

international edition

# The Ukrainian Week

№ 19 (42) NOVEMBER 2012



## NO MORE DELUSIONS PLEASE

**STOP THE WISHFUL THINKING AND GET  
REALISTIC ABOUT UKRAINE**



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**5 November** ————— **6 November**

The opposition gathers in front of the Central Election Commission, protesting against the falsification of the election



The parliament passes the National Referendum Law that gives the president more opportunities to change the Constitution through public voting and to manipulate the outcome

## QUOTES

**ANDREW WILSON**  
 on the media

The expert of the European Council on Foreign Relations believes that the Ukrainian government will renew pressure on the media once the election process is over


**VIKTOR YANUKOVYCH**  
 Quiet lay-offs

The president has made no public statements since October 31, but officials who failed to ensure high support for the PR are fired upon his instructions


**LESIA OROBETS**  
 The first victim of the election?

Unidentified people attack the office of her husband's firm. She assumes that the government is trying to force her into the pro-presidential majority in the new parliament


**VOLODYMYR YELCHENKO**  
 Ready for the Customs Union

Ukraine's Ambassador to Russia explains that Ukraine will join the Customs Union if the financial crisis continues in the EU



# Lateral Transfers in Law Enforcement



Personnel rotations began at Ukrainian law enforcement agencies after the election. They are particularly noticeable at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, where the heads of ten oblast departments were replaced within the course of one day. There were also new appointments in the Ministry's central apparatus as well as in some departments. Notably, the personnel clean-up largely pertained to the regions where the Party of Regions (PR) did not enjoy significant support. However, experts are not prone to think that the rotation is a direct consequence of the parlia-

mentary campaign. Hennadiy Moskal, a retired general in the police, feels that this is how the government is trying to get its loyal servants in place, prior to the presidential election. The newly appointed generals also include the following infamous names: the Ivano-Frankivsk Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs will be headed by Oleh Salo (photo 1) and the Zakarpattia Office – by Vasyl Vartsaba (photo 2). Both “distinguished” themselves during the 2004 presidential election. That very year, Vartsaba, the then head of the oblast Ministry of Internal Affairs conducted the so-called “Mu-

PHOTO: UNIAN

**The month in history**
**2 November 1917**


The Third Military Convention opens in Kyiv, demanding the immediate declaration of Ukraine's independence

**3 November 1937**


Soviet authorities conduct the mass execution of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in Sandarmokh, a forest in Karelia.

**10 November 1764**


Russian Empress, Catherine the Great, abolishes the rule of hetmans in Cossack Ukraine

11 November



**Volodymyr Klitschko** defends his world champion title in a 12 round fight against Poland's Mariusz Wach

12 November



**Catherine Ashton and Štefan Füle** express doubts as to whether the new Verkhovna Rada reflects the will of the people

13 November



The final results of the parliamentary election are officially announced

kachiv destruction" when the government tried to distort the will of the people with the aid of law enforcement agencies during the mayoral election. In 2005, a criminal case was initiated against the indicated persons and they were put on the international wanted list. According to some data, Salo and Vartsaba were in hiding in Russia. The government of the PR reinstated them and even gave them positions in Kyiv – and has now sent them to "the places of their former glory" – Western Ukrainian regions.

They say that the personnel re-shuffle of the Interior Ministry is a sort of preparation for the return of the despicable Mykola Bilokon, who headed the Ministry in the last years of the Kuchma presidency. Today, the former minister is working at the Russian Ministry of Justice and holds Russian citizenship, so his reincarnation in the office of the head of the Ukrainian police, would be a significant event. There is another assumption – that the large-scale personnel changes were initiated by the current Minister of Internal Affairs, Vitaliy Zakharchenko, who is attempting to create a network of "his own people on the ground". Zakharchenko is part of the Yanukovych family clan, so it's very likely that another position has been found for him outside the Interior Ministry (some say that he could replace Serhiy Liovochkin as the President's Chief of Staff). If that is the case, Zakharchenko's personnel combination is calculated to maintain indirect influence within the Ministry of Internal Affairs through those loyal to him.

## Time for a Tymoshenko-Lutsenko Bill?

On November 16, the US House of Representatives passed the Magnitsky Act entailing sanctions against Russian officials involved in the death of incarcerated Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky. The Senate may vote on it by the end of November, and the President is likely to approve it by the end of the year. The EU is preparing similar sanctions. In July, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly passed the Magnitsky Resolution calling on European countries to apply sanctions against the respective Russian officials. Thus far, the UK has done so. At the end of October, the European Parliament passed a resolution urging the European Council to apply similar sanctions. At this point, the US and EU sanctions include visa bans and the freezing of bank accounts. Experts project that the US might also use the Magnitsky Act to apply sanctions against officials that violate human rights in other countries, including those involved in the persecution of opposition leaders in Ukraine. In a recent interview for Deutsche Welle, German EMP Rebecca Harms stated that the EU is seriously contemplating sanctions against certain members of the Ukrainian government following the US model in the case of Magnitsky. However, there is a difference between the current situation in Ukraine and the Magnitsky case in Russia. The Ukrainian officials who were directly involved in the trials against opposition leaders were simply following orders from Ukraine's top officials, thus the most effective solution entails sanctions against those who ordered the persecution. Otherwise, trials similar to those against Tymoshenko and Lutsenko will persist, as those who follow orders are far more concerned about what may happen to them if they disobey than they are about possible sanctions against them in the EU or the US.



GOTO: PHL



11 November 1917



The Ukrainian regiment of the Third Military Convention crushes the Bolshevik resurrection in Kyiv

15 November 1945



A group of Ukrainian immigrant scientists establish the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences, UVAN, in Augsburg, Germany

20 November 1917



With its Third Universal, the Central Rada declares the establishment of the Ukrainian People's Republic, UNR

# Time for Action

**Yanukovich & Co do not hide the fact that their strategic goal is to retain control over the country. Society is ready to resist this with bottom-up consolidation and initiative**

**T**he 2012 parliamentary election is officially over in Ukraine. On 10-11 November, Central Election Commission Chairman, Volodymyr Shapoval, announced the official results and the opposition essentially recognized them on November 12. Despite stating that the parliamentary election was rigged and undemocratic, the opposition accepted its newly-won parliamentary mandates and agreed to start working in parliament. Of the 450 MPs, 445 are known. The remaining five will be decided after the reelection in FPTP districts, where major falsifications took place in favour of pro-government candidates, although in actual fact, there were many more such districts. Supported by less than one third of the electorate, the Party of Regions (PR) ended up with 185 seats while three opposition parties currently have 178 seats, plus five more, unless the reelection in the five disputed districts is rigged again. The Communist Party has 32 seats. The remaining 50 seats went to self-nominated candidates and representatives of minor parties. Through bribery and pressure, most of them will probably join the pro-government majority in the new parliament.

Greater support for the PR in a number of South-Eastern oblasts stems primarily from their ethno-social background, which is postcolonial and post-Soviet in essence. A large share of the population there are the descendants of people who were resettled from other regions of the Russian Empire or the USSR. They never accepted the fact of Ukraine as an independent state, and still look up to Moscow and the path it follows, the most ardent of which are Crimea and Sevastopol. According to polls, the largest share of their population does not identify itself with Ukraine, yet has had Ukrainian citizenship since 1991.

Moreover, the USSR's policy of constructing a new historical community called the "Soviet People"

**Author:  
Oleksandr  
Kramar**

**ENOUGH GAMES:** Western leaders are forced to shed their illusions about the democratic and constructive aspirations of Yanukovich and the Party of Regions, as well as the oligarchs' ability to lead Ukraine closer to Europe

Viktor Yanukovich switched Barack Obama's attention from democracy to nuclear energy during his first visit to the US in April 2010

and the cultivation of loyalty to despotic rule has crushed initiative and the expression of individuality in most of the Ukrainian population. As a result, these people remain socially and politically inert, ready to unthinkingly bow their heads to the stronger – such as entrepreneurs or state administration officials.

## PRETERM OPTIMISM

Despite the cautious optimism showed by the West, after the parliamentary election turned out to be less disastrous for the future of democracy in Ukraine than expected (some experts in the West expected the PR and its allies to gain a constitutional majority in parliament and pave the way for Yanukovich to continue ruling for many years to come) and the opportunity for a change of government after the 2015 presidential election, things are much more complicated. Yanukovich & Co do not hide the fact that their strategic goal is to retain control over the country and are likely to keep telling the West to stay away from Ukraine's domestic affairs. Meanwhile, the lack of electoral support shown in the October

vote will push the regime to seek far more exotic tools to stay in power after 2015.

Immediately after the election, the pro-presidential majority in parliament passed a law on a nationwide referendum. It creates the threat of a change to the Constitutional order by using controlled plebiscites. The procedure for drawing commissions to count the votes in referendums excludes the opportunity for opposition members to be involved. This opens doors to falsifications on a scale that is far greater than that in the last parliamentary election.

Meanwhile, as it repeats statements about the priority of European integration for Ukraine on a regular basis, without backing them up by taking action, the Yanukovich regime continues to look for other parties to turn to, should it find itself isolated from the West and relations with Russia become strained. So far, China appears to be the most likely alternative. It will not criticize Yanukovich for the violation of democratic standards, threaten the monopolist position of oligarchs close to the government, and at the same time, under certain conditions, can help the government solve urgent financial issues facing Ukraine today.

Putin's Russia does not hide its concerns with how most Ukrainians voted against the regime and Yanukovich's attempts to transfer allegiance to China. This gives the Kremlin good reasons to accelerate its integration plans for the post-Soviet territory. This will entail increasing pressure on the Ukrainian government to join the Customs and



Eurasian Unions, and designing of alternative scenarios to destabilize South-Eastern Ukraine, if the current government happens to lose in the 2015 presidential election. Yuriy Meshkov, Crimea's separatist ex-president, is already claiming from Moscow, that joining the Customs Union – with or without Ukraine – is the only way for Crimea to survive.

The frustration of voters with the social and economic situation in the country is strong and likely to escalate, as the second wave of the crisis reaches Ukraine. As a result, the part of the PR's core electorate discouraged by its failures could turn to Russia.

### THE WEAKNESS OF THE OPPOSITION

Many voted for an opposition party only because of its oppositional stance, and not because they strongly supported it. The government is likely to provoke conflicts within the opposition, discredit and sideline it as incapable and unconstructive. Reports have already surfaced of demands for all FPTP-elected MPs to join the Party of Regions rather than create satellite factions or groups oriented at the president as in the Kuchma years of 2002-2004. Thus, the scenario of reinforcing the role of the president, distancing him from the PR and creating his image as a non-party leader in preparation for the 2015 presidential campaign will be replaced by a campaign to create a stronger image of a unanimous ruling party that is capable of uniting Ukrainian politicians.

In this situation the opposition's prospects in the parliament will depend on its ability to achieve transparent agreements on the format of its participation in the 2015 presidential election, which will largely define political life for the next two years. If Tymoshenko remains in prison, both Yatseniuk and Klitschko are likely to run separately in hopes that one of them will make it to the second round and become a joint candidate of all opposition forces automatically. However, this approach risks discrediting opposition parties before the official presidential campaign even kicks off, if they fail to hide their internal tug of war and/or resist the regime effectively due to their lack of coordination and agreement.

First and foremost, society is expecting the opposition to prepare alternative projects for the resolution of key problems in Ukraine. But is it capable of doing so? The numerous declarations of the "united opposition" on the conclusions made from previous mistakes are supposed to convince people that they are, but the election campaign and the composition of the opposition parties, information regarding their connection to oligarchs and the absence of a clearly formulated plan of action in Ukraine, forces people to have reservations as to the ability of the elite in the current opposition to meet the expectations of most Ukrainians.

### THE UKRAINIAN MAJORITY

Such a situation spurs Ukrainian society to greater self-organization and the activation of efforts to find an alternative political power and a proj-

ect for the development of Ukraine as a democratic European country, based on the principles of true market relations, civil society and a law-governed state.

To achieve this, it is necessary to initiate a self-organization process at the bottom by means of self-financing on the basis of membership dues and mass voluntary donations from small business. According to an opinion poll conducted by the Democratic Initiative Foundation in early October, 6% of the population is already willing to finance a party, providing they are convinced that it is protecting their interests, and a further 10% can potentially join them. At present, this share of the population is ready to contribute an average of UAH 135 (nearly USD 17) in membership dues per month. Simple calculations show that this would be perfectly adequate to form and independently finance a large European-style party, which in their time, lay in the foundation of the modern democratic system.

Thus, the formation of alternative elites on the basis of self-organization in society, and their consolidation around common course is a more complex and prolonged process, than a situational cohesion into technological opposition conglomerates. On the other hand, a consolidation of the Ukrainian majority from the bottom is capable of forming alternative elites. It can also implement a Ukrainian version of a European civilization project.

A necessary condition for this is the formulation of a clear alternative to the existing state of affairs and an algorithm for its achievement, and informing the population about it. This is for people to know what can be done and how, what difficulties can be expected and why it is necessary to overcome them. Alternative forces to the Yanukovich regime do not have to try to win all Ukrainian voters over, since this is impossible. However, they have to be consistent in their vision of changes in Ukraine and realistic, guided by the interests of Ukrainian society. The formation of a civil society from the bottom up, and attaining power, starting on the local, then regional and nationwide level for a broad popular movement can only be possible if the electorate learn to differentiate between cheap populism and promises "to solve all problems on your behalf", and real programmes.

Nicolas Sarkozy awards Viktor Yanukovich with France's highest decoration, the Legion of Honour, in October 2010



The social base, formed from people who have rid themselves of superfluous illusions, overstated expectations and consumerist mindset, will be sufficiently stable to create the necessary amount of resilience for such a political force when it initiates the transformations that are necessary for Ukraine. The personnel that have been trained at different levels from the bottom up will be required to change the existing bureaucratic system to a progressive one.

## THE WEST'S MISSION

The evaluation of the parliamentary election proves that quite a few people in the West have begun to understand the specifics of Ukraine more clearly, particularly the total domination of the oligarchy, the dependence of numerous institutions which should be independent (for example election commissions and the court) on the party in power, the absence of actual freedom of speech and the monopolization of the leading nationwide media by a narrow circle of people that is connected to the government. Following on from this, the gulf between the ruling elites and the majority of people became clearer, a choice that the former can ignore as a result of various technologies for the distortion of the will of the people. However, the West finds it difficult to understand quite a few specific features of the Ukrainian political, social and economic order, which impacts the approval of their decisions regarding Ukraine.

In order to prevent being the target of the Ukrainian government's manipulations, the West has to reach its own impression of the processes taking place in Ukraine, based on direct contact with Ukrainian society. It also has to be more critical of grant-guzzling NGOs, which, taking advantage of the lack the knowledge about Ukraine among their Western partners and their exclusive positions, often merely nourish existing stereotypes regarding the situation. More specifically, their expectation for a change in government, based on the Ukrainian parliamentary election, reflects their firm belief that the current regime still possesses a sound element that can launch qualitative improvements, or that the replacement of Azarov with Arbutov, Kliuyev, with Khoroshkovsky or Tshipko or Yanukovych with Poroshenko can change anything. In truth,

Swedish  
Minister for  
Foreign Affairs  
Carl Bildt at a  
Shakhtar game  
alongside  
oligarch Rinat  
Akhmetov in  
November 2011



these illusions are more like the self-delusion initially seen in Western circles regarding Vladimir Putin and subsequently Dmitry Medvedev. Since the existing Ukrainian elite is of Soviet origin or a product of the colonial past, it is generally impossible to change it – a new one should be created in its place.

It is important to understand the fundamental reasons for the transformation of Ukraine into a modern European, law-governed and democratic state. Support is required for the formation of a civil society in Ukraine, by establishing thousands of contacts with its provincial and regional centres, as well as those in just several large cities. It is necessary to facilitate interpersonal contacts between Europeans and active Ukrainian citizens (not simply with mostly illegal migrants from Ukraine), learning about the way of life, political and business culture in the EU.

Sovietization, which was accompanied by the whipping out of individual initiative and the ownership instinct, has left a deep wound in the mindset of generations. However, the aspiration for self-sufficiency is slowly emerging, as reflected in the growing number of small and medium-sized business. The people, who assert themselves, often do so in spite of the existing post-Soviet state bureaucracy model and the economy dominated by oligarchs and monopolies. They are completely capable of becoming the basis for the future civil society and alternative political forces.

Finally, it is this “new Ukrainian petty bourgeoisie”, largely comprised of small businessmen, is the social stratum that is most interested in the European transformation of Ukraine, the consolidation in Ukraine of a real market economy, human rights, the protection of property rights, equality before the law, an independent judicial system, and a real representative democracy. The pace of relevant transformations will depend on the ability of the EU and the West as a whole to support the establishment of this class and the activation of its contacts with the EU. To achieve this, discrimination against Ukrainians as regards access to free travel, commodities and capital in Europe, should stop.

This is why it is so important to sign and start the ratification of the Association Agreement and Free Trade Area Agreement with Ukraine. Association, under current conditions, it not so much an incentive for the regime, as it is important support for Ukraine and society on its European route, an instrument which is capable of strengthening pro-European forces in Ukraine and objectively increase the possibility of realistically influencing any regime on the part of the EU. The refusal to sign the agreement will not only push away the Yanukovych regime. A significant part of society will be isolated from the opportunity to develop contacts with the EU, there will be great disenchantment, meanwhile the regime will be trying to convince the vast majority of the



Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council and head of the Party of Regions election campaign, Andriy Kliuyev, stays in touch with the EU Enlargement Commissioner, Stefan Füle

population that they are under the influence of the central media, that they don't want to see us in the EU, so it will be necessary to look for alternative alliances in the East, with Russia or even, for example, with China.

At the same time, in order to promote changes in the Ukrainian government, the West should take previous mistakes into consideration and take the initiative into its own hands, forcing the current Ukrainian elite to react accordingly. It is not looking on the Association and Free Trade Area Agreements with the EU as a tool to put pressure on the Yanukovich regime and influential oligarchs. They have limited interest in its being put into effect, and delaying the signing is not critical for them. After all, the oligarchs have created their own business empires even without Association and FTA with the EU. Such an agreement is beneficial for them from the point of view of increasing the sales volume of their production on the EU market. However, what is much more important to them is that the existing rules of the game in Ukraine remain. This will allow them to maintain their monopoly positions and obtain excess profits, avoiding competition with Western business. For this reason, oligarchs are not really interested in European companies entering the Ukrainian market, nor are they interested in the emergence of real competitive conditions with local Ukrainian medium-sized business, a niche

that they can currently determine independently, using their influence in the approval of state decisions. For this reason, although unhappy with the concentration of power in the hands of the "Family", they have no desire to see the emergence of normal political parties, which would not be under their control and could try to change the rules of the game in Ukraine.

The idea that Ukrainian oligarchs will inevitably resist the swallowing of Ukraine by Russia is a myth, too. In fact, "Ukrainian" oligarchs have never really identified themselves with Ukraine or protected its sovereignty – even if economic – from Russia. By contrast, they have always been – and still are – a part of the Soviet business elite, struggling to expropriate and exploit the region's economic resources for their own benefit without creating any new potential for them. If the only way for them to do so is to prevent other representatives of the Soviet business elite from entering the market they control, they counteract. But whenever the prospect of personal benefit entails selling a share of their assets, "economic patriotism" vanishes as it did among Ukrainian oligarchs who have been actively selling their plants to Russians over the past two-three years.

Moreover, Ukrainian oligarchs have been watching not only the negative, but also the positive experience of their Russian peers doing business under Putin's regime, provided that they comply with a set of

unspoken rules. They are concerned with the terms of integration in the Eurasian or European space rather than with which of the two they may end up in. In fact, they may view real competition, the rule of law and a political system they cannot control, as a much bigger threat than being under the Kremlin's influence.

When applying carrot-and-stick strategy to increase pressure on the Yanukovich regime and the oligarchy, the West should keep in mind that none of the above is a sincere follower of European standards. The pressure should primarily target specific Ukrainian top officials who are involved in the violation of human rights and crimes, by means of freezing their bank accounts, launching investigations against people linked to them, and banning them from obtaining EU and US visas. A list of requirements should be compiled for them to comply with, and sanctions should be increased or relaxed as the respective officials comply or fail to meet the requirements. Apart from that, pressure should be exerted on leading oligarchs who support the Yanukovich regime.

Meanwhile, the current position of "neither war, nor peace" which essentially entails the freezing of contacts with Ukraine on the part of the EU and the US, and avoiding to take more effective steps that could play a decisive role in the change of government, threatens to facilitating the mounting authoritarianism of Yanukovich and the influence of Moscow. After all, Ukraine and its future cannot be viewed as an individual isolated case. It is not so much about Ukraine now, as it is about the line of bifurcation that has emerged in it. Developments in Ukraine indicate the direction in which many post-socialist countries will develop in the near future. The defeat of democratic and pro-European forces in Ukraine will open the door to stronger authoritarian and pro-Russian trends in South-Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and the Baltic States. The victory of the Ukrainian majority and its European choice will set the ground for stronger democracies in the Baltic and Black Sea region, and erode the threat of the new Russian imperialism for Europe. Meanwhile, the emergence of a real market and rule of law in Ukraine will offer the EU good potential for deeper economic cooperation with a potentially large and promising Ukrainian market. ■

# NO ILLUSIONS

Ukraine's majority needs to accurately assess the potential of the current opposition. This will help spare the country from further disappointment and preserve hope for an alternative project

**Authors:** Oleksandr Oleksiyenko,  
Andriy Skumin

**T**he election proved that a majority has crystallized in Ukraine—and it voted against the Yanukovich regime. The election also demonstrated the lack of a new mainstream party on the country's political horizon.

Despite the opposition's sparse media, financial, organizational and leadership resources prior the election and the amount of administrative resources utilized by the ruling party, the number of parliamentary seats gained by the three opposition parties (Batkivshchyna, UDAR and Svoboda) exceeded projections. However, this can hardly be attributed to the successful election campaigns of the opposition parties or the persuasive power of their ideologies. At this point, the majority of Ukraine's voters have proven their utter rejection of the Yanukovich regime. Many voted for an opposition party only because of its oppositional stance, and not because they strongly supported it. Similar motivations pushed people to vote for single candidates from Batkivshchyna, UDAR and Svoboda. Quite a few people supported them without knowing anything specific about the candidates they elected, voting for them simply because they presented an alternative to the current leadership. Thus, voters granted more trust to the political forces that call themselves the opposition, even though they still have a lot of questions for each of them. However, the great risk is that they will once again disappoint the majority of voters seeking an alternative project. If that happens, the opposition will find itself on the political sidelines very

quickly, and the government will help to speed the process by attacking its many weak points.

## **BATKIVSHCHYNA: EXPLOITING PROTEST SENTIMENTS – FOR HOW LONG?**

The election campaign, especially in the days following the vote, was further testament to the poor organization of the United Opposition. By focusing its efforts on Western Ukraine, Batkivshchyna essentially left the rest of the country to the Party of Regions (PR), especially its first-past-the-post candidates. The United Opposition conducted a sluggish campaign in Central, Southern and Eastern Ukraine, often nominating weak FPTP candidates while leaving fairly popular people behind. As a result, no Batkivshchyna candidates won in Poltava or Volyn Oblasts, while Kmelnytsk, Kirovohrad, Chernihiv, Cherkasy, Kyiv, Zhytomyr, and Vinnytsia Oblasts elected just one Batkivshchyna candidate each despite giving from 30 to 45% to the United Opposition in the party-list vote. Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, Kherson, Mykolayiv, and Kharkiv Oblasts each gave over 35% to the opposition. This means that the opposition could have struggled for victory in at least 15 districts, as witnessed in Pervomaik, where voters fiercely defended the triumphant opposition candidate following blatant falsification of the vote in favour of a pro-government one. However, Batkivshchyna ended up winning just one seat in these oblasts. Both Batkivshchyna and UDAR gave up on the East without a fight, represented by a minimal number of candidates, commission members and observers. Therefore, it is virtually impossible to find out how



the votes were actually counted there. After all, the United Opposition's inertia in the South and East gave the government a chance to once again divide Ukraine into two parts.

Clearly, the opposition's campaign teams did a poor job of preparing for the election. The vote count only confirmed this, as in many cases no Batkivshchyna activists were available to protect the outcome of their candidate. Sometimes, the impression was that Batkivshchyna was specifically reluctant to help its candidates where pro-government candidates were leading, if only narrowly. United Opposition candidates were often surprisingly passive themselves, letting their victory slip away at the finish line.

After all, Batkivshchyna ended up winning 62 seats under the party-list vote and 40 more seats through its FPTP candidates. However, it had offered nothing that could help to turn it into a mainstream party during the campaign. It relied instead upon old slogans like "Incarcerate the Bandits" and "Freedom for Yulia", offering no solutions to major prob-

lems such as freeing the economy from the grip of oligarchs, eliminating corruption, and consolidating the nation.

Batkivshchyna's leadership raised the most questions. It is unclear who makes the key decisions and who should be held responsible for obvious failures, including the failed election campaign and vote count in Eastern and Central Ukraine.

The party is obviously suffering a leadership crisis. Every day, United Opposition leaders seem to be less concerned with Yulia Tymoshenko. Even her hunger strike against falsifications in the election failed to garner any reaction from them. Turchynov, Kozhemiankin and Yatseniuk hardly commented on it during the first days following her announcement of the hunger strike. There is a strong impression that nobody is going to release Tymoshenko. Instead, her imprisonment will be exploited as long as it is effective in attracting the electorate. She has lost nearly all influence within her party. Meanwhile, Yatseniuk, accompanied by Turchynov and Kozhemiankin, two other leaders of the

United Opposition, is growing less effective as a politician. During the election campaign—and especially after the vote—he looked more like a mid-level manager than a party leader.

Poor coordination has plagued Batkivshchyna's leadership. This

## IT IS UNCLEAR IN BATKIVSHCHYNA WHO MAKES THE KEY DECISIONS AND WHO SHOULD BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR FAILURES

problem was visibly manifested in their reaction to election rigging. Arseniy Yatseniuk declared at a rally in front of the Central Election Commission on November 5th that his party had consented to a re-vote in five disputed districts because it was "the best solution in the situation" in his opinion. His ally Anatoliy Hrytsenko wrote on his Facebook page, "I want to punch someone in the face for this 'victorious' recognition of a re-vote in five districts". Earlier, Hrytsenko proposed the absurd initiative of holding a Batkivshchyna »

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party convention, “nullifying” party lists and refusing to attend the parliament. Utterly unprofessional and lacking the support of his allies, this statement confused voters and forced other opposition members to clarify that no such initiative had been accepted and it was impossible to carry out at the moment anyway.

Apparently, the key challenge for the bloc is now to develop a format of cooperation between Batkivshchyna, Yatseniuk’s Front of Change, Hrytsenko’s Civic Position, and other parties that ran under the United Opposition’s flag. The United Opposition parliamentary faction risks becoming a replica of Viktor Yushchenko’s and Yuriy Lutsenko’s Our Ukraine–People’s Self-Defence faction without any trace of a joint position or discipline. Remaining unanimous is one of the key objectives on its agenda, especially given the government’s attempts to fuel conflicts among its leaders and defeat each party individually.

After all,

the United Opposition and its leaders risk ending up on the parliamentary sidelines unless they stop exploiting the electorate with high-minded protest sentiments and offer the voters a clear and constructive alternative project.

### UDAR: MANIPULATORS VS KLITSCHKO

The abbreviation UDAR – meaning “punch” or “hit” in Ukrainian and standing for “Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reforms”, was one of the very few creative aspects of Vitali Klitschko’s entire 2012 campaign. The party was devoid of the triumphant features exhibited by its leader in the boxing ring. “Vitali is used to relying on himself and was not really prepared for a dirty collective

struggle,” an UDAR team member said off-record. This is a strange comment considering that Klitschko has been a Ukrainian political leader for several years now.

The crucial question for Klitschko is why he chose to promote himself rather than cooperate closely with the United Opposition. In December 2011, UDAR and ex-Defence Minister Anatoliy Hrytsenko’s Civic Position held lengthy negotiations about running jointly, but failed to reach an agreement. In March 2012, Klitschko rejected an offer to run under the joint opposition party list with Batkivshchyna and the Front of Change.

Klitschko’s allies stated that this rejection was motivated by polls projecting more votes for the United Opposition and UDAR running separately rather than jointly. For some reason, though, UDAR strongly insisted on its own scenario for the selection of joint FPTP

candidates, urging Batkivshchyna and Svoboda to accept it instead of a plan that was beneficial for the whole opposition. The scenario offered by UDAR was based on polls that projected victory for most of its FPTP candidates, not those from Batkivshchyna or Svoboda. The vote proved that UDAR had been bluffing or had chosen unprofessional pollsters. The official count brought victory to only six UDAR candidates in FPTP districts. Worst of all, the rivalry be-

tween the United Opposition and UDAR candidates in one district resulted in the victory of pro-government candidates in at least 22 districts. In most of these districts, Batkivshchyna candidates followed with a narrow gap of under 1%, while Klitschko’s candidates were running well behind. In fact, UDAR stole from 3% to 15% of the votes that could potentially have

## KLITSCHKO MUST LEARN THE RIGHT LESSONS FROM HIS EARLIER DEFEATS AND RID HIMSELF OF THE PERSISTENT MANIPULATORS WHO MAY WELL LEAD HIS PARTY INTO A PRO-GOVERNMENT MAJORITY

gone to the opposition if Batkivshchyna and UDAR had nominated joint candidates.

Sociological miscalculations and unrealistic expectations were not the only factors that led to UDAR’s failure. Klitschko and his team wanted to come in second in the election and gain more seats than Batkivshchyna in order to dominate the decision regarding the nomination of a single opposition candidate for the 2015 presidential election. UDAR did not take into account the fact that the United Opposition managed to reach out to voters with their campaign agenda despite non-constructive slogans such as “We will stop them!” and their focus on the “struggle between good and evil”. Klitschko did not fit into this scheme very well – not once did he criticize President Yanukovich personally throughout his entire campaign.

This reserved (or flexible?) attitude fuelled rumours of Klitschko’s collaboration with the Firtash group represented by the President’s Chief of Staff Serhiy Liovochkin in the government. Meanwhile, at his party convention, he failed to say how exactly he was going to keep his allies from collaborating with pro-presidential forces in the parliament. Potential crossovers are another weak point of UDAR. It has more of these than Batkivshchyna, which nominated mostly reliable people, save for a few exceptions, or Svoboda, which lured many voters with the fact that pro-gov-

ernment forces could not buy its MPs.

Klitschko cannot become the leader of a mainstream party because his team includes a number of manipulators who would prevent him from becoming an effective politician. Everyone is offering him concepts and ideas that are often mutually exclusive, hence UDAR's unclear position. It appears to promote European choice while not seeing the increasing role of the Russian language in Ukraine and close friendship with Moscow as barriers to that. These people seem to be preventing Klitschko from realizing how crucial many things are for UDAR as a party that aims to lead the opposition: it should admit that Ukraine has no free market; offer an alternative to the tycoon-controlled economy; and determine the central elements upon which national identity will be shaped.

Otherwise, it does not qualify as an opposition party. That is partly the reason why Klitschko and his party did worse in the election than they had expected. They failed to communicate a clear agenda to potential voters. Instead, UDAR's campaign featured people who wanted to use Klitschko to their benefit or work for different political forces.

Now Klitschko must learn the right lessons from his earlier defeats and rid himself of the persistent manipulators who may well lead his party into a pro-government majority. That would be the end of his political career. If UDAR wants to increase its political weight, it must change its team and its platform to stand apart from those of minor parties.

### SVOBODA: FROM RALLIES TO THE PARLIAMENT

Unlike Batkivshchyna and UDAR, Svoboda's candidates in the new parliament are unlikely to join the pro-government wing. Even if it has potential crossovers, tough party discipline will prevent them from switching sides. Svoboda has an ideology and a clear position, well-organized local teams, devoted activists, and the potential to attract more voters. Its key problem is the lack of qualified people in specific industries who could offer an alternative project. With most of its early experience

based on protests and activism, Svoboda knows better how to destroy, not build.

Its victory risks playing a lame trick on Svoboda. Once in the parliament, it may decide that it is do-

## SVOBODA NEEDS TO INVOLVE MORE OPINION LEADERS AND PROFESSIONALS IN PUBLIC GOVERNANCE, ECONOMICS AND EDUCATION

ing everything right and discontinue its political development. Until now a "street" party, it may fail to transform into a proper parliamentary one, and end up doing virtually nothing but blocking microphones, fighting with Party of Regions MPs or quarrelling with the Communist Party. That would quickly push it to the sidelines, and the government would make every effort to help it get there. It may also face harassment aimed at damaging its reputation as "the only party that does not sell its votes" which was a major source of its 10% in the election.

Svoboda's success in the election is likely to push the government to implement a scenario discussed earlier, yet hardly realistic until recently. It might use loyal media to manipulate public opinion and lead Oleh Tiahnybok, Svoboda's leader, portrayed as the best rival of Viktor Yanukovich, into the second tour of the presidential election, while also fuelling fears of rising Ukrainian neo-Nazism. This would repeat the campaigns of 1996 in Russia with Yeltsin versus Zhiuganov, or 1999 in Ukraine with Kuchma versus Symonenko, where most voters stood up against the Communist threat. This does not mean that Svoboda or Ti-

ahnybok will willingly play into this scenario. The government will merely use its rival's strengths against it, exploiting Svoboda's growing reputation as the most radical and consistent opponent of the anti-Ukrainian regime.

Svoboda can try to use this scenario to its benefit. However, this will require many efforts and transformations. Firstly, it needs to shed its image as a xenophobic and anti-Semitic party orchestrated by pro-Russian forces. Otherwise, it will never have the support of the moderate electorate, while the EU might count on Yanukovich or another PR candidate in the second round, thus giving the regime the green light to arranging the outcome it needs at any price. Secondly, Svoboda must attract and involve more opinion leaders and professionals in public governance, economics and education – especially from Central and South-eastern Ukraine. Meanwhile, it should push aside part of the "old guard" that still turns to rhetoric and policy typical for marginal ultra-radical forces, not that of a party with political leadership ambitions. Last but not least, Svoboda needs to upgrade its agenda to make it more realistic in the current global and local arenas, stating a clear vision of the changes necessary to implement it in the best interest of Ukrainian voters. Until now, Svoboda – like Batkivshchyna and UDAR – has not raised or analysed certain crucial issues for society such as the damage done by oligarchs to the economy, monopolization and manipulation of the print media market that is squeezing out Ukrainian-language publications, and the russification of the book publishing industry. Its alternative project should offer constructive solutions to the problems facing society at the moment. Otherwise, the reboot that the majority of voters are looking forward to will not take place once again.

In order to become a viable alternative to the current regime, Svoboda will have to transform into a constructive rightist party that can protect the interests of the Ukrainian majority from the ultra-right populist party that it is now. Unless that happens, it will quickly lose its support and end up with the same core electorate of barely 4% that it garnered in 2011. ■



# Another Step to Isolation

**Author:**  
**Janusz Bugajski**

**A**fter the contested election victory of the Party of Regions, Ukraine will feel increasingly alone and abandoned by the West. The U.S. administration, several EU governments, and the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) have described the parliamentary ballot as a step backward for Ukrainian democracy, while U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged Kyiv to put an “immediate end” to “the selective prosecution and detention of political opponents.” Having ignored previous admonitions from Washington and Brussels, the Regions government may instead seek to tighten the Presidential grip and move Ukraine closer to the Russian and Belarusian political model.

It was hoped that the parliamentary elections, if conducted according to Western standards, would launch a new chapter in Kyiv’s relations with Europe and the U.S., by re-energizing the EU Association Agreement, sealing an enhanced free-trade accord with the Union, raising prospects for the release of International Monetary Fund (IMF) resources, and revamping relations with Washington. Unfortunately, Ukraine now finds itself caught between its own political failings, the EU’s internal preoccupations, and America’s strategic disinterest. With a more alienated West and a diminishing international reputation, Kyiv will have even less leverage to resist Russia’s neo-imperial ambitions.

## AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES

While Ukraine moves closer toward quasi-authoritarianism, the re-election of President Barack Obama will ensure that Kyiv is shifted further to the rear of U.S. foreign policy. In the past four years, Ukraine has slipped from the second tier of U.S. foreign policy priorities into a tertiary sphere

of non-urgent international issues. This is partly due to Ukraine’s democratic regression and partly a consequence of America’s relegation of the broader Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union as a lesser geopolitical concern than the Middle East or South Asia and East Asia.

As a by-product of the Obama administration’s “reset” policy toward Moscow, launched in early 2009, Washington curtailed if not completely discarded its campaign to enlarge NATO and secure the post-Soviet neighbourhood within Western structures. This has left the Central and East European states bordering Russia more exposed and vulnerable to Moscow’s pressures and integrationist maneuvers. Whereas a Mitt Romney presidency may have challenged Russia on its regional ambitions and its internal authoritarianism, Obama’s softer approach is likely to continue during his second mandate.

Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Georgia are not priority interests for the current American Administration, whether in terms of democratic development, national sovereignty, or their strategic location. The focus has been on establishing a working relationship with Russia in such spheres as arms control, counter-proliferation, and anti-terrorism, even at the cost of neglecting or relegating new or aspiring allies.

The Ukraine-U.S. Strategic Partnership, signed in December 2008 during the waning days of the George W. Bush Administration, was intended to give structure and content to the relationship with Kyiv. However, the Partnership has not been significantly developed by the Obama White House, as there has been little impetus from either side. It was based on the assumption that Kyiv would make strides in strengthening democracy and the rule of law



while more effectively preparing the country for eventual NATO accession in line with the final declaration at NATO’s Bucharest Summit in April 2008.

However, the “common values and interests” that the Partnership envisaged seem to be evaporating, with both Ukraine and the U.S. veering away from each other. Ukraine’s “values” have not included democratic development, while its strategic interests have diverged from the Euro-Atlantic path. It is difficult for the U.S. or any other country to defend Ukraine’s sovereignty if the government has chosen to expose itself more extensively to Russia’s pressure tactics because of its alienation from the West.

Since the Yanukovich administration took office in 2010, several meetings of the Ukraine-U.S. Strategic Partnership Commission have taken place, and three new groups were formed to focus on peaceful nuclear energy development, political dialogue and the rule of law, and science and technology. Although some high-level meetings have been staged, there is growing uncertainty whether these will continue and if the Partnership will have any durable impact.

Despite these setbacks, not everything is necessarily lost. If the Ukrainian authorities are serious about upholding the country’s sovereignty and maintaining their freedom of choice in international

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GOTO: UNIAN

alliances then more work must be done to develop the Partnership with America. In a recent report sponsored by the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation in Washington, leading American policy analysts listed a range of constructive initiatives for Kyiv. For instance, it can make better use of U.S. technical assistance in implementing defense reforms. It can also improve the business climate to attract American investment, including in key economic sectors such as high-tech industries, aircraft construction, hydrocarbon and nuclear energy, energy efficiency, alternative sources of energy, and agriculture.

A number of economic agreements can also be concluded by both partners, such as broadening the assortment of Ukrainian exports on the U.S. market; minimizing trade barriers; and further liberalizing the bilateral trade regime through conclusion of a Ukraine-U.S. free trade agreement. Washington can also increase technical assistance to help Kyiv attract foreign investment to develop Ukraine's natural gas sources and thereby reduce its dependence on imported energy which comes at a political price.

The U.S. government can also intensify its efforts to develop the Ukraine-NATO dialogue. But a much more difficult decision for Washington in the aftermath of the Ukrainian elections is whether to urge the EU to proceed with an early signature and ratification of

the Association Agreement and Free Trade accord. The administration will need to consult closely with Brussels, as it will not want to be out of step with its European partners.

### NATO CONTEXTS

Ukraine's decision on its "non-bloc status" means that the authorities no longer aspire to join the Alliance or envisage closer integration with NATO. Although the rationale for neutrality was presumably to improve relations with Russia, Moscow views it as a sign of weakness in its offensive against NATO. Ukraine's estrangement will also diminish Washington's ability to offer political support for Ukraine's assimilation into the EU. Under the Yanukovich-Party of Regions government no high-level Ukraine-NATO meetings have been held in conjunction with the last three NATO summits. This reflects both the lack of an agenda and an absence of political will. It may also indicate that Kyiv is succumbing to pressure from Moscow to distance itself both from the Alliance and from Washington.

If the new government wants to demonstrate its commitment to Ukraine's independence and display to President Putin that it does not take instructions from his office, then it should reset its relations with NATO. Ukraine's declaration of non-bloc status may not in itself hinder the content of Ukraine-NATO relations. Indeed, Kyiv can work more closely with incoming officials in the second Obama administration to intensify cooperation with the Alliance, including the country's inclusion in NATO missions and activities.

Even without joining NATO, active participation in Alliance operations is a form of self-defense for Ukraine. It enables greater military and political inter-operability with the West as a shield against unwanted pressures from the East. Participation in the closing stages of the Afghanistan mission is one of the few arenas where the country can improve its international reputation and enhance its relations with Washington.

Kyiv can also become more actively engaged in regional security discussions and formulate clear Ukrainian positions on such questions as conventional arms control, European missile defense, cy-

ber security, and Moldovan integrity. A domestic focus on reforming the security and defense sectors consistent with NATO standards will also substantially enhance the country's prospects. For its part, the U.S. administration should not be passive but can reach out to the new government. It can offer advice on how best Ukraine can strengthen its practical cooperation with the Alliance and extend technical assistance to promote the reform agenda.

### OSCE OPPORTUNITIES

One additional development during 2013 provides Kyiv with an opportunity and a test of its commitment to Western values and interests. Ukraine's chairmanship of the OSCE next year can either strengthen the country's standing in the West or it will underscore that the government is sliding into the OSCE's authoritarian camp led by the Russian Federation.

The main risks for the OSCE chairmanship are increasing evidence that Ukrainian democracy is eroding and falling short of the standards exhibited by the OSCE's democratic bloc. To stem and reverse such presumptions, Kyiv should highlight the OSCE's human dimension agenda, which includes democracy promotion. In particular, this means upholding the mission of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw as the primary monitor of democratic development and human rights throughout the OSCE region. In recent years, ODIHR has been under considerable attack from Moscow for exposing election violations in Russia and other post-Soviet states.

As OSCE chair, the Ukrainian government should also engage in initiatives on arms control and nuclear non-proliferation. It can thereby strengthen its reputation as a country that voluntarily surrendered its nuclear weapons and highly enriched uranium in order to advance confidence building and security throughout Europe and Eurasia. At the very least, it will keep Kyiv in the spotlight. Otherwise, continuing estrangement from the West will simply drive the country into Russia's arms, and as we know from history Moscow finds it difficult to let go of allies that it has closely embraced. ■

# David Kramer:

We've been talking about carrots for too long. Carrots don't work. It's time to have a serious conversation

**Interviewer:**  
**Nataliya**  
**Gumenyuk,**  
**USA**

**D**avid Kramer is president of Freedom House. This summer Freedom House warned Kyiv about possible sanctions against Ukrainian top officials. After the October parliamentary election, David Kramer talks about sanctions as a necessary step similar to measures against Russia.

**UW: Freedom House published a critical report "Sounding the Alarm Round 2: Protecting Democracy in Ukraine" in July, saying that Ukraine may head down a path toward autocracy and kleptocracy. Quite a few concerns were linked to the parliamentary election. How do you see the election against the backdrop of the report and your earlier observations?**

I must say that your government ignored most of our remarks, unfortunately. Ukraine will head the OSCE in 2013. However, our concern is that Kyiv failed to comply with its commitments to the OSCE to hold a fair and transparent election. Ukraine has made a step back

## BIO

**David J. Kramer** is President of Freedom House, which he joined in **October 2010**. Prior to joining Freedom House, Kramer was a Senior Transatlantic Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States. Before joining GMF, Kramer served as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor from **March 2008 to January 2009**. He also was a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, responsible for Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus affairs as well as regional non-proliferation issues. Before joining the U.S. Government, Kramer was a Senior Fellow at the Project for the New American Century, Associate Director of the Russian and Eurasian Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Assistant Director of Russian and Eurasian Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, all in Washington. Kramer received his M.A. in Soviet Studies from Harvard University and his B.A. in Soviet Studies and Political Science from Tufts University.



in terms of cooperation with the OSCE. This has been highlighted in comments from the OSCE-ODIHR, the US Department of State, and other observers.

**UW: Did the campaign meet your expectations?**

We started the monitoring well in advance this time. Hillary Clinton and Catherine Ashton wrote a great article about the abuse of administrative resources, pressure on the media, the Central Election Commission, and voter bribery. But it was published only a week before the election, and that was too late. A warning like that should be disclosed at least a month before the election takes place. Eventually, we saw the violations similar to those in the widely criticized local election in 2010. In nationwide terms, this year's parliamentary election was the worst since the rerun of the presidential election in 2004.

**UW: Many serious violations and wide-scale falsifications in favour of pro-government candidates in first-past-the-post districts were reported during the vote count. Just take the scandal in Pervomaisk, Mykolayiv Oblast. How do you assess this situation?**

It's discouraging to see this sort of violations and violence. Such developments do not create the necessary ground for solving political conflicts. They further polarize the situation and raise doubts about election results.

**UW: How would you comment on the fact that the Ukrainian government keeps ignoring warnings from the West?**

We do find it surprising. We had meetings on the highest level, including with President Yanukovich. The Ukrainian government talks about commitments but then has no intention to fulfill them. I'm afraid that we've reached the stage when the only way to move something is through punishment – i.e., targeted sanctions. Incentives, it appears, will not change the way the government behaves. We've been talking about carrots for too long. Carrots haven't worked. It's time to have a serious conversation. Delaying the signing of the Association Agreement and DCFTA didn't work. I can only assume that President Yanukovich is not truly interested in signing them. So, I see no other way than taking serious measures. I reluctantly have come to the conclusion that applying sanctions, especially against certain officials, is the only alternative.



PHOTO: UNIAN

**UW: What does this mean?**

Freedom House will soon call for serious consideration of personal sanctions. These will first of all include refusal to grant visas to some Ukrainian officials responsible for the violations. Of course, these measures will not be taken immediately, but the talk of them will take on a much more serious scale. It's very important that the US Congress passed the Magnitsky legislation dealing with Russia first, since the situation there is much worse, but after that, the focus should turn to Ukraine. In the case of Russia, the Magnitsky Act will not only bar officials involved in the death of the Russian lawyer from entering the US, but allow freezing of their assets.

**UW: The Congress suggested sanctions against Ukrainian officials involved in human rights violations in July. In September, the Senate passed a resolution demanding the release of Yulia Tymoshenko. In both cases, these were just declarations.**

So far, this has been the most serious step against the Ukrainian government. More importantly, there was not one vote against it in the Senate.

**UW: How can the outcome of the US election affect its relations with Ukraine?**

There will be no much difference.

**UW: Before the Ukrainian parliamentary election, Russian opposition activist Leonid Razvozhayev was kidnapped in Kyiv after he came to Ukraine to ask for political asylum. What do you think about this?**

It was definitely kidnapping. It's hard to say whether the Ukrainian government helped Russian special services, whether it knew about what happened, or whether it merely turned a blind eye to this. However, it allowed another government's security services to kidnap a person on its territory. We are not concerned – we are outraged! This is the return to Soviet-style methods. We haven't seen anything like this for a long time. Moreover, the government of Ukraine seems to be barely embarrassed by the fact that special services of another country feel like home in its territory. It should launch an investigation into how this happened.

**UW: After the parliamentary campaign ended, where do you see the biggest problems in Ukraine?**

Selective justice, persecution of political opponents and corruption on the highest levels. The Ukrainian government is completely responsible for this. The biggest threat is corruption, including the "familyization". This word was frequently used in April among people who were discussing how the president's family allegedly gains personally from his position, and strengthens itself as one of the power centres.

**UW: You are looking at the situation with democracy in Ukraine in the context of its presidency at OSCE in 2013. What can this mean for OSCE?**

Kazakhstan headed OSCE in 2010... and it was not a great year for the organization though it survived. I really hope Ukraine won't do damage to the OSCE. Heading it means even more responsibility to fulfill the commitments in the human dimension. The chair should be a role model, and what kind of model can Ukraine be today? ■



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# Steven Pifer:

The West now views Ukraine as a country that has gone off the democratic track

**Interviewer**  
**Natalia**  
**Gumenyuk,**  
**USA**

**S**teven Pifer, long-time diplomat and US Ambassador to Ukraine in 1998-2000, has been known for reserved comments on the Ukrainian government. However, in his latest interview for *The Ukrainian Week*, Pifer sharply criticized the backslide on democracy in Ukraine and outlined the impact the October parliamentary election might have on the Ukrainian government's future relationship with the West.

**UW: Can you comment on the statement from the US State Department and the reaction of other Western countries regarding the Ukrainian election?**

If you look at how the US State Department, the EU and most European capitals reacted, it was pretty much a sense of disappointment about this election. It is not so much about what happened on Sunday (October 28, the election day – **Ed.**) because the voting looked like it went fairly well. It's what happened before, like the abuse of administrative resources, uneven access to the media, questions about the transparency of the Central Election Commission's operations. And, of course two of the main opposition leaders, Yulia Tymoshenko and Yuriy Lutsenko, were in jail. Compared to the presidential election in 2010 or parliamentary elections in 2006 and 2007, this election was a significant step backwards.

**UW: So, now that election is over and the State Department has commented on it, what's next?**

I think we will have to wait and see. The Yanukovych Administration had the chance to run a good election and get good marks. Some



were ready to say that would have been enough for us to engage Ukraine in a more positive way. That argument can't be made now because the election process was not seen as a step forward. I think Washington and other capitals will see this as just another piece of evidence of the Yanukovych Administration moving away from a democratic course. It cannot be good for Ukraine's relations with the US and Europe.

**UW: Could you explain the latest statement from the State Department and the resolution from the US Congress and Senate? What do they mean?**

Both resolutions reflect what the Congress really thinks about Ukraine. Administration officials have said that they are not considering sanctions against Ukraine at this point. However, the most recent resolution put forward by Senator Richard Durbin and approved by the Senate in September, called for visa sanctions against specific Ukrainians. I know that some in Ukraine said that the process was not correct or that it was not legitimate (among others, the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued such a statement – **Ed.**). The most strik-

ing thing about that was that not a single senator spoke out against the resolution — and the US Congress has been very friendly towards Ukraine for the past 20 years. Now no-one is ready to defend the Ukrainian government. That suggests that the Congress now views Ukraine as a country that has gone off the democratic track. That's a real problem.

**UW: What do you mean when you talk about sanctions?**

I'd like to make it clear that there is a separation between the Ukrainian government and the Ukrainian people. The resolutions targeted specific individuals who are responsible for the democratic regression that we are witnessing. I think it is still too early to talk about the application of real sanctions by the Congress. What Kyiv should find worrisome is the fact that this conversation was not even being held just a year-and-a-half ago.

**UW: Has there been a precedent of applying similar sanctions? The Congress has just passed the Magnitsky Act, but the Senate has not. What does this mean?**

The House of Representatives voted on November 16 to pass the



PHOTO: NATALIA GUMENYUK

Magnitsky Act. The Administration had said that it already put a number of people connected to the case on a no-visa list. It did so partly because it would have liked to retain the right to impose this sort of sanction as an administrative decision, rather than as a result of Congressional action. Ten years ago, the US applied visa sanctions against some people from Belarus. So, there have been cases when the US government resorted to this, but it preferred to do so via administrative or executive decisions, rather than through the law. Ukraine is certainly not Belarus so far, but it is moving in that direction. Look at the very negative reaction from Moscow to the talk about applying sanctions in the Magnitsky Act. I think these kinds of sanctions do have an impact. And I think some people in the Congress are ready to use that approach as a potential tool if Ukraine continues to regress from the democratic path.

**UW: Besides the election, what else could trigger sanctions?**

There are many different problems with democracy in Ukraine. One is the conduct of elections – the 2012 parliamentary election and the 2010 local

election. In both cases, the processes seemed to be not as good as the presidential election in early 2010 or the parliamentary elections in 2006 and 2007. Another concern is the way that the Constitutional Court just decided to tear up the Constitution it had been operating under for five years, and change it to grant more power to the President. There is also concern about how the Verkhovna Rada has operated, and the arrests of other members of the previous government that are now in jail. That is something that never happened in Ukraine before. Only under this Administration have you had cases where officials from a previous government that lost went to jail. When it comes to charges against Tymoshenko for abuse of power because she allegedly cut a bad gas deal with Russia, the argument in the West would be that that was a political decision and she should be punished for it politically. And she was when she lost the election in 2010. Nobody in the West sees this as a criminal matter. And, certainly, the way the trial was conducted was seen as a farce in the West. No matter how much we are told that this was under Ukrainian legal procedures, this will not persuade the West. I regret to say all this. In 2010, I was one of the people who said that we ought to give Yanukovich a chance. He was elected in a free and fair process back then. He had an opportunity. But, unfortunately, we've been seeing consistent regression on democracy. After Yanukovich became president, there was an assumption in Washington that Ukraine did not want to join NATO. It seemed pretty clear that the Ukrainian population was not interested in joining NATO. And that was fine – that was a decision for Ukraine. I think Washington concluded in 2010 that the best way for Ukraine to draw closer to Europe back then was to get closer to the EU. But this democratic regression is making it harder and harder.

**UW: How will Obama's victory affect US relations with Ukraine? Many experts claim that the White House is ready to view Ukraine as Russia's sphere of influence as a result of the US-Russia relations reboot.**

**BIO**

**Steven Pifer** was the United States Ambassador to Ukraine from 1998-2000. He is now Senior Advisor with the Washington-based Brookings Institution focusing on arm controls in Ukraine and Russia. He served at the State Department for over 25 years and the US embassies in London, Moscow, Geneva and Warsaw. In 1996-1997, Mr. Pifer was special assistant to the president and National Security Council senior director for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia.

I think the Administration of Barack Obama has been quite critical of Russia. The number of statements made by the White House and the State Department concerning democracy developments in Russia within the past four years has been striking. You will probably find more statements by the Obama Administration than you did from the Bush Administration. Ukraine should not only be considered in the context of relations with Russia. Ukraine may be held to a different standard than Russia, for two reasons. One may seem somewhat unfair. When the US is engaged in negotiations with Russia, there are a lot of other really big is-

**THE RESOLUTIONS TARGETED SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEMOCRATIC REGRESSION THAT WE ARE WITNESSING**

ues for the US Government, such as arms control, Iran and Afghanistan. In this sense, democracy in Russia is just one of many issues. There are probably not so many big issues on Washington or Europe's agenda where Ukraine comes up, so democracy may get more attention. That's not fair to Ukraine. The other difference - this one fair enough - is that Yanukovich has been saying consistently that he wants to join Europe and see Ukraine as a modern European state. So, Ukraine is held to a different standard than Russia, because Ukraine has articulated the goal of joining Europe. Unfortunately, having set that bar so high, the Ukrainian government is falling short of that standard under President Yanukovich. And it may be bad geopolitically for the West if Ukraine aligns more closely with Russia. But that threat doesn't have any weight in the US or Europe. Closer integration with Russia may be a lot worse for Ukraine. ■

In 2010, I was one of the people who said that we ought to give Yanukovich a chance.

But, unfortunately, we've been seeing consistent regression on democracy.



PHOTO: PHL

# Azarov Versus Firtash

News about escalating conflicts between groups of influence within the ruling party surface in the foreign media, including the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, after the Party of Regions fails to get the result it expected in the election

**M**ykola Azarov looked irritated on the night after the election. As No. 1 on the Party of Regions' list, he was forced to appear at the PR's official headquarters located at the InterContinental hotel in downtown Kyiv, and talk about the "victory" of his party with the 30% it won in proportional vote, which was the best result of all election participants.

The impression was, however, that PR's No. 1 was not in a good mood. Azarov's irritation came to

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the fore when reporters began to ask him about his prospects for remaining in office. Instead of waving them aside, saying something like "this will be decided by the president and parliament according to the Constitution", the premier called the reporters provocateurs, then spoke offensively to some of them, but did not actually give a response.

## AIRING DIRTY LAUNDRY

Something unimaginable followed: the internal conflict within

the ruling party was not only made public, but was even the focus of the foreign media. The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, a well-known German newspaper, published an article called *Der Gute Mann von Kiew?* (The Good Man of Kyiv?) by Konrad Schuller, based on his visit to Ukraine during the October parliamentary election. The publication described the titanic struggle of Premier Mykola Azarov with the cunning oligarch Dmytro Firtash. If any Ukrainian publication were to print such an article, it would have immediately been accused of writing a deliberately misleading article for money. "In a narrow circle, Azarov said that the main group in this war of oligarchs, headed by chemical and gas billionaire Firtash, has been consistently trying to ruin Ukraine's relations with the West for many years now," stated the article.

It portrays Mykola Azarov as possibly one of the most pro-Western men in Ukrainian politics; one who personally insisted that Yanukovich should immediately free German political analyst Nico Lange, arrested by the Ukrainian Security Service – the SBU, (which at that time was headed by Valeriy Khoroshkovsky, a member of the Firtash group) at the airport under obscure charges in 2010, and recommended against the imprisonment of Yulia Tymoshenko who was also in a public conflict with Firtash, but in better relations with Andriy Kliuyev, head of the PR election campaign. Moreover, Azarov is personally doing everything possible to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian gas, the article expands. He is aiming to replace Russian gas with that bought in Western Europe and is making every effort to intensify cooperation with German industrial giants. Firtash and his RosUkrEnergo (of which Gazprom is a co-owner), on the other hand, were portrayed as the main lobbyists of Russian interests in Ukraine.

The article may give the German readership, unfamiliar with Ukrainian politics, the impression that Azarov is a true European-oriented statesman and democrat, although it does say that the premier is doing all this as part of the

war against Firtash, and not out of some abstract idealism.

### CHAOS AS A STRATEGY

At first glance, the article has many rational points. Still, believing Mykola Azarov's dedication to democracy and European values is as naïve as assuming that Viktor Yanukovych reads through Cicero's works before he makes a public speech of his own. The article may stem from the long lasting animosity between the Firtash group and Andriy Kliuyev, Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council, who attained the right to run the Party of Regions' election campaign this spring. According to The Ukrainian Week's sources, one of the manifestations of this animosity was the chaos that lasted over ten days after the election in a number of FPTP districts, where pro-government candidates lost to opposition or disloyal independent candidates, but used an extensive arsenal of measures to rig the outcome.

The President's Chief of Staff and Firtash's man, Serhiy Liovochkin (the current Head of the Kyiv City State Administration – Oleksandr Popov, is trying to become the fully authorized Kyiv mayor under his protectorate, albeit without success as yet), got out of the challenge of ensuring solid support for the PR in Kyiv with its electorate that is decidedly unfriendly towards the PR. This was partly the reason why the PR essentially lost the campaign in all 13 Kyiv districts.

Meanwhile, Andriy Kliuyev, as head of the PR headquarters was responsible for achieving one of the PR's key objectives in this election, i.e. to ensure a 226 one-party majority in the new parliament. The PR headquarters now blames the failure to do so on the sabotage arranged by the Firtash group. "They were literally sinking us. Just look at how maliciously their Inter (a TV channel with nationwide coverage controlled by Valeriy Khoroshkovsky) covered developments at problematic districts," a PR source said.

Of course, nothing is that simple. Let's say that Yanukovych or someone from his closest circle had personally authorized the chaos that unfolded at some districts after the election. According

to The Ukrainian Week's sources, Kliuyev came up with the following scheme: candidates capable of winning, should have done so on their own using the tools available to them. Meanwhile, the administration machine would merely not interfere with what they did. As a result, PR candidate Travianko at notorious District No. 132 in Pervomaisk, Mykolayiv Oblast, engaged special purpose police units to transport ballots from the oblast election commission. Others, such as Tetiana Zasukha at District No. 90, "encouraged" the courts to deem that tens of thousands of votes for the opposition were invalid. Some PR candidates quit the campaign, due to a lack of resources.



The idea of the scheme was for central government to look as if it had absolutely nothing to do with the scandalous developments in many districts. This was why Yanukovych stubbornly avoided commenting on what was going on for two weeks after the election. At the same time, as is now clear, the government obviously failed to dissociate itself, as the post-election rigging and chaos are now blamed on the president both at home and in the West.

In a situation like this, much now depends on who will present himself better in Yanukovych's eyes. Will it be Liovochkin who has to prove not only that Kliuyev is to blame, but also that he is once more fueling a scandal, or Kliuyev, who would like to blame everything on Firtash's saboteurs. After all, Firtash's people ran in

some scandalous districts. His protégé, Valentyna Zhukovska blatantly stole the victory from opposition candidate Mykola Bulatetsky.

This must have been the background for the publication in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. The ongoing struggle, among other things, is for the premier's office. The Firtash group has had its eye on it for years. Kliuyev also wants it, but has found himself in a lose-lose situation, falling hostage to Azarov who is not ready to retire yet. This explains the efforts to present Azarov to Western partners as a pro-Western premier who is supposedly protecting Ukraine from the pro-Russian Firtash.

Kliuyev's opponents quickly responded to the anti-Firtash publication. On 6 November, the Ukrainian Internet was abuzz with the news of Firtash's man Liovochkin resigning from the office of the President's Chief of Staff and that Kliuyev was being considered as a possible replacement. The news appeared on a website notorious for posting blatantly false interviews, and was rebutted later in the day. It is common practice in behind the scenes political struggles for politicians to arrange the leaking of misleading information about themselves to see who will first claim a newly-vacant office, or to report to their bosses – Yanukovych in our case – that the enemies – in this case Kliuyev – are working tirelessly to overthrow the only loyal servant – Liovochkin. Whether the balance of power changes in the pro-government conglomerate, will largely depend on how well Kliuyev accomplishes his new task to recruit at least 40 self-nominated and opposition MPs into the PR faction in the new parliament. Actually, they are already getting "offers that are hard to refuse". According to The Ukrainian Week's sources, the PR has already recruited at least 20 crossovers.

Ultimately, the current situation signals a serious internal struggle in the ruling party's camp that strives to look unified and unbreakable. If it has not been leaked so obviously to the public so far, now it is – and will most likely escalate as the presidential election draws closer. ■

# A War for the Ne

The Party of Regions launches yet another campaign to whitewash the Yanukovich regime and discredit the opposition. Its members accuse international observers of violations and struggle to persuade the West that the election was democratic in Paris, and talk about threats from Svoboda in London

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"Communication is first and foremost a war for the ears of your neighbour", Czech writer Milan Kundera once said. This is especially true when it comes to political communication during elections. The Party of Regions' mouthpieces were also competing for the ears of their neighbours, among them Western European researchers, MPs, senators and journalists. "The government must also explain its standpoint on the election", a colleague in Paris once said. Indeed, the world has quite a few questions for the Ukrainian government after photos surfaced showing special Berkut police fetching ballots from polling stations in Pervomaisk and elsewhere.

The latest protection campaign for the ruling party unfolded in Paris, led by PR MPs Leonid Kozhara and Ivan Popesku. They held no press conferences or other public events during the first week of November, yet met with interested parties in personal meetings, a source claimed.

The PR has delegated its communications in France to Justine Gilles from Fleishman-Hillard Paris. She previously tried to arrange a visit of ex-

president Viktor Yushchenko to Paris after placing a huge poster of Yulia Tymoshenko on the façade of the Paris mayor's house. The attempt failed. Now she is offering interested parties the opportunity to meet with Leonid Kozhara, Deputy Head of the Verkhovna Rada Committee for Foreign Affairs, according to correspondence attained by *The Ukrainian Week*. The Presidential Administration is now relying upon Kozhara's diplomatic expertise when it comes to its image in the West.

*The Ukrainian Week* has tried to contact Justine Gilles for a meeting to speak with the president's advisor about his comments on election violations. In an interview with the Russian newspaper Izvestia (The News), Kozhara once stated, "International observers are breaking the law by saying that Ukraine's parliamentary election was undemocratic". "Mr. Kozhara's schedule is full," Gilles replied by email, while Kozhara left for London to talk about the threat of Svoboda at the UK House of Commons. In her communication with the press and politicians, the PR's French aide introduces herself as an activist from a "Brussels-based NGO monitoring Ukraine and everything linked to Ukraine's EU integration", and not as an employee of the well-known public relations company whose email



**WASTED EFFORT:** It looks like the mission of Deputy Chairman of the VR Committee for Foreign Affairs Leonid Kozhara is to tell everyone that black is white. According to *The Ukrainian Week's* sources, the Presidential Administration is not happy with the way he is doing his job

address she uses. The NGO she mentions is known as the European Centre for a Modern Ukraine.

Its platform is centred on European integration, the establishment of direct connections between Ukrainian and European politicians, and dialogue with civic activists. However, its Ukrainian co-founders are all PR people, including Leonid Kozhara, Vitaliy Kaliuzhnyi and Yevheniy Heller. In its public declarations, the Centre seems to be all about democratic rhetoric, but its activities reflect Soviet propaganda practices. "I think I attended just one event

# neighbours' Ears



of the European Centre for a Modern Ukraine,” says an activist from the Ukrainian community in France. “It was a meeting with the Central Election Commission’s Mykhailo Okhondovsky this August. They publicized the election law and touted the virtues of the government, but they did it so unprofessionally! A history professor who was sitting next to me just wondered quietly, ‘Who are they kidding?’ The address on the invitation letter was proudly stated as Pantheon-Sorbonne University. When we arrived, a young woman redirected us to a building next door that had barely

**COMMON OBJECTIVES:** Minister of Foreign Affairs Košiantyn Hryshchenko claims that he is ready to give it all for the interests of his country, yet identifies Ukraine with the Yanukovich regime

anything to do with the renowned university. It was on the fourth floor, with no elevator, and wobbly chairs.”

Another aspect of the Centre’s activities is its selective approach to informing its Western audience, such as a mailing on access to the media sent prior to the election on October 7-10. The note stated in English and French that opposition parties received more airtime on Ukrainian television than pro-government parties. This is true according to the State Radio and Television Committee, but its list of opposition parties includes Natalia Korolevska’s party, whose promotional campaign outspent all other parties running in the election.

## UKRAINE’S RULERS WARN OF THE SVOBODA “THREAT”

On November 6, the outcome of Ukraine’s parliamentary election was discussed at the British Ukrainian Society roundtable at London’s Westminster parliamentary committee session hall. Ukraine’s Ambassador to the UK Volodymyr Khandohiy elicited grins from the crowd when he suggested that the Ukrainian and US elections had similarly unpredictable outcomes. However, the disparity between the two elections was clear the following day when the Americans had successfully completed their election and announced a winner while Ukraine was still counting ballots with the help of special police and mysterious burly men with journalist IDs two weeks after election day. Nobody else talked about similarities between the elections in Ukraine and the US that night.

Leonid Kozhara spoke on behalf of the PR at the London discussion sessions. He seemed perfectly happy with how the counting went in Ukraine and claimed that the longest delays were in first-past-the-post districts. According to Kozhara, his party barely had any problems in the

election. His biggest concerns were about the opposition. With a worried expression on his face, he tried to look like a true European politician who cares about Western values of liberal democracy: “Two radical parties from the far-right and far-left wings gained a large share of Ukrainian votes. This means that the Ukrainian parliament will have a new flavour... We are all concerned about Svoboda’s statements, especially those concerning ethnic minorities. Svoboda lacks tolerance and we are particularly concerned about its anti-Semitic declarations... Nazi and fascist ideology is banned in Ukraine. Svoboda is a marginal party. I’d like to assure you that my party will never let Svoboda cross the red line.”

During the discussion, however, Kozhara was actually forced to admit that it was the actions of his party, including the passing of the notorious language bill, that pushed many voters to support parties promising to resist the government’s anti-Ukrainian initiatives.

Eventually, the overall impression was that Kozhara had failed to accomplish his key mission. British Conservative MP John Whittingdale who observed the Ukrainian election did not sound too concerned about Svoboda. He said that some people in Ukraine also told him that Svoboda follows a fascist neo-Nazi ideology, but he decided to draw his own conclusions based on what he saw and heard from people he considered reliable and trustworthy. “A man I know very well, who is fairly well educated and informed, accompanied me on my recent trip to Ukraine. He told me that he was voting for Svoboda. As far as I know, he is not a fascist or a neo-Nazi. He is undoubtedly a Ukrainian patriot, and he was outraged by the language bill. He wanted to manifest his patriotic feelings. I assume something similar takes place in the UK, »

too. There is frustration with the leading political parties, and the voters seek alternatives.”

Another issue at the London discussion was the assessment of Ukraine’s prospects of drawing closer to Europe. The prospects did not sound too optimistic. Participants who were not part of the Ukrainian delegation often mentioned “selective justice” and comments from the audience gave the impression that the West still sees Tymoshenko’s case as a symbol of the current government’s nature.

Leonid Kozhara struggled to dispel this, referring to the trial over Romanian ex-premier Adrian Năstase on charges of corruption, and assured Europeans that Kyiv simply had not had enough opportunities to explain its position to Europe. In response, he was told that he was speaking at the British parliament at the moment, and that Ukraine is represented in a number of European organizations and institutions which have been calling on its government to stop antidemocratic processes in the country, and have mostly been ignored. Therefore, nobody in London risked rejecting the prospect of Ukraine’s escalating international isolation. Kozhara’s diplomacy seemed to fail once again. According to *The Ukrainian Week’s* sources, the Presidential Administration is already looking for someone to replace him as its key mouthpiece in the West.

### KOSTIANTYN HRYSHCHENKO AND HIS FRIENDS

On November 12, the Paris-based École Militaire hosted a conference titled “Ukraine: A Strategic Crossroads in Europe”, arranged by the *Revue Défense Nationale* (National Defence Review) magazine and Vienna-based Renner-Institut. Although the conference took place in Paris, the contacts for questions and references were Belgian.

Ukraine’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kostiantyn Hryshchenko, was present at the conference. He appeared quite confident, assuring everyone in English and French of the Ukrainian government’s unfaltering will to lead Ukraine to EU mem-



MUST BE A PARTY OF REGIONS LOBBYIST: Ex-Chancellor of Austria Alfred Gusenbauer ardently justifies any actions by the Ukrainian government at international events

bership: “Candidates did not debate on international issues at all during the election. Why? Because all participants of the political process in Ukraine have a common objective – future membership in the EU.” As he listed the government’s accomplishments on the path to bringing this objective to life, Hryshchenko mentioned the new Code of Criminal Procedure, the “biggest solar power station in the world under construction in Crimea”, and the Association Agreement “initialled and ready to be signed.”

Backstage, Hryshchenko had a nice chat with some Western visitors whose speeches were quite friendly towards Ukraine’s government. Ex-Chancellor of Austria Alfred Gusenbauer was one of them. “Democracy is the victory of the majority over the minority. Some of the defeated in Ukraine cannot come to grips with their defeat, hence the problems,” he said. Alexander Kwasniewski claimed that the mixed election system “is definitely not good for Ukraine or other countries with insufficiently structured political sys-

tems”. “You can offer any system to a country, and some people will still criticize it no matter what,” Gusenbauer responded. Meanwhile, voter bribery, voter coercion and abuse of administrative resources in FPTP districts were not mentioned. “He must be a lobbyist from the Party of Regions,” suggested an international observer who had worked at the Ukrainian election as he listened to Gusenbauer.

The conference went on as a sequence of speeches rather than a debate. No time was left for questions from the audience, so only the speakers had a chance to ask them. Sensitive or controversial issues were tackled very gently, with no reproach. “Imperfections or falsifications?” wondered Senator Hervé Maurey, Chairman of the France-Ukraine Friendship Group at the French parliament. Delivered in a somewhat worried tone, his speech seemed the most adequate reaction to the political developments in Ukraine.

“Is it possible to expect that Yulia Tymoshenko will be released soon?” moderator and journalist Gérard Sebag asked Hryshchenko. “I’m not God, I can’t say when Ms. Tymoshenko will be free,” he answered

## THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR A MODERN UKRAINE SEEMS TO BE ALL ABOUT DEMOCRATIC RHETORIC, BUT ITS ACTIVITIES REFLECT SOVIET PROPAGANDA

AGENT OF THE PARTY: Ina Kirsch chairs the European Centre for a Modern Ukraine, an NGO set up by the PR to feed consistent propaganda to the EU



vaguely, adding “You know, her close friend, Ukraine’s ex-premier Pavlo Lazarenko, is currently in a US jail...”

Although held at the prestigious École Militaire, with well-known participants, high goals and political correctness, the conference lacked something important. “What did you expect?” a French journalist wondered. “Take an old Soviet car, fix it up and hire the best promoters in the world to sell it. Will they find buyers? I don’t think so. It’s the same thing with the Party of Regions. No matter who promotes it in the West, they will never hide its falsifications or stolen victories.” ■

# Encyclopaedia of Illusions: The State Border of Ukraine

**T**he behaviour of the supreme power in Ukraine in the last 20 years has consistently called forth doubts regarding Ukrainian sovereignty. Endless speeches on special relations with Russia which often encouraged disregard for the established formal diplomatic practice of inter-state relations and the replacement of international law as the ground for them with informal arrangements made at informal meetings with disregard of rituals and ceremonies that are necessary in this sphere – all of this formed a very slippery and dangerous background for Ukrainian-Russian coexistence.

But that, which happened to Russian dissident Razvozhayev in downtown Kyiv graphically highlighted the fact that Ukrainian sovereignty is pure fiction. A brigade of Russian enforcers, who came to Kyiv feeling perfectly at home, captured a person virtually on the steps of the international representative office for refugee issues and transported him to Russia. The hijackers, together with their victim, crossed the border without any problems or misunderstandings with Ukrainian border guards. If necessary, these highly qualified guards are capable of noticing an extra pack of cigarettes, yet they failed to notice a person tied up in a car. So in effect, we do not have special services, we have no border guards, nor do we have an actual border. On top of it all, both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs are great cause for concern. All this looks like a show lasting since Soviet times when the Ukrainian SSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not have a single embassy abroad. Even before, Russian enforcers felt very comfortable in independent Ukraine, and under the Donetsk-based authority, began to behave demonstratively insolently and even defiantly, showing that they well remember the wonderful words if their supreme boss Vladimir Putin, said to a former US President: “George, Ukraine isn’t even a country.” Indeed, if foreign special forces seized a person in any fully-fledged, albeit very small country, this would call forth a flood of resignations on the part of highly-placed competent officials, responsible for this area of state activity. But from the Party of Regions’ managers and the bosses that appointed them – absolutely no reaction to this public slap in the face of those in Ukraine, who are supposed to guarantee the Constitution, specifically Ukraine’s sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, human rights and freedoms, and other good things.

Taxpayers, if a class of people had finally been formed in Ukraine, who would be able to think in such categories, could have asked: why do we pay money to support the Ukraine’s special service – SBU, border services and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which have yet to be able to express something reasonable regarding what happened after the brigandage in the style of Abreks from the Caucasus in the centre of the Ukrainian capital. And where are those with a cool head, warm heart and “mani pulite” (literally “clean hands” but clean record in fact)? If they didn’t know

anything, then this is evidence of absolute official inadequacy and ultimate disqualification. If they knew and didn’t do anything, it looks like a criminal breach of trust. Isn’t this why security services exist in various countries, so as not to allow their foreign colleagues to act brazenly on foreign territories? For example, Switzerland is considered to be the capital of world espionage, because each intelligence service considers it necessary to have its own resident spies there. Local counter intelligence services know everything, track everything, but don’t touch anyone, as long as the foreign cloak and dagger knights remain within the limits of decency, in other words, don’t steal anything or kill anyone. As soon as something of this nature happens, even the government of this country reacts immediately, since this is an invasion of sovereignty and public order.

Meanwhile, in Ukraine we have true international banditism and a kind of enigmatic silence on the part of the Ukrainian authorities. Of course, we see the consequences of the absence of effective public control over the activities of Ukrainian enforcers, which are still unjustifiably closed and lacking in transparency. For example, what does society know about the specific contacts between the SBU and Russian special services? But today, after a fundamental change in the leadership of the service, some witty people call this structure the Federal Security Service of Ukraine or FSBU, the abbreviation being very similar to Russia’s FSB. And the border service, the head of which has reached the hallowed rank of an army general? Can it really protect us from hundreds of thousands of illegal migrants, drug traffickers and the uncontrolled crossing of the Ukrainian border? Does such a thing really exist?

In recent days, “Putin’s eagles” captured a Russian citizen in Ukraine. But, having become convinced of their absolute impunity, will Russian Checkists (as they are called to this day, although it’s difficult to imagine that the special services of modern Germany would proudly call themselves Gestapo agents) seize Ukrainian citizens, against whom they have claims?

Do Ukrainians need such enforcement structures? Our friends in misfortune – Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – did not reform the KGB in their countries, but destroyed this punitive body of totalitarian dictatorship, having instead established civilized national special services, without any Stalin-Yezhov-Beria strain.

The incident in Kyiv leaves behind a sense of disquiet: will Ukraine transform into a territory, where the FSB (Federal Security Service), GRU (foreign military intelligence main directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces), SZR (Foreign Intelligence Service) and other special services of the Russian Federation can hunt for the citizens of Ukraine at will? And does this mean that Ukrainian enforcers could return runaways from the time of the Orange Revolution – Bakai, Bodelan and Bilokon, to Ukraine from Russia in the same manner? ■



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# The Dollar Fight

In spite of destructive consequences for the economy, the government will try to maintain hryvnia exchange rate at any cost until the expected re-formatted government is in place. So until the end of the year, it is doubtful whether the hryvnia exchange rate will exceed UAH 8.40/USD 1

**R**epresentatives of the government and the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) repeat the following phrase in unison: "there is no threat to the stability of the hryvnia". However, independent economists have predicted a significant devaluation for more than a year now, while the unceasing reduction in gold and exchange reserves and the ever more extravagant initiatives of the government in the area of currency regulation are evidence of the fact that the situation on the currency exchange market is on the verge of being critical.

## FUNDAMENTAL FACTORS

The main factor of long-term action, which predetermines the devaluation of the hryvnia is a trade balance deficit. In Ukraine, the trade balance deficit for last year constituted USD 10.2bn, or 6.2% of GDP. The amount is significant, but in itself, it does not mean inevitable devaluation.

First of all, transition economies and the economies of developing countries often operate with trade balance deficit on an ongoing basis. This is caused by the low competitive capacity of export and a high demand for the import of high-technology in the process of the structural transformation of the economy. For example, in the last three years, on average, Poland's trade balance deficit constituted 4.6% of GDP, but was offset by foreign investments and loans, which totaled 8.5% of GDP.

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**LOOKING AT THE PREMIER'S OFFICE?** The NBU's ongoing struggle with the dollar may be based on political ambitions of its Chairman Serhiy Arbuzov

Secondly, the structure and growth of the deficit are important. If the amount is stable, and the structure leans towards goods that are within the range of investment demand that will become part of new manufacturing capacities producing goods that will squeeze out import or increase export, the deficit is safe for the currency exchange rate. If there is such a deficit, international creditors and private foreign capital will always help to resolve temporary foreign currency problems.

Unfortunately, not one of the aspects that allow Ukraine to avoid hryvnia devaluation with significant trade balance deficit present, is inherent in Ukraine. In the structure of commodity imports, investment designated technological produc-

tion only amounts to about 15%. Another 35% is consumer goods, which make up almost half of the domestic commodities market. The remaining 50% is raw materials, from the existence of which, the operation of the Ukrainian economy, including exporters, has been dependent since Soviet times.

There is a negative growth in the deficit of foreign commodities trading. In the first nine months of this year, it constituted USD 9.3bn and grew by 57% in comparison to the relevant period of last year. Under such growth, Ukraine risks ending the year with a deficit of almost USD 14bn, which is almost as much as Azarov's government in Kyiv pays for all of its imported gas! Against such a background, the government continues to stress that Ukraine pays an exorbitant price for imported gas, although the economy, at a gas price that is 20% lower than at present, will not even cover the growth of the deficit, not to mention its entire volume.

In other words, the problem is not actually in the gas price, but in the fact that Ukraine is losing its domestic market, while at the same time, export does not ensure adequate compensation. Moreover, in the last quarter, deficit growth has accelerated. On the one hand, the European crisis, which is gradually gaining global dimensions, has restricted demand for Ukrainian noncompetitive export.



On the other, for the time being, enterprises are literally bearing the whole brunt of the blow, in other words, the income of Ukrainians has yet to feel the impact of the crisis in full, so at an unchanging hryvnia exchange rate, it ensures a significant increase in imports (via the commodities market).

Prior to the beginning of this year, there was enough import capital to compensate the trade balance deficit, satisfy the demands of Ukrainians for cash currency and every now and again, even replenish the reserves of the NBU. However, in 2012, trends changed, and now, the influx of capital is too little to even cover the trade balance deficit. And don't let the large volumes of capital, attracted in the third quarter fool you, because USD 2.6bn of them are expensive state Eurobonds. They, together with the USD 1.25bn, received from the additional allocation of funds in November, replaced the USD 3.5bn of the national debt, paid out to the IMF. Their servicing will be more than twice as expensive, and subsequently, in the near future will further worsen the problem of the balance of payments (BoP) and currency deficit.

The inflow of capital did not stop covering the needs of the current account simply because of the increased deficit of the latter. The first two quarters of 2012 clearly indicate that investments and loans started to come to Ukraine at a much slower rate. And if the problems with the trade balance emerged as a result of the passivity of the government, then the dynamics of capital inflow – is the result of its single-minded actions, which have led Ukraine to lose its investment attractiveness in the eyes of non-residents.

So, the situation regarding foreign currency inflow is very complicated. First of all, under an unchanging hryvnia exchange rate, the trade balance deficit will increase. The national commodity producer will even lose his competitiveness on the domestic market. And since the global economy is heading towards recession, Ukraine will be feeling the effects of this to an even greater extent in the near future. Secondly, the inflow of capital will continue to decrease. The investment climate in Ukraine is extremely unfavourable. Thirdly, as previously indicated,

the government is building a debt pyramid, paying external debt at the expense of new loans, but at rates that are several times higher than existing ones. Finally, next year, the repayment of previous loans will increase sharply in comparison to current ones, but the possibility of new borrowing, even under higher interest rates, will become more complicated, in view of the crisis on external financial markets. All of the above-mentioned factors are considerable, while the development of the situation in Ukraine and the world shows that they will continue for at least several financial quarters. For this reason, the deficit of foreign currency inflow is structural, so they will be impossible to overcome by one-off or moreover, exclusively administrative measures, which the government is resorting to.

#### ARBUZOV'S "CAST IRON" ARGUMENTS

However, the NBU is turning a blind eye to the logical arguments that are not in favour of supporting current hryvnia exchange rate – at least, in public, and for more than a year now, it's counting on ever more extravagant methods for the administrative tightening of the screws which are supposed to prevent the

threat of bankruptcy for individual banks and a further increase in the cost of loans for enterprises. However, the greatest danger lies in the fact that money is leaving the economy and Ukraine is steadily moving towards chronic default and barter settlements.

There is also a kind of manipulation of BoP, which the government, together with several oligarchs, has been practicing since the beginning of 2011. In less than two years, Ukrainian enterprises have received USD 6.3bn in trade credits compared to just USD 162mn in trade credits they issued. This means that either goods have been imported into Ukraine on credit (without relevant payment for them in foreign currency) for this amount, or money has been received for future export. The fact of the matter is actually a concealed article of BoP deficit, which can hit it hard, and subsequently provoke additional demand for foreign currency at a later date.

Quite a resonant measure was the introduction of a requirement for individuals to show their IDs exchanging money. As a result, in the first nine months of 2012, the volume of the purchase of foreign currencies by banks from the public, constituted USD 11.3bn, the volume of sale – USD 17.6bn, a decrease of 23% and 29% accordingly in comparison to last year. The volume of the net sale of foreign currency to the public during this period constituted USD 6.3bn, which is 37% less than in the previous year. However, at the same time, according to various evaluations, the volume of shadow foreign currency circulation increased by at least 50%: foreign currency now passes through banks less frequently and more often through shadow currency exchange points. Thus, the scale of the currency issue is such, that passports have not significantly changed the situation.

Two more measures have recently been introduced to support the hryvnia – the restriction on the withholding of foreign currency earnings by exporters for a period of 90 days and a share of 50% as well as the obligation to sell currency earnings to private individuals on the interbank currency market in a volume of no less than UAH 150,000 per month. The first measure was

## THE HRYVNIA EXCHANGE RATE REMAINS A POLITICAL FACTOR, MAKING THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN UKRAINE A HOSTAGE OF NOT ONLY PARTY, BUT ALSO SPECIFIC PERSONAL INTERESTS

collapse of the hryvnia rate.

Firstly, the NBU resorted to creating an artificial deficit of hryvnias on the market, so that banks would not be able to buy foreign currencies and instead were forced to sell US dollars and euros they got from loans and deposits. Having reduced refinancing volumes and increased reserve standards, at a certain stage, the NBU provoked a hryvnia deficit on the market and the sharp rise in its price on the interbank exchange market. Loans for enterprises became significantly less accessible, and this could not help but impact the further folding of business activity. Recently, individual credit rates exceeded crisis figures, posing a

practiced in Ukraine several times and was effective, to a certain extent. But it should be understood, that exporters, just like all other enterprises, pay salaries and buy raw material, so they cannot withhold a large amount of foreign currency without reducing production volumes. If there is a fall in production, the amount of money on accounts will be limited to inventories (raw material and finished production), which under current volumes of export and financial proportions, will not yield more than USD 5bn, but this will not even be enough for three months. As for the second measure, it is even less effective, after all, most money transfers by migrant workers to their Ukrainian beneficiaries, is directed towards consumption, so is exchanged into hryvnias. So only time will tell whether it will be possible to obtain at least several hundred million dollars from this measure.

And finally, the draft law on a 15% tax for the sale of cash currency. Prior to the implementation of such measures, it is necessary to be aware that the economic system generally finds means by which its currency flow evades most excessive barriers. As a rule, part of the shadow circulation of salaries will transfer into the hryvnia, however savings will continue to be made in foreign currency, particularly during a period, when the devaluation potential exceeds 15-20%. In addition, people often save for large purchases, which generally takes a long time. After all, it's very likely that this is the manner in which the

government has decided to simply provoke people into the large-scale sale of foreign currency "prior to the introduction" of the tax, and then either not actually introduce it, or cancel it.

### WHAT NEXT?

To a greater or lesser extent, all of the above-mentioned measures in the battle with the currency deficit are temporary and one-off. Fundamental factors prove that the foreign currency deficit under the current exchange rate, and the pace of trade balance and BoP deficit growth will only increase. The government will have to consistently devise something new, but each new measure will be less effective each time. But taking into account the fact that within just under two years (as of the beginning of October) the NBU has spent about USD 5bn to maintain reserves (according to unofficial information, they are currently at a level of USD 24bn, against USD 29.2bn as of the end of September), the foreign currency market will "swallow up" the calming effect from even the most severe measures within a matter of weeks.

Meanwhile, negative trends will gain pace: the growth of the trade balance deficit, the decreased competitiveness of Ukrainian producers on both the external and domestic markets and subsequently lay-offs and a greater number of workers being sent on unpaid vacation, a reduction in the consumption of goods and services and subsequently, further pressure on the domestic

By the end of the year, the hryvnia exchange rate on the cash and interbank foreign exchange markets will fluctuate between

UAH  
8,20-  
8,40/  
1USD

market. At the same time, the government's "foreign currency experiments" will force small and medium-sized business into the shadow and choose the dollar as a medium of exchange and measure of value. Should this be the case, not only will the hryvnia not gain, but will even lose its existing positions in the Ukrainian economy and risks repeating the fate of the coupon-karbovanets of the 1990s. In such an economy, only a select few will be able to ensure themselves a worthy existence, and there's no point in even thinking about development, since people are very reluctant to invest in such a system and demand excessive interest rates.

Why does the government need this? The election is over and it can now duly respond to the challenge of the economic situation. The government could even benefit from hryvnia devaluation because it would manage to fill the budget

## THE GOVERNMENT'S "FOREIGN CURRENCY EXPERIMENTS" FORCE SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESS TO GO INTO THE SHADOW

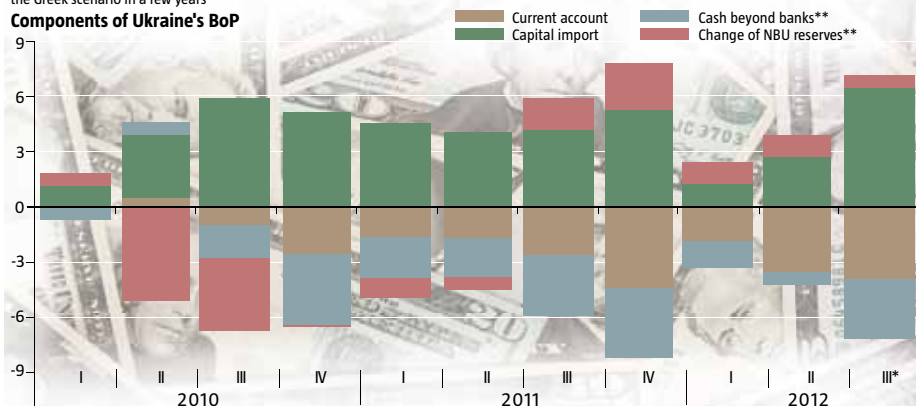
with a larger amount of hryvnias, albeit substantially depreciated hryvnias, and plug the obvious holes in this year's budget, and most importantly – next year's as well. The oligarchs, oriented towards the steel and agricultural business, would obtain far greater proceeds in the Ukrainian currency. After all, for a certain period, they would be able to halt the unjustified high flow of imports and the fall in the competitiveness of domestic production, and thus, slow down the unemployment growth rate under global economic crisis conditions.

Could this whole battle with the dollar domination be provoked by the fact that the premier's office is being prepared for the current Governor of the NBU and "Family" representative, Serhiy Arbuzov, and the collapse of the hryvnia prior to this appointment must be avoided at all costs? In any case, the hryvnia exchange rate remains a political factor, making the economic situation in Ukraine a hostage of not only party, but also specific personal interests. ■

### Inevitable devaluation

The analysis of the balance of payments (BoP) over the past few years suggests that the rapid growth of trade deficit and capital outflow from the banking system have been offset by capital import comprised mostly of fairly expensive and short-term loans. If the trend lasts, Ukraine might face the Greek scenario in a few years

#### Components of Ukraine's BoP



\* Data for Q3\*2012 is preliminary and capital import rate is estimated approximately

\*\*Negative numbers signal increasing amount of foreign currency cash beyond banks and growing NBU reserves respectively

Source: NBU data, USD bn

# Money Talks

The use of money as social media goes back millennia

Is money a good medium to spread messages? At first Alexei Navalny, a Russian opposition activist and noted blogger, was sceptical. But then he did the maths: if 5,000 Russians stamped 100 bills each, every citizen would encounter at least one of the altered notes as they passed from person to person.

Members of Iran's Green Movement used this tactic in 2009, writing slogans on banknotes during their anti-government protests. This prompted a ruling that defaced notes would no longer be accepted by banks.

scribed on coins, along with symbolic images of various kinds. In the era before printing, this was a very efficient way to project their image directly to the people.

But their subjects were also aware of the messaging power of money, as the recently revamped exhibit on the history of money at the British Museum in London reveals. It includes a Roman coin from 215AD, on which the Christian "chi-rho" symbol has been scratched behind the emperor's head; a French coin from 1855 over stamped with an advertisement for Pears Soap; and a 1903



Similarly, supporters of the Occupy movement have added slogans and infographics about income inequality to dollar bills. And members of China's Falun Gong movement wrote messages on banknotes attacking government persecution.

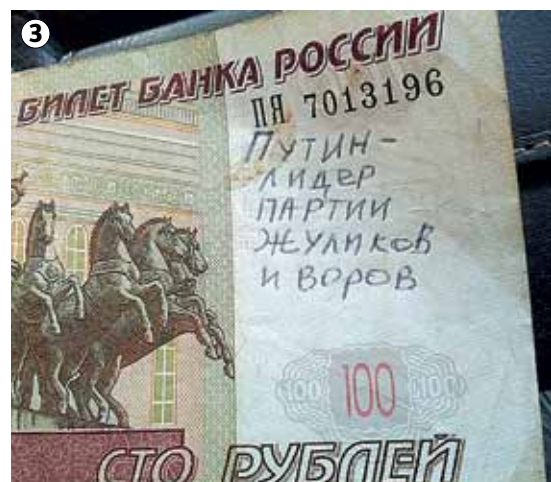
The use of money as a communications medium, distributing words and images as it passes from hand to hand, is ancient. The earliest coins, minted in Lydia (now part of Turkey) in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, depicted the head of a lion, thought to have been a royal symbol. Later rulers had their names and images in-

scribed on coins, along with symbolic images of various kinds. In the era before printing, this was a very efficient way to project their image directly to the people. But their subjects were also aware of the messaging power of money, as the recently revamped exhibit on the history of money at the British Museum in London reveals. It includes a Roman coin from 215AD, on which the Christian "chi-rho" symbol has been scratched behind the emperor's head; a French coin from 1855 over stamped with an advertisement for Pears Soap; and a 1903

<sup>1</sup> 200 hryvnia bills say "Get rid of the prisoner, Lutsk"

<sup>2</sup> "Donate for a golden toilet and Mezhviria for Yanukovich"

<sup>3</sup> "Putin is the leader of a party of crooks and thieves"



# Enhanced Security

Oligarch-owned private “armies” are set to benefit from the new law on security activities

**T**he Law On Security Activities went into effect on November 18, greatly expanding the rights of security guards. In particular, privately-owned security firms duly licensed by the Interior Ministry now have the right to use billy clubs, tear gas and service dogs, as well as detain and search people. Experts say that there has long been a need for a law regulating the security business, but the current redaction may well lead to more bitter conflicts between security guards and ordinary citizens. Moreover, the law clearly benefits large business owners who now have their own “armies” of guards and sorely want official permission for them to use weapons, even if they are non-lethal.

## PROS AND CONS

“This document is innovative as far as legislation on privately-owned security firms is concerned,” lawyer Oleh Dorofieiev says. “First, it clearly lays down the requirements for security agencies. Second, it expands their much debated authorities. From the purely legal standpoint, I can’t say that this law has an exclusively negative effect. Security agencies must filter and upgrade their personnel in order to meet the new licensing requirements. In addition to this law, other regulations must be passed to clearly define the use of special equipment and the application of physical force by security guards.” The law is clear on when these cannot be applied – against the elderly, women showing signs of pregnancy and in crowded places. Special equipment can only be used by security agencies licensed by the Interior Ministry,

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**Bohdan**  
**Butkevych**



**MPs AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WILL HAVE A QUIETER LIFE, WHILE CITIZENS, ESPECIALLY JOURNALISTS, WILL HAVE LIMITED, AND DEFINITELY LESS SAFE, ACCESS TO THEM**

Most guards earn  
**UAH**  
**1,500-**  
**2,500**  
or around  
**USD 180-**  
**315**  
a month

and they will hire only professionally trained and experienced personnel.

However, there is also a psychological side to the issue. “If you look at what has been happening between citizens and private security guards, the enforcement of the new law may have sad consequences,” Dorofieiev continues. “Considering that the authority of the latter has been expanded, conflicts may rise to a new level. In this context, it is impossible to omit an important psychological factor: people become irritated in confrontation; they generally despise uniform-

wearing staff, especially those with the chevrons of private firms, and so on. All of this may lead to security guards applying physical force more often, even if not involving special equipment like non-lethal weapons. Another negative consequence is that from now MPs and other government officials guarded by private firms (they are a majority) will have a quieter life, while citizens, especially journalists, will have limited, and definitely less safe, access to them.”

## AN INTERIM PROFESSION

“The situation on the security services market in Ukraine is now ambiguous,” Serhiy Starovytsky, a security expert and ex-chief of a large security firm,



says. “The professional level of ordinary security guards protecting most establishments, such as supermarkets, stores and warehouses, is too low. Meanwhile, true professionals will always find good, well-paid jobs on the market as rich Ukrainians are increasingly building their private security structures.”

Serhiy Shabovta, president of the Ukrainian Federation of Security Professionals NGO, said in a comment for **The Ukrainian Week**: “The events in Luhansk (where supermarket security



guards killed a person – **Ed.**) and in the Karavan shopping centre (on September 26, a man shot three guards and severely injured one at the Karavan shopping mall in Kyiv – **Ed.**) have proven that, unfortunately, a large number of guards are simply not up to the requirements set for them.” He emphasizes that security guard positions are not highly paid jobs in Ukraine: “Most guards earn UAH1,500-2,500 or around USD 180-315 a month.” Understandably, the profession has suffered from low

Apart from protection, oligarchs use guards to solve corporate conflicts and conduct raider attacks

wages and the turnover rate has been high. Shabovta says that even stable companies see 40-60 per cent of their staff come and go every year. There are 100 education institutions of various levels in Ukraine that are licensed by the Ministry of Education to train security guards. Their average student quota is 40-50 persons. “Even if we multiply that by 100, we will get 5,000 people that all these institutions can train. But the security services market has 450,000-500,000 jobs,” he adds.

**The Ukrainian Week** ran an experiment. Oleksiy, an IT-developer, was sent to find a job as a nighttime security guard. His lack of any experience working in law enforcement agencies or the military was no obstacle – he was hired by a small food store in Kyiv. The only thing was that he had to use a small lie and claim he had an advanced level in combat sambo. No one asked him to show any documentary proof.

“The main thing is that you have to watch things when drug addicts enter,” the security chief

instructed the newcomer. “These bastards are always looking to steal something. If you have any problems, press the red button by the cash register right away, and the police will come.” The two nights our “agent” worked there were pretty uneventful, apart from drunkards he had to stop as they tried to make their way into the store when cash was being collected to be taken to the bank.

“Imagine that real criminals came to rob the store. I wouldn’t have had anything to counter them with,” Oleksiy says. “First, I have no special training, and second, no experience or education in this area. So my unprofessional work did not cause any damages to the store only because there were few customers during my shift. The most shocking thing was the ease with which they hired me and then let me go. I guess the owner views guards like dishwashers who can be replaced even day to day.”

### VIP SECURITY GUARDS

The situation for security guards protecting oligarchs and large companies is the exact opposite. This is where privately-owned security companies hire only professionals. These companies have received the lion’s share of authority under the new law. Their recruitment is based on a system of personal acquaintance. “If you want to be a security guard of a banker and you have no experience of serving in special-task forces, to say nothing of the army, it is almost unrealistic,” Starovytsky says. “This is a closed market that is inaccessible to a person who walks in off the street. It was this market that demanded getting official permission to use special equipment. Of course, every truly rich person in this country has, as is the custom elsewhere in the world, his own private security unit, loyal and extremely professional. It is also clear that such organizations have for a long time been in possession of firearms de facto and will use them if needed. But this situation needed to be legalized. And now with a crisis similar to the one that struck Ukraine in 2008 again approaching, the rich are beginning to take security measures in advance. So they need their security guards to

have the legal right to use non-lethal guns at the very least.”

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a manager with Rinat Akhmetov’s Metinvest company told *The Ukrainian Week* that every top manager there has special emergency telephone numbers to be called in case of any physical threat. A call will quickly bring a “powerful group” to the spot and it will solve all issues in an urgent and extremely tough manner.

Soon after the tragedy at the Karavan shopping mall in Kyiv, rumours surfaced that all these events had been inspired by the security services lobby in an effort to prove that security guards had to be given the right to carry weapons and use special equipment. “That’s a load of baloney,” Starovytsky says. “The bill

so to speak, official security activities. Only large business owners know how much they spend on their private structures, but the figure is no doubt in the range of hundreds of millions of dollars.”

The question of oligarchs’ private armies is shrouded in mystery. Their enterprises are ostensibly protected by official security agencies, and no-one says a word about any personal guards. “Each agency that provides protection to a high-ranking official or businessman has two levels,” Starovytsky explains. “The first, lower level is ordinary, officially employed guards. The next level includes true professionals who may be officially listed as consultants or coaches, rather than guards. It is these people who are responsible for personal protection of the clients and resolving any sensitive issues as part of protecting their interests. These are most often former law enforcement officers, more specifically members of special-task units who begin to work for the rich after retirement or sometimes in pursuit of money and a normal job. Moreover, this option is viewed as the best continuation of a law enforcement career.”

Experts say that the business empires of Ukrainian oligarchs essentially include entire armies numbering up to 10,000-15,000 people. They are used not only to protect business entities or the oligarchs themselves but are also employed in corporate conflicts, raider attacks, etc. Furthermore, bodyguards often carry out political tasks, according to some sources. In particular, during the parliamentary election they managed “public order” and the protection of pro-government candidates on their campaign trail. They are also used for rallies and protests. For example, sources tell *The Ukrainian Week* that people who work in security structures owned by one oligarch were present near the Verkhovna Rada building in large numbers while supporters of the Party of Regions were blocking it when the law on languages was put to a vote in the first reading.

Consequently, some experts fear that further expansion of the rights of privately-owned armies and their use in political confrontations may lead to bloodshed. ■

## THE QUESTION OF OLIGARCHS’ PRIVATE ARMIES IS SHROUDED IN MYSTERY

started being lobbied a year ago, and its purpose is not to enable security guards in supermarkets to use tear gas. In fact, some of the main lobbyists were private agencies that provide services to some serious people and are concerned about their security in the increasingly dangerous socioeconomic situation. So they need their small armies to have every means to effectively protect their clients.”

The Interior Ministry also has a stake in the law. With the much tougher licensing requirements set to security agencies, the police receive countless new ways to earn money under the counter. The simplest way is to receive bribes for extending or granting licenses, turning a blind eye to patent violations of regulations, etc. On the other hand, the police also receive the official right to monitor the activities of security firms.

The most cautious expert estimates of those solicited by *The Ukrainian Week* put the number of various security structures in Ukraine at around 5,000. “The size of the market is at least \$500mn,” Oleksiy K., chief of one of the leading Odesa-based security agencies, says. “This covers,

The number of various security entities operating in Ukraine officially is about

5,000,  
with the market estimated at nearly  
USD  
500mn

# Warm Relations

A donation from Dmytro Firtash to Ukrainian Catholic University, and recently established harmonious relations between its rector and the oligarch, raise complex ethical issues about the role and future of UCU

PHOTO: UKRINFORM

**A**t the end of September, the acting rector of Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU), Bishop Borys Gudziak, joined Prime Minister Mykola Azarov in dedicating among Ukraine's largest greenhouse complexes, built by Dmytro Firtash in his native village in the Ternopil Oblast.

Bishop Gudziak was among a delegation of more than 20 Ukrainian Catholic priests who blessed the greenhouses with holy water, as tradition.

At first glance, it would seem strange that Firtash's greenhouses would interest the rector of a university. After all, UCU does not offer a biology or botany major for students to have internships at the greenhouses. UCU is exclusively a liberal arts university, and one of the best in Ukraine at that.

Yet any confusion is cleared up once taking into account that Firtash made a USD 4.5mn donation, almost a third of the cost of the first phase construction of UCU's Striyskiy Park campus, which will become the university's main hub in a few years.

Bishop Gudziak said in an interview published on Sept. 9 in the English-language Diaspora

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newspaper, The Ukrainian Weekly, that he hopes the donation will not be the last from Firtash.

Yet the donation caused a rift in the Ukrainian Diaspora in the U.S. and Canada, which until Firtash came along was the main source of financing for UCU.

Not only does the Diaspora leadership look at Moscow with disdain (justifiably so), but it is not very fond of the Ukrainian oligarchy that played a key role in the 2010 victory of President Viktor Yanukovich.

The tension in the Diaspora is strong enough that some of Bishop Gudziak's close colleagues, such as Dr. Lubomyr Hayda at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, refuse to communicate with him now.

## "THE CAMBRIDGE DEFENSE"

As his response, Gudziak has offered the example of Cambridge University, which received USD 6.7mn from Firtash to launch a Ukrainian studies program.

His "Cambridge Defense" is based on the fact that Firtash doesn't interfere with the academics of Cambridge University and hasn't attempted to, according to the bishop.

As his response to questions about his greenhouse trip, Bishop Gudziak said, "We accept donations, understanding our responsibility – before donors, as well as the larger citizenry – to wisely use our funds, which is why we don't 'hide' from any donor, since we view such behavior simply dishonest in our relations to our donor, as well as to everyone who is interested in UCU and supports us."

Indeed it's likely that Firtash won't be introducing a class entitled "Economic Advantages of Ammonium Nitrate and Natural Gas Transit Monopolies" anytime soon at UCU. It was believable that UCU would remain independent of Firtash's politics in Ukraine.

After all, blessing a complex of greenhouses isn't a moral wrong. Yet Bishop Gudziak's trip from Lviv to the depths of Ternopil Oblast was the first indication that what UCU insisted was a clear black-and-white line between business and charity could actually be a gray hazy streak. That is cause for concern among those who supported UCU since the 1990s when it was still a humble theological academy on cozy Svyentsitskiy Street.

Firtash's donation and Bishop Gudziak's newfound rapport with the oligarch (he was seated in the second row of seats during Gudziak's Aug. 26 consecration as bishop, just behind his mother) raises complex ethical issues about the role and future of UCU, as well as its acting rector.

UCU's role in Ukrainian higher education was to introduce and maintain Western values and standards. Bishop Gudziak explicitly stated that UCU's mission was to give Ukrainians a quality education so that they wouldn't have to travel to the U.S., Germany or Great Britain.

UCU was founded as a non-profit university, which envisions providing education as an end in itself, rather than a means to profit, as almost all of Ukraine's higher education institutions operate.

It's supposed to be based on Christian values of honesty and integrity, rather than pragmatism and materialism that have infected Ukrainian society today. Only should a student's performance determine his or her grades, which could not be bought at UCU, let alone a diploma.

Firtash, on the other hand, hasn't demonstrated an interest in Western values in Ukraine. Although he is one of the few people who has the power to change life in Ukraine for the better for it is citizens, yet he has done next-to-nothing to promote the rule of law in Ukraine, equality before the law or individual rights such as freedom of speech and assembly.

Firtash sponsored that same World Newspaper Congress and World Editors Forum in Kyiv that occurred in the format of whitewashing Yanukovich's image and at which the president's security officers assaulted protesting Ukrainian editors.

Instead he has been assembling his monopolies on natural gas transit and ammonia nitrate production, among other industries.

He has aligned himself with the administration of Viktor Yanukovich, which threw the former prime minister in prison, violated her rights and the rights of former Internal Affairs Minister Yuriy Lutsenko, thereby damaging Ukraine's Euro-integration aspirations for the near future.

In accepting Firtash's donation, Bishop Gudziak associated himself with one of the people who is at the root of those same problems of Ukraine that he says UCU wants to remedy.

Let's remember that Gudziak was among the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians participating in the Orange revolts of 2004.

After accepting Firtash's donation, it's entirely reasonable to ask what was Gudziak standing for on the Maidan, if not to prevent such opaque, corrupt government schemes such as RosUkrEnergo, in which Firtash played a central role.



## **FIRTASH MADE A USD 4.5MN DONATION, ALMOST A THIRD OF THE COST OF THE FIRST PHASE CONSTRUCTION OF UCU'S CAMPUS**

What was Gudziak standing for, if not to protect freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly, all of which have been restricted by the same Yanukovich administration that Firtash has comfortable ties with.

The dilemma faced by Gudziak is the dilemma faced by most Westerners living in Ukraine – whether to push the rock of Sysypus with your Western values and suffer the whole way, perhaps even failing altogether, or to conform to the nihilistic norms of the day and make those material gains that you want.

The diaspora in North America refers to this phenomenon as “going native,” with its most famous victims being former First Lady of Ukraine Kateryna Yushchenko and former Justice Minister Roman Zvarych.

Somewhere down the road, Gudziak and his circle determined that the modest donations from the Diaspora were not enough, and that being a small academy in a quaint 19<sup>th</sup> century building, graduating a few dozen students a year, wasn't enough either.

Indeed throughout its various pursuits, the Ukrainian Catholic Church seems to take the approach of, “Build it first, find donors later.” Among the results of such an approach is the incomplete Christ's Resurrection Patri-

archal Cathedral on Kyiv's Left Bank, which has been under construction for nearly a decade and not yet close to completion.

Such facts dismantle the “Cambridge defense” offered by UCU's leadership. UCU is not Cambridge University, which was established in 1231, has an endowment of 6.9 bn and is situated in a nation which had rule of law for at least three centuries.

In that sea, Firtash's influence is that of a single tuna. It is hard to imagine the chancellor of Cambridge University traveling 266 kilometers to bless the greenhouses of one of its millionaire donors.

On the other hand, UCU was established in 2000, has a budget that is a fraction of the Cambridge University budget and is situated in a nation that had a fragile democratic republic whose few remaining pillars of rule of law were dismantled during the last two years by people with close links to Firtash.

### **WHY OLIGARCHS SPONSOR THE INTELLIGENTSIA**

The UCU leadership must have considered what motivated Firtash to make his USD 4.5mn donation. Several ideas come to mind.

Yevhen Smahliuk, the head of Firtash's press service, repeated the line that Firtash has the wish to support the development of a European-quality university in Ukraine, which has a unique approach to teaching with Ukrainian tradition and common human values.

Of course, there is the possibility that Firtash simply wants education in Lviv Oblast to blossom. Certainly. Yet other goals are possible.

UCU could become a vehicle for Firtash very much like Yalta European Strategy is for Victor Pinchuk and what the world's largest Jewish center, the recently opened Menorah in Dnipropetrovsk, is for Ihor Kolomoisky and Hennady Boholyubov – an excellent public relations platform, a platform for a popular base of support among the local populace and a lever of influence on the West.

Then there's the issue of regional influence. Rinat Akhmetov has Donbas, Pryvat Group and Victor Pinchuk share Dnipropetro-

trovsk, Oleksandr Yaroslavskyi has Kharkiv, Kostyantyn Zhevago has Poltava, Petro Poroshenko has Vinnytsia, Ihor Yeremeyev has Volyn, and now Firtash may be laying his claim to Halychyna.

He needs a positive image in the West, where much of his business lies and is expanding. Sponsoring the only Catholic university in the post-Soviet sphere is a good step in that direction.

Firtash could also be hoping for a helpful ally in Bishop Gudziak in Brussels and Strasbourg.

On July 23, the Vatican announced that its appointment of Bishop Gudziak as the apostolic exarch of France, Benelux and Switzerland, which occurred more than a year after Firtash's donation was announced. But it was widely believed for years that Gudziak would be tapped to lead an eparchy, and Paris came as no surprise with Gudziak's predecessor there entering deep into his elderly years.

Moreover, Gudziak told The Ukrainian Weekly that he will be "very much" and "explicitly" involved in politics in France, Benelux and Switzerland, which are not only home to the European Union's governing organs, but also the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland.

If Firtash has a personal rapport with Gudziak (how else to explain the decision to bless the greenhouses?), what is to stop Firtash from calling Gudziak on his next visit to Strasbourg and asking,

"Borya, kak dyela? I heard that you're attending the banquet tomorrow night. Did you know that the EU Parliament's chair of the industry, research and energy committee will be there? Perhaps you can mention that I'd like to a meeting with him this week. And it wouldn't hurt to mention the new academic wing we built at UCU, too."



## UCU COULD BECOME A VEHICLE FOR FIRTASH VERY MUCH LIKE YALTA EUROPEAN STRATEGY IS FOR VICTOR PINCHUK – AN EXCELLENT PUBLIC RELATIONS PLATFORM

As apostolic exarch of France, Benelux and Switzerland, Gudziak has the potential to become a better diplomatic asset and even overshadow Foreign Minister Kostiantyn Hryshchenko and his diplomatic corps.

While Hryshchenko is increasingly perceived as a Soviet-era dinosaur with diminishing credibility, Gudziak is a sophisticated intellectual who earned his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He can relate better to a euro-diplomat than a Soviet-educated bureaucrat can.

Of course, Bishop Gudziak's defenders will correctly point out that the leaders of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate are in frequent contact with their oligarch sponsors and

have no moral scruples when business, politics and religion overlap.

But the Ukrainian Catholic Church is supposed to be a far higher standard of ethics and morality, given its heroic resistance to Soviet Communism (which the Moscow-centered Orthodox Church largely capitulated to) and commitment to Western values in Ukraine.

These ideals include the separation of church and state, so that the state never becomes a sponsor or partner with any single church. It's these ideals that have created the higher standard of living and quality of life that so many Ukrainians aspire to through Euro-integration.

Until recently, Bishop Gudziak, and every Westerner involved in Ukrainian society was at the forefront of a battle between Western values and the "Russian World"...

Finally, it should be noted that the dedication of greenhouses was scheduled on the same day as the village's church holiday, which by itself could not have been a sufficient pretext for a university rector to visit a remote village.

The UCU leadership's decision to accept the DF Group's invitation reflects that UCU is in a painful transition phase which its leadership has not fully grasped.

In arranging for an internationally recognized rector and bishop to travel to a remote village to bless a set of greenhouses – a job usually reserved for the local parish priest or head of the eparchy – UCU is still acting like a small academy instead of one of Ukraine's top-tier institutions of higher education.

The greenhouses are business, which is supposed to be an entirely separate matter from charity. There's supposed to be a fine line to distinguish the two.

Bishop Gudziak has built a reputation during his decade of leading UCU as a man of exceptional integrity and high morals. He draws respect from all corners of the global Catholic community.

With the newly acquired big sponsors and with them, big responsibilities, UCU's leadership will need to more closely consider the ethical implications and political appropriateness of its decisions so that all that has been built remains intact and untarnished. ■

GOING NATIVE. UCU Rector Borys Gudziak and Dmytro Firtash have found something in common despite the difference in values



# Terra Sudorum

At one time scattered between the Neman and Western Bug Rivers, the Yotvingians contributed to the development of several Eastern European nations

*The Ukrainian Week* continues a series of articles about ancient peoples that once populated Ukrainian lands, leaving behind unique cultural heritage. Following articles about the Celts, the Goths, the Alans and the Saka, this instalment focuses on the Yotvingians, Baltic tribes that left their mark on Ukraine's topography. Below, read why the Soviet special services made an attempt to artificially "revive" the Yotvingians in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

**Author:**  
Košiantyn  
Rakhno

**T**he Yotvingians were a Baltic people that lived in what is now Volyn, Ukrainian and Belarusian Polissia, the Podlachia region of Belarus and Poland, and the Narew and Neman River basins. They were divided into three tribes and populated a territory known as Yotvingia or Sudovia ("terra sudorum" in the earliest Western sources). Their language was close to Latvian, Lithuanian and the now-extinct Old Prussian. Chroniclers describe Yotvingians as being quick as animals, fierce and extremely courageous. They spent most of their lives fighting wars or hunting. Yotvingian tribes were involved in

the genesis of several nations in the region: Lithuanians, Latvians, Belarusians, Poles, and even Ukrainians.

## THE INTRACTABLE BALTS

Back in the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., Yotvingians served in the armies of Kyivan princes. In 945, a Yatviag Hunarev travelled to Constantinople with other ambassadors of Kyivan Prince Ihor.

The Poles and Rus' wanted to conquer their lands, and in 983 Prince Volodymyr attacked and subjugated them to Kyiv. Together with his warriors, he sacrificed many captives and captured cattle to pagan gods. In 1009, Bishop Bruno of Querfurt, a German missionary, tried to baptize the Yotvingians and convert them to Christianity at the request of Polish King Boleslaw the Brave and thus subjugate them to Poland, but he was killed. In 1038, Yaroslav the Wise was quite successful in fighting the Yotvingians who were a nuisance to trade connections along the Western Bug River. However,



chronicles claim that he did not capture their towns, unwilling to sacrifice his men to fight their fortifications. Instead, he seized a large number of cattle and other booty in the countryside and returned home. As can be seen, living amid

## A Yotvingian Chief from the KGB

How the communist special services tried to drive a wedge between Ukrainians and Belarusians by reviving a separate Yotvingian people in Western Polissia

**T**he rapid rise of Ukrainian and Belarusian national identity during perestroika in the 1980s and the growing interest of these two peoples in their native languages, history, ethnography and folklore made the KGB and the communist government nervous. Several political proj-

ects were launched to counter this trend. These were based on the constructionist idea that a nation is an "imagined society" created by intellectuals. The thinking was that it could be fragmented and new, loyal nations could be forged from it. One of the most vivid, exotic and, at the same time,

The territory planned for the Yotvingian Re-





PAINTING: 'YOTVINGIANS WITH BOAT' BY ALAKSANDR SILVANOVICH, 2002

forests and marshes, the Yotvingians had fortified towns which the Rus' armed forces were reluctant to take by assault. Yaroslav made two more raids in 1040 and 1044.

As the ancient Rus' became increasingly fragmented, the Gali-

cian and Volhynian principalities picked up the baton in battling the Yotvingians. In 1112 and 1113, Volhynian Prince Yaroslav Sviatopolkovich made two successful raids against them, which are briefly mentioned in a chronicle.

The Tale of Ihor's Campaign, likely written in 1185 by Volodymyr, the son of a Galician prince, mentions Yotvingia as a land hostile to Rus'.

In 1196, Prince Roman Mstyslavovich also sent an expedition against the Yotvingians, who attacked the Podlachia region. While the Yotvingians hid away in Prussian forests and marches, the militant ruler of Galicia plundered their land. In response, the Lithuanians and Yotvingians ravaged Turiisk in Volhynia in 1205, and in 1227 Yotvingian forces advanced as far as Volodymyr but were eventually repelled. They also attacked regions around Pinsk and Brest in Belarus, Poland and the lands controlled by the Teutonic Order. In 1248, when the Yotvingians assaulted towns in the Chelm area, Prince Vasylo set out from Volodymyr and forced them to retreat. Their leaders, Borut and Skomond, were killed. The latter was known also as a priest who foretold the future by watching birds fly. The Rus' warriors put his head on a stake according to an ancient custom. In 1251, princes Vasylo and Danylo, as well as the Polish Prince Siemowit I of Masovia defeated the united Yotvingian-Prussian forces, and Prince Danylo of Galicia subjugated them completely in 1256. But the recalcitrant Balts continued to rebel on occasion.

»

## Republic in the early 1990s



abhorrent actions was the revival of the "Yotvingian people" and the "Yotvingian language" in the Ukrainian and Belarusian parts of Western Polissia.

### A POLITICAL REINCARNATION

Mikola Sheliagovich, poet, journalist, teacher at the Minsk Police Academy and a KGB agent, was the leader of this political movement. In April 1988, he set up the Polisse Cultural Union which promoted "the revival of the Western Polissian language and culture" and the recognition of residents of Western Polissia as a distinct nation. He argued in the press that they were not Belarusians but, rather, descendants of the Balts, "Yotvingians", and had their own "Yotvingian" language.

Since 1989, the Zbudinne (Awakening) newspaper was published as an organ of the Yotvingian revival movement. It was a biweekly publication written in a weird mix-

ture of Ukrainian and Belarusian in which brand new coinages predominated. It should be said that Sheliagovich's initial appeals attracted the interest of Ukrainian intellectuals in the Polissia region. They were ready to lend him a hand and act together. But once the Polisse Union was founded, it became clear that it sought separatism rather than the promotion of folk culture, so the Ukrainians severed contacts with Sheliagovich.

The political mission of the self-styled Yotvingians was completely pro-communist and pro-Russian. Their union received assistance from government ministers and Belarusian MPs, party functionaries, CEOs of government organizations, directors of leading factories and plants, newly rich businessmen and the almighty KGB. This handful of separatists were well-financed.

The chief of the "Yotvingians" made several claims: there was no Belarus; it »

## PAGAN DIALECTS FROM NARVA

The history of the Yotvingian dictionary – purportedly lost – traces back to the summer of 1978 when Viacheslav Zinov, a young man from Brest who collected antiques, travelled the Białowieża Forest in search of items to add to his collection. When he inquired about antiques with an old man from a remote hamlet, the man showed him several items from his own home. One book, a compilation of prayers in Latin with a few handwritten pages added to it, caught Zinov's eye, and he purchased it. Once home, he realized that the manuscript was older than the book itself and it was actually a dictionary – a list of words in Polish and an unknown language. A note at the beginning of the dictionary said "Pagan dialects from Narva". Some letters in the manuscript had faded, so Viacheslav carefully copied them into a notebook to decipher the text. He translated Polish words easily, yet despite all of his efforts, he was unable to make sense of the strange unknown language.

Before long, Viacheslav was enlisted in the army. While he was away, his parents who disliked his hobby went through his things and destroyed the icons and religious books out of fear that their son might become religious himself. The Latin prayer book with the curious handwritten dictionary was also destroyed. All that remained were the fragments that Viacheslav had copied into his notebook before he left for the army. When his service was over, he continued to research his discovery. After finding out that the Białowieża Forest had once been inhabited by pagan tribes that spoke a language similar to Lithuanian, he contacted researchers at the University of Vilnius. The notes shocked them: they now had a dictionary of the lost Yotvingian language that preserved it for future generations and revealed the culture and habits of this ancient people.

Yotvingian words from Zinov's notes trace borrowings from Gothic, Alan and Slavic languages. Phrases found in the chronicles of Hieronymus Meletius that date back to the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century and allegedly stem from the Sudovians (a branch of Yotvingians often falsely attributed to Prussians) are also a blend of Baltic languages and Slavic elements. Baltic researchers are now using these fragments to recreate the Yotvingian-Sudovian language. Years prior, however, politicians attempted to create a Slavic Yotvingian language.



could not have one language and culture; Belarus did not and would not have intellectuals or its own state; all things Belarusian were temporary, accidental and incomplete, while nationalists were the main enemy. His organization was effectively promoting the secession of Western Polissia from the republic. As a more radical option, Sheliagovich suggested forming a Belarusian-Polissian federation. There were even calls to set up checkpoints and a local national guard, but these remained on paper only. There were also territorial claims made against Ukraine.

In April 1990, a Western Polissia (Yotvingian) scholarly conference was held, declaring that the populations of the Brest and Pinsk regions of Belarus, the Volyn region of Ukraine, and the Podlachia and Chełm regions of Poland had the right to form an independent ethnic group. The conference was scheduled to take place in Pinsk, but the city turned out to be unpre-

pared for the event, so it was moved to Minsk. Some presentations were made in "Yotvingian". This gathering of separatists was made to appear more authoritative when it received welcoming addresses from Nikita Tolstoi, a leading Soviet Slaviciŭt and specialist in the folk culture of Polissia, and his students Aleksandr Dulichenko from Tartu, Oleg Poliakov from Vilnius and Fyodor Klimchuk from Minsk. Five years later, Tolstoi participated in a congress of Ruthenian separatists in Slovakia where he welcomed the codification of the "Carpatho-Ruthenian literary language". He was joined there by Dulichenko, another ardent advocate of the Ruthenians and the compiler of a two-volume dictionary of Russian obscenities.

## FROM THE "YOTVINGIAN" LANGUAGE TO RUSSIFICATION

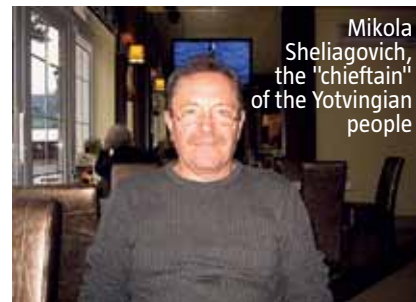
In contrast, some Belarusian public activists and authors such as Nil Gilevich and

## MARTENS IN EXCHANGE FOR CROPS

Chronicles not only contain a record of military events and the names of Yotvingian leaders (known as Kunigas) – Nebr, Stegut Zebrovyeh, Nebiast, Komat, Steikynt, Myntel, Mudeiko, Pestylo, Shurpa, Shiutr, Mondunych, Ankad and Yundil – but also tell us about their everyday lives and needs. In 1279, the Yotvingians sent ambassadors to Volodymyr-Volynskyi asking to be saved from starvation. They asked for crops in exchange for which they were happy to offer wax, silver and the fur of squirrels, black martens and beavers. Volodymyr Vasylykovich sent boats loaded with crops down the Bug River.

The Yotvingians were perhaps the last people of the region to still hold on to their pagan faith. According to Polish chronicler Wincenty Kadłubek, they believed that death was not to be feared because the soul would reincarnate in a more noble living being. Some would reincarnate as newborn children, others as beasts.

Yotvingian chiefs were forced to accept Christianity after they were defeated. In the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, northern Yotvingia came under the control of the Teutonic Order. It was plundered and many locals moved to Lithuania. But after the defeat of the Teutonic Knights at the Battle of Grunwald in 1410 and the Treaty of Melno in 1422, Sudavia, the entire territory the



Zianon Pazniak, were very critical of Sheliagovich and his statements, correctly perceiving him as a KGB operative that threatened the territorial and national integrity of Belarus. Meanwhile, ethnographers proved that all Belarusians, rather than one particular group, had Baltic roots. The Polisse Union gradually fell into decline, failing to drum up the support of Polissia residents themselves, who found the artificial "Yotvingian" language foreign and

## FEARLESS PEOPLE

"The Yotvingian people reside in the North, bordering with Mazovia, Rus and Lithuania; has a language greatly similar to the language of Prussians and Litvins, and understandable to them. The tribes are wild and warlike, so hungry for glory and renown that a dozen of them fought with a hundred enemies encouraged only by the hope and knowledge that, after their death, their compatriots would honour them with songs of their heroic deeds. This character led to the demise of the Yotvingians, as small groups were defeated by more numerous units and virtually all were killed because of their inability to flee from such unequal battles."

*-Polish chronicler Jan Dlugosz (1415-1480)*



Yotvingians possessed, was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. They left a number of traces in Ukraine such as in place names: the village of Yatviahy in Lviv Oblast, Yatviahy and Yatviaz in Volyn and Yatvizh in Chernihiv Oblast. The name of Lake Pulmo in Volyn is also thought to have Yotvingian origin. Until recently, place names were nearly the only

source of data about the language of this people, because all or almost all Yotvingians had converted to Christianity by the 17<sup>th</sup> century and were assimilated by the Lithuanians, Latvians, Belarusians, northern Ukrainians and Masovian Poles. One copy of a dictionary of the Yotvingian language survived, although the original was tragically lost. ■

barely comprehensible. Only one book – a chess handbook – was published in this language to date. Attempts to create a Movement of Western Polissia Residents, a Yotvingian National Party and a Western Polissian Regional Party all fell through.

In 1991-92, Sheliagovich still participated, with Tolstoi's support, in congresses of Slavic cultures in Ljubljana as a representative of "Yotvingian culture", while the odd Zbudinne newspaper, which experimented with the Latin script, was still available in newspaper kiosks in Brest Oblast and Minsk. Sheliagovich later distanced himself from the Yotvingian idea and became one of the most successful businessmen in Minsk. In 1994, he ran for president and later moved to Kaliningrad Oblast in the Russian Federation.

**Author: Koštiantyn Rakhno**

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# Ukraine Finds Its Place on the European Bookshelf

Ukraine was a Guest of Honour at the Festival of European Literature held November 15-18 in Cognac, France

**"**It was a challenge. We had to persuade a number of people before choosing Ukraine," said festival Director Sophie Jullien. "Today, on the last day of the celebration I can say confidently: we made the right choice."

Featuring a book salon and conference, film screenings, concerts, debates, and a sampling of Ukrainian food from writer Maria Matios, the festival conceptually aims to place a specific culture into a common European context. While last year's guest of honour, Spain, and next year's choice, Italy already belong to the European cultural space, Ukraine is quite different—both in terms of stereotypes within Ukraine and the attitudes of EU citizens toward Ukrainians.

## COGNAC AND THE ARTS

The warm autumn sun was the biggest rival of Ukrainian writers at Littératures Européennes Cognac. "If it weren't for this beautiful weather, many more people would have come", organizers claimed, al-



though the venue was well attended anyway. The festival had obviously become an integral part of the elegant old town long ago.

The small town of Cognac has a population of less than 20,000 but is known worldwide as the birthplace of the famous liquor that bears its name. Today, some top brands, such as Hennessy, Martell, Rémi-Martin, Camus and Otard are produced in Cognac and distributed throughout the world. Its reliable financial background allows Cognac to fund numerous cultural initiatives, including Littératures Européennes Cognac.

Why focus on European literature? "Because, before becoming a political project, the European community had been a cultural one," says Jean-François Colosimo, Chairman of the National Book Centre in France. "Because politician Jean Monnet who was one of the inspirers and fathers of the EU, was born here," notes Cognac Mayor Michel Gourinchas. "Because visitors from European countries are a key element of the

local economy," explains Nicolas, an executive at one of the local cognac factories. Over the twenty years that the festival has been held, only two non-EU countries have had a chance to present their literature in Cognac: Ukraine and Norway.

## INSECURE ABOUT FITTING IN

"Ukrainian literature is currently like a child prodigy that can do anything it likes," said Yuriy Andrukhovych at a conference. "After centuries of taboos, censorship and bans, we are enjoying unlimited freedom and feel wildly ecstatic about being allowed to do anything we want."

"Why did you have to invite him?" an executive from a Ukrainian publishing house lamented quietly. "Literature means responsibility for the image of the country you represent before readers and the world."

Whereas Ukrainians listened carefully to every word of their speakers to make sure that they would not have to denounce or

justify anything later, the international audience was more benevolent. Most visitors were French from Cognac and the area who had known little about Ukraine before the festival, eager to gain an overall background and less attentive to small details.

The list of Ukrainian writers invited to the festival was determined by whether their books had ever been translated into French. These included novels by Andrey Kurkov, Yuri Andrukhovych, Liubko Deresh, Maryna Levytska, Anna Shevchenko and Maryna and Serhiy Diachenko, all published in French. The international jury that voted on special prizes, as well as professional literary critics from France who moderated the conference had a chance to read them.

"I read books by all of the Ukrainian writers who attended the festival," said Hubert Artus, French critic and writer. "You're asking how well the themes and the quality fit European tastes and trends? Of course they fit in. In my opinion, Ukrainian literature is no better or worse than American, Mexican, Czech or any other literature. You have nothing to worry

about. I work at this festival every year and I can assure you that this year the festival attracted as many people as it always has. For instance, we know Spain much better than Ukraine but people are equally interested in both countries. We just have much more Spanish literature available in French. That's the only difference."

According to Artus, "Ukrainians have nothing to worry about in terms of whether they fit into Europe. Ukraine is Europe by default because we all belong to a common European culture. The issues raised in Liubko Deresh's *Cult*, for instance, are perfectly in line with youth literature trends popular in Europe. The French audience received its psychological tone very well, just as it does Andrey Kurkov with his political yet lyrical novels. Andrukhovych may be emotional at times, but he's also very poetic, in my opinion."

"Ukrainian discourse seems to be gradually rising," said Raymond Clarinard of Courrier International in a comment for *The Ukrainian Week*. "There is a critical mass of knowledge about Ukraine accumulating, and slowly, drop by drop, it

is moving ahead. The dubious stereotypes fuelled by Ukraine's opponents that used to mar anything related to the country are disappearing gradually, too. The fact that a place like Cognac with its prestige and variety of cultural initiatives has dedicated its festival of European literature to the introduction of Ukraine creates many new prospects for the nation. Let's face it: some people had no idea that the country existed before Euro 2012. Today, they have a chance to discover that an entire world, an entire life lies behind the word 'Ukraine'."

Such were the first steps of Ukrainian contemporary literature in France. Some claimed that the festival "came too early" and organizers should have waited for more Ukrainian books to be translated into French. Others said that such events are essentially the only places where publishers, writers and translators can meet. New meetings encourage new projects. Perhaps they will encourage accomplishments and vibrant art initiatives in the future.

"It could have been better of course," commented translator and literary history expert Iryna Dmytryshyn, Professor at the Paris Institut National des Langues et Civilisa-

## FEATURING A BOOK SALON AND CONFERENCE, FILM SCREENINGS, CONCERTS AND DEBATES, THE FESTIVAL AIMS TO PLACE A SPECIFIC CULTURE INTO A COMMON EUROPEAN CONTEXT

tions Orientales (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations), who inspired Ukraine's participation in the festival as the Guest of Honour. "But when you hear Ségolène Royal quoting Ukrainian writer Vasyl Barka, and Chair of the French National Book Centre quoting Voltaire to say that "Ukraine had always wanted freedom", you no longer need to prove that Ukrainian culture is becoming an integral component of the common European legacy. We'll know how effective the festival's promotion is in a year or two, but this is precisely the right way to lay the groundwork for the promotion of a nation's literature abroad." ■



# Sophie Jullien:

## Ukrainian literature is rich, versatile and deserves to be known



Interviewers:

Kateryna Koval, Alla Lazareva

Cognac, the city in southwest France known for its drink, is also the birthplace of the “Father of Europe”, Jean Monnet. The LITTÉRATURES EUROPÉENNES COGNAC, literature festival, was started in 1988 marking 100 years since Monnet’s birth. The festival promotes European literature and writers and give authors and readers a chance to meet and talk. Each November, writers from all over Europe flock to Cognac to meet, debate, and discuss their writing together with the audience. In 1995, the Jean Monnet Prize was established to reward a European writer for a novel or short stories written or translated into French. Ever since, festival attendees have discovered significant European writers, including William Boyd, Claudio Magris, Danièle Sallenave, Jorge Semprun, Antonio Tabucchi, and Sylvie Germain last year. **The Ukrainian Week** talks to Sophie Jullien about this year’s festival and Ukraine as its Guest of Honour.

**UW: Why did you choose Ukraine to be the central guest this year?**

In 2011, Spain was the Guest of Honour. Now, we are discovering the East of Europe and a country whose literature is little known in France. Ukraine is the second largest country on the European continent, and the biggest country whose territory lies entirely within Europe. So Ukraine is part of Europe. The opportunity to explore various themes with writers and raise the issue of frontiers makes our choice even more interesting.

**UW: In 2011, France hosted a big Ukrainian literature delegation at the Paris Book Fair (Salon du Livre de Paris). Has Ukrainian literature become more interesting for the French audience since then?**

Literature is one part of cultural identity that gives use an idea about countries and their cultures. It enhances imagination, the experience of other cultures and countries, and pushes the audience to open their minds. Translators have an important place in taking books across borders – geographic and cultural: they build bridges between cultures, hence between people.

Ukrainian literature has not been translated much in France. The few contemporary Ukrainian writers that are translated and published in French include Yuri Andrukhovych, Igor Baranko, Lyubko Deresh, and Andrey Kurkov.

In fact, it was very important for the Ukrainian delegation to be present at the Book Fair in Paris when an Almanac presenting unpublished writers was compiled. Being present at that meeting and listening to the writers encouraged me to discover more Ukrainian literature and look forward to new translations. And I’m delighted to know that some of them will be published in France.

**UW: What Ukrainian writers were invited to the festival? What will be its main theme?**

In his History of Charles XII, Voltaire wrote: “Ukraine has always aspired to be free.” So, we chose the theme of Freedoms. We invited Ukrainian writers from a variety of genres, from novels and poetry to cartoons and children’s books, including Yuri Andrukhovych, Igor

PHOTO: ANDRIY LOMAKIN

Baranko, Kateryna Biletina, Lyubko Deresh, Anton Kouchnir, Andrey Kurkov and Maria Matios, to name a few. And there were European writers, such as French Hubert Haddad and Gilles Rozier, Polish Mariusz Szczygiel, or Czech Jaroslav Rudiš. They had a chance to exchange ideas in meetings and at roundtables. Such things are very important as they encourage new cultural and literary projects, and boost creativity.

**UW: How popular are book fairs in France? What is the overall situation with book reading there? Are books giving way to digital media?**

Book publishing is a very big cultural industry and book fairs are very popular in France. Every weekend, there is a book fair in some city. Digital books change reading habits, of course. But the latest data from the National Book Centre shows that more and more books are being sold, as are translated books. Some may think that people tend to read less now, but I think it is the practice of reading that has changed. If people are encouraged to take a book and read it, they will. What we have to do is to find some innovative ways to encourage reading. People are still willing to discover and explore, and to share what they have read with others.

**UW: How can Ukrainian literature attract European readers? Does it have something unique that surprises them?**

Ukraine is at the crossroads of history and culture, a blend of different cultures. From what I've read, I can see that Ukrainian literature is rich, versatile and deserves to be known. In my opinion, it offers an original perspective of society, humour and irony, and historical background. But the most important aspect that leads a book to the foreign audience is translation.

There is still much to be done on the state level to create the image of Ukrainian literature abroad and to open the country. For example, France had the Year of Poland in 2004. Ever since, more and more Polish books have been translated into French.

**UW: What themes prevail in modern European literature? Actually, is there "European literature", or is it rather a generalized theoretical term?**

Each European country has its own authentic literature, but common historical and literary references show that all Europeans have something in common in terms of their culture. What we try to do with books is to ask questions. And as Umberto Eco said, "the language of Europe is translation".

**UW: Ukraine is the second non-EU Guest of Honour at the festival. Was it worth choosing Ukraine for the role this year?**

We highlight the cultural and geographical Europe, not politics. When Iryna Dmytrychyn came here as the translator of Yuriy Andrukhovych in 2009, she suggested that we could invite Ukraine, and I enjoyed the idea. I'm really glad about the outcome today. We had so many visitors every day, and especially now they discovered Ukrainian writers and it gave a better idea of the cultural Ukrainian landscape.

**UW: Your audience is mostly local, isn't it?**

The festival has existed for 20 years now. The city has got used to it and the locals really enjoy getting to know other worlds. People came from other cities of region Poitou-Charentes, and beyond. Some come back every year, and each year we get new audience attracted by different events we arrange all year long.

**UW: Spain was the guest last year. Was the audience then different from the one this year?**

There were more people. Actually, we see every year that the seeds we plant into the soil grow into beautiful flowers. Each year, the number of visitors has in fact increased. But we need time for this seed to grow. People got interested in Ukrainian literature and we have to keep encouraging this interest. Next year, Italy will be the Guest of Honour. But the main principle is to share experience and ideas and arrange meetings. We invite several writers from one culture, and other European writers. You saw that we had people from Poland, Czech Republic, Russia, Catalonia last year... It gives us a chance to share ideas and not get frozen in just one vision. Next year, we are planning to invite Serhiy Zhadan as his book will be published in French. Thus, we hope to

launch consistent communication with Ukrainian writers.

**UW: In your opinion, how does festival promotion affect the development of literature and promotion of foreign writers in France?**

The French have a good taste in books and they still need help in discovering new interesting writers and seek advice. We're trying to not only offer a book but understand and decipher a given society. We could see how Ukrainian writers invited this year were responsive and enthusiastic to tell people about their country, not just about themselves or their books, and to meet writers from other countries. I believe that Ukrainian culture is very deep and original, it's worth being known in the world. And that recognition comes through meeting new people, among other things. I hope that French publishers will continue to translate Ukrainian books. In a way, a country does not exist without translation, you know.

**UW: Some compare literature to wine. How about literature and cognac?**

Just like with cognac, one should savour all the different flavours of any given book. It is a per-

**UKRAINE IS AT THE CROSSROADS OF HISTORY AND CULTURE, A BLEND OF DIFFERENT CULTURES IT OFFERS AN ORIGINAL PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIETY, HUMOUR AND IRONY**

fect blend of shape and style. And just like cognac is made for future generations, literature goes through time, passing down knowledge from generation to generation. There is a beautiful French expression: "la part des anges", or "the angels' part" used for the part of alcohol that evaporates from liquor. It's the same with a book: there is an angels' part in it that affects us. I like the idea of the blend and transmission in cognac. A novel, too, is a blend, an adventure, a discovery. The difference is that one can consume literature without moderation. The main thing is that both cognac and literature are something to enjoy and share. ■

# Anna Shevchenko:

## It's important for me to show people that history tends to take revenge

Anna Shevchenko's debut thriller *Bequest* is about the British, Russian and Ukrainian intelligence services' hunt for Cossack Hetman Pavlo Polubotok's gold

**O**ur interview with Anna Shevchenko, a Ukrainian-born writer who now lives in Britain, took place at the European Books Festival of Cognac. Her debut thriller *Bequest* is about the British, Russian and Ukrainian intelligence services' hunt for Cossack Hetman Pavlo Polubotok's gold. The French translation of *Bequest* has turned out to be a big hit. Visitors kept interrupting the interview to get an autograph or ask Anna who the hetmans were and whether or not it is safe to travel around Ukraine in a camping trailer, and whether or not she remember the day Chernobyl exploded. We also spoke with her about trends in British literature, the responsibility of writers for the image of their nation and Western stereotypes about Ukrainians.

**UW: Are there many writers in the UK who write about anything linked to Ukraine?**

I'd say that Ukraine mostly comes up in political journalism. A lot of research is published on Ukraine's geopolitical choices. But these are not novels. An interesting book called *Odessa Brides* was recently published in English. It's by Janet Skeslien Charles from New Zealand. Janet presents a great portrait of what was going on in Odessa between Perestroika and 1991 when Ukraine gained independence, giving an extremely interesting perspective of Ukrainian reality through a foreigner's eyes. Apart from that, Andrey Kurkov's, Maryna Levytska's and my novels about modern Ukraine have been the only ones published in English, as far as I know.

**UW: Tell us about your grandfather, Fedir Shevchenko...**

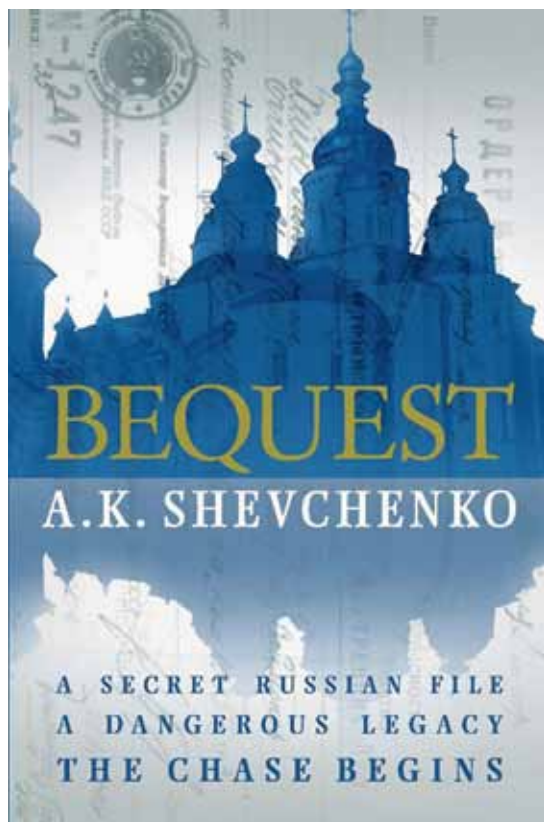
He had a sad and difficult life, one typical of an intellectual in the 1970s. He was a historian and the director of the Archeology Institute. He wrote the truth about Ukrainian historian and first president Mykhailo Hrushevsky, but it was prohibited; did research on Ukrainian Cossacks and edited the Soviet Encyclopaedia. He was a versatile, talented man who was known in the world. That's what the authorities didn't like about him. Anonymous reports started coming in against him and his name was removed everywhere. That was in 1972. Then, literary critic and dissident Ivan Dziuba was arrested and poet and dissident Dmytro Pavluchko faced persecution. Worst of all, my grandfather could have said so much and he never did. That was my major inspiration. I wanted to finish his unfinished work. After Perestroika, he was invited to speak about Hrushevsky at the Academy of Sciences. So many people came that they couldn't fit into the auditorium and they stood in the doorway. But the system had broken him and he could no longer speak the truth. That was my worst pain. My grandparents inspired the characters in *Bequest* and this novel is dedicated to them.

**UW: Is *Bequest* your first novel?**

Yes, but I published two books with research on Ukrainian and Russian mentality earlier. This was where it all started. My first book was a brief guide on Ukraine from the perspective of Ukrainian mentality. It was published in 2005. I did this because it would get Ukraine into a series of books about different countries. The actual research cost me two-three times more than the paycheck was. What surprised me though was that I found absolutely nothing on Ukrainian mentality when I began to look for contemporary research. After the first two books were published, my grandmother gave me my grandfather's diaries to read. He was a dissident and a professional historian. It was really painful to read his diaries. "Write a story about all this if you want to leave the memory of your grandfather," my granny told me. "Make it a novel this time." I was pregnant at that point — expecting a child and "expecting" a novel. It took me 12 years to research all the sources and complete the book.

**UW: Do you see yourself as a writer of high or popular literature? Do you accept the division?**

I don't think of myself as a writer. I'm just a story teller. I see things as if they were in a movie. I use different stories from Ukraine to bring its history to a mass audience. It's not that I don't respect highly intellectual literature. It's certainly very important. I'm just not sure today that I can do it. By the way, I was inspired to start writing books by my neighbours' six-year old daughter. I used to take her to school with my daughter and she



would give me three words and I had to make a story out of them every day. I had just 20 minutes to do that while driving the girls to school. And she would edit me all the time. Then six months later she told me, "Now you can really start thinking about writing books."

**UW: Still, you write historical detectives, not children's books...**

The key message of my first, second and maybe the two other books I'm currently contemplating is to show that history tends to take revenge. Subsequent generations get to pay the price for treating history carelessly. My next book is about the secrets of the Yalta Conference, the documents we don't know about. I worked in the UK and American archives, Livadia palace in Crimea, and talked to many different people. And there were some secrets there. The information I will reveal in my book will disturb some people. But not knowing it is even more dangerous.

**UW: Do you feel yourself a British or a Ukrainian writer?**

For me, the plot, the shape and completeness of a story are the priorities. This is what you can reach in any language. The point is what you write about.

**UW: Do you think festival promotion is effective for writers and the nations they represent?**

The Cognac literature festival is very vibrant, lively. It attracts people who have nothing in common with a given country but want to know more about Ukrainian history and culture. The festival is not commercial and reveals new music, photos, literature and art... All generations come here. Some people have been to Ukraine to study or just travel, but most have only heard that the country exists. I think this festival is a great initiative.

**UW: Are Ukrainian writers seen as something exotic in the West, or are they an integral element of the common European image?**

Sadly, they're definitely exotic. I've experienced this myself. Ukrainian literature is viewed as something new, an alien world. Recently, I did a programme on trips to Crimea, Russia and the Far East for the BBC. I was invited to talk about my second book on the Yalta

Conference and I accepted the invitation only because I had a chance to tell something about Ukraine. Surprisingly, Ukraine was not mentioned once in the draft programme.

**UW: How similar are the themes in contemporary Ukrainian and British literature?**

I would probably combine this question with the theme of football, although it may surprise you. And I'm not talking about Euro 2012. There is a book called *Dynamo: Defending The Honour Of Kiev* by Andy Dougan. It's about the Death Match of Kyiv Dynamo during World War II. A film with many British celebrities, including Gerard Butler, will be done on it soon. You may think that this has nothing to do with the problems Ukraine has now but the situation actually reflects British mentality. The British like to support the losing party. The concept of the losing party getting victory in the end makes Ukraine much more closer to the UK than any common economic or art events. That's how bridges are built – through football and history. For me, that was an important example of how a story that had nothing to do with modern time engaged Ukraine into the current trends in the UK.

**UW: What other trends are popular in the UK today? What Ukrainian writer could fit them?**

Maryna and Serhiy Diachenko, definitely. Their gloomy and weird fantasy is something the British find extremely interesting. Black detective stories also have a chance in the UK. Just look at all these popular Scandinavian novels. Kurkov fits in really well with his irony, sarcasm and surrealism that the Brits love and understand.

**UW: Do your books build bridges? Do they contribute to creating the image of Ukraine in the West?**

I think the Bequest contact has worked. Its detective element helped. And the plot – the hunt for gold is always interesting and everyone is familiar with it. I wanted to communicate Ukrainian history to the readers through this story. When a British newspaper wrote that "Shevchenko compiled a brief course on Ukrainian history," I felt that they got my message right. That was my goal.

**UW: So, you realize that people on the UK now partly see Ukraine through your eyes?**

I'd really like them to see Ukraine through more eyes than just mine. But that's what we have at this point. They see it through the eyes of Kurkov, Denysenko and other modern writers. And I'm grateful to the British audience for finding my eyes helpful.

**UW: Do you think writing, literature and storytelling entails responsibility?**

Definitely, yes. I feel 100% responsible for what I do. The responsibility is actually huge.

**UW: How do people in the UK see Ukrainians? Do they know anything about Ukraine?**

They know the three whales: Chernobyl, Andriy Shevchenko and mines. Sadly, that's all. In summer, a surge of negative media surfaced before Euro 2012. The media often write about Ukraine's endless political problems. But the good thing is

**I USE DIFFERENT STORIES FROM UKRAINE TO BRING ITS HISTORY TO A MASS AUDIENCE**



that people have finally realized that Ukraine is a separate state. Ten years ago, they would often not distinguish Ukraine from Russia.

**UW: Do you think Europe is finding Ukraine more and more interesting despite all our troubles?**

I think so. A lot of French people came up to me at this festival asking not just about books, but about Ukraine and its history. Their questions ranged from Cossacks to Chernobyl. The 120-seat historical roundtable was filled with the French, with all kinds of questions and comments coming from them. These intelligent people wanted to enrich their own culture.

**UW: Have your books been translated into Ukrainian?**

No, the novels haven't been translated yet. My first book *Bequest* has been published in 12 countries so far. Perhaps it will appear in Ukraine next year. Of course, I would be happy to reach out to Ukrainian readers with my books. ■

# The Louvre Welcomes Johann Georg Pinsel



Opening the exhibition of the works of Johann Pinsel, a master of Ukrainian baroque sculpture, Guilhem Scherf, the commissioner of the exhibition and Head of Department of Sculptures at the Louvre explained that: "We are exhibiting the sculptures in the former royal chapel, which was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The atmosphere and overall spirit of the premises ideally suit these wonderful sculptures. As a rule, we do not open the windows during exhibitions: the bright sunshine can harm paintings, but this is not the case with sculptures. This exceptional situation is only for the best."

The exhibition of the renowned Ukrainian artist in the Louvre is also an exception. This is the first cooperation between the museum that is well-known throughout the world and Ukraine. "This event has been in the making for three years," explained Scherf. "One of my friends, a French businessman, who was working in Lviv at that time, visited me, told

me about Johann Pinsel and showed me reproductions of his work..."

**The Ukrainian Week** tried to discover the name of the foreign benefactor from Scherf, but failed. The Head of the Department of Sculptures hesitated for a moment, but refused: "I cannot do this without the approval of this person. And he is not looking for glory for himself."

Oleh Pinchuk, sculptor and coordinator of restorative work, willingly spoke with journalists. "Just about all sculptures require restoration. This was very fine and demanding work, requiring exceptional craftsmanship," he said.

The commissioner of the exhibition noted that "the cultural event would never have taken place without the heroic efforts of Borys Voznytsky, who has been collecting and saving the masterpieces of Johann Pinsel since the 1960s. The art critic and former Director of the Lviv Art Gallery died tragically in a car accident in May, 2012. The exhibition was

## Events — 25 November, 7 p.m. — 2 December, 7 p.m. — 7-16 December

### The Beethoven Quartet

**National Philharmonic of Ukraine  
(2, Volodymyrsky Uzviz, Kyiv)**

The Beethoven Quartet from Basel is getting ready to play a concert in Ukraine with Antonio Nuñez on the first violin, Laurentius Bonitz on the second violin, Bahagn Aristakesyan on the viola and Carlos Conrad on the cello. Russian pianist, Alexey Liubimov and French bass violist, Botond Kosťyak, will join the quartet to play a sextet for piano, string quartet and bass viol called *The Favourite City I Hate* by contemporary Russian composer Pavel Karmanov and the Grand sextet in E-flat major by Mikhail Glinka. The programme also features String quartet No.1 by Suter and String quartet by Jean-Jacques Düski.



### Norma

**National Opera House  
(50, vul. Volodymyrska, Kyiv)**

No-one who wants to see and hear something wonderful will be left unmoved by the lyrical two-act tragedy by Italian composer Vincenzo Bellini. The story takes place in Gaul, which had been conquered by the Roman Empire. Norma, the high-priestess of the Celts, sacrifices her life for her lover. The Italian libretto by Felice Romani based on *Norma, or The Infanticide* tragedy combines perfectly with opera melodies, making it ever more dramatic and emotional. The title role is considered to be one of the most difficult arias in the repertoire of a soprano.

### The International Jazz Bez 2012 festival

**Lviv Philharmonic, Picasso club and other spots in Lviv  
(7, vul. Tchaikovskoho; 88, vul. Zelena, Lviv)**

Winter will bring along exciting jazz festivals, sparking cities all over Ukraine and Poland with the energy of improvisation. This year, over 100 international musicians, including Petras Vishniauskas, Eddie Henderson, Tomek Grochot, Jazz Pospolita and many more will take to the stage. The Benito Gonzalez Trio

will play the final chord with American jazz pianist Benito Gonzalez, Slovakian drummer David Godek, and Ark Ovrutski, one of the best bassists in Eastern Europe.



thus dedicated to his memory. Borys Voznytsky's daughter, Larysa, attended the opening of the exhibition. She left early, just after the arrival of Mykhaylo Kulyniak, the Minister of Culture of Ukraine, possibly because of the painful circumstances.

Kulyniak also liked the mention made by Scherf of the exception made to open the windows. He stated that "this will allow Pinsel to see the extent to which the Louvre values his works", and also alluded to the window to Europe, which the Pinsel exhibition had carved out for Ukraine.

However, the next Ukrainian-French artistic event will only take place in two years. It will be in Marseilles, not the Louvre, and will be dedicated to the art of Odesa. It's not as if Ukraine doesn't have anything with which to surprise the world. But as Guilhem Scherf accurately stated: "Each art exhibition is a chain of successful meetings". In the case of the Pinsel masterpieces, the chain has come together successfully, only time will tell if it will continue to grow with future exhibitions.

Tibo Brutten, an employee of the Louvre's Promotion Department, told *The Ukrainian Week* that the museum plans to expand its collection of work from Central and Eastern Europe. "More specifically, we shall be buying orthodox icons – Russian, Ukrainian, Serbian..." This project is in the early stages, but we don't know when the new collection will be ready for viewing.

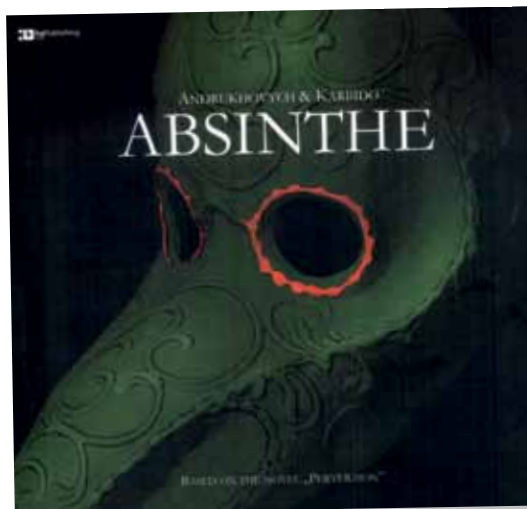
Ukrainian windows are only beginning to be found in the mass of Ukrainian masterpieces. These first rays of light, attention and interest are still an exception. A lot of work is needed for this exception to become the norm for cultural cooperation, and in time, for the norm to become a positive, stable tradition.

Alla Lazareva

## MUSIC

# Strong Spirits

*Absinthe* is the final part of the poetry and music trilogy, the first two albums being *Moonshine* and *Cinnamon*, started over six years ago by poet Yuri Andrukhovych and Polish avant-garde band, Karbido. The new album is a fusion of jazz, jazz-rock and ambient, flowing into folk in *Sniper* and *I Won't Go to the Forest*, and reggae in *J.P.'s Reggae*. The talented Karbido musicians maneuver through the various genres, always coming up with a delightful creation. The project, inspired by Andrukhovych's novel *Perverzion*, involves music, poetry, video art and theatrical elements, to present a versatile myth about the poet, traveler and performer, Stanislav Perfetsky. The audio part covers the most important episodes of Perfetsky's story that is more cinematographic by development and composition in the art performance than it is in the novel. Capturing the moments, details, symbols and moods, reflected accurately by all artistic means, it takes an approach that requires the audience to be familiar with the original text. A bonus DVD compiles videos of concerts at the Kyiv Conservatory and Ivano-Frankivsk Philharmonic, played with VJ-group Cube. The secret of *Absinthe* is not just the integrity that was lacking in the previous albums of the trilogy. Its most exciting element is the great interpretation of the story of Perfetsky, who finds himself in a ghost town, facing his life, love and death alone.



8 December, 8 p.m. — 10 December, 7.30 p.m. — Through 12 December

## Warm Jazz Evenings

**Officers' House**  
(30/1, vul. M. Hrushevskoho, Kyiv)

The best Ukrainian jazz musicians come together to present the Kyiv audience with the world's top jazz hits by legendary composers such as Duke Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, Sammy Nestico, Jerome Kern and George Gershwin. Improvisation, swing and smooth jazz rhythms will embrace the

audience in a world of music. Dmytro Aleksandrov on saxophone, Oleksiy Saranchyn on piano, vocalist Ruslan Yehorov and Oleksandr Charkin on trombone will be playing, along with Den Adu on trumpet, Mykola Kisteniov on double bass and Pavlo Halytsky on drums.



## Nino Katamadze & INSIGHT

**Solomia Krushelnytska Opera and Ballet Theatre**  
(28, Prospekt Svobody, Lviv)

Georgian jazz will once again melt the hearts of Ukrainian music-lovers. Nino Katamadze and her Insight band will come to Lviv to present her new much awaited album, *Green*. Just as in her previous album, *Red*, Nino and her musicians experiment with the voice, instruments and arrangements. This time, they experiment with traditional jazz and offer smart jazz remakes in a musical dialogue with the audience in songs including *Gammal*, *Vahagn* and *English*.



## The Beatles

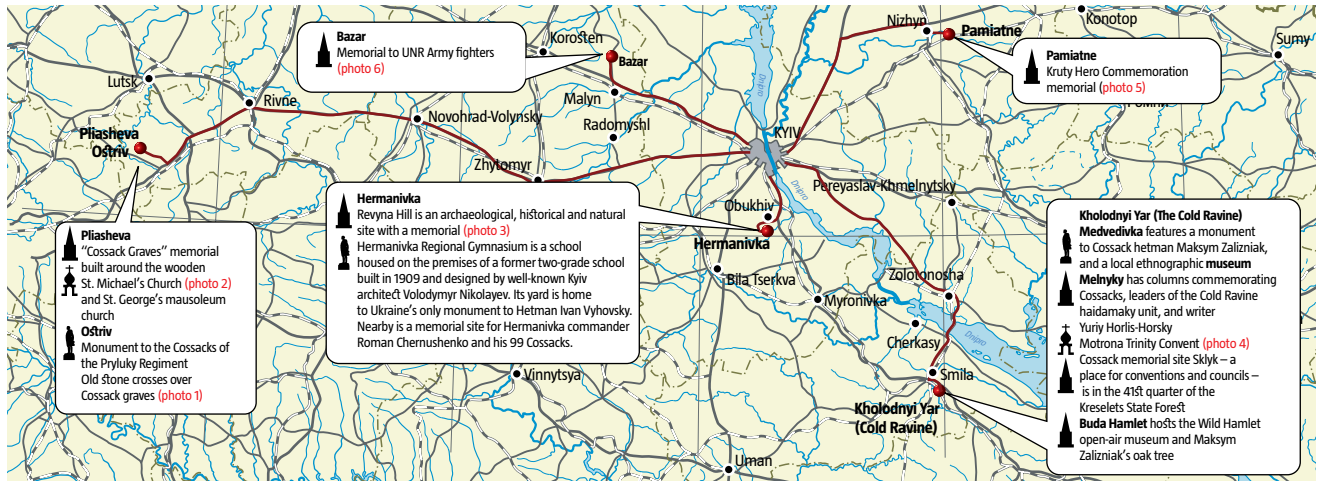
**M17 Contemporary Art Centre**  
(102-104, vul. Horkoho, Kyiv)

There is a special reason for joy among all Beatles fans: Kyiv will be hosting a photo exhibition by photographer Astrid Kirchherr, dedicated to the legendary Liverpool band until mid-December. She was the one who, in her time, defined the band's style: black leather jackets and stylish haircuts. The exhibition will feature

50 photographs, including 30 portraits of the four Beatles, and the rest revealing the character of Hamburg in the 1960s, with guitars, typical hairstyles, dressed and ideas inspired by the legendary band.

# In the Footsteps of Fallen Heroes

*The Ukrainian Week* takes a drive to explore places where significant military campaigns had taken place



**Author:**  
**Dmytro Malakov**

**D**mytro Harmash, a Kyiv-based construction engineer and musician, is hopelessly in love with history. He sometimes takes the day off to drive to places where memorable events have taken

place. The most popular of these include Chernihiv, Kaniv, Pereiaslav-Khmelnytsky, Chyhyryn, Subotiv, Sedniv, Ostroh, Kozelets and Oster. The story below reveals some of the lesser-known spots.

## PLIASHEVA

We pass Zhytomyr, Rivne, and Dubno, heading to Pliashieva, a village where a Cossack Grave memorial was founded in 1910-1914 to commemorate the tens of thousands of Bohdan Khmel-



nytsky's warriors killed in the devastating Battle of Berestechko with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth army in 1651. The memorial was designed by architect Volodymyr Maksymov around two unique churches. The wooden St. Michael's Church was built in 1650, renovated and brought to Pliasheva from the nearby village of Ostriv a century ago. The St. George Mausoleum Church was decorated with oil frescos by Kyiv artist Ivan Yizhakevych 100 years ago. St. Michael's is a traditional piece of Volyn architecture, while St. George's is Ukrainian Art Nouveau. The two churches are connected by a vaulted underground passage with dozens of Cossack skulls stored under glass in a special chamber. They were collected on the vast battlefield. There is also a monument to the Cossacks of the Pryluky regiment in the village of Ostriv, and old stone crosses on Cossack tombs along the Pliasheva riverbank.

### HERMANIVKA

The old village of Hermanivka, first mentioned as Hermenych in chronicles from 1096, is located in Obukhiv County, south of Kyiv. Over the Krasna River stands the Revyna Hill, an archaeological, historical and natural site containing a memorial to the past glory of this small village. "Cossack colonels Sulyma and Prokip Vereshchaka, slaughtered at the reading of the

Treaty of Hadiach at the Chorna Rada on 11 September 1659 are buried here," states the plaque on the solitary steel cross.

After the death of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Moscow increased its pressure on Ukraine ignoring the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav. On September 16, 1658, Hetman Ivan Vyhovsky signed an agreement with Poland in Hadiach consolidating a break with Moscow. In Ukraine, however, discord sparked between supporters of Ukraine's conflicting Russian and Western courses. This mounted after Ivan Vyhovsky's army defeated the Moscow army at Konotop in summer 1659. In autumn, Cossack leaders arrived for the Chorna Rada – the Black Council – in Hermanivka to decide whether Ukraine should head east or west, a question that remains unresolved to this day. Supporters of the Russian course prevailed, while the allies of Ivan Vyhovsky, Stepan Sulyma and Prokip Vereshchaka, were executed by their compatriots who were now loyal to Moscow.

The only monument to Hetman Ivan Vyhovsky in Ukraine is in the yard of Hermanivka County Gymnasium, a school located on the premises of a former two-grade school built in 1909 and designed by well-known Kyiv architect Volodymyr Nikolayev. Nearby is a memorial site for Hermanivka commander Roman Chernushenko and his 99 Cossacks.

### THE COLD RAVINE

Kholodny Yar – the Cold Ravine – is a huge relict forest with ravines and spurs, streams and springs, covering over 7,000 hectares, and a symbol of national resistance south of Cherkasy. People have lived there for thousands of years. In recent times, the pristine thicket of the Cold Ravine was home and shelter to several generations of Ukrainians who struggled for freedom.

We turn west from the Cherkasy-Chyhyryn road, past the Tiasmyn River to the village of Med-

## THE COLD RAVINE – IS A HUGE RELICT FOREST WITH RAVINES AND SPURS, STREAMS AND SPRINGS AND A SYMBOL OF NATIONAL RESISTANCE SOUTH OF CHERKASY

vedivka with its monument to Maksym Zalizniak, the leader of the Koliyivshchyna revolt. The local museum presents the history of the Cold Ravine and the sites worth seeing. From there, we turn to Melnyky – a village with columns honouring Cossacks and leaders of the Cold Ravine haidamaky, as well as writer Yuriy Horlis-Horsky who wrote the novel Cold Ravine published in 1937 in Halychyna. Nearby is a monument





to poet Taras Shevchenko inscribed with the prophetic words, "The new fire will come from the Cold Ravine."

Next is the Motrona Trinity Convent, first mentioned in chronicles in 1198 and surviving alternating waves of prosperity and devastation. It had once been under the protectorate of Ukrainian Cossacks. The haida-

maky who fought in the Koliyivshchyna had their weapons blessed there in 1768, followed by rebels fighting the Bolshevik government during the Ukrainian War of Independence in 1917-1921.

The clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate to which this shrine is now subject – as are many churches and monasteries all

over Ukraine – are more concerned about female church visitors adhering to the traditional dress-code (most often, hideous headscarves and long skirts) than about preserving the historical memory of this place. There is not a single monument to remind visitors of what transpired here long ago.

Behind the convent fence one can find several ancient and more recent caves. Across the road from the convent gates, steep wooden stairs descend to the bottom of a wide ravine that stays cool even on hot days.

The asphalt driveway takes us westward through a dense Kresets State Forest to a roadside plaque commemorating the sklyk – or gathering. In Cossack times, this was the name of a huge cauldron hanging on an ancient oak tree and used as a bell to signal gatherings for councils. A few kilometres from here is Wild Hamlet, an open-air ethnographic museum. Arranged with Ukrainian hospitality and respect for the history of Cold Ravine, the hamlet houses a traditional Ukrainian baroque wooden church for Saint Petro Kalnyshevsky, the last otaman of the Zaporizhian Sich. A beautiful thousand-year old tree



6



that inspired many legends, known as "Maksym Zalizniak's Oak", is another highlight. The restaurant offers traditional meals and features a machine gun standing between the tables, old weapons hanging on the walls, and framed portraits of the heroes of the Cold Ravine Republic.

### KRUTY

Some places are best visited in winter. One such place is the Kruty railway station near Nizhyn, a town in Chernihiv Oblast; the other is the village of Bazar in Korosten County, Zhytomyr Oblast. There, historical events took place in winter, during the Ukrainian War of Independence.

On January 29, 1918, the Cadet Corps of Bohdan Khmelnytsky Military School, Sich Rifleman student battalion, and nearly 200 haidamaky fought against the Bolshevik army commanded by ex-colonel of the Royal Army Mikhail Muravyov. The battle held back the Bolshevik attack on Kyiv, which was an important political contribution to the successful completion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

A memorial commemorating the Kruty Heroes was built near the railway station as a branch of the National Military History Museum.

A manmade mound is crowned with a red pillar and a golden trident. Red stands for the characteristic colour of the Kyiv University building whose students also took part in the Kruty Battle. Beside it are 27 symbolic pillars commemorating the young defenders of Ukrainian statehood

killed in the battle. The railway platform with two short trains in front of it reflects the original scene. Old cargo and passenger train cars host a museum collection telling the story of the 1918 battle.

### BAZAR

In fall 1921, the Bolshevik government had not yet crushed the Ukrainian insurgent movement. The army of the UNR, the Ukrainian People's Republic, commanded by General Yurko Tiutiunnyk launched a military campaign in hopes of coordinating the separate insurgent groups and overthrowing the Soviet government. The campaign failed when the red cavalry led by Grigory Kotovsky encircled and took most UNR fighters hostage after a fierce battle. On November 23, 1921, 359 insurgents were executed near the town of Bazar.

Today, it hosts a memorial to the UNR fighters who took part in the Second Winter Campaign. It was built with support of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the UK diaspora, the Great Britain Symon Petlura Foundation, the Association of Former Ukrainian Fighters and the Ukrainian Community of Great Britain. The names of 359 executed soldiers are carved on the pillars crowned with the image of the UNR Iron Cross Knights Order, an inscription stating "Eternal glory and memory to 359 knights" and a bundle of guelder rose berries, a symbolic plant known in Ukraine as kalyna. ■

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