

The Ukrainian Week

International edition

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a key to Ukraine's democracy

Capital flight
from Ukraine in 2014

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Тижень

Independent Ukraine Speaks



Author:
Dmytro Krapyvenko

The history of independent Ukraine is marked by its Maidans. The quarter-century from the Granite Revolution of 1990 started by students, to the latest events—the “Revolution of Dignity” is not yet over, after all—, can be broken into periods of great social changes and local protests, the epicenter of which has always been the main square of the Capital. Kyiv’s one-time October Revolution Square with its Cyclops-like workers and peasants and Lenins, all on a provincial scale as befits a mere republic, designed for workers’ rallies and military parades, has been transformed, with its sentimental post-soviet clusters of graceless monuments and shopping malls, into a place of grief.

Here, it’s not portraits of Heaven’s Hundred that look down at us from a height, but the burned-out shell of the Union Building, only partly masked by patriotic banners. Near the Post Office is Kilometer 0, where you can easily find the distance to oblast centers and world capitals alike. This is the real Ukrainian crossroad, from which we still cannot see what kind of Maidan this will ultimately be—of Sorrow, of Entertainment, of Independence, or of Victory—not in the distant future, but in the one that we are all waiting for today.

Ukraine’s historic fate has been to be a testing place. What geopolitical theory has not played out on its terrain? What social experiments have not been carried out here? What types of internal government were not implanted in it? And whatever they were,

they were always from outside, in the interests of outsiders. Even a mind unfettered by conspiracy theories at some point begins to interpret events in our country as



**THE MAIDAN STOOD
IN OPPOSITION
TO A PATERNALISTIC MODEL
THAT HAD TAKEN SHAPE
OVER CENTURIES AND WAS
ENSHRINED, NOT IN LAW BUT
IN PEOPLE’S MENTALITY**

the consequence of outside influence, the conflict of imperial ambitions, and so on. The minute some serious social disturbance starts in Ukraine, the armchair generals—this military unit that remains the biggest combat unit

of all, albeit a virtual one—get out the popcorn and begin the hunt for historical analogies: “Oh, look at the Velvet Revolutions in Eastern Europe, if only we had as much humor as they did, or what about Poland’s Solidarity movement with its rally of dwarves who trolled the police? How about we do something like that and we’ll succeed? No, it’s more like the Arab Spring, because everything was coordinated using social networks.” The more original among them even began to extrapolate on Ukrainian ground the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, calling for non-violent resistance. But it was all no good. The Maidan will enter world history books as different from the velvet and colored revolutions, with its own name, without translation. Only the new meaning will remain, its Turkic roots forgotten.

AGAINST THE OFFICIAL MYTHOS

The enemies of the Maidan like to talk about economic statistics, saying that there was no reason to rebel, when the indicators for 1990, 2004 and 2013 were way better than the first post-revolutionary years. Of course, they’re not really talking economics. The mind of an unfree person whose sacred cow is stability does not accept change. There’s probably no more compromised phrase than that among Ukrainian politicians. What it really means is, “You stay loyal to us and we’ll give you some nice little handouts.”

Of course, loyalty has different faces. In the 1990s, the government demanded at least a declarative faithfulness to “Lenin’s idea,” and was willing to compromise as far as hanging the Blue & Yellow flag next to the flag of the USSR. By the Kuchma era, it was to overlook the crimes of those in power, to ignore the opposition, and to not resist when they wanted to use you as administrative leverage. Loyalty to the Yanukovich regime was a simple labor-camp hierarchy: you did your job and you were well-fed. Best of all, you’d be left alone, as God forbid you should fall foul of the thieves-in-law and their minions.

The carrot of “stability” from the Yanukovich regime was something far more abstract, having the stagnation under Brezhnev - the

era that gave birth to the phrase “They kind-of pay us and we kind-of work” - as its ideal. The currency of bribery was deficit goods under Brezhnev; later it evolved into free concerts for students and bags of produce for pensioners. The government was not particularly generous, but it did promise an unending supply of “goodies,” thereby earning its political dividends.

The cult of stability is evident in most post-soviet countries. In Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, petrodollars keep it going; in Belarus, the overvaluation of state assets; in Tajikistan and Armenia the hope, “as long as there’s no war.” But the main reason is the critical mass of voters who are prepared to accept such rules of play. This is where problems arise in Ukraine: too many people want to take care of themselves and are not prepared to settle for government handouts. And this is the group of people prepared to rebel against (post) soviet stability.

Economic slogans were never a strong point of the Maidan. It was not a hungry uprising and did not arise for the purpose of redistributing wealth. The oligarchs whose money likes peace and quiet were never allies of the Maidan but rather supported the regime and, when there was victory, they built bridges to the new government. The shadowy nature of the oligarchs has saved them so far. The Maidan’s economic program remained unwritten, but came down to a very simple formula: “The heck with your stability, because we can take care of ourselves. The main thing is for the state not to interfere in this.” This, incidentally, also explains why the Maidan, which survived on the basis of volunteers and donations, won over the Anti-Maidan, which was based on funding from the “stable” government and was little more than a crowd of hirelings. This brings us to the failure to understand and the ironic questions of opponents of the Maidan: “So, what were you fighting for? None of you got any richer...?”


The success of the velvet revolutions depended only on democratic elections and changes to various constitutions. The Maidan, by contrast, stood in op-

position to a paternalistic model that had taken shape over centuries and was enshrined, not in law but in people’s mentality.

WHO’S THE BOSS HERE?

The Maidan could never have succeeded if it had been a leader+followers phenomenon: the regime hierarchy would have beheaded that leader and destroyed the movement at the very beginning. Even in 2004, when the insurrection had a clearly designated leader, all those who stood up understood that this was not a battle for a new tsar, but against the old system. Today, hostile propaganda tries to appeal to Ukrainians with questions like: “You stood up on the Maidan and now you’re fighting for a president who is an oligarch? What’s the point?” This kind of question is natural, coming from a country where an opera called “Living for the Tsar” is a classic and even the cossack otaman needed to declare himself “Emperor Peter III” in order to raise a successful insurrection. In a Ukrainian context, this sounds completely ridiculous.

The role of Big Politics in popular rebellions in recent years is not worth overestimating. The Granite Revolution of 1990 was launched by students who joined



THE MAIDAN COULD NEVER HAVE SUCCEEDED IF IT HAD BEEN A LEADER+FOLLOWERS PHENOMENON: THE REGIME HIERARCHY WOULD HAVE BEHEADED THAT LEADER AND DESTROYED THE MOVEMENT AT THE VERY BEGINNING

together from various organizations and never did form influential parties afterwards. Significantly, the then-student leaders joined “adult” politics, that is, ran for public office, only 10-15 years after the hunger strike that accelerated the collapse of the USSR and brought Ukraine closer to independence. The Orange Revolution united many opposition parties, but the main force on the 2004 Maidan was non-partisan individuals who rose up and even after victory did not join Viktor Yushchenko’s Nasha Ukraina en masse, while Nasha Ukraina »

quickly turned into a bureaucratic, corrupt party in power.

Ukrainians never organized a Solidarity, Sajudis or Muslim Brotherhood, in the sense that none of the Maidans gave birth to a single civic or political force that could have representation at various levels of government. For instance, Narodnyi Rukh (People's Movement) emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, but its members were effectively barred from influential political appointments by the freshly re-painted communist nomenklatura. Similarly today, Praviy Sektor, which has the justified slogan, "the party born on the Maidan," has only a few deputies in the new Verkhovna Rada, a handful of activists scattered among the big parties and among the independents. In the Cabinet and Presidential Administration, Maidan activists have mostly been given posts as "advisors."

To achieve a complete victory, this latest revolution needs to include a replacement of police units by self-defense teams and regional officials by local Maidan activists. After all, in February 2014, the sense of the Maidan went geographically well beyond the central square of the capital. Yes, professionals were necessary and, sooner or later, the contact lists would have had to be gone through, and yesterday's civil servants screened through the lustration process. But a revolutionary event has no time for superficial renovations: quickly firing all the regime's functionaries would have helped stop the sabotage and separatist attacks last spring.

COMPROMISE AS THERMIDOR¹

The era of jacobinism and bolshevism has gone into the dustbin of history, so calls for bloody revenge on enemies of the revolution makes as much sense as placing hopes on horse-drawn carts as a "green" form of transport that, moreover, doesn't require imported fuels. The language of weapons makes sense on the front, but not in the rearguard. Still, depending on the lustration law alone, however ideal it might be, is also not enough. To clean government of communist functionaries in the early 1990s would have been far simpler than trying to sift

out the civil service today, after it has been largely shaped by the principle of permanent criminal gangs. The strength of such gangs is in their ability to conspire, to come up with shadowy schemes, and to negotiate informal agreements.

To confront unspoken gang rules with the help of legislation is far from straightforward. Party of the Regions was only the tip of the iceberg, the face of the mafioso octopus of the Yanukovych regime. If we recall, in addition to a presidentially-appointed governor of every oblast state administration, the regime had an informal "minder" who made sure the interests of the Family were taken care of, especially its business interests. To try to define in law the limits of influence of such individuals is impossible, although it's equally naive to believe that the current Administration has no idea of these shadow functionaries and their capacities.



A REFLECTION OF YET ANOTHER FEATURE OF THE MAIDAN IS THAT CHANGES ARE MOVING MUCH FASTER IN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY THAN IN THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

The success of reforms in Ukraine will depend on how much distance the current power elite manage to keep between themselves and various "trusted individuals" of Yanukovych and today's oligarchs, and from political forces that indirectly work on behalf of the aggressor. Any talk of "peace for the sake of unity" is likely to lead to the same mistakes that were made by the leaders of the Orange Revolution, who allowed the Regionals to return to power and eventually to organize a full-scale reversal.

AND THE MAIDAN GOES ON

The "Revolution of Dignity" has overturned relations between the nation and the government in such a way that now the ruling elite is seriously worried about staying loyal enough to voters. The paternalistic system and the faith in "stability" that went along with it have collapsed as the main element in public trust.

Government, be it central, local or even military, is becoming accountable to civil society in Ukraine. The powerful volunteer movement that was born on the Maidan makes it possible not only to supply the army with everything it needs, but also to expose the incompetence of generals, their bravura reports, and the failure of officials at various levels to come through on their promises and commitments. The self-defense companies that a year ago consisted of boys in construction helmets and wooden shields have turned into battle-ready battalions that offer a model for how the country's forces need to be reformed in the future. The Ukrainian community abroad, which mostly loved Ukraine from a distance in the past, has been giving its homeland millions of dollars' worth of assistance through transfers to volunteer foundations and suppliers of ammunition, while holding the "western front" in the information war through which Russia is using every trick in the book to discredit Ukraine.

The current government still seems to think that problems are resolved by first setting up a line ministry—along the lines of the Ministry of Information, nicknamed Propaganda Ministry or Minstets after the current minister—, while ordinary Ukrainians are already busy working in the information and cultural arenas. Campaigns to boycott Russian goods began long before the Verkhovna Rada announced its economic sanctions against the Russian Federation. Interest in Ukrainian film, music, literature, and art inside the country is creating domestic demand that Ukrainian artists not long ago complained was missing. Ukrainian bloggers are famously exposing the fakery of Russian propaganda while officials speaking at podiums still talk about "the need for proper measures."

Changes are moving much faster in Ukrainian society than in the corridors of power. This is a reflection of yet another feature of the Maidan: the revolutionary class is not enthralled with power. Rather, it is demonstrating to the ruling elite those progressive systems and models that they should really consider instituting. ■

¹ Thermidor, a month name invented during the French Revolution, has come to mean a retreat from more radical goals and strategies during a revolution, especially when caused by a replacement of leading personalities. Source: Wikipedia



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From Cold War to Hot War

Russia's aggression in Ukraine is part of a broader, and more dangerous, confrontation with the West

The pens were on the table in Minsk, Belarus's capital, for the leaders of France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine to sign a deal to end a year-long war fuelled by Russia and fought by its proxies. But on February 12th, after all-night talks, they were put away. "No good news," said Petro Poroshenko, Ukraine's president. Instead there will be a ceasefire from February 15th. A tentative agreement has been reached to withdraw heavy weaponry.

But Russia looks sure to be able to keep open its border with Ukraine and sustain the flow of arms and people. The siege of Debaltseve, a strategic transport hub held by Ukrainian forces, continues. Russia is holding military exercises on its side of the border. Crimea was not even mentioned.

Meanwhile the IMF has said it will lend Ukraine USD17.5 billion to prop up its economy. But Mr. Putin seems to be relying on a familiar Russian tactic of exhausting his negotiating counterparts and taking two steps forward, one step back. He is counting on time and endurance to bring the collapse and division of Ukraine and a revision of the post-cold war world order.

Nearly a quarter-century after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the West faces a greater threat from the East than at any point during the cold war. Even during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, Soviet leaders were constrained by the Politburo and memories of the second world war. Now, according to Russia's chief propagandist, Dmitry Kiselev, even a decision about the use of nuclear arms "will be taken personally by Mr. Putin, who has the undoubted support of the Russian people". Bluff or not, this reflects the Russian elite's perception of the West as a threat to the very existence of the Russian state.



In this view Russia did not start the war in Ukraine, but responded to Western aggression. The Maidan uprising and ousting of Viktor Yanukovich as Ukraine's president were engineered by American special services to move NATO closer to Russia's borders. Once Mr. Yanukovich had gone, American envoys offered Ukraine's interim government USD25 billion to place missile defenses on the Russian border, in order to shift the balance of nuclear power towards America. Russia had no choice but to act.

Even without Ukraine, Mr. Putin has said, America would have found some other excuse to contain Russia. Ukraine, therefore, was not the cause of Russia's conflict with the West, but its consequence. Mr. Putin's purpose is not to rebuild the Soviet empire—he knows this is impossible—but to protect Russia's sovereignty. By this he means its values, the most important of which is a monopoly on state power.

Behind Russia's confrontation with the West lies a clash of ideas. On one side are human rights, an accountable bureaucracy and democratic elections; on the other an unconstrained state that can sacrifice

its citizens' interests to further its destiny or satisfy its rulers' greed. Both under communism and before it, the Russian state acquired religious attributes. It is this sacred state which is under threat.

Mr. Putin sits at its apex. "No Putin—no Russia," a deputy chief of staff said recently. His former KGB colleagues—the Committee of State Security—are its guardians, servants and priests, and entitled to its riches. Theirs is not a job, but an elite and hereditary calling. Expropriating a private firm's assets to benefit a state firm is therefore not an act of corruption.

When thousands of Ukrainians took to the streets demanding a Western-European way of life, the Kremlin saw this as a threat to its model of governance. Alexander Prokhanov, a nationalist writer who backs Russia's war in Ukraine, compares European civilisation to a magnet attracting Ukraine and Russia. Destabilising Ukraine is not enough to counter that force: the magnet itself must be neutralised.

Russia feels threatened not by any individual European state, but by the European Union and NATO, which it regards as expansionist. It

1985–2015

Gorbachev comes to power

Mikhail Gorbachev elected president of the Soviet Union by Congress of People's Deputies

MARCH 1985

Break-up of Soviet Union

Communist coup against a reformist Gorbachev fails, but contributes to break-up of Soviet Union. Boris Yeltsin becomes Russian Federation president

DECEMBER 1991

First Chechen war

Conflict between Russian forces and Chechen separatists begins, culminating in a ceasefire in August 1996, shortly after Yeltsin's re-election

DECEMBER 1994

sees them as “occupied” by America, which seeks to exploit Western values to gain influence over the rest of the world. America “wants to freeze the order established after the Soviet collapse and remain an absolute leader, thinking it can do whatever it likes, while others can do only what is in that leader’s interests,” Mr. Putin said recently. “Maybe some want to live in a semi-occupied state, but we do not.”

Russia has taken to arguing that it is not fighting Ukraine, but America in Ukraine. The Ukrainian army is just a foreign legion of NATO, and American soldiers are killing Russian proxies in the Donbas. Anti-Americanism is not only the reason for war and the main pillar of state power, but also an ideology that Russia is trying to export to Europe, as it once exported communism.

Anti-Westernism has been dressed not in communist clothes, but in imperial and even clerical ones. “We see how many Euro-Atlantic countries are in effect turning away from their roots, including their Christian values,” said Mr. Putin in 2013. Russia, by contrast, “has always been a state civilisation held together by the Russian people, the Russian language, Russian culture and the Russian Orthodox church.” The Donbas rebels are fighting not only the Ukrainian army, but against a corrupt Western way of life in order to defend Russia’s distinct world view.

MISTAKEN HOPES

Many in the West equate the end of communism with the end of the cold war. In fact, by the time the Soviet Union fell apart, Marxism-Leninism was long dead. Stalin replaced the ideals of internationalism, equality and social justice that the Bolsheviks had proclaimed in 1917 with imperialism and state dominance over all spheres of life. Mikhail Gorbachev’s revolution consisted not in damping down Marxism but in proclaiming the supremacy of universal human values over the state, opening up Russia to the West.

Nationalists, Stalinists, communists and monarchists united against Mr. Gorbachev. Anti-Americanism

had brought Stalinists and nationalists within the Communist Party closer together. When communism collapsed they united against Boris Yeltsin and his attempts to make Russia “normal”, by which he meant a Western-style free-market democracy.

By 1993, when members of this coalition were ejected by pro-Yeltsin forces from the parliament building they had occupied in Moscow, they seemed defeated. Yet nationalism has resurfaced. Those who fought Yeltsin and his ideas were active in the annexation of Crimea and are involved in the war in south-east Ukraine. Alexander Borodai, the first “prime minister” of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic, who fought with anti-Yeltsin forces, hails Mr. Putin as the leader of the nationalist movement in Russia today.

Yet for a few years after Mr. Putin came to power he built close relations with NATO. In his first two presidential terms, rising living standards helped buy acceptance of his monopoly on state power and reliance on ex-KGB men; now that the economy is shrinking, the threat of war is needed to legitimise his rule. He forged his alliance with Orthodox nationalists only during mass street protests by Westernised liberals in 2012, when he returned to the Kremlin. Instead of tear gas, he has used nationalist, imperialist ideas, culminating in the annexation of Crimea and the slow subjugation of south-east Ukraine.

HARD POWER AND SOFT

Mr. Putin’s preferred method is “hybrid warfare”: a blend of hard and soft power. A combination of instruments, some military and some non-military, choreographed to surprise, confuse and wear down an opponent, hybrid warfare is ambiguous in both source and intent, making it hard for multinational bodies such as NATO and the EU to craft a response. But without the ability to apply hard power, Russia’s version of soft power would achieve little. Russia “has invested heavily in defence,” says NATO’s new secretary-general, Jens Stoltenberg. “It has shown it

Mr. Putin drew two lessons from his brief war in Georgia in 2008. The first was that Russia could deploy hard power in countries that had been in the Soviet Union and were outside NATO with little risk of the West responding with force. The second, after a slapdash campaign, was that Russia’s armed forces needed to be reformed

can deploy forces at very short notice...above all, it has shown a willingness to use force.”

Mr. Putin drew two lessons from his brief war in Georgia in 2008. The first was that Russia could deploy hard power in countries that had been in the Soviet Union and were outside NATO with little risk of the West responding with force. The second, after a slapdash campaign, was that Russia’s armed forces needed to be reformed. Military modernisation became a personal mission to redress “humiliations” visited by an “overweening” West on Russia since the cold war ended.

According to IHS Jane’s, a defence consultancy, by next year Russia’s defence spending will have tripled in nominal terms since 2007, and it will be halfway through a ten-year, 20 trillion rouble (\$300 billion) programme to modernise its weapons. New types of missiles, bombers and submarines are being readied for deployment over the next few

THOSE WHO FOUGHT YELTSIN AND HIS IDEAS WERE ACTIVE IN THE ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA AND ARE INVOLVED IN THE WAR IN SOUTH-EAST UKRAINE

years. Spending on defence and security is expected to climb by 30% this year and swallow more than a third of the federal budget.

As well as money for combat aircraft, helicopters, armoured vehicles and air-defence systems, about a third of the budget has been earmarked to overhaul Russia’s nuclear forces. A revised military doctrine signed by Mr. Putin in December identified “reinforcement of NATO’s offensive capacities directly on Russia’s borders, and measures taken to deploy a global anti-missile defence system” in central Europe as the greatest threats Russia faces.

In itself, that may not be cause for alarm in the West. Russian nuclear doctrine has changed little since 2010, when the bar for first use was slightly raised to situations in which “the very existence of the state is un-

Putin comes to power

Yeltsin chooses Vladimir Putin as prime minister. In October Putin sends Russian troops into Chechnya, starting the second Chechen war

AUGUST 1991

Revolution in Ukraine

Ukraine’s election, widely viewed as fraudulent, sparks protests leading to the Orange revolution which brings Viktor Yushchenko to power

NOVEMBER 2004

War in Georgia

Long-standing tensions with Georgia boil over into a military conflict. Georgian troops attack South Ossetia, Russia drives them out

AUGUST 2008

der threat". That may reflect growing confidence in Russia's conventional forces. But Mr. Putin is fond of saying that nobody should try to shove Russia around when it has one of the world's biggest nuclear arsenals. Mr. Kiselev puts it even more bluntly: "During the years of romanticism [ie, detente], the Soviet Union undertook not to use nuclear weapons first. Modern Russian doctrine does not. The illusions are gone."

Mr. Putin still appears wedded to a strategy he conceived in 2000: threatening a limited nuclear strike to force an opponent (ie, America and its NATO allies) to withdraw from a conflict in which Russia has an important stake, such as in Georgia or Ukraine. Nearly all its large-scale military exercises in the past decade have featured simulations of limited nuclear strikes, including one on Warsaw.

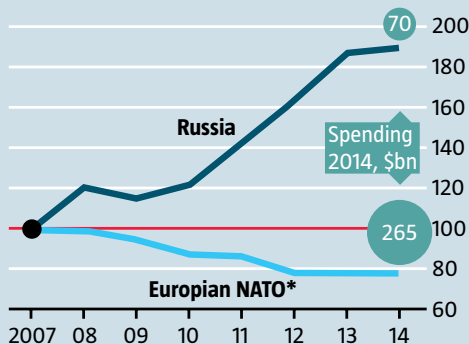
Mr. Putin has also been streamlining his armed forces, with the army recruiting 60,000 contract soldiers each year. Professionals now make up 30% of the force. Conscripts may bulk up the numbers, but for the kind of complex, limited wars Mr. Putin wants to be able to win, they are pretty useless. Ordinary contract soldiers are also still a long way behind special forces such as the GRU Spetsnaz (the "little green men" who went into Crimea without military insignia) and the elite airborne VDV troops, but they are catching up.

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

South-east Ukraine shows the new model army at work. Spetsnaz units first trained the Kremlin-backed separatist rebels in tactics and the handling of sophisticated Russian weapons. But when the Ukrainian government began to make headway in early summer, Russia had regular forces near the border to provide a calibrated (and still relatively covert) response.

It is hard to tell how many Russian troops have seen action in Ukraine, as their vehicles and uniforms carry no identifiers. But around 4,000 were sent to relieve Luhansk and Donetsk while threatening the coastal city of Mariupol—enough to convince Mr. Poroshenko

Coming up from behind
Defence spending, 2007 = 100



Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies

*26 countries

to draw his troops back. Since November a new build-up of Russian forces has been under way. Ukrainian military intelligence reckons there may be 9,000 in their country (NATO has given no estimate). Another 50,000 are on the Russian side of the border.

Despite Mr. Putin's claim last year that he could "take Kiev in two weeks" if he wanted, a full-scale invasion and subsequent occupation is beyond Russia. But a Russian-controlled mini-state, Novorossiya, similar to Abkhazia and Transnistria, could be more or less economically sustainable. And it would end Ukraine's hopes of ever regaining sovereignty over its territory other than on Russian terms, which would undoubtedly include staying out of the EU and NATO. Not a bad outcome for Mr. Putin, and within reach with the hard power he controls.

The big fear for NATO is that Mr. Putin turns his hybrid warfare against a member country. Particularly at risk are the Baltic states—Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania—two of which have large Russian-speaking minorities. In January Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO's previous secretary-general, said there was a "high probability" that Mr. Putin would test NATO's Article 5, which regards an attack on all—though "he will be defeated" if he does so.

A pattern of provocation has been established that includes a big

increase in the number of close encounters involving Russian aircraft and naval vessels, and snap exercises by Russian forces close to NATO's northern and eastern borders. Last year NATO planes carried out more than 400 intercepts of Russian aircraft. More than 150 were by the alliance's beefed-up Baltic air-policing mission—four times as many as in 2013. In the first nine months of the year, 68 "hot" identifications and interdictions occurred along the Lithuanian border alone. Latvia recorded more than 150 incidents of Russian planes entering its airspace.

There have also been at least two near-misses between Russian military aircraft and Swedish airliners. This is dangerous stuff: Russian pilots do not file flight plans. They fly with transponders switched off, which makes them invisible to civil radar. On January 28th two Russian, possibly nuclear-armed, strategic bombers flew down the English Channel, causing havoc to commercial aviation. Such behaviour is intended to test Western air defences, and was last seen in the cold war. Mr. Stoltenberg calls it "risky and unjustified".

Since 2013, when Russia restarted large-scale snap military exercises, at least eight have been held. In December the Kremlin ordered one in Kaliningrad, an exclave that borders Lithuania and Poland, both NATO members. It mobilised 9,000 soldiers, more than 55 navy ships and every type of military aircraft. "This pattern of behaviour can be used to hide intent," says General Philip Breedlove, NATO's most senior commander. "What is it masking? What is it conditioning us for?"

A huge problem for NATO is that most of what Russia might attempt will be below the radar of traditional collective defence. According to Mr. Stoltenberg, deciding whether an Article 5 attack has taken place means both recognising what is going on and knowing who is behind it. "We need more intelligence and better situational awareness," he says; but adds that NATO allies accept that if the arrival of little green men can be attributed "to an aggressor nation, it is an Article 5 action and then all the assets of NATO come to bear."

1985–2015

Moscow protests

First big anti-government demonstration since the 1990s. Thousands protest in the streets against a fraudulent election that keeps Putin in power

DECEMBER 2011

Putin's third term

Putin returns to the Kremlin for a third term after a four-year hiatus forced by constitutional rules

MARCH 2012

Street protests in Kyiv

Hundreds of thousands call for the resignation of president Yanukovich, who backed away from EU membership in favor of Russia

NOVEMBER 2013

For all the rhetoric of the cold war, the Soviet Union and America had been allies and winners in the second world war and felt a certain respect for each other. The Politburo suffered from no feelings of inferiority. In contrast, Mr. Putin and his KGB men came out of the cold war as losers. What troubles Mr. Stoltenberg greatly about Mr. Putin's new, angry Russia is that it is harder to deal with than the old Soviet Union. As a Norwegian, used to sharing an Arctic border with Russia, he says that "even during the coldest period of the cold war we were able to have a pragmatic conversation with them on many security issues". Russia had "an interest in stability" then, "but not now".

MEDDLING AND PERVERTING

Destabilisation is also being achieved in less military ways. Wielding power or gaining influence abroad—through antiestablishment political parties, disgruntled minority groups, media outlets, environmental activists, supporters in business, propagandist "think-tanks", and others—has become part of the Kremlin's hybrid-war strategy. This perversion of "soft power" is seen by Moscow as a vital complement to military engagement.

Certainly Russia is not alone in abusing soft power. The American government's aid agency, USAID, has planted tweets in Cuba and the Middle East to foster dissent. And Mr. Putin has hinted that Russia needs to fight this way because America and others are already doing so, through "pseudo-NGOs", CNN and human-rights groups.

At home Russian media, which are mostly state-controlled, churn out lies and conspiracy theories. Abroad, the main conduit for the Kremlin's world view is RT, a TV channel set up in 2005 to promote a positive view of Russia that now focuses on making the West look bad. It uses Western voices: far-left anti-globalists, far-right nationalists and disillusioned individuals. It broadcasts in English, Arabic and Spanish and is planning German- and French-language channels. It claims to reach 700m peo-

ple worldwide and 2.7m hotel rooms. Though it is not a complete farce, it has broadcast a string of false stories, such as one speculating that America was behind the Ebola epidemic in west Africa.

The Kremlin is also a sophisticated user of the internet and social media. It employs hundreds of "trolls" to garrison the comment sections and Twitter feeds of the West. The point is not so much to promote the Kremlin's views, but to denigrate opposition figures, and foreign governments and institutions, and to sow fear and confusion. Vast sums have been thrown at public-relations and lobbying firms to improve Russia's image abroad—among them Ketchum, based in New York, which helped place an op-ed by Mr. Putin in the New York Times. And it can rely on some of its corporate partners to lobby against policies that would hurt Russian business.

The West's willingness to shelter Russian money, some of it gained corruptly, demoralises the Russian opposition while making the West more dependent on the Kremlin. Russian money has had a poisonous effect closer to home, too. Russia wields soft power in the Baltics partly through its "compatriots policy", which entails financial support for Russian-speaking minorities abroad.

Mr. Putin's most devious strategy, however, is to destabilise the EU through fringe political parties. Russia's approach to ideology is fluid: it supports both far-left and far-right groups. As Peter Pomerantsev and Michael Weiss put it in "The menace of unreality", a paper on Russian soft power: "The aim is to exacerbate divides [in the West] and create an echo-chamber of Kremlin support."

DISRUPTIVE POLITICS

Far-right groups are seduced by the idea of Moscow as a counterweight to the EU, and by its law-and-order policies. Its stance on homosexuality and promotion of "traditional" moral values appeal to religious conservatives. The far left likes the talk of fighting American hegemony. Russia's most surprising allies, however, are probably Europe's Greens. They are opposed to shale-

gas fracking and nuclear power—as is Moscow, because both promise to lessen Europe's dependence on Russian fossil fuels. Mr. Rasmussen has accused Russia of "sophisticated" manipulation of information to hobble fracking in Europe, though without producing concrete evidence.

There is circumstantial evidence in Bulgaria, which in 2012 cancelled a permit for Chevron to explore for shale gas after anti-fracking protests. Some saw Russia's hand in these, possibly to punish the pro-European government of the time, which sought to reduce its reliance on Russian energy (Gazprom, Russia's state-controlled gas giant, supplies 90% of Bulgaria's gas).

Previously, Bulgaria had been expected to transport Russian oil through its planned South Stream pipeline, and its parliament had approved a bill that would have exempted the project from awkward EU rules. Much of it had been written by Gazprom, and the construction contract was to go to a firm owned by Gennady Timchenko, an oligarch now under Western sanctions. Gazprom offered to finance the pipeline and to sponsor a Bulgarian football team. The energy minister at the time later claimed he had been offered bribes by a Russian envoy to smooth the project's passage. Though European opposition means it has now been scrapped, the episode shows the methods Moscow uses to protect its economic interests.

In all this Mr. Putin is evidently acting not only for Russia's sake, but for his own. Mr. Borodai, the rebel ideologue in Donetsk, says that if necessary the Russian volunteers who are fighting today in Donbas will tomorrow defend their president on the streets of Moscow. Yet, although Mr. Putin may believe he is using nationalists, the nationalists believe they are using him to consolidate their power. What they aspire to, with or without Mr. Putin, is that Russians rally behind the nationalist state and their leader to take on Western liberalism. This is not a conflict that could have been resolved in Minsk. ■

According to IHS Jane's, a defence consultancy, by next year Russia's defence spending will have tripled in nominal terms since 2007, and it will be halfway through a ten-year, 20 trillion rouble (\$300 billion) programme to modernise its weapons

Spending on defence and security is expected to climb by 30% this year and swallow more than a third of the federal budget

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Annexation of Crimea

Yanukovich flees from Kyiv. After an invasion in February by Russian troops, a referendum is held declaring Crimea an independent state

APRIL 2014

Fighting intensifies

Fighting reaches Ukraine's Donbas region. Malaysian Airlines passenger jet shot down by pro-Russian troops. Sanctions against Russia follow

JULY 2014

Peace plan talks

Pressure on NATO to arm Ukraine's troops. World leaders meet to discuss peace deal and announce second ceasefire after collapse of previous effort

FEBRUARY 2015

Russian Military Bases and Soviet Heritage in the West

There is a wide-spread belief among the journalist community as well as the general public that Russia and the NATO members are in some kind of serious confrontation. In reality the NATO leadership is very interested in the Russian Federation Armed Forces as a deterrent for the Islamic fundamentalist threat from the East. On top of that, strong and authoritative Russia is a considerable factor in curbing the Chinese expansion, which causes serious concerns in Europe and the United States.

In the 1990s, NATO member-states, and above all, the USA tended to look down on Russia's military potential. But things changed ever since the 9/11 tragedy and the military campaigns launched in Iraq and Afghanistan, the latter of which is yet to conclude. The Pentagon reconsidered the importance of having a powerful ally in the East. The NATO-Russia relationships were at their closest in the mid-2000s. And while they did worsen in 2008 as a result of the Russo-Georgian war, they soon stabilized again. What is more, several years ago the Russian Federation carried out major reforms in the armed forces switching to "NATO standards". For instance, the current organization of the Russian army is a carbon copy of that in the alliance.

At present the Russian Federation Armed Forces de-facto have three likely opponents globally, any two of which can be allies against the third one. These are the NATO and the countries of the Middle or the Far East.

One of the largest contingents de-facto directed to oppose NATO's military strength is represented by the land and coastal forces of the Baltic fleet located in Kaliningrad region. This remote part of Russian territory lies between the Baltic States and Poland, which is why the military bases on it are especially strong both in terms of manpower and the advanced level of equip-

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At present the Russian Armed Forces have **845,000** servicemen and civilian employees. The Kremlin is fully prepared for the event of WWII, however, its probability is viewed as extremely low

ment. The Kaliningrad contingent matches half the military potential of Poland in terms of armament, and all of the Baltic States combined, as far as manpower is concerned. In case fighting breaks out, the Kaliningrad forces can receive support from the Republic of Belarus, which has one of the largest armies in Europe, as this country is in defence commonwealth with the Russian Federation. There also are Russian military bases on the territory of Belarus: the radar station "Volga" in Hantsavichy (southwestern part of Belarus, close to the Polish border) and the navy communication unit in Vileyka (in northwestern Belarus, close to the Lithuanian border).

This line essentially representing Russia's front against the NATO is broken by the territory of Ukraine, but continues through Moldova, or rather through the self-proclaimed Republic of Transnistria. Until recently there were 2.5 thousand of the Russian "peacekeeping forces" in Transnistria. Currently this contingent is just over 1000-strong, as officially declared. These units guard the military depots in Tiraspol containing more than 100 T-64 tanks, close to 150 infantry fighting vehicles, artillery systems, anti-aircraft missile systems and so forth. The weaponry available on site would suffice for the deployment of a far larger corps.

Crimea serves as a powerful reserve for the forces in Transnistria. There's a large and diverse contingent on the peninsula, it includes missile units capable of creating a "shield" above Transnistria.

Further east, the Russian military bases in the Caucasus have the potential to not only oppose the NATO, but also to serve as ally forces. Since Washington and Moscow have a similar stance as regards to Islamist extremists, Russian military presence in this region is in fact convenient for the Alliance.

Russian military contingents in the Caucasus played a decisive role during Russo-Georgian war of Au-

gust 2008. At present there are three Russian military bases in the region, which are, incidentally, organized according to the NATO standards.

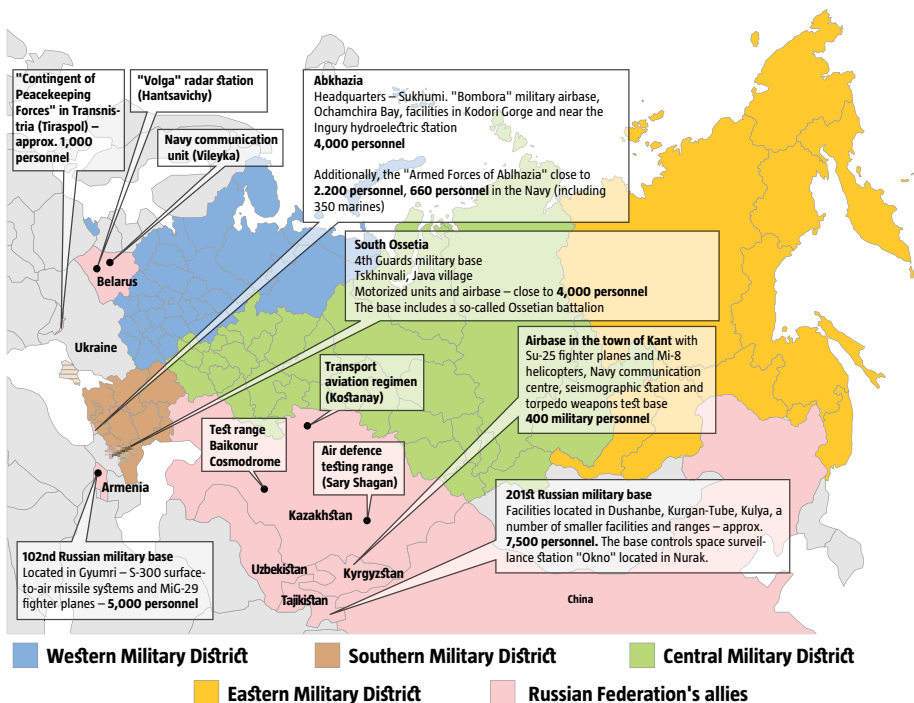
Russia's 7th military base in Abkhazia with headquarters in Sukhumi is a place of service for more than 4 thousand military, including aviation, mountain infantry, and special units. Their objective is to maintain control over the strategic Kodori Gorge, the Ingury hydroelectric station and the Sukhumi port. The 3000-strong "Armed Forces" of the self-proclaimed Republic of Abkhazia play the supporting role. The 7th military base represents a powerful contingent that can resist Georgia, or be used in operations in the Middle East.

The second largest Russian overseas base is the 4th Guards Military Base in South Ossetia with headquarters in Tskhinvali. These are predominantly motorized and aviation units. While no data on numbers of equipment stationed at the 6th and 4th military bases is available, these contingents are known to have tanks, armored vehicles, artillery systems and aircraft both from the Russian bases formerly located in Georgia, as well as from the disbanded North Caucasus Military District.

The oldest Russian base in the Caucasus is located in Gyumri, Armenia. The 102nd base became the new home for the Russian contingent withdrawn from Transcaucasia in 2007. Official numbers as of the year 2000 suggest that the base had 3,000 military personnel, 74 T-72 tanks, 148 infantry fighting vehicles and 84 artillery systems. This approximately matches the Georgian arsenal in 2008 before the Russo-Georgian war. At present more than 5,000 Russian military are serving in Armenia. Their armament, apart from the abovementioned weaponry, includes S-300 surface-to-air missile systems and MiG-29 fighter planes.

By means of transport aviation each of the Russian bases in the Caucasus can be reformed within hours into a powerful corps with all the necessary means of armament. If need be, Moscow can use these troops against Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey (NATO member-state) or the potential opponents of the Atlantic Alliance.

Effectively the Russian bases in the Central Asia are serving the NATO interests. As long as the Rus-



sian Federation keeps the region under its control the American Armed Forces are free to carry out operations in Afghanistan or Pakistan without fear of being struck from the rear.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are part of the Russian-created Collective Security Treaty (also signed by Belarus and Armenia), and thus are Moscow's direct allies. On top of that, all three are members of what is known as Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a regional military and political bloc, which also includes Russia, China and Uzbekistan. Therefore the Central Asia now has its own military and political alliance, which while not declaring to be a NATO-style military bloc, de-facto plays a rather important part.

Russian military presence in the Central Asia is first and foremost realized via the 201st military base in Tajikistan with 7,500 military personnel. It has bases in Dushanbe, Kurgan-Tube, Kulyab and other areas. The base controls the space surveillance station "Okno" [Russian for "window"] located in Nurak and boasts a large arsenal. In the 1990s the base had 180 T-72 tanks, 340 infantry fighting vehicles, large numbers of artillery systems etc.

On the territory of Kyrgyzstan in the town of Kant the Russian Federation has an airbase with Su-25 fighter jets and Mi-8 helicopters, a communication centre, a seismo-

graphic station and a torpedo weapons test base – 400 military personnel. In Kazakhstan there's a testing range more commonly known as Baikonur Cosmodrome, a transport aviation regiment in Kostanay and an air defence testing range in Sary Shagan.

In case of fighting at any of the directions, the command of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation can redeploy strong support to any of the abovementioned military bases within hours. This can be carried out by very considerable airborne troops (35 thousand personnel). They consist of four divisions: the 7th (Novorossiysk), the 76th (Pskov), the 98th (Ivanovo), the 106th (Tula); four brigades: the 11th (Ulan-Ude), the 31st (Ulyanovsk), the 56th (Kamyshyn), the 83rd (Ussuriysk); communication and special purpose regiments (the 45th in Kubinka, Moscow Oblast), Riazan military school and the 242nd training centre in Omsk.

The airborne troops are Russian army's equivalent of the US Marine Corps, and therefore are at the forefront of all offensive operations by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Their tactic is rapid and covert action, as demonstrated in August 2014 in the course of the war against Ukraine in the Donbas.

Despite the fact that Russia suffers from economic sanctions as a result of its active engagement in

the military conflict in the Donbas, the leadership rules out the possibility of military conflict with NATO member-states over Ukraine. First and foremost this is based on the popular moods in European societies and the United States. Not uncommon is the perception of the Russian Federation as a "necessary evil" (an instrument against the possible threat from the East). A certain portion of citizens even tend to take the Russian side in any conflict unfolding on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Many countries have a widespread belief that in the 1990s Russia voluntarily gave up its WWII "trophies" in Europe and withdrew its military contingents from East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Additionally, the Russian Federation reined in its ambitions in the Balkans. So there is this kind of thinking along the lines of 'let's be grateful to Russia for that and keep our noses out of "its business" in Georgia or, say, Ukraine.'

Officials in the Kremlin are well aware of this. At present the activity of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation is based upon the military doctrine developed by the former Head of Staff and current chief military analyst General Nikolai Makarov. In 2010 he declared: "In the past we fought wars with multi-million armies based on fronts. The experience of the military conflicts in the last decade demonstrated that this kind of war is possible, yet is improbable. In future armed forces will switch to active maneuvering. Front line battles will be replaced by actions of combined groups in the depth of the enemy lines. Sides will aim at striking critically important facilities and lean towards non-contact combat."

Thus, in spite of the war in the Donbas and scandals like the recent killing of an Armenian family by a Russian soldier in Gyumri, NATO member-states will continue to turn a blind eye at such things, because for them Russia is more of an ally than an opponent.

Meanwhile the horror stories about "NATO legions" in Ukraine or some illusory standoff between the USA and Russia have only one aim: to push maximum numbers of classes whose representatives are potentially dangerous for Putin's regime inside Russia towards going to the Donbas to meet their death. ■

"Armed Forces of Novorossiya" Who is fighting against Ukraine?

Author:
Yaroslav
Tynchenko

Ukrainian media tend to portray the enemy as semi-barbaric gangs of terrorists, good for nothing without Russian volunteers, the Chechen spetsnaz and the regular army of the Russian Federation. This distorted view of the enemy leads to underestimation and arrogance, which represent a factor of defeat.

The territories of the self-proclaimed "Donetsk People's Republic" (DNR), and especially the "Luhansk People's Republic" (LNR) are no longer controlled by the semi-anarchist militant rabbles. The separatist "republics" have had enough time and powerful supervision in order to properly organize, equip and arm their troops. Of course, there are plenty of Russian volunteers among their ranks, and in the rear there is Chechen spetsnaz stationed in Zugres, a town not far from the state border with Russia. The "kidnapping" of Pavlo Hubarev, one of the DNR leaders, by the Chechens on January 19* and his subsequent "fortunate" return neatly demonstrated that the forces of Ramzan Kadyrov, the Chechen leader, are there to act as barrier troops: nobody will be allowed to retreat into Russia, especially the figures like Hubarev.

For many residents of the territories controlled by the self-proclaimed DNR and LNR the independence referendum held in May 2014 was a point of "saying goodbye to Ukraine". Ukrainian politicians and later armed forces failed to turn the tide in time. This allowed anti-Ukrainian forces to organize over the summer. When ceasefire was announced in September, the units of the "people's militia of the Donbas" (DNR) and the "army of the Southeast" (LNR) began reorganizing into the "Armed Forces of Novorossiya"

One of the major features distinguishing any army is uniform with own insignia. Uniform experts in Moscow began working on uniforms for the "republics" as early as June 2014. Their sketches bear a



lot of resemblance with the Russian armed forces uniform. Manufacture was to be arranged in Crimea with plans to order in the region of 15-40,000 kits.

Apparently, funding for the project never arrived or, rather, Russia opted to supply the "Armed Forces of Novorossiya" with the Russian Federation's old 1998-spec army uniform, which had been phased out a few years ago with plenty of stock remaining. As a result the militants of the self-proclaimed LNR and DNR feature in most videos are dressed in Russian army camouflage known as Flora (VSR-98) and Gorka, both of which have been replaced in the Russian Federation army with the new camouflage pattern known as the Rossiyskaya Tsifra (Russian Digit).

As far as orders and medals were concerned, the situation is similar. Moscow's Phaleristic experts produced plenty of orders and medals featuring the double-headed eagle and the St. George's Cross. The flags that the LNR leaders awarded to their "battle units" in late 2014 bear a striking resemblance to the artistic products of the "Mars" Academy of Russian In-

signia in Moscow. Yet the insignia on the uniforms of both the DNR and LNR remained Soviet: stars on the shoulder straps, belt buckles, buttons, Guards badges, Russian Bolshevik cockades on the headgear. So visually the "Armed Forces of Novorossiya" represent a carbon copy of the Russian troops circa the campaigns in Chechnya and Georgia. Only the stars on the shoulder straps and the system of ranks they represent match the one of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Of course armed forces cannot exist without the command. And separatists do have plenty of that (not only officers, but generals). Firstly, there are officers, Donetsk and Luhansk locals, who served in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Rumour has it, many of them are former colonels and lieutenant colonels, who worked within the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the General Staff, and held important positions in brigades. On the other hand, there is no shortage of Russian military officers and even generals of the reserve.

The existence of organized command in the "Armed Forces of Novorossiya" became especially

apparent in late 2014. The inner war between cadre officers and guerilla leaders reached its climax when Igor Plontytskyi, the self-proclaimed leader of the LNR, ordered the elimination of Oleksandr Biednov aka Batman, the notorious leader of the sabotage group of the LNR titled after its commander. This was done on January 1, 2015. His public assassination along with six of his associates served as a warning message to other guerilla commanders of the self-proclaimed "Luhansk People's Republic": submit to military subordination or leave the LNR.

Interestingly, the assassination of Batman pointed to certain differences between the armed groups of the LNR and those of the DNR. The militants, who opposed Plotnytskyi's policies, fled to the "Donetsk People's Republic" joining the ranks of militias led by commanders nicknamed Givi and Motorola.

Now the LNR has its own so-called "Corps of People's Militia of the Armed Forces of Novorossiia". It has four numbered brigades (including one landing-assault brigade), a detached artillery brigade, a special purpose brigade "Odessa", a commandant's regiment and a "Cossack" regiment. Each of the brigades has a number of motorized, tank and reconnaissance battalions. The "Corps of People's Militia of the LNR" incorporated battalions Zaria (Russian for "dawn"), which was created and led by Plotnytskyi himself, Lieshyi (Russian fairy tale wood goblin), Batman, USSR, St. George Battalion, Vitiaz (Russian for "knight"), Rus, Modzhakhed (Mujahidin), KGB Odessa, August, 2nd detached battalion Don, 3rd Stanitsia-Luhanska paratrooper battalion and other units with equally exotic names.

In late 2014 and early 2015 the "Corps of People's Militia of the LNR" held extensive tank and live fire exercises. The sheer number of staged news reports featuring heavily on the Russian television, which showed the tanks of the self-proclaimed LNR, can be taken as a clear indication of separatists' intention to launch an offensive in the near future.

Such rapid success in organizing the "Armed Forces of Novorossiia" on the territory of LNR can be explained by the fact that the leadership of this separatist "republic"

had their sights on complete integration into the Russian Federation from the get-go. And this is why Russian military aid was much more prominent there compared to the DNR ever since May 2014. In fact, the appearance of first Russian bases near Luhansk was recorded as early as June 2014. And when a conflict sparked between the LNR and the leaders of Don "Cossacks", it was the Russian leadership that settled things by curbing the separatist appetites of people like Cossack ataman Nikolay Kozitsyn.

The bottom ranks of the "Corps of People's Militia of the LNR" are mostly made up of the locals, predominantly "volunteers". First of all they feel real support on Russia's part, so they are not afraid of Ukrainian authorities regaining control and prosecuting them. Secondly, the privates in these "armed forces" receive a monthly salary of USD 350, while officers are paid USD 500, which is a very high wage for a region with extreme unemployment rates.

Wages in the "people's militia of the Donbas", the Donetsk wing of the "Armed Forces of Novorossiia" are similar. Yet, unlike the Luhansk units, the DNR forces maintained their guerilla-like organization. In them discipline is supported not so much by the military subordination, but rather by individual authority of the commanders. The author of this article has regular phone conversations with Donetsk residents, who live near the City Military Commissariat. According to their observations, up to 40 volunteers come each day. These are men of all ages, from 18 year-olds to pensioners.

The DNR military leader Oleksandr Zakharchenko opposed the idea of having his units merge into the "Armed Forces of Novorossiia". This was one of the biggest stumbling blocks that led to his fallout with Igor Bezler aka Bes, the commandant of Horlivka. As a result of the conflict, the latter was removed from command.

The best known units of the DNR are the brigades Oplot (Russian for "stronghold") formerly led by Oleksandr Zakharchenko, Vostok ("the East"), Kalmius (named after the local river), Prizrak (Russian for "phantom") led by separatist Aleksei Mozgovyi from Luhansk Oblast, battalions Sparta

led by commander Motorola and Somalia led by commander Givi. Aside from the Russian "volunteers", at their core these groups are made up of radical opponents of the current Ukrainian authorities, the natives of the Donbas, as well as of Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa and other oblasts. Defectors from the Armed Forces of Ukraine, as well as from the law-enforcement bodies, former policemen etc. make another considerable category within the militias.

Given the large number of militants originating from the territories currently under the control of the Ukrainian authorities, the leadership of the DNR often declares intentions to carry out a "punitive" offensive on Kyiv against the "fascist junta". Acts of terrorism car-

EXACT TOTAL NUMBERS OF THE "ARMED FORCES OF NOVOROSSIYA" ARE UNKNOWN. BUT, EVIDENTLY, THEY ARE IN EXCESS OF 10,000

ried out in Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia and Odesa oblasts during the recent months indicate massive infiltration by sabotage units.

Exact total numbers of the "Armed Forces of Novorossiia" are unknown. But, evidently, they are in excess of 10,000. Their minimum goal is to straighten the front line by seizing the Donetsk Airport area, the towns of Debaltseve, Stanysia Luhanska and Triokhizbenka. The maximum goal is to capture the territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts where the referendum on the independence of the self-proclaimed DNR and LNR took place. Apart from political gains, these plans also have certain economic rationale. There are Ukrainian-controlled agrarian areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts that could potentially satisfy the agricultural needs of the large separatist-held cities. Capturing Mariupol and Severodonetsk would bolster the industrial potential of the separatist "republics", while Artemivsk with its large army depots would reinforce their arsenal. And then there's the global objective to move further west towards Transnistria, reanimating the project "Novorossiia". ■

* According to Pavlo Hubarev, Chechen mercenaries who are fighting in the Donbas took him to their base in Zugres on January 19 to have him explain what they considered to be his statements of possessing records of some negotiations that allegedly confirmed the involvement of Ramzan Kadyrov in the terrorist attack against Charlie Hebdo employees in France. This information was spread online in mid-January. Hubarev said that he never accused Kadyrov of anything and the statement spread online was a fake.

A Key to Transforming Ukraine

Hopes for stamping out corruption, reforming law enforcement bodies and transforming the country in accordance with the European values are futile, unless major flaws in the Ukrainian electoral law are eradicated

Author:
Volodymyr
Vasylenko

Electoral law is the key legal foundation for representative democracy. Its quality defines the quality of the nationwide representative body and the highest legislative body of the country. The quality of the parliament in its turn defines the quality of the executive and judicial branches of power, as their top officials are elected and higher bodies are formed by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. All hopes for creating efficient constitutional order, stamping out corruption, reforming the Prosecutor's Office, the judicial and law-enforcement systems, transforming the country in accordance with the European values and democratic principles are futile, unless major flaws in the Ukrainian electoral law are eradicated.

The mixed proportional-majoritarian electoral system that exists in Ukraine was supposedly designed with the European and the world experience in mind. In reality, however, Ukraine has an established general freedom of elections, which are regularly held in due terms, as prescribed by the laws and the Constitution, on the one hand, while a citizen is practically deprived of the basic freedom of choice on the other.

Under the current Ukrainian law, 225 out of 450 people's deputies (parliament members) are elected in the general multi-member constituency with closed party lists defined not by the voters, but by party leadership. The voters cast their ballots for the entire list, rather than certain candidates. Therefore half the parliament is

essentially formed not by the voter, but by party leaders, who are accountable to their backers. The other 225 MPs are elected in single-member constituencies under the first-past-the-post (majoritarian) system. The flawed, yet legally regulated order of campaigning in single-member constituencies coupled with Ukrainian political reality turns majoritarian election into a cynical farce, which is often further exacerbated by the subsequent vote rigging and yet again leaves the citizens without true freedom of choice.



**UKRAINIAN AUTHORITIES
AND LEADING POLITICAL
PARTIES IN PARLIAMENT
MUST REFRAIN FROM
ATTEMPTS TO SHAPE
THE ELECTORAL LEGISLATION
TO FIT THEIR NEEDS**

Thus the existing situation around parliamentary elections goes against the very principle of representative democracy and makes it impossible to form the parliamentary composition capable of maintaining any kind of organic connection with the voters, and having the political will to represent and protect public interests, rather than serve the oligarch clans and obey the orders of party leaders wholly dependent on their wealthy patrons. The parliament formed in violation of the basic principles like the rule of law and elementary democratic norms

cannot be operational and efficient by definition.

The Program Manifesto of the Maidan passed at the popular assembly on December 29, 2013 defined as a priority short-term objective for the democratic forces to "conduct early parliamentary elections under the proportional representation system with open lists".

Unfortunately, in spite of the collapse of the Yanukovich regime and the considerable loss of influence of his Party of Regions faction, the old composition of the Verkhovna Rada never managed to adopt new electoral legislation. Early parliamentary elections of October 2014 took place in accordance with the existing law that several years earlier had been modified to suit the needs of Viktor Yanukovich's puppet government. As a result the representatives of the Party of Regions and those that openly or candidly supported it were once again elected to the new parliamentary convocation, albeit in much smaller numbers. They made and will continue to make attempts to block the adoption of initiatives directed at reforming the country, satisfying the urgent needs of the public, restoring Ukraine's defence capability, repelling the Russian aggression, protecting the territorial integrity of Ukraine and strengthening its statehood. The results of their voting for important political, economic, social, defence and other issues ascertains to this.

With the above in mind it is urgent for Ukraine to adopt new electoral legislation, preferably as



PHOTO BY UNIAN

a single unified Electoral Code, as recommended by the Venice Commission. The Coalition Agreement signed by the leaders of parliamentary factions, which formed the majority, provides that in the first quarter of 2015 the coalition is to ensure "the move from the mixed (proportional-majoritarian) system of elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to one that provides voters the possibility to vote for particular candidates in multi-member constituencies (proportional representation system with open lists)", as well as to ensure legally prescribed liability of the participants of the election process for violating the law, and increased responsibility of political parties for failure to meet the demands relating to transparency of their finances.

The Coalition Agreement rightly emphasizes on the need to strengthen the liability for violating the electoral law. However, cases are commonplace when

The Coalition Agreement signed by the leaders of the coalition parties provides that in Q1'2015 the coalition is to ensure "the move from the mixed system to one that allows voters to choose among particular candidates in multi-member constituencies" guarantee liability of candidates for violating the law, and increase responsibility of political parties for failure to meet financing transparency rules

gross violations of the election process were brought about by the flaws purposefully incorporated into the legislation by the previous authorities. For instance, the norms relating to composition of electoral commissions, which brought about the dominance of members delegated by "technical" parties (set up to steal the votes of a rival party but with no chance of actually getting into parliament) entirely dependent on the ruling authorities and the oligarchs. The flaws of the current Ukrainian law are well known to the domestic experts, NGOs as well as the Venice Commission, which more than once pointed them out and provided recommendations on ways to rectify the situation.

This is why at the foundation of the new electoral law must be the initial draft of Electoral Code developed by independent experts and representatives of NGOs in accordance with the recommendations of the Venice Commission and taking into account existing

Ukrainian political reality. At the same time the Ukrainian authorities and parliamentary factions of the leading political parties must refrain from attempts to shape the electoral legislation to fit their needs.

One can hope that under such conditions, Ukraine will manage to create a high-quality electoral law designed to ensure the true freedom of citizen's electoral choice, and that the formation of the government and the transformation of the country will happen in accordance with the outcome of said electoral choice and the interests of the society.

Granted, shortly after the new electoral law is adopted there has to be a new early parliamentary campaign. New quality of the legislation must ensure new quality of the authorities. This is a key condition for radical transformation of the country in-line with the European values, democratic principles and Ukrainian tradition. ■

MP Oleksandr Chernenko:

"New electoral law should be adopted no later than in May"

Interviewed by
Bohdan Butkevych

The *Ukrainian Week* discussed the situation with the new electoral legislative framework with Oleksandr Chernenko, the long-standing head of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine and Member of Parliament with the Bloc of Petro Poroshenko.

U.W.: How pressing is the need to have new electoral legislation right now?

Certainly, the entire legal framework relating to the election to the Verkhovna Rada and the local elections is outdated morally, technically and in terms of procedure. There's a good reason why upon the conclusion of all previous campaigns we received proposals regarding amendments to the respective legislation. Now the Venice Commission has joined this process. The current mixed system – a blend of closed party lists and the majoritarian model – completely discredited itself. It birthed outrageous corruption in the single-member constituencies, where election commission members are bribed, and at the same time it brought about internal corruption within the parties, where spots on the passable part of the list are sold. So you formulated the question quite correctly. Whether there is the need to change electoral law at all is not even the question worth talking about. The need is there and it is pressing. Even the politicians themselves already realized that changes in the electoral domain are in huge demand in the society, so they cannot just talk about this forever hoping that everyone gets bored and loses interest. For the first time in years, according to opinion poll data, citizens no longer view the majoritarian system as the best option for the electoral law and are willing to see election lists. I'll also

remind that the Coalition Agreement of the current majority in the Parliament includes written commitment to adopt a new electoral law before the local election campaign, which is to take place in autumn.

U.W.: Are the politicians really prepared for this? The adoption of new law has been unanimously blown by almost all the factions last year before the 2014 elections.

Now that's a good question. Granted, the discussion about the need for a system with open party lists has been on for more than a decade, however, none of the coun-

exception aren't thrilled about the idea of adopting new legislation, because it means they lose the means to control the spots in the election list. Because then it will be the people that will choose, not the owners-oligarchs. Yet, I remain convinced that with enough pressure from the society we'll arrive to this reform and it will not be delayed anymore. At least there are a number of existing draft laws that can use a starting point and worked on.

U.W.: Please outline the main principles and foundations, on which the new law should be based. Particularly interesting is the issue of the frontline and occupied territories, which is something that cannot be ignored...

I would make a distinction between conducting elections in Ukraine in general and the elections in frontline areas. As far as the election process in the zone of the Anti-Terrorist Operation is concerned, there should be a separate section, or, preferably, a separate law. And the final provisions of the main document on elections should mention that the respective process there (in the frontline and occupied territories) will be regulated by a dedicated act, because one cannot compare the election campaign on the territories not controlled by Ukrainian authorities with the normal campaign. There's a whole host of issues to consider beginning with the safety of the voters, and ending with technical matters to do with accountability, vote counting and so forth. As regards to the main part of the country, the new law must be as convenient as possible for the voter, because the party system with open lists is not so much complicated, as it is simply novel, it needs getting used to. Let us not forget that there are other issues, which are not directly related to election process, that still need to be resolved ur-

THE CURRENT MIXED SYSTEM – A BLEND OF CLOSED PARTY LISTS AND THE MAJORITARIAN MODEL – COMPLETELY DISCREDITED ITSELF

try's leaders (be it Yushchenko, Tymoshenko, Yanukovich or Poroshenko) did anything to implement it. But purely in words everyone supported the idea. Moreover, they used to stomp on the brakes at a very early stage even before the bill was being put to a vote. Clearly, all the current party leaders without

DRAFT LAWS ON ELECTION SYSTEM

1. Draft law sponsored by Yuriy Miroshnychenko (Opposition Bloc) envisages proportional representation system with closed lists. However, it provides for lower electoral threshold for parties to secure representation in the Parliament (current threshold is 5%).
2. Draft law sponsored by Serhiy Soboliev (Batkivshchyna) envisages switching to open list proportional representation system, albeit with considerable reservations. A party assigns each candidate to an oblasť and afterwards, based on the voting results, can select which candidate is given the mandate, and is allowed to switch candidates within the list. Therefore the political party has the final say.
3. Draft law sponsored by Viktor Chumak (Bloc of Petro Poroshenko) and Leonid Yemets (Narodniy Front) represents a carbon copy of the Electoral Code by Yuriy Kliuchkovskiy mentioned in the interview. It envisages a complete switch to open list proportional representation system.



PHOTO BY UNIAN

gently. For example political advertising, forming election commissions, funding the elections and so on. As a matter of fact, all of this is covered in the developed draft laws, all it takes is political will adopt them. In the nearest future under the Parliamentary Committee on Legislative Policy and Justice a working group is to be created. It will include the representatives of all factions, independent experts from the public and members of the Central Election Commission. The group will develop the single unified draft law. The new system should be based on the principle that each political party in every region nominates its representatives, for whom the voters will vote. Those that gain the most votes within the political party become parliament members. At the same time on the local level, in county councils for example, it would be a good idea to have a multi-member majoritarian system, since proportional representation system would not be very appropriate there. This, by the way, will allow avoiding the main problem of this electoral principle, when there is only one winner, while the candidate, who gained even one single vote less, is out. This is why there are so many violations, scan-

dals, court hearings and so on in such constituencies.

U.W.: Do you think this unified draft law should be developed from scratch or based on the old existing law on elections?

Definitely from scratch. It's easier to inscribe everything in it from scratch, rather than to rework the law that is conceptually unsuitable. Moreover, there's a very well written draft by Chumak and Yemets based on the section on parliamentary elections from the so-called draft Electoral Code developed by Yuriy Kliuchkovskyi in 2010. We need to homogenize electoral procedures of all the different elections as much as possible: the parliamentary, the presidential, the local. Having said that, we do need to have two separate laws: one on parliamentary and one of local elections. And out of those two the Electoral Code should be formed.

U.W.: Local elections are just around the corner. Do you expect problems with the introduction of the new model in such a short timeframe? Such experiments tended to end badly...

On the contrary, local elections could be used to test out this new system. According to the Coalition

BIO

Oleksandr Chernenko, born in 1973 in Kyiv Oblast, is a politician, journalist, activist and political expert. In 1997, he graduated from the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University majoring in teaching history and ethnology. He also took public activity course in National Democratic Institute (United States) and a course of political education in Akademie Klausenhof (Rhede, Germany). Mr. Chernenko worked as journalist in numerous publications. In 2009, he chaired the Committee of Voters of Ukraine. In 2014, he was elected deputy of the Verkhovna Rada with the Bloc of Petro Poroshenko.

Agreement this new legislation has to be adopted no later than in May. I am convinced that the working group, which I am part of, will work hard in February through April in order to put this draft law to a vote by the end of this period, having already agreed all the terms with all the major political parties. Because it is indeed necessary to adopt it before summer comes, that is at least 6 months before the elections, in order to avoid time trouble.

U.W.: Is the adoption of new electoral system capable of renewing the authorities through elections, or in other words carrying out the so-called "natural lustration"?

The law on its own will not make the elections fair and clear. This is something that only people themselves and their good will can do. However, there's no doubt the new law will contribute to this. As it will eventually contribute to healthy party-building, since political parties built upon one famous personality will no longer have a chance to gain seats in the parliament. It will also help the arrival of new, fresh and interesting people. Especially since the very participants of the election process will now be interested in their arrival. ■

To Sell Boryspil

During the Yanukovych era, Boryspil International Airport went through at least two high-profile scandals associated with the attempts to transfer it into private hands. But even after officials were changed in offices, these attempts continue

Author:
Stanislav
Kozlyuk

Worries as to the future of Boryspil Airport date back to the last year of the Yanukovych regime, when Oleksiy Kochanov was appointed its director, to be later replaced by Serhiy Hombolevsky, allegedly linked to Odesa businessmen Boris Kaufman and Oleksandr Granovsky. Kochanov was instrumental in bringing Odesa airport under total control of private business structures. A similar scheme to "privatize" the airport was expected to be used in Boryspil. But the Maidan disrupted the existing schemes, to a certain extent. The next tide of opaque reforms of the state-run company began with the appointment of the new Director General, Yevhen Dykhne, coming there from Lviv Airlines and Ukrainian Railways.

QUIET "OPTIMIZATION"

The newly appointed head of the airport set to "optimize" the workflow. On November 29, 2014, Dykhne issued an order to outsource the airport's ground handling operations. The order envisaged purchasing such services, starting February 24, 2015, from private companies. The airport's trade union appealed to the Ministry of Infrastructure, stating that the state-owned enterprise could not afford outsourcing its profitable operations. It should be recalled that the situation happened at the end of the last year, under Hombolevsky's management. Back then, the trade union sent open letters to the Prosecutor's Office and the SBU, Ukraine's security service. The SBU reacted, and the order was revoked. The order signed by Dykhne, according to the trade union's management, almost literally replicated the one issued by his predecessor.

On December 12, order No. 01-07-1207 was issued, that virtually spelled out the plan to transfer a part

of Boryspil's operations to private entities, accompanied by staff reduction. The airport's management issued a report on its operations, trying to make some of them look as loss-making. However, the trade union learned about this development almost a week later, on December 16.

"This order was released on the quiet; we got hold of it in the evening of December 16, by pure chance. We received it as a picture taken with a cell phone. Obviously, we reacted by appealing to the Presidential Administration, the Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Infrastructure, and the Parliamentary Committees on Transport and Corruption," said the Head of Boryspil Airport Independent Trade Union, Serhiy Stotsky.

"The order actually stated that starting January 1, the airport was to pay to a third party for ground handling and passenger handling services. No one discussed it with the union representatives," he added.

Why trying to outsource these services? The action group members explained that today such services are offered by only two companies on the Ukrainian market: Interavia and Aerohandling. Both are linked to Ukraine International Airlines, believed to be part of the Ukrainian business tycoon Ihor Kolomoisky's business empire – the first one as a subsidiary, and the second one indirectly. If Boryspil airport stops providing these services, it will lead to market monopolization. In this way, the owners of the above two companies would be able to charge any fees for their services.

Besides, during the "optimization," according to the statement made by the trade union, about 700 airport employees could get laid off. The Ministry of Infrastructure, however, denied this, while Boryspil press office replied to the enquiry made by the *The Ukrainian*



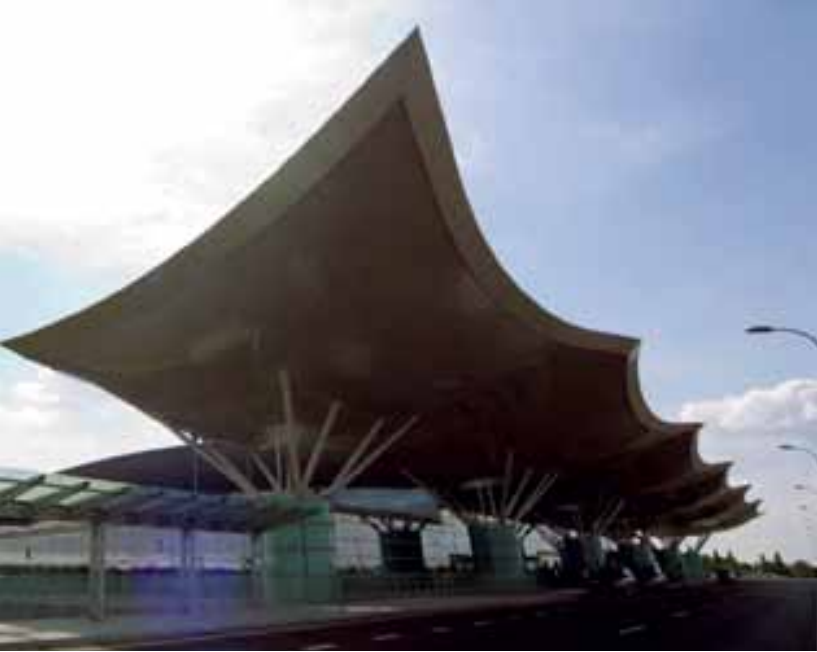
PHOTO BY UNIAN

Week that outsourcing a number of services was actually planned, but a mandatory requirement to tender participants was ensuring staff employment.

"How the profitability of specific operations was calculated remains a mystery. For instance, we have such service as aircraft deicing. It is provided by ground handling department. However, special purpose vehicles are charged with the chemical agent by custom vehicles department. And it is this department that procures it. The management's calculations show that the expenses involved in purchasing the liquid were attributed to both custom vehicles and ground handling departments. But the ground handling department does not buy it. This means that non-existent costs were attributed to it," explained the initiative group's representatives.

An audit showed that the "loss-making" ground handling service for the period analyzed by the administration actually earned a profit of nearly UAH 3mn.

In late December, the airport employees arranged for a meeting with Andriy Pyvovarsky, the Minister of Infrastructure. At the meeting they learned that Boryspil was waiting for an audit team, and that its Director General Yevhen Dykhne was placed on leave until January 12. On December 30, it turned out that the Ministry was planning to organize a transparent competition for the position of the Director General of Ukraine's largest airport. Later, on January 12, another meeting was held between Pyvovarsky and the airport staff. At this meeting, the results of the auditors' work were presented. The airport's critical points,



Boryspil's cooperation with UIA resulted in the airline's UAH 400 million debt to the airport

according to the Ministry, were poor leadership and a lack of direction. Besides, the Ministry of Infrastructure expressed the dissatisfaction with the fact that Boryspil makes little profit from non-aviation activities (such as duty-free shops, cafes, restaurants, parking lots, hotels, and advertising). Major world airports earn about 40% of their revenues from such activities. For Boryspil, this figure is twice lower, at about 20%. However, the problem, most probably, is to be solved by the new director.

In addition to the layoff, Dykhne's name is associated with one more scandal. The collective labor agreement has not been signed to this day. Besides, the trade union claims the disappearance of a few million hryvnia allocated for employee benefits.

"When Hombolevsky held the Director's post, we planned to sign the agreement. The document was ok, and provided for social security, employee insurance, and so on. Basically, it had to be re-signed. There was only one issue left: interest free home loans," Stotsky said.

"The management allocated UAH 3mn for interest-free housing loans annually. We have several employee categories eligible for such loans: people on accommodation waiting list, veteran workers, vulnerable employees, and highly qualified specialists. Only this last issue remained to be discussed. While people tried to obtain the certificates confirming the absence of housing, Hombolevsky was sacked. The new Director General was appointed. When we came to the first meeting with the new management, we found out that those UAH 3mn were miss-

ing. We asked the Administrative Director to explain to the union in writing where the money went. There was no answer. As a consequence, there is no answer as to the collective agreement," said the union representatives.

A COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP WITH UIA

In a letter to the Ministry of Infrastructure, Boryspil employees complained that the airport was losing money by providing services to Ukraine International Airlines at cost or at no cost. This company is Boryspil's major carrier, operating about half of the flights. However, the only results of this cooperation for the airport are litigations and debts. As of today, they amount to nearly UAH 400mn.

"UIA pays for our services under several contracts. As for the contract prices, no one knows how exactly they were set, except for the directors. The documents were signed by Anton Volov, and later by Oleksiy Kochanov. It was Kochanov who signed a collateral agreement with UIA (No. 30). This agreement stipulates that the service prices should not be below the cost. However, we are not interested in such terms. The revenue we earn from our major carrier equals to zero, and this is not right," the action group complained.

"Let's say, Ukraine International Airlines have discounts for such services as baggage handling. But no one knows where the discounted prices come from. One has to understand that this is not a cheap service, because it is a complicated procedure. The baggage is transported from the check-in counter, x-rayed, and sorted. The system on Terminal

D is even more complicated. Still, UIA is paying a symbolic price," the airport employees added.

The company also has preferences for airport taxes.

"Airport charges are our main source of revenues. There are three types of them: passenger facility charge, takeoff/landing charge, and security charge. Any company has to pay a certain amount per each passenger, but UIA have discounts. They also have discounts for takeoff and landing, depending on the aircraft weight. The only fee for which they don't have discounts is security charge," Boryspil activists said.

However, Boryspil management neither confirmed nor denied these claims, stating that service fees for Ukraine International Airlines are confidential information that cannot be disclosed according to the existing contracts.

"We are not against UIA, we are for major carriers. We are ready to offer them preferential terms. But we need to understand what we get in return. For the time being, we only get court proceedings. They have some outstanding debt to us. They started paying it only recently. In fact, we are surviving thanks to other companies," stress the airport workers.

However, the meeting of Minister Pyvovarsky with the staff has demonstrated that the UIA issue is not a priority for the Ministry.

"The issue of UIA cannot be resolved quickly. In order to make claims to that company, we need to have a plan B. If it goes out of business, then maybe in six months someone else will come to the market. But we will need to survive this period somehow. And in 2015, we have a heavy burden of Japanese loans to be repaid", stated the action group.

The airport employees added that an open skies agreement could become such "plan B." If it is signed, the largest Ukrainian airport would finally have alternatives, and therefore, a company to take the UIA niche. At the same time, Boryspil's major carrier could change their attitude towards cooperating with the airport. However, such future developments today are nothing more than the subject of discussion. For the time being, the new management, to be selected in an open competition, will have to focus on the real optimization, rather than making statements. ■

Major world airports earn about
40%
of their revenues from non-aviation services. For Boryspil, this figure is about
20%

Tracing the Fleeing Capital

How many billions of dollars Ukraine lost in 2014

Author:
Lyubomyr Shavalyuk

2014 was extremely hard for Ukraine. The overt war, the actual loss of territories and the long history of misgovernment had a negative impact on the economy. Its scale is largely unprecedented, making the government face challenging tasks that require outstanding skills in crisis management. One of the persistent problems of Ukrainian economy last year was capital flight. It had a number of reasons and a number of channels, but its only overall result was panic on the currency market, hryvnia depreciation, and falling living standards.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

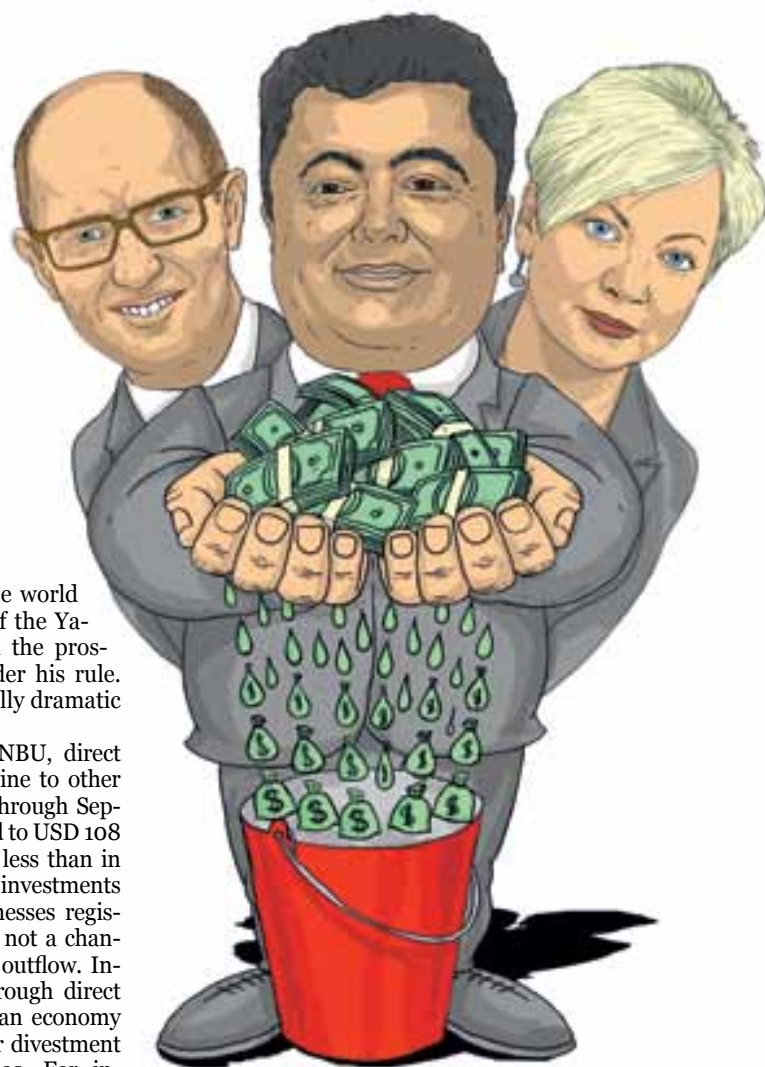
Of course, the exact amount of the capital exported from the country is unknown even to the eagle-sighted intelligence officers. However, very tentatively, the volume of capital outflow (or shortage) can be estimated by comparing certain economic indicators against the same figures for the previous years.

The key indicator associated with the long term capital inflow and the economic development of the country is foreign direct investment (FDI). Last year, Ukraine received direct investment in the amount of USD 413mn net (see **Capital Drought**). This is 9.9 times less than in 2013, and 17.4 times less than in the relatively active 2012. That is, FDI influx fell significantly

already in 2013, as the world realized the essence of the Yanukovich regime and the prospects for Ukraine under his rule. But last year saw a really dramatic decline in FDI.

According to the NBU, direct investment from Ukraine to other countries in January through September 2014 amounted to USD 108 million, which is 42% less than in 2013. This means that investments abroad made by businesses registered in Ukraine were not a channel of massive capital outflow. Instead, it happened through direct investment in Ukrainian economy (or, in this case, rather divestment from it) from overseas. For instance, during the first three quarters, USD 133mn of FDI were received, while for the same period of 2013, the inflow of investment in Ukraine amounted to almost USD 3.3bn. This means that after the power shift, the capital flow not only decreased, but also changed direction, resulting in the loss of billions of proceeds in foreign currency.

The structure of direct investment explains the nature of this phenomenon. According to the State Statistics Service, in early October 2014, FDI in Ukraine (cumulative invested capital from the beginning of investment) totaled USD 48.5bn, which is 17% less than at the end of 2013. The biggest investor countries were Cyprus with USD 15.1bn (-21%), Germany with USD 5.8bn (-8%), the Netherlands with USD 5.2bn (-6%), and Russia with USD 3.0bn (-31%). It turns out that the investors most afraid of the war were



Russians, who previously invested in Ukraine either directly from Russia or indirectly via Cyprus, and Ukrainian oligarchs, for whom Cyprus is the most traditional offshore territory (followed by the British Virgin Islands, with FDI of USD 2.5bn coming from there. That one fell 20%).

Through the investors' panic and their efforts to protect their capital from the worst-case scenarios (this applies mostly to the adherers of the Yanukovich regime), FDI amounts had been negative through May 2014, rebounding to the level of 2013, a crisis year, in December only. In this way, Ukraine underreceived the total of USD 6.0-6.5bn in 2014 (compared to the relatively successful 2011 and 2012). This money still exists somewhere as it (its value) was most probably created by the economy and did not disappear, but was deposited somewhere abroad.

The question is whether it will ever return to Ukraine.

Portfolio investments have also become a channel of capital flight from Ukraine, even though insignificant in volume. In 2014, the country lost USD 395mn through this channel, compared to inflows amounting to USD 1.2bn recorded in 2013. It should be noted that transactions with fictitious (junk) bonds may also serve as an instrument for disinvestment. It is usually used for transactions with millions or tens of millions, and not billions of dollars. However, given the current balance of payments, not more than USD 0.8-1.0bn could have been channeled out of Ukraine last year using this method. Compared to the overall capital flight, this amount is not too large.

EXTERNAL DEBT

The largest volume of foreign exchange earnings arrears recorded last year was due to debt (medium- and long-term loans and bonds). The outflow of capital in this case occurred via two channels: through banks and nonfinancial (mostly production) corporations. In the first case, everything is more or less clear: it takes financial institution years to pay back foreign loans taken before the crisis of 2008-2009. 2014 was no exception, although the outstanding bank debt to non-residents today is not too large. However, in the last year, financial institutions reduced the rate of raising debt 2.8 times. This is not surprising, since foreign investors who know the current situation in the banking sector, even from hearsay, are not excited about lending to Ukrainian depository corporations. Therefore, the outflow of capital using this channel is totally consistent with the market situation.

However, not everything is clear with the real sector debts. Last year, Ukraine spent almost USD 4.2bn net to repay them, although previously this budget item generated revenue: USD 1.3bn in 2013 and USD 4.7bn in 2011-2012 (see **Capital Drought**). The rate of borrowing in 2014 decreased 5.6 times compared to 2013, which could be explained, as in the case with banks, by the fact that foreigners are not willing to lend to a country involved in a war. But, as we said above, foreign borrowings

of financial institutions decreased only 2.8 times (the difference in absolute terms is even more impressive: -USD 2.9bn for banks against -USD 11.0bn for nonfinancial corporations), while it was the banking sector that had the most problems in 2014. Besides, the volume of external debt repayment by real sector companies last year fell by almost 1.5 times, although the total volume of external debt as of the beginning of 2014, naturally, increased compared to the previous years, that is, there were no reasons for such decrease.

Given the above, it seems that the statistics of foreign borrowings and foreign debt repayment by nonfinancial corporations are also affected by the cash flows of Ukrainian oligarchs. Many years ago, the Ukrainian new rich often used external debts to funnel capital out of

of them is that the population buys up currency to keep it under mattresses. If so, where did Yanukovich find USD 32bn (according to other sources, USD 2-5bn) in cash that he allegedly took to Russia, and what is the source of financing for the large-scale illegal trafficking that flourished under the regime and has largely survived to this day? This is a rhetorical question. It would be probably right to say that a portion of the foreign exchange cash that was withdrawn from the Ukrainian banks through currency exchange offices was neatly packed into cases and shipped abroad.

The same goes for the outflow of deposits from the banking system. The Prime Minister once said that Ukrainians withdraw money from their bank accounts and put them into cashboxes in anticipation of financial institutions' bankruptcy. This is partly true. But, of course, a portion of these funds was also taken out of the country in cash, since after the power shift, according to The Ukrainian Week's sources, overt transfer of funds abroad through banks has become much more complicated, primarily because of the measures taken by the US authorities and their counterparty banks. Since the total of foreign currency deposits withdrawn last year from Ukrainian financial institutions, according to the National Bank of Ukraine, amounted to USD 11.4bn in dollar terms, it is very likely that at least a third or a half of this amount can no longer be found in Ukraine. It may well be that these funds have migrated abroad along with their owners. Taking into account that under normal economic conditions, Ukrainian banking system received an additional USD 5bn in the form of deposits from individuals and businesses annually, the financial sector in 2014 received over USD 16bn less in deposits. God only knows, which share of this amount was taken out of the country.

Another popular channel of capital flight are fictitious transactions related to the import of certain goods or services. The scheme is quite simple: a fake importer pays in foreign currency under a contract that is either not executed (then the amount stays on the importer's balance as accounts receivable), or executed only on pa-

UKRAINE UNDERRECEIVED THE TOTAL OF AT LEAST USD 6.0-6.5BN OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT IN 2014

the country to offshore territories under the guise of high interest rates on such loans. Today, they might register the financing of their production assets as loans to management companies registered offshore in order to avoid the risks of the Ukrainian banking sector or to hold their equity in the foreign jurisdiction in case of disputes (through the incapacity of the national judicial system that could not deal with, say, forcible takeovers of businesses often practiced under Yanukovich). One way or another, the refusal of the oligarchs to continue investing funds in financing Ukrainian assets apparently significantly limited the amount of foreign exchange earnings on loans and bonds obtained by the real sector. As a result, last year Ukraine received USD 8.10bn less proceeds, most of which would have gone to the national economy, if not for the war.

OTHER ITEMS

A notable component of the capital flight was the outflow of foreign exchange cash from the banking system. Last year, its volume amounted to USD 2.6bn, which is 4% less than in 2013. A lot of myths are associated with this item. One

It is safe to say that last year the Ukrainian economy lost over **USD 40bn** in foreign exchange earnings compared to normal years. Based on rough estimates, about **USD 20-25bn** of this amount accounted for the capital channeled out of Ukraine during 2014

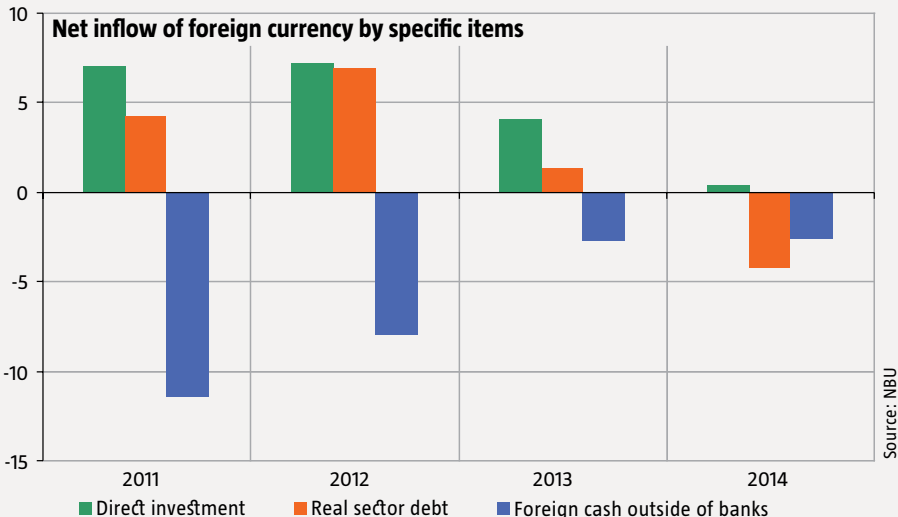
per (which is very common in the case of import of services, such as consulting). The scale of capital outflow via this channel is hard to estimate accurately, but we will give a try. In 2014, total imports of goods and services in Ukraine amounted to USD 74.1bn, which is 27% less than in 2013. At the same time, hryvnia depreciated over the year by 134%, and the average dollar exchange rate grew by 52% compared to 2013. During the last crisis of 2009, imports of goods and services fell by 44%, while the average annual dollar exchange rate grew by 53%. It turns out that at that time, imports fell faster than now. There may be two reasons for this. Firstly, at that time a special duty was imposed on most commodity items at the rate of 12%, which probably restricted imports. Secondly, this year the statistics showed an increase in imports of some goods due to the elimination of illegal trafficking schemes coordinated by the Yanukovich regime. Nevertheless, there are rumors that many schemes continue to operate successfully, and the figures show that the legalization of illegal trafficking had no significant impact on the balance of payments.

So how can we explain those 17 percentage points representing the difference between the imports drop in 2014 compared to 2009, given that the average annual hryvnia depreciation is almost the same? It is obvious that the lion's share of this difference can be attributed to the fictitious imports used to funnel money abroad. This hypothesis is indirectly confirmed by the fact that when the Head of the National Bank Valeria Hontareva tried in late August to introduce administrative barriers to such transactions by signing the respective NBU order, she had to rescind it under the pressure from above already in two months. Here we are talking about an amount of about USD 17bn. Even if only a half of this sum was generated through fake import operations, this is a huge loss to Ukraine in the current situation.

In more developed countries, central banks strictly monitor transactions related to the channeling of funds abroad and try to prevent them. Even Russia's balance of payments statistics have

Capital Drought

USD billion



"suspicious transactions" item for the contracts of purchase and sale of goods, securities etc. aimed at withdrawing funds from the country. The volume of such transactions amounts to 1–2% of GDP. If we draw an analogy with the Russian Federation, the invisible share of capital flight from Ukraine could be estimated at USD 3–4bn. However, given the current economic and political situation, which has dramatically reshaped the balance of payments compared to the last year, the actual amount is probably much higher.

CONCLUSIONS

Using the above calculations, it is safe to say that last year the Ukrainian economy lost over USD 40bn

ously much lower than the amount which was allegedly stolen by the Yanukovich regime (USD 70–100bn). But it is quite comparable to the changes in the financial account balance, which in 2013 amounted to USD 18.6bn, and in 2014 to minus USD 8.4bn. This drastic metamorphosis became the cornerstone of the dramatic hryvnia depreciation and the impoverishment of the population.

One way or another, this money in Ukraine would come in handy in the current situation, especially given the fact that we are talking about an extended cooperation program with the IMF, envisaging tens of billions of dollars of additional credit that the country's economy badly needs. Since no one in the new government is trying to prevent the outflow of capital from Ukraine, except for minor and short-lived exceptions, the conclusion would be as follows: the Revolution of Dignity has transformed the system of values of just about anyone, except for the authorities. For them, the money stays at the top of Maslow's pyramid, remaining the sacred cow that cannot be touched, even when the country is bulging at the seams. As before, they are quite tolerant of the activities of the oligarchs and the like, who can easily take their money out of the country, directly contributing to the hryvnia depreciation and the increased poverty of Ukrainians. ■

**FINANCIAL ACCOUNT
BALANCE WENT
DOWN FROM USD 18.6BN
IN 2013 TO MINUS USD 8.4BN
IN 2014**

in foreign exchange earnings compared to normal years. Basing on a rough estimate, about USD 20–25bn out of this amount accounted for the capital channeled out of Ukraine during 2014. This sum is probably higher than what the oligarchs funneled out of the country annually using transfer pricing (USD 5–20bn per year, according to different estimates), but obvi-

Akhmed Zakayev:

"It's dangerous for Ukraine to live as though there is no war going on"

President of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria in exile, Akhmed Zakayev, talks to *The Ukrainian Week* about what Kadyrovites want in the Donbas, the December clashes in Grozny and Makhachkali as an extension of the Russo-Chechen war that has gone on with varying intensity for nearly 25 years now, the illusory friendship of Vladimir Putin and Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, and the coming of ISIL to the Northern Caucasus.

U.W.: Who are these "kadyrovites" and what are they doing in Donbas? Are they merely carrying out orders from Putin and Kadyrov or do they have their own reasons for getting involved in the war in Eastern Ukraine?

We consider kadyrovites traitors of our nation because they take up arms on behalf of the Russian occupiers. Indeed, we separate ordinary police officers from those who work in Kadyrov's special forces and continue to terrorize ordinary Chechens. To make it a bit clearer what I mean by 'terror,' remember the recent massive burning of the homes of relatives of Chechen partisans? People were thrown out on the street in the middle of winter, many weren't even given a chance to gather their documents, and their homes were burned down. In other words, the kadyrovites act today using the same methods of the hangman of the Chechen people, General Yermolov (commander of the Russian army fighting the Chechens during the Caucasus wars of 1819-1864 – Ed.). The spiritual heirs of this sadist were the NKVD, who believed in collective punishment.

What's clear is that Ukrainians shouldn't expect anything good from them. If they were prepared to terrorize their own people, acting as death squads in the service

Interviewed by
Hanna Trehub

of the occupier, then what would stop them in Ukraine? Of course, their actions have nothing in common with the attitude of normal Chechens towards Ukrainians, as a nation fighting a just war against the Russian invader. As a nation that suffered unbelievable terror in the hands of the Russian occupiers and their allies, they completely side with Ukrainians. And



THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS AND CHECHNYA IN PARTICULAR REMAIN THE SOURCE OF BLOODY WARRIORS FOR RUSSIA AND ULTIMATELY THE DETONATORS OF ITS COLLAPSE

nothing, not kadyrovites nor Russia's lying propagandas, should be allowed to get in between our two nations. In our struggle against Russian imperialism, we were and remain on the same side of the barricades.

U.W.: In modern-day Russia, is the Northern Caucasus factor a powder keg or just a local threat? What were the clashes in Grozny and Makhachkali in early December 2014 all about? The reaction of Chechens and Dagestanis to the pressure and

terror of the Russian Federation or are we talking about yet another operation by Russia's special forces?

In my opinion, Russia's regions, especially the republics of the Northern Caucasus, will only leave the federation when Russia itself cuts them off. At one time, the USSR did just that by separating the Central Asian republics from it, although their leaders were begging Moscow to keep them in a union. As for Chechnya, the situation there is completely different. The lengthy Caucasus war and the last two Russo-Chechen ones were fierce and uncompromising. Russia won the first Caucasus war because it had much better material and human resources. However, it was not and still is not a strategic victory. 19th century Russian historians were right when they preferred to use the term "the pacification of Chechnya."

Sure, since it was prepared to use the most violent forms of repression, Russia was able to pacify Chechnya for a time. Then there was an uprising and the abrek movement rolled through occupied Chechnya, but the Russian Federation kept the region under military and police control. But when the Russian Revolution exploded in 1917, Chechnya once again became a powerful center of national liberation movements. An independent Mountain Republic was formed that a slew of western and eastern countries actually recognized. But among all the forces drawn into the civil war, only the bolsheviks promised the nations of the Northern Caucasus independence, so Chechens and many other Caucasus peoples supported them. Many historians think that the resistance of the Chechens and Ingushetis, which Anton Denikin described as "terrible," prevented him from com- ➤

BIO

Akhmed Zakayev is a Chechen military and political professional, a Brigadier General of the self-proclaimed Chechen Republic of Ichkeria who has served as Minister of Culture and Deputy Premier (1998-2006) and Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was a colleague of Djokhar Dudayev. At the end of 1994, he joined the Chechen Military HQ. In 1995, he was promoted to Brigadier General and was appointed Commander of the Urus-Martian front. In 1996, he became security advisor to CRI President Zelimkhan Yandarbiev and secretary of the CRI Security Council. He was involved in the preliminary negotiations and preparations for the Khasavyurt [Dagestan] ceasefire. After the start of the Second Chechen War, he was appointed Commander of the Presidential Reserves of Aslan Maskhadov. In 2007, part of the Chechen diaspora recognized him as the Prime Minister of CRI in exile.

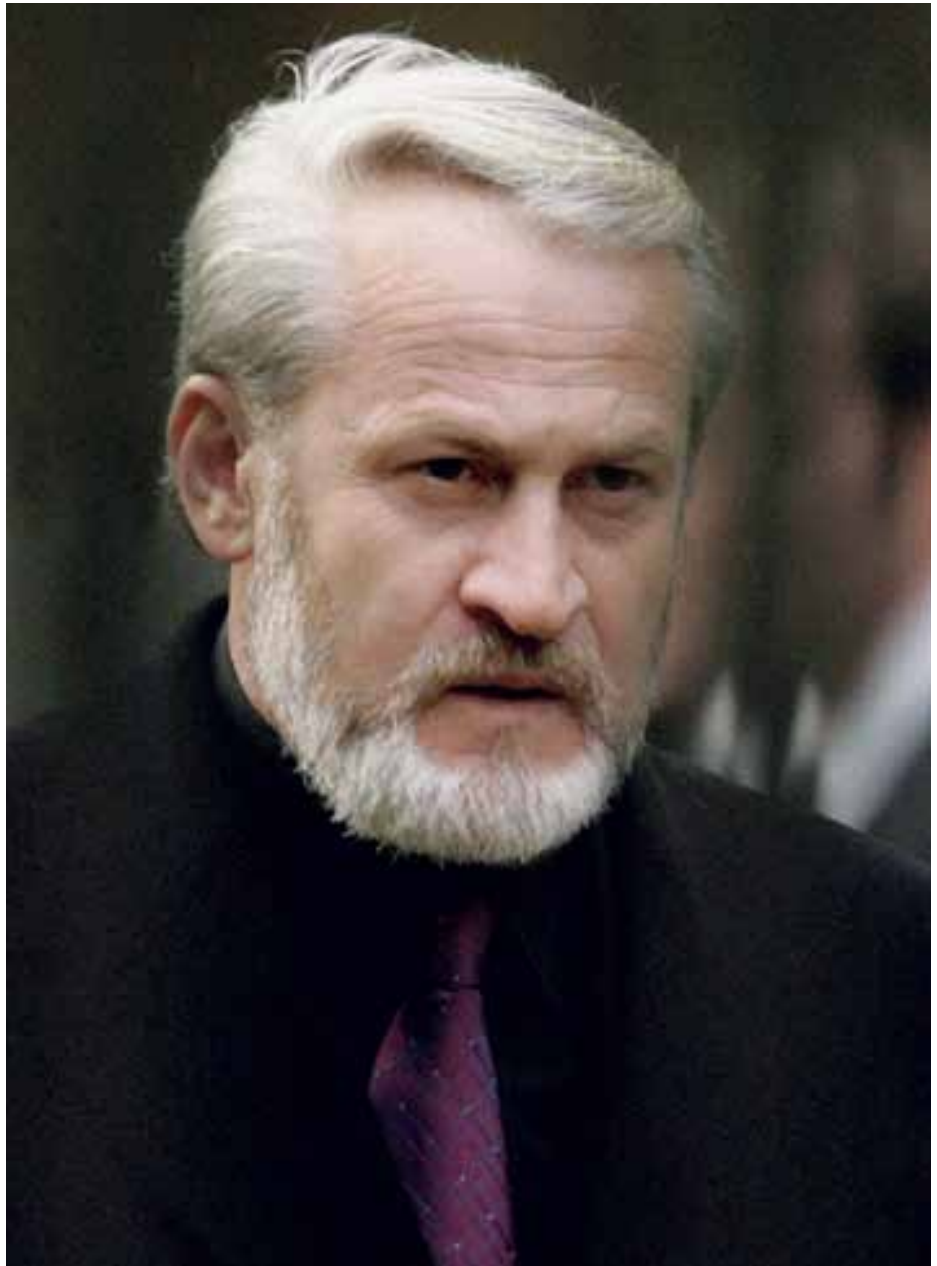
pleting a victorious attack on Moscow and crushing the bolsheviks.

When the Chechens realized that the bolsheviks had conned them regarding national independence, they organized an uninterrupted series of armed insurrections from the early 1920s to the early 1940s. To crush them, even in 1920 the Russians used not only infantry and cavalry, but also artillery and aviation. In 1944, all the Vainakhs were deported to Central Asia, but in bolshevik-occupied Chechnya, the struggle of insurgent groups and abreks did not abate for a single day. The last of these avengers, Khasukhana Mahomadov, was only killed in 1976.

The crisis and eventual collapse of the Soviet Union led to the immediate establishment, or more correctly revival, of an independent state called the Chechen Republic, shortly afterwards renamed the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. Russia was forced to undertake two multi-year, genocidal wars to destroy Chechen statehood and occupy our country. However, legally the Kremlin was unable to destroy the state. The CRI government continues to function successfully in Western Europe and I have the honor of being its current head.

So this brief historical excursion provides the answer to your question: The Northern Caucasus and Chechnya in particular remain the source of bloody warriors for Russia and ultimately the detonators of its collapse as long as Moscow does not come to the realization that it needs to recognize the independence of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. Otherwise, Chechnya and the entire Northern Caucasus will not only be a tinderbox for Russia, but the destroyer of its empire. As to the partisan raids on Grozny and Makhachkali, these are just episodes in a North Caucasus war that has been going on, at varying degrees of intensity, for nearly 25 years now.

U.W.: Chechens have been involved in the conflict in Syria. Some of them even support ISIL. Not long ago, this jihadist organization publicly announced its interest in the Northern Caucasus. How seriously do the peoples of the Northern Caucasus want to become part of the Caliphate and subordinate themselves to Abu Bakr al-



Baghdadi? There have been posts on the internet about Ramzan Kadyrov issuing orders to have him assassinated. Clearly, something about ISIL doesn't suit him...

The terror launched against the Chechens, and later against all the peoples of the Northern Caucasus, by Russia was doomed to give rise to the most extreme forms of resistance. Over the last 25 years, our struggle for independence has not received any support from the world community: not materially, not politically, not morally. Humanitarian and human rights organizations regularly report on the

heinous actions of the Russian occupiers on Chechen land, about widespread, deliberate killings of ordinary civilians, and about the use of all kinds of weaponry banned by international conventions, including chemical weapons and weapons with depleted uranium. All Chechens keep hearing from the international community in response to such reports is the usual dismissive argument that it's "an internal affair of Russia's."

Although Chechnya's Armed Forces and insurgents won the first Russo-Chechen war, this position of official governments around the world gave a lot of leeway to vari-

ous emissaries who came to us from the East to preach extremist religious doctrines to our young people. They tried to tell us they were “pure Islam,” but in fact, they were aiming at undermining the Chechen state from within. Some of these young people, many of whom could properly be called grown-ups, were captivated by these radical religious ideas and went off to join the insurrectionist movement in Syria. My firm position is that is not our war and I have stated this in many interviews and speeches. Chechens in Syria and now in Iraq are paying with their blood for completely alien military and political operations that are packaged in religious rhetoric in order to attract the most impassioned Muslim youth.

As to Ramzan Kadyrov’s announcements that he has supposedly called for the assassination of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, they remind me of the tactics of a certain kind of soviet professor: they took money from many parents whose children were applying to post-secondary institutions, but would not lift a finger to actually help them. If the applicant successfully completed the entrance exam, these professors kept the money while assuring the parents that it was all thanks to their own efforts. If the applicant failed, they would return the money, wringing their hands as though to say that, unfortunately, nothing had worked out. That’s Ramzan Kadyrov: If Al-Baghdadi dies, he will certainly suggest that the hand of his men was involved. If not, then he’ll just drop the subject over time.

U.W.: How strong is the connection between Putin and Kadyrov and to what extent is Kadyrov being handled by the Kremlin? Are they real friends and ideological allies, as most people see them, and is there something that might break this cozy duo up?

We do carefully monitor the situation in Chechnya and, of course, relations between Putin and Kadyrov, but I’m not going to get into all the secrets of the royal court. I will only say that, despite all of Kadyrov’s loyal declarations vis-à-vis Russia and his accolades regarding Putin, their relationship can hardly be termed a friendship or a genuine alliance. Putin is arming himself against Chechnya by

using a colonial approach that’s as old as the world: fostering a “new elite.” Some might call it collaborationist or compradorist. This elite is not only supposed to be isolated from its people and even sharply hostile towards it, so that it depends entirely on the power of the metropole. Many did not understand that Putin’s slogan, “chechenizing the war” was precisely this approach, thanks to which he established the necessary “new elite.” I already mentioned its attitude towards the Chechen people with reference to kadyrovites.

Today, Kadyrov and his most odious cadres, whose arms are up to the elbows in blood, have no shelter or defenders in the world other than Russia. I should add



PUTIN IS ARMING HIMSELF AGAINST CHECHNYA BY USING A COLONIAL APPROACH OF FOSTERING A “NEW ELITE” THAT IS ISOLATED FROM ITS PEOPLE, SHARPLY HOSTILE TOWARDS IT, AND DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON THE POWER OF THE METROPOLE

that criminal investigations launched against many of Kadyrov’s colleagues and assistants are currently on hold, but any of them can be reopened at any time. This is done, of course, so that they will be better at serving their Moscow master. But Chechens never forget or forgive harm done to them if the guilty party does not provide extenuating circumstances and genuinely repent. People in Chechnya suffer and wait, because they are wary of bringing a mortal blow upon their families, who have been turned into collective hostages by the kadyrovites. In fact, Russia looks like it might soon legalize the practice of collective responsibility on the initiative of its Chechen marionettes.

U.W.: How likely is it that the departure of Putin, by one means or another, from power might lead to a change in the current regional leadership in the Northern Caucasus, including that in Chechnya? From where might a renewed Northern Caucasus elite

emerge and would it have at least the outline of a vision of the future? Of the direction that Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia and the rest might take in the future?

Kadyrov and Putin are connected by a bloodied umbilical cord, like a pair of Siamese twins. And as soon as Putin’s power collapses or even seriously wavers, it will have an instantaneous impact on the Northern Caucasus and on Kadyrov in particular. I don’t doubt that Putin’s very aggression against Ukraine will lead to his fall. It’s not for nothing that Kadyrov, who understands just how tightly his own fate is tied to that of Putin, is so verbosely nervous about Ukraine.

U.W.: What is your thought of the current state of the Russian-Ukrainian war? What would you say are Ukraine’s chances, despite all the problems, of getting rid of Russia’s armed forces and mercenaries from its territory and to prevent Donbas from turning into another frozen conflict or a grey zone like Abkhazia or Southern Ossetia? How can Ukrainians win this one?

Everything depends on Ukraine itself and the fighting spirit of Ukrainians. You need to understand that only a steadfast nationwide resistance can save the situation and repel the aggressor beyond the country’s borders. It’s very dangerous now, for Ukraine to keep living as though there isn’t any war. I think your country must declare a state of war and appropriately tighten legislation and stop playing one step forward, one step back with the enemy. Ukraine has enough strength to overcome the terrorist scum in the eastern regions and their Russian mentors.

But if the current undetermined state continues a bit longer and people don’t see results, there will come a psychological breaking point and Ukrainians will simply acquiesce to the fact that their country has lost considerable territory. The politicians in Kyiv will make wimpy statements, as happened in Georgia, about the country’s right to Crimea and the eastern oblasts, but in actual fact they will become Russian. We Chechens have a saying, “A war can only be stopped through war.” I wish for Ukraine to have a speedy victory! ■

¹One of several terms among the Caucasus nations for men who dedicated their lives to battle and in particular to partisan warfare against occupying Russia, sometimes called “avengers.”

²Anton Denikin was a general in the Russian imperial Army who eventually led the Whites against the Reds.

³A subgroup of one-time Caucasus peoples known as Nakhs, that today includes the Chechen, Ingushetia and Kist people. Other Nakh groups have become extinct.

When the Rules Are Broken

Experts comment on the leadership of the USA and Germany in the Ukraine-Russia conflict, delivery of weapons to Ukraine and the new world order

Author:
Anna Korbut,
Munich

In 2009, US Vice President Joe Biden announced the “reset” in America’s policy with Russia at the 45th Munich Security Conference. It was less than a year after the Russian aggression in Georgia. “We will not agree with Russia on everything. For example, the United States will not – will not recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. We will not recognize any nation having a sphere of influence. It will remain our view that sovereign states have the right to make their own decisions and choose their own alliances,” he said back then. “But the United States and Russia can disagree and still work together where our interests coincide.”

“As a result of these choices made by Mr. Putin, the world looks differently today than it did when I spoke in Munich not just six years ago, but even two years ago,” Mr. Biden noted at the same Bayerischer Hof hotel conference hall six years later, on February 6–8, 2015.

The Munich Security Conference is not a place where landmark decisions on things like the launch of the “reset” policy or delivery of arms to Ukraine are made. Nor is it a place where one can hear details of a “peace plan” for Ukraine in official statements by the world leaders, especially when the conference takes place a day or two before their meeting with the leader of the aggressor-state, then a visit to Washington. However, leading diplomats and analysts come here every year to share their opinions on the pressing challenges, the current one being probably one of the worst one in decades. *The Ukrainian Week* asked François Heisbourg and Judy Dempsey for their comments and expectations. ■



François Heisbourg

Chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, moderator of the panel on hybrid war at the 51st Munich Security Conference

Judy Dempsey

Non-resident Senior Associate at Carnegie Europe, Editor-in-Chief of the Strategic Europe blog, and author of The Merkel Phenomenon (Das Phänomen Merkel, Körber-Stiftung Edition, 2013)

DELIVERY OF ARMS TO UKRAINE: EU AND US STANCES

This is really complicated. First of all, the US Congress has not yet been able to reach a consensus on this but they are talking about it, and that is a big change. If the US arms Ukraine, that doesn’t mean that American soldiers will be sent there. Europe is much more complicated. The Baltic States would clearly like some weapons to be sent in. Poland is waiting for an EU consensus. Angela Merkel still believes in diplomacy. But what is diplomacy without the threat of visible use of force to back it up. She would not deal with this issue. She has just put force off the agenda. This is the new Germany we are dealing with. And it reflects the German view.

As to France, I must say that it has changed a lot. It hardly knew where Kyiv was only a few months ago, focusing on Africa instead. What Mrs.

Merkel has done to France is very interesting: she has engaged it in dealing with Eastern Europe. This is a positive side of all that can be said.

At a point, Poland felt sidelined. This is how Vladimir Putin wants this, preferring Germany and France for the Normandy format instead as Russia’s “traditional partners”. But ever since then, according to people in the German foreign ministry and the chancellery, Poland has been kept informed all the time. The Swedes and Poland are working very hard behind the scenes. Poland is trying to push the reform programme with Ukraine as much as it can. This is the reality of politics.

The interesting thing is that the EU is not involved in any of these negotiations. Germany is the leader in Europe and Mrs. Merkel has done it all alone. She is now doing foreign policy, weighing up all strategic implications of what she has done. It is a high-risk strategy for her.

DELIVERY OF ARMS TO UKRAINE: EU AND US STANCES

I would be careful on this one. As NATO Secretary General reminded people at the conference, this is not something decided by NATO. It's not a collective decision. Transfer of arms is a product of national policy. From what I see in Paris, for instance, and even in the way Angela Merkel answered questions on this at the conference, countries have different views, considering it a dangerous idea to send weapons to Ukraine and preferring to go on with sanctions instead, but nobody is going to stop others from providing arms to Ukraine. That is the impression I got from listening to Angela Merkel (during her remarks and Q&A session on February 6 – Ed.). She is not going to transfer arms to Ukraine and will continue to express her doubts – and I use the word “doubt” here because that is what she used when answering American Senator Bob Corker's question about delivery of weapons to Ukraine – but she will hardly interfere with decisions of other countries to provide weapons. So, it really boils down to American leadership, if there is such a thing. A lot depends on public opinion in Germany. I don't know how strongly people here feel about this. But at the time of the annexation of Crimea, the Russians, for instance, expected that Germany would be the weak link because it is the country with the most economic assets in Russia, the oldest historical tradition of cooperation with Russia, and a strong pro-Russian sentiment in all of Germany. However, Mrs. Merkel understood quickly what was going on and who Vladimir Putin is. Subsequently, German public opinion has been channeled in the right direction to understand what's going on.

RESPONSE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO THE “NEW WORLD ORDER”

I think one of the new characteristics of the new order is that there will be no international community. In fact, during the last days of the Soviet Union and the early days of Russia, the latter was quite a positive player on the UN Security Council. Even until the annexation of Crimea there had been hope that, no matter how difficult and tricky relations with Russia were, some sort of order would be preserved. That is now over.

SENTIMENTS IN FRANCE

Don't forget that it was the Americans who invented the “reset policy” eight-nine months after the war in Georgia. And everyone followed. The signal was given by Joe Biden here in February 2009. So, a general understanding in all Western States was then that the war in Georgia was an exception that did not set a new pattern, so they could continue business as usual. Now, everybody knows what's going on. Even those in Europe who like Vladimir Putin know that this is no longer the case. Plus, sanctions prevent business as usual from happening anyway.

What is true is that public opinion is deeply divided in all of Europe. The propaganda battle in Western European countries is very intense and Russia is very effective – both in terms of direct intervention through social media and channels like Russia Today, and indirectly, through authoritarian-type policymakers like Marine Le Pen, for instance.

POTENTIAL COLLAPSE OF RUSSIA AS A RESULT OF SANCTIONS

That is a deeply undesirable outcome because, if the Russians see something like that happening, they will likely act extremely forcefully. This is the

point I was trying to make in my question to the German Defense Minister when she compared sanctions to a short sword. I said that the people who are receiving the sharp end of the sword don't see this as a metaphor. Take Japan in 1941 and sanctions against it. The Japanese would have run out of the ability to wage a war in six months, so they attacked Pearl Harbor.

Sanctions are not a risk-free option. My basic argument is that we would be better off putting economic and military help to Ukraine, and not sanctions, at the center of our strategy. The ones imposed already have been effective – actually, too effective in terms of their economic impact – while being completely ineffective in terms of their political effect. Of course, there was an unexpected slump in oil prices. That's why we should not impose more sanctions. The Germans often think of them as an easy answer to our problem because they do not carry the risk of war. But they are wrong in that. Sanctions do carry a risk of war when they reach a certain level of effectiveness. And when the Germans say that it could be dangerous to provide arms to Ukraine, sanctions are probably equally dangerous.

FINANCIAL AID TO UKRAINE

It is necessary and Mrs. Merkel mentioned it specifically, but a broader plan is necessary. A major problem now, however, is Greece. So, if Mr. Hollande, Mr. Renzi or Mrs. Merkel tell their voters in the middle of all this financial mess in the eurozone that “we are going to give a EUR 50bn package for Ukraine”, it won't be an easy political decision for them. But I was reassured by Mrs. Merkel's immediate answer about the need to provide the IMF package to Ukraine. That means that she thinks it is important.

ASSESSMENT OF REFORMS IN UKRAINE

It is extremely difficult to do reforms overnight. You need state institutions and state apparatus, a new culture of civil service and technocrats. It takes a lot of time.

What the public demands is another matter. My impression is that people want the authorities to just deal with corruption. They want something tangible, a perspective. The first thing is to stop corruption – and much more has to be done to get rid of it. On the other hand, it is so endemic, deep down in every aspect of life.

The second thing – and it is as difficult – is the lustration law. People want to end the old history. They do not want the Maidan revolution to be betrayed once more.

The EU and the IMF are pushing for reforms in Ukraine, but you have to be very careful not to push too hard. An excuse for delaying reforms can always be found. And they can't be done in a vacuum. Reforms need to be done well, and explained to the public – why they are needed. This is really important.



Jacek Saryusz-Wolski:

“Given the divisions within the EU, it is good that sanctions have been installed”

Interviewed by
Anna Korbut

The *Ukrainian Week* spoke to the Polish Member of the European Parliament* who actively contributed to bringing his country to the European Union in the 1990s about political divisions in the EU, the change of European attitude towards Ukraine and Russia today over the past year, and about arguments the EU expects from Kyiv to continue its support for Ukraine.

U.W.: How united is the EU in terms of sanctioning Russia now as compared to spring, when the military tension began to escalate?

The targeted sanctions introduced against Russia by the EU in July 2014 in the financial, armament and energy sectors have made a difference and have had an impact on Russia. That has been the EU's most effective response to the war in Eastern Ukraine since spring 2014. Could the restrictive measures have gone further? I be-

lieve they could and also should have been introduced earlier, as we have been witnessing a continuous escalation of the Russian invasion on Ukraine. We have called on EU member-states for further sanctions in case Russia does not fulfil the commitments of the September Minsk Agreements in our European Parliament Resolutions in September 2014 and January 2015.

U.W.: Where do these divisions between member-states you mentioned run today?

No simple East-West or North-South division can be made here. Member-states are mostly grouped according to the different approaches and policies towards Russia and Ukraine. One group includes the Baltic States, Sweden and Poland – countries that strongly support Ukraine's Euro-

pean choice. Another group includes countries that want to avoid any confrontation with Russia - Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Some member-states, like Cyprus, Greece, Austria, are traditionally friendly with Russia rather than Ukraine, while the attitude of others, such as Bul-

* The interview took place on January 27

BIO

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, born in 1948, is a Polish diplomat, Member of the European Parliament. He studied economy at the University of Lodz. In the early 1980s, he joined the Solidarność trade union movement, became deputy press-secretary at its Lodz branch and political board secretary at the Centre for Social and Professional Research of the Solidarność regional branch. He was Poland's first Minister for European Integration from 1991 to 1996, an architect of Poland's entrance to the EU and a negotiator on the process in 2000-2001. Since 2004, Mr. Saryusz-Wolski has been Member of the European Parliament (in the EPP faction) and a proactive participant of the processes linked to the European Neighbourhood Policy, particularly its east-European vector. From 2004 to 2007, Mr. Saryusz-Wolski served as President of the European Parliament. Since 2014, he has served as Vice President of the EPP foreign policy group. He took part in the drafting of many resolutions on Ukraine, Russia and ENP before the Vilnius summit in November 2013. From September, Mr. Saryusz-Wolski has been the EP's permanent rapporteur on Ukraine



garia and Romania, depends on the political force currently in power, left always flirting with Moscow. There are also those that like Portugal or Spain, are not too preoccupied with the developments in Eastern Europe, which for them seems too distant. Some countries like Italy, France or Germany and Great Britain have big business, financial and investment interests in or with Russia that they do not want to jeopardize, so that also influences their response and willingness to take decisive steps against the aggressor-state Russia.

U.W.: As a long-time European Parliament member, can you see any change in the overall attitude towards Russia, now that it has been almost a year since its invasion in Ukraine essentially began?

I see a considerable change in the European Parliament's and the overall EU's position. The EU's belief and hope that Russia can go through a process of modernization and be brought closer to international and European standards of democracy and the rule of law, has proven to be false. Russia is no longer considered a rational partner, but rather an aggressor, a violator of international law, and a country that has been undermining the Eastern Partnership Program - a flagship project of the EU's for-

eign policy. So, it is not unfounded when I say that the European perception of Russia has fundamentally changed.

U.W.: There was an impression earlier that, if Russia complied with the Minsk Agreement, even if only formally, the EU would be willing to go back to normal relations with it, leaving the occupied part of Eastern Ukraine as a frozen conflict and forgetting about Crimea. How accurate is it?

Instead, it used it to buy time to better prepare itself for a further invasion of Ukraine. There were those in Europe who continuously believed in Russia's sincerity because they were naïve or afraid of taking a stronger position, and thus pretending to believe in order to avoid confrontation.

The position of the EU on Crimea is clear. Its annexation has never been and never will be recognized or legalized, and sanctions will be maintained. The principle of Ukraine's territorial integrity is unquestionable, no matter whether we are speaking about Crimea or Donbas. Legally, there is no difference between the status of these two parts of Ukraine.

U.W.: These "naïve" policymakers – how influential and numerous are they in the EU policymaking process? What arguments could persuade them to see the Russian threat for what it is, if anything?

The EU's stance towards Russia has changed and the shift in opinions includes also those policymakers (except for the extreme left, extreme right and anti-Europeans within EU). Especially now when Russia's direct involvement in the war has become so obvious. The problem is that the Russian perspective is still strong in the Western media. The Russian propaganda is often winning and needs to be fought with.

U.W.: Is Ukraine providing enough facts and arguments to the western media to counter Russia's rhetoric? What could it do more to communicate its own perspective to European societies effectively?

Russia is winning the information war so far. That is why we the EP have called on the European Commission in our January European Parliament Resolution

on Ukraine to prepare and establish a Russian-language TV channel that would be funded by the EU and would mainly aim at countering Russia's propaganda. Ukraine on the other hand should also change its language of official statements and documents to a harsher tone that reflects the gravity of the situation. Ukraine expects the EU to use a straight language, but uses soft language itself. Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin, in his latest communication uses the term "hostilities", not "war". But we should call a

THE EU'S BELIEF AND HOPE THAT RUSSIA CAN GO THROUGH A PROCESS OF MODERNIZATION HAS PROVEN TO BE FALSE

spade a spade - war should be called war, terrorism should be called terrorism, and invasion should be called invasion. Asking Russia to influence their own terrorist proxies in Donbas is counterproductive and harmful, because it confirms the Russian narrative of not being engaged and not being party to the war against Ukraine.

U.W.: Apart from the communication efforts, what else do you, as a long-time proactive supporter of Ukraine in this conflict expect from the country that could give you more arguments for further support?

Indeed, we would like to see Ukraine do more, actions rather than words. When, for example, we ask the EU to step up sanctions, we want to see Ukraine imposing also sanctions on Russia. When we in the European Parliament urge EU Member States to help Ukraine to develop its military capabilities to defend itself, we expect Ukraine to use its own regular army and weaponry on stock and not rely only on under-equipped volunteer heroic battalions. When we ask the EU for more money and support for Ukraine in the reform process, we need to see progress and determination on Ukraine's side in modernizing the country and eradicating systemic corruption, instead of delays and posturing. ■



Ulrich Speck:

“What was the minority position towards the Russian aggression has become the majority one in the EU. The main driver of this was Russia itself”

Interviewed
by
Olha
Vorozhbyt

The *Ukrainian Week* spoke to Ulrich Speck, the EU expert and visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe in Brussels, about internal contradictions inside the EU, attitude to Russia and the role of Germany in preserving the unity of the European Union.

U.W.: It seems that the escalation in Eastern Ukraine aggravates internal contradictions amongst EU member-states. Would you agree on this?

The word “contradictions” may be a little too strong. The EU is the organization made of 28 member-states and you will never find 100% agreement. There is always a majority opinion and a minority one. Doubts will always be plenty and some countries will disagree, but, nevertheless, what matters is the action that comes out. We have just seen a new statement coming out from heads of states and governments of the EU saying that they “note evidence of continued and growing support given to separatists by Russia which underlines Russia’s responsibility”. They asked foreign ministers to assess the situation and to consider any appropriate action, in particular, further restrictive measures, i.e. sanctions. It takes a whole process to get there and, as I said, there are people who disagree.

On the one hand, you have the more hawkish view that advocates standing up against Russia and providing more support to Ukraine. Some people even suggest that it should be by providing

Ukraine with defensive weapons. On the other hand, there is much concern that the relations with Russia will get worse and even become dangerous, potentially leading to a new Cold War. So, these differences in the emphasis have led to a double strategy with two different strains. One element is the sanctions, and the other is negotiations as an attempt to bring Russia back into a more cooperative position via diplomacy. However, with more intense warfare in Eastern Ukraine and with obvious Russian involvement, it becomes more difficult to have this double approach.

U.W.: When you mentioned “hawkish” views in the EU, how strong are they?

The countries that were tough from the beginning were Poland and the Baltic States, perhaps Romania to the certain extent. Southeastern ones, such as Italy, Spain, Greece, and others, have been rather reluctant to go into a confrontation with Russia over Ukraine. But what was initially a minority position has become a majority one over the last year. The person who played a major role in this process was Angela Merkel as she was ready to move towards a more hawkish stance on Russia. However, the main driver of this change has been Russia itself, its aggressive behavior and warfare in Ukraine.

U.W.: With her hawkish position, will Angela Merkel succeed in persuading those countries that lean towards negotiations with Russia? This is especially

interesting in the context of the Greek elections...

Germany has moved into a strong leadership position in the eurozone during the euro crisis. In fact, the Germans never wanted to lead Europe. They were just happy to stay in the background. But the euro crisis forced Germany to step up as the biggest country and the strongest economy. It has a lot of trust. From this leadership position during the euro crisis Angela Merkel has moved towards the same position in the conflict with Russia. Of course, leadership does not mean domination. What it means is the chance to bring the EU towards the common position, and Mrs. Merkel is fit for that better than anybody else. But this is the outcome of negotiations, not something given.

In addition to that, Mrs. Merkel constantly needs to figure out what others want and try to find an integrated approach, by bringing EU partners early in to the decision-making. That is why France is now a major partner for Germany in these negotiations with Russia. When the Germans get France on board, they have a good chance that other countries in the South like Spain and Italy are going to accept this outcome of the negotiations. France is in between, rather on the skeptical side on sanctions, but Germany has brought it at least halfway into the other camp. Germany needs this critical mass and it has a good chance to it by getting France involved.

The second point is that the countries in the South may not



BIO Ulrich Speck is a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe in Brussels. His research focuses on the European Union's foreign policy and Europe's strategic role in a changing global environment. From 2010 to 2013, Mr. Speck was an associate fellow at the Madrid-based think tank FRIDE. Prior to that he worked for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague and Brussels, and in 2006 he was a fellow at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies in Washington, DC. He received PhD in Modern History from the University of Frankfurt.

share Germany's or Mrs. Merkel's views on Ukraine, Russia and the conflict, but the internal dynamics inside the EU is such that they need Germany for other issues. That gives Germany leverage. It does not mean that Berlin can command them, but it does make it easier to make a deal for Mrs. Merkel. So, I think it is very likely that the sanctions policy will continue, especially as we have not seen any sign of Russia trying to accept and fulfill the Minsk Agreement.

U.W.: To which extent the results of the Greek elections can weaken the joint European position on Russian aggression towards Ukraine?

I am not so concerned about this. Some elements in the new Greek Government appear to be rather pro-Kremlin, but the big issue for Greece is not Russia or Ukraine, it is whether it will leave the eurozone or not, and what the conditions are to stay. So, the core of the negotiations is the economy.

The main partner here is Germany. It is possible that Greece is going to try to increase its leverage by signaling to Brussels and Berlin that it would use its veto power over Russia sanctions. However, I don't think that they are in a very strong position. Greece might create some hiccups, but not a real obstacle. Countries that rely heavily on the EU for economic well-being usually fall in line with the EU broader policies, unless they have a very strong national interest, as Cyprus. The latter is blocking the EU's relations with NATO because of its internal conflicts. It can do so, because it sees this as a major national interest, but I don't expect this from Greece.

U.W.: When the European Union was just at its beginning, France and Germany were the two driving forces. Is it possible that they become the locomotives of the EU counter policy against Russian aggression?

France's interest has historically and until today been in the

south, including Maghreb, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, Sub-Saharan Africa where it had its colonies, and the Middle East – Syria – which had also been France protectorate. Germany is just the opposite, looking eastward. This is where its economic interests are and where it feels it can make a difference. And this is also a major concern of Germany's neighbors in the East, especially Poland. When Frank-Walter Steinmeier became Germany's foreign minister in December 2013, he tried to rebuild German-French cooperation on foreign policy by offering a joint lead and working together on both sides to French foreign minister Laurent Fabius. Under that deal, Germany would take more interest in what is happening in the South and cooperate closely with France in that direction, and France would work with Germany on problems in the East. They visited some countries in both Eastern and Southern neighborhoods together. Angela Merkel is doing the same with French president François Hollande, bringing him in on Russia. If you see who and how often speak to Vladimir Putin, Merkel is very much ahead, but Hollande is also in that game. But I do not think that the French interest is strong enough, so that France would really invest in these Eastern policies. In the future, as I see it, Poland is more likely to play an important role in Germany's Eastern policies and France in Germany's Southern policy. This is called the Weimar triangle – Poland, Germany and France – and for a while it worked well, including throughout the Ukrainian crisis. It was the three foreign ministers from Poland, Germany and France who tried to convince Viktor Yanukovich to sign the agreement with the Maidan. Unfortunately, Poland has been cut off from this group and now it is the Normandy format group. We do not know exactly how this will develop, but you can see that the German-Polish cooperation is very strong now in the European Council between Angela Merkel, whose grandfather was Polish, and Donald Tusk, now President of the European Council. Mr. Tusk and Mrs. Merkel worked very closely in the past and they continue to do that on Russia and Ukraine now. ■

Trouble at the Academy

On the maladies afflicting Ukraine's National Academy of Sciences and its chances of recovery

Author:
Ihor Losev

The institution that is now called the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (NAS) was founded in 1918. Hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi stood behind the creation of the Academy, and its first president was the world-renowned scientist Volodymyr Vernadskyi. It was then, in November 1918, that a boy named Borys was born who was destined to lead the Academy for 52 years. Although the NAS has not produced any Nobel laureates, it can be found in the Guinness Book of World Records thanks to the administrative longevity of its leader, Borys Paton.

In this regard, the NAS is definitely "a world leader". In a few years, the institution will celebrate its 100th anniversary. For the last 23 years, Ukraine has been run by figures who were not concerned with knowledge and philosophical wisdom, but with a powerful grasping reflex. They occasionally raise the issue of something being unnecessary and redundant after they drive that something to such state, in order to privatize, optimize and utilize it for the benefit of a narrow circle of limited people. While the NAS amassed considerable property during its decades-long existence, it has often been the subject of envious scrutiny resulting in proposals for its rearranging or re-subordination. These attempts to exercise the grabbing instinct, a strong one in post-communist states, were camouflaged as concerns about the institution being redundant. When the Ukrainian army was looted (after the dissolution of the USSR — **Ed.**), the looters were similarly questioning the need of its own military machinery in a peaceful Ukrainian nation that has "good friends just across the border".

Not all countries can afford to finance strong fundamental sciences. It is quite expensive indeed. How-

ever, science can provide a country with great long-term competitive advantages, advanced breakthrough technologies, strategic perspectives and more.

Here much depends on whether state leaders are able to think strategically rather than simply to consider narrow business or administrative career interests, and whether they are capable of planning for the long term.

Great science is intended for the long-term history of society. It cannot exist under a government run by a fussy, kleptocratic class of hucksters who think only of the here and now, forcing the country to start a

"new life" with each new group that manages to take control of the state apparatus. This is precisely why renowned sociologist Yevhen Holovakha called their domination a "momentocracy".

Great science is cherished by those peoples that are going to live long and seriously in this world, who do not measure their lives with short-sighted imperatives, where everything is limited to the short interval between elections.

Ukrainians, in spite of everything, are quite educated, predisposed to learning and intellectual activity, and the NAS still holds some strong scientific schools of thought, traditions, research skills and so on.

That very scientific potential is still one of Ukraine's few true trump cards in the international division of labor. Without advanced sciences (and a chance to preserve and develop them), Ukraine will quickly slide into the Third World, becoming a country of slow development and accelerated degradation.

Given the proper societal and governmental attitudes, science can provide Ukraine with new technologies, innovation, and fundamental discoveries that will change the

In 2018, the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences, as well as its current leader Borys Paton will celebrate their 100-year anniversary



landscape of production, lifestyle, interaction with the environment, and more. If it is destroyed, then what will remain for us as a benchmark of progress? A flock of businesspeople that can't see anything beyond their immediate commercial success. Ukraine's international weight will be much smaller without its scientific component, for science provides potential and opportunities that, while they may not be realized today, are certainly positive and worth preserving. We might compare this with Britain and France without nuclear weapons. How much do the sciences do for them, considering the significant advantage of global nuclear superpowers and the presence of a US nuclear umbrella under which they can always hide? However, without science, the weight of these countries in Europe and the world would be markedly reduced. And now look at us. Ukraine with science is one thing; Ukraine without science is something completely different. Thus, academic science is crucial. However, does Ukraine need an organizational structure like the National Academy of Sciences? What we see now is a typical product of the Soviet reality with all its virtues and faults. That is why it is very difficult for it to function in a modern environment.

The NAS is a huge company with dozens of "shops"—institutes and laboratories with thousands of workers. This hierarchical structure forms a sort of pyramid with a supreme power at the top: the President and the Presidium of the NAS. Beneath them is the academic nomenklatura: academics and associate members, and even lower, the scientific "commonwealth": virtually powerless researchers, even if they are doctors and PhDs. For almost nothing here depends on them, they do not affect the life of this organization in any way, and decisions are made without them and for them. Eventually, regulations are merely passed down to them from the academic authorities. Nothing akin to "transparent" mechanisms of democratic self-government exists here that might differentiate the NAS from a pseudo-democratic soviet government.


Elections of academics and associate members occur without the participation of research teams from academic institutions (maybe a little more democratic than the election

of the Pope by the College of Cardinals, but not much). The nomenklatura of academic elites decides everything backstage. This leads to rather predictable consequences. The membership of the National Academy of Sciences is often completely unrelated to real scientific advances. One might be a politician, chief of the Presidential Administration, an MP, leader of a political party and a nobody in science, but due to one's political "merit" and proximity to power, one might become an academician, often with all the "achievements" of several ordinary scientific articles and a monograph. One figure that carried such baggage became famous during the 2004 presidential campaign for his almost criminal actions related to rigging the vote, yet this did not prevent him from becoming an academician. It is predominately among academics in the humanities that we find such "scholars" whose great contribution to the science of their colleagues is completely unknown.

Because the system for electing academics is completely undemocratic, secretive, and driven by caste and nomenklatura, it is not at all conducive to healthy human resource processes. Thus, under Yanukovich's presidency, comrade Valeriy Soldatenko, skilled historian of the Communist Party, became a NAS associate member in the field of History instead of renowned scientists, such as Stanislav Kulchytskyi, Volodymyr Serhiychuk, and others. There is another example: for five years, the Institute of Philosophy has nominated Anatoliy Yermolenko as a candidate for NAS associate member. Though he has great influence not only among Ukrainian philosophers, but also in German philosophical circles in Europe and has made great scientific achievements, the top of the academic pyramid has steadfastly ignored these proposals. NAS research teams must be allowed to participate in the election of academics and associate members, otherwise nothing will be updated and the system is guaranteed to become a gerontocracy—rule by the elderly. Yes, many of them have made their contributions to science. But a natural process of generational shift is required if science is not to fall into decay. Of course, this is difficult because the very same man who served as President of the National Academy of Sciences in '96 was still in charge in 2014.

Unfortunately, the NAS has not managed to shed the spirit of Sovietism and Russophilism. Sergei Glazyev, a willful Ukrainophobe and provincial Russian activist with an economics education became the most difficult manifestation of this problem when he was elected a foreign member of the NAS. Now senior veterans in the NAS are standing behind Glazyev to their death, saying that his honorary status cannot be revoked. In another case, The author of this article personally acted as an expert consult on a state deputy's inquiry into his plan to establish a monument to Russian Emperor Alexander II in Kyiv.

Despite all of the above shortcomings, the National Academy of Sciences should be saved through radical and fundamental reforms based on more than merely the diametrically opposed models of the US and Russia that entail either to-



BECAUSE THE SYSTEM FOR ELECTING ACADEMICS IS COMPLETELY UNDEMOCRATIC, SECRETIVE, AND DRIVEN BY CASTE AND NOMENKLATURA, IT IS NOT AT ALL CONDUCTIVE TO HEALTHY HUMAN RESOURCE PROCESSES

tal separation from the state, or complete state control, and nothing in between. The NAS should become a democratic self-governing structure. In this sense, it is necessary to look at the experience of some post-communist Central European countries such as the Czech Republic. There, the Academy of Sciences was not dismantled, but preserved by substantially modifying its structure and management. 54 of its institutions operate on money from government programs as well as grants (i.e. grants for the work of individual scientists at home) thanks in particular to the EU. Where there's a will, there's a suitable model to borrow. However, it is clear that the NAS cannot continue to exist in its current archaic, overly bureaucratic form. It is transforming from a living and active organization into a monument to itself. We need new ideas, new forms, and new leaders. History has challenged us. We must respond. ■

Deputy Education Minister Maksym Strikha:

"Science is not a means of satisfying one's curiosity, but the guarantee of the national security"

Mr. Strikha spoke to *The Ukrainian Week* about the current status and the potential of the Ukrainian science, the need for reform at the National Academy of Sciences, and forged academic degrees.

U.W.: How can you describe the current situation at the NAS? Are there any initiatives to evaluate what has been left of the Academy of Sciences in terms of technical and human resources, and to decide how to manage it efficiently?

Speaking of the assets of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in terms of lands, facilities, etc., the Academy has been and still remains a unique institution, thanks to a great degree to the role and the activity (and I'm saying this without irony) of Borys Paton. All the institutes that existed in the early 1990s have survived to this day, and their number has even increased.

As for the human resources, changes were not for the better. In fact, very many active people, especially of the younger generations, were washed out of the country or to other sectors. Salary levels at the Academy as of today give no chances to the talented youth from the provinces to settle down in the capital, neither by renting apartments nor by staying at the Academy's dorms after defending their PhD theses.

The average age of the Candidates of Sciences at the NAS is over 50 years, Doctors are aged over 60, Academicians over 70, and the President of the Academy is 96. There is a huge gap between the older generation and the youth. We have a situation where most of Ukrainian science depends on veterans. They

chose to work here, rather than leaving the country. Speaking of natural and technology sciences, the older generation of scientists is our gold reserve. They will not invent quantum mechanics (which were created, as you might know, by 25-year-olds), but they can direct and organize the research process, and will keep generating ideas to the ripe old age. Such people are in high demand, because quantum mechanics does not emerge all by itself, it requires the background of a certain scientific environment. However, we should remember that due to biological reasons, in 10 years at the latest the older generation will be gone. If we do not manage during that time to bring to the academia a sufficient number of young people, the issue of science in Ukraine will be taken off the table completely.

The management of the NAS really ought to be more mobile. Boris Paton is not a gerontocrat, he still actively controls everything that happens in the Academy, following the new ideas. However, this is a man who was formed in the 1930s. While in the 1990s, his conservatism was necessary to preserve the NAS as such, today something else is needed. Most Academicians got accustomed over the years to the situation when all external communications are carried out by Paton, whose authority can help resolve any issue. But let's be honest: due to his age, he can no longer be an effective

Interviewed by
Hanna Trehub

communicator with the power elites and the society. This makes the gap between science and the society even deeper. If the Academy fails to change the situation, it will just disappear, because neither the society nor the authorities understand why Ukraine needs this institution and why it should be financed. So, it is important that the NAS finds the resources to bring young blood to its management, appointing new dynamic people to senior positions. I would not make a forecast as to whether its representatives will be able to do so, since the Academy still remains a conservative structure.

Inventory count at the NAS would be a good idea. Not everything that the Academy owns is used efficiently. But it would be an illusion to believe that following an audit we will find some great assets that were unaccounted for to this day.

U.W.: The NAS system included a whole number of experimental plants and technology labs, that is, the framework required for the efficient development of the applied science and the implementation of its breakthroughs in the economy and the industry. What is the current state of these enterprises, what do they do to survive?

Speaking not only about the Academy, but also about the Ukrainian science in general, we have both success stories and cases of complete failure. Those that still operate are surviving depending on their niche. What



do we actually have? We have hard-working people. The needs of the pharmaceutical market are clear. As for the IT sector, no questions either: it has the greatest potential for outsourcing, so our scientists are working for foreign companies. But there are very many other high-tech niches, both in Ukraine and abroad. Do you know why Pinchuk still has a large share of the world market of railway wheels? Because he very actively cooperates with the academia. The Dnipropetrovsk National Metallurgical Academy actually works for his plants. It offers technological solutions that allow the wheels produced by INTERPIPE to compete worldwide. But there is also a sad history. Not so long ago, we were very proud of the fact that the steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal was given the control of Krivorizhstal. Before that, the whole Dniprodzerzhinsk University worked for that production. Mittal put on hold any research orders, and Krivorizhstal became a dump for outdated Western technologies. Everywhere in the world, people who invest in technology eventually win. The problem is that the Ukrainian economy to this day functions in such a way that no one thinks of investing in research in order to gain a stable +10% over the next few years, because everyone thinks about snatching +50% or +100% here and now, by buying up politicians, using shadow schemes, giving bribes, etc. For any Western capitalist, introducing new technologies means making profit. However, here people make money by siphoning it off.

When the society creates the conditions in which the economy will be interested in R&D, the situation will change dramatically. But achieving this goal is beyond the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Science or the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. It takes political decisions at the highest level. Until we have such decisions, it simply makes no sense talking about a possible influx of extrabudgetary funding into science or about its self-financing. Anyway, self-financing is only possible in case of applied research. Basic science everywhere in the world is sponsored by the state.

U.W.: It is clear that the Ukrainian academic science, along with its whole structure, should have switched over to a more efficient model at least 10 years ago. Can it

be reformed without destroying whatever we already have?

Any reform should be based on the current situation, because we cannot afford to lose what we have preserved. The reconversion should be carried out very carefully, always in consultation with the professional environment. Any attempts of mechanically replicating in Ukraine the experience, say, of Georgia, which is now top fashion, or of any other nation, could be disastrous. We have our own deep-rooted traditions: the very same NAS, which is so much criticized today (sometimes rightly so, and sometimes not), was established not by Joseph Stalin, but by the most illustrious Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, along with Volodymyr Vernadsky.

Ukraine, strange as it may seem, still has first-class science and scientists. Unfortunately, they are largely ignored by the media, since the society prefers quite different public figures. How they manage to survive is not quite clear, since given the amount of funds allocated in recent years, science should have ceased existing long ago. By all international scientometric canons, it is bound to disappear if its funding is lower than a certain critical level. Science is believed to have a direct impact on the economic situation when over 1.7% of GDP is invested in research. This is the conclusion drawn from the study of R&D expenditures in many countries that achieved economic success. Hence the EU Lisbon Strategy (3% of GDP) and the US efforts to keep R&D spending at the level of at least 3% of GDP, while Israel and Sweden spend 4% of GDP on science. For me it is difficult to say today what Ukraine spent on science last year, but in the recent years the funds allocated from the state budget amounted to 0.3% of GDP, plus a little bit from other sources. In 2014, these figures were obviously even less. In 2015, we will have financing at the level of 0.5% of GDP from all sources (including 0.2% of GDP from the state budget). This means that the whole structure of science in Ukraine, including the National Academy of Sciences, universities, industry academies, and research institutes, today costs less than 5 billion hryvnia, which is mere pocket change. But the real tragedy is that some people believe that even this money is unacceptable luxury and should be saved. Many people in the country's top management believe

that there is no science in Ukraine. We should dispel this stereotype and show that it is quite the opposite. It is science that can offer brilliant defense solutions that just need to be implemented.

U.W.: In public discourse, the perception that fundamental science should have strong relations with universities gradually starts to prevail. How strong today is this connection, and how can the situation be balanced in this specific area?

Ukraine has inherited from the past a large sector of extra-university research. It should be preserved and combined with universities as places where science is developing naturally. Once again, quantum mechanics were created by people who were aged 25 at that time. Such people are open to everything new, and this is very important. How can we cope with this task? There are many ways, and they are not revolutionary. We could encourage dual employment on a large scale, as is the case in France. People working for the CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) usually also do lecturing. People who pursue science should not lecture 600 hours per year, since this would leave them little time for research. But they need to dedicate at least 200 hours per year to teaching.

Our legislation actually prohibits dual employment, instead of encouraging people from universities to work part-time in research institutes and, vice-versa, scientists to give lectures. Although our budget is limited today, one of the competitions of the State Fund for Fundamental Research was arranged for joint teams of universities and research institutes. We support projects that are carried out by both branches of the academia on a parity basis. We could come up with many more such projects. We need to eliminate certain discrimination that existed previously with respect to academic research, although ultimately it will be simply removed as life goes on, because today both academic institutions and universities are equally bad off.

U.W.: It's no secret that since Ukraine gained independence, buying academic degrees and scientific ranks has become common practice. For instance, former President Viktor Yanukovich called himself a doctor of economic sciences, and many more infamous »

BIO

Maksym Strikha

is an academic, social and political activist, translator, and writer. Doctor of Physics and Mathematics (1997). Has been Chief Researcher at the Institute of Semiconductor Physics, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, since 2010; Head of Translation Department at the Humanities Institute of Borys Hrinchenko, Taras Shevchenko University since 2010; Vice President of the Higher Education Academy of Sciences of Ukraine since 2010; Vice President of the Ukrainian Writers Association since 2009; and Chairman of the Public Council at the State Agency for Science, Innovations and Informatization of Ukraine since 2011. Deputy Minister of Education in 2008-2010 and since summer 2014

personalities have acquired fake scientific degrees. What shall we do with these ersatz scientists? It is thanks to them that the whole of Ukrainian scientific community is considered charlatans...

In natural and technology sciences, with a few exceptions, the situation with forged scientific degrees is not so bad. This epidemic has mostly plagued social and humanitarian sciences. When the society is corrupt, it is not realistic to have even one crystal-clear sector, such as science. In other words, the problem is much wider: it's about healing the whole society.

There are also issues related to the scientific community as such. Here we need a policy of zero tolerance for plagiarism and forged research. In the recent years, and this is a very dangerous symptom, the situation with medical sciences has been deteriorating rapidly. As a result, the falsification of clinical trial results to the orders of pharmaceutical companies to prove that certain drugs are effective has become common practice. This is scary. Some constructive results in such situation can only be achieved by joint efforts of the entire academic community.

The Ministry of Education and Science is making some real steps, each State Accreditation Commission makes decisions to annul academic degrees or refuses to award them due to plagiarism. For instance, at the last meeting, an academic council was disbanded after we saw a video of its chairman showing to a student a price list for the whole range of services, from writing a thesis to defending it. If previously everything was limited to talks, today we already have people who were really punished.

Regarding ersatz academicians, I cannot name a single one among Ukrainian physicists. But I understand that in other branches of the National Academy of Sciences the situation is worse. We had a certain Academician Nikolay Bagrov, who later became a traitor after the annexation of Crimea, defecting to the Russian side. It's no secret that he was an apparatchik rather than a scientist, who became a manager of education. But I would not say that this is a rule. The situation is different in sectoral research academies. Hopefully, if we now become members of the European Research Area (since there are hopes that the agreement on Ukraine joining Horizon 2020

Programme will be signed in March, giving us the rights of European research communities), this will automatically bring about great change. So far, the academicians were considered to be the most important, but now, simply and naturally, the major players will be those who can effectively compete for European research grants. This reform would be deeper than anything we could do by administrative means.

U.W.: Do Ukrainian scientists and politicians have a clearly defined national science development strategy for the next 5-10 years? While the needs of physical and exact sciences are clear, what would be the fate of the humanities that are part of the academic basic science?

The future of science is an important issue. There is even such term as foresight, or futures studies, which

drop drastically. In fact, the Humanities in science and the humanitarian level of science in general are extremely important for the society. Their impact cannot be measured with money. Without this component, there would have been no Revolution of Dignity (Maidan – Ed.).

U.W.: Ukraine has a National Security Council, but still has no state doctrine of social and humanitarian development. Under this perspective, culture, education and science have not yet been recognized as the basis for national security. Is there a way to change the situation?

I don't quite like the term of "humanitarian development strategy," because this also involves a large non-humanitarian component. In fact, we need to talk about science and technology policy, among other things. Whatever words we use, we are talking about the strategy for the future sustainable development of the Ukrainian society. There is no doubt that we need it, but it has to be formed by high-ranking professionals from various areas. I am not aware of any such work currently underway. Naturally, some of its components are now being considered. This refers to the information security, the future of the defense science, and so on. But I haven't heard of anyone preparing a global document that would encompass this all.

However, it is clear to me that one of the reasons for losing Donetsk Airport, besides the errors made by the military commanders, is our fundamental technological inferiority. The Russians are fighting using the latest developments, while we only have patched up Soviet weapons made in the 1980s. This is entirely understandable, because none of the previous governments took the army for something serious, and Ukraine spent on research 50 times less than Russia in the last 25 years. This clearly indicates the state of the national science, the level of technical education, etc. Period. No further comments. Sadly, the country's management has not yet come to the understanding that science is not just a means of satisfying one's curiosity and a reserve for budget cuts, but the guarantee of the national security. Today, victory belongs to those who have high-precision modern weapons. Ukraine, thank God, still has the scientific potential required for their design and manufacture. ■

LESS THAN UAH 5BN IS SPENT ON ALL SCIENCE IN UKRAINE TODAY

refers to the research of the areas that may be important today, taking into account their possible use in the real economy of tomorrow. In Ukraine five years ago, there have been attempts of such research, which later stopped. It would be critically important to resume it today, because without it we could not determine priority areas of applied science that we need to support in order to get the products required by the real business and industry. We still have no answer to this, same as no money in our miserable budget. But world-class basic science should be supported, because it is the basis of the knowledge of mankind, without which no other science is possible.

I believe that humanities knowledge is the basis for very many things and for all people. By the way, this is also true for exact sciences. In this sense, science as such has a very strong humanitarian component. I am trying to demonstrate it. Ukrainian science, due to miserable funding, cannot currently bring us Nobel Prizes. It is very expensive, although I must say that all Nobel Prize winners in recent years, at least as far as physics are concerned, had Ukrainian contributors in the near circle. But if this science in our country disappears, the overall level of the society, its intelligence, and its culture would

Why Is Russia Against Europe?

Why is Russia so persistently aggressing on Ukraine? Because it sees Ukraine as already in Europe and has historically been driven to destroy both

What we call European civilization evolved over centuries to embrace the principles that human rights are inviolable, private property sacrosanct, a strong judiciary fundamental, and honest work respectable. Medieval Rus, the historic triangle between Kyiv, Chernihiv and Pereiaslav, reflected these same features: the members of every social class in Kyivan Rus had clearly defined rights and could defend them in unwritten and written law alike. Every free Rusin had the right to vote at a local assembly and even a Great Kniaz, their prince, could not claim the throne without the agreement of “Kyivans and the black hoods” of the forested steppe lands.

In the boggy woodlands to the north, known as Zalissia and also ruled by Rus, life was very different. A harsh, colonized hinterland with only a scattering of villages and towns, it had no room for traditions like voting, contracts or the ownership of ancestral lands. There, only service to the ruler—be it military or civilian—was respected. Shaped by outcasts from Kyivan Rus, this swampy territory was to become Muscovy and later renamed Russia.

THE MARAUDING MENTALITY

Starting with Andrei Bogoliubsky, Zalissia's rulers marched ruinously on the southwest of the realm. Not to rule from Kyiv but simply for the sake of booty: to loot, burn and destroy. When the Mongols reached the borders of Kyivan Rus, the princes of Zalis-

Author:
Valeriy Prymost

sia gladly bowed their heads, starting with Yaroslav Vsevolodovich of Pereiaslav-Zalisskiy and his son Aleksandr Nevsky. Thus, Moscow became the tribute-collection center of the Golden Horde, evolving into that most lucrative and widespread form of Russian business: “sitting on cash flows.”

The main wealth of Europe, including Kyivan Rus, were land and people, so Europe quickly focused on the principle of inventiveness. Europeans understood that it was more beneficial to create something yourself than to take it away from someone else. But the Zalissia



IF RUSSIA IS WAGING WAR ON UKRAINE, IT MEANS THE EUROPEAN SPIRIT HAS AWAKENED IN UKRAINIANS AGAIN

region teemed with natural wealth. With the furs of sables, squirrels, beavers and martens highly valued, an economy of “extraction” soon took hold. After all, why make things when you could simply buy them—or just take them away from someone?

Having annexed Western Rus, with its “European” institutions such as vassalage, the rights of subjects and local self-government, Muscovy had no use for them. It only absorbed that which allowed it to acquire even more territory: resources, military forces and technology, and mobilization capacity.

Some historians say that the Horde brought the rule of the autocrat, the powerlessness of subjects, and the psychology of the military boot camp and enshrined in Muscovy. But this mixes cause and effect. The Horde subordinated Muscovy precisely because Muscovites were receptive to this kind of rule. What the Horde did bring to the Zalissia realm was a reason to fight against Europe: the Grand Mission of spreading Genghis Khan's rule to the “Last Sea.”

THE SPIRIT OF ORTHODOX JIHAD

When Lithuania took Zalissia, Smolensk, Polotsk and even the Three Cities from the Horde, it became the target of this murderous mission. Moscow and Lithuania had taken equal measures of territory from Kyivan Rus, but the socio-political essence was very different. This shaped the nature of the conflict between the two: Moscow saw Lithuania as an existential enemy from whom it had to rescue the “Rusin soul.”

As Muscovy continued to loot everything possible—land, settlements, people, riches, and technology—it annexed huge territories and populations in Western Rus. By the 16th century, it had transformed into a major state that was able to defeat its once-powerful rivals: the Golden Horde and the Lithuanian Principality.

Meanwhile, differences in religion between Moscow and Rus orthodoxy came to the forefront during the Lithuanian era. After the Florentine Union of 1439, Muscovites had distanced them-

¹“Black hoods” refers to the warriors from the various nomadic Turkic tribes, including the Pechenegs that settled the southern edge of Kyivan Rus.

² I.e., the Atlantic Ocean.



selves from the Christian world and lived in virtual isolation for more than a century. In effect, this schism between Muscovy and Rus added an element of religious fanaticism to the many excuses Muscovy had to march on the West.

Under Ivan III, the Great, the principles and worldview of Moscow's expansionism first surfaced: Muscovy as "Holy Russia," a shining orthodox empire surrounded by godless, evil enemies. The "Divine Mission" given to "Holy Russia" to fight against the enemies of orthodoxy demanded that the "proper" orthodox faith and hence the "proper" way of life be spread as widely as possible. And every Muscovite-Russian was supposed to serve this lofty mission. Since nothing personal—not yours, not others'—had any value, the political formula, "Divine Autocrat + serfs/slaves," was ideologically validated.

The Zalissia way of life—collectivism, top-down rule, contempt for the "other," acquisitiveness—combined with its "love-hate" attitudes towards Europe shaped that dreadful Moscow hegemony that historian Lev Gumilev euphemistically called "passionarity." It is a powerful force based on a fierce belief in inherent uniqueness and disdain for the rights of others. It was not long before this mix led to another ideological myth—Moscow as the Third Rome.

With the appearance of the Third Rome doctrine, all the actions of Moscow's leadership against Lithuania and Novgorod, its conflicts with the Constantinople patriarch, the search for a more august ancestry, and the manifestations of autocracy and "great state-ness" were strictly defined. Muscovy was simply "destined" to become an imperial

power and to continue the attack on Europe.

THE MOSCOW WAY

The case of Novgorod was a classic illustration of Muscovite principles: its prince was hired to serve the principality and at times there was no prince at all. In 1494, Ivan III seized the city, closed the German Court and the Hanseatic embassy, confiscated the goods of the many foreign merchants, and forbade Novgorod to engage in foreign trade. When Novgorodians rebelled against Moscow, Ivan IV, Grozny or "the Terrible," dealt the finishing blow: of 6,000 households, more than 5,000 were devastated, countless residents slaughtered and the remainder deported to the east, to be replaced by Muscovites.

Under Grozny's rule, Muscovy became a powerful empire that was ready to challenge Europe. The Livonian Order proved easy

³ Kyiv, Chernihiv and Pereiaslav, the three cornerstones of Kyivan Rus.

⁴ Defined in the Global Studies Encyclopedia Dictionary as "an irresistible inner drive to conduct extremely fierce activity whose purpose is to change the ethnic or natural environment of the person possessing this drive."



overcome, because no voluntary military formation can withstand a powerful, centralized state force. Only when it had to deal simultaneously with the Poles, Lithuanians, Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians was Moscow's "drang nach Westen" given such a response that it nearly destroyed the Muscovite state altogether.

What ultimately saved Muscovy was the conquest of Siberia, which gave the tsar an endless source of material resources. Now Moscow was in a position where it could lose battles and even tactical wars, but not major, global military conflicts, where the quality of the force and the talent of its commanders—often a problem for Moscow—no longer mattered in the face of colossal resources. Muscovy could afford to lose entire armies on failed campaigns—and thousands of sables from Siberia would pay to send new men, often foreign mercenaries, off to battle again. Economically, Muscovy could survive as long as it continued to extract something from one place or another, so permanent expansion became a kind of endless flight from the total bankruptcy of the state. But the marauder mentality meant Muscovy would inevitably fall more and more behind.

Having borrowed European technology from German and Italian weapons-makers during the reign of Ivan III, Muscovites did take the manufacture of arms seriously, running it at the state level. The first item they began to produce was the cannon. And as soon as production went on line, Moscow began to sell firearms to eastern potentates such as the Persian Shah—which it does to this day.

As long as the state lived off the extraction and sale of natural resources, there was no felt need to develop domestic processing and manufacturing industries. And since peasants, artisans and merchants were not the state's main source of revenue, they had no right to a voice—no rights at all, as it turned out. With such vast resources, Muscovy's armies kept conquering new territories and defending existing ones. The land, resources and processing facilities all belonged to the state. People, from the prince to the stable boy, also belonged to the state.

And "the state" was the autocrat, sitting at the pinnacle of a top-down chain-of-command cast in iron.

When the Riurykovych dynasty came to an end in Moscow, two new rulers appeared who genuinely wanted to reform Muscovy along European lines: Borys Godunov and Dmitry I the Self-Proclaimed, aka the Pretender. Moscow's nobles might have accepted the European model with its limits on monarchic powers, rule of law and inviolable property rights. But Moscow's people wanted to live in "Holy Russia," to wallow in "true orthodoxy," and to be subservient to "God's anointed" autocrat: they needed a "natural sovereign."

DIVIDE AND CONQUER

With Lithuania out of the way, Poland was next in Moscow's line-of-sight. The Poles not only were involved in the Livonian War (1558–1583) on the side of Lithuania, but at the start of the 17th century, they gave Muscovy the Troubles of 1598–1613 and a Polish garrison stood in the Kremlin. Busy warring over distant colonies and trade on the high seas, western Europeans did not take Muscovy seriously. While one or two countries were resisting its expansion, others aided and abetted it. And so, English gold and English cannons helped Moscow drive the Poles out of the Kremlin.

Having swallowed up Ukraine and collected military and civilian engineers, officers and German mercenaries, weapons and technology in Europe, Muscovy, renamed "Russia" by Pyotr I, known as Peter the Great, put paid to Po-

the 20th century, partitioning it yet again.

Next, it was Sweden's turn to defend Europe. In the 16th century, Ivan IV had tried to get an outlet to the Baltic Sea without success. Now it was the turn of Pyotr I. Buying up military and technical specialists, arms and equipment in Europe, the "carpenter tsar" launched a new war against Sweden. Muscovy had already started four wars against Sweden in the 15th and 16th centuries, and in the 17th century, Sweden attacked in response to Moscow's failure to uphold their treaty. The war launched by Pyotr was the seventh. At the enormous cost and with enormous losses, a by-now huge Russia finally got its window on the Baltic. In the 18th century, the Swedes twice tried to retake lost territory, but failed. In the 19th century, Russia managed to also snatch Finland from the Swedes.

On Sweden's heels came the next "defender of Europe," Prussia. Having waited until a coalition between Austria and France formed against the young and ambitious kingdom, Russia joined the attack. In the ensuing Seven Years' War (1756–1763), the Prussians lost and Germany's next military clash with Russia wasn't until the mid-20th century.

EUROPEAN SKINS, RUSSIAN SOULS

Russia's "schizophrenic" attitude towards Europe and all things European was not limited to acquiring European specialists, goods and technology and then attacking that same Europe with them. In the mid-18th century, Russia actually "borrowed" its next dynasty from Europe: starting with Pyotr III and Yekaterina II (Catherine the Great), Germans from the Holstein-Gottorp dynasty sat on the imperial throne. But all that was "europeanized" as a result was a small circle of aristocrats and officials, who wore European clothes, spoke European languages, and traveled to European cities. In reality, this "europeanization" was completely superficial, for neither in their aggressive marauder mentality, nor in the autocratic, orthodox nature of their state did these elites differ from their predecessors who wore beaver hats and straggly beards. ■



LOOK AT RUSSIAN HISTORY, FROM ANDREI BOGOLIUBSKY TO STALIN, AND YOU WILL UNDERSTAND VLADIMIR PUTIN

land and demonstrated the proper place of "noble democracy." The Poles themselves may have started the first war, but the rest were all started by Russia. It attacked Poland twice in the 17th century, invaded it 4 times and partitioned it three times in the 18th century, crushed two rebellions in the 19th century, and attacked the country twice more in

Russia needed to give the appearance of europeanization for two main reasons: to get closer to its next source of booty and to have access to weapons. This mimicry allowed Russia to form pacts with one European country against others time and again, allying with Poland against Sweden, with Sweden against Poland, with France and Austria against Prussia, and with Prussia and Austria against France. The first Franco-Russian war was at Russia's initiative in an alliance with Austria and Saxony, known as the War of Polish Succession in 1733-35. In the second war against France, Russia joined forces with Austria during the War of Austrian Succession in 1740-48.

Russia attacked Europe three more times, declaring war on post-revolutionary France, together with Austria and Prussia. The first time, it ended with Suworov's humiliating retreat through the Alps in 1799; then came defeat at Austerlitz in 1805; and finally a disastrous defeat at Friedland in 1807 ended this assault. Napoleon's invasion in 1812 was his response to these attacks by Russia and to Russia's violation of the 1808 Treaty of Tilsit.

Russia threw the gauntlet at France and England during the 19th century, with the Crimean War of 1853-56. This time the Russians did not modernize European-style and did not have any European allies. The Crimean War ended in total defeat.

The Empire needed to modernize but was now faced with an unexpected problem: technological changes had become strongly linked to economic, social and attitudinal changes. To be able to match Europeans on the battlefield, Russia needed to close the gap in these areas as well. This meant democratizing government, establishing a workable court system, and treating all nationalities equally. Russia was not prepared for this. During its bloody revolution, Russia's new leadership, sponsored once more by a western European power, eliminated all overtly European notions and the pro-European elite from the times of early industrialization. The tender shoots of liberty, democracy and reason were crushed.



THE USSR: A RETURN TO THE ROOTS

Under the bolsheviks, Russia once again became an autocratic religious empire. Only this time the autocrats were General Secretaries of a party and the religion was communism. The rest—customs, laws, democracy, human and property rights—reverted to the levels they had been at under Ivan Grozny. This was once again “Holy Russia,” only now called “the only country of workers and peasants in the world,” surrounded, of course, by evil enemies. The autocrat ruled over disenfranchised serfs who were expected to serve the state. No personal or property rights were recognized.

The minute bolshevik Russia began to gain strength, it returned to its familiar paradigm: to move in on Europe and destroy it. The “World Revolution” failed, so military incursion came next. Josef Stalin needed to prepare the empire's economic and administrative structures at top speed for the next “Great Leap,” arm a huge military force and send it off to war. By 1939, the soviet army was more than 5 million strong.

Meanwhile, Europe had Germany. Twice in the 20th century, Russia entered a war against Germany with powerful western allies on its side. Both times the war was started by Germany, because the first attack gave some

Ukrainian
roofer Mustang
Wanted
“europeanizes”
the Kremlin star
by painting it
blue and yellow

hope of victory over the Muscovite phoenix. Stalin was counting on thrashing the Germans and getting to the “Last Sea” on their backs. But he only got as far as Berlin. Victory—but only by half.

In the post-war period, soviet Russia kept supporting socialist overthrows and its many satellites in the Third World, from Vietnam and Ethiopia to Angola and Cuba. Still, the First World kept hanging on. Khrushchev orchestrated the Berlin and Cuban crises, but times had changed. With nuclear weapons, a world war was suddenly impossible: capitalists and socialists alike wanted to live, after all.

THE MARAUDING STATE AS FAILED MODEL

When competition with the damnable West moved into the economic sphere, Russia had no chance at all. It kept getting into ever-deeper debt with that same damnable West, selling its “furs”—read oil and gas—to buy food, manufactured goods and technology. With no more territories to loot, bankruptcy soon loomed. The minute oil prices fell, and the West raised interest rates on soviet loans and stopped selling technology to the Russians, it was only a short time before soviet Russia came crashing down.

All this time, the West kept pulling Russia towards itself and into Europe, supporting it, treating its sicknesses, giving it

money, and doing everything possible so that the country might get better at last. And what did Russia do when it nearly crucified itself after the crash? It began riveting tanks and cannons, and screaming that the damnable West was getting in its way.

Today, Russians get everything from the West: technology, innovations, entertainment, fashion, trends, fresh ideas, movies, books, music, cars, and gadgets, food and beverages, neologisms and technical terms. The “best” Russians tend to go to the West for their educations, their vacations and their entertainments. They buy real estate and save their money there, because that’s where they plan to move when they retire. Meanwhile, the West keeps thinking that the mass delusion will pass any minute now and Russia will finally come to its senses.

What does Russia do in response? It attacks Ukraine—the most annoying bit of Europe.

Russia always dreamed of conquering Ukraine, and when it finally succeeded during Maze-

pa’s time, it did all it could to kill everything European in the country, eliminating traditional liberties, prohibiting the language and culture, and robbing, killing, torturing, and starving its people to death. But Ukrainians time and again picked them-



STALIN REACHED BERLIN. HOW FAR WILL THE PUTINOIDS GET? IF UKRAINE SUCCEEDS, NOWHERE

selves up. Calling Ukrainians simultaneously their “younger brother” and a “fiction of Austrian military HQ,” Russians see Ukrainians as both “Russians like us” and “stupid khakhols.” So, if Russians hate Ukrainians once again and are waging war against them, it means the ancient European spirit has awakened in Ukrainians.

We have only to look at Russian history—Andrei Bogoliubsky and Yaroslav Vsevolodovich,

Ivan the Great and Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, Lenin and Stalin—to understand Vladimir Putin. He and his people will never give up their “holy mission” to destroy Europe—Russia’s Orthodox jihad.

When Russia began advancing against Europe this time, it followed its old template: first kill Kyivan Rus and grab all its resources, next start internal repressions, then control the rear-guard, and finally, move on the West. This is what Ivan III and Ivan IV did. This is what Alexis of Russia and Peter the Great did. And Lenin and Stalin did, too.

War in Ukraine-as-Rus is already underway. Repression is gaining momentum in Russia. And next in line is Europe itself. The Riurykoviches took Western Rus and half of Lithuania from Europe. The Romanovs took Ukraine, the Baltics, Poland and Finland. The bolsheviks reached Berlin. How far will the Putinoids get?

If Ukraine succeeds—nowhere. ■

⁵ Kyivan Rus, based in Kyiv, predated Moscow and Muscovy by many centuries.

⁶ “Khakhol” is a pejorative term for Ukrainians, similar to “yid” for Jews, “nigger” for blacks, or “wop” for Italians. Its Russian counterpart is “katsap.”

⁷ Aleksei Mikhailovich Romanov, Peter the Great’s father.

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Nuremberg Trial vs. Truth Commission

Why South African reconciliation experience is more acceptable than the German experience of punishing war criminals

I often wonder how he makes decisions. How does it happen? Does he sit at a table void of any paper or electronic devices? Does he stand by the window, gazing... At what? At Saint Basil Cathedral, whose architect was blinded so that he could build no more masterpieces? Or at the Kremlin wall, with the graves of cannibals, whose only glory was the rivers of blood that was spilled for the sake of empty ideas... Or at the Mausoleum? Maybe he looks at the Mausoleum considering a place for himself, so that there would be two of them – two creatures born dead, two butchers. There used to be two of them there before, anyway.

What can he see from his window, I wonder, looking out of which he signs orders to kill, with a predatory smile? Although it is unlikely that he uses the word "to kill." In his language it's probably something like "to nightmarize" or "to whack"...

Or maybe he doesn't smile at all. Maybe he says, stone-faced: "Destroy everything of any value. Everything and everybody." Or maybe he runs around the office, hysterical, spitting and screaming in a falsetto voice: "The Airport! I want the Airport and thousands of lives of peaceful underdogs! Drown them in blood, those damn copped Ukies!" Or what does he call us?

When I think of how he sends to us his buddy, Death, I only want the Nuremberg Trial. I want a long, detailed hearing, where he and his allies would sit handcuffed in the dock, and where mothers and children of those he killed would be present in the courtroom. I want a detailed transcript of the trial, I want every word of indictment to be recorded and never forgotten. I am not sure that I would agree with the sentence, because gallows for criminals are not in fashion in Europe, so there'll be

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Styazhkina

none. I believe it's a pity. But anyways...

I want to see in the dock next to him all those who here in Ukraine betrayed their sons and daughters, shooting them on Maidan, and later providing funding to separatists, letting weapons through the border, and sending soldiers to ambushes. I want the dock to be large enough, with 10 or 100 rows... And everyone – just everyone – has to be there, in the cage, until we hear the verdict. Because life after the Victory is unthinkable of without their punishment.

"Nuremberg Trial. If in the Hague, let it be in the Hague," I say.

Historian Yaroslav Hrytsak shakes his head, and then says gently: "No. Truth Commission. Like in South Africa."

IS THERE ANY TRUTH AT ALL?

Thoughts about a Truth Commission are rather heavy and uncomfortable. Unlike the trial, the Commission's task is not to punish, but to restore justice for the sake of reconciliation. And amnesty. Amnesty for those who repent. And then, life among and with the victims. Life without a sentence, but with all the details pronounced.

Here we are not talking about reconciliation or forgiveness for the invaders. We are talking about our compatriots. About the small percentage of the population that, like in the times of the Second World War, accepted the offer to "serve the occupants" – to take up arms, to torture, to rob, and to murder.

Do they have some kind of truth? Do we want to know it? Or do we have to?

I, personally, don't have answers that could be expressed without recourse to obscene language. But the impersonal unconscious seems to have them.



In fact, it does. For every time the Orcs take the Donetsk Airport, we bury their leader, Motorola. Every time it's different: sometimes we bury him without a head, the way we knew him during his lifetime, sometimes with dirty pants, sometimes as he's hiding in a shelter. In our collective consciousness, he rarely dies in battle. As a rule, a bullet or a shell splinter finds him while he's fleeing headlong.

And so we bury Motorola. But not Givi, another leader. Even though they are supposed to have equal worth: stupid, vain, and arrogant representatives of the "Russian World." The only difference is that Motorola is an invader. While Givi is "one of us," because he is a loser and a parking attendant from what a Donetsk roofed market.

We stubbornly keep burying Motorola, for he is the embodiment of the Russian collective guilt. However, in the case of Givi, the brakes of the subconscious are triggered, because guilt can only be personal. And has to be dealt with. Quite ironically, despite the hatred, wrath, and the desire for revenge, the society seems to be ready to deal with it.

And if I personally still burn at the stake of pain and trauma, this does not mean that my temperature is acceptable and right for all.

I try to reduce the heat by asking myself a question that the Truth Commission might ask: did the people who took up arms have some other motives besides money, such as, say, ideological or social reasons? Not Givi, but those who no longer wanted to work at illegal coalmines. Those who were not able to say goodbye to the "great past." Those



Liberation of Humanity,
a mural by
Jorge Gonzalez
Camarena

whose children were not able to enter universities without bribes, despite excellent grades at school. Those who were frightened by TV. Did they actually want what happened in reality?

Who and when refocused their aggression against the oligarchs and the mean local cops, taxmen, or mayors to the war against Ukraine? What is the name of the person who gave them weapons? What are that person's whereabouts? Is it Kyiv, by chance?

The demand for truth is extremely high, not only on the occupied and then liberated territories. It is the general demand of the Ukrainian society. Neither the lustration law and its implementation, nor the slow investigation of the crimes of the regime committed under Yanukovich can satisfy this demand.

What people need is not even punishment as such, for who is without sin among us. What they need is the truth. Repentance, names of employers, awareness of guilt and even shifting the blame to those who gave orders – these are the steps towards deactivating the mine of silence.

SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission worked in the Republic of South Africa in 1996–1998. It was established to investigate gross human rights violations that occurred during the period of the apartheid regime from 1960 to 1994, including abductions, killings, and torture. It is important to note that the Commission's mandate covered both the violations perpetrated by the racist gov-

ernment and the crimes committed in the name of the liberation movement.

The Commission had three committees. The Human Rights Violations Committee investigated gross human rights abuses that occurred between 1960 and 1994. The Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee provided assistance to apartheid victims. The Amnesty Committee considered applications for amnesty from individuals whose crimes were not extremely violent or brutal. Interestingly, amnesty was only granted on the condition of full disclosure by the person seeking amnesty. The punishment in this case was not a prison term, but the fact that the general public knew the names of the slaughterers. They, like Cain, had to live on among others with the mark of guilt.

The Commission's head was Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu. Its public sittings were held in different South African cities, where it was possible to draw the largest number of people: witnesses, audiences, and judges. During two years of work, the Commission took the testimony of approximately 21,000 victims, and 2,000 of them appeared at public hearings. The Amnesty Committee received 7,112 amnesty applications, and amnesty was granted in 849 cases. The Commission's findings were made public. Its report covered the structural and historical background of the violence, individual cases, regional trends, and the

THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION IS NOT THE AGENDA FOR A BETTER TOMORROW, BUT FOR TODAY

broader institutional and social environment of the apartheid system. The final report named individual perpetrators.

All efforts of the Commission were focused on social reconciliation. Reconciliation through articulating trauma. Reconciliation, but not free pardon. In its conclusions, the Commission stated the following: "Reconciliation does not necessarily imply forgiveness. Reconciliation requires that all South Africans accept moral and political responsibility for nurturing a culture of human rights."

WILL WE MANAGE?

In a country that has indisputable moral authorities available to be elected as head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, and if everyone agrees that those entrusted with this important mission will make the right choice in favor of the state, this means that the situation is not hopeless here.

The question is, whether we are all grownup and mature enough to speak, rather than keeping our mouths comfortably shut. Are we ready for the reconciliation not only with an individual Givi, but also with the Berkut and the titushki as such, many of whom today defend our land. Are we ready to recognize and to see not only the sins of others, but also our own sins, such as indifference, conformism, laziness, and so on...

Are we willing to seek forgiveness and to forgive? Is there still a place for forgiveness left after all that has happened?

I do not know. But when I pray, I say: "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive our debtors." I believe, this means to say that if I cannot forgive them, then He, the Heavenly Father, will not be able to forgive me. He will not forgive me my debts.

If there is forgiveness, says Jacques Derrida, it is extended to those things that supposedly cannot be forgiven. Otherwise, there can be no forgiveness.

If I prefer the Nuremberg Trial to the Truth Commission, this means that I prefer to blame others for everything. The invaders. I want them to be flattened out and leveled with the ground, not with my hands or with my heart, but with a ruthless and heartless machine of the international law.

If you think of it, what do I care about what will become of them, who are already damned for all time?

What I care about is here and now. In my country. So it turns out that Yaroslav Hrytsak is right. And we need to think about it right now. Because the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is not the agenda for a better tomorrow, but for today. Because it will give us power to move forward. In Slovyansk, Kyiv, Mariupol, Zhytomyr, Severodonetsk, or Lviv. Wherever people need truth and power.

Forgiveness will probably come later. It will be easier to deal with truth than with hatred. ■



The Misery of Putinism

Author: Leonidas Donskis, Lithuania

As I have been working on my new book of an interpretive vocabulary of politics – a blend of political humor, satire, and my own experience in European politics – I revisited many Soviet clichés, pearls of propaganda, and poisonous darts of demagoguery (all of them alive and well in present Russia). One, a famous Vladimir Lenin's revolutionary slogan, reads: "Communism is Soviet power plus electrification of the whole country!" That brought to my mind a new definition of Putinism for which I now claim copyright reserved: "Putinism is the mob's power plus schröderization of the whole Europe." I dare hoping that this entry, in my equivalent of Ambrose Bierce's *The Devil's Dictionary*, will be a highlight, since the title of the book incites and invites such definitions of political phenomena as the aforementioned one – the title of the book being *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Politics (But Were Afraid to Ask)*.

What is the essence of Putinism? In a way, it is a form of postmodern fascism – a mafia state based on kleptocracy, coercion, terrorism, and violent foreign policies with the aim to divert public attention from injustice and misery at home by offering overt gangsterism and adventurism in foreign countries. There is no coherent ideology, though. In terms of political views, Putin is an ideological pervert who tries to put together mutually exclusive things – the ancien régime and its gravedigger, Bolshevism; Stalinism and crony capitalism; Oriental political despotism and pseudo-democracy; contempt for freedom which goes hand in hand with fervent religiosity; the surface of Western life with its comfort and technological advancement coupled with disdain for human rights and civil liberties. A mishmash which appears even more absurd than ideological inconsistencies of the Soviet elite.

The true Significant Other of Vladimir Putin in arts and culture is the noted and controversial Russian film director and actor Nikita Mikhalkov. Like his Kremlin-based patron, Mikhalkov can celebrate Russian Czars (by playing the role of the last Russian Czar Nicholas II in his film *The Barber of Siberia*) one day, and act as Red military commander Kotov, a hero of the revolution and civil war (*Burnt by the Sun* with all its sequels), himself a victim of Stalinist purges, hatred and paranoia, the next day. In this opaque and

obnoxious realm of political ghosts, he finds anything he or his Significant Other needs – the paraphernalia of the monarchy as well as the embodiments of the forces that destroyed it. With dead serious face, a gifted cinematographer turned into a miserable political sycophant, finds himself capable of the most preposterous political kitsch, such as the idea that only an offspring of the Russian father in the US Army can defend the beauty of the music of Mozart along with classical values of Europe brutally attacked by a simpleton who happens to be an American sergeant in one of his films.

It is hardly surprising, then, that Putinism and its equivalent in culture, Mikhalkovism, became twin brothers in the sense of the ability to bring a bunch of flowers to the victims of Stalinism only to offer another bunch to the monument of Stalin himself. This sort of ideological schizophrenia may best explain how present Russia fell prey to its phantoms of troubled imagination, revanchist and revisionist policies.

What did Vladimir Putin achieve from his rise to power in 1999 onward? Next to nothing, to tell the truth. After Boris Yeltsin's years of confusion and chaos, Russia showed some signs of more consolidated power. Yet in terms of democracy and political

**PUTINISM AND ITS EQUIVALENT
IN CULTURE, MIKHALKOVISM,
BRING A BUNCH OF FLOWERS
TO THE VICTIMS OF STALINISM
ONLY TO OFFER ANOTHER
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OF STALIN HIMSELF**

pluralism, Russia began degenerating into a tyranny with no point of return. If Putin was sincerely hoping for more respect and recognition of Russia as a great power that deserved credit for contributing to the status quo of international relations, he failed, as Russia is regarded now as a threat to global security and Europe, instead of being perceived as a partner.

Instead of becoming a promising democracy next to the EU, Russia under Putin has become a ghost of Soviet propaganda trying to whitewash and restore Stalin's good reputation which was dead even under the Soviets. Instead of enjoying richly-deserved admiration of the world for its literature and culture, Russia is made hostage to Putin's mad ambitions to make it a police-state and prevent the strategic partnership between Ukraine and the EU. The same applies to any other nation from Eastern Partnership on which Russia keeps an eye trying to block any sort of new alliances and democratic clubs in the vicinity.

Putin will fail, and it will happen faster and sooner than he thinks. ■



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Valentyn Sylvestrov:

Composer of Freedom

Ukkraine changed my life twice. The first time was when I discovered this country, its noble people, its tragedies, and its struggle for freedom that offers a model for all of Europe. The second time was when I discovered the music of Valentyn Sylvestrov.

A genius, the renaissance of contemporary music, endless beauty, richness of form and feeling. I hesitate, reading back this fulsome language that comes to mind, when trying to convey how these works influence the listener. Yet the right to use such descriptives comes from the many renowned modern-day composers who have echoed similar thoughts and who see in Sylvestrov “a guide on a clearly marked path” (Sofia Gubaidulina, Russia) and an important composer’s composer (Arvo Pärt, Estonian), as well as the interpreters of Sylvestrov’s music, first among whom is Mykola Hodych, choir director and founder of the Kyiv choir, whose talent seems to form a single whole with Sylvestrov’s choral works.

I’ll start with the experience of Sylvestrov’s works, something that many musicians have described, including Russian cellist Ivan Monighetti, in a similar manner: Sylvestrov’s music changes the way we experience other composers. Anyone of my readers can try this little experiment. Listen to a well-known work that you truly love, but first, listen to Sylvestrov. The well-known piece will have changed, become more alive, more mobile, its majestic, familiar structures disappear, giving way to the sequence of events and the ordering of the elements. The formal unity, both mystical and artistic, that moves us in the works of great composers such as Bach or Beethoven, suddenly allows us to escape into unexpected streams. Motifs and figures take on a new freedom, the work opens itself up as if to allow the melody to take over.

I tried this experiment with Brahms’s Fourth Symphony. The idea of combining it with Sylvestrov’s music first occurred to me during a conversation with my

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France

friend Kostiantyn Sihov, who introduced me to this composer. What I mean is that many of Sylvestrov’s works give the impression that, long before the first note, they are already coming from afar. I had the same impression from the introductory theme of the first part of this symphony by Brahms as well. In time, I found out that Sylvestrov himself insists on this kind of quality in his own music: on reminiscence, echoes, returns, “wie aus der Ferne”—as though from a distance—, like the eponymous piece by Schumann. And later, when I listened to the Brahms symphony again, other qualities became apparent. All the musical discourse in Brahms had metamorphosed for me. Unnoticed motifs emerged, a sense of freedom, of creating directly in the now above and beyond the



SYLVESTROV’S MUSIC CHANGES THE WAY WE HEAR OTHER COMPOSERS

structure, a natural freshness beneath the burden of whimsical memories of sorrow that are so characteristic of this classic German composer. Metamorphosis is not the right word, really, because Brahms’s Fourth Symphony remains what it is. It’s rather that I became more sensitive to new dimensions in the work, to the new beauties and temporalities that were added to the ones I was already familiar with.

The measure of echoes and revived perceptions of works from the past are at the heart of Sylvestrov’s creative work. To some extent in both sense of these words, because he often inserts citations and fragments that are more or less recognizable in his works: Mahler’s Fifth Symphony in his own Fifth and Sixth; Mozart in his serenade, “Der Bote” (“Poslanets/The Emissary,” 1996), which is dedicated to his wife Larisa; Schubert and Wagner in “Two dialogs and one epilogue for piano and strings;” Bach in “Dedication to J.S. Bach.”

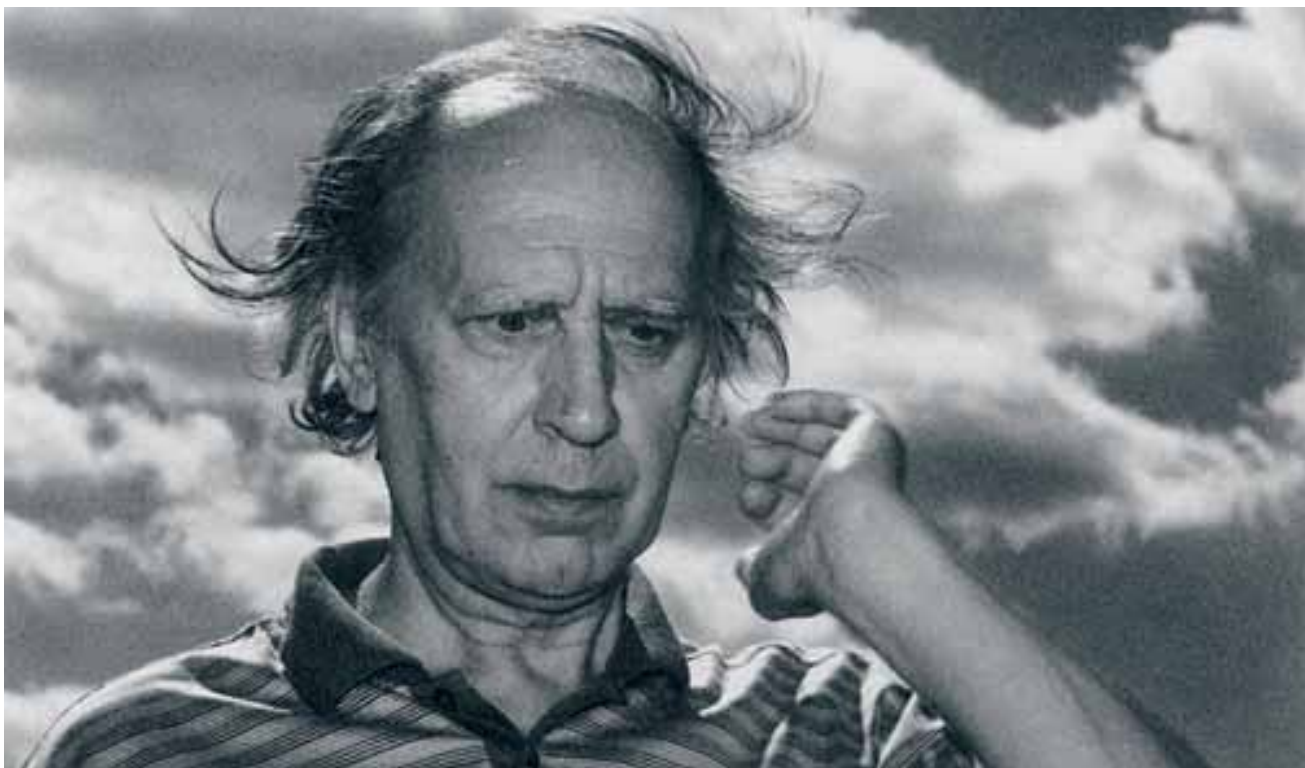
Valentyn Sylvestrov’s melodies, even when just short motifs, are wonderfully expressive, similar to Czech composer Leos Janacek, and they are immediately distinguishable, as though the composer himself discovered new, already known intervals—which is patently absurd! Yet these melodies are easy enough to recognize also because of the way in which they are introduced, their arrival, their emergence: not in quietude or at the beginning, in preludes to future developments, but at the heart of the music. They are surrounded and signaled by previous tonalities and subsequent ones, they sound like a surprise, like instant inventions, as though it is pointless that they lead further on into a familiar musical discourse.

Sylvestrov’s music is very carefully written, with many precise instructions for how to play, sometimes more abundant than even Pärt’s notes in his compositions for movies—and no less important. This is not improvised music, even if it has the inherent freedom, the unfathomable quality that jazz players call the “blue note.” No, Sylvestrov’s music is not improvisation, but it creates an impression that it was written just now, completely saturated with the colors of his rich imagination.

Like Shostakovich before him, it seems that Sylvestrov composes in one fell swoop, without interruptions. His melody is defined by the work, so to speak, it might arise from some generating cell or a shape separated from its background, to stand above it, unconnected to a specific musical grammar, be it variations or tones, serial, or any other type of development. The paradox here lies in the fact that these ruptures of notes establish the musical discourse and the integrity of it all, something not often grasped in modern music, which we can understand by reading the program, but cannot hear directly. Sylvestrov, by contrast, has used the remaining tools to once again un-

Listen to
Valentyn
Sylvestrov’s
Fifth Symphony
here:





cover the secret of classical style—Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven—which consists of giving complex forms that we experience in the music present and accessible, even when we are not able to analyze them. Consider the wealth of voices that is combined simultaneously in the fugato fragment from Mozart's 40th Symphony, where feeling is born from being supersaturated with this complex polyphony, and at the same time accompanying it and finding ourselves surrounded by it.

Sylvestrov's music is also Ukrainian. This is obvious, but why? It establishes that combination of celebratory grandeur and gentleness that is characteristic of this people. A Ukrainian by birth and from Kyiv, the composer was shaped in the struggle of musicians in the soviet era against assembly-line production and academicism. As a Ukrainian, he took part in the revolution on the Maidan. He is a Ukrainian in his works, which inspired the Revolution of Dignity. But he's not a politician.

Like all true artists born under totalitarianism, he found his voice and raised it against conformity, partisanship and the use of art as a mere instrument. Yet he is no activist. Having defended his creative freedom, Sylvestrov talks with much

humor and even some condescension about the ridiculous nature of official music, the campaigns against "bourgeois formalism" and that form of acknowledgement, which is really satisfying a need, that totalitarianism offered composers and poets as it oversaw and humiliated them. Sylvestrov is hardly the only free master of the soviet era but perhaps he most brilliantly reflects the fate of those communist and post-communist generations—Shostakovich, Schnittke, Gubaidulina, Penderecki, Gorecki, Tubin, and Pärt—who fought with all the means at their disposal and greedily took possession of the innovations of western music, but never shut themselves up in mandatory avand-gardeness. Moreover, this artistic freedom energized itself with the experience of totalitarian oppression, knowing well its heavy cost.

Last, but not least, Sylvestrov is Ukrainian in the combination of his music with language. Amazingly, this is something that can be felt even without knowing Ukrainian because of the musicality of the language itself. Every language has its tie to music, its own voice, but some fit it more easily than others. Ukrainian has a fundamental and natural quality of "Italianness" and a completely natural link between speech and song. Melodies, including Syl-

vestrov's choral works, sound like Schubert's in German and Bartok's in Hungarian.

Valentyn Sylvestrov has never been part of any "school." Having learned their most distinguishing forms of expression, he never allowed himself to become their prisoner. He is also sharply critical of post-modernism and avant-gardism. Had the concept of post-modernism not been devalued by excessive use and corruption, if it were still possible to make use of it, I'd call Sylvestrov the first post-modern, or possibly meta-modern, composer. In other words, an artist for whom the fact of being in a "post" modern world is not a formal pose, not a cynical or purely cerebral way of speaking inside the box about the current world and feeling its utterly crushed nature in the face of the multifarious works of the past. Post-modernism depreciated itself with the fraudulence, the lazy collages and the sound bites that it tended to in order to make an interesting impression. On the contrary, the voice that I call meta-modernism in Sylvestrov is the serious experience of our aesthetic consciousness recognizing art's relationship to the history and the wealth of the past, and to tomorrow. And this stands in direct opposition to frivolous games with our cultural heritage. ■

"Dedication
to J.S. Bach"



"Der Bote"
("Poslanets/
The Emissary")



February 15, 7 p.m.

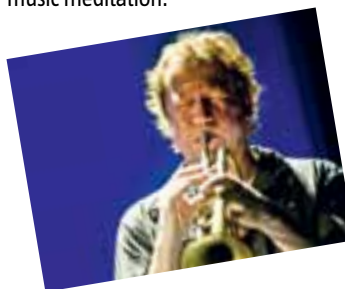
Argentinean Tango
Officers' Palace
(30/1, vul. Hrushevskoho, Kyiv)

The passionate Argentinean tango will certainly fill a cold winter night with heartwarming emotions. An exciting dance show, following the best traditions of Buenos Aires, includes the sparkling and sophisticated tango performed by some top couples both from Ukraine and Argentina. Trinidad Arfó will play for the dancers, and Carlos Roulet will sing for the public. The group has toured many festivals and stages around Kyiv, Donetsk, Krakow, Minsk, Moscow and a range of European cities.

**February 19, 8 p.m.**

Nils Petter Molvaer
CLOSER art center
(31, vul. Nyzhniyurkivska, Kyiv)

Nils Petter Molvaer is one of the best known representatives of Norwegian jazz school. He will present it to the Kyiv audience on the Thursday night. A fearless fan of music experiment, he has absorbed a huge variety of music but sticks to rhythm and emotions as the key components of his sound. Nils is inseparable with his trumpet that has that special sensational and melancholic timbre framed with electronic rhythm and beats. The combination keeps the audience engaged throughout the concert. That may be one of the reasons why many think of Nils' concerts as sessions of music meditation.

**From February 20**

Oscar Shorts nights
Movie theatres in Kyiv and other cities in Ukraine

The screening of the best short films nominated for the 2013-2014 Academy Awards is soon to start in movie theatres all over Ukraine. It will precede the 85th Academy Awards ceremony. The programme includes films of various genres, countries and authors, all united by the element of artistic value and one of the top awards in cinematography. The Ukrainian audience will have a chance to see the British film *The Voorman Problem*, a Spanish short film *Aqué! no era yo* (That Wasn't Me), the French movie *Avant que de tout perdre* (Just Before Losing Everything), and other films nominated for the Oscars.

**March 8, 4 p.m.**

Teulis shadow show
Tchaikovsky National
Music Academy
(1-3/11, vul. Horodetskoho, Kyiv)

Spring will arrive in Kyiv along with a show from Teulis, a world-renowned shadow theatre. It uses elements of acrobatics, theatre art, optical illusions and video projections in its shows. Black silhouettes create unbelievable plots and stories. Great music arrangement accompanies the performance perfectly. Over the past few years, the theatre has gained many fans in Italy, Czech Republic and Slovakia where it competed in talent shows. It has also toured many more countries.

**March 8, 8 p.m.**

Good Old Jazz
Movie Palace
(6, vul. Saksahanskoho, Kyiv)

Ukraine's best jazzmen will gather at the Movie Palace in Kyiv to present the audience with their Good Old Jazz music show. Dmytro



Aleksandrov, the founder of the Skhid-Side jazz band, will play saxophone and Ruslan Yehorov will sing to the accompaniment of the Kyiv Soloists conducted by Dmytro Yablonsky. Accompanied by a chamber strings orchestra, the jazz masters will play songs by the legends of the world jazz, from Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald to Tony Bennett, Stevie Wonder and more.

March 20, 7 p.m.

Tenors Bel'canto
International Culture
and Arts Centre
(1, vul. Instytut'ska, Kyiv)

A fusion of classic opera and modern pop-music may sound like a strange combination to those who never heard it performed by Tenors Bel'canto. Music lovers who had a chance to at least once go to the band's concert appreciate the beauty and originality of the mix. The quartet sings pieces in various languages, from French, Spanish and Italian to Polish, English and Ukrainian. That is not the only element of diversity as the tenors sing both lyric songs, and masterpieces of world classics, wowing the audience with the power of their voices.



breakfast



stars

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