Johann Georg Kohl who came to Ukraine in 1841. "The dislike that the people of Malorossiya have about the people of the Great Russia is so strong that it can simply be described as national hatred," he wrote. He also observed that the Ukrainian nobility preserved "many features of their golden era of independence. You can spot portraits of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Ivan Mazepa, Pavlo Skoropadskyi and Kyrylo Rozumovskiy, who had been hetmans in different times, in many houses. Handwritten scripts that tell of those days are carefully stored in trunks." Kohl noticed how important the influence of the nobility on the social life of Ukrainians was in the 19th century. He noted that Ukrainians "have their own language, their own historic memories, rarely mix with or marry Moscow rulers... One can say that their national roots go back to provincial nobility that dwells in villages and has generated all great political movements." The German traveler managed to see what the *Narodniki** missed in the 19th century when they dominated social activity in Ukraine.

"PROVINCIAL NOBILITY"

Ukrainian noble class and with peasants chaotically (and organically) preserved the language, religion, traditions and conventional family and social life. The process continued throughout the 19th century, all the way through the 1917-1921 Revolution. In the first decades of the 19th century, Ukrainian Cossack elites faced the loss of common forms of social and cultural life, so they accepted external elements of Russian lifestyle, yet preserved many elements of the old traditional life. It was this class that turned out to be the most proactive participant of the national revival process, determining its social content and forms of expression. The ancestors of the Cossack nobility were the crucial part of numerous opposition clubs where participants discussed urgent political issues, including the revival of the hetmanate, reanimation of the Cossack status and traditional social institutions. The clubs mushroomed in Novhorod-Siversk, Chernihiv, Poltava and Kyiv, all in Northern and Central Ukraine. Very often, they would emerge in noble mansions, such as the house of the Kapnist in Obukhiv, Kyiv Oblast, or the Myklashevskys in Ponurivka (a village in Bryansk Oblast, today's Russia). The descendants of the ruling class in the Hetmanate also gathered around Prince and Malorossiya Governor Nikolai Repnin, a supporter of Ukrainian traditions married to the granddaughter of Kyrylo Rozumovskiy, the last Hetman of the Zaporizhian Host, a Duke of the Russian Empire and President of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences. These people included Vasyl Tarnovsky, Vasyl Lukashevych, Semen Kochubei and Petro Kapnist. Mykola Repnin was friends with academics and writers Vasyl Poletyka, Hryhoriy Kvitka-Osnovianenko and Petro Hulak-Artemovskiy. It was in that group that the idea of Prince Repnin as a possible candidate for the Hetman of Ukraine emerged. As the elites participated in the all-Russian opposition entities (quite a few were in the Society of United Slavs, a secret revolutionary organization of officers and local officials, as well as among the Decembrists), they added a particular Ukrainian autonomous fer-



A portrait of Vasyl Tarnovsky Jr. by Andriy Horonovych

ment to the views of the oppositioners on the future structure of Russia.

Ukrainian nobility was the crucial party to the evolution of Ukrainian literature. The Romanticism novelists of the 1820-1840s were the ones to express Ukrainian spirituality. They most often descended from well-known Cossack elite families that had played an important role in the history of the Hetmanate. They became the carriers of Romanticism, a trend

**RUSSIA PURSUED
A TASK THAT NO OTHER
COLONY IN THE WORLD
CARED FOR: IT AIMED
TO RUSSIFY AND CRUSH
UKRAINIAN NATIONAL
ORGANISM**

that affected the formation of national consciousness in European countries. This served as the ground for opposition sentiments against the new rules introduced in Ukraine by the Russian centralist system.

Objective observation of Ukrainian national life in the 19th century, and the role of the Ukrainian nobility in it, resembled what



A portrait of
Yelyzaveta
Drahan by
Mykhailo
Briansky

Viacheslav Lypynsky, political thinker and historian known as the father of Ukrainian conservatism, later described as the contribution of the “class of family landowners” to the socio-political and cultural movement in Ukraine. He criticized local national democrats for their attempts to push aristocrats to the sidelines of the national process. He also stressed on the crucial creative role of Ukrainian landowners who laid “the foundation of modern political and cultural revival of the Ukrainian nation” in the 19th century.

These landowners, as listed by Lypynsky, included Yevhen Hrebinka, both Gogol brothers, Mykola Markovych, Oleksa Storozhenko, Hryhoriy Kvitka-Osnovianenko, Amvrosiy Metlynsky, Panteleymon Kulish, Mykola Kostomarov, Lesia Ukrayinka and many more. He claimed that aristocratic landowners funded the foundation of the Ukrainian Scientific Society on Lviv, the Department of Geographic Society and Commission of Archeology in Kyiv, the History Museum of Bohdan Khanenko in Kyiv, the National Museum of Metropolitan Sheptytsky Foundation in Lviv, and a number of other scientific and cultural institutions.

Ukrainian aristocrats had long-standing and close contacts

with the rural population and abundant experience of commercial cooperation with them, plus a number of common elements in everyday life and household routines. This inspired hope for potential nationwide solidarity in the Ukrainian society.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST. CYRIL AND METHODIUS

In January 1846, the Brotherhood of St. Cyril and Methodius emerged in Kyiv as a secret community that, for the first time in the history of Ukrainian social movement, offered a list of political priorities focusing on the liberation of Ukraine and profound reform of the social hierarchy. The fact that it did not involve big landlords and aristocrats, but was dominated by small and middle landowners, government officials, students and intelligentsia signaled a significant change in the liberation movement, an expansion of its social platform.

The Brotherhood viewed historical process from the perspective of Christian principles of justice, equality and goodness - by contrast to the despotic regime of Russia. The goal of the Brotherhood was to eliminate serfdom, autocracy, social classes and privileges for the nobility, and to guarantee civil liberties to everyone. Its members suggested that Ukraine would play the central role in creating the future free community of Slavic peoples, with Kyiv as the capital of the future federation where the “general Slavic assembly” would convene.

The Brotherhood initiated the movement of *Narodniks* in Ukraine, and the respective school of political thought. Its most outstanding representative was historian and activist Mykola Kostomarov who led the *Narodnik* school of Ukrainian historiography. The Brotherhood members were obviously influenced by West European ideas of Romanticism, as well as the idea of the Slavic national revival. One source of inspiration was *The Books and The Pilgrimage of the Polish Nation* by Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz. As they strived for Ukraine’s individual historical process and national development, most of the brothers were skeptical about statehood efforts of their aristocratic elites. Instead, they preferred to focus on

cultural and education missions. This was, for instance, part of the writer Panteleymon Kulish’s worldview where the notion of “power” was subordinate to the notion of “truth”. Ukrainian noble landlords, hetmans and senior rulers, as well as their statehood aspirations, were seen exclusively as “untruth”. Despite Kulish’s huge cultural and spiritual contribution to the national revival, the drawback of his social stance was the inability to see a social class in the past or in his contemporary world that would prove willing and capable of creating separate statehood.

TARAS SHEVCHENKO

The socio-political stance and worldview of Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine’s most well-known poet, was different. He realized that all classes of society had to unite for national liberation of the entire Ukraine not just one social class or group.

When Russian “reformers” abolished Ukraine’s autonomy, they were seeking to assimilate Ukraine with Russia and to break the connections between the national elite and religious leaders and the average people. Many descendants of the Cossack seniors and nobility thus switched to Russian aristocracy, turning into “slaves with a cockade in the forehead” as Taras Shevchenko described them. However, this transformation was far from absolute or irreversible for many of Ukraine’s aristocratic families. In fact, Shevchenko’s close ties to Ukrainian aristocrats largely shaped his worldview and social perspective. As he traveled around Ukraine, he established fruitful contacts with the descendants of prominent Cossack and noble families who, both intentionally and not, were the carriers of the long-standing national and cultural traditions and the diverse memory of Ukraine from the time when it was ruled by Cossack hetmans. Many of his contacts with the left-bank nobility of the 1840s, including father and son Tarnavsky, Hryhoriy Halahan or Andriy Lyzohub, significantly contributed to the formation of Shevchenko’s social stance. His famous line, “Will we see our Washington, with the law new and just; we sure will someday”, was based on the concept of “American separatism” ■

*The Narodniks was a social opposition movement of patriotic intelligentsia and students, as well as peasants and workers, who united based on their democratic worldview and shared ethical, social and political ideals of democracy and socialism that could be used to build a new life of people. The term emerged in the early 1860s among Russian democrats, i.e. democracy- and reform-oriented people who supported the “people’s cause” and the people

from England pursued by the Ukrainian opposition led by Vasyl Kapnist, a poet, playwright and activist, a descendant of a well-known landlord family. American aristocratic opposition had gained independence through an armed rebellion against the rule of the metropolis, while preserving its social position at the same time. At some point, Ukrainian aristocrats, too, thought that they could repeat this in Ukraine with the support of Prussia. Taras Shevchenko was probably aware of the earlier campaign by Vasyl Kapnist, initiated in the late 18th century, to implement this idea. He was a close friend of Vasyl's son, Oleksiy, and could have heard of his father's political concept.

Shevchenko's contacts with Ukrainian aristocrats stem from St. Petersburg. In 1840, Petro Martos, the landlord of Lohvytsia and Lubny *povits* (counties) in Poltava Oblast, a descendant of an old Cossack elite family whom Shevchenko met in winter of 1839-1840, published *Kobzar*, the most famous collection of Shevchenko's poems, at his own expense. He introduced Shevchenko to Hryhoriy Tarnavsky, a well-known philanthropist and art expert, the founder of the famous collection of Ukrainian antiquities in the Kachanivka park that helped strengthen national consciousness of many figures in Ukrainian Renaissance. Shevchenko's dreams of a Ukraine liberated from the Russian rule were closely intertwined with the urge to revive the hetmanate, a widespread idea among Ukrainian aristocrats at the time. "The gold-clad hetmans will come to life", his characters would say.

On the one hand, his contacts with Ukrainian aristocrats largely shaped his national position which encompassed prospects of national revival, not just interests of peasants. On the other hand, his poems encouraged patriotic sentiments among Ukrainian aristocrats, created the nationwide spiritual upsurge badly needed by all participants of the Ukrainian movement regardless of their social class. His poems blurred the lines between the elites of Ukrainian society and the rest, some-



Historian and thinker Mykola Koštomarov



Poet Taras Shevchenko

thing that Russian autocrats had long striven for.

Despite all transformations of Ukrainian aristocrats caused by Russia's assimilation policy that resulted in the integration into the imperial system, many of them naturally rejected an alien regime and tried to preserve traditional ties to the lifestyle developed by the previous generations. Despite sharp dislike of the antihuman conduct of many Ukrainian aristo-

among them and tried to make them understand national goals and the need to restrain their negative class-dictated instincts. "Embrace, my brothers, the youngest brothers," he wrote. "Bless your children with a firm hand, and kiss them with your lips free".

Shevchenko's urge to reach national unity and reconciliation between Ukrainian nobility and peasants in society was based, among other things, on distinct socio-cultural ground shaped by history. This certain proximity of the two segments of society stemmed from the socio-economic affinity of the land ownership models for Cossacks and peasants that evolved from the 1648-1654 Khmelnytsky Uprising. The Cossacks were an open society, absorbing both the nobility and the peasants, their social, economic and cultural traditions included.

The flow of history in Ukraine proved that the ideals of national freedom and solidarity cannot be substituted by any other slogans, even the most appealing ones like the *Narodniks'* "land and freedom" or the subsequent Bolshevik "land to peasants". These ideals must be protected and cherished by all classes and segments of a nation. The generations of various stages of the Ukrainian liberation movement, including modern Ukrainian socialist parties, failed – or did not want – to understand this. ■



MOSCOW HAD NO COMMON ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN STATE-BUILDING WITH EUROPE. THEREFORE IT WAS TRYING TO STEAL ALL CIVILIZATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM UKRAINE, INCLUDING THE OLD KYIV STATEHOOD AND RECOGNITION THEREOF IN EUROPE

crats Shevchenko often observed, he still realized their social role and meaning in the liberation struggle. Unfortunately, the activists of the Ukrainian *narodnik* movement failed to realize this later and pushed what they saw as "the class of exploiters" to the sidelines. Shevchenko did not break contacts with aristocrats. Quite on the contrary, he stayed



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