The Ukraine List #490

The Ukraine List (UKL) #490
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www.chairukr.com
www.danyliwseminar.com
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#1

14th Annual Danyliw Research Seminar on Contemporary Ukraine

Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa, 8-10 November 2018
http://www.danyliwseminar.com

CALL FOR PAPER PROPOSALS
Deadline: 21 June 2018

The Chair of Ukrainian Studies, with the support of the Wolodymyr George Danyliw Foundation, will be holding its 14th Annual Danyliw Research Seminar on Contemporary Ukraine at the University of Ottawa on 8-10 November 2018. Since 2005, the Danyliw Seminar has provided an annual platform for the presentation of some of the most influential academic research on Ukraine.

The Seminar invites proposals from scholars and doctoral students —in political science, anthropology, sociology, history, law, economics and related disciplines in the social sciences and humanities— on a broad variety of topics falling under thematic clusters, such as those suggested below:

Conflict
- war/violence (combatants, civilians in wartime, DNR/LNR, Maidan)
- security (conflict resolution, Minsk Accords, OSCE, NATO, Crimea)
- nationalism (Ukrainian, Russian, Soviet, historical, far right)

Reform
- economic change (energy, corruption, oligarchies, EU free trade, foreign aid)
- governance (rule of law, elections, regionalism, decentralization)
- media (TV/digital, social media, information warfare, fake news)

Identity

- history/memory (World War II, Holodomor, Soviet period, interwar, imperial)
- language, ethnicity, nation (policies and practices)
- culture and politics (cinema, literature, music, performing arts, popular culture)

Society

- migration (IDPs, refugees, migrant workers, diasporas)
- social problems (reintegration of combatants, protests, welfare, gender, education)
- state/society (citizenship, civil society, collective action/protests, human rights)

****To mark the 85th Anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine (Holodomor), a number of papers/events will be devoted to the Holodomor. Holodomor-related proposals are most welcome****

The Seminar will also be featuring panels devoted to recent/new books touching on Ukraine, as well as the screening of new documentaries followed by a discussion with filmmakers. In 2017, new books by Oleh Havrylyshyn, Yuliya Yurchenko and Mayhill Fowler were featured, as well as the films *The Trial* (by Askold Kurov) and *Alisa in Warland* (by Alisa Kovalenko), with the filmmakers present. Information on the 2016 and 2017 book panels and films can easily be accessed from the top menu of the web site. The 2018 Seminar is welcoming book panel proposals, as well as documentary proposals.

Presentations at the Seminar will be based on research papers (6,000-8,000 words) and will be made available, within hours after the panel discussions, in written and video format on the Seminar website and on social media. The Seminar favors intensive discussion, with relatively short presentations (12 minutes), comments by the moderator and an extensive Q&A with Seminar participants and the larger public.

People interested in presenting at the 2018 Danyliw Seminar are invited to submit a 500 word paper proposal and a 150 word biographical statement, by email attachment, to Dominique Arel, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, at darel@uottawa.ca AND chairukr@gmail.com. Please also include your full coordinates (institutional affiliation, preferred postal address, email, phone, and Twitter account [if you have one]). If applicable, indicate your latest publication or, in the case of doctoral or post-doctoral applicants, the year when you entered a doctoral program, the title of your dissertation and year of (expected) completion. Note that a biographical is not a CV, but a written paragraph.

Books published between 2017 and 2019 (as long as near-final proofs are available prior to the Seminar) are eligible for consideration as a book panel proposal. The proposal must include a 500 word abstract of the book, as well as the 150 word bio and full coordinates.

Films produced between 2016 and 2018 are eligible for consideration as a documentary proposal. The proposal must include a 500 word abstract of the film, as well as the 150 word bio, full coordinates, and a secure web link to the film.

In addition to scholars and doctoral students, policy analysts, practitioners from non-governmental and international organizations, journalists, and artists are also welcome to send a proposal.

The proposal deadline is 21 June 2018. The Chair will cover the travel and accommodation expenses of applicants whose proposal is accepted by the Seminar. The proposals will be reviewed by an international selection committee and applicants will be notified in the course of the summer.

To celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Danyliw Seminar in 2014, a special website was created at www.danyliwseminar.com. The site contains the programs, papers, videos of presentations and photographs of the last fourseminars (2014-2017). To access the abstracts, papers and videos of the 2017 presenters, click on "Participants" in the menu and then click on the individual names of participants. The 2017 Program can be accessed at https://www.danyliwseminar.com/program-2017.

Check the "Danyliw Seminar" Facebook page at http://bit.ly/2rssSHk.
For information on the Chair of Ukrainian Studies, go to https://www.chairukr.com. (The site is being re-developed).

The Seminar is made possible by the generous commitment of the Wolodymyr George Danyliw Foundation to the pursuit of excellence in the study of contemporary Ukraine.

#2
ASN 2018 Post-Convention Announcement

The Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN) held its 23rd Annual World Convention on 3-5 May 2018 at the Harriman Institute, Columbia University, New York. The Convention Awards were announced at a special ceremony on Saturday May 5.

The ASN Doctoral Student Awards, to honor the best graduate papers, were given to

- **Albana Shehaj** (U of Michigan, US, Political Science) on the puzzle of the electoral durability of corrupt politicians despite popular protests against graft; and **Iva Vukusic** (Utrecht U, Netherlands, History) on the evidence of Balkans war paramilitary violence in war crimes trials – both in the Balkans Section;
- **Andrea Peinhopf** (U College London, UK, Political Science/Sociology) on how the mass population displacement in the 1992 Abkhazia War affected those who were left behind (Russia/Caucasus Section);
- **Susan Divald** (U of Oxford, UK, Political Science/International Relations) on the variation in the Hungarian claims to autonomy in Slovakia (Central Europe Section)

- **Karolina Kluczewska** (U of St. Andrews, UK, International Relations) on how the notion of "good governance" promoted by American donors is carried out by local NGOs in Tajikistan (Eurasia/Turkey Section);
- **Natalia Stepaniuk** (U of Ottawa, Canada, Political Science) on the civilian volunteers who provide assistance to refugees and combatants in Donbas (Ukraine Section);
- **Livia Rohrbach** (U of Copenhagen, Denmark, Political Science) on the divergent outcomes of the bargaining process over self-determination (Nationalism/Migration Section)

The Harriman ASN Rothschild Book Prize went to **Evgeny Finkel** for *Ordinary Jews: Choice and Survival during the Holocaust* (Princeton University Press, 2017), which explains the variation in Jewish survival strategies (collaboration, rebellion, escape) in three ghettos during the Holocaust (Minsk, Kraków and Białystok). Honorable mentions were given to **Kelly O'Neill** for *Claiming Crimea: A History of Catherine the Great's Southern Empire* (Yale, 2017), and to **Mikhail A. Alexseev** and **Sufian N. Zhemukhov** for *Mass Religious Ritual and Intergroup Tolerance: The Muslim Pilgrims' Paradox* (Cambridge, 2017).

The ASN Huttenbach Prize for Best Article in Nationalities Papers was given to **Dana Landau** for "The Quest for Legitimacy in Independent Kosovo: The Unfulfilled Promise of Diversity and Minority Rights," which appeared in the Vol. 45. No. 3 issue of the journal. Henry Huttenbach, a founding member of ASN, was a long time Editor of *Nationalities Papers*.

The ASN Documentary Award went to *The Red Soul* (Netherlands, 2017), from director **Jessica Gorter**, on the ambivalent memory of Stalin in contemporary Russia, https://www.asnconvention.com/the-red-soul. Honorable mentions were given to *The Other Side of Everything* (Serbia/France/Qatar, 2017), directed by **Mila Turajlic**, on the unresolved legacy of civil war in Serbia, https://www.asnconvention.com/the-other-side-of-everything, and to *Intent to Destroy* (US, 2017), directed by **Joe Berlinger**, on the Armenian genocide and its denial, https://www.asnconvention.com/intent-to-destroy.

The ten most attended panels/events at the Convention were
- A Conversation with Timothy Snyder on *The Road to Unfreedom*
- the roundtable on David Laitin's *Identity in Formation* Twenty Years Later
- the roundtable "Russian Under Putin—After the Presidential Election"
- -the film *The Red Soul*
- the Symposium on "Identities in Flux in post-Maidan Ukraine"
- A Conversation with Serhii Plokhy on *Chernobyl: History of a Nuclear Catastrophe*
- the panel "Inclusion and Exclusion in the Western Balkans"
- the roundtable "Polish Memory Law: When History Becomes a Source of Mistrust"
- the panel "The Far Right in Europe and North America"
- the roundtable "Reflection on Peaceful Protest and Tranformation in Armenia"

The Conventiom hosted panelists traveling from 42 different countries and featured 152 panels/events, including 25 book panels and 14 new documentaries.

ASN wishes to express its gratitude to the Harriman Institute for its exceptional support in making the event a remarkable success. Special acknowledgments are reserved for ASN Executive Director Ryan Kreider, Convention Manager Ilke Denizli, Convention Registration Manager Kelsey Davis, Convention Communications Manager Agathe Manikowski and University of Ottawa Student Coordinator Catherine Corriveau, with warm kudos to the Harriman/SIPA student staff and from the University of Ottawa student team.

The next ASN Convention will take place on **2-4 May, 2019**, at the Harriman Institute, Columbia University. The Call for Papers will be issued in early September and the submission deadline will fall on **October 25, 2018.**

An ASN European Conference, "Nationalism in Times of Uncertainty," will take place at the University of Graz, Austria, on 4-6 July 2018.

For more information on the ASN World Convention: https://www.asnconvention.com
For more information on ASN, http://www.nationalities.org.

#3
Kule Doctoral Scholarships on Ukraine
Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa

Application Deadline: 1 February 2019 (International & Canadian Students)
https://www.chairukr.com/kule-doctoral-scholarships

The Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Ottawa, the only research unit outside of Ukraine predominantly devoted to the study of contemporary Ukraine, is announcing a new competition of the Drs. Peter and Doris Kule Doctoral Scholarships on Contemporary Ukraine. The Scholarships will consist of an annual award of $22,000, with all tuition waived, for four years (with the possibility of adding a fifth year).

The Scholarships were made possible by a generous donation of $500,000 by the Kule family, matched by the University of Ottawa. Drs. Peter and Doris Kule, from Edmonton, have endowed several chairs and research centres in Canada, and their exceptional contributions to education, predominantly in Ukrainian Studies, has recently been celebrated in the book Champions of Philanthrophy: Peter and Doris Kule and their Endowments.

Students with a primary interest in contemporary Ukraine applying to, or enrolled in, a doctoral program at the University of Ottawa in political science, sociology and anthropology, or in fields related with the research interests of the Chair of Ukrainian

Studies, can apply for a Scholarship. The competition is open to international and Canadian students.

The application for the Kule Scholarship must include a 1000 word research proposal, two letters of recommendation (sent separately by the referees), and a CV and be mailed to Dominique Arel, School of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences Building, Room, 7067, University of Ottawa, 120 University St., Ottawa ON K1N 6N5, Canada.
Applications will be considered only after the applicant has completed an application to the relevant doctoral program at the University of Ottawa. Consideration of applications will begin on **1 February 2019** and will continue until the award is announced.
The University of Ottawa is a bilingual university and applicants must have a certain oral and reading command of French. Specific requirements vary across departments.

Students interested in applying for the Scholarships beginning in the academic year 2017-2018 are invited to contact Dominique Arel (darel@uottawa.ca), Chairholder, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, and visit our web site www.chairukr.com.

#4
New Book

Marci Shore
The Ukrainian Night
An Intimate History of Revolution
Yale University Press, 2018
https://bit.ly/2KQvftf

What is worth dying for? While the world watched the uprising on the Maidan as an episode in geopolitics, those in Ukraine during the extraordinary winter of 2013–14 lived the revolution as an existential transformation: the blurring of night and day, the loss of a sense of time, the sudden disappearance of fear, the imperative to make choices.
In this lyrical and intimate book, Marci Shore evokes the human face of the Ukrainian Revolution. Grounded in the true stories of activists and soldiers, parents and children, Shore's book blends a narrative of suspenseful choices with a historian's reflections on what revolution is and what it means. She gently sets her portraits of individual revolutionaries against the past as they understand it—and the future as they hope to make it. In so doing, she provides a lesson about human solidarity in a world, our world, where the boundary between reality and fiction is ever more effaced.
Marci Shore is associate professor of history at Yale University and award-winning author of Caviar and Ashes and The Taste of Ashes. She has spent much of her adult life in Central and Eastern Europe.

#5
New Book

Anna Matveeva
Through Times of Trouble
Conflict in Southeastern Ukraine Explained from Within
Lexington Books, 2018
https://bit.ly/2J7I0SO

This book tells the story of insurgency in Ukraine's Donbas region from the perspective of the rebels, who sought and continue to seek either independence from Ukraine or unification with Russia. As such, it provides a unique insight into their thinking and motivations, which need to be understood if the conflict is to be resolved. Those making and remaking the conflict are placed in the centre of the story which uses the words of the combatants themselves. It shows how volunteer fighters, driven by a wide and diffuse set of motivations, emerged from Ukraine, Russia, and different parts of the world, stood at the rebellion's heart. The book focuses on the participants' own voices and personalities, drawing extensively on first-hand research and interviews.

Rather than rendering Ukraine a chess piece on the geopolitical board, the rebellion shows that ordinary people, rather than elites, can act as a decisive force. Donbas says something about why large numbers of people make the decision to take part in a collective violent action, when material rewards are low or non-existent, and mortal risks high. It stands as an important text on the study of modern insurgencies, revealing how violent conflicts happen via issues of politicized identity and involvement of non-state actors. This book places this conflict into the context of other conflicts worldwide and demonstrates how ideas and narratives are constructed to provide meaning to a struggle. The insurgency has produced a conflict sub-culture, rich with symbolism, narrative, and communications, made possible by the digital age and a social media-savvy population. These beliefs and ideas have had the power to pull people from different parts of the world.

#6
New Book

Olexiy Haran and Maksym Yakovlyev, eds.
Constructing a Political Nation
Changes in the Attitudes of Ukrainians during the War in the Donbas.
Stylos Publishing, 2018
https://bit.ly/2ILuDEr [PDF downloadable]

What effect did Russia's attack have on Ukrainian society and on public opinion? And how, in turn, did they influence Ukrainian identity and politics? This book, prepared by the School for Policy Analysis, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy with the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, shows that contrary to the Kremlin's expectations, Russian aggression has in fact led to a strengthening of the Ukrainian political nation. The book covers national and regional dimensions of changes in the attitudes of Ukrainians during the war in the Donbas: identity issues, political and party preferences, approaches to decentralization and the conflict in the Donbas, economic tendencies, changes in foreign policy attitudes toward the EU, NATO, and Russia. In the afterword to this book, possible scenarios for Ukraine's future policy toward the occupied territories have been presented.

The first edition appeared in March 2017 in Ukrainian. This is now the second, updated edition and the first in the English language. The project was supported by the State Fund for Fundamental Research of Ukraine, the Kennan Institute of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the International Renaissance Foundation, the Fulbright Program in Ukraine, administered by the Institute of International Education, and the Ukrainian Fulbright Circle.

Iryna Bekeshkina, Decisive 2014: Did It Divide or Unite Ukraine?
Iryna Bekeshkina and Oleksii Sydorchuk, The Party System after the Maidan: Regional Dimensions of an Unfinished Transformation
Ihor Burakovskiy, Russian Aggression in the Donbas as a Factor in the Formation of Economic Sentiments in Ukraine
Maria Zolkina and Oleksiy Haran, Changes in the Foreign Policy Orientations of Ukrainians after the Euromaidan: National and Regional Levels
Maria Zolkina, The Donbas: New Trends in Public Opinion
Ruslan Kermach, Attitudes of Ukrainians toward Russia and Russians: Dynamics and Main Trends

#7
New Book

Taras Kuzio
Putin's War Against Ukraine
Revolution, Nationalism, and Crime
Published in association with the Chair of Ukrainian Studies
University of Toronto
https://amzn.to/2kqevh3

The West has woken up to the uncomfortable fact that Russia has long believed it is at war with them, the most egregious example of which is Vladimir Putin's hacking of the US elections. For Western governments, used to believing in the post-Cold War peace

dividend, it came as a shock to find the liberal international order is under threat from an aggressive Russia. The 'End of History – loudly proclaimed in 1991 – has been replaced by the 'Return of History.' Putin's War Against Ukraine came three years earlier when he launched an unprovoked war in the Donbas and annexed the Crimea. Putin's war against Ukraine has killed over 30, 000 civilians, Ukrainian and Russian soldiers and Russian proxies, forced a third of the population of the Donbas to flee, illegally nationalised Ukrainian state and private entities in the Crimea and the Donbas, destroyed huge areas of the infrastructure and economy of the Donbas, and created a black hole of crime and soft security threats to Europe. Putin's War Against Ukraine is the first book to focus on national identity as the root of the crisis through Russia's long-term refusal to view Ukrainians as a separate people and an unwillingness to recognise the sovereignty and borders of independent Ukraine.

Written by Taras Kuzio, a leading authority on contemporary Ukraine, the book is a product of extensive fieldwork in Russian speaking eastern and southern Ukraine and the front lines of the Donbas combat zone. Putin's War Against Ukraine debunks myths surrounding the conflict and provides an incisive analysis for scholars, policy makers, and journalists as to why Vladimir Putin is at war with the West and Ukraine.

#8

MH17 Downed by Russian Military Missile System, Say Investigators

by Shaun Walker
Guardian, 24 May 2018
https://bit.ly/2KMf53S

An international team of investigators say they have uncovered hard evidence that a Russian military missile system fired the missile that shot down flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014.

The Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 was travelling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur when it was shot down over the conflict zone in eastern Ukraine on 17 July 2014. All 298 people onboard were killed.

In 2016, investigators announced they had evidence that the BUK systeminvolved in the incident had crossed the border into eastern Ukraine from Russia and returned after the plane had been shot down.

The joint investigation team (JIT) looking into the incident is made up of Dutch prosecutors and police and others from Australia, Malaysia and Ukraine.

At a press conference in The Hague on Thursday, the investigators showed photo and video evidence that they said proved they had identified the specific BUK system

responsible for shooting down the plane. They said they had “legal and convincing evidence which will stand in a courtroom” that the BUK system involved came from the 53rd anti-aircraft missile brigade based in Kursk, in western Russia.

For the first time, the investigators appeared to confirm that the Russian military was complicit in the downing of the plane, at the very least by providing the missile system used. Previously, the investigative website Bellingcat has pointed to involvement of the same brigade using open-source information.

Russian officials have denied all involvement in the incident, and Kremlin-linked media outlets have floated a range of implausible theories suggesting Ukraine was responsible for shooting down the plane. Russia has used its veto in the UN to prevent an international tribunal from being set up to determine guilt, meaning any eventual trial would be held in the Netherlands under Dutch law.

Fred Westerbeke, the chief prosecutor, said the investigation was in its last phase but could not say when he would be ready to file indictments. Two years ago, prosecutors said there were about 100 people under suspicion of direct or indirect involvement. On Thursday, Westerbeke said that number had come down to several dozen, but he declined to name them.

He said there was other evidence that would be kept secret until a court hearing began. “We don’t want to tell everything we know because then we are opening our cards to the other side and we do not want to do that.”

Investigators had asked Russian authorities for information about the 53rd brigade but had been ignored, said Westerbeke.

In a sign that some evidence is still missing, the JIT repeated a call for those with information about the incident to come forward, including information about the 53rd brigade, promising anonymity. No information was given as to whether investigators believed the BUK system was deployed as part of a Russian military mission. Bellingcat said it would hold a press conference on Friday to present new findings on MH17.

Russia has repeatedly denied it was militarily active in eastern Ukraine, despite an overwhelming body of evidence to the contrary. In 2014, Russian troops and hardware were introduced at key moments to back pro-Russia separatists fighting against Ukrainian government troops.

In the weeks before MH17 was shot down, the separatists had shot down a number of Ukrainian military planes over east Ukraine.

This week a group of families of the MH17 victims wrote an open letter to the Russian people before the World Cup begins in Russia next month.

"We are painfully aware of the dark irony that the Russian leaders who will profess to welcome the world with open arms are those who are chiefly to blame for shattering our world," the letter says. "And that it is these same leaders who have persistently sought to hide the truth, and who have evaded responsibility ever since that dreadful day in July 2014."

#9

Ukrainian Government Accused of Fooling West on Anti-Graft Court

by Oleg Sukhov
Kyiv Post, 24 May 2018
https://bit.ly/2KUgZzN

Ukrainian authorities and the nation's foreign donors have entered the final stage of talks on creating an anti-corruption court.

The Verkhovna Rada on May 23 and May 24 considered hundreds of amendments to a bill to create an anti-corruption court but did not have enough time to pass the bill itself in the second reading as of 4 p.m. on May 24. It was adopted in the first reading on March 1.

However, the negotiations between Ukraine and its foreign partners on the anti-corruption court have been heavily lambasted by members of the Public Integrity Council, the judiciary's civil society watchdog. They believe foreign donors have been deceived by Ukrainian authorities, which will now get Western money but will still be able to rig the competition for anti-corruption judges.

Ukrainian authorities deny the accusations.

The creation of the anti-corruption court is a necessary precondition for another $2 billion tranche of the International Monetary Fund.

The conditions pushed for by Western partners will still enable President Petro Poroshenko to create a puppet court without a proper transparent competition and stack it with his cronies, Public Integrity Council members say.

"Effectively, international donors will be completely isolated from the selection of the best candidates for the anti-corruption cour, " Roman Kuybida, a member of the council, said in an op-ed for the Kyiv Post. "The Public Council of International Experts can be used as a façade to cover up for the results of a competition influenced by political and oligarchic elites through members of the High Qualification Commission."

"It is crucial that the Expert Panel—consisting of independent people with extensive and recognized expertise in the area of fighting corruption—is given a crucial role in verifying that applicants to the position of a judge on the High Anti-Corruption Court have the necessary qualifications related to corruption adjudication," Mr. Goesta Ljungman, the International Monetary Fund's resident representative in Ukraine, told the Kyiv Post. "The recommendation issued by the Expert Panel should be respected, and candidates who do not meet the criteria for anti-corruption judges should be disqualified from further consideration in the selection process."

Ljungman said that the discussions on the bill were "ongoing."

Satu Kahkonen, World Bank Country Director for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, told the Kyiv Post that "for the court to be effective, its independence needs to be ensured."

Flawed compromise

According to the ongoing negotiations, the seven-member Council of International Experts, which will be delegated by Ukraine's foreign partners and donors, will be able to veto candidates for the anti-corruption court nominated by the 16-member High Qualification Commission.

A joint session of the Council of International Experts and the High Qualification Commission will be able to override such vetoes.

Allies of Poroshenko insist that at least 16 votes should be enough to override vetoes by the Council of International Experts on candidates. This means that the High Qualification Commission's 16 votes will be enough, and foreign donors' opinion can be ignored.

Ukraine's foreign partners say that at least 20 votes should be necessary to override a veto by foreign partners.

But Public Integrity Council members Kuybida and Vitaly Tytych believe that foreign powers' veto powers will be useless because they will not have any oversight over the actual selection of judges. As a result, the commission will choose the worst and most politically loyal candidates, and it will not matter whether any of them will be vetoed, Tytych and Kuybida argue.

Moreover, good and independent candidates will not even run in the competition because they know they will be blocked by the commission, Tytych said.

Powerless foreigners

The Public Integrity Council believes that foreign partners must be allowed not only to veto the worst candidates but also choose the best candidates.

To make the competition fair and objective, the competition for the anti-corruption court must be held by a special chamber of the High Qualification Commission comprising a majority of foreign representatives, Tytych and Kuybida argued.

The Venice Commission's recommendations (clause 73 of Conclusion No. 896/2017) stipulate that foreign partners must be included in the competition commission or even the High Qualification Commission's composition.

The Public Integrity Council's role, which should be able to veto candidates based on integrity criteria, must also be preserved during the competition for anti-corruption judges, Kuybida said.

Flawed methodology

Another way to hold a fair competition is to make the assessment methodology objective and deprive the High Qualification of its arbitrary powers to assess candidates, Tytych argued.

During the Supreme Court competition, 90 points were assigned for anonymous legal knowledge tests, 120 points for anonymous practical tests, and the High Qualification Commission could arbitrarily assign 790 points out of 1,000 points without giving any explicit reasons.

To make the competition's criteria objective, the law on the judiciary must be amended to clearly assign 750 points for anonymous legal knowledge tests and practical tests (for competitions for both the anti-corruption court and all other courts), Tytych argued. Moreover, the authorities may sabotage corruption cases through the discredited Supreme Court, which will be the cassation court for graft trials.

A special autonomous anti-corruption chamber of the Supreme Court should be selected under the same procedure as the High Anti-Corruption Court, Kuybida said.

Other aspects

One of the only concessions that Ukrainian authorities made to Western partners is that they agreed to make the conditions for becoming an anti-corruption judge less strict. In Poroshenko's original bill, they were so strict that it would be almost impossible to find candidates meeting the demands, and the selection could drag on for years.

Ukrainian authorities also agreed to amend the bill to make sure that the court considers all cases of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and does not consider non-NABU cases.

Discredited commission

Public Integrity Council members argued that the competition for the anti-corruption court should not be entrusted to the discredited High Qualification Commission because they believe it rigged the Supreme Court competition and brought it under Poroshenko's control. The commission denies the accusations.

First, during the practical test stage, some candidates were given tests that coincided with cases that they had considered during their career, which was deemed a tool of promoting political loyalists.

Second, in the High Qualification Commission illegally allowed 43 candidates who had not gotten sufficient scores during practical tests to take part in the next stage, changing its rules amid the competition. Members of the Public Integrity Council believe that the rules were unlawfully changed to prevent political loyalists from dropping out of the competition.

Third, the High Qualification Commission and the High Council of Justice illegally refused to give specific reasons for assigning specific total scores to candidates and refused to explain why the High Qualification Commission has overridden vetoes by the Public Integrity Council on candidates who do not meet ethical integrity standards.

Moreover, the commission nominated thirty discredited judges who do not meet integrity standards (according to the Public Integrity Council) for the Supreme Court, and Poroshenko has already appointed 27 of them (out of 115 appointees). These judges have undeclared wealth, participated in political cases, made unlawful rulings (including those recognized as unlawful by the European Court of Human Rights) or are investigated in corruption cases.

#10
From Crimea to Siberia:
How Russia is Tormenting Political Prisoners Sentsov and Kolchenko

Hromadske International, 17 May 2018
https://bit.ly/2IEp3b0

[With a 64-minute video]

Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov and activist Sasha Kolchenko were both detained in occupied Crimea on May 10, 2014. They were accused of plotting terrorist acts, taken to Russia and convicted. Kolchenko was sentenced to 10 years in prison and Sentsov – 20 on fabricated charges and based on testimonies given under tortures.

Two other Ukrainians – Gennadiy Afanasiev and Oleksiy Chirniy – were arrested with Sentsov and Kolchenko. Afanasiev was released in a 2016 prisoner exchange, and Chirniy is still in a penal colony in Magadan.

Four years after his arrest and thousands of kilometers away from his initial place of detention, Sentsov announces a hunger strike. His sole condition for its end is the release of all Ukrainian political prisoners located on the territory of the Russian Federation. Together with the ones that are held in Russia-occupied Crimea, there are 64 of them.

Of the 64 political prisoners, 27 are held on the territory of the Russian Federation while the rest are in Crimea. Among them, 58 were detained on the territory of the occupied peninsula.

Sentsov and Kolchenko were first held in a detention center in Moscow, tried in Rostov, transported to the Urals and then to the Russian Arctic. Between the two of them, they have covered almost 20,000 kilometers, or, half the distance around the Earth. Their entire journey has been within Russia. Or actually, within its prison system.

We travelled to the key sites along their transport route – where the Ukrainian consuls were denied access and where lawyers today face difficulties getting in – to find out in what conditions they are being kept and who is responsible for their fate.

#11

The Trial: The State of Russia vs. Oleg Sentsov

Directed by Askold Kurov. Produced by Marx Film (Estonia), Message Film (Poland) and Czech Television, with the support of the Polish Film Institute, the B2B Doc network and the Ukrainian Association of Cinematographers. 2017, 70 minutes. Contact: Anja Dziersk, Rise & Shine (Berlin), anja.dziersk@riseandshine-berlin.de. Webpage: https://www.asnconvention.com/the-trial. Shown at the ASN 2017 World Convention.

Dominique Arel
Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa
Forthcoming in *Nationalities Papers*

In 2011, Oleg Sentsov, a Crimean filmmaker, made waves on the international festival circuit with Gaamer, a documentary on computer gaming. During the Maïdan protests, he went to Kyïv to join "Avtomaïdan," a group of activists who used their cars to picket the houses of government officials. During the Russian military occupation in Crimea, he organized humanitarian missions for Ukrainian soldiers trapped in their compounds, bringing them food and medication and assisting in the evacuation of their families. Outside of the strong Crimean Tatar national movement, Sentsov was arguably the most famous Maïdan activist in Crimea.

In May 2014, Sentsov was arrested on charges of "terrorism," along with three alleged co-conspirators — Oleksiy Chornyi, Hennadiy Afanasyev and Oleh Kolchenko. Russian TV, citing sources from the FSB, Russia's internal security police, announced that the suspects were linked to Pravyi sektor, a far-right Ukrainian movement involved in violent resistance on Maidan, and planned to blow up bridges and railway tracks in Crimea's three major cities — Simferopol, Sevastopol and Yalta. It was later claimed that Sentsov was the main organizer.

The Trial, by Russian filmmaker Askold Kurov — known for documentaries on gay oppression in Russia (*Children 404*) and the Lenin Museum in Moscow (*Leninland*) -- follows the legal proceedings in Russia: first in a Lefortovo district courtroom in Moscow, for two hearings that extended his pre-trial detention; and then in Rostov, in Southern Russia, for the trial itself. The courtroom scenes allow us to see how a political trial with a predetermined outcome actually functions in Russia. The cruelty of the state gives pause, but its actors come out small. The prosecutor and judges merely go through the motions, reading without conviction legalese-laden testimonies and verdicts, while pretending that the law is being observed. (The multiple mentions that Sentsov and the witnesses who implicated him were tortured is never acknowledged). Sentsov tells the judge not to take it personally that "the court of an occupier cannot be just," but he has no respect for the truly powerful —the FSB ("the Federal Service of Banditry"), and Putin (a "bloodthirsty dwarf"). He knows no fear. In his last words, he cites Bulgakov, that the greatest sin on earth is cowardice: "Everyone in the courtroom understand perfectly well that there are no fascists in Ukraine and that Crimea was annexed illegally." One-third of the Russian population do not believe Russian propaganda, but they are afraid to act.

One Russian citizen who is not afraid is Alexander Sokurov, one of Russia's most celebrated film directors. In a chilling scene, at an official televised function with nearly 100 people seated around a table, Sokurov confronts Putin over Sentsov, "begging" him to solve the problem: "A film director should be battling me at film festivals," not sitting in jail. Putin responds that Sentsov was not convicted for his work, but because he has "de facto dedicated his life to terrorist activities." Twice, Sokurov pushes back, invoking the "Russian and Christian way to hold mercy over justice." Putin icily replies that "we cannot act (...) without a court judgment." Everyone knows that the court judgment will be a political order but only Sokurov has the courage to stand up.

The film, in interviews with lawyers and court testimonies, leaves no doubt that the case is a complete fabrication, based on a modicum of actual or intended low-grade violence, unrelated to Sentsov. In early April 2014, Chornyi, Afanasyev and Kolchenko commit arson, in the middle of the night, against the empty offices of local pro-Russian organizations which supported the annexation. The damages are so light that a policeman shouts that it is not necessary to call the firemen. Afterwards, Chornyi makes plans on his own to blow up a Lenin statue and seeks advice from a chemistry student named Pirogov. Pirogov becomes an FSB informer and films a later encounter with Chornyi discussing his plans.

Chornyi was arrested before he can act and Afanasyev was also picked up. They were tortured to implicate Sentsov, whom they had never met. They both cracked (in the case of Afanasyev, the torture involved choking on his own vomit and having his testicles electrocuted). Sentsov was also tortured, threatened that if he did not admit his participation in the "conspiracy," he would be made his ringleader and sentenced to 20 years, which is exactly what eventually happens. An initial search finds nothing but Soviet anti-fascist films, presented by a clueless FSB as evidence of his membership in Pravyi sektor. A subsequent search comes up with a planted gun.

The question is why frame Sentsov? The Russian political scientist Kirill Rogov, who appears twice in the film, invokes the "Khodorkovky principle," named after the Russian oligarch who was sent to jail on alleged corruption charges: being famous will not protect you from the arbitrariness of the state, and therefore anyone is fair game. Sentsov's lawyers claim that the FSB needed someone famous to symbolize the Pravyi sektor threat in Crimea. The film does not elaborate on what appears to be the key motive — Russia's attempt to legitimize the annexation of Crimea.

Besides the fear that NATO might dislodge the Black Sea Fleet, the immediate claim by Russia was that the Crimean population, in majority ethnic Russian, was under physical threat from a "coup d'état" by "fascists" in Kyiv. Since actual threats could not be found, they had to be invented. Hours before the Russian Duma authorized Putin to send troops in Ukraine, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the local Crimean Ministry of Interior had been attacked by "unknown men," failing to clarify that the attackers were pro-Russian militias, working in concert with Russian troops already occupying parliament and communication hubs. Weeks later, the only incidents were isolated cases of vandalism. The Sentsov case symbolizes the lie that Russia came to the rescue of Crimean civilians against Maidan activists willing to engage in "terrorism." At latest count, 23 Crimeans have been arrested or convicted of terrorism, always for alleged conspiracies.

This vital film, made with the involvement of film institutions from five East European countries, is also revealing on the meaning of Ukrainian national identity. In an interview on Crimean television prior to Maidan, Sentsov, an ethnic Russian, is asked if he considers himself a Ukrainian filmmaker. He simply answers "Yes, I am a citizen of Ukraine." At the trial, when Kolchenko has to formally identify his nationality, he replies "Russian, Ukrainian," as if to suggest that his identification with Ukraine is self-evident. A stunning scene is when Afanasyev, brought in to incriminate Sentsov, recants his testimony "done under duress." Sentsov, applauding, shouts "Slava Ukraini! (*Glory to Ukraine!*)", with Afanasyev answering back "Heroiam slava! (*Glory to Heroes*!)." The slogans, popularized by the Ukrainian Insurgency Army (UPA) during World War II, were adopted as a rallying cry of resistance on Maidan. It is doubtful that Sentsov was ever invested into Stepan Bandera, the far right wartime leader with whom the UPA was symbolically associated. Yet in refusing to be afraid, he can be seen as embodying a spirit of resistance that makes him a far greater threat than the terrorist that he is not. His parting words to Russians were telling: "We also had a criminal regime but we came out against it."

#12

Askold Kurov: "Movies cannot change things, but they can change individuals"

Danyliw Seminar, 16 November 2018
https://www.danyliwseminar.com/askold-kurov

Transcript of the Q&A with filmmaker Askold Kurov that followed the screening of *The Trial: The State of Russia vs Oleg Sentsov* at the Danyliw Seminar on 16 November 2018. Questions and answers were edited for style by Sophie Foster. A few comments were added in brackets for context.

Born in Uzbekistan in 1974, Askold Kurov has lived in Russia since 1991. He co-directed in 2012 the award-winning documentary Winter, Go Away! His next films Leninland and Children 404 also won critical acclaim and screened at numerous festivals.

Question: Can you tell us more about how this film came to be? What is the origin of this film? Did you know Oleg Sentsov?

Askold Kurov: I met Oleg about three years ago, before he was arrested. Oleg had messaged me on Facebook, wanting to share his new film [*Gamer*]. I met him in person at his film's premiere in Moscow. I became interested in this story when I saw how fake the case looked. I was discussing some ideas I had on the subject with a friend when he suggested that I make a documentary. Eventually, I felt that making a documentary would be the only way I could help.

How did you get funding?

I didn't really have problems getting funding because I was the only cameraman shooting inside the courtrooms. The Russian legal system wanted filming within the courts because they wanted to make sure that the case looked legal and real. The funding aspect of this film took a long time, however, because we couldn't get funding in Russia or Ukraine. We decided to use international Crowdfunding, where we found a Polish corporate user who got us in contact with Polish, Czech and Estonian film institutes.

Regarding the filmmaking process itself: You remained distant on the tensions within his family. Why have you decided to just mention it rather than thoroughly discuss it?

The story is really complex and it has multiple facets to it. Because Oleg is such a diverse person it was hard to give details on everything. Also, his family situation is a sensitive topic and it's very hard for him. [His brother-in-law and nephew work for the Crimean FSB and he is estranged from his wife –Editor]

Can you talk about some of the difficulties in filming? What was the reality of filming the trial?

This film was difficult because it was my first [political] documentary. In my previous films I usually just follow characters and observe but in this film it was more than just observation; it included investigation, etc. At some points in the filming process we ended up using hidden cameras because we were not allowed to film. The most difficult part was when you knew that you were being followed. We also knew of instances where our cell phones were being tapped. I sometimes passed through moments of paranoia, where I was afraid all the time and I couldn't sleep.

Where are we on the negotiations of exchange of the prisoners? Is there a possibility of exchange of the prisoners from Russian prisons? Can this movie help to cause an exchange?

I hope that this movie can help. Unfortunately, Oleg isn't the only political prisoner; I don't know the exact number but we're talking about dozens of them. Many film festivals and even Amnesty International and activists are trying to organize screenings in order to invite politicians. It would be a big surprise if Oleg would be the next to be exchanged because the Russian legal system has its own logic and nobody knows how it works. A month ago we had an update on where Oleg is; it seems that they're moving him from prison to prison and he is now in a place much closer to the North Pole. The conditions here are much tougher than where he was in originally. He is now facing problems with his health, specifically problems with his heart. We were hoping for some sort of exchange but not to change location for the purpose of tougher conditions.

Regarding the speech that Oleg gives at the end of the film, how did anyone allow him to say the things he was saying? Was his monologue on the state of Russia cut off at all? He's placing himself with artists fighting the state. I wonder how aware he was of placing himself with Soviet artists? How aware was he that this filming was going out to a large audience? How much of this awareness help to shape the film?

There hasn't been much of an interruption between Soviet Russia and the current Russia. It looks very much the same. I had some cooperation with Oleg but only through his lawyer and attorney. Through this cooperation I was able to get permission to meet his family and children. It was very important to Oleg that he knew what I was doing. Of course, Oleg had prepared all of his speeches during the trial. I think that it was very important to Oleg to have the ability to say something to a larger audience. In a way, he is a co-director of this film.

The last words in the trial are "Do not be afraid". It seems you're not afraid yourself... What have been the consequences for you?

Just to make a correction: He says the people should "Learn not to be afraid.". I didn't have any problems during the filming and I still don't have problems with authorities or crossing borders. For instance, I didn't face any issues coming to Canada. Maybe they just don't really care about me? It's not absolutely the same Soviet times in Russia at the moment. The borders are still open, there are at least a few medias and real newspapers, some internet and TV channels as well as some online media.

Has the film been shown in Russia? Or available? What has the reaction to it been?

It hasn't yet premiered in Russia. We've tried but some film festivals refused to include it without an explanation. It's not officially banned or forbidden, but the system sends you signals and you just have to choose what to do. I hope that in a week we'll have news of an independent film festival in Russia if they'll include the film. If they do we'll include it and premiere it in Russia. Shortly after that, we'll put it online on online forums.

Can you interpret the scene that comes early into the film? The scene where a couple of men light an entranceway on fire and then a different man extinguishes it, what was this meant to show and how was interpreted by the FSB officers? Also, how does Oleg feel Ukrainian? Was his family dismissive of his Ukrainians beliefs? Did that come up in your conversation with them?

This scene took place in Crimea, and the entranceway was an office of pro-Russian organizations used by the officers who detained pro-Ukrainian activists in Crimea. The two who lit the fire were normal guys, they were not military or police. They had information that these pro-Ukrainians were tortured there, so they tried to burn these places. It was out of protest. The FSB tried to use this to say that they were extremists and that they have a connection to a radical right organization and that Oleg was the leader of this organization. It's very complicated but they basically tried to connect a lot of cases together in order to create this illusion of a big network.

Regarding the second question, this question of identity is new. Oleg was part of this new form of Ukrainian identity. His sister does not share this idea. His mother doesn't like what happened after the annexation but she feels as though "she's between two fires," in her exact words. When editing the film, they decided to let her cousin [Natalia Kaplan, a main figure in the film –Editor] explain this complicated situation because I didn't think it would be right to use the mother for the explanation.

When you're showing the man who was identified as insane and who was a specialist in chemistry, and the scene where they're testing chemicals in a wooded area; how did you get the material of those scenes?
This is the material of the FSB, it was just part of the case. I got the material from Oleg's attorney as the scene was shown as evidence during the trial.

I noticed that Oleg called Putin a "Bloody Dwarf". Almost every country has limitations on called leaders names. Can you comment on that? He's making reference to Putin's height I believe, which I would say is name calling, or bullying right?

When I was there during this trial, I didn't feel that Oleg had crossed any boundaries. I think that sometimes calling names has a direct meaning. An artist's task is calling names or to find the real names of a character.

First, why did the FSB choose Oleg as a mastermind in your opinion, was he already on a blacklist? Second, when are you planning to screen your movie in Ukraine?

We actually already had a premiere in Ukraine in March at a film festival [*DocuDays*, the leading documentary festival in Ukraine –Editor]. After that we had a release in the biggest cities in Ukraine, and we continue to have screenings from time to time.

I think from the very beginning that Oleg was a random victim. After, I realised that Oleg was in some kind of list because he had communications with Ukrainian activists in Maidan and had some activity with the Ukrainian military who were in Crimea. [He brought humanitarian assistance to soldiers trapped in their barracks –Editor] Oleg even tried to organize a rally against the annexation before the referendum. Of course, the FSB knew about him. Maybe they chose him because he was one of the most well-known persons in Crimea and it allowed the FSB to achieve multiple goals. They were able to stop Oleg as well as other activists. Many activists just abandoned their actions. This worked really well for propaganda, and they were able to use this case to prove there is a dangerous Right Sector in Crimea.

Your film makes a gruesome impression of what's going on in Russia and the regime. How do you see the situation in Russia right now and did you get any support on the ground while making the film; any solidarity that wasn't shown in the film?

In Russia, we had many activists who left Russia and went to Ukraine. Oleg's cousin is an example of that. We are always waiting for something to help the political situation. You know that we had this protests movement in 2011 and then in 2012 we were so inspired. It looked like we just needed a little time to change everything and then nothing happened. After that, the system changed a lot in the political sphere and we had more and more political prisoners. In the spring, suddenly many young people went to the streets completely unexpectedly. Nobody knows why they suddenly appeared. I don't know how and when but I hope that this regime will change quite soon.

What do you think about making movies to change the political system? You're educating through movies but has anything really happened? What can art do?

I don't believe that movies can change things but that movies can change individuals. These individuals are the ones who can change everything. I do believe that we must use art. We have one experience of Soviet times when one specific person was imprisoned. Many European artists tried to help him and only after a famous person said that he will only come to the Soviet Union once this prisoner is free did we see a chance. Maybe something similar will happen to Oleg.

In a sense this is a Russian film; it's about the Russian justice system. It's also Ukrainian, he identifies as Ukrainian. Central Europeans made this movie possible through funding, how do you explain that you couldn't get funding from Ukrainians?

As I explained to by a Ukrainian film producer, the economic situation was very difficult after Maidan and the only funding is state funding. All in all, I'm not sure why Ukraine didn't give us money.

#13
Nationalist Radicalization Trends in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine

by Volodymyr Ishchenko
PONARS Policy Memo 529, May 2018
https://bit.ly/2GJXnM1

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Ukraine today faces a vicious circle of nationalist radicalization involving mutual reinforcement between far-right groups and the dominant oligarchic pyramids. This has significantly contributed to a post-Euromaidan domestic politics that is not unifying the country but creating divisiveness and damaging Ukrainian relations with its strategically important neighbors. The lack of a clear institutionalized political and ideological boundary between liberal and far-right forces lends legitimacy to the radical nationalist agenda. Moreover, the oligarchic groups exploit radicalizing nationalism not out of any shared ideology but because it threatens their interests less than the liberal reformers. Local deterrents are insufficient to counter the radicalizing trend; Ukraine's far right vastly surpasses liberal parties and NGOs in terms of mobilization and organizational strength. Western pressure is needed on influential Ukrainian figures and political parties in order to help shift Ukraine away from this self-destructive development.

Mass Attitudes Versus Real Politics

There are two major narratives about nationalism in post-Euromaidan Ukraine: "fascist junta" and "civic nation." The first was promoted by the anti-Euromaidan movement, pro-Russian separatists, and the Russian government. The "fascist" part is directed first and foremost at Ukrainian radical nationalists in the Svoboda and Right Sector parties, which were among the most active collective agents in the 2014 Ukrainian revolution. The "junta" part points to the unconstitutional removal of former president Viktor Yanukovych from office.

After the first Minsk agreements in September 2014, the "fascist junta" narrative disappeared from Russian media (though not from pro-separatist sources), reflecting Moscow's official strategy of negotiation with, rather than removal of, the new government in Kyiv. Indeed, at the time, there was exaggeration of the influence of far-right groups and political parties, which ended up taking relatively marginal positions in

the new government, performed poorly in the presidential and parliamentary elections, and left the government altogether after October 2014.

The opposing liberal-optimistic narrative posits that a "civic nation" has been emerging as a result of the Euromaidan and the war in Donbas. This new civic identity is allegedly inclusive of the country's regions, cultures, and language groups. The main systematic evidence in support of this claim are various polls indicating an increase for "civic" rather than "ethnic" answers about Ukrainian identity.[1] However, the true nature of Ukrainian politics today is that it has been heading in the opposite direction.
The poor electoral performance of far-right parties in 2014 demonstrated that they were not capable of competing with the established political machines backed by oligarchic money and media. However, this ignores the growing—and unprecedented in contemporary Europe—extra-parliamentary power of the Ukrainian far right, which over recent years has been able to:

- Penetrate law enforcement at the highest positions;
- Form semi-autonomous, politically loyal, armed units within official law enforcement institutions;
- Develop strong positions and legitimacy within civil society, often playing a core role in the dense networks of war veterans, volunteers, and local activists.

Electoral performance is not a good measure of the influence of radical nationalists. Similarly, no one claims that Euro-optimist liberals hold a marginal position in Ukraine because of the poor electoral performance and low ratings of the liberal Democratic Alliance or People's Power (*Syla Lyudei*). These two parties are arguably the only relevant ones that take the ideology seriously rather than opportunistically exploiting it to receive approval and support from Western elites and the Ukrainian electorate. One of the reasons for the far right's poor electoral performance is that "centrist" oligarchic electoral projects exploited the issues, rhetoric, and slogans of the radical nationalists, thus shifting the political mainstream rightward.

This is not simply a patriotic, rally-around-the-flag effect in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas. Ukraine has always been ethnically and linguistically diverse, has a legacy of historical conflicts with neighbors to the east and west, and encompasses plural and strongly opposing versions of historical memory about the Soviet Union and relations with Russians. Precisely because these issues were exploited by the Russian media in its information war, the wise strategy in Kyiv would have been to promote unity against Putin's government but not against Soviet legacy issues, Russophone culture, and dissenting voices.

Despite the increasing positive attitudes in Ukraine toward the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (OUN-UPA), thanks to its promotion by both the state and the far right, they are still not majority-supported (the same holds

true for the de-communization policies). Moreover, the glorification of OUN-UPA, while whitewashing their crimes and ideology, puts at risk Ukraine's relations with its neighbors, such as Poland, where top-officials have threatened to block Ukraine's European integration despite Warsaw sharing Ukraine's anti-Russian foreign policy orientation. There is majority support for the Ukrainization of public institutions and media, at least in the government-controlled parts of the country. However, the passing of a new education law that reduced minority-language usage in schools provoked very strong opposition from Hungary.[2] This past February, the constitutional court of Ukraine effectively canceled the notorious 2012 law that allowed for the official status of the Russian language in certain regions. The previous (belatedly vetoed) attempt to cancel it right after Yanukovych's toppling contributed to massive anti-Euromaidan mobilizations in the southern and eastern regions.

Despite the fact that 30-40 percent of citizens in government-controlled territories of Ukraine overall and the majority of people even in the government-controlled southeastern regions do not share the governmental narrative about the "Revolution of Dignity" and the Russia-driven war in Donbas, the dominant approach has not been to seek dialogue and reconciliation, but the marginalization and repression of dissenting opinions. These voices have often been branded as a "fifth column" consisting of willing or unwilling Russian agents. Kyiv has supported this approach via:

- Media censorship and propaganda;
- Hate speech, including by some government officials, MPs, and celebrities;
- Legal and extra-legal repression of opinions, peaceful assemblies, and organizations;
- Harassment, physical violence, and legal prosecution of dissenting journalists, experts, and opposition media;
- Blocking payments and trade with areas not under governmental control.

The extra-legal part of the repression has often been carried out by far-right paramilitary and vigilante groups sometimes colluding with state forces. Political repressions have been selective and inconsistent. There have been multiple cases of prosecutions for expressing a pro-separatist or even communist opinion online, all the while some politicians and oligarchs perceived by the public as allegedly pro-Russian are not visibly harmed. This is a combined result of the different capacity of the victims to defend themselves, selective attention by the West, contradictions within pro-governmental elites, and the weakness, corruption, incompetence, and inefficiency of Ukraine's law enforcement bodies (which are only partially substituted by patriotic vigilantes).

More broadly, the overall state approach of dealing with dissenting citizens and the opposition media and organizations has not been inclusionary but exclusionary, mostly on the basis of the pro-Euromaidan narrative about the 2014 events and nationalist interpretation of Ukrainian identity and history. The Ukrainian government has persisted in an exclusionary politics that is exacerbating internal cleavages in Ukrainian society—despite a lack of support for these narratives among a large segment of the population (sometimes even the majority of citizens), outrage from some of Ukraine's strategic

neighbors, regular criticism from international human rights organizations, and the Minsk accord commitments. This is damaging for Ukraine's government in its mission to receive domestic and international support and it lowers the chances for Ukraine to solve its conflict with separatist forces and Russia.

Why Is This Radicalization Happening?

These trends are occurring because of the interaction between competing oligarchic pyramids and the competition between pro-Western liberal and far-right wings of Ukrainian civil society. The latter two forces were the two major organized pillars of the Euromaidan uprising, in addition to the formerly oppositionist oligarchic parties. It would be naive to assume that the detrimental nationalist politics of the post-Euromaidan government is driven by any ideology among the elites. The majority of the elites are no more committed radical nationalists than they are pro-Western liberal reformers. All in all, many researchers agree that Ukraine's political system has not deeply changed since the revolution, and many still describe it as a kind of hybrid regime underpinned by competing patronage pyramids led by major oligarchs.

The anti-corruption agenda of the liberals threatens the state's selective preferences—the source of Ukrainian oligarchs' major competitive advantages. In response to growing societal disappointment, primarily due to the lack of highly anticipated reforms, the oligarchic elites find it much easier to concede to the nationalist agenda than to the liberals' anti-corruption program, which directly jeopardizes the oligarchs' immediate interests. Although the nationalist agenda may be destabilizing for the regime over the long term, it gives the elites important short-term political benefits. It helps them weaken the opposition; liberal supporters become confused and split when they hear accusations from the top that "political instability helps Russia," a trick that was used, for example, against the Mikheil Saakashvili-led protests. Radicalization dynamics are fostered because Ukrainian politics is not dominated by one patronage pyramid, like it is in Russia or Belarus, but by several competing pyramids. If President Petro Poroshenko tried to ignore the nationalist agenda, the People's Front or Ihor Kolomoiskyi, for example, would seize on this and exploit it against him.[3]

On the other side, the resources, mobilization potential, and the organizational structure of the pro-Euromaidan civil society groups explains why the dominant oligarchic pyramids choose to compete on the grounds of a nationalist agenda instead of simply avoiding it. The Ukrainian political regime was weak before the Euromaidan and afterwards it became even weaker due to both internal and external constraints. In 2014, in order to fight the Russia-supported separatist revolt, the government could not rely fully on the army (systematically underfunded and unready for combat) or on the disloyal law-enforcement officers in Donbas; it had to share the monopoly on violence with the relatively autonomous volunteer battalions.

After breaking economic and political ties with Russia, Ukraine became more dependent on Western financial and political support. This relationship is used by the liberal wing

to push forward the anti-corruption agenda. However, the radicalizing nationalism in Ukrainian politics has not been among the primary concerns of the Western elites. Meanwhile, far-right groups pressure the government directly, relying on their own mobilization potential and politically loyal armed units. These units are less important at the frontline now than they were a few years ago, but nevertheless, they maintain experienced and close-knit battle groups consisting of the most ideologically committed combatants (who fight not so much for the Kyiv government but for their vision of Ukraine). These communities retain close connections with other units and peers, and are able to leverage this to raise resources. They also actively connect with young radical nationalists and post-Euromaidan vigilante initiatives. These networks are influential, particularly when civic groups are actual fronts of far-right organizations, and when they mobilize against authorities, dissenters, and politicians they deem to be "pro-Russian."

Besides relying on different resources, the far right and liberal wings are organized in different ways that have a direct impact on their political mobilization potential. The far right builds ideological parties, namely Svoboda, Right Sector, and National Corps (the party of the Azov regiment). Meanwhile, the liberals are organized primarily in NGOs. Of course, some well-known liberal activists and journalists have joined pro-governmental parties (in the 2014 elections) and formed conjunctive alliances with pro-Euromaidan opposition parties (Batkivshchyna or Samopomich). However, the liberal political parties are very weak and the liberal NGOs are predominantly think tanks, media groups, and advocacy organizations rather than community mobilizers. The liberal organizations tend to make appeals to elite decision-makers, pundits, and the public-at-large but have little direct mobilization potential by themselves.

On the contrary, the far-right parties have strived to build nationwide networks of cohesive mobilized collectives of ideologically committed activists. Their mobilization potential—not just the number of supporters but how actively and intensely followers are ready to participate in political actions—is significantly higher than that of the liberal NGOs or the opposition electoral machines. The figure below illustrates this by comparing the number of protest events in 2016 with the reported participation of the major far-right forces, paramilitaries, the parliamentary and major extra-parliamentary parties, and the best-known groups of post-Euromaidan civic initiatives.

[Figure 1. Participation in Protest Events, 2016 – see web version]

Moreover, it is easier for far-right than liberal parties to advance a narrative on the nation. Far-right parties appeal to the historical tradition of Ukrainian radical nationalism and it is clear what one can expect if they come to power: more glorification of Ukrainian nationalism, more anti-Communism, marginalization of the public presence of the Russian language, uncompromising confrontation with Russia, resistance to any reconciliation with the "fifth column," and institutionalized discrimination against the "pro-Russian" population. However, there is no strong liberal ideological party that would invent or develop, and institutionalize, a tradition of Ukrainian liberalism. Thus, it is

much less clear what specifically the liberals' civic nationalism proposes regarding the crucial questions of Ukrainian identity.

Historically, the pro-Ukrainian civil society that emerged in the late 1980s as a national-democratic movement supported the interweaving of national-liberation and democratization demands. Since that time, the nationalist-liberal coalition has not really split as much as it has been rather latent, re-emerging during each crucial moment: during the Orange revolution in 2004, the Euromaidan in 2013-14, and recently the anti-corruption protests against president Poroshenko. The lack of an institutionalized political and ideological boundary between the liberal wing of civil society and the far right helps to legitimate the radical nationalist agenda and actions.

Among the most dangerous consequences is the lack of public condemnation of the government's repression and far-right extra-legal violence against dissenters (often simply branded as "pro-Russian.") For example, C14, a neo-Nazi group that was close to Svoboda but that is autonomous now, is known for violent attacks and harassment of dissenting journalists, bloggers, and activists—actions that they justify as a hybrid war against internal enemies. Despite its violent actions, C14 generally receives sympathetic or only softly critical coverage from respectable media such as BBC-Ukraine, Radio Liberty, and Hromadske Radio. Their recent violent attack on a Roma camp in Kyiv provoked a wider though still weak criticism.

Conclusion

Neither Moldova nor Georgia, which had very similar internal and external conflicts, experienced radicalizing dynamics to the same extent as Ukraine. This implies that radicalization has its roots primarily in the structure of both Ukraine's political regime and civil society. For the post-Euromaidan elites, nationalist radicalization is a tool used to consolidate power, restrain the far right, and split the liberals. At the same time, it provides legitimating cover for the far right to raise the bar of its nationalist demands, which they support with paramilitary resources and mobilization potential (effectively in the absence of a strong liberal opposition). In the short term, nationalist radicalization will be only accelerated by party competition before the presidential and parliamentary elections, in 2019. Over the long run, it will be detrimental for trust between citizens and between Ukraine and neighboring states, as well as for Ukraine's state capacity and democracy.

[1] See: Grigore Pop-Eleches and Graeme Robertson, "Revolutions in Ukraine: Shaping Civic Rather Than Ethnic Identities," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 510, February 2018.

[2] See: Volodymyr Kulyk, "Ukraine's 2017 Education Law Incites International Controversy Over Language Stipulation," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 525, 2018.

[3] For more about post-Euromaidan far right connections, see: Denys Gorbach and Oles Petik, "The rise of Azov," OpenDemocracy, February 15, 2016.

#14
Linking Language and Security in Ukraine

by Gwendolyn Sasse
ZoiS Spotlight 17/2018, 9 May 2018
https://bit.ly/2xaaRBd

The Ukrainian parliament is in the process of considering the bill 'On Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language', which is based on a monolingual definition of the Ukrainian state and aims to boost the knowledge and use of Ukrainian in public life. The political discourse links the Ukrainian language explicitly to the security and territorial integrity of the Ukrainian state. This securitisation of the language issue partly reflects the influence of the ongoing war in the Donbas on Ukrainian politics.

The bill under consideration, which is likely to be adopted, stipulates that every Ukrainian citizen must know Ukrainian and that Ukrainian-language proficiency is a condition for employment in the government, the civil service, and the legal, educational, and medical sectors. Language use in private and religious settings is excluded from the law, so in daily life the immediate changes will be limited—apart from an increase in Ukrainian-language media content.

However, there will be a long-term effect of the overall language policy regime, of which the current bill forms one part. The bill on education that entered into force in September 2017 is another part. That legislation determines that while there is room for minority languages at primary school level, secondary education has to be in Ukrainian.

'Everyday Bilingualism'

In Ukraine's 2001 census, 67.5 per cent of the population listed Ukrainian as their native language—a symbolic category that cannot be equated with actual language use. According to KIIS survey data from 2012 to 2017 (excluding, for the sake of comparison, Crimea and the non-government-controlled Donbas, which are missing from the latter years), in 2012 about 32 per cent of respondents said that they spoke mostly or only Russian in their daily lives. By 2017, this figure had decreased to just below 27 per cent, mostly due to a significant decrease in the number of those speaking only Russian.

These figures suggest a process of 'de-Russification' from below. The surveys also indicate widespread bilingualism: from 2012 to 2017, the number of those saying that they spoke equally Ukrainian and Russian rose from 16 to 24 per cent, and there was a slight increase in the share of those indicating that they spoke 'mostly in Ukrainian' (from 12 to 13 per

cent) and 'mostly in Russian' (from 11 to 13 per cent). Thus, overall about 50 per cent of respondents recorded a bilingual language practice in 2017.

The widespread existence of this 'everyday bilingualism' in Ukraine, mostly in the south-east, is something outside observers have routinely missed. On the one hand, everyday bilingualism makes language a less conflictual issue on the ground than the political discourse at times suggests. On the other hand, bilingualism comes in different shapes and sizes, and the incentives to actively speak Ukrainian may be limited, as, for example, the widespread use of Russian in Kyiv demonstrates.

Former Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych introduced the status of 'regional language' in thirteen regions where the population speaking a minority language—this label included Russian—constituted at least 10 per cent of the regional population. The sensitivity of this issue was illustrated by the fact that the proposed abolition of the law in early 2014 after the ouster of Yanukovych was put on hold by then acting president Oleksandr Turchynov and his successor, Petro Poroshenko. The law was struck down on procedural grounds by the constitutional court in February 2018.

Changing concepts of identity

Although 'identity' is a frequently used concept in the social sciences and in public discourse more generally, it is difficult to grasp empirically. Crisis moments offer insights into identities and potential identify shifts. [1] But even at such moments, what exactly do respondents and researchers mean when they talk about 'ethnic identity', 'nationality', or 'native language'? These terms escape fixed definitions, and their meaning changes over time in people's perceptions and official usage. Survey research therefore needs to reflect this reality, for example by combining open and closed questions and by contextualising the meaning of the survey categories across different linguistic and political settings.

Recent survey research demonstrates that a 'Ukrainian identity', identification with Ukraine as the 'homeland', and 'Ukrainian citizenship' have been preserved and strengthened through experiences of protest and war. [2] Contrary to state fears and policies, bilingualism does not undermine the notion of a Ukrainian identity or Ukrainian citizenship as an expression of a shared perception of the polity. If there has been a change, it points to a more conscious association of bilingualism with being a Ukrainian citizen.

My own surveys of those most directly affected by the war—the population in both the Kyiv-controlled and the non-government-controlled Donbas as well as the displaced in Ukraine and those who fled to Russia—show that language (mainly native language, occasionally language use at home) carries weight in explaining the likelihood of mixed (Ukrainian-Russian) or civic Ukrainian identities.

Interestingly, it is not only one native language—Ukrainian—that emerges as the key factor. A self-reported dual native language—Ukrainian and Russian—has a similar

effect, in particular on self-reported identity shifts towards feeling 'more Ukrainian' and 'more mixed'. Our datashows that feeling 'more Ukrainian' across all four populations and Ukrainian citizenship in the case of the population in the Kyiv-controlled Donbas explicitly and simultaneously accommodate mono- and bilingual language identities.

The current political climate in Ukraine does not allow much space for a discussion about bilingualism as a desirable and stabilising feature in a state characterised by diversity. But even if the policy goal is to increase the use of Ukrainian in public life, the commitment to the Ukrainian state should not be reduced to identifying with or speaking only Ukrainian.

[1] For an in-depth discussion of the options and challenges associated with this type of research, see the special issue of Post-Soviet Affairs, Vol. 34, No. 2-3 on 'Identity Politics in Times of Crisis: Ukraine as a critical case" (edited by Olga Onuch, Henry Hale and Gwendolyn Sasse) (open access until 31 May 2018) and the article by Henry Hale and Olga Onuch in this issue.

[2] Ibid., see the articles by Grigore Pop-Eleches and Graeme Robertson, Volodymyr Kulyk and Gwendolyn Sasse and Alice Lackner.

Prof. Dr. Gwendolyn Sasse is the director of ZOiS.

#15
The Seven Ages of Revolution

by Peter Pomerantsev
The American Interest, January 2018
https://bit.ly/2x84rT8

Marci Shore's intimate account of Ukraine's 2014 revolution probes the metaphysical meaning of revolution. In so doing, it illuminates the crisis of the West more broadly.

The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution.
Yale University Press, 2018, 320 pages, $26

Peter Pomerantsev is a director of the Arena Program at the London School of Economics. He is the author of Nothing is True and Everything is Possible, The Surreal Heart of the New Russia, which won the Royal Society of Literature Ondaatje Prize.

"It was the rare moment when the political became the existential. I saw friends, colleagues, acquaintances I had known for years, people who valued their privacy, suddenly laying bare their souls, taking decisions they never could have imagined of themselves a few months earlier," writes Marci Shore near the start of her strikingly innovative The Ukrainian Night, which she wrote prompted by her sense of how little

Ukraine's 2014 revolution was understood. "Journalists and politicians commented on NATO policy, international finance and oil investments, but not the transformation of human souls."

Shore, an Associate Professor of Intellectual History at Yale, is trying to rescue "revolution," a concept made near meaningless by over-repetition, and return its metaphysical meaning. For Shore's characters—writers and artists, philosophers and students—the revolution was initially about standing up to "proizvol," a "Russian word combining arbitrariness and tyranny, the condition of being made an object of someone else's capricious, or malicious will." Viktor Yanukovych, the gangster turned President, symbolized this quality with his casual use of violence, his casual revoking of Ukraine's Association Agreement with the European Union, his overriding of any judicial norms—but also in his lack of any higher ideals: "Yanukovych himself offered no grand narrative, no promise of transcendence, no story about a higher purpose of present suffering."

It's "higher purpose" that Shore's protagonists were looking for in their protests against his rule in Kyiv. As she traces their stories, she develops a scale of revolutionary behavior through which the individual is transformed, and which opens the way for society to have purpose again.

The first stage is "spontaneous self-organization," where previously alienated, passive groups are brought together to create improvised street kitchens, hospitals and self-defense units in a "laboratory of social contract": "a union of IT specialists from Dnipropetrovsk and a Hutsul shepherd, an Odessa mathematician and a Kiev businessman, a translator from Lviv and a Tatar peasant from Crimea." The far-Right is present too, but if the revolution is to be truly democratic, wouldn't it have to contain all parts of society, even the most sickening?

Stage two involves taking a radical, often life-threatening choice: in a space of no ideology, the readiness to embrace personal risk confers meaning. The rock singer Slava Vakarchuk (seen by some as a future President) believes that the first deaths among the revolutionaries instigated "the main tectonic shift. . . towards something more responsible and less paternalistic."

Next comes a strange sense where "time is smashed," where those involved in the revolution seemed to enter a space where the normal clock was suspended, and which created a condition in which the next, critical, phase could be born: the emergence of values. "The revolution of dignity" was the name bestowed on the Maidan, which can sound somewhat wishy-washy, but to Shore's characters specifically circles around overcoming "prodazhnost," the idea that anyone is for sale, the existential dimension behind the catch-all term "corruption." It's no coincidence Kremlin propaganda tried to dismiss the protesters as being paid tools of the West, or that regimes like Putin's or Yanukovych's cultivate social models where everyone has to be corrupt in order to get by: when everyone is "for sale" then all ideals can be dismissed as mere PR.

After "values" comes what Shore refers to as the "non-analytical point," where all rational calculation breaks down, and where a mass of people are prepared to die for a cause, and after which, if they survive, some sort of "revolutionary soul" emerges, defined by the revolutionaries' readiness to sacrifice themselves for each other. Shore invokes Camus, for whom "the desire that led to rebellion was the desire at once to defend an essence of selfhood and to overcome alienation from others. The dialectic of rebellion was that it always began from the individual but transcended the individual."

Taken together, these various phases—which Shore weaves in far more delicately and poetically than I have in my crude summary—allow for the emergence of a subjectivity where people are no longer playthings of "proizvol." It's a subjectivity that in Ukraine was framed by the logic of social media. The protests were organized on social media, which became the vehicle through which new selves were both performed and undermined:

When the young paramedic Olesia Zhukovska, blood pouring from her neck, typed on her phone, "I am dying," her Twitter message traveled the globe in minutes. To strangers around the world, that message made Olesia Zhukovska a real person. At once that message robbed death of its intimacy; and this self-violation of intimacy became the means for the assertion of selfhood...The sacrifice was privacy.

Social media both produced and revealed another paradox. On the one hand it enabled the emergence of a new idea of Ukraine and Ukrainian-ness. On the other, its fractured, polarizing, echo-chamber nature meant that the Maidan's transformative experience was contained in a bubble, alien to millions in the country who live in other information ecologies.

As Shore's book moves out of the cauldron of revolutionary Kyiv, her heroes confront a world where their heroism is rejected, where many are ready to believe the Kremlin's lies about their revolution and support Moscow's invasion of the country. Many of Shore's revolutionaries saw Maidan as Ukraine's movement towards an idea of "Europe" defined by rule of law and dignity. But this logic means that some of her characters are forced into seeing anyone who opposes them as a priori "backwards, postcolonial people with a Soviet mentality, who were simply too lazy to define an identity for themselves."

But this attitude, problematic in so many ways, also misses the profusion of narratives involved.

Many in Ukraine do live, or did live, among Kremlin-orchestrated propaganda paradigms, but the media kaleidoscope is far more fractured and complex than a simple "pro-Maidan" versus "pro-Moscow" tension. A city like Odessa, for example, has dozens of television channels and many more online news sites, each answering to the whims and priorities of myriad tycoons, ethnicities and passions. One can't reduce the city to a simple "Soviet" past versus "European" future story. Instead, every little group lives in its own micronarrative, bumping against others and getting into fights but for reasons

which can have nothing to do with why others are fighting them.

These non-linear narrative relationships are reflected in the "Leninopad," the campaign to pull down statues of Lenin in Ukraine. Some of Shore's pro-Maidan activists see the pulling down of the statues across the country as about toppling the past, ridding the country of the vestiges of Soviet imperialism. And it's certainly true that some of the Russian-backed separatists in the Donbas have attempted to recreate a Soviet Dismaland in Donetsk. But for many other Ukrainians the statues had nothing to do with either of these ideologies:

Nelia Vakhovska, the young translator of German literature, tried to explain. She was an intellectual and lived in Kiev, but she came from a small town ... where young people earned pitiable salaries doing heavy unskilled labor at a sawmill where the workers' hands often got caught in the saws. These are the people, Nelia wrote, "who my pure-as-snow friends dubbed the enemies of the revolution." In that little town activists on the side of the Maidan took down the Lenin statue. Nelia learned of this from her parents: "'They tied him by the neck and dragged him through the city.' This phrase holds unexpected pain." She tried to explain to her friends from Kiev, and from western Europe: "The statue is their personal Lenin, it's where they used to kiss, where they stole roses from the flowerbeds, where they went on pointless parades and equally pointless rallies. Until now, he had been guarding their memories, storing them all up in one spot."

Traveling through Ukraine today, one can have the sense of tumbling from one reality into another with every person one meets. Some Maidan activists have formed into the truly remarkable volunteer movement, which has armed and fed the army and supported hospitals and refugees, but whose members often tell me they feel they are living in a separate headspace than their neighbors. Even among the troops one finds people fighting for completely different reasons, each making up their own motivation. In many major cities, there are swathes of the population for whom the war with Russia might as well not be happening; it doesn't seem to be their war to either support or reject.

Shore's book ends with the ominous signs of the first stage of her first revolutionary scale, "spontaneous self-organization," starting to fall apart as far-Right thugs who were present at the Maidan beat up a Maidan left-wing activist, Vasyl Cherepanin. Cherepanin, however, is less bitter than one might imagine: "'I am a happy person,' Vasyl told me: he had now had an experience of real democracy, an experience that most people never have in their whole lives. And despite having been beaten by right-wing nationalists from Svoboda, Vasyl wanted me to know that when he had been there on the Maidan together with members of Svoboda, he had felt safe with them."

The book ends with a nation which needs to somehow spread the same sort of trust and solidarity throughout its people as was present on the Maidan. But what strikes me is how similar this challenge is to the ones we see in Europe and the United States: the falling apart of a common, national public space; the struggle to define any sort of notion of the future; disinformation black holes pulling people into warped nostalgias; parts of

the population not so much polarized as living in a separate somewhere or other. And beyond all that, a series of nagging questions: What does it mean to be a nation in a time of globalization? How can one embrace both the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual reality and a coherent polity? How does one generate a discussion of progress in an age of ultra-relativism, where everyone has their own version of the truth?

Rather than trapped between "Soviet" past and "European" future, Ukraine is our common, contemporary crisis brought into sharp relief, the country where the West's problems are now most vividly surfaced as life-or-death drama. Early in the Maidan, one of Shore's characters remarks on how some in the West didn't want to see the truth about their own problems in Ukraine's revolution. This excellent observation concerns the far-Right, but one can apply it to so many other areas too:

"The immediate Western response was hypocritically colonial, proclaiming that Ukrainian protesters were not European enough to claim allegiance to European values. In reality, the juxtaposition of neo-Nazi symbols with EU flags in the streets of Kyiv exemplified a pan-European malady. . . The ideological composition of Ukraine's Maidan square mirrored Europe. That's why so many in the West turned away from that mirror in horror."

#16

Enclosed below are three open letters that circulated regarding the Kennan Institute's Ukraine program and his Kyiv office between February and April 2018 –UKL

Alumni:
"We are deeply concerned by the Kennan Institute's growing pro-Kremlin policies"
Kyiv Post, 27 February 2018
https://bit.ly/2s5W0mm

Editor's Note: The following is an open letter of the Ukrainian Association of the Kennan Institute Alumni published on Feb. 27.

The Honorable Jane Harman, Director and CEO
CC: Kennan Institute Advisory Council

Dear Ms. Harman!

Dear Members of the Kennan Institute Advisory Council!

The Ukrainian Association of Kennan Institute alumni would like to renew to the Wilson Center the assurances of its highest consideration and express its deep concern with the worrisome trends in the overall management and strategy of the Wilson Center's Kennan Institute. After careful consideration, we would like to request that Wilson Center

leadership disintegrate the Ukraine program from the Kennan Institute and transfer it under the auspices of the Wilson Center's Global Europe Program.
This decision will be a logical outcome of Ukraine's Euromaidan Revolution of Dignity and its unequivocal desire to break away from the politico-economic influence of Russia. In light of the growing EU-Ukraine partnership, the transfer of our academic program to the Global Europe Program would guarantee the proper academic framework for the analysis of Ukraine's internal politics, economy and security as part of the European agenda.

Our strong interest in disassociating Ukraine from the Kennan Institute is also based on our disagreement with the management style and strategy of its current leadership. We are deeply concerned by the Kennan Institute's growing pro-Kremlin policies, lack of democratic procedures and unprofessional communication with Kennan Institute alumni in Ukraine.

Smagliy's firing 'unjustified'

On Feb. 16, 2018 we learned that the Kennan Institute dismissed Dr. Kateryna Smagliy, Director of the Kennan Institute Kyiv Office, and simultaneously appointed Dr. Mikhail Minakov as Principle Investigator on Ukraine. The Institute promised to continue its operations in Ukraine, but made no mention of the scope, direction and the form of its involvement. In the follow-up message the Kennan Institute accused Dr. Kateryna Smagliy of "driving a disinformation and incitement campaign" – the statement that we categorically deny as our debate was genuine and grounded on our own observations and professional analysis.

We find Dr. Smagliy's dismissal unjustified, illogical and disrespectful. Appointed in December 2015 in an open competition, Dr. Smagliy has proven herself an accomplished scholar, devoted professional and resourceful manager. She quickly diversified and magnified the work of the Kennan Institute Kyiv Office and built numerous partnerships with government and research institutions. In 2017 the President of Ukraine praised the Kennan Kyiv Office for promoting Ukraine's public diplomacy in his annual address to the Verkovna Rada (parliament) of Ukraine. Under Dr. Smagliy's leadership, the Kennan alumni presented more than 100 public lectures, including 30 at the displaced universities of Donbas; organized three forums of cultural diplomacy with the Foreign Ministry of Ukraine, held five intensive leadership programs for internally displaced students; and edited six volumes of Agora, featuring 122 articles on the wide range of subjects.

Parallel to this arbitrary dismissal, Mr. Matthew Rojansky prevented Dr. Smagliy from participating at the Kennan Advisory Council meeting held on Feb. 16, 2018, despite the fact she was in Washington, D.C., and requested the opportunity to present the Kyiv office accomplishments to the Advisory Council members. The fact that Dr. Smagliy was denied this opportunity testifies to Mr. Rojansky's increasing tendency to make non-transparent decisions, obstruct democratic dialogue and silence his ideological opponents. Such

behavior does not align with the Western tradition of openness and democratic scholarly debate.

Kennan Institute 'unwitting tool of Russia's political interference'

The Kennan Institute's growing pro-Kremlin policies threaten to turn the Wilson Center into an unwitting tool of Russia's political interference. We noted numerous episodes of the Kennan Institute's involvement with Kremlin associates, as exemplified by its special awards to a Russian businessman Petr Aven, whose name is on the "Kremlin" sanctions list, and to Susan Carmel Lehrman, previously personally awarded by President Putin with an "Order of Friendship". We were appalled by the fact that the founder of Russia Today TV channel Mikhail Lesin – the mastermind behind Russia's major vehicle of disinformation campaign during the 2016 U.S. presidential elections – was on the Kennan Institute's guest list for the Aven-Lehrman gala.

Today, at the time when the U.S. government tightens its grip on Putin's associates, the Kennan Institute offers them a rather warm welcome. Mr. Rojansky actively promotes the idea of the U.S.- Russia dialogue at the Dartmouth Conference. This platform, which was long dead after the end of the Cold War, was suddenly revived by the Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov, several months after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its war in Donbas. Mr. Rojansky serves as conference's executive secretary on the American side, but his Russian vis-à-vis – Yuri Shafranik and Gissa Guchetl – lead the Russian Union of Oil and Gas Producers.

We were particularly disappointed by the Kennan Institute's logo on the "For Unity!" concert on November 13, 2017, as it featured two Russian artists who supported Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea. In our October 31, 2017 letter to Mr. Rojansky, signed by 36 members of our network, we warned that such an inconsiderate move would strongly damage the Kennan Institute's reputation and make it no friends among Ukrainians.

We noted that the Kennan Institute's leadership started sidelining Dr. Smagliy and prohibiting the Kyiv Office from implementing research projects with international partners immediately after our protest against the "For Unity!" concert. The Kennan Institute denied Dr. Smagliy the opportunity to organize the international conference on the legacy of communism and Soviet occupation and attempted to prevent her from participating in the February 14, 2018 presentation of Boris Nemtsov and Russian Politics book in Washington DC. The fact she was dismissed the day after the event testifies that this decision may be politically motivated.

We feel deeply sorry to lose Dr. Smagliy as a leader of the Kennan Institute's programs in Ukraine, because she had always demonstrated professionalism, enthusiasm, and devotion to her work. The entire Kennan Kyiv office team decided to step down in protest of this unjust decision. At the same time, we are surprised by the appointment of Dr. Mikhail Minakov, who is known for his biased analysis of Ukraine's post-Euromaidan developments. In our view, he is not in a position to serve as an independent and

academically balanced editor of "Focus Ukraine" or Kennan Institute's Principle Investigator on Ukraine.

We appreciate the long-term support provided by the Kennan Institute to Ukrainian scholars, which allowed us to deepen cooperation and understanding between Ukraine and the United States. However, our deep disappointment and disagreement with the recent policies and decisions taken by the current Kennan Institute leadership prompt us to request you disassociate our program from Mr. Rojansky's supervision and transfer it under the auspices of the Global Europe Program.

Under the current circumstances, we consider this open letter to be a necessary step to save the reputation of the Kennan Institute and the Woodrow Wilson Center.

Respectfully,

Antonina Kolodii, Chair, Ukrainian Association of Kennan Institute alumni
Olexiy Haran, former member of the Kennan Institute Advisory Council
Natalia Moussienko, former member of the Kennan Institute Advisory Council
Viktor Stepanenko, former member of the Kennan Institute Advisory Council
Serhiy Kvit, Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine (2014-2016)

26 scholars added their signature to the letter. Their names appear in the online version.

#17
Letter of Scholars in Support of Professor Mikhail Minakov

5 March 2018
https://support-letter-minakov.org

As a group of scholars working on Ukraine and other post-Soviet states and in light of an ongoing controversy, we would like to express our support of Professor Mikhail Minakov who was recently appointed Principal Investigator on Ukraine at the Kennan Institute, a leading research institution on the post-Soviet region under the jurisdiction of the Wilson Center in Washington, DC.

The appointment was made as the Institute decided to end the contract of the Director of its Kyiv Office, Dr. Kateryna Smagliy. (On March 1, the Wilson Center announced the closing of the Office). On February 27, an Open Letter signed by 31 members of the Ukrainian Association of Kennan Institute Alumni stated that the decision may have been "politically motivated," linked with the Institute's "growing pro-Kremlin policies." The charges related to the Institute's public outreach initiatives and, in particular, its association with certain Russian and American businesspersons seen as close to the

Kremlin and to a cultural event that featured artists who had been publicly supportive of the annexation of Crimea.

The Letter ended by objecting to Professor Minakov's appointment, with the allegation that he is "known for his biased analysis of Ukraine's post-Maidan developments" and is not "independent and academically balanced" enough to serve in this position and edit an online Kennan academic blog on Ukraine. No specifics were provided, but social media threads cited an op-ed that he published in the French newspaper Le Monde in September 2017, which claimed that "the 'Revolution of Dignity' had led to shameless corruption, militant nationalism and a decline in freedoms."

While we understand that the Russia-fueled war in Donbas puts a constant strain on Ukrainian society, and that scholars and citizens at large have the right to criticize policies of institutions and organizations they do not agree with, we are nonetheless appalled that the sharp critical outlook of a scholar be considered grounds for denying him a research appointment. Academic freedom entails the freedom to share contentious interpretations. Any critical statement should remain an object of academic debate, however fierce the disagreements might be.

At issue is the assumption, implied in the Letter and all-too prevalent in the current climate, that public discourse is a zero-sum game, in which a contrarian view necessarily places someone in the opposing camp, namely, with the Russian state. We wish to stress that respecting intellectual freedom to critique policies and urge reforms without being called an agent of the Kremlin is not only a right in the open and liberal society that Ukrainians wish to live in but also a condition of its existence.

We have no doubt that Professor Minakov is deeply devoted to a vision of Ukraine as a free, democratic, inclusive and open society and that his life-long commitment to the study of Ukraine and to advancing the Ukrainian cause internationally is unquestionable.

Dominique Arel, U Ottawa
Anna Colin Lebedev, U Paris Nanterre
Mayhill Fowler, Stetson U
George G. Grabowicz, Harvard U
Oleh Kotsyuba, Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard U
Sophie Lambroschini, Marc Bloch Center Berlin
François-Xavier Nérard, U Paris 1
Oxana Shevel, Tufts U
Ioulia Shukan, U Paris Nanterre

52 scholars added their signature to the letter. Their names appear in the online version.

#18

"Our disagreement with leadership's pro-Kremlin tendencies ignored": Ukrainian Scholars on Closure of Kennan Institute Kyiv Office

Euromaidan Press, 15 April 2018
https://bit.ly/2IJc3gf

On March 1 2018, Director of the Wilson Center Jane Harman decided to close the Kennan Institute's office in Kyiv, which had promoted the US-Ukraine academic dialogue over the last 20 years. This decision was taken after an absolute majority of Ukrainian Kennan Alumni Association members sent a letter to the Institute's Advisory Council, protesting against the pro-Kremlin line of the Kennan Institute leadership and the groundless decision to dismiss its Kyiv office director, Dr. Kateryna Smagliy.

The haste with which the U.S. think-tank executives decided to close the active and successfully operating institution in Ukraine is a sad testimony to the absence of an open, professional and honest dialogue about worrisome tendencies in the work of the Kennan Institute. We received no reaction to our disagreement with appalling facts of its leadership's open flirtation with pro-Kremlin circles, undermining the Kennan Institute's reputation and repelling its former colleagues and partners.

Instead of addressing our criticism of Kennan policies, the Wilson Center's statement touched upon supposed "threats to the safety" of its employees and associates but offered no evidence to prove their validity. This unsupported statement was an openly unfriendly gesture that caused reputational damage to Ukraine by presenting it as a country where intellectuals cannot feel safe.

We welcome the March 20, 2018 decision of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine that draws the attention of the U.S. Congress to the Kennan Institute's unbalanced policies and its links to Russian oligarchs under U.S. government sanctions. It is regretful, however, that certain Western scholars, who should have been the first to sound the alarm about the Kennan Institute's degradation into an instrument of Russian influence in the middle of Washington DC, also ignored our key arguments and criticized us for questioning the professional integrity of Mikhail Minakov – the Kennan Institute's newly appointed Principle Investigator on Ukraine.

We take this opportunity to underscore that our letter only aimed to express disagreement with the Kennan Institute's policies and to urge its administration to follow democratic procedures, respect the opinion of its Ukrainian alumni and adhere to standards of quality academic research. In no part of our letter did we deny scholars and experts the right to express opinions and political views. The reference to Mikhail Minakov was only made in the context of our criticism of the Kennan Institute's pro-

Russian slant and as part of our proposal to transfer Ukrainian studies under the auspices of the Wilson Center's Global Europe Program.

We regret that some Western scholars neglected to delve into the details of our criticism and rushed to protect one person's intellectual freedoms from alleged threats. No views – liberal or conservative, left or right – can serve as an indulgence against academic distortion and manipulation. Liberalism is not the right to ignore or misinterpret some facts in order to defend one's own biases, just as nationalism is not synonymous with demands to draw objective and balanced conclusions about a country that is responding to foreign aggression as it fights for its democratic future.

It is regrettable that Western scholars sometimes resort to orientalism in their perceptions of Ukrainian reality and prove unable to differentiate scholarship from propaganda, as well as sham liberal biases and opportunism from a genuine intellectual discourse.

Signed by members of the Ukrainian Association of Kennan Institute Alumni and representatives of the Ukrainian intellectual community

Antonina Kolodii, Volodymyr Kulyk, Mykola Riabchuk, Serhiy Kvit, Pavlo Kirpenko and 28 other scholars. The full list is available in the online version.

#19

Ukraine's Loznitsa Wins Cannes 'Un Certain Regard' Prize For Best Director

RFE/RL, 19 May 2018
https://bit.ly/2IMe3V9

Ukrainian film director Serhiy Loznitsa has won a best director prize in the Cannes film festival's Un Certain Regard competition for Donbass, his odyssey about the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

The Un Certain Regard awards, which were announced on May 18, go to more edgy films and up-and-coming directors than those awarded in the Palme d'Or prizes in Cannes' main film competition.

The Un Certain Regard prizes were awarded a day ahead of the main awards ceremony, which is due to take place on May 19.

Loznitsa's hard-hitting film Donbass depicts the brutal conflict since 2014 between government forces and Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine in a "post-truth" world dominated by fake news.

The film portrays the region as declining into a gangland-style war at a time when Russia is seeking to reassert itself in the world some 18 years after the Soviet Union collapsed.

Loznitsa, whose previous film A Gentle Creature competed in the Cannes festival last year, told the AFP news agency in an interview last week that he felt compelled to make the film because of "the world crumbling around him."

"My main concern and my main subject is the particular type of human being, which is produced by a society, where aggression, decay, and disintegration rule," he said.

"The information war waged by [President Vladimir] Putin's Russia uses all of the most efficient and modern technical means available to influence attitudes around the world, to hammer home one truth as the truth," he told AFP.

Loznitsa is viewed as a national treasure in Ukraine after making some two dozen documentaries and films that have brought him international renown.
His documentary Maidan about Kyiv's pro-Western street revolution premiered at a special Cannes screening in 2014.

#20
Cannes Film Review: 'Donbass'

By Jay Weissberg
Variety, 9 May 2018
https://bit.ly/2Ls8kpo

Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Un Certain Regard), May 9, 2018.
Running time: 121 MIN.

Another cri de coeur by Sergei Loznitsa, set in the eastern region of Ukraine, that reveals the degradation of civil society in the post-truth era.

There is no job more thankless than the prophet of doom, nor one more necessary. Prescient commentators rant about the degradation of civil society, yet in an age when every conflict can be accessed or flicked away with the swipe of a finger on a smartphone, such cries of injustice generally constitute just another shout in the wind. The compunction to tell the truth remains, which is why Sergei Loznitsa's body of work is so indispensable: It refuses to be complacent. The Ukrainian director's "Donbass" is a natural follow-up to "A Gentle Creature": Though the two have little in common stylistically, they're both screams against a society that's lost its humanity and can't be bothered to care.

Seamlessly divided into 13 segments, "Donbass" recounts the corrosive nature of the conflict pitting Ukrainian nationalists against supporters of Russia's proxy Donetsk People's Republic in eastern Ukraine. No one comes out clean, but how could they, when years of manipulation have malignantly stirred animosities on both sides? Notwithstanding the film's unmistakable thematic cohesion, its piecemeal structure means that viewers will feel battered with each successive scene, knowing full well that the storyline to come will lead to yet another episode of increased brutality. For this reason, "Donbass" will struggle to find audiences beyond Loznitsa fans.

The time period is 2014-'15, though it's unlikely much has changed in a region lacking basic infrastructure and shredded by acrimony. The opening establishes Loznitsa's argument, as a group of people in a makeup trailer is refreshed and then marched to a section of town where controlled explosives have just blown up several vehicles. It's not a movie set but fake news to be broadcast as real reportage (the segment is glimpsed later on in the background). At this moment of post-truth, hardly limited to Donbass, reality is a useless commodity whose only value lies in how it can be reproduced and packaged.

The next two episodes continue the theme of fact manipulation, as a woman (Olesya Zhurakovskaya) accused in a newspaper of taking a bribe dumps a pail of feces onto a town councilman. From there it's an easy leap to a maternity hospital storeroom, where Boris Mikhailovitch (Boris Kamorzin) shows staff members they're fully stocked with food and medicines, although clearly the supplies have just been placed there. Boris isn't immune to ill-treatment when he tries to get through a roadside checkpoint, just like a busload of passengers whose inner dialogues about the homes they're returning to in the conflict zone offer a glimpse at the constant uncertainty plaguing the battered population.

As they pass into the Donetsk region, German journalist Michael Walter (uncredited) and his translator are taunted by soldiers, several of whom clearly are non-local Russians pretending to be from the area. It's possible he's connected with the cameraman who enters a building lacking plumbing or heating, where scores of people are living in primitive conditions. The arrival of a blonde (Irina Plesnyaeva) in a tight sparkly dress, spiked heels and fur coat makes a sharp contrast as she tries to coax her elderly mother to join her. Leaving in frustration, she heads back to the office, where her boss (Vadim Dubovsky) listens with little interest to a woman (Zhanna Lubgane) wanting luxury arrangements for the holy relics she's proposing be toured around the region.

The remaining segments become ever more brutal: Simeon (Alexander Zamurayev) goes to army headquarters when he's told his missing car has been found, only to be forced into handing the vehicle over "for the cause." Most disturbing is a scene in which a captured man (Valery Antoniuk) labeled as a Ukrainian exterminator is tied to a street pole and verbally and physically attacked by a growing mob. A nightmarish wedding follows, with the film returning to that makeup trailer for a coldly horrific finale.

Corruption and humiliation are the guiding forces of "Donbass," resulting in a scathing portrait of a society where human interaction has descended to a level of barbarity more

in keeping with late antiquity than the so-called contemporary civilized world. As with "A Gentle Creature," the connecting ties between people have been worn away, ravaged by selfishness or sheer exhaustion. Dissimulation is a weapon that pairs perfectly with bombs and machine guns: One murders individuals, the other kills the social order, and together they rule over a scorched land of foul-mouthed beings whose souls have shriveled away. There's a danger that Loznitsa's cries of inhumanity will be dismissed as repetitive, yet isn't that always the case with prophets?

In each scene, Oleg Mutu's supple camera acts as a silent, inquisitive historian recording every new offense, for capturing it all visually is the only means of ensuring that some truth survives. Taking the pseudo-documentarian approach he's demonstrated in a number of now classic Romanian films, the master cinematographer inserts himself and wanders in and among the actors, fixing them in space and guaranteeing that reality — the reality of the film — is honored.

#21
Ukrainian Studies in Canada: Texts and Contexts

Proceedings of the CIUS Fortieth Anniversary Conference 14-15 October 2016

CIUS is pleased to announce that the transcribed proceedings of its 40th Anniversary Conference are now posted online. They are available in an annotated format to complement the video recordings, and accompanied by biographies of the invited speakers.

https://cius40.artsrn.ualberta.ca

Oleksandr Pankieiev

Arts Collaboration Enterprise
Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies

#22
American Association of Ukrainian Studies (AAUS) Annual Prizes

At the AAUS business meeting that took place at the ASN World Convention in New York City [on May 6, 2018], the winners of the AAUS Book and Article Prizes were announced.

For this round of prizes, monographs, articles, and book-length translations published in 2016 and 2017 were eligible.

The Book Prize Committee, consisting of Andriy Danylenko, George Liber, and Maxim Tarnawsky, named Lynne Viola the winner for her book *Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial: Scenes from the Great Terror in Soviet Ukraine* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

The committee noted:

Lynne Viola's *Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial: Scenes from the Great Terror in Soviet Ukraine* is an exceptionally well-researched and well-written monograph on a very disturbing and unappealing topic in Ukrainian studies--the Stalinist repressions in 1937 and 1938 against the KGB perpetrators of the previous round of repressions against the Ukrainian population. It is the product of very good and detailed new research. It presents a complex problem without simplifying it. It builds on her previous books, all deeply researched in the archives in Kyiv and libraries of Moscow. She does not seek to justify the crimes of the perpetrators, but to seek their motivations and investigate their crimes in Ukraine. She writes (on p. 175): "The materials under investigation also demonstrate some of the Ukrainian specificities of the terror. Ukraine's status as borderland with a diverse ethnic population and the heritage--real and imagined--of Ukrainian nationalism, made it an especially dangerous zone of terror." She places the terror of the 1930s within an all-Soviet context while firmly anchoring it in Ukrainian specifics. Viola richly deserves the distinction of the best book in Ukrainian studies in 2017.

The Article Prize Committee, consisting of Yuliya Ladygina, Olena Nikolayenko, and Christine Worobec, named Heather Coleman the winner for her article "History, Faith, and Regional Identity in Nineteenth-Century Kyiv" (*Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol. 34).

The Translation Prize Committee did not name a winner and has extended the call for submissions. Please contact the committee members, Reilly Costigan-Humes [reilly.costigan.humes@gmail.com], Oksana Lutsyshyna [lutsyshyna@austin.utexas.edu], and Isaac Wheeler [isaacswheeler@gmail.com] with any inquiries.

Congratulations to the winners!

Vitaly Chernetsky
Past President (2009-2018) and Board Member

#23
AAUS Board Members and Officers

At the AAUS business meeting that took place at the ASN convention in New York City earlier this month, elections were held and new leadership of our association has been elected:

New AAUS Board members

(elected at ASN meeting May 2018, 3 years term for all; book, article, and translation prize committees rotating).

President

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Nominating Committee

1. Dominique Arel
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2. Halyna Hryn
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3. Olena Nikolayenko

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4. Oleksandra Wallo
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Book Prize Committee

1. Antonina Berezovenko
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2. Myroslav Shkandrij
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3. Lynne Viola
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Article Prize Committee

1. Heather Coleman
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2. Markian Dobczansky
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3. Oleh Wolowyna
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Translation Prize Committee (continuing)

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2. Reilly Costigan-Humes
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3. Isaac Wheeler
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Congratulations to all the newly elected officers of the AAUS!

Sincerely,

Vitaly Chernetsky
Past President (2009-2018) and Board Member

UKL 490, 24 May 2018

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