The Ukraine List #495

Call for Papers **Deadline Reminder: 7 November 2018**

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**24th Annual World Convention of the
Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN)**

International Affairs Building,
Columbia University, NY
Sponsored by the Harriman Institute
2-4 May 2019
https://www.asnconvention.com/proposal-information

Proposal deadline: 7 November 2018

Proposals must be submitted to:
darel@uottawa.ca and darelasn2019@gmail.com

Over 150 Panels/Events in 11 Sections

The Ukraine section had 22 panels/events at the ASN 2018 Convention

Nationalism Studies
Migration/Diasporas
Balkans
Central Europe
Ukraine
Russia
Caucasus
Eurasia (Central Asia and China)
Turkey and Greece
Book Panels
World Documentary Films

Thematic Sections

The Rise of the Far Right
The Politics of Refugees
Political Memory
Political Violence
The Russia/Ukraine Conflict

ASN Awards

Best Doctoral Papers
Best World Documentary Film
Best Book on Nationalism
Best Article in Nationalities Papers

The ASN World Convention, which annually brings 750+ scholars from 50+ countries to Columbia University, welcomes proposals on a wide range of topics related to nationalism, national identity, ethnicity, conflict and migration in regional sections of Central, Southern and Eastern Europe or cross-regional sections on nationalism and migration/ diasporas.

In addition to the thematic sections on the far right, refugees, memory, violence and the Russia/Ukraine conflict, popular themes over the years have included gender, youth, language politics, religion, arts and culture, EU integration/exit, foreign policy, nation-building, energy politics, parties and elections, and civil society.

Disciplines represented include political science, history, anthropology, sociology, international studies, security studies, area studies, economics, geography, literature, and other fields of humanities and social sciences.

Prospective applicants can get a sense of the large thematic scope of ASN Convention papers and presentations by looking at the 2018 Final Program.

The ASN scholarly journal Nationalities Papers will be published as of January 2019 by Cambridge University Press. The ASN 2019 Convention Opening Reception will celebrate this new partnership between ASN and Cambridge University Press.

Proposal Forms

Paper Proposal
Panel Proposal
Roundtable Proposal
Documentary Film Proposal
Book Panel Proposal
Discussant Proposal

To send a proposal, download the relevant form above, send it to darel@uottawa. ca and darelasn2019@gmail.com and fill out a Fact Sheet online.

Applicants can be considered for only one paper (included either in a paper proposal or a panel proposal) and appear in a maximum of two proposals (paper, panel or roundtable).

An exception is made for book panels or films, although applicants can only be on one book panel proposal.

Applicants whose proposals is accepted are responsible for covering all travel and accommodation costs. *ASN has no funding available for panelists.*

The receipt of all proposals will be acknowledged electronically, with some delay during deadline week, due to the high volume of proposals.

An international Program Committee is entrusted with the selection of proposals. Most applicants will be notified between January and February 2019.

Practical information on the Convention, including registration costs, will be communicated in January 2019.

Publishers and companies wishing to exhibit at the Convention or advertise in the Convention printed program can contact ASN Executive Director Ryan Kreider at rk2780@columbia.edu.

For practical questions on the Convention, please contact ASN Executive Director Ryan Kreider at rk2780@columbia.edu.

The ASN website is at http://nationalities.org
The ASN Convention website is at http://asnconvention.com
To follow us on Facebook, go to *https://www.facebook.com/Nationalities*
To follow us on Twitter, go to @asn_org

We very much look forward to receiving your proposal!

Dominique Arel, ASN Convention Director
Agathe Dudzinski, ASN Convention Assistant Director
Lisa Koriouchkina, ASN Communications Director
Ceren Belge, Evgeny Finkel, Tamara Pavasović Trošt, Program Committee Associate Directors
On behalf of the ASN Convention Program Committee

Deadline for proposals: 7 November 2018 (to be sent to both darel@uottawa.ca *AND* darelasn2019@gmail.com *in a single attachment).*

A Unique Look at Contemporary Ukraine
at Three-Day Danyliw 2018 Seminar in Ottawa

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The 14th Annual Danyliw Seminar (8-10 November 2018), organized by the Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Ottawa, is unveiling an ambitious program devoted to current research and documentaries on Ukraine.

The Seminar, featuring 23 presentations and 2 film screenings, will bring together 33 scholars or doctoral students, and 2 film creators -- 29 from outside Canada (8 from Ukraine), and 18 attending for the first time, a testimony of the vibrancy of the field of Ukrainian Studies.

The program is online at https://www.danyliwseminar.com/program-2018.
A PDF version is also attached.

Among the highlights:

- A special section commemorating the 85th anniversary of the Holodomor, featuring five presentations, as well as the presentation of a new book presenting for the first time to an English-language audience the contribution of Ukrainian historian Stanislav Kulchytsky (*The Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine: An Anatomy of the Holodomor*).

- Two sections on Ukraine in World War II and its aftermath, touching on state and church in Galicia, the UPA and gender, the OUN and concentration camps, and anti-Jewish violence, featuring new books by Omer Bartov (*Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz*) and Jeffrey Kopstein and Jason Wittenberg (*Intimate Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms on the Eve of the Holocaust).*

- Two new Ukrainian films featured in international documentary festivals this Fall – *No Obvious Signs* (2018), on a female soldier suffering from PTSD following her tour of duty in Donbas, and *Home Games* (2018), a hard look at the reality of broken homes and strong women, with a backdrop of professional sports. Each screening will be followed by a Q&A with film creators.

- A simulation game of the war in Donbas, based on ethnographic evidence collected or aggregated by British documentary filmmaker and programmer Antony Butts.

- Several presentations on the societal impact of the Donbas war — on medical care infrastructure destruction, daily life near the contact line, decommunization in a Ukraine-controlled Donbas town, and the songs of the war.

- An introductory section on the political economy of post-Maidan Ukraine —on water management in Donbas, corruption in the military, and the economics of journalism.

- A panel on changing political behavior and attitudes since Maidan, including a new book co-edited by Oleksiy Haran on *Constructing a Political Nation*.

All the Seminar sessions will be held in Room 12102 of the Desmarais Building (DMS), 55 Laurier Ave., on University of Ottawa campus. A map of University of Ottawa campus – with the DMS location – can be accesssed at http://maps.uottawa.ca.

The Seminar is open to the public and registration is free. Since space is limited, people interested in attending the seminar must register by sending an email to the Chair of Ukrainian Studies (chairukr@gmail.com).

An opening reception will be held on Thursday, November 8, at 7.00 PM in Desmarais 12102, after the screening and Q&A of *Home Games*. All are cordially invited.

The Seminar will have an extensive presence on the web. All presentations will be filmed and uploaded on the Seminar web site (http://www.danyliwseminar.com). The Seminar papers will also be available on the website shortly after they are presented.

For real time updates, go and like the Seminar's Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Danyliw-Seminar-874438662581143/) or follow me on Twitter at @darelasn.

The international selection committee is comprised of Dominique Arel (Chair of Ukrainian Studies, U of Ottawa), Anna Colin Lebedev (U Paris Nanterre, France), Mayhill Fowler (Stetson U, US), Daria Mattingly (U of Cambridge, UK), Anna Muller (U of Michigan Dearborn, US), Oxana Shevel (Tufts U, US) and Ioulia Shukan (U Paris Nanterre, France).

The Seminar is made possible by the commitment of the Wolodymyr George Danyliw Foundation to the pursuit of excellence in the study of contemporary Ukraine. We are grateful to the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies for their support in the Holodomor commemoration section.

14th Annual Danyliw Research Seminar on Contemporary Ukraine
Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa, Canada
Desmarais Hall 12102
8-10 November 2018
https://www.danyliwseminar.com/program-2018

Thursday 8 November

Political Economy: Oligarchs and Corruption

9.15-10.00 AM

Moderator: Oxana Shevel (Tufts U, US, oxana.shevel@tufts.edu)

- Sophie Lambroschini (Centre Marc Bloch, Germany, sophie_lambro@yahoo.com)
  "Rivers Don't Abide by the Laws of War" : The Water Utilities Company Voda Donbasu as a Case Study of Collaborative Practices Across the Contact Line in Eastern Ukraine

10.00-10.45 AM

Moderator: Anna Colin Lebedev (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, anna_lebedev@yahoo.com)

- Dmytro Khutkyy (Independent Defense Anti-Corruption Committee, Ukraine, khutkyy@gmail.com)
  Corruption Risks in Defence Procurement in Ukraine

Political Economy: Since Maidan

11.15 AM-12.00 PM
Moderator: Ioulia Shukan (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, ioulia.shukan@gmail.com)

- Taras Fedirko (U of Cambridge, UK, taras.fedirko@gmail.com)
  Money and Free Speech in Ukrainian Journalism: The Case of Hromadske

The Holodomor: 85 Years Later
(with the support of the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium)

1.00-2.30 PM

Perpetrators and Bystanders

Moderators: Anna Muller (U of Michigan Dearborn, US, anmuller@umich.edu) and Dominique Arel (U of Ottawa, Canada, darel@uottawa.ca)

- Daria Mattingly (U of Cambridge, UK, dm628@cam.ac.uk)
  The Ordinary and Extraordinary Perpetrators of the Holodomor

- Olga Ryabchenko (Beketov National U of Urban Economy, Ukraine, lerche555@ukr.net)
  Resistance and Humility: Mobilizing Young People for Work in Urban Areas during the Years of Collectivization and Holodomor

- Nick Kupensky (Bowdoin College, US, nkupensk@bowdoin.edu)
  Blindness, Hypnosis, Addiction, Fetish: The Language of Holodomor Denial in Soviet Industrial Travel Narratives

3.00-4.30 PM

Asking the Big Questions

Moderators: Bohdan Klid (CIUS, U of Alberta, Canada, bohdan.klid@ualberta.ca)
and Daria Mattingly (U of Cambridge, UK, dm628@cam.ac.uk)

• Stanislav Kulchytsky (Institute of Ukrainian History, Ukraine)
New Book: The Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine: An Anatomy of the Holodomor (CIUS Press, 2018)

• Oleh Wolowyna (U of North Carolina Chapel Hill, US, olehw@aol.com)
A General Framework for Holodomor Research

4.30-7.00 PM

Film Screening

Home Games (Ukraine 2018), directed by Alisa Kovalenko

A season in the life of Alina, a poor 20-year-old girl from Kyiv who has a chance to be saved by football, but must also rescue her young siblings. A hard look at the reality of broken homes and strong women.

Followed by a Q&A with the film producer, Stéphane Siohan (East Roads, Ukraine, stephane@east-roads.com).

Moderated by Anna Colin Lebedev (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, anna_lebedev@yahoo.com) and Natalia Stepaniuk (U of Ottawa, Canada, natalia.stepaniuk@gmail.com).

Friday 9 November

9.00-9.45 AM

Moderator: Dominique Arel (U of Ottawa, Canada, darel@uottawa.ca)

• Natalia Levchuk (Institute of Demography, Ukraine, levchuk.nata@gmail.com)
The Role of Grain Procurement in Understanding Regional Variations of 1933 Holodomor Losses

The OUN and World War II Violence

9.45-10.30 AM

Moderator: Daria Mattingly (U of Cambridge, UK, dm628@cam.ac.uk)

- Orysia Kulick (U of Toronto, Canada, omkulick@gmail.com)
  OUN Prisoners in the Buchenwald Subcamp Mittelbau-Dora: A Microhistory

11.00 AM-1.00 PM

Moderators: Dominique Arel (U of Ottawa, Canada, darel@uottawa.ca) and Anna Muller (U of Michigan Dearborn, US, anmuller@umich.edu)

- Jeffrey Kopstein (U of California Irvine, kopstein@uci.edu)
  Jason Wittenberg (U of California Berkeley, witty@berkeley.edu)
  New Book—Intimate Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms on the Eve of the Holocaust (Cornell, 2018)

- Omer Bartov (Brown U, US, omer.bartov@gmail.com)
  New Book—Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz (Simon and Schuster, 2018)

- John Paul Himka (U of Alberta, Canada, john-paul.himka@ualberta.ca)
  OUN-UPA and the Holocaust: A Survey of the Historiography

The Humanitarian Costs of the Donbas War

2.00-3.00 PM

Moderators: Anna Colin Lebedev (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, anna_lebedev@yahoo.com)

- Cynthia J. Buckley (U of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, US, buckleyc@illinois.edu)
- Ralph S. Clem (Florida International U, US, clemr@fiu.edu)
- Erik S. Herron (West Virginia U, US, esherron@mail.wvu.edu)
  No Safe Place: Geopolitical and Humanitarian Implications of Medical Care Infrastructure Destruction in the Donbas Conflict

3.00-3.45 PM

Moderator: Oxana Shevel (Tufts U, US, oxana.shevel@tufts.edu)

- Tania Bulakh (U of Indiana Bloomington, US, tbulakh@umail.iu.edu)
  Daily Life Near the "Contact Line": How People Experience the State in Conflit-Affected Ukraine

4.15-6.15 PM

Film Screening

No Obvious Signs (Ukraine 2018), directed by Alina Gorlova

The story of a female soldier who returns from the Donbas war. Talking to psychologists, battling her PTSD and panic attacks, she tries hard to get back to normal life. The film shows her difficult path of recovery.

Followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker Alina Gorlova (Tabor Productions, Ukraine, alinagorlova.e@gmail.com)
Moderators: Anna Colin Lebedev (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, anna_lebedev@yahoo.com) and Natalia Stepaniuk (U of Ottawa, Canada, natalia.stepaniuk@gmail.com)

Saturday 10 November

War and Gender

9.00-10.30 AM

Moderator: Daria Mattingly (U of Cambridge, UK, dm628@cam.ac.uk) and Oxana Shevel (Tufts U, US, oxana.shevel@tufts.edu)

• Anna Muller (U of Michigan Dearborn, US, anmuller@umich.edu)
  Underground, Imprisonments, and the Polish-Ukrainian Relationships:
  The Life of Polish and Ukrainian Female Underground Members

• Oksana Kis (Institute of Ethnology, Lviv, Ukraine, oksanakis55@gmail.com)
  Faith as a Shield: Ukrainian Women's Religious Practices as Resistance to Total
  Dehumanization in the Gulag

Religion after the War

11.00-11.45 AM

Moderator: Anna Muller (U of Michigan Dearborn, US, anmuller@umich.edu)

• Kathryn David (NYU, US, ked376@nyu.edu)
  Soviet Governance in postwar Western Ukraine: Church and State

Recasting Memories

11.45 AM-12.30 PM

Moderator: Ioulia Shukan (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, ioulia.shukan@gmail.com)

• Anna Balázs (U of Manchester, UK, anna.balazs@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)
  The Decommunization of Everyday Life: The Case of Mariupol

Political Behavior and Attitudes Since Maidan

1.30-3.00 PM

Moderator: Oxana Shevel (Tufts U, US, oxana.shevel@tufts.edu) and Ioulia Shukan (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, ioulia.shukan@gmail.com)

Discussant: Oleh Havrylyshyn (Carleton U, Canada, olehhavrylyshyn@cunet.carleton.ca)

• Olga Onuch (U of Manchester, UK, olga.onuch@manchester.ac.uk)
  The Impact of War on Voting Behavior: The Case of Ukraine

• Oleksiy Haran (U Kyiv Mohyla Academy, Ukraine, haranov@gmail.com)
  New Book—Constructing a Political Nation: Changes in the Attitudes of Ukrainians during the War in the Donbas (Stylos, 2017)

The Donbas War in Visuals and Sounds

3.00-3.45 PM

Moderator: Dominique Arel (U of Ottawa, Canada, darel@uottawa.ca)

• Antony Butts (Filmmaker/Programmer, UK, antonybutts@me.com)
  The Many Lives of "Lenin": A Simulation Game of the War in Donbas

A video game, based on ethnographic evidence, exploring how information warfare impacted the minds of individuals on the ground in what became the Donbas war.

3.45-4.30 PM

Moderator: Anna Colin Lebedev (U Paris-Ouest Nanterre, France, anna_lebedev@yahoo.com)

• Iryna Shuvalova (U of Cambridge, UK, is411@cam.ac.uk)
  Songs of the Donbas War: Dismantling, Construction and Reconstruction of Identities through Text, Sound and Image

#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 $25,000, 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 2019-2020 are invited to contact Dominique Arel (darel@uottawa.ca), Chairholder, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, and visit our web site www.chairukr.com.

Ukrainian Activist Doused With Acid Dies

Christopher Miller
RFE/RL, 4 November 2018
https://bit.ly/2D39WnJ

KYIV -- Kateryna Handzyuk, a Ukrainian civic activist and adviser to the mayor of the Black Sea port city of Kherson, has died from wounds she suffered from an acid attack three months ago.

The 33-year-old Handzyuk died on November 4 in a Kyiv hospital where she was being treated for burns from the attack, colleagues and officials said.

Local media suggested that Handzyuk's death was caused by a blood clot.

The activist, who was known for her scathing criticism of police corruption, was doused with sulfuric acid outside of her Kherson home on July 31 by an unknown attacker.

Her death comes amid a wave of attacks against Ukraine's civic activists, with rights campaigners claiming law-enforcement agencies have failed to thoroughly investigate the cases and may even be complicit in some of the attacks.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, speaking during his trip in Turkey, expressed his condolences to Handzyuk's family and called on law-enforcement agencies to do everything in their power to bring her killer to justice.

Five suspects have been detained for their alleged involvement in the attack, but there was no information about its mastermind.

"Attacks against civil society activists are unacceptable. The perpetrators of this vicious crime must be brought to justice," EU enlargement commissioner Johannes Hahn tweeted.

Handzyuk suffered severe burns to nearly 40 percent of her body and lost sight in one of her eyes after the acid attack, according to doctors who treated her at a burn center in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv.

Doctors performed 11 surgical operations to try to save her life. From her hospital bed, Handzyuk vowed to track down her attackers.

Police initially listed the case as hooliganism but changed it to attempted murder committed with extreme cruelty after public outcry.

Ukrainian lawmaker Olena Sotnyk on November 4 renewed her previous call for a special investigative committee to be formed in parliament to probe her case.

Local and international civil society groups have recorded at least 55 unsolved attacks against activists, including on Handzyuk, since 2017.

In recent months, protesters demanding a proper police response have gathered outside government buildings across the country in a campaign dubbed "silence kills."

Yuriy Lutsenko, Ukraine's prosecutor general and a presidential appointee, caused uproar after one of the protests in September, when he said activists were themselves partly to blame because they "stir up"an "atmosphere of total hatred toward the authorities."

Handzyuk was stinging in her criticism of police corruption.

In September 2017, she accused Artem Antoshchuk, a department head in the Kherson Regional Police, of demanding a 3 percent cut from all contracts and tenders in the region.

The accusation led to a fierce court battle, which she won.

Police have arrested five former fighters of the Ukrainian Volunteer Army, a splinter faction of the ultranationalist Right Sector militia, suspected of involvement in the attack.

Four of the men have claimed the fifth, Serhiy Torbin, a former officer of Kherson police, was the main suspect.

Torbin is in the custody of the Security Service of Ukraine at a pretrial detention center in Kyiv, his defense lawyer Yuriy Khazov Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.

Stills from a CCTV camera published by local media appear to show the alleged attacker running away from the scene of the crime.

Six weeks before her death, Handzyuk recorded a video message for Hromadske TV from her hospital bed. Wrapped in bandages, she said she was certain the attack was meant to kill her.

"Why do I consider it to be assassination attempt? Because the acid was poured on my head," she said. "If someone wanted to warn or silence me, they could have targeted my arms, legs, or face -- anywhere. But they poured a liter of acid on my head."

Before she signed off, she added: "Yes, I know that I look bad now. But I'm sure that I look much better than law and justice in Ukraine," she said. "Because they aren't treated by anyone."

Making Sense of Russia's New Draconian Sanctions on Ukraine

by Anders Aslund
Atlantic Council, 01 November 2018
https://bit.ly/2P5DHLT

On November 1, the Russian government imposed severe economic sanctions on 322 Ukrainian individuals and 68 Ukrainian companies. These are the most extensive sanctions imposed by any country in the tit-for-tat confrontation between Russia and Western countries over Ukraine.

Curiously, these sanctions are explicitly only economic, declaring that any assets on the territory of the Russian Federation belonging to these individuals and enterprises will be frozen, though one would presume that none of these people will be allowed to enter Russia and no trade with the sanctioned companies will be possible.

The sanctions focus mainly on two groups, politicians and businessmen. The list of sanctioned individuals reads like a who's who list of Ukraine's elite. The biggest group is politicians. Pro-European party leaders have been sanctioned: Yulia Tymoshenko, Oleh Lyashko, Oksana Syroyid, and Arseniy Yatsenyuk as well as Speaker Andriy Parubiy. Scores of parliamentarians have been included, such as leading liberals Mustafa Nayyem, Serhiy Leshchenko, and Svitlana Zalishchuk. Prominent members from the Poroshenko Bloc are Ihor Hryniov, Oleksandr Granovskiy, Irina Gerashchenko, and Nina Yuzhanina. The most striking omission is Poroshenko's closest man, his deputy faction leader Ihor Kononenko. Only the Opposition Bloc goes almost unscathed.

The top of the presidential administration is included, the head Ihor Rainin, and his deputies Konstantin Yeliseev, Rostislav Pavlenko, and Aleksei Filatov. Many ministers have been sanctioned, notably Deputy Prime Minister Ivanna Klympush-Tsinzadze, Minister of Interior Arsen Avakov, Minister of Defense Stepan Poltorak, Acting Minister of Health Ulana Suprun, Minister of Education Lila Hrynevych, and Minister of Infrastructure Volodymyr Omelyan. The leading law enforcers are also being hit, Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, SBU Chair Vasyl Hrytsak and his first deputy Pavel Demchina, as well as National Security Advisor Oleksandr Turchynov and his first deputy Oleg Gladkovskiy. Needless to say, the two top Crimean leaders, Mustafa Dzhemilev and Refat Chubarov, are also on the list.

Moscow only left President Petro Poroshenko, Prime Minister Volodymyr Groisman with several deputies, and Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin off and available for talks. However, Poroshenko's oldest son Oleksiy is sanctioned.

More surprising is how many prominent businessmen have been sanctioned. The list reads like the Forbes list of the richest Ukrainians. It is topped by Victor Pinchuk.

From Privat Group, Hennadiy Bogoliubov is included but oddly not his partner Ihor Kolomoiskiy. Ferrexpo's owner Konstantin Zhevago and Burisma's owner Mykola Zlochevskiy, and the foremost agricultural businessmen Yuriy Kosyuk (MHP), Oleksiy Vadaturskiy (Nibulon), and Andriy Verevskiy (Kernel) as well as leading retailers Oleksandr and Galina Gerega (Epitsentr) and Volodymyr Kostelman (Fozzy) are included. Some wealthy and completely apolitical businessmen are as well, such as Vitaly Antonov (Galnaftogaz), Oleksandr Yaroslavskiy, and Mykola Yankovskiy. The most surprising inclusions are Pavel Fuks, a Russian businessman who lives in Moscow, Dmytro Firtash's partner Ivan Fursin, and Konstantin Grigorishchin, who was a Russian citizen until recently. Naftogaz's CEO Andriy Kobolev is also there. Does that mean that Gazprom does not want to talk to Naftogaz anymore?

The list of sanctioned companies largely coincides with its owners. It contains numerous mines and metallurgical companies, many food and agricultural companies, three big fertilizer companies, and Ukraine's biggest retailers. Not included are Rinat Akhmetov and Vadym Novynskiy and the many companies that belong to them. Nor is Roshen or any other company that belongs to Poroshenko. Only three minor state companies and a few financial firms have been selected.

These sanctions will have significant economic impact, though after trade between Russia and Ukraine plummeted by 80 percent from 2012 to 2016 because of tough prior sanctions, Russia's share of Ukraine's total foreign trade has fallen to some 12 percent. Another third of Ukraine's remaining export to Russia will likely disappear, primarily food and agricultural goods, but also some metallurgical products. Since bilateral trade has shrunk so much, Ukraine is becoming increasingly immune to Russian sanctions.

The political implications are likely to become much more severe. Although the Russian government presents these sanctions as countermeasures to US and Ukrainian sanctions, they are very far-reaching and only justified with "unfriendly actions." These latest sanctions will make it difficult for any Ukrainians to advocate for a friendlier policy to Russia. Given that only five months remain until the Ukrainian presidential election, they will make it impossible for pro-Russian candidates in Ukraine to make themselves felt in the race. Another question is whether the United States and Europe will respond with more sanctions on Russia because of this draconian action.

#6
Counting the Dead in Europe's Forgotten War

by Amy Mackinnon
Foreign Policy, 25 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2OOM8Lb

Since the conflict began between Ukraine and Russian-backed rebels more than four years ago, Alexander Hug has had a front seat to Europe's forgotten war. In a conflict steeped in fake news and propaganda, Hug has helped lead the only independent international monitoring mission of the war as the principal deputy chief monitor of the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The civilian monitoring mission has some 700 observers on the ground in Ukraine. Each week, the observers document thousands of violations of the Minsk cease-fire agreements that were brokered in a bid to end the war.

During a recent trip to New York City, Hug sat down with Foreign Policy. He described the challenges of his job in Ukraine and the frustrations of witnessing a conflict that could be resolved quickly if only the two sides were willing.

Alexander Hug: It's more of an emotional difficulty. There is an expectation on us on the ground, especially from the noninvolved civilian Ukrainians on both sides of the contact line [front line]. There is no other international organization there. They see our monitors coming into town with their notebooks or cameras or glasses to take note of the explosion, note the damage, count the dead, take record of the misery they see, and then they leave and it all continues.

And, of course, they want to know who is guilty. This is a normal human question. The absence of accountability is a major problem. In other conflicts, you have a military commission or joint military commission where everyone involved is trying to then investigate and inquire into a violation of the peace accord. That doesn't exist here. This year alone, we have triangulated evidence of probably 190 civilian casualties and over 200,000 cease-fire violations.

FP: What's the OSCE's official stance on Russia's involvement in Eastern Ukraine?

AH: If the question is what we have seen on the ground ... we have seen convoys leaving and entering Ukraine on dirt roads in the middle of the night, in areas where there is no official crossing. In one border area, we've also made this public, including some footage we have put out. We have seen specific types of weapons that we have described in detail, including electronic warfare equipment. We have spoken to prisoners taken by the Ukrainian forces who claim to be members of the Russian armed forces fighting on rotation in Ukraine. We have seen men with the insignia of the Russian Federation, but you can buy this jacket anywhere. We have also seen the insignia of Germany, Spain, and others—but also of the Russians.

FP: Are mines being laid by both sides?

AH: Yes, even new ones. It's not just that this is old stuff that we're seeing here. You see it in our reports. We even describe very clearly that they're new and not seen before, so it's clearly trackable where these new developments are.

FP: How easy will they be to remove? Are people on both sides keeping good records of where these mines are? Or are we going to have a situation years down the line when, even after the conflict has finished, there is still going to be live mine fields?

AH: Laying mines in the situational conflict is not like building a road, so they've likely been ad hoc. That's one thing that makes it very difficult to track despite the fact that they have obligations to keep maps. But the reality is if you have to do this under fire, very rapidly, it's likely there are cases where no records or very bad records were kept. And the weather. Even if there are maps, the melting water moves mines quite a bit.

FP: What has been your biggest frustration?

AH: A major frustration is that we know, I know, and our readers know that this conflict can end, the military technical part of it can end within one hour when decision-makers both take that political decision. And we have demonstrated it. In the Minsk agreements, the parties agreed to a cease-fire on the first day of the school year, which in this part of the world is Sept. 1. What happened just overnight was cease-fire violations dropped to just a few dozen. And it was low for quite a few days only to go back up again and now we're in the thousands. But this shows clearly that when they take a decision—

FP: That they can when they want to.

AH: It's no problem. And it's not just a small area—it's a 500-kilometer-long front line. That shows that there is absolute 100 percent control on both sides of this contact line, of every little position. And that it doesn't stop irreversibly is very frustrating. Because we know it's possible.

I have seen other conflicts where you have an undercurrent group dynamic, ethnic, religious. You don't have this here. You don't need to think about reconciliation from village to village. It's pure political decisions that are required. Up to 40,000 Ukrainians cross this contact line every day. You have to go far and wide to see another conflict where you have civilians crossing what is in essence the front line so frequently.

FP: So you think it's very solvable in terms of the animosities between people?

AH: Well, four and a half years of violence will require compromises. It will require that justice has been done for those who have lost their loved ones and had their property destroyed and taken. But I don't think it's yet at the stage where you have one group against the other group. That may well change if this goes far too long.

Look at a kid who lives in Donetsk or Avdiivka across the line. If the kid was, say, 5 or so in 2014, the kid is now 10. He will not recall anything else but conflict of his short life.

And his head is full of propaganda. He doesn't know what the situation was before the conflict here. Add another five years of the same, if this goes on longer, and that kid will be

15, and you will have a formed adult more or less who will have no recollection of what is was like before. And then you will have a generational problem. That should be prevented.

FP: What has been the lowest point for you?

AH: Every civilian who gets killed or injured. And in particular kids. It is very difficult to take because I know this is unnecessary and could stop. They're not the ones who take up arms and have developed hate against the other side. Civilians always tell me, on either side of the line, "This is not our conflict. We don't understand why it is continuing." And all they want is that it ends. That clearly shows me that it's not their war or their conflict.

#7
The Lessons of the Donbas Election Campaigns

by Kirill Krivosheev
Carnegie Moscow Center, 29 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2SefMB8

Just two months ago, there were no plans to hold elections in the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics, even though the four-year terms of the Donbas officials were coming to an end. The republics had said they didn't have sufficient funding to hold elections, and that they feared a Ukrainian offensive. Then, the assassination of Donetsk leader Alexander Zakharchenko in late August forced everyone into an about-turn. It was decided that elections in the Donbas were necessary in order to fill a power vacuum and avoid destabilization, and they will take place on November 11.

The recently published lists of candidates confirmed that the election winners were selected far ahead of time in Moscow, but the campaigns and candidates—including those who didn't make the final list—say a lot about the ideological differences within the self-proclaimed republics and about the Kremlin's vision for their future.

Zakharchenko's assassination may have introduced some political uncertainty in Donetsk, but in Luhansk there was never any question about what the future holds. The list of challengers to incumbent Leonid Pasechnik reveals that there is only one real candidate, a valiant defender of the people, who will crush his competitors: chairmen of the railways and education trade unions.

Pasechnik seized power in November 2017 from his unpopular predecessor, Igor Plotnitsky. Pasechnik, a former minister of state security of the breakaway region and previously a department head of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), has done quite well in his new role: at least, there have been no serious incidents during the year that he has been in power.

The election campaign in the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) has been much more turbulent. Both the low popularity of the main candidate (Denis Pushilin, the former speaker of the region's parliament) and the Kremlin's attempts to restore his reputation during the brief remaining period have made things more interesting.

Replacing Zakharchenko wasn't easy, as he was the epitome of Donbas separatism. Not a poor man, Zakharchenko could have fled to Rostov or Kyiv at the beginning of the conflict, the way dozens of his peers did. Instead, he stayed and became the commander of a military division, risking his life many times. He was a man of the people and spoke his mind, and many in the Donbas genuinely respected him for his principles.

Pushilin, on the other hand, is the butt of many jokes and the scapegoat for many failures. How else could the workers of the Donbas see the former functionary of an infamous financial pyramid that conned millions of Soviet people, who claims that this experience taught him how to be an "effective manager"?

The people of the Donbas associate Pushilin, not Zakharchenko, with the Minsk agreements on ending fighting in the region, which contradict the romantic ideas of the Russian Spring of 2014. They also look down on him for always wearing a suit and tie in public, never donning a military uniform, even though he talks about the war frequently (as an excuse for various failures in running the republic).

Pushilin and his handlers in Moscow understand that an influential field commander would be too strong a challenger for a man in a suit, and did not let any strong military figures enter the running, though some tried.

Igor Strelkov, one of the field commanders from 2014 (whose return to the Donbas many still hope for) did not make the cut for a formal reason: he is a Russian citizen. Alexander Khodakovsky, the commander of the Vostok battalion—who, like Luhansk head Pasechnik, hails from the Ukrainian special forces—had said he would run, and if the elections were being held fairly, would have stood a real chance. But with some contrived reason cited, Khodakovsky wasn't allowed to cross the border from the Rostov region into the Donetsk republic on the day he needed to submit documents to register as a candidate.

Two other military men—Igor Khakimzyanov, the first commander of the Donetsk forces, and soldier Vyacheslav Dyakov—campaigned, but the local election commission refused to register them as candidates, claiming that they had not submitted their signature lists on time.

Pavel Gubarev, one of the first political leaders of the Russian Spring, also threw his hat in the ring. Like Pushilin, until 2014 Gubarev was a wealthy businessman, and from the very start of the conflict he has provided financial support for the separatist movement. Gubarev owns the Novorossiya television channel and radio station, as well as the DNR-Live online portal, and has repeatedly questioned the use of the Minsk agreements.

Gubarev didn't make it onto the ballot, either: the election commission said he had not collected enough valid signatures.

There will therefore be only four relatively unknown candidates challenging Pushilin, none of whom is likely to get more than a few percent of the vote. These challengers are Roman Khromenkov (the former mayor of the cities of Yenakiieve and Horlivka as part of the DPR), Elena Shishkina (chairwoman of the Ukrainian People's Tribunal for the Government of Ukraine), Roman Yevstifeyev (head of the Museum of Afghan Veterans), and Vladimir Medvedev (deputy education minister of the DPR).

All of these candidates are so far removed from the "patriotic" opposition movement in the DPR that even Strelkov has called for "a boycott of this imbecilic spectacle," even though he had previously said that voters should go to the polls—and vote for anyone other than Pushilin.

Despite the fastidious weeding of the political playing field, Pushilin's PR team is trying to make the civilian candidate at least vaguely attractive to voters, including by positioning him as continuing the mission of Zakharchenko. He is also talking more about Russia, saying that "integration with Russia is the main and immutable vector that the Donbas chose back in 2014."

Pushilin's key PR achievement was his interview with a real Western newspaper, Poland's Rzeczpospolita. In Poland, many criticized the interview for a lack of tough questions, and Ukraine's ambassador to Poland wrote a letter of complaint to the paper's editor. Nevertheless, it had the effect of legitimizing Pushilin as a decisionmaker.

There are no objective opinion polls in the Donbas that could be used to assess the results of the PR efforts. However, even accounting for the highly conditional nature of online voting on social networks, Pushilin does not appear to be popular. In the latest surveys, Gubarev was firmly in the lead. In earlier surveys, Strelkov was ahead.

Journalist Sergei Belous shared different figures on his Telegram channel: citing a closed survey, he wrote that Pushilin is in the lead, though with only 32.1 percent, while 46.6 percent of respondents found the question difficult to answer.

Moscow is overtly changing its approach to its relationship with Donetsk. Russia's Federal Security Service investigators openly traveled to Donetsk to look into Zakharchenko's murder, and on October 10, Pushilin met just as openly in Moscow with Vladislav Surkov, the Kremlin's point man on Ukraine. Pushilin, who is more manageable and less impulsive than his predecessor, even invited Surkov to visit Donetsk before the end of the year. In other words, Moscow does not feel obliged to conceal the fact that it is pulling the strings in the election campaign in the Donbas.

The romantic spirit of 2014 that supporters of the unrecognized republics remember so fondly has completely dissipated. Today, the poster child of the Donbas isn't a tough guy

in fatigues, but an "effective manager" in a suit and tie who is ready to take unpopular decisions as directed from above and relay the bad news to the people.

Before Pushilin's new mandate becomes completely clear, however, another unknown in the equation must be found: who will become president of Ukraine in March 2019?

#8
Two "DNR Ministers" Surrender to Ukraine. Will the Rest Follow?

- -

by Yuri Zoria
Euromaidan Press, 16 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2Oi7n33

In August and September the Security Service of Ukraine reported that two former ministers of the "Donetsk People's Republic," one of two Russian-run statelets in the east of Ukraine, surrendered to Ukrainian law enforcers. The agency didn't disclose their names, but it was possible to identify them as Yuri Lekstutes and Aliya Kamara, who were members to the "DNR minister soviet" back in 2014, but were arrested in December of the same year and spent some time behind bars in occupied Donetsk under accusations of embezzlement and authority abuse. They are first high-profile "officials" from the Moscow-run statelets in the east of Ukraine who chose to surrender to Ukraine instead of fleeing to Russia. Can such cases become a tendency and under what circumstances?

The second "DNR ex-minister" surrenders to Ukraine

On 25 September, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) reported that SBU Counter Intelligence Department managed to transfer a former "DNR minister of agrarian policy and food" from ORDO, as the occupied parts of Donetsk Oblast are referred to.

"Law enforcers found that the man joined the ranks of the illegal armed formations in September 2014. First, as a member of the so-called "Industrial Stronghold of the Donbas," he supplied fertilizers, fuel, and lubricants and other goods to the separatist-held territories of Donetsk region... Then, headed by the suggestion of [then DNR head] Zakharchenko 'Ministry of Agro-Industrial Policy and Food' offender recruited the staff and provided the functioning of the fake agency under the supervision of Russia's special services. Furthermore, he also 'authorized' the arrival of the so-called 'Russian humanitarian convoy' cargo to the occupied Donbas territories," the SBU report reads.

The Agency didn't name the defector, but mentioned that he had conflicted with Zaharchenko "because of plunderage redistribution," "he was accused of authority abuse, stealing state funds in a particularly large size, and was imprisoned by his own accomplices for a while." These facts give grounds for identifying him as Aliya Kamara

who was an acting "minister of agroindustry and food" for about a month from November 2014 but was arrested and put in prison later in December 2014.

Earlier in August, SBU reported that its counterintelligence department had transferred former "DNR minister of culture and tourism" from the occupied territory to Ukraine, who was identified as Yuri Lekstutes, who was a "minister" from May 2014 and was also arrested in December of the same year.

On 15 August 2015, the SBU launched kind of a witness protection program dubbed "Waiting for You at Home" for Ukrainian citizens who participated in illegal armed groups and terrorist organizations in Easter Ukraine.

The program helps discharge from liability the members of the so-called "DNR and LNR" who choose to surrender to the Ukrainian authorities. The program is applicable to those who "didn't participate in murders, tortures, rape abuses, attacks on the enterprises, institutions, and organizations and other felonies" and who "are sincerely ready to assist in the discovery of the crimes" committed by the formation they took part in.

According to the most recent official information published by Ukrainski Novyny, 303 members of the illegal armed groups took advantage of the program as of May 2018, and the Ukrainian courts exonerated 232 of them.

Nevertheless, prior to the defection of the two "ministers," there were no public reports on such high officials who surrendered to Ukraine. Reportedly, the users of the Program were low-profile members of "LNR" and "DNR," who had joined the military and paramilitary groups but later decided to return to normal life.

Now at least the former "DNR minister of culture" has used the program "Waiting for You at Home" to move to Ukraine, according to the SBU report.

DNR "officials"

In total, 103 persons were members of six consecutive "DNR governments," including the "Interim Coalition Government" declared back in April 2014 and the next "DNR minister soviets." Some members of the "cabinets" were foreign citizens. There were Russian nationals like Moscow political consultant Aleksandr Boroday and retired Russian military intelligence agent Igor Girkin. Some other were holders of the passports of Transnistria, a Russian-controlled breakaway region of Moldova, such as former vice PM of PMR Aleksandr Karaman, former chief of the Transnistrian secret service (PMR MGB) Vladimir Antyufeev. The latter had also brought two of his Transnistrian accomplices, Andrey Pinchuk and Oleg Beryoza, who remained law enforcement "ministers" until March 2015.

However, most of the former and incumbent "DNR ministers" have been Ukrainian citizens. The current "DNR heads" and "parliamentarians" (50 in Luhansk, 100 in Donetsk) are the citizens of Ukraine too.

Post-resignation options for separatist "ministers" and other leaders
After their resignations, many leaders remained in the occupied territory, still holding other positions in power. Some of them lost their powers and took on the role of the opposition to the Moscow-approved leadership, like 2014-2016 "DNR security minister" Aleksandr Khodakovsky, and 2014 "DNR people's governor" Pavel Gubarev, who both had become vocal critics of then "DNR head" Aleksandr Zakharchenko.

Some "ministers" preferred fleeing to Russia (Boroday, Girkin, Timofeev), Transnistria (Antyufeev, Pinchuk, Beryoza), or occupied Crimea (Lyagin).

Some other wound up behind bars in Donetsk charged with "abuse of the official position," like it had happened to "fuel and energy ministers" Andrey Granovsky and Yevgeny Faynitsky, vice PM Aleksandr Kalyussky, justice minister Yekaterina Filippova in late 2014 – early 2015.

The two other of those imprisoned in 2014-2015, culture minister Yury Lekstutes and agroindustry minister Aliya Kamara, have lately surrendered to Ukraine after their release from DNR prisons.

It is worth noting that many leaders who could be rivals for the "heads of republics" were assassinated or forced into Russia, as it happened to a few Don Cossack leaders in Luhansk Oblast in 2015 (Kozitsyn – expelled, Mozgovoy and Dryomov – assassinated) and to a number of other chieftains such as Arsen "Motorola" Pavlov and Mikhail "Givi" Tolstykh who were killed in Donetsk. Zakharchnko's main rival Khodakovsky tried to return to Donetsk from Russia shortly after the death of the "DNR head" to participate in the sham elections, but he himself reported that the Russian border guards didn't let him pass into the ORDO. The "LNR head" Igor Plotnitsky escaped to Russia following the successful putsch organized by siloviki who opposed him.

Another noteworthy highlight is that hiding in Russia can't prevent an accidental death of a former leader: ex "LNR head" Valery Bolotov had died shortly after a meeting with his "LNR" allies in Moscow due to suspected poisoning; leader of a separatist "Oplot" unit Yevgeny Zhilin was shot dead in a restaurant in Moscow Oblast.

What can force "LDNR leaders" to surrender to Ukraine?

As far the pseudo-states remain relatively stable and most of the leaders remain in power, there are no signs that more high-ranked separatists can flee to Ukraine. Even if someone loses his or her power in a "republic," the main option is to remain. If they are about to be arrested or feel like their life is in danger, their first choice is to flee Luhansk or Donetsk to Russia. Ukraine seems to be the last pick possible for high-profile "LDNR" leaders.

The deaths of at least two top separatists in Russia are not a secret for the political leadership and top-brass of the fake republics. However, they still know that not just Russian citizens like Girkin or Kozitsyn, but also Ukrainian nationals like Plotnitsky, Lyagin, Timofeev – all have had no significant problems while in exile in Russia.

While Russia fully supports the "republics" and no internal conflicts escalate within the LDNR leadership, it's hard to expect a mass defection of the leaders to Ukraine.

Both "DNR" and "LNR" have announced the plans to conduct the "parliamentary and presidential elections" on 11 November. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry said that the "intention of Russian Federation's occupation administration of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts to conduct 'snap elections'... is a flagrant violation of Russia's commitments as a part to the Minsk [Peace] Accords." The EU and US condemned the planned sham elections as well.

However, Russia is not going to abolish the voting. The Kremlin-approved acting heads of both republics, Leonid Pasechnik and Denis Pushilin, are campaigning in full swing, showing up on the local TV channels every day while visiting various local factories, farms, and social organizations.

The key rivals of "acting DNR head" Denis Pushilin, Aleksandr Khodakovsky and Pavel Gubarev, have been elbowed out of the "election race."

Even the Kremlin "gray cardinal" for the East-Ukrainian occupied territories, Putin's aide Vladislav Surkov, participated in promoting the unpopular Denis Pushilin, promising to "raise wages in the DNR," as the Russian state-run news agency TASS reported.

The Kremlin's intention to legitimize the acting leaders of its puppet republics once again by sham local elections, even under the threat of further EU and US sanctions on Russia, shows that Russia is not going to scrap its pseudo-states or reduce its support to them.

And this means that we may witness only isolated cases of the escapes by high-profile LDNR leaders to Ukraine in the nearest future.

Meanwhile, the "leaders" themselves understand that the republics are in no way real states. For example, one of the masterminds behind the 2014 separatist Donetsk referendum and former "minister of labor and social policy" Roman Lyagin who resides in the Russian-occupied Crimea once stated that the DNR "a parody of a state" being "kept afloat by internal terror," and that the region's "return to Ukraine is inevitable, the Donbas is Ukraine."

Such realistic sentiments may work towards their intentions to surrender in the future.

Ukraine Notifies ICC that Russia is Forcing Crimeans to Serve in Russian Army

- -

by Natalia Datskevych
Kyiv Post, 25 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2yPqNao

Russia is forcing citizens of Crimea to serve in its army, in breach of international law, Ukrainian prosecutors and human rights organizations said at a press conference in Kyiv on Oct. 25.

The prosecutor's office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and non-government human rights organizations have now sent notification of this to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, in the Netherlands, including evidence they have gathered about Russia's actions.

In accordance with international law, Russia has no right to force citizens of an occupied territory to serve in its armed forces, Elizaveta Dzigora, a prosecutor of the Prosecutor's Office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, said during the press conference. "Russia is not adhering to this ban, and army conscription campaigns are taking place. This is an obvious war crime," said Dzigora.

The purpose of sending the notification to International Criminal Court is to allow the court's prosecutors to conduct investigations in Ukraine, she said.

"A repressive system for drafting (Crimeans) into Russia's army has been created, under which it is a crime to avoid serving in the armed forces of the Russian Federation," said Maxim Tymochko, a lawyer at Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, non-profit and non-partisan association of 30 Ukrainian human rights NGOs.

According to the Crimean Prosecutor's Office, 12,229 residents of the peninsula have already been called up to serve in the Russian army since Russia invaded and started its occupation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea in 2014. Russia has conducted 33 court cases related to the criminal prosecution of Crimean citizens for evading military service.

Under Article 40, Part 3 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, an occupying power may not compel protected persons (the citizens of the occupied territory) to do work directly related to military operations.

Oleksandr Sedov, an analyst at the Crimean Human Rights Group, reported that 165 legal acts had already been collected confirming that citizens of Crimea have been drafted into the occupying power's army.

"There are orders from the Russian president to begin the campaign, laws that allow this campaign in the occupied territory, as well as reports from local administrations," said Sedov.

The expert group has also analyzed 2,000 pages in social networks, and found that at least nine recruits from Crimea had received awards for participating in Russian military operations in Syria.

Currently, another Russian conscription campaign is underway in Russian-occupied Crimea, under which Russia plans to draft another 3,000 soldiers to its army.

"This indicates that the Russia's crime has not stopped, so our work to collect evidence will continue," said Sedov.

#10

Russia's Roadmap to Exiting Ukraine

by Charles North
Moscow Times, 30 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2yPoWm3

In its fifth year, Russia's armed aggression in Ukraine's Donbas region has become a costly burden with little strategic benefit. Ukraine, having lost over 10,000 lives, is more united against Russia — and more connected to Europe. Sanctions have heightened Russia's isolation and forced it to cut spending, leading to protests over the government's raising of the retirement age. Meanwhile, Russia's continued military presence in Donbas blocks all Russian hopes of restoring dialogue with the West on shaping security in Europe.

While we cannot know when or if Russia will reconsider its failed approach, it would be a failure of smart policymaking not to have an exit ramp designed and paved for ready use.

One possible path has emerged after negotiations between U.S. envoy Kurt Volker and Kremlin aide Vladislav Surkov, bolstered by numerous analyses by policy specialists in Moscow, Kiev and Washington.

This approach calls for a U.N.-mandated peacekeeping operation to facilitate a peace process that would result in Russia's departure from Donbas and the return of control to Ukraine. Ukraine has endorsed the principle and Russia has said it does not object. Four months ago, their foreign ministers, along with those of France and Germany, were still far apart on the details, but they agreed that their talks are "not about if, but how, such a mission could happen."

The recent analyses, alongside lessons from past peace operations, suggest what a peacekeeping operation in Ukraine could look like.

To prevent an operation from bogging down in incremental negotiations, the Security Council would provide a single authorization for the entire transition process, which would take at least two years. It would establish a special representative of the U.N. Secretary General (SRSG) to oversee the operation and make all decisions to implement the mandate without additional Security Council authorization. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) would designate the SRSG as the head of its operations in eastern Ukraine, unifying the OSCE and U.N. roles.

The peacekeeping force would need to be robust: 20,000-40,000 troops with armor, helicopters and aerial drones, and demining, intelligence and other capacities. Such a potent force would compel adherence to the ceasefire, deter spoilers, secure the territory, impound heavy weapons and manage the demobilization of local combatants. The force would have to be drawn primarily from countries outside both NATO and the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization. It would need to deploy quickly — within six months of a Security Council resolution. Women should ideally form 30 percent of a peacekeeping force, to strengthen its ability to work with all the population and to help prevent the abuses against civilians that have occurred in other peacekeeping operations.

A civilian administration of roughly 5,000 international and Ukrainian employees would administer key public services, help reintegrate displaced persons and former fighters, and implement key provisions of the peace agreement. The SRSG would oversee this administration, as well as an international police force of 2,000 to 4,000 members that would maintain order while reforming and training the local police.

Once mobilized, the peacekeepers would take control of the region in phases. To begin, they would quickly deploy along the current ceasefire line and provide security for OSCE monitors along the Russian border. They would then establish control over the whole territory and secure the border with Russia within 60 days.

In that time, Russia would complete its withdrawal, local combatant forces would be gathered into cantonments for demobilization, and the political leaderships of the self-proclaimed "republics" would dissolve. Meanwhile, Ukraine would pass laws to meet its obligations, including for amnesty (except for war crimes) and local elections. The peacekeeping operation would end after overseeing the elections.

Even if all sides can agree on the mandate and shape of a peacekeeping operation, two issues remain obstacles to peace.

First, Putin has insisted that Ukraine must negotiate directly with the self-proclaimed "republics." Ukraine understandably refuses. Coordination with the "republics," if not

handled by Russia or through the Minsk process, would more properly be handled by the U.N. special representative.

Second, the Minsk Accords endorse a "special status" for the areas currently under Russian influence, including specific powers for their local authorities. Many Ukrainians mistrust such an arrangement, applied exclusively to these areas, as a way for Russia to continue subverting Ukrainian governance. Adhering to this provision will increase resentment toward the separatists and inhibit their reintegration.

Alternatively, Ukraine could advance its decentralization and make all regions "special" by adopting the European Union's Charter of Local Self-Government as a framework nationwide. This approach may address Russian concerns, while strengthening Ukraine's governance and easing the reintegration process.

The opportunity exists to end this war, to restore Ukraine's control over its Donbas region, and to open a path toward restored adherence to a rules-based security order in Europe. The basic design of a Russian exit ramp from Donbas is visible. Negotiations should press forward to clarify its details and remove the remaining obstacles. The clearer the path, the more likely it will be used.

#11
Russian Disinformation on Facebook Targeted Ukraine

Well Before the 2016 U.S. Election
by Dana Priest, James Jacoby and Anya Bourg
Frontline PBS, 28 October 2018
https://to.pbs.org/2RxooIr

In the spring of 2015, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko was desperate for Mark Zuckerberg's help. His government had been urging Facebook to stop the Kremlin's spreading of misinformation on the social network to foment distrust in his new administration and to promote support of Russia's invasion and occupation of parts of Ukraine.

To get Zuckerberg's attention, the president posted a question for a town hall meeting at Facebook's Silicon Valley headquarters. There, a moderator read it aloud.

"Mark, will you establish a Facebook office in Ukraine?" the moderator said, chuckling, according to a video of the assembly. The room of young employees rippled with laughter. But the government's suggestion was serious: It believed that a Kiev office, staffed with people familiar with Ukraine's political situation, could help solve Facebook's high-level ignorance about Russian information warfare.

"You know, over time it's something that we might consider," the chief executive responded. "So thank you for — the Ukrainian president — for writing in. I don't think we've gotten that one before."

In the three years since then, officials here say the company has failed to address most of their concerns about Russian online interference that predated similar interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The tactics identified by officials, such as coordinated activity to overwhelm Facebook's system and the use of impostor accounts, are the same as in the 2016 contest — and continue to challenge Facebook ahead of next month's midterm elections.

"I was explicitly saying that there are troll factories, that their posts and reposts promoted posts and news that are fake," Dmytro Shymkiv, then deputy minister of the presidential administration, said he told Facebook executives in June 2015. "They are promoted on your platform. By very often fake accounts. Have a look."

Facebook has launched major reforms to its platform and processes since the 2016 U.S. presidential election made the company — and American users of Facebook — aware of how Russian actors were abusing it to influence politics far beyond their borders. But Ukraine's warnings two years earlier show how the social media giant has been blind to the misuse of Facebook, in particular in places where it is hugely popular but has no on-the-ground presence. There is still no Facebook office in Ukraine.

Facebook officials defend their response to Ukrainian officials. They said Shymkiv did not raise the issue of Russian misinformation and other tactics in the meeting but that he talked instead about the company's standards for removing content. They also said what they were alerted to in Ukraine was not a preview of what happened in the United States during the 2016 election.

Activists, officials and journalists from countries including Ukraine, the Philippines and Myanmar who reported abuses say Facebook took little or no action, according to an investigation for the documentary The Facebook Dilemma, airing Monday and Tuesday on FRONTLINE PBS. It was not until after evidence that fake accounts from Russia were used to influence the 2016 U.S. election that the company acted, some said. This article is based on reporting done for the film.

"That was the moment when suddenly I got a lot of calls and questions," said Shymkiv, who left the government recently to return to private industry. "Because we were one of the first ones who actually told them that this is happening."

In the past year, Facebook has begun to double the number of employees — to 20,000 — tasked with removing hateful speech and fake accounts.

Facebook contracts out the work of finding misinformation to small, local nonprofit organizations, while engineers build automated tools to tackle the problem on a large

scale. Such misinformation is "downranked" — moved down in the news feed — unless it also violates other community standards such as being spam, hate speech or inciting violence, in which case it is removed.

Facebook has said Russia's manipulation of political messages on its platform during the U.S. presidential election caught it by surprise. In Ukraine and elsewhere, Facebook had been seen as a force for good, bolstering democracy and enabling free speech. It played an oversized role in Ukraine's 2014 Maidan Revolution, helping communities orchestrate the delivery of medical care and supplies to the revolutionaries and the sharing of tactics for resisting police and troops.

In interviews, company executives said they were slow to act on other evidence that Facebook was causing what they called "real-world harm."

"Mark has said this, that we have been slow to really understand the ways in which Facebook might be used for bad things. We've been really focused on the good things," said Naomi Gleit, one of Facebook's longest-serving employees and now vice president for social good. "It's possible that we could have done more sooner, and we haven't been as fast as we needed to be, but we're really focused on it now."

A team set up to safeguard the upcoming U.S. midterm elections will be reviewing and removing inappropriate posts in real time. Facebook in August removed 652 fake accounts and pages with ties to Russia and Iran aimed at influencing political debates — and an additional 82 Iran-backed accounts on Friday. False narratives about the Central American migrant caravan and mailed pipe bombs were rampant on the network this week.

Complaints and harm done overseas, where 90 percent of Facebook's 2.2 billion users live, were not company priorities, experts say, and may have led to missed signals before the 2016 U.S. election.

"Facebook's tactic is to say, 'Oh, we were blindsided,' when in fact people had been warning them — pleading, begging — for years," said Zeynep Tufekci, associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who began urging Facebook to remove false rumors during the 2011 Arab Spring revolutions. "The public record here is that they are a combination of unable and unwilling to grasp and deal with this complexity."

Some former Facebook employees say that they were aware early on of Russian online interference in Ukraine, but either did not have a full picture of the interference or were unable to move the warnings high enough up the chain of command.

Alex Stamos, Facebook's recently departed chief security officer, said the company had acted in Ukraine against Russia's traditional cyber unit, the military intelligence agency GRU, which later stole emails from the Democratic National Committee. "We knew that they were active during the Ukraine crisis" in 2014, he said in an interview, referring to

the pro-democratic Maidan Revolution and subsequent Russian invasion. "We had taken action against a number of their accounts and shut down their activity."

But, he said, "we had not picked up on the kind of the completely independent disinformation actors" behind phony accounts circulating false news and posts, the sort of activity Shymkiv and other officials were flagging.

Elizabeth Linder, until 2016 Facebook's government and policy specialist in Europe, Middle East and Africa, based in London, said disinformation was "absolutely hugely worrisome to countries, especially in Eastern Europe" before the U.S. elections. But "in a company that's built off numbers and metrics and measurements, anecdotes sometimes got lost along the way," she said. "And that was always a real challenge and always bothered me."

As Facebook pushed into new markets around the world, in some places becoming in effect the internet by serving as the primary source of information online, it took few measures to assure that its product would be properly used, critics said. "They built the city but then they didn't put any traffic lights in, so the cars kept crashing into each other," said Maria Ressa, editor of Rappler, a prominent journalism website in the Philippines, which Facebook last month contracted to identify fake news and hate speech in the country.

In an August 2016 meeting with Facebook in Singapore, Ressa showed three Facebook employees how close supporters of President Rodrigo Duterte were using the platform to circulate disinformation and call for violence against critics. Facebook had taught Duterte's campaign how to use its platform to communicate with voters — training it offered other campaigns in other countries, too.

She said she warned them that the same type of disinformation campaign could happen in the upcoming U.S. elections. "I was hoping they would kick into action when I mentioned that," she said.

But Facebook didn't remove the accounts until she went public with her findings two months later and became the target of rape and death threats, she said. "They need to take action now or they need to leave our countries," Ressa said.

Facebook's failure to heed the pleas of civil society groups on the ground in Myanmar, also known as Burma, as far back as 2015 has had an even more devastating result. That was the year Australian tech entrepreneur David Madden, who was living in Myanmar, traveled to Facebook's headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif., and gave a seminar for employees describing how the platform had become a megaphone for Buddhist leaders calling for killing and expelling the Muslim Rohingya minority.

Facebook removed the particular posts Madden complained about at the time but "what we had not done until more recently is proactively investigate coordinated abuse and networks of bad actors and bad content on the platform," the company said last week. In March, the United Nations declared that Facebook had a "determining role" in the genocide. "Facebook has now turned into a beast, and not what it originally intended," U.N. investigator Yanghee Lee said.

"I think we were too slow to build the right technical tools that can help us find some of this content and also work with organizations on the ground in a real-time fashion," said Monika Bickert, head of global policy management.

As in many countries, Facebook had no employees or partnerships on the ground. It says this is changing but still refuses to disclose how many are deployed country by country — something of great concern to Ukraine, Myanmar and other nations that suspect its content moderators are biased, inadequately trained or lack the necessary language and cultural fluency.

"We are working here in Menlo Park," said Gleit, Facebook's vice president for social good. "To the extent that some of these issues and problems manifest in other countries around the world, we didn't have sufficient information and a pulse on what was happening." Hiring more people overseas "can give us that insight that we may not get from being here."

But, she said, "It's not that we were like, wow, we could do so much more here and decided not to. I think we... were just a bit idealistic."

In Ukraine, Russian information warfare was in full swing on Facebook and a Russian social media network during the revolution in 2014, government officials say. There was a daily flood of fake news condemning the revolution and trying to legitimize the invasion by claiming Ukraine was an Islamic State safe haven, a hotbed for Chechen terrorists and led by Nazis.

"We tried to monitor everything, but it was a tsunami," recalled Dmytro Zolotukhin, then working for the new Ukrainian government's Information Analysis Center of the National Security and Defense Council, which investigated online disinformation.

"Thousands of reports of fake news on fake pages came in." With the help of hackers and other cyber experts, he says he traced some of these accounts back to the Kremlin, which was also amplifying the false claims on dozens of fake online publications.

After the revolution in 2014, and again in 2017, Facebook suddenly banned dozens of accounts owned by pro-democracy leaders. Zolotukhin and others concluded that Russian bots were probably combing past comments and posts looking for banned terms and sending their names and URLs of the account owners to Facebook with complaints.

Another problem was someone — they believe it to be Russia — created impostor Facebook accounts of real government ministries and politicians, including Poroshenko. The impostor accounts posted incorrect and inflammatory information meant to make the government look bad, said Zolotukhin, now the deputy minister of information policy. He and others begged Facebook through its public portal to add verification checks next to the real accounts and remove the fakes. But usually no action was taken.

"I asked for six months for my verification," said Artem Bidenko, state secretary of the Information Ministry, who said someone had created a fake account using his name.

All this overwhelmed the new Ukrainian government, which was dealing with corruption in its ranks, a Russian invasion and the continuing onslaught of Russian propaganda. Shymkiv and others met to figure out how to get Facebook's attention when they learned of the May 2015 town hall meeting with the Facebook CEO.

One town hall question — with a record 45,000 likes — asked whether the Ukrainian accounts were the victim of "mass fake abuse reports." Zuckerberg replied that he personally had looked into it. "There were a few posts that tripped our rule against hate speech," he said. He did not say whether Facebook had checked on the authenticity or origin of the ban requests.

A month later, Facebook sent Gabriella Cseh, its head of public policy for Central and Eastern Europe based in Prague, to met with Shymkiv, Bidenko and others in Kiev. Shymkiv said he told Cseh that the government believed Russia was using Facebook accounts with fake names to post fictitious, inflammatory news reports and engaging in online discussions to stir up political divisions.

Facebook needed to send a team to investigate, he said. Ukraine's stability as a new democracy was at stake.

Bidenko said Cseh agreed he could email her the names of civic leaders who believed their accounts had been wrongfully banned.

"People would come in here with tears in their eyes," said Bidenko, seated in his crumbling Soviet-era office. "They would say, 'I wrote nothing bad and they banned me.' I would write to Gabriella."

At the end of the meeting, according to Shymkiv, Cseh promised to review the cases, which Facebook says it did. Then she handed him a copy of its Community Standards policy, available online.

This appeals process worked well for about two years, Bidenko said.

But Cseh went silent, Bidenko said, since an email she sent him April 13, 2018, two days after Zuckerberg testified on Capitol Hill and public scrutiny of Facebook intensified. He

figures she and the company became too busy with other problems to respond. But to his astonishment, she also unfriended him.

"I was like, what!? Why is Gabriella unfriending me?" he said. "Maybe I became a nuisance."

Facebook declined to allow Cseh to be interviewed and didn't respond to a question about why she unfriended Bidenko. In a statement they said, "Gabi has previously made it clear to Mr. Bidenko that she might not respond to every single one of his messages, but that doesn't mean she isn't escalating the issues he flags to the appropriate internal teams."

In August, Zolotukhin met with Facebook officials and said he reiterated the same concerns. He sent them a list of pages that still needed verification marks and they complied soon thereafter.

Bidenko, Zolotukhin, hackers and journalists are eager to open their laptops and scroll through what they say are fabricated news that sometimes includes gruesome videos. "Phosphorus burns everything: Ukrainian militia is using illegal weapons," said a repost of a YouTube video from 2017. "Executioners were harvesting internal organs for sale," read a post from a Russian website.

More than 2,000 Ukrainians have been killed and an active war continues, making Russia's continued clandestine attacks via Facebook an urgent national security matter. Facebook recently posted a job for a public policy manager for Ukraine — based in Warsaw.

"Facebook is trying to stay on the sidelines" of the war between Ukraine and Russia, Zolotukhin said. "But now it is not about saying you're for democracy. It's about fighting for democracy."

#12
European Parliament Slams Russia's Militarization of Azov Sea, Calls for Tougher Sanctions

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by Iryna Somer
Kyiv Post, 25 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2QfAg1u

The European Parliament on Oct. 25 backed a resolution to stiffen its sanctions on Russia if the Kremlin continues to escalate tensions in the Azov Sea.

The joint resolution was proposed by the five biggest political groups in the parliament — The European People's Party, the Socialists and Democrats, the European Conservatives and Reformists, the Greens, and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats.
The resolution, passed during a parliament session in Strasbourg, also calls for the appointment of an EU Special Envoy for Crimea and Donbas, with responsibilities covering the Azov Sea.

"The EP urges the Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (Federica Mogherini), together with the EU Member States in the European Council, to make it clear that the targeted sanctions against Russia will be reinforced if the conflict in the Azov Sea escalates further," the resolution reads.

The parliament also called on Mogherini to follow more closely the evolving security situation in the Sea of Azov, given its growing potential for conflict on Europe's doorstep, which may have wider security implications affecting the European Union and its member states directly.

"(The parliament) considers, in this regard, that it would be very useful to appoint an EU Special Envoy for Crimea and the Donbas region, whose responsibilities would also cover the Sea of Azov," the resolution goes on.

The parliament also called on Mogherini to take the necessary steps to propose that the mandate of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, which covers the entire territory of Ukraine, including maritime areas, also cover the new area of tensions in the Azov Sea.

"Either the mission should be equipped with the necessary means to perform its monitoring role in maritime areas, or a separate international monitoring mission should be established for this body of water," the parliament's resolution reads.

In the resolution, parliament condemned the "excessive actions of the Russian Federation in the Sea of Azov, which are in the breach of international maritime law and Russia's own international commitments."

The parliament also condemned the excessive stopping and inspection of commercial vessels, including both Ukrainian ships and those with flags of third-party states, including ships under the flags of various EU member states.

"The European Parliament stresses that inspections of vessels, while being allowed at random, should not be abused or carried out for political reasons with the aim of further destabilizing the security, integrity and social and economic situation in Ukraine," the resolution reads.

"(Parliament) calls on the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to demand that the Russian Federation immediately end the intensive and discriminatory inspections of vessels and to consider, if necessary, appropriate countermeasures." The parliament said it had very serious concerns about the "very volatile security situation in the Sea of Azov, which could easily escalate to an open conflict" and that it was "gravely concerned about the continued militarization of the Sea of Azov and Black Sea region."

The parliament said this concerned in particular the illegally occupied and annexed Crimea peninsula, the development of anti-access/area denial capabilities by the Russian Federation, including new S-400 anti-aircraft systems, and the redeployment of military and patrol vessels from the Caspian Sea.

"The European Parliament regrets that the Sea of Azov has become a new maritime dimension of belligerent Russian actions against Ukraine," the resolution reads. Next, the parliament condemned Russia's illegal construction of a bridge over the Kerch Strait, and the infringement of navigational rights in Ukraine's territorial waters.

"The European Parliament points out that Russia is bound by international maritime law and the bilateral cooperation agreement with Ukraine not to hamper or impede transit passage through the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov," the resolution reads.

The parliament reiterated its support for the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, reconfirmed Ukraine's sovereignty over the Crimean peninsula, its part of the Sea of Azov, and Ukraine's absolute right to have full access to the Sea of Azov.

The European Parliament also said it deplored the illegal extraction of oil and gas resources by the Russian Federation from Ukrainian territory. It said there was a danger of Russia seizing existing Ukrainian oil and gas fields in the Sea of Azov if it achieved its aim of transforming it into an internal lake within the Russian Federation.

The parliament underlined that the Kerch Bridge was illegally constructed and welcomed the European Council's decision to impose restrictive measures on six companies involved in its construction. It also reiterated its concern at the involvement of European companies in the construction of the Kerch Bridge.

In this regard, the parliament wants the European Commission to assess and verify the application of EU sanctions in force, and for member states to share information regarding any cases of potential violations.

The parliament also calls on the European Commission and the European External Action Service to provide a full assessment of the economic damage caused by the de facto blockade, and to consider possible ways to support the carriers and ports that have been

negatively affected, in particular by strengthening the EU's engagement in Mariupol and Berdyansk.

As for the environmental impact of the Kerch Bridge, which might affect the interests of all Black Sea basin countries, the parliament called on Ukraine, the European Commission and member states on the shores of the Black Sea to monitor the situation, exchange relevant information, and identify potential remedial actions.

#13

European Parliament resolution on the situation in the Sea of Azov

European Union External Action, 30 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2PIuo3I

The European Parliament

1. Deplores the excessive actions of the Russian Federation in the Sea of Azov insofar as they breach international maritime law and Russia's own international commitments; condemns the excessive stopping and inspection of commercial vessels, including both Ukrainian ships and those with flags of third-party states, including ships under flags of various EU Member States; stresses that inspections of vessels, while being allowed at random, should not be abused or carried out for political reasons with the aim of further destabilising the security, integrity and social and economic situation in Ukraine; calls on the Council and the VP/HR to demand that the Russian Federation immediately end the intensive and discriminatory inspections of vessels and to consider, if necessary, appropriate countermeasures;

2. Expresses its very serious concern about the very volatile security situation in the Sea of Azov, which could easily escalate to an open conflict; is gravely concerned about the continued militarisation of the Sea of Azov and Black Sea region, particularly of the illegally occupied and annexed Crimea peninsular, the development of anti-access/ area denial (A2/AD) capabilities by the Russian Federation, including new S-400 anti-aircraft systems, and the redeployment of military and patrol vessels from the Caspian Sea; regrets that the Sea of Azov has become a new maritime dimension of belligerent Russian actions against Ukraine;

3. Condemns the construction of the bridge over the Kerch Strait linking the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula with mainland Russia, and the infringement of navigational rights in Ukraine's territorial waters; points out that Russia is bound by international maritime law and the bilateral cooperation agreement with Ukraine not to hamper or impede transit passage through the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov;

4. Reiterates its support for the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, reconfirms Ukraine's sovereignty over the Crimean peninsula and its part of the Sea of

Azov and Ukraine's absolute right to have full access to the Sea of Azov, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea;

5. Deplores the illegal extraction of oil and gas resources by the Russian Federation from Ukrainian territory; highlights the possible danger of Russia seizing existing Ukrainian oil and gas fields in the Sea of Azov once it achieves its aim of transforming it into an internal lake within the Russian Federation;

6. Underlines that this pattern of violating the territorial waters of European countries or blocking maritime transport has already been exercised by Russia in the Baltic Sea, in particular against the Baltic States and Poland (Vistula Lagoon);

7. Calls on the VP/HR to follow more closely the evolving security situation in the Sea of Azov, given its growing potential for conflict on Europe's doorstep, which may have wider security implications affecting the EU and its Member States directly; considers, in this regard, that it would be very useful to appoint an EU Special Envoy for Crimea and the Donbass region, whose responsibilities would also cover the Sea of Azov;

8. Calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to take the necessary steps to propose that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) mandate, which covers the entire territory of Ukraine, including maritime areas, also cover the new area of tensions in the Azov Sea, and stresses that either the mission should be equipped with the necessary means to perform its monitoring role in maritime areas or a separate international monitoring mission should be established for this body of water;

9. Underlines that the Kerch Bridge has been illegally constructed and welcomes the Council's decision to impose restrictive measures on six companies involved in its construction; urges the VP/HR, together with the EU Member States in the Council, to make it clear that the targeted sanctions against Russia will be reinforced if the conflict in the Azov Sea escalates further;

10. Reiterates its concern at the involvement of European companies in the construction of the Kerch Bridge, which, through this involvement, knowingly or unknowingly undermined the EU sanctions regime; calls on the Commission, in this regard, to assess and verify the application of the EU restrictive measures in force and on the Member States to share information regarding any national customs or criminal investigations into cases of potential violations;

11. Supports the efforts made by the Ukrainian side in all diplomatic actions and legal procedures provided for by international law and relevant conventions, including the ongoing arbitration process under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, with a view to countering Russian hostile practices in the Sea of Azov;

12. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to provide a full assessment of the economic damage caused by the *de facto* blockade and to consider possible ways to support the carriers and ports that have been negatively affected, in particular by strengthening the EU's engagement in Mariupol and Berdyansk, enhancing social resilience and promoting the economic development of these cities and the broader south-east region of Ukraine;

13. Is concerned about the adverse environmental impact of the Kerch Bridge, which might affect the interests of all Black Sea basin countries; calls on Ukraine, the Commission and the Member States on the shores of the Black Sea to monitor the situation, exchange relevant information and identify potential remediation needs;

14. Expresses its condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims of the mass murder at the college in Kerch where 20 people were killed and dozens wounded on 17 October 2018;

15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Secretary-General of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Secretary-General of NATO, the President, Government and Parliament of Ukraine, the President, Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation, and the EU Member States.

#14
EU8 Members of the UN Security Council Joint Statement on Ukraine

- -

by Karen Pierce
Gov.UK, 30 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2RqFMyp

I would like to make the following statement today on behalf of the five EU Members of the Security Council (France, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the UK), and Italy, Belgium and Germany, as former and future EU Members of the Security Council, which demonstrates the continuity of the EU's position on Ukraine.

We as Member States of the European Union fully support the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within the internationally recognised borders.

We condemn the illegitimate "elections" planned for 11 November in the non-government controlled territories of the so-called "Luhansk People's Republic" and "Donetsk People's Republic". If held, these illegitimate "elections" would contravene commitments made under the Minsk agreements and violate Ukrainian law. Any such illegal elections would be incompatible with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We call on the international community to stand united in opposing these illegitimate "elections" that can only serve to undermine efforts to achieve peace in the region. We urge the separatists to abandon the plans for "elections" and call on Russia to bring its considerable influence to bear to stop the "elections" from taking place.

We welcome the renewal of the special status law in the Ukrainian Rada. We urge all sides, particularly the Russian-backed separatists, to commit to full implementation of the Minsk Agreements, beginning with a comprehensive ceasefire and withdrawal of heavy weaponry. We fully support the efforts within the Normandy format for implementing the Minsk Agreements.

We remain convinced that a peaceful resolution of the conflict is possible. Only progress on the diplomatic front will bring us to a point where legitimate and credible elections can be held in eastern Ukraine in line with the Minsk agreements.

Russia must play its part by ending its financial and military support to the separatists and withdrawing its armed forces and military equipment from Ukrainian territory. We also express our concern regarding the degraded humanitarian situation in the conflict area, particularly as the winter season approaches. We also urge all parties to the conflict to re-establish full access of all international humanitarian organisations to the non-government controlled areas and to allow smooth and speedy delivery of humanitarian assistance in line with humanitarian principles and International Humanitarian Law.

#15
War-Related Environmental Disaster in Ukraine

- -

by Kristina Hook & Richard "Drew" Marcantonio
Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, 16 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2qqLvsH

Yevhen Yakovlev sat in his Kiev office, some 700 kilometers from Ukraine's still-hot war with Russian-backed separatists, the room overcrowded by piles of paper containing primary data about the conflict. "Ukraine is standing before, first of all, an ecological catastrophe," he said, "more deep and dangerous than Chernobyl."

A geologist and now chief researcher at Kiev's Institute of Telecommunications and Global Information Space, Yakovlev has earned the right to reference Chernobyl, the 1986 nuclear accident in then-Soviet Ukraine that continues to haunt the country's physical, geological, and political landscape. In May 1986, one month before that nuclear disaster, Yakovlev was set to receive a reprimand from the Communist authorities in Moscow, who had reacted negatively to his reports of troubling irregularities at Chernobyl's ill-fated Reactor No. 4.

Later, as a member of the Chernobyl response brigades, Yakovlev would be decorated for his role in the clean-up efforts.

Now, a review of Yakovlev's data and other environmental information regarding the active conflict in Ukraine has convinced us that the current war in the eastern portion of that country has heightened the potential for a severe ecological disaster there.

Now in its fifth year, the war in eastern Ukraine shows no indication of approaching a conclusion. At least 11,000 people are confirmed dead, and nearly two million internally displaced persons have been registered by Ukrainian authorities, with informal estimates in both categories running significantly higher. Among the less-reported features of the conflict are some of the highest landmine-related casualty rates in the world. And one enormous problem—significant environmental damage that includes the particularly dangerous flooding of a series of inter-connected mines that stretch across the contact line between Ukrainian and Russian-backed forces, posing the possibility of massive poisoning of water supplies and spreading of radioactive contamination—threatens to cause an ecological collapse. Such a collapse could create a legacy of human devastation lasting well beyond the still-unforeseen end of active warfare.

The lack of international attention given to this environmental crisis can be attributed in part, to the status of the Ukraine conflict as a "forgotten war." The war itself, of course, warrants increased international attention. But because of its enormous scope, the potential for long-term environmental disaster in eastern Ukraine also deserves a focused global response.

The big picture—environmental damage and conflict. Ukraine's present reality perfectly illustrates the danger of a negative feedback loop between warfare impacts and environmental legacies. The degradation of the environment caused by war and its constituent activities comes in many forms: air pollution from the building of and the follow-on emissions from military vehicles; trash and surface waste that remains uncollected, promoting disease and the contamination of water resources; soil and water pollution caused by toxic unexploded ordnance and detonated munitions; and particulates and other air pollutants emitted from destroyed and smoldering buildings.

In wartime, the environment often becomes degraded because normal maintenance is neglected or limited. War may prevent local and national environmental managers from conducting their regulatory duties, in part by making it impossible for them to move about freely. The government may reduce funding for environmental services, shifting money to the war effort or to other areas deemed more essential during times of conflict, such as health and food services. Contaminated sites that require active management may be abandoned or, at least, management efforts will be significantly reduced.

In eastern Ukraine, persistent pollution sources include abandoned mines in this heavily industrialized region, livestock production facilities, and agricultural runoff. The war has

increased the risks present at these sites while decreasing the Ukrainian government's capacity to deal with them.

A history of environmental impacts in eastern Ukraine The eastern Ukrainian region that serves as the primary theatre of war includes the Luhansk and Donetsk *oblasts* ("provinces"). Taken together, these two provinces are often referred to as the "Donbas," a nearly 200-year-old term that hints at the environmental issues now facing Ukraine. The word *Donbas* is a shortened version of *Donetsky Bassein* (literally, "Donets coal basin") and is believed to have been first introduced by the mining engineer Yevgraf Kovalevskyi in the 1820s to signify the rich coal deposits found in the Siverskyi Donets river basin. This coal basin is some 500 kilometers across, stretching from the Dnipro to the Don River in modern-day Ukraine and Russia, respectively. Estimates put the total area of the coal basin at 60,000 square kilometers. As a comparative reference point, the Ruhr coal basin in Germany is one-13th that size. The Donbas region also includes major population centers across four Ukrainian provinces (the Luhansk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Dnipropetrovsk *oblasts*), as well as one Russian province (the Rostov *oblast*).

The Donbas area is highly industrialized and includes a dense sprawl of active industrial production facilities and inactive sites. The conflict in eastern Ukraine is happening in and around these industrial complexes, exposing them to damage that not only reduces production but increases potential environmental risks. Donbas is home to one of the world's largest coal mining regions; before the current conflict, Donbas coal was one of the main sources of energy for all of Ukraine. In fact, 90 percent of Ukrainian coal comes from the Donetsk *oblast*, and the Donbas area contains 900 active and inactive mines. (This figure includes both surface and subsurface mining operations.) It is estimated that, in total, 15 billion metric tons of coal and nine billion metric tons of rock have been extracted from the ground in the Donbas, and that nine billion cubic meters of subsurface shafts and tunnels have been constructed.

Surface mines are often associated with environmental harm; they are, after all, directly exposed to the erosive and transporting power of rain and wind. The mines in the Donbas area, however, are both deep—averaging 720 meters in depth, and reaching as deep as 1,380 meters—and close to surface waters. As a result, they are exposed to groundwater flows that can percolate into mine shafts; to mitigate the associated risks of this flooding requires that water be pumped from the mines on a regular basis. The subsurface of the Donbas region is also rich in methane gas, which makes mining significantly more risky and increases the environmental impacts of subsurface mining. Between 1991 and 2000, 3,459 miners died in subsurface explosions due to the ignition of methane. Mines are estimated to release up to six billion cubic meters of methane a year.

Accumulating environmental risks now accelerating. The long history of mining and industrial production in the Donbas region has resulted in the accumulation of environmentally risky sites that contain pollutants, ranging from heavy metal toxins in mining tailings to industrial chemical pollution around manufacturing buildings. Before

the current war, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) designated 4,240 sites as potentially hazardous. Specifically, 2,160 sites are deemed potentially explosive due to methane content, 24 are flagged due to radiation hazards, 909 are hydro-dynamically hazardous, and 34 are biohazardous. Before armed conflict began, the MENR actively monitored and managed each of these sites to mitigate the environmental and health risks.

Clearly the resources of the Donbas, particularly its coal deposits, are critical both to the Ukrainian state and the Russian-backed separatists operating in the non-government controlled areas. In 2017, the Ukrainian government issued an order to embargo the purchase of coal extracted in the Donbas, even though the coal is much needed in government-controlled Ukraine. The government decided to explore alternative energy sources rather than buy Donbas coal —and potentially fund Russian-backed separatist operations there. Partially in response to this, evidence suggests that Donbas coal is being exported, primarily through Russia, providing funding to rebel forces. The resources of the Donbas are not the direct causal mechanism of the conflict, but they are integral to it, providing revenue for the militant forces and providing an incentive for the Ukrainian government to regain access to them.

Ukraine suffered severe economic problems after it gained independence in 1991, with its economy contracting between 9.7 to 22.7 percent each year for the ensuing five years, with economic growth not recommencing until 2000. It also experienced extraordinarily high production declines and hyperinflation. Until the Soviet Union dissolved, and Ukraine gained independence, Soviet industry had been the primary consumer of Donbas coal. During the rocky transition from the planned Soviet economy to a market system, the upkeep of factories and mines declined, and the Donetsk and Luhansk *oblasts* hit the bottom of Ukrainian provinces in terms of human development.
But coal production—including coking coal for steel production—continued, and Donbas business owners grew into some of Ukraine's richest citizens. They funneled part of their profits into politics, and they helped found the Party of Regions, a pro-Russia political party of Ukraine.

Since 2014, when the conflict over control of the Donbas began, war activities have caused a variety of forms of environmental degradation. One involves the proliferation of unexploded ordnance and the emplacement of landmines. Unexploded or partially exploded ordnance remnants can leach toxic chemicals into the soil and underlying water table, and undetonated explosives can prevent environmental authorities from doing their jobs. Similarly, landmines can restrict use of an area even as they degrade, leaking toxic chemicals.

In the short term, the environmental risk is direct harm to human lives and health, as demonstrated by extraordinary civilian casualty rates from landmines and unexploded ordnance; about 50 people are killed and wounded each month. The long-term concern is the effect on soil, ground and surface water, and land use.

The conflict also directly degrades the environment through the destruction of infrastructure by artillery and other munitions. This destruction releases hazardous air pollutants that have short- and long-term health effects. Attacks on infrastructure have also disabled trash removal and water supply and wastewater treatment systems; household and industrial wastewater in the Donbas now often goes untreated into surface waters because treatment facilities have been destroyed or pumping and treatment stations are no longer being manned. Combined with the suspension of most household trash services, this collapse of wastewater treatment has led to significantly increased surface water contamination of the Donetsk River and other water sources. These sources demonstrate levels of fecal coliform 10 times the governmental standard, which these same test sites met before the war.

In the mines: Warning signs of nuclear and other contamination. The fighting in the Donbas has made it next to impossible for the MENR and other government ministries to effectively do their jobs in the Luhansk and Donetsk *oblasts*. One of the primary pre-war roles of the MENR was to monitor, regulate, and manage the environmental impacts of the 900-plus active and inactive mines (mostly coal mines) throughout the Donbas, approximately 200 of which are at risk of flooding due to groundwater aquifers and flows. Before the conflict began in 2013, the MENR oversaw the pumping of some 2.2 billion liters of groundwater per day to keep mine shafts from flooding. A flooded mine shaft can dissolve pollutants—ranging from minerals that increase the salinity and hardness of water to toxic heavy metals such as mercury, lead, and arsenic—and introduce them at significantly increased rates into surrounding ground and surface water.

In the Donbas context, the concern about contamination is amplified because several mining operations used nuclear detonations during the coal-extraction process; this occurred, for example, at the Kilvazh facility in the Yunkom mine in the Donetsk *oblast*. These sites now pose a risk of radioactive contamination if irradiated debris is carried out of the shaft in mine water. The most recent survey by the MENR—conducted in 2016— found 35 mines where groundwater pumping had stopped and the mines were therefore flooded. The survey also found that groundwater pumping in total had decreased from 2.2 billion liters per day to 1.4 billion liters per day, and MENR officials believe this amount has continued to significantly decrease as conflict prevents managers from reaching the mines.

The interaction of these factors—deterioration of mine management and pumping, flooding of subsurface mines, and surface water contamination by groundwater—has reduced water quality throughout the Donbas. In 2016, the MENR tested 35 wells, springs, and surface water sources in the government-controlled areas of the Donbas and 26 wells, springs, and surface waters in the areas the government does not control. Before the war, the MENR found that these sites all provided potable water; the results of the 2016 survey demonstrated that 30 of the 35 government-controlled sites and 25 of 26 of the other sites were contaminated above MENR water quality standards and deemed non-potable.

Three of the sites—located in the villages of Beretski, Krasne, and Mariupol ,which are near inactive mines where subsurface nuclear detonations had been used—had radiation levels that significantly exceeded the baseline in the Donbas of 15 microrems per hour (mcR/h); the villages showed levels of radiation at 154 mcR/h, 152 mcR/h and 103 mcR/h respectively. (For comparison, the United States Environmental Protection Agency suggests that multi-year exposure levels should not exceed 11.4 mcR/h.) The MENR asserts that the increased rate of contamination is caused when water enters inactive and unmanaged mines, where it becomes contaminated and then moves to surface waters through springs, flooding, and percolation into groundwater. The ministry estimates that 87,000 cubic meters of contaminated mine water is discharged every hour.

The flooding of mines in the Donbas has produced environmental hazards beyond water contamination. The MENR estimates that the rate of methane and radon released from subsurface mines has likely substantially increased because of mine flooding, decreasing air quality in the vicinity of the mines. The ministry has not, however, been able to access mine sites to confirm this suspicion. Also, mine flooding has destabilized 9 billion cubic meters of horizontal tunnels throughout the Donbas, causing some 8,000 square kilometers of land above the mines to experience an average of 1.75 meters of subsidence.

So the impacts of environmental neglect due to warfare in the Donbas are expressed in both geophysical processes—such as subsidence and groundwater contamination—and physiological processes, including the slow degradation of human and environmental health due to increased pollution. Some of these impacts are immediate, for example respiratory distress or enteric disease; other impacts show up in the long term, often in the form of cancer.

The daunting legacy of ecological collapse. With much of the Donbas environment degraded and made unsafe by contamination and unexploded ordnance, control over resources that are functioning and useable is rendered even more valuable and important. Two resources in short supply and high demand because of the war are water and fuel—primarily in the form of coal. Many municipal water facilities have either been destroyed or are non-functional due to lack of maintenance, forcing people to seek alternative water sources such as boreholes, wells and springs. As access to clean water continues to diminish, the import of water will become necessary, resulting in a new potential mechanism of control over the population.

As previously discussed, Donbas coal is being quietly exported out of the country to fund the Russian-backed separatists' operations in the region. The sale of coal allows these Russian-backed forces to purchase needed supplies and be less reliant on the surrounding population—which also allows them to exert control over the Donbas population more fully than might otherwise be the case. By controlling the extraction and flow of coal, the Russian-backed forces also control its distribution to local populations who need it for cooking and heating.

Use of this mechanism of control is likely to increase in the Donbas as the conflict continues and resources become scarcer. In the areas not controlled by the government, the MENR and other state ministries cannot provide essential services. The physical and psychological impacts of this failure to deliver basic services will likely continue to accumulate and to negatively affect the population. As this spiral continues, it will augment the influence of those actors who do control the scarce resources that persist.

This complex picture of the environmental emergency in Ukraine suggests that the cost of war stretches well beyond the confines of direct physical fighting. Unless this array of environmental issues is directly addressed, the ecosystem and the people inhabiting the Donbas region will suffer and literally embody—for example by drinking contaminated water and pollutants like lead and mercury, which will concentrate in the body—the damage for decades to come.

It is in the interest of the Ukrainian government, the Russian-backed separatists, and the Russian government to begin to confront the strategic implications of this environmental disaster, which is likely to spread across the Ukrainian-Russian national boundary. Regardless of any short-term, tactical advantage it may confer on the Russian-backed forces, the ecological collapse of the Donbas is in the interest of neither side in this conflict—even as it rapidly becomes a disastrous reality.

When pressed for comment on what might happen without a rapid mobilization of political will by the warring parties and global technical assistance, Yakovlev, the eminent geologist, quietly concluded, "Donbas can destroy Ukraine."

#16

Serhii Plokhii:

Ukraine Got a State in 1991, and Now Ukraine is in the Process of Getting a Nation

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by B0hdan Nahaylo
Hromadske Radio, 20 October 2018
https://bit.ly/2AJl9rY

Nahaylo: Well, it's my great pleasure, and indeed my great privilege, today to have as our guest on Ukraine Calling, Serhii Plokhii. He's an eminent historian, some would say also a publicist from the types of things he writes about, but most importantly, he's not only the Mykhailo Hrushevsky Chair in Ukrainian History at Harvard University since 2013 and a prolific author, but an award winning author who is known throughout the world, through the translations of his historical works and ones that deal more with contemporary themes. Welcome to the program, professor.

Plokhii: It's a great pleasure to be here. Thanks for inviting me.

Nahaylo: Although we're friends and I would prefer to refer to you as Serhii, for the audience, I emphasize that you're a professor, and a Hrushevs'kyi professor at that.

Plokhii: Well thank you but I am perfectly okay with Serhii.

Nahaylo: Serhii, let's start with your background. I am fascinated to read that you actually were born in Russia, you grew up in Zaporizhia, you were a professor at Dnipro University, and then you ended up in Alberta and Harvard. That's quite a trek.

Plokhii: Everything is true, and Wikipedia says that, so you should trust Wikipedia on that. I remember most of those places, with the exception of Russia. I was born in

Nizhnii Novgorod, but I spent maybe two or three weeks of my life there.

Nahaylo: And, of course, people will ask, are you of Ukrainian origin or of Russian origin?

Plokhii: I am of Ukrainian origin, and the way it happened, that I was born in Russia, was that my father graduated from an the university in Zaporizhia, and then there was a wonderful thing of the distributing the young specialists and he ended up working at the metallurgical plant in Nizhnii Novgorod – that's where I was born. My grandmothers thought there was something wrong with that geography, so they grabbed me and brought me back to Zaporizhia, and eventually my parents came; they followed me a year or a year-and-a-half later.

Nahaylo: So, your life has really been a story of adaptation, from one move to another, each one becoming even more complex?

Plokhii: I think this is exactly what is going on, and I still struggle with jetlag and all other things. No matter how often you move, you still have the same problems to deal with in terms of adaptation.

Nahaylo: But you're talking about jetlag, and that's about time and the impact on the body, but what about the mental strain? Eastern and Central Ukraine, moving on to Western Canada, and then moving on to the "Olympus" of Harvard?

Plokhii: Well, I still believe jetlag is a good metaphor, so you struggle for a while, and then eventually, you adjust and look for new opportunities. And again, I was really lucky that my moves eventually brought more opportunities to work, to write, to research, and to grow – that's the most important part.

Nahaylo: And, of course, you started off writing primarily in Russian, then primarily in Ukrainian, and now primarily in English.

Plokhii: Yes, that's exactly the sequence. And I remember, as many people in Ukraine in secondary school, I started writing poetry, and the poetry was in Ukrainian, but when

it comes to my academic work, yes indeed, it was in Russian. And then, my first article in Ukrainian was written for the Ukrainian Historical Journal in Kyiv, which is quite interesting in the sense that that journal stayed in the Ukrainian language through all those years, through Brezhnev, Shcherbytsky and then into the 1980s.

Nahaylo: When I had the pleasure to notice you for the first time and to meet you, I think then you were primarily known as a scholar on Ukrainian church history, on the Kozak period, and now you are the foremost authority on contemporary Ukraine, as well.

Plokhii: Well, I want to think that I still maintained my expertise, so to say, in the early-modern period as well, but as you said, I started as a scholar of the early-modern period. I am very proud to be part of the school of historians of early-modern history that evolved in the city of Dnipropetrovsk, today Dnipro, at the university there. It was headed by the eminent Ukrainian professor Mykola Kovalsky. I was part of that group and a lot what I learned about the field and about the profession comes from there. I became a historian with the idea not of studying early modern history but topics closer to today's concerns. I was interested in the Cold War. It was explained to me that in a provincial university like Dnipropetrovsk you couldn't do this kind of things. I also found out that you couldn't write on the 20th century what you actually wanted to write. So for me going to the 16th and the 17th century was a way of extending my freedom as a scholar. It was not like we were completely free, but we were much freer than historians studying the 20th century. After 1991 those restrictions were not there anymore and I could really move freely.

Nahaylo: Talking of restrictions, limitations you placed on your own scope. You are known to the Ukrainian audience as the most eminent living Ukrainian historian. But as somebody who was born in Britain and was also was a historian in terms of my professional interests, I would like to emphasize for the audience that you have moved far beyond just the Ukrainian purview or interest. Your books on Yalta, on the collapse and final days of the Soviet Empire put you in the mainstream as one of the leading specialists on this part of the world, of Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, but also on geopolitical aspects of the modern world. I can only compare you to Timothy Snyder who has that kind of reputation and a background as a historian, and who has also become a commentator on contemporary affairs.

Plokhii: Thanks. This is really flattering comparison. I would like to use this opportunity and thank you for one of the books you wrote together with Victor Swoboda – Soviet Disunion. It was a basic text for the first course that I ever taught in English at the University of Alberta in 1991. It was called "The USSR in Crisis: The Nationality Question" and yours was the key text book. I had more students in that course than we could accommodate. I really appreciate that kind of comment coming from you. Yalta or the fall of the Soviet Union, they are global in terms of questions that I address.

Nahaylo: Even Chornobyl and its impact...

Plokhii: Exactly. Chornobyl is the latest. Thanks for mentioning that. They are all global, but they are all deeply rooted in Ukrainian history and partially in my own experiences and interests.

Nahaylo: Let me be a bit cheeky, as one professional speaking to another. If you permit me to ask you the following. You have the Hrushevsky Chair, you have written about Hrushevsky, not his just historical schemes but about him as a personality, his contribution. In terms of what you have done in your life, do you sometimes compare yourself to him, not in a sense of self-flattery, but in terms of the mission, the need to get the messages and information across both to your countrymen, and now to a broad international audience?

Plokhii: I try not to make this comparison because Hrushevsky is very high on a pedestal for all of us writing on Ukrainian or Eastern European History. Nevertheless, sometimes questions like that force me to do so. On the door of my office in Harvard I have an invitation from quite important people from the Financial Times addressed to "Professor Hrushevsky." The letter was sent to me inviting me to participate in one of the conferences they organized. So there is this confusion, at least because the Chair that I hold after Omeljan Pritsak and Roman Szporluk is named after Mykhailo Hrushevsky. Sometimes I compare, and I would say that the comparison is not in my favour.

Nahaylo: But, for example, Hrushevsky spent so much time in Lviv because he could not write in the Russian Empire his monumental history of Rus. You spent so many years doing classical historical work, then suddenly you are in a 20th century. You are commenting on very recent or even on-going events as in your latest book Gates of Europe where you are responding to Putin's aggression against Ukraine and the challenges. When I look at Hrushevsky, I can also see a historian that found himself in the middle of political life and had to rise to the challenge of leading his particular nation not just by setting the tone through his learning, but by personal example. I think you have set an example for many of us by your commitment and by the fact you are so eloquent in your writing, commentaries, in getting that message across both here in Ukraine, but to the outside world especially.

Plokhii: Thanks a lot for that comment. Hrushevsky had already created a nation and a state. That's a tough act to follow. One thing [that is pertinent here is the timing], it's less about me and more about the current time in which I am writing. This is one of the turning points in Ukrainian history. When Hrushevsky was writing and acting as a political figure in 1917, it was of course the turning point of the 20th century. The work of Orest Subtelny, a major figure in terms of conceptualizing and explaining Ukrainian history, not just to the West, but also to Ukrainians, came also at a very important time – in 1988, a few years before independence. [His history of Ukraine] being adopted as a textbook and published with 1 million copies in Ukraine. I am not comparing myself to any of these scholars, but the moment that we are living through today is really something that should be put on the same level as the events of 1917 and 1991. As Italians used to say, or someone on their behalf, «we have a state, now we have to get a nation». So it looks like

Ukraine got a state in 1991, and now Ukraine is in the process of getting a nation. And at times like that –

Nahaylo: A political nation?

Plokhii: A political nation.

Nahaylo: Serhii, let me interrupt, because obviously you could say a lot more about that. In brief, from your historian's perspective, 100 years since the first declaration of independence – modern declaration of independence, let's put it that way – and 27 years since the restoration, if you want, or the reaffirmation of that independence in 1991 – your thoughts on this. 100 years later: the good, the bad, and the ugly?

Plokhii: Well, there is a tendency in Ukraine to think that we are the most, I don't know how to put it, unlucky or unhappy people in Europe, and I don't think this is the case because –

Nahaylo: We're not the first and not the last "terrible beauty" to have been born [from Irish poet W.B. Yeats' description of newly independent Ireland].

Plokhii: I can't agree more. Well, there were five attempts to declare independence in the 20th century, and on that score, yes, we are less lucky than let's say the Lithuanians, who were relatively late also in formulating their national project. But on the other hand, the idea of Ukrainian modern independence is very new. It is an idea of the 20th century; we have [Mykola] Mikhnovsky who first declares that, and Hrushevsky is very reluctant to embrace it, not even in 1917, only in 1918. And from that point of view, when you look as a historian of intellectual history, this is a relatively short period of time. So we should not be too discouraged by history. Yes, our path is more difficult than other nations and other groups, but not something unheard of in the history of the region.

Nahaylo: And the last 27 years? With the revolutions and affirmations of Ukraine's European self-identification having to be repeated several times, 27 years later: are we at the point where we would like to be? Should be? Or do we still have quite a way to go?

Plokhii: Well we're clearly unhappy with how it turned out, and this is also interesting in its own right. Because the Belarusians or Kazakhs, who are under authoritarian regimes in their countries, are not unhappy. Russians embraced authoritarian rule after one decade maybe of attempting democracy. We stayed truthful to the idea of democracy. There were two attempts in our independent history, relatively short independent history, to bring in authoritarian rule, and both of them ended up with Maidans, with the revolts, and going back to democracy. So now we're learning how to live under democracy and how to make it work, but those 27 years were really a test of how serious we were about the democratic development of Ukraine.

Nahaylo: And I'm struck by the fact that in your Gates of Europe, a classic now both here and in the outside world, you're reiterating ideas or basic principles put forward, at least in the modern period, by Rukh. About the need for coexistence, toleration, about the building of a common state of all those living here – a political nation. Have we made progress in that area, particularly after the Maidan and the Revolution of Dignity?

Plokhii: I don't think that we've made progress. I think that Rukh back then in the late 80's and early 90's set the standard very, very high. And what we had in the 1990's was certainly, basically, the rule of what used to be the nomenklatura and the former party elite; it rearranged itself, retrenched and found itself again running the show. Then today when you look at the rise of, for example, the nationalist movement, it certainly goes against the ideas of Rukh. The things related to an exclusivist, ethnic basis for the Ukrainian nation; it's very different from what Rukh was saying back then. But events of 2013-2014 show, at least to me, that the reason why Ukraine survived, and if it will survive in the future, and I'm sure it will, will happen on the Rukh platform. It will not happen on the platform of these new waves of nationalism, or any ideas presented by the former party elite.

Nahaylo: Which is not just a fringe feature of Ukrainian politics, for we see in Hungary and in Poland these tendencies as well. Okay, as we begin to conclude, a few words about the general state of Ukrainian history, writing or approaches to it. Let's start by looking at the situation here in Ukraine. History, the study of history, the teaching of history, is it in a healthy state?

Plokhii: Well it's in a healthier state than it was let's say five years ago – there is no question about that. There is understanding that for the country to survive, the country has to agree – the society has to agree – on a number of things, and history is the very basis, the foundation. They have to agree on history. In that sense it's much more difficult today for outside forces to manipulate Ukrainians by misrepresenting history, than it was five years ago. There is a growing understanding among professional historians that it's not just enough to write for ourselves, for two or three people who are able to appreciate what you are doing. You also have to go outside and explain to society what you are doing. Why it's important. And this is a change. That is something that wasn't there before. It wasn't there five years ago. I would say that was one of the reasons why Ukraine found itself completely unprepared to deal with the so-called hybrid warfare that was unleashed on it in 2013 and 2014.

Nahaylo: Now looking at the study and the teaching of history, and researching of historical themes, by what was called a diaspora. A pre-eminent role was played by Harvard, of course, and kudos to Professor Pritsak, but also the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Do they, in your view, still maintain the relevance and importance that they had in the 60s, 70s, 80s, or are they somehow being sidelined by the way events have turned out, and with Ukraine itself taking a central role?

Plokhii: Before 1991, those two institutions and people associated with them were the only ones who were interested in Ukraine and the writing on those subjects and topics. And since then we have a field that has changed dramatically. One of the tasks that both institutions had was to find their place in this new rapidly-changing field. There are some successes, and there are some problems and issues. I, as the Director of the [Harvard Ukrainian] Institute, now try to address those issues that are out there. One of them is that, for example, the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute was founded at the time when it was relatively easy to study Ukrainian history, philology or literature, but in contemporary Ukraine it was a different story. There was no independent state. Now we have a situation where we have Chairs in all those fields that I just mentioned, but no one really being an expert on contemporary Ukraine, trained as a political scientist or sociologist or anthropologist. We are trying to address that by creating from a program on contemporary Ukraine. We got funding, I'm very happy to say, from Canada. That's also something that was there in the very early days of the formation of the Institute. It wasn't just American donations. From Jim Temerty. We are launching a program on contemporary Ukraine. So this is just one of the examples, the most recent ones. We have this wonderful legacy. We have to be careful about the tradition, but we also have to look forward.

Nahaylo: And your personal plans. What are you working on? You're always working. It's a book a year, it seems, if not more with you.

Plokhii: Probably. That's how it looks like, but it's not how it is planned. First of all I wanted to thank the Fullbright Program. I'm here and I'm here in this studio because of support from Fullbright. The project they supported is on the history of the American air bases in Ukraine during the Second World War. There were three of them. Now we have KGB files and their surveillance. And surveillance of the American servicemen and also of the poor girls and women who had the misfortune of dating Americans. They were followed all the way to the 1960s. This is a wonderful set of sources, a very interesting topic.

Nahaylo: Just as your topic about "The Man with the Poison Gun," the assassination of Bandera by Soviet agent Bohan Stashynsky was. An unexpected book from you.

Plokhii: And I'm driven in both cases by what I call an Archival Revolution in Ukraine. The opening of the archives, including KGB archives. That certainly wasn't the case before. Ukraine started opening them quite early, but really in the last few years they became very, very accessible. So that is my next project and I'm thinking about it as a key element in the story of the fall of the Grand Alliance. Because Poltava, that's where the airbase was, was the only place where the Americans and the Soviets and the Ukrainian population were together, fighting together. It wasn't just the war on different fronts. Its there, where in the interpersonal relations the Grand Alliance really fell apart. That's the argument.

Nahaylo: So what would Mazepa, Hohol, Kotliarevsky [all linked with Poltava] have made of all that, had they been alive and watching this?

Plokhii: Well all of those characters...

Nahaylo: or Petliura even...

Plokhii: I don't think Petliura is mentioned, but the others are there. Indeed it happened to be that the place where the Americans landed, not knowing about that at all, that Poltava had such importance in Ukrainian history and really was the birthplace of Ukrainian literature. You mentioned Kotliarevsky.

Nahaylo: Unfortunately, we are coming to the end. My final question in this discussion, as always: your parting thoughts, impressions? What would you like to share with our audience, in a nutshell? It can be a wish, it can be a thought, it can be an impression.

Plokhii: We are on the verge of a major political event in Ukraine – the elections. And the question that is there, and the main question to be answered is: whether the changes that happened in the last three or four years are there to stay. This is a very big question. It's a very important question for Ukraine. It's also a very important question for the international community and I keep thinking about that future, that immediate future, and I think that others should do the same.

Nahaylo: Thank you very much. I've been talking to Serhiy Plokhiy, eminent historian, award-winning author of numerous books. They keep coming out and getting rave reviews and are as popular here as they are in many countries in the outside world. He's the Mykhailo Hrushevsky Chair in Ukrainian History at Harvard University. I thank you very much Serhii for your participation.

Plokhii: Thanks very much, it was a pleasure.

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