The Ukraine List #499

The Ukraine List (UKL) #499
compiled by Dominique Arel (darel@uottawa.ca)
Chair of Ukrainian Studies, U of Ottawa
www.chairukr.com
www.danyliwseminar.com
18 June 2019

Deadline Reminder: 27 June 2019

15th Annual Danyliw Research Seminar on Contemporary Ukraine
Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa, 7-9 November 2019
http://www.danyliwseminar.com

CALL FOR PAPER PROPOSALS

The Chair of Ukrainian Studies, with the support of the Wolodymyr George Danyliw Foundation, will be holding its 15th Annual Danyliw Research Seminar on Contemporary Ukraine at the University of Ottawa on 7-9 November 2019. Since 2005, the Danyliw Seminar has provided an annual platform for the presentation of some of the most influential academic research on Ukraine.

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

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

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

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

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

The Seminar will also be featuring panels devoted to recent/new books touching on Ukraine, as well as the screening of new documentaries followed by a discussion with filmmakers. Information on past book panels and films can easily be accessed from the

top menu of the web site. The 2019 Seminar is welcoming book panel proposals, as well as documentary proposals.

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

People interested in presenting at the 2019 Danyliw Seminar are invited to submit a 500 word paper proposal and a 150 word biographical statement, by email attachment, to Dominique Arel, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, at darel@uottawa.ca AND chairukr@gmail.com. Please also include your full coordinates (institutional affiliation, preferred postal address, email, phone, and Twitter account [if you have one]). If applicable, indicate your latest publication or, in the case of doctoral or post-doctoral applicants, the year when you entered a doctoral program, the title of your dissertation and year of (expected) completion. Note that a biographical statement is not a CV, but a written paragraph.

Books published between 2018 and 2020 (as long as near-final proofs are available prior to the Seminar) are eligible for consideration as a book panel proposal. The proposal must include a 500 word abstract of the book, as well as the 150 word bio and full coordinates.

Films produced between 2017 and 2019are eligible for consideration as a documentary proposal. The proposal must include a 500 word abstract of the film, as well as the 150 word bio, full coordinates, and a secure web link to the film.

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

The proposal deadline is 27 June 2019. The Chair will cover the travel and accommodation expenses of applicants whose proposal is accepted by the Seminar. The proposals will be reviewed by an international selection committee and applicants will be notified in the course of the summer.

The Danyliw Seminar website (http://danyliwseminar.com) contains the programs, papers, videos of presentations and photographs of the last five years (2014-2018). To access the abstracts, papers and videos of the 2018 presenters, click on "Participants" in the menu and then click on the individual names of participants. The 2018 Program can be accessed at https://www.danyliwseminar.com/program-2018. Presentations from previous years can be accessed under menu "Archives."

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

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

#2
Kule Doctoral Scholarships on Ukraine
Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa

Application Deadline: 1 February 2020 (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 2020** 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 2020-2021 are invited to contact Dominique Arel (darel@uottawa.ca), Chairholder, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, and visit our web site www.chairukr.com.

#3
Election Watch: Newcomers, Veterans Will Vie for Seats in Parliament

By Bermet Talant
Kyiv Post, 14 June 2019
https://bit.ly/2IUzeFE

It has been a hectic week in Ukrainian politics: parties unveiling their candidates and anti-corruption watchdogs and journalists rushing to check them.

As parties must rapidly pick their candidates for party lists and single-member districts, they're mindful of a deadline to submit lists by June 20. That leaves a month for campaigning before Ukrainians head to the polls on July 21 to elect a new parliament. Some parties have published more than 100 names, while others have revealed only the top 10. Some candidates are experienced, while many are total newcomers with little public profile. And some new parties have pushed for greater transparency and diversity.

Here are a few takeaways from the latest polls and party lists.

New parties dominate

Currently, the leading party is Volodymyr Zelensky's Servant of the People, named after the actor-turned-president's hit television series. According to the latest survey by the Rating Group, it is polling at 47.5 percent among the decided voters. It outstrips its nearest competitor, the Russia-friendly Opposition Platform — For Life party, by 37 points.

Servant of the People has also demonstrated the most transparency of the parties: It published a list of 201 candidates. A group of them were members of and experts from Zelensky's presidential campaign office. Some were selected through an open call for candidates. Another 199 people will run as representatives of the party in single-member districts.

Another newcomer, the Voice (Holos in Ukrainian) party of rock star Svyatoslav Vakarchuk, has rapidly climbed in the rankings. The musician announced his party just a month ago when it polled at under 1 percent. Now, Voice has 6.4 percent of the vote and all chances to make it to parliament.

Voice also published a list of the 195 candidates on its party list and 72 candidates running in single-member districts.

The Strength and Honor party, led by former security service chief Ihor Smeshko, is very close to reaching the 5-percent threshold to enter parliament. A low-key figure just months ago, Smeshko surprisingly finished sixth in the first round of the presidential

election in March, attracting the votes of older people seeking a responsible, experienced candidate who is relatively distant from the top echelons of Ukrainian politics.

The biggest losers of this election could be People's Front, Samopomich, and the Radical Party. All three have sizeable factions in the current Verkhovna Rada, but likely will not make it into the next parliament.

It has been roughly two weeks since ex-Odesa Governor and former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili got back his Ukrainian citizenship and returned to Ukraine. Initially, he said he would not run for parliament. He even declined an offer from Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko to lead his party UDAR into parliament.

So much for that. Now, he is making his own bid with his Movement of New Forces party. Besides Saakashvili, the party list includes ex-deputy Prosecutor General David Sakvarelidze in the number two spot, some anti-corruption activists, and even a chess champion.

Old forces consolidate

Challenged by newcomers, veteran lawmakers aren't ready to give up. Many are rebranding and forming new alliances to increase their chances.

Former President Petro Poroshenko changed the name of his political party to European Solidarity. Currently, it is polling in the top five parties. Parliament Speaker Andriy Parubiy is one of its biggest assets since Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman broke away from his long-time ally Poroshenko to run with his own party, Ukrainian Strategy. Groysman scraped his top 10 from current ministers and a couple of lawmakers with the People's Front faction.

Ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko's Batkivshchyna said her team is determined to go into coalition with Zelensky's party. Number two on Tymoshenko's list is once-time oligarch and ex-Donetsk Oblast Governor Serhiy Taruta of the Osnova party, who dropped out of the presidential race in her favor.

The Russia-friendly opposition camp, which split in two last year in the run-up to the presidential election, has also gone through serious reshuffles. The party that formed after the split, Opposition Platform — For Life, proved a success. It currently polls second, much to the chagrin of pro-Western and nationalist politicians.

Its top 10 candidates include heavyweight pro-Russian politicians such as Yanukovych-era minister Yuriy Boyko, president of the All-Ukrainian Jewish Congress Vadym Rabinovych, and oligarch Viktor Medvedchuk, a close ally to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The depleted Opposition Bloc party has recently joined with the Party of Peace, Nashi (Ours), Vidrodzhennya (Revival), and the Doviryai Dilam (Trust in Deeds) parties. The

yet unnamed bloc enlisted mayors of five cities — Kharkiv, Odesa, Mariupol, Zaporizhia, Uzhgorod — as well as Vadym Novynskyi, the Russian-born business partner of oligarch Rinat Akhmetov, and some former members of the Party of Regions.

The top three nationalist parties — Svoboda, National Corps, and Right Sector — reunited after their political alliance broke up amid disagreements on a single presidential candidate. The new bloc includes some other nationalist organizations and reached a consensus: National Corps leader Andriy Biletskiy is the formal head of the bloc but number one on the list is Svoboda chair Oleh Tyahnybok.

More women?

In 2014, only 50 women were elected to parliament, two of them in single-district constituencies. One way to raise women's representation in parliament from the present 11 percent is to have more female candidates in leading parties and have them placed higher up on their lists.

The frontrunner in the race, Servant of the People, has 63 women among 201 candidates on its list. Only five of them are in the top 20. It happened for objective reasons, said lawyer Iryna Venediktova, the number three candidate.

"While making the list we didn't try to fit into any pattern or create a beautiful picture. The male contingent objectively turned out to be stronger than the female one. But I hope the situation will change," she told the Kyiv Post. "I hope other women will join. We really need more women because they have a different approach (to politics)."

Voice has 59 women on its 195-candidate party list, with eight of them in top 20, including Yulia Klymenko, head of the Kyiv School of Economics and ex-deputy economy minister, and Kira Rudik, CEO of Amazon-owned tech company Ring Ukraine.

The second best polling party, Opposition Platform — For Life, has only four women among the 35 candidates it published. Only two of them are in the top 20.

Crimean Tatars

In 2014, Crimean Tatar candidates all ran with one party, the Bloc of Petro Poroshenko. This time, representatives of the indigenous people of Crimea are using a different strategy: placing candidates at the top of several party lists to ensure more seats in the parliament.

"It was a 100-percent coordinated strategy approved by the leaders of the Crimean Tatar people," said Rustem Umerov, a young Crimean Tatar businessman running as No. 18 on the Voice party list.

Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev and Refat Chubarov, chairman of the Crimean Tatar's Mejlis representative body, were the only two Crimean Tatar lawmakers elected to the Verkhovna Rada in 2014 with Poroshenko Bloc. This year, Dzhemilev remained with the ex-president's party, rebranded as European Solidarity. He was joined by Mejlis Deputy Chair Akhtem Chiygoz. Chubarov moved to Smeshko's Strength and Honor party.

Besides Umerov, Tamila Tasheva, co-founder of the Crimea-SOS non-governmental organization and No. 26 on the Voice party ballot, represents the new generation of Crimean Tatars going into politics. Emine Dzheppar, who served as the deputy minister of information policy, is running in the top five of Groysman's Ukrainian Strategy.

"It's important that the young generation of Crimean Tatars becomes a part of the Ukrainian Parliament and for the governing bodies of Crimean Tatars to get revitalized — so the young can influence the decision-making processes," Tasheva said.

Liberal lawmakers

Some of the pro-reform, pro-Western lawmakers of the current parliament have no political home in the new race.

Both the Servant of the People and Voice announced that they will not accept any sitting or former lawmakers on their lists, although Voice will allow them to represent the party in single-member districts. Thus, ex-Samopomich member Viktoria Voytsitska will run in a district in Rivne Oblast with Voice.

Some of the reformists joined other parties. For instance, Olena Sotnyk, a lawmaker from Samopomich, is No. 2 on Smeshko's party list.

Others are running as independents in single-member districts. Svitlana Zalishchuk is running in her native town of Zhashkiv in Cherkasy Oblast.

Lawmaker Serhiy Leshchenko said he has not yet decided whether to run in his district in Kyiv. Lawmaker Hanna Hopko, who chairs the parliament's foreign affairs committee, is running as an independent and is deciding between Kyiv, or her native Lviv Oblast.

Is Russia Changing Its Calculus in Eastern Ukraine?

Anna Arutunyan
International Crisis Group, 11 June 2019
https://bit.ly/2MShGiP

Amid expectations that Russia will test Ukraine's new president with escalatory actions, it appears that its calculus is to wait for Kyiv's administration to make the first move – while quietly helping the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics entrench themselves economically.

Five years into a war in its east, Ukraine has elected an unlikely new president: professional comedian Volodymyr Zelenskyy. To date, Zelenskyy has hinted at both dialogue with and new punitive measures against Ukraine's formidable neighbour to the east, but offered little in the way of specific plans for either course of action. Some Ukrainians fear that Moscow might take advantage of this seeming hesitancy to cement its influence in the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (D/LPR) – the breakaway statelets in eastern Ukraine controlled by Russian-backed separatists since 2014. In April, after Zelenskyy's election, but before his inauguration, Russian President Vladimir Putin issued a decree making it easier for D/LPR residents to obtain Russian citizenship. Many in Ukraine saw in this move a threat that Russia would seize the moment of Zelenskyy's ascent to gain full control of the statelets by either recognising their independence or annexing them – or that Moscow would seek to co-opt Zelenskyy himself. Outgoing President Petro Poroshenko, who lost to Zelenskyy, tweeted that his "inexperienced" rival would allow the Kremlin to "return Ukraine to Russia's orbit".

Before Zelenskyy's election, some in Moscow did express hope that he could undertake a "reset" in Russian-Ukrainian relations. Since then, the mood has become more guarded. Putin has refused to congratulate the new president in Kyiv. Nor has the Kremlin shown any inclination thus far to exploit Zelenskyy's inexperience through escalation. Instead, Moscow appears to be taking steps to consolidate the status quo in eastern Ukraine even as it tries to figure out the new Ukrainian leader.

Russian officials are baffled by what they see as Zelenskyy's flip-flopping between overtures toward reconciliation and tough talk. He has proposed both a referendum on peace talks with Moscow and tougher U.S. sanctions on the Kremlin for its continued backing of pro-Russian separatists in the east. "Poroshenko was an adversary", said one official. "At least we knew where we stood. With Zelenskyy, we don't". Another said: "We don't know who stands behind him". In short, the Kremlin is waiting for Zelenskyy to make the first move.

The decision to wait fits into Moscow's quietly shifting strategy in eastern Ukraine. From 2014 to 2018, the Kremlin bolstered the D/LPR with military support with the apparent

aim of destabilising Ukraine. Its vision of the implementation of the Minsk agreements, signed during talks involving Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France in 2014 and 2015, in which Kyiv would be forced to grant these statelets autonomy on their terms, would have given Russia substantial and lasting influence in Ukrainian politics. Since last year, however, Moscow has changed tack. While it continues to pay lip service to Minsk, its priority has shifted from the military conflict itself to helping the statelets mitigate their financial dependence on Russian support.

This approach aims to entrench the statelets' nascent institutions while allowing Moscow to avoid costlier moves like recognising their independence or annexing them. It keeps Minsk alive, but unimplemented, such that Russia can continue to accuse Ukraine of failing to abide by its terms. It also lets Moscow off the hook financially, as better developed client economies would have less need for Russian subsidies. If those economies are better integrated with Russia's own, with gains for each, so much the better. There's a reason why the Emergencies Ministry, which has been sending convoys of humanitarian aid, has paused its shipments in recent months: to paraphrase one Russian official, it is time for the statelets to stop being dependent on Russian aid and start trying to break even.

The economic embargo that Ukraine imposed on D/LPR in 2017 makes above-board trade difficult, and may push them closer to Russia, albeit via grey zone commercial interactions. For example, according to media reports and Ukrainian specialists interviewed by Crisis Group, anthracite coal and other minerals travelled freely across the line of contact into Ukraine from the start of the conflict in 2014 until the blockade. Now, those sources say, a complicated scheme sends these minerals first east to Russia, then west to Belarus, and from there to other markets – including Ukraine itself.

Because Russia denies being a party to the conflict and says it offers nothing to the D/LPR but humanitarian aid and moral support, it is difficult to verify how exactly Moscow is assisting the coal trade or any other commerce. But for over a year now, Kremlin-connected observers have noted the growing influence of the deputy prime minister, Dmitry Kozak. Kozak, who is responsible for Russia's energy sector, oversees a government commission that manages humanitarian aid to rebel-held areas in eastern Ukraine. Russian investigative reporters have linked his role to a Russian decision to prioritise business integration with the statelets, including allegedly facilitating coal trade from Ukraine's east.

Asked about the prioritisation of economic above military ties, one Russian official said that the current D/LPR leadership is not as militaristic as its predecessors. In November 2018, the self-proclaimed statelets held elections, which were not recognised outside of Russia and which Moscow allegedly choreographed. Denis Pushilin, who became DPR leader, is widely believed to be less ideologically passionate, less popular and thus easier to control from Moscow than his assassinated predecessor Aleksandr Zakharchenko. Much the same applies to the LPR's new leader, Leonid Pasechnik, who took over after a power struggle in 2017 and retained the leadership in last year's election.

The Kremlin's offer of Russian passports to D/LPR residents may also be intended to strengthen the breakaway region's economies and ties to Russia. One Kremlin adviser said the measure had been in the works for some time. Domestic political pressures in Russia might also have played a role. Many Russians know that life in D/LPR is difficult, as Crisis Group has reported. During a widely watched call-in show featuring Putin last June, D/LPR residents phoned to complain about how hard it was to settle in Russia after fleeing the war. On the air, the president ordered the Interior Ministry to make it easier for them to obtain citizenship. Issuing passports strengthens D/LPR residents' ties to Russia. If more residents go to work in Russia, they may well send remittances home, another boost to the local economy, even as they provide cheap labour to Russia.

While Ukrainians are surely right to distrust Russia's intentions in the east, Moscow's actions so far do not suggest a plan of escalation. The passport move does signal Moscow's resolve to bolster ties with Russian speakers in Ukraine. But Zelenskyy's election was likely not its impetus. "We're not orienting our policy around Zelenskyy", a Russian official said. Overestimating Moscow's appetite for escalation could have its own negative consequences. If Kyiv interprets Moscow's move to expedite passports as escalatory and pushes back, even if only rhetorically, it risks feeding a spiral of both words and action, rendering the escalation prophecy self-fulfilling.

Instead, the new administration in Kyiv and its European supporters could take advantage of Moscow's waiting game, and use the time to construct a better policy for engaging the people of the east. Kyiv should also decide on what terms it wants to deal with Moscow in order to move toward real peace, including how it wants to move forward on Minsk. Zelenskyy's administration is already taking tentative steps in this direction: at a 5 June meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group, formed in 2014 to broker Russian-Ukrainian talks over the rebel-held east, Kyiv's representatives explored several proposals for a truce, including lifting the embargo. Moscow sounded encouraged, but said it wanted to hear more specifics.

In Kyiv, Zelenskyy faced blowback, however. Because the Trilateral Contact Group meeting came so soon after his election, his offer raised concerns among some Ukrainians that the new president is making concessions to Russia in hopes of sealing a fast truce. Already, some politicians in Kyiv call his proposals a capitulation to Russia.

The president can prove them wrong. First of all, he should avoid rushing proposals in hopes of clinching a fast deal; Moscow in any case is unlikely to commit to concessions in return anytime soon. Secondly, no deal will be viable absent Ukrainian consensus on the conditions under which it can implement its commitments under Minsk. He needs to involve political parties and civil society in Kyiv in formulating proposals for a truce. He also needs to ensure that any proposal is a means of restoring Kyiv's control over the breakaway regions. Whether he seeks to lift the embargo or agrees to a ceasefire, he must do so with a view to how this helps restore Ukraine's ties with its citizens in the east and its social and territorial integrity. And, indeed, restored Ukrainian economic relations

with this region would push back against Moscow's efforts and help bring it back into the fold.

Moscow is still sizing up Ukraine's new president. Zelenskyy should convince his own base that he is developing a plan for eastern Ukraine that will serve Ukraine's long-term social and political cohesion.

#5
Nearly One Third of Russians Would Like Russia to Annex Ukrainian Donbas
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by Hayla Coynash
Human Rights in Ukraine, 12 June 2019
https://bit.ly/2Xm5iLY

A Levada Centre poll published on 11 June 2019 has found the highest support for Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts "becoming a part of the Russian Federation since March – April 2014. Although the 27 % support is still very far from the 48% who wanted to annex more of Ukrainian territory in the period immediately following Russia's invasion and annexation of Crimea, it is a clear increase on previous years. It would require more monitoring to determine whether the increase is directly linked with Russian President Vladimir Putin's decree simplifying the illegal process by which Ukrainians in occupied Donbas can receive Russian citizenship, or whether that decree has been accompanied by a propaganda campaign on Russian state-controlled media.

The survey was carried out between 24-29 May in 50 'subjects of the Russian Federation', with no mention as to whether there were respondents in occupied Crimea.

The first question pertained to Putin's simplification of procedure for "residents of Ukraine, in the first instance the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts" to get Russian citizenship. Respondents were asked to give their opinion on two assertions, with a large majority (77%) either fully or basically agreeing that the move was motivated by "the wish to help people living in conditions of war". There was also an absolute majority (59%) who saw in it the "wish to spread Russian influence on the eastern part of Ukraine". 69% either fully or basically supported the move, although 36% of them saw this as being an additional burden on the Russian budget, while 26% recognised that "it will heighten tense relations between Russia, Ukraine and western countries supporting Ukraine.

It is interesting that the Levada Centre asks respondents about "the south-east of Ukraine" although it writes in brackets that this means the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Those two oblasts are, in fact, eastern Ukraine, and Russia's insistence in 2014 in talking about "the south-east of Ukraine" was widely seen as linked with Russian hopes (and illicit activities aimed at ensuring) that a Donbas scenario could be repeated in, at least, the Odesa oblast.

It is also not strictly clear what is meant by "the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts", since only parts of those oblasts are under the control of Russia's proxy 'Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics'. The nominal leaders of these so-called 'republics' have never, however, concealed their wish to seize all of the area.

In the Levada survey, respondents were allowed to choose only one variant with respect to "the political future of South-Eastern Ukraine (the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts)". In March 2014, 48% wanted this area "to become part of the Russian Federation"; 12% wanted it to become an independent state; 17% - that it remained a part of Ukraine but became more independent from Kyiv. Only 8% wanted it to remain part of Ukraine under the same conditions as before what the survey called "the crisis". In May 2019, these figures had changed fairly radically with 29% in favour of the area becoming "an independent state"; 27% - part of the Russian Federation; and 17% that it remained part of Ukraine, but with greater independence from Kyiv. The number of respondents who wanted the pre-invasion of Crimea and pre-war status quo had risen, but not dramatically, to 14%. It should be said, however, that this 14% is the highest since the polling began in March 2014.

Respondents were asked each time about the cost of Russia's annexation of Crimea which was referred to as "the reunification of Crimea". The question pertained to the financial burden of this, and how much they were prepared to pay such a price. The main change here was that the number who were "completely unwilling" to pay such a price had almost doubled, from 19% in March 2014 to 36% in May 2019.

Unwillingness to pay the substantial cost for the first annexation in Europe since Nazi Germany's aggression does not appear to have influenced Russians' attitude to the land-grab itself. A survey published by the Levada Centre on 1 April 2019 showed that the number of people who either totally or basically supported this so-called "reunification" had changed very little (88% in March 2014; 86% in March 2019). The percentage totally or basically against was 7% in March 2014, and had only increased in March 2019 to 10%.

It should be remembered that fluctuation in all such surveys may be, at least in part, attributable to the message which state-controlled media have been instructed to present. Back in 2015, journalists who had worked for state TV channels gave frightening details of the degree to which the reporting, and even the vocabulary used to describe the government in Kyiv, the war in Donbas, etc. was coordinated with people in the Kremlin (details here). It is unlikely that Putin's effective act of aggression in offering Russian citizenship to Ukrainians in Donbas was undertaken without similar propaganda accompaniment.

Next Up For U.S. Weapons Supplies To Ukraine? Possibly Surface-To-Air Missiles

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by Mike Eckel and Christopher Miller
RFE/RL, 11 June 2019
https://bit.ly/2MUmJ2j

Over the five years of grinding war that has pitted Ukrainian forces against Russia-backed fighters, the United States has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in military gear: night-vision goggles, flak jackets, vehicles, counter-battery radars, among other things.

Last year, after years of internal debate that preceded his administration, President Donald Trump began supplying Ukraine with sophisticated anti-tank missiles known as Javelins -- a move that some feared would antagonize Moscow.

Now, U.S. lawmakers are moving to up the ante again, with legislation that would authorize supplying Kyiv with surface-to-air missiles.

The effort comes in an amendment being attached to legislation providing funding for the Defense Department; the amendment removes existing language prohibiting the sale of such missiles, known as man-portable air-defense systems, or MANPADS.

Sponsored by the two top lawmakers on the House Foreign Affairs Committee -- Democrat Eliot Engel and Republican Michael McCaul -- the measure, which is expected to pass easily, does not mean that the weapons will be supplied right away.

Any final decision would have to go through multiple approval processes at various U.S. agencies, including the U.S. Defense Department.

Moreover, targets for Ukrainian surface-to-air missiles are limited for now: Russia-backed separatists don't have fighter jets, and Russia sending its own aircraft over Ukraine would undermine its assertions that it is not involved in the conflict.

Still, the move sends a clear message to the Kremlin of where Congress stands regarding the war in Ukraine. And, according to Steven Pifer, a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, it's a logical next step after the U.S. decision to supply Javelins to the Ukrainian armed forces.

"I don't see this as generating more problems than the arrival of the Javelins did," Pifer, now a research fellow at Stanford University's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, told RFE/RL. "We're not talking about providing the Ukrainians with F-35 fighters or M-1 tanks."

The Defense Department did not immediately respond to a query seeking comment on the possibility of supplying the missiles.

One U.S. diplomat who has worked on Ukraine-related issues downplayed the significance of the amendment, telling RFE/RL on the condition of anonymity in order to speak freely that it simply removed "an arbitrary restriction that is not in place for most countries."

The move comes as part of a broader effort in Congress to increase military support for Ukraine. Two separate pieces of legislation making their way through the House and the Senate call for authorizing up to $300 million in annual military support for Ukraine, an increase from past years.

And the House legislation calls for the first time for supplying anti-ship missiles and coastal-defense weaponry to Ukraine in response to an incident in November 2018, when Russian Coast Guard ships seized three Ukrainian boats and 24 sailors in the Kerch Strait near the Crimean Peninsula.

Though the overall death toll has surpassed 13,000, fighting around Ukraine's Donbas region has ebbed and flowed in intensity since 2014, when the conflict with Russia first erupted.
In recent weeks, there's been a sharp uptick in artillery shelling and gunfire, with Ukraine's military reporting that at least six soldiers were killed last week.

It's unclear how Russia would respond if Washington did in fact move forward to supply the surface-to-air missiles.

And it's unclear how that would affect stalled peace negotiations, including the so-called Minsk Trilateral Contact Group meetings and the Normandy Format talks. Ukraine's newly elected president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, has called for restarting both efforts; last week, the Trilateral Group -- comprised of officials from Russia, Ukraine, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe -- met for the first time in weeks.

But Konstantin Kosachyov, a member of Russia's upper house of parliament and a Kremlin ally, criticized the overall increase in U.S. military funding for Ukraine.

"In this way Washington fuels Ukraine's internal conflict. Such foreign support may create a dangerous delusion in Kiev that a solution can be achieved by military means," Kosachyov said in a post to his Facebook page on June 11. "Each million dollars of military support to Kiev spells more casualties and months and even years of war against one's own people, for which the United States will bear its share of responsibility."

The MANPADS would have no immediate battlefield use, Pifer noted, since Russian military aircraft have not been used in the conflict. Drones, however, are widely used by both sides in the conflict.

While Moscow reacted angrily when Washington agreed to supply the Javelins to Ukraine, there have been few remarks by Russian officials on the subject since the 210 missiles and 37 launchers arrived in April 2018.

Ukraine has showcased the Javelins in publicized drills but its armed forces have not used them in combat against Russia-backed forces in eastern battlefields.

The special U.S. envoy for Ukraine, Kurt Volker, has said that the Javelins are being stored in a secure facility far from the front line.

Ukrainian and U.S. sources with knowledge of the storage locations have told RFE/RL that the missiles and launchers have been separated into smaller groups and are held in strategic locations around the country, possibly in underground bunkers, where they can be moved quickly to areas that border Russia or the eastern front line.

In March, the top U.S. military commander for Europe told the Senate Armed Services Committee that even if the Javelins hadn't been deployed, their presence had been registered by Russia-backed forces.

"They take that into consideration in the deployment of their forces and where they put them," General Curtis Scaparrotti told the committee.

Since 2014, Ukraine has received more than $3 billion in total support, including security and nonsecurity assistance, from the United States.

#7

No Limits for Russia: How PACE Agreed to Lift Sanctions on the Aggressor

By Serhiy Sydorenko
Euromaidan Press, 6 June 2019
[translated by Alya Shandra]
https://bit.ly/2XmSIfs

[Ukrainian-language original in European Pravda: https://bit.ly/2WRmYdX]

On Monday, 3 June, a regular meeting of the Rules Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe took place in Paris. At first glance, this was a routine, insignificant event – PACE is by far not the most influential body European body, and the meetings of its committees no longer attract attention.
But this meeting was special.

During it, European Assembly members agreed to capitulate to the requirements of the Russian Federation and fulfilled all its wishes. The draft resolution approved by

the Regulatory Committee introduces a special, individual procedure to return the Russian delegation, which was sanctioned after the annexation of Crimea, to the PACE session already this summer. And in order for the Russians to not be afraid of coming to Strasbourg, PACE should undertake a "self-amputation" and remove the right to sanction Russia from its own powers.

The idea of "forgiving" Russia its aggressive steps against Ukraine – the annexation of Crimea and fomenting of war in the Donbas – has been in the air of PACE for several years.

It has been put up for a vote several times yet failed in each of them. Now, the situation has changed drastically – committee members overwhelmingly supported the project. This isn't the final victory for Russia – in three weeks, this document will be voted upon in the session hall. But it's already clear that Russia's supporters have done everything possible and impossible to guarantee such support.

European Pravda has looked into what the committee decided, why the decision appeared now, and how Russia succeeded in gaining the support of European PACE members.

Down with the sanctions!

Attempts to lift the sanction pressure on Russia in PACE are nothing new.

The idea of "forgiving" Russia is openly supported by the Council of Europe Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland, as well as by a number of very influential assembly members, and therefore the struggle for de-sanctioning Russia had become pronounced in recent years.

The Ukrainian delegation managed to stop these efforts each time.

The most active and flagrant attempts came in the fall of 2018, but then the defeat of Russia's friends was so devastating that it seemed to be definitive. And the acting rules of the Assembly left no chances for the Russians' return – at least, not this year.

But do the rules matter when political expediency is at stake?

The governments of Germany and France became the main drivers for removing restrictions from Russia.

They gathered votes in favor of supporting the decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for a new sanctions procedure against the violating states. The initiators of the changes did not hide the key idea behind them: to make the new procedure as cumbersome and complex as possible. So that applying it against Russia would be close to impossible.

Ukraine was not able to win the round in the Committee of Ministers but did not lose it, either. The decision included a critical point for Kyiv – that the new sanction mechanism would complement the existing sanctions mechanism rather than replace it. Consequently, the old sanctions should not be abolished automatically – only if the Assembly would agree to amputate its own powers. This seemed almost unrealistic.

But Berlin and Paris know how to find arguments that make dreams reality. The dreams, however, are theirs, and the reality can become Ukraine's.

What has already been approved and what's left

Here is a very important detail: as of now, the sanctions pressure has not yet been lifted. The PACE resolution has been approved only by the Committee. This is an important preparatory step, but the final decision should be made by the Parliamentary Assembly.

This gives Ukraine a chance to persuade their European colleagues, to explain to them how serious the consequences of their decision may be.

But, to be frank, there is no certainty of success. The standards agreed upon by the profile committee are too serious. Even incredibly so. Moreover, they were adopted by an absolute majority of votes.

In essence, they are about PACE's capitulation to Russia, about its self-destruction.

The draft resolution of the PACE which was approved by the committee has already been published.

The title of the document makes it seem as if it's about something extremely positive: "Strengthening the decision-making process of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning credentials and voting."

Among the 12 paragraphs of the decision, two are of key importance – exactly those that are addressed specifically to Russia. You, however, won't find any mention of Russia in them, despite there being no other Member State that is under sanctions pressure and because of this does not take part in PACE activities.

The first norm of the approved project proposes to abolish the right of PACE to impose key sanctions. Not only against Russia, but sanctions altogether. The regulation adds a rule according to which the assembly will no longer be able torestrict the right to vote, the right to speak, the right to participate and vote in the committees of the assembly. In essence, the only sanctions that can be imposed by PACE, according to the project, are a ban on holding senior positions in PACE bodies and a ban on participation in observation missions. And this is not the limit – the last point of the decision suggests that the sanctions rules "need further revision"!

The second norm of the project allows the Russians to return to the Assembly in the middle of the year, "as an exception," and even more – in the middle of the summer session. This rule is contrary to the Council of Europe's statute and therefore only applies to the June 2019 meetings. The reason for it is that the Russians do not want to travel to Strasbourg until PACE waives its right to impose sanctions on Russia at any time in the future.

And so, upon an agreement with the Russian Federation, PACE's leadership has adopted an unprecedented working schedule. The decision of the Assembly to abolish sanctions should be adopted on Monday as soon as Assembly Members arrive in Strasbourg, without leaving them the opportunity to discuss these changes in party groups. This means that the Ukrainian delegation will not have time to lobby for its position in Strasbourg at all – and usually, this lobbying was the most effective. Having received a "green light" regarding the elimination of the threat of sanctions, Russia, according to this scenario, submits a list of its delegates and on Wednesday they already begin working in PACE.

And, finally, about the current balance of forces. The meeting of the committee showed that the absolute majority of its members support "forgiving" Russia. "The voices were distributed as follows: 18 in support, six against (Ukrainians, British, the Baltic countries); one (Pole) abstained," Volodymyr Ariev, the head of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE, told after the meeting.

What's at stake?

Brief reference: the sanctions against Russia in the Council of Europe which the country's friends are campaigning against are not connected with the economy at all. They do not harm "Putin's family," do not limit the Russian economy, and so on. They are purely political restrictions imposed on the Russian delegation in response to the annexation of the Crimea and armed aggression in the Donbas. Back in the spring of 2014, Russian Assembly Members were limited of voting rights in PACE, deprived of the right to lead committees, participate in governing bodies and supervisory missions until the end of the year. Only the rights of speaking at sessions, initiating decisions, and voting in committees were preserved.

The following year, these restrictions were prolonged, and from 2016, Moscow just stopped sending its delegation to Strasbourg, avoiding the humiliating sanctions procedure (according to PACE rules, if the delegation isn't there, then formally sanctions are not imposed against it).

Meanwhile, without the influence of the numerous Russian delegation, PACE turned into an organ that was rather critical of Russia. This was seriously irritating to the Kremlin, so two years ago, they rolled out the blackmail, having stopped paying contributions to the budget of the Council of Europe. An annual deficit of 33 million euros, or 7% of the budget, brought about a financial crisis in the organization (although PACE itself received only a

fraction of that money). In parallel, Moscow began talking about the possibility of Russia's withdrawal from the Council of Europe.
It seems that, ultimately, the blackmail worked.

How is this dangerous for Ukraine?

This creates the first precedent of softening sanctions against the Russian Federation.

Moreover, Russia would receive vivid confirmation of its strategy: the West so greatly appreciates a "dialogue" with the aggressor that even ordinary blackmail could be enough for lifting sanctions imposed against it. And there is no doubt that attempts to attack the sanctions regime will continue.

But this is far from being the only problem.

Domino effect

Strasbourg is reluctant to admit it, but starting from 2018, PACE delegates have received signals that Ukrainian civil society will lose confidence in the Council of Europe if sanctions on Russia are unconditionally lifted. Ukrainian human rights activists have already made a rather harsh joint statement about the "surrender of the Council of Europe. And the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry has officially warned the Council of Europe that it is preparing harsh steps if Russia will return to PACE.

Even Ukraine's interests are put aside, even if one turns a blind eye to the values of the Council of Europe, this decision of PACE – if the resolution is approved in its current form – will be catastrophic for the Council of Europe. And this is not an exaggeration.
After all, the sanction mechanism will be killed for everyone, not just from Russia.
Under these changes, PACE's monitoring mechanism, one of the key instruments of the Assembly, ceases to work. Will many states follow the monitoring instructions if their violations of the rules will no longer result in penalties?

Gross violations of the principles of international law, let alone the annexation of foreign territory, is an exceptional event for the European continent. But routine small violations are not so rare for the Parliamentary Assembly, and sanctions have always helped to correct them.

For example, the Council of Europe rules and traditions require all countries to send a balanced delegation to Strasbourg: the ratio of the power and opposition, the number of men and women, various parties, etc. should be exactly the same as in the national parliament. And if, for example, a certain state sends a purely male delegation to Strasbourg, then other PACE deputies, having learned about this, challenge the powers of the national delegation and force the offending country to rectify the problem.

Today this works, but now this opportunity will simply be annulled if PACE decides to "amputate" its own sanction powers.

But if Russia returns, Ukraine may face another, even more dangerous issue.

Imagine a situation when the Russian delegation triumphantly returns to Strasbourg (the Ukrainian one may make a symmetrical step and cease working in PACE). And for the next session, the Russian Federation sends an updated list of its delegation, including all the "MPs" illegally elected to the State Duma from occupied Crimea to the Assembly.

According to all the rules and logic, PACE would have to stop this malaise and deprive the Russians of voting rights, or maybe terminate their powers altogether, but will not be able to do so, because it would have killed its sanctions powers. And so Russia announces that it has won the recognition of its delegates from occupied Crimea at the level of the Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Do France and Germany strive for this scenario or dozens of other similar ones? That's unlikely.

The operation of "forgiving Russia," which is being implemented now, looks more spontaneous and emotional than sober and thought out.

Will the Ukrainian delegates, public activists, human rights activists, and journalists be able to communicate to the West an understanding of this danger and stop them from making a mistake in June? I can't be sure, but this chance does need to be taken.

#8
What Does the New Language Law Really Change?
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by Vladyslav Vlasiuk
Kyiv Post, 10 May 2019
https://bit.ly/2FiMnYp

The newly introduced "Law on Ukrainian Language" has become a subject of strong public debate. There is a wide range of opinions: some defend the law and mark it as a historic milestone while others call it controversial due to some "sensitive" provisions. But what does the law really change? Here are answers to some common questions:

1. Is it now illegal to advocate for bilingualism?

The new law says that giving official status to other languages is in violation of the constitution. This does not mean that it is no longer legal to advocate for making any

foreign language official in Ukraine. Nevertheless, trying to accomplish this in violation of the constitutional procedure would be a criminal offence.

Another provision introduces criminal liability for publicly expressing disrespect towards Ukrainian language. The law equates it to abusing national symbols, which is an offence according to the Criminal Code of Ukraine. However, making it punishable would require amending the criminal code itself.

2. What about minority and indigenous languages?

The Law retains the right of indigenous peoples and national minorities for pre-school and elementary education in their mother tongue as well as further studying it as a separate subject. The Law also protects the use of minority and indigenous languages in the public sphere (e.g. during cultural, artistic, entertainment events, on television, in print media, during religious services etc.).

3. May I refer to a public office in a foreign language?

There is no provision requiring that one should address public institutions in Ukrainian. Meanwhile, a public office is obliged to communicate in Ukrainian regardless the language of the initial appeal. In addition, a public official is not obliged to use Ukrainian while on duty in a number of occasions. For example, law enforcement or border service officials may use a foreign language when communicating with someone who does not speak Ukrainian.

4. Is there space for secondary and higher education in a foreign language?

Indigenous peoples and national minorities may study in separate classes combining Ukrainian with any other study of language. Several disciplines may be taught in English or other official languages of the European Union.

In addition, the government is required to promote learning global languages in state and municipal educational institutions. Upon a respective request, higher education institutions should create an opportunity for studying minority or indigenous languages as separate disciplines.

5. How does the Law approach private communication?

The Law does not apply to private life and religious exercises. There are no provisions obliging citizens to learn Ukrainian compulsorily. Meanwhile, the law provides for incentivizing learning Ukrainian language at home and abroad.

6. May I ask my doctor to talk to me in a foreign language?

Even though the law requires all communication in healthcare, services, transportation and other spheres to be in Ukrainian, one may always ask for switching to some other language, as there is no restriction.

7. What will be a mandate of the Language Commissioner?

The law introduces setting up the Office of the Language Commissioner. Its mandate is mostly to provide for ensuring compliance with language requirements by public authorities. Apart from that, the commissioner may also address language violations committed by private bodies. For example, one may refer to the Commissioner's Office in case he/she was refused to switch to Ukrainian in a restaurant, when a company's charter is not available in Ukrainian.

#9
Crimea: Russia's Newest Potemkin Village
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by Andrew Wilson and Ridvan Bari Urcosta
European Council on Foreign Relations, April 30
https://bit.ly/2ISdsT1

Grand projects funded by Russia can do little to cover up the lopsided and inadequate economy and infrastructure that Crimeans are now living with

According to Russian television's number one propagandist Dmitry Kiselyov, "Crimea gave Russia inspiration and strengthened faith in our own strengths." But five years on from annexation, in terms of economic successes in Crimea, these have come at great cost to Russia – if you can even call them successes.

Subsidies from Moscow have led to a lopsided and highly militarised economy on the peninsula, squeezing out other sectors. Russia responded to Ukraine's blockade of Crimea with prestige projects like the Kerch Bridge and energy links, but it has not been able to solve basic questions like water supply. To great fanfare, a "Ministry of Crimean Affairs" appeared on 31 March 2014, but was wound up in July 2015. Its role had been to attract and oversee investments, but Russian businesses shied away after initial enthusiasm.

In short, over the last five years Crimea has become more dependent on Moscow – and achieved the rare distinction of becoming both more expensive and poorer at the same time.

Mega-projects

Several grand projects have been completed in Crimea; but Moscow paid for all of them, and they have diverted resources from elsewhere. Opinion polls show that Russians increasingly complain about the expenditure. The Kerch Bridge officially cost 172.1 billion roubles ($2.6 billion), plus smaller contracts, but its prioritisation "stopped construction of nearly all new roadways and bridges in Russia. In 2017, only 10 new roadways were built across Russia". The cost of building the Tavrida highway to Sevastopol has tripled, from 41.8 billion roubles to 144 billion roubles ($0.6 billion to $2.2 billion). Completion is not due until September 2020.

Before annexation the main supplier of power for Crimea was the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant to the north: 82 percent of energy supply came from outside Crimea. Since annexation, two new thermal power stations have been built, at no small cost of 49 billion roubles. Rosatom discussed building a nuclear plant in Crimea but eventually rejected the idea (the Soviet Union equally abandoned a project on the Sea of Azov as the region is too geologically volatile). Crimea's main source of electricity is now the Rostov nuclear plant in Russia, necessitating the construction of a fourth energy unit by 2018, and two high voltage power lines to Crimea. An underwater gas pipeline from Krasnodar was finished in 2016, whose planned volume of gas supply is 2.2 billion m^3.

Sanctions and their impact

Meanwhile, sanctions are having an effect: "44 Russian and Crimean companies and 155 individuals are currently under international sanctions", as of September 2018. The last high-profile Western company, Best Western Hotels and Resorts, left Crimea last year. Siemens controversially sold seven gas turbines to Russia in 2015-16, and four made their way to Crimea to help build the new thermal power plants – supposedly without Siemens' knowledge. Siemens then sold a 46 percent stake in the Russian company Interautomatika as a result of the scandal. According to one Crimean official, however, subtler schemes allow some Western companies to operate under the cover of the local authorities.

At the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in Hamburg, Ukraine has accused Russia of illegally extracting 7.2 billion m^3 of gas from the rigs west of Crimea seized by paratroopers in 2014, of which 3.5 billion was from the Odesa field, even closer to Ukraine's shore. In March 2019 the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruled that Russia had in 2014 "unlawfully expropriated Naftogaz's assets in Crimea … valued at $5 billion, plus interest". Russia has been told to pay Ukraine's Oschadbank $1.3 billion, and $159 million for the seizure of companies and real estate rumoured to mainly belong to oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky.

Fear of sanctions means that mainstream Russian banks do not operate in Crimea. Of the three main operating banks, one is the state-controlled Russian National Commerce Bank, which was moved to Simferopol in 2014. The GENBANK and Black Sea Bank of

Development and Reconstruction are indigenous Crimean banks, created immediately after annexation and belonging to the Crimean elite. The whole banking system operates within the newly created Russia-only payment system Mir.

Sanctions on flights to Crimea were imposed after annexation, with the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation introducing a ban in March 2014. Attempts by proxy companies to fly have largely been unsuccessful; they include Grozny Avia (claiming to fly into Istanbul from a stop-over in the Russian town of Anapa), Dobrolyt, and Pobeda. However, 21 Russian airlines fly to Crimea, with flights connecting to 56 Russian cities and 20 countries. "Many of the same planes travel to the Simferopol airport and then continue on to European cities," in a clear breach of sanctions. According to local statistics, Simferopol airport has expanded its passenger numbers from half a million to five million a year, after a refit costing $537 million.

The Crimean economy

Official and non-official accounts of the state of the Crimean economy differ enormously. According to the speaker of parliament in Crimea, Vladimir Konstantinov, the Crimean economy made "… a fantastic breakthrough in its development. The regional gross product has tripled". Despite the damages awards listed above, the speaker of the Russian State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin inverted this picture in March 2019, claiming that Ukraine should compensate Russia for its misrule of Crimea before 2014.

Russia has restored the military sector in Crimea, benefiting the large military plants in Feodosiya, Evpatoriya, Sevastopol, and Kerch. The weaknesses of other sectors, however, mean that Crimea's general socio-economic situation is only 40th among the 85 subjectsof the Russian Federation (in 2015 – 53rd) place and Sevastopol 66th (in 2015 – 76th). Crimea and Sevastopol are separate subjects.

There was a one-off administrative boost to real wages and pensions in 2014, but this was soon eroded by inflation, the substitution of more expensive Russian goods for Ukrainian ones, and shortages induced by blockade and sanctions. In terms of the standard of living, Crimea is only in 69th place, Sevastopol is 52nd. Crimea has an abnormally large numberof pensioners to support: 0.7 million, which is 31.5 percent of the population.

The militarisation of the economy and the strong criminal presence within the Crimean elite have shrunk the SME sector. There were 15,553 small private enterprises in 2014, but by 2018 only 1,382. Small businesses used to employ 31.2 percent of the workforce – now the figure is only 19.5 percent.

There has been a notable influx of military personnel. In information supplied to the Ukrainian parliament, military analyst Dmytro Tymchuk stated that: "in the four and a half years of occupation 247,500 people have moved to Crimea … Given the 'uninvited' visitors, as well as natural movement (birth rate/mortality), during the occupation the population of Crimea has already changed by 20-25 percent."

Tourism

Before 2014, Crimea was re-establishing the tourism industry that had collapsed in the 1990s. Crimea featured on big ship cruises. The official claim is that tourism figures are back up to nearly six million a year; but unofficial sources claim closer to two million. In the summer of 2018 Russia hosted the World Cup, so there were fewer Russian visitors (Crimea did not host any games). The 2019 or even 2020 season will be a better test. The opening of the Kerch Bridge to rail travel is expected for December 2019.

Crimea attracts few independent middle-class Russian travellers. Most post-annexation tourists are so-called 'budgetniki' – state employees with limited funds who make collective bookings at hotels and sanatoria (before the annexation, tourists often let individual rooms). Crimea used to be relatively cheap, even though services were primitive; now it is more expensive but the services are the same. The Russian middle classes prefer to go to Turkey, Bulgaria, and Egypt. Claims that Ukrainian tourists are returning have been hotly disputed.

The budget

A massive 77 percent of Crimea's budget is currently paid by Moscow, and 60 percent for Sevastopol, rising to 79 percent for Crimea and 65 percent for Sevastopol in 2019-20. That makes at least $6 billion in budgetary subsidies alone since annexation. Other estimatesstate "at least $2.3 billion a year", but warn that "indirect losses" are harder to count.

A federal programme called "Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol" draws in money from many other funds and structures. More than 80 percent of it has gone on big infrastructure projects. Only 5 percent has gone to tourism, and just 1.5 percent to "inter-ethnic unity". A mere "0.4 percent of the peninsula's budget (or 1.2 billion roubles) is earmarked for 'defence, security and law enforcement.'" The huge military build-up, in other words, comes out of the Russian federal budget.

Water

Before annexation, 85 percent of Crimea's water supply came from further north in Ukraine via the North Crimea Canal built by the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s. In fact, securing the water supply was one of the main reasons for the administrative transfer of Crimea to Ukraine from Russia in 1954. The canal and its branches used to supply Crimea with up to 3 billion m^3 of water a year. The occupation authorities have responded with wells, drilling down up to 400 metres, but with diminishing returns. The water extracted is of poor quality and ground water is getting salinated.
Aerial maps show just how badly the situation has deteriorated in recent years.

About 70 percent of the green steppe is now dried up or damaged, and therefore unsuitable for farming. A state of emergency was introduced in four farming regions in 2018. Plans for expensive desalination plants have been mooted, but have not taken off. Some have suggested the possibility of a military strike northwards to secure the canal. But any mission would create big new open front lines. A cover story would be hard to create in a relatively rural, pro-Ukrainian region. The biggest local city, Kherson, is on the wrong (western) side of the river Dnipro.

Syria

Crimea plays a role in Russia's hopes of benefiting economically from the end-game in Syria. Syrian participation at the Yalta Economic Forum in April 2018 led to the establishment of the Crimean-Syrian Shipping Company, and to plans to create a special trade zone in Crimea (in part to help circumvent sanctions on the two Donbas "People's Republics"), secure phosphate supplies for Crimean factories, and even transfer captured Ukrainian oil rigs for use in Syrian waters. There are rumours of Russian tourism companies operating to Tartus and Latakia out of Sevastopol. Ironically, sanctions on Crimea might facilitate some of these more shady operations.

After five years, Russia has not succeeded in creating a self-sustaining economy in Crimea. Instead, Crimea resembles the late Soviet Union: it is highly militarised, but it cannot solve basic questions of water and food. And nor is Crimea 'stable under occupation'. Its economic problems and shadow economy are driving Russian adventurism elsewhere. Polarisation between a militarised economy and a marginalised Crimean Tatar community, with the Russian-speaking service economy shrinking in between, is not a recipe for long-term stability. The newly elected president, Volodymyr Zelensky, has come under pressure from at least one of his predecessors to ease the blockade on Crimea; but it is impossible to yet predict any of his policies with any certainty.

#10
Ukraine Not Succeeding, But Not Giving Up

by Yaroslav Hrytsak
Forum for Ukrainian Studies (CIUS), 25 April 2019
https://bit.ly/2WPSnNW

This speech (in Ukrainian) was given to the European Parliament in Brussels on 27 November 2018. [The Ukrainian-language original is at https://bit.ly/2IntYLZ]

As part of a small Ukrainian delegation, I gave a speech to the European Parliament nearly five years ago, aiming to convince MEPs that Ukraine was unlikely to break up. The Euromaidan Revolution had immediately raised, again, the "Huntingtonian" scenario of Ukraine splitting into a Ukrainophone west and Russophone east. The protests in

Kyiv were presented as coming only from the Ukrainian-speaking west of the country, supposedly risking a negative response from the east and ultimately threatening a civil war and possible end of Ukraine as a state.

I tried to show that regardless of its internal strifes and divisions, Ukraine is a relatively stable political entity. I don't know how convincing my arguments were, but the best proof of my thesis came one year later, in December 2014, with the disgraceful end of the "Russian Spring" in Ukraine. (To recall: it was a widely implemented attempt at a counter-revolutionary separatist uprising in the Russian-speaking oblasts of Ukraine's south and east that was intended to spur the defection of these oblasts from Kyiv as part of a newly declared "New Russia.") The Russian Spring had failed to prevail in the spring of 2014, by summer it was already extinguished, and in December the Kremlin declared it was over. Ukraine proved again that it is quite resistant to, and able to defend against, the threat of splitting.

But when I spoke in December 2013 at the European Parliament, neither I nor my Ukrainian colleagues were aware of Putin's actual plans. In fact, these plans had been adopted as Russia's new Ukraine strategy far earlier, immediately after the Russian-Georgian war of 2008. This strategy stipulated that if Kyiv started to move in the direction of the West—either by submitting an application to join NATO or by strengthening its ties with the EU—then Russia must respond with military intervention and by splitting Ukraine into three. The east and south of Ukraine were planned to be moved directly under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation, and central Ukraine would be transformed into a puppet state with its centre in Kyiv; as for Western Ukraine—the bastion of Ukrainian nationalism—it would be free to go where it wanted, even "to three devils," as the saying goes.

Information about this strategy was leaked in the Western mass media. In September 2009 it was described in detail in the newspaper Dzerkalo tyzhnia (Mirror on the Week; Rus: Zerkalo nedeli) by the director of the Institute of Strategic Studies in Kyiv, Volodymyr Horbulin, and his advisor, Oleksandr Lytvynenko. However, the article seemed too incredible to be believed at the time, and it was ignored. Moreover, when my colleague presented this strategy in September 2013 at a conference in Warsaw on European security, the rest of the participants laughed at him. Only one senior German diplomat approached this colleague during a break and said he was right—and also that unfortunately the strategy was probable.

During the Euromaidan I had the chance to work with an informal team of experts at one of the protest headquarters. After the first shootings and the adoption of draconian laws in January 2014, we were aware already that the main threat was not Yanukovych, it was Putin. This was even spoken of by Putin's former advisor Andrei Illarionov, who had emigrated to the USA and was working at one of its strategic institutes. Illarionov warned Ukrainians that they had exactly until the end of the winter Olympic games, after which Russia would commence direct military aggression.

That is in fact what happened. First was the appearance of the "little green men" in Crimea, and of Girkin's gang in the Donbas. Next was the incursion of the Russian Army, the extent of which was gauged from the reaction of the local population. The scenario stipulated that the Russian military would advance not on their own but in response to requests from local residents to protect them from the rule of "Ukrainian fascists" in Kyiv. This plan failed, however, when Russia's army was met not with bouquets of flowers and tears of joy—but rather with opposition from fervent activists in Ukraine's Russian-speaking cities and oblasts, who clearly understood that inviting the Russian military meant calling war into their own homes.

The Russian strategy succeeded only in Crimea and part of the Donbas. Painful losses as they are, for Ukraine they are small beer compared to what was really the intended result. Ukraine was supposed to have been divided along the line running from Kharkiv to Odesa, with Russia wanting to gain control over the country's industrial heartland, including the important cities of Dnipropetrovsk (today Dnipro) and Kharkiv, as well as the Black Sea coast from Odesa to Mariupol. Fortunately, these plans were not realized.

I have three reasons for setting forth this history in such detail. Firstly, we have a short memory. We can hardly remember what we did yesterday, and so it's no wonder we've forgotten how serious the risk was five years ago. If the plan had come to pass, today my Kyivan colleagues and I would have been representing not one but two different states; actually, I doubt whether we'd be here at all, representing anyone. Europe would have had a large Syria on its hands, right next to its borders (because Ukrainians would hardly have given in easily to the Russian aggression), and its actual Syrian refugee problem would have been compounded even more by refugee Ukrainians.

Therefore, when today we try to assess the failures and successes of the Euromaidan, we should evaluate them not only compared to the best-case scenario. This rosy picture envisioned Ukraine conducting radical political and economic reforms, and embarking on a development trajectory leading like a highway away from the "Russkii Mir" (Russian World) to a united Europe.

Regrettably, this did not happen. But we should judge Ukraine according to this optimal scenario only if we also keep in mind the worst-case scenario, which I described earlier. Against this more even-handed background, we must make a simple and honest assessment: things in Ukraine are neither as good as we would have wished nor as bad as we imagine. The truth is that Ukraine has never implemented as many reforms as it did in the past five years! But clearly there is also the feeling that these reforms are not enough.

The fact that despite the war the Ukrainian economy is growing can truly be called a "Ukrainian miracle." However, positive macroeconomic performance has not been converted into microeconomic prosperity for the average Ukrainian. Similarly, Ukraine was granted a visa-free regime with the European Union, but masses of Ukrainians—especially the young—have taken advantage of it in order to leave their country for good. And the label being used for their exit is not emigration but evacuation.

Furthermore, although Ukraine no longer has Communists in its parliament, and the parties from the counter-revolutionary camp have weakened considerably, yesterday's revolutionary allies are squabbling with each other in the Verkhovna Rada no less than they did with Yanukovych's forces before 2014. Nevertheless, democratic procedures continue to function, albeit imperfectly. As a consequence of the war, Ukraine currently has 1.5 million or more internally displaced persons, and there are a lot of weapons among the general population, yet it is relatively stable as a political community. Civic society is tired and exhausted, and its suffering leaders are subject to pressure and direct attack—but it remains determinedly on the political stage and is not giving up.

In a word, Ukraine is not succeeding, but it is not giving up. That is the first point.

Secondly, when we speak of a revolution, we must not forget that it is not a one-time act. The English revolution began in 1640 and finished only in 1688. France started on its revolutionary period in 1789, which entailed three more revolutions by 1871. It is jokingly said of Germany that it began its revolutionary transformations in 1848, and only 100 years later embarked on a normal developmental path—not without the help of occupational forces. For its part, Russia went through several revolutionary situations in the 19th century before its "real" revolutions started in 1905. And while its 1917 Revolution looked like a victory for the Bolsheviks, nearly 70 years later we understand that this victory was a "grand illusion." Meanwhile, in the 19th century the Poles were famous as the most revolution-prone nation: from the Kościuszko Rebellion to the Polish Insurrection of 1863–64, the szlachta and the bourgeoisie instigated five revolutionary insurgencies before Poland achieved independence in 1918. We all remember Poland's most recent revolution—the successful ascent to power of Solidarnosc in 1989—but we tend to forget that it was preceded by the 1968 Prague Spring and by several worker's uprisings during the 1970s.

It is Deng Xiaoping who is supposed to have said, in response to Henry Kissinger's question as to what he thought of the French Revolution, that it's too early to tell. Given this logic, it is probably too early to speak of the failure or victory of the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity. The Maidan events of 2014 were merely one act—the most brilliant and most tragic so far—but only one of several, and no guarantee that it will be the last.

Ukraine has yet to fully process its tragic history. This included being at the epicentre, between 1914 and 1945, of what Professor Timothy Snyder called the "Bloodlands"; and in the second half of the 20th century, being reduced from potentially one of the largest nations in Europe to a mere ethnographic ecomuseum, where the local natives were obliged to happily sing and dance, praising the glorious Soviet reality. (It must be said that in their ignorance of any other reality, many of those local natives truly loved this role.) In addition, Ukraine has yet to pay the price for the slowness of reforms since independence was declared after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991—for it has been shown that the slower or later such reforms are implemented, the greater the social cost.

Thus, the revolutions in Ukraine are a healthy reaction to unhealthy Ukrainian conditions. Because these conditions have been established historically—that is, over many decades—it's doubtful that Ukraine could manage to extract itself from them in a single short-term revolution.

In sum, Ukraine is not a sprinter country but rather a stayer country. It is unlikely to traverse the stayer's distance at a sprinter's speed. So, at best, the revolutions would only provide a spurt to these processes; they would be able to reduce the time required to go the distance, but would not be able to reduce the distance itself. Ukraine is almost at the final kilometre, but "almost" doesn't count: it has to get to the end. And the histories of other countries show that reaching the end is not automatically guaranteed.

Thirdly, when considering whether Ukraine will succeed or not, we cannot ignore the geopolitical factor. No revolution happens as a domestic matter of one country only; each revolution invariably has an international context and international consequences.

To expand on this thesis, I would like to cite Alexander Gerschenkron, who is one of the foremost experts on the economic history of Eastern Europe. He wrote an essay in 1951 titled "Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective," mainly about countries like Russia or today's Ukraine. He knew what he was talking about, because he was born in Odesa. When the Bolsheviks took over he was forced to flee to Vienna, and from there, when Hitler invaded, he was again forced to flee, landing in the USA, where he became a professor at Harvard. Gerschenkron's thesis is simple: the greatest lesson of the 20th century is essentially that the problems of "backward" countries are not contained only in those countries; they are in equal portion the problems of developed countries as well. Developed countries cannot afford to ignore the economic backwardness of their neighbours, because both will eventually have to suffer the consequences.

Russia is a problem for Ukraine and for Europe. It's a geopolitical problem, but its roots lie in the failed liberalization of Russian politics and economy in the early 1990s. Putin is not the cause of the failure—he is its result. To quote from the aforementioned article by Horbulin and Lytvynenko, in the person of Putin the government of the Russian Federation "sacrificed the prospect of systemic public modernization and, therefore, the country's future. In effect, for the fifth or sixth time in Russian history, the reform/counter-reform vicious circle could not be broken."

A broad modernization program was reduced to a single narrow element—upgrading the military. This means that the current Russian government cannot live without external aggression or fomenting war hysteria, otherwise it loses its existential meaning.

Ukraine is attempting to do today what Russia failed to accomplish in the early 1990s. It's not a given that Ukraine will succeed, and almost certainly hard times are ahead. It will have to address some domestic issues on its own, without any outside help, but overall its chances of success are very small without support from the West. And this would be a

defeat not only for Ukraine but also for the West—and even for Russia in the long run. For Ukraine's success would create a chance to finally break the Russian vicious circle.

As I said before, Ukraine has not succeeded yet. Nevertheless, in contrast to Russia, Ukraine is continuing to process its past, and is determined not to sacrifice its European future. For this alone it deserves your support.

English translation by Ksenia Maryniak, Edmonton, 8 April 2019.

#11

Congratulations to the New Roster of AAUS Prize Winners!

Ukrainianstudies.org, 3 May 2019
https://bit.ly/2WNcxIn

Dear Colleagues,

AAUS is pleased to announce prize winners in our three categories (book, article, translation) in this year's competition. Please join me in congratulating the winners and thanking members of three selection committees for their hard work!

Book prize:

Winner: Serhiy Bilenky, *Imperial Urbanism in the Borderlands: Kyiv, 1800-1905* (University of Toronto Press, 2017)

Honorable mention: Marci Shore, *The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution* (Yale University Press, 2018)

Article prize:

Jennifer Carroll, "Sovereign Rules and Rearrangements: Banning Methadone in Occupied Crimea," *Medical Anthropology* (2018)

Translation prize:

Winner: *My Final Territory: Selected Essays* by Yuri Andrukhovych, edited by Michael M. Naydan and translated by Mark Andryczyk and Michael M. Naydan (University of Toronto Press, 2018)

Honorable mention: *The White Chalk of Days: The Contemporary Ukrainian Literature Series Antholog*y, compiled and edited by Mark Andryczyk (Academic Studies Press, 2017)

On behalf of AAUS President Oxana Shevel,
Vitaly Chernetsky
AAUS past president and Board member-at-large

#12
A Religious Affair

Ainslie Pierrynowski
ASNConvention.com, 4 May 2019
https://bit.ly/2IUk3MI

 "Suddenly we are now the Orthodox! We are now the Ukrainians…I did not want to stay without church, but this is too much. Too much to be patriotic enough and believing enough." These words, from a Ukrainian woman interviewed by panelist Tornike Metreveli, reflect one of the most fascinating elements of of Panel U7 on Power, Politics, and Religion, during the ASN World Convention held at the Harriman Institute, Columbia University. During Session Three on Thursday, May 2, 2019, Chair Elizabeth Clark (Brigham Young U, US), discussant Catherine Wanner (Penn State U, US), and participants Alessandro Milani (HURI, Harvard U, US), Andreii Fert (U Kyiv Mohyla Academy, Ukraine), Tornike Metreveli (U of St. Gallen, Switzerland), Inga Miller (U of Albany, US), and Annelle Sheline (Rice U, US) delved into how faith shapes and is shaped by competing nationalisms in Ukraine.

Andrii Fert argues that Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) promotes a vision of supranational unity in its messaging toward the Ukrainian public. Although this narrative attempts to legitimize UOC-MP's ties to Russia, it taps into nationalistic discourses to do so. UOC-MP's official media and formalized rituals construct a history which situates the Church's origins in Kievan Rus' and then moves to Moscow, only turning back to Ukraine when Orthodox Ukrainians suffer. Interestingly, this account reproduces the imperial and Soviet era concept of Ukrainians and Russians as a singular people with a common origin, who suffer when separated from each other. Conversely, an emergent counternarrative paints a picture of Ukraine's religious history wherein the Ukrainian people represent a distinct spiritual—and political—entity. Likewise, Metreveli contends that a recent push for an independent Church in Ukraine is bound up in recent political developments—the invasion of Crimea, Euromaidan, and a growing consensus around the formation of a singular state Church among political elites. Metreveli's exploration of how these discourses are discourses applied and felt in everyday life lead him to the concept of identarian in-betweenness, a response to a civic nationalism that forces people to choose one identity over another, characterized by undecided motive narratives and a volatile secular national identity.

These analyses raised a compelling point during the question and answer period: Does a focus on these competing national projects limit one's understanding of Ukrainian society

to a simplistic binary? Metreveli responded that religion in Ukraine ought to be conceived of as a distinct category of practice which separates religion from loyalties and conflict. This answer recalls panelists Inga Miller's and Annelie Sheline's comparative analyses of religion and national identity. Miller contends that, like the Latvian Lutheran Church, the Kiev Patriarchate has allied itself with political parties. Sheline says that Morocco's successful efforts to graft religion on to a new, territorially-bound nation-building project enables its state-sanctioned religion to co-exist with other competing faith and suggests that the same could be true of Ukraine. While these case studies might seem disparate at first glance, both presentations illuminated the complexities—and potential futures—of the relationship between Church, nation, and state in Ukraine.

Overall, the panelists explored salient political discourses in Ukraine which religion with conflicting national projects. From formal, high-ranking institutions, to local churches, on to the pages of newspapers and textbooks, religion is intertwined with conflicting visions of nation, identity, and self in Ukraine.

#13
HURI Fellow Talia Zajac Wins Prize for Kyivan Rus' Article

Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 31 May 2019
https://bit.ly/2KnN1rC

Congratulations to Dr. Talia Zajac, one of our Shklar Fellows during 2018 spring semester, for winning the Canadian Association for Ukrainian Studies Article Prize for 2017-2018.

Her article, "The Social-Political Roles of the Princesses in Kyivan Rus,' ca. 945-1240" is published in A Companion to Global Queenship (ed. Elena Woodacre, 2018).

Zajac is a graduate of the University of Toronto and is currently affiliated with the University of Nottingham. Her research focuses on Kyivan Rus' dynastic marriages, particularly ones that formed a connection between Kyivan Rus' and Western Europe, and between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. She works to uncover the political activities and agency of women in medieval societies, which often are excluded from historical accounts. In addition to re-examining the influence of women during this time, her research calls into question the notion that Western Europe and Ukraine can be divided along Catholic and Orthodox civilizational lines.

(...)

Zajac also answered a few of our questions about the book and her time here at HURI as a Shklar Fellow.

HURI: What role did your fellowship at HURI play in the creation of this article?

Zajac: Thanks to generous funding from the Eugene and Daymel Shklar Research Fellowship, I was able to spend one academic term at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute in the spring of 2018 in which I was able to bring several research projects to completion. Among them, I was blessed to have the research time and library access to investigate the public roles that a princess could play in Kyivan Rus' (the medieval ancestor state of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus'). My research on this topic was a contribution to the volume Global Queenship, edited by Elena Woodacre (ARC Humanities Press, 2018). As its title shows, this volume is an ambitious attempt to understand the nature of queenship in the Middle Ages and early modern period not only in Europe, but in a broad geographic perspective throughout the medieval and early modern world, with chapters spanning from Wales to Georgia, the Sultanate of Delhi, China, Japan, New Zealand and Madagascar, among other countries.

In my contribution to this wider project, I compared the political and social roles available to female members of the ruling clan of Rus' in the tenth to thirteenth century with the roles available to medieval Western European queens, their social equals. In East Slavic sources, each female member of the ruling dynasty of Rus' bore the title k"nęgyni (also spelled knęginia or more commonly, kniaginia), which was the female equivalent of the male title k"niaz', a word related to our English "king." Usually k"nęgyni is translated in English as "princess" and "k"niaz'" as "prince," but medieval Latin sources more often refer to the female and male rulers of Kyivan Rus' as regina (queen) and rex (king), respectively. So, I was curious to explore the question: How did the agency available to Rus' princesses compare to that of queens, since at least to outsider observers writing in Latin, they were very similar?

Finding an answer was difficult and still partly awaits further research. In some ways, I found the roles to be analogous—for instance, both the princess in Rus' and the western medieval queen had special titles of rulership; both were married to a prince or king in a Christian ritual; both gave birth to children who alone were considered legitimate and able to inherit power; both wore elaborate clothing and headdresses that emphasized their elevated social status over that of common women. But Rus' princesses had more limited power than their Western European counterparts in certain respects — for example, by the rules of succession adopted by the ruling dynasty in Rus', women were not allowed to become rulers in their own right. Instead of just ascribing this kind of limitation on power to misogyny, I tried to trace what cultural influences (for example, from Byzantine, Scandinavian, and even nomadic Turkic groups) might have shaped the agency available to elite women in Rus'.

HURI: Among many other sources, you draw from the Rus' Primary Chronicle for the information that is at the core of your article. Why is the Primary Chronicle an important source? How does it differ from other chronicles, such as the Kyivan and Novgorod chronicles, which you also use?

Zajac: The Rus' Primary Chronicle is easily the most important surviving narrative source for early Rus' history. No comparable document has survived that tells in one grand

narrative the story of the origins of Rus', its rulers, their adoption of Christianity, and the various 'games of thrones' that took place as rulers clashed for power. Its main narrative tells of events that took place from the ninth to early twelfth century, but it begins with a kind of pre-history, tracing the descent of the Rus' all the way back to Japheth, one of the sons of Noah in the Bible.

A note under the year 1116 in one major group of manuscripts of the Primary Chronicle states that the monk Silvester wrote its text at the Monastery of Saint Michael outside Kyiv, but most scholars believe that Silvester copied the Chronicle from previously existing manuscripts. Many people may perhaps know the Primary Chronicle by the title "Nestor's Chronicle": but this is a misnomer. The idea that the monk Nestor of the Kyivan Monastery of the Caves was the author of this text comes from a note inserted into a late sixteenth century manuscript copy of the Chronicle (called the "Khlebnikov" or "Ostrozkyi") manuscript). Historians and literary scholars agree that the form in which the text of the Primary Chronicle has come down to us is not just the product of one person's authorship, but the result of editing and re-editing by numerous anonymous monks over time. The number of these editorial changes, called redactions, when and where they were made, remain greatly debated.

The Chronicle's story of Prince Volodimir (Vladimir's) Sviatoslavich's acceptance of Christianity from Byzantium in 988/989 is a case in point. As historians Andrzej Poppe and Jonathan Shepard have shown, in fact, the conversion narrative has multiple beginnings: we are told that Volodimer was first taught by a missionary Greek "philosopher" about Christianity. Even though he is convinced by the missionary's argument, he still sends envoys around the world to find out whether Islam, Judaism, or Christianity in its Western or Eastern forms is the best religion. Later, in the chronicle narrative, we find that Volodimir is suddenly blind and then miraculously healed by his belief in the Christian God, but we are also told that he accepted conversion to Christianity in exchange for marrying the Byzantine emperor's sister, Anna, after besieging the city of Cherson… You can see in the fabric of the text how the monks have assembled different conversion narratives to form a cohesive whole, but the seams of the texts they have stitched together are still visible.

So in sum, we can say that the Primary Chronicle was written by monks in Kyiv in the early twelfth century to explain the origins of Christianity in their land and how the ruling family came to power—for this reason, the Primary Chronicle is also known as the "Tale of Bygone Years" (in Old East Slavic: Povest' Vremennykh Let; sometimes abbreviated to "PVL"). These monks were trying to make sense of the ancient history of their land in light of their twelfth-century Christian beliefs. They used various sources to understand the past centuries of this history, including Byzantine chronicles and Slavonic translations of tenth-century trading and peace treaties signed between Byzantium and Rus'. Sometimes other types of texts, like the story of the founding of the Kyivan Monastery of the Caves, are inserted into the main narration of year-to-year events, which becomes more detailed from the eleventh century onward.

But the fact that the Primary Chronicle is often a unique source of information for early Rus' history and the fact that it has only come down in manuscript copies written centuries after the original composition sometimes makes it difficult for historians to assess its reliability. Women are often frustratingly only mentioned in passing—even the founding of monasteries or churches often takes a back seat to stories of competition for power between male princes.

As Rus' became more politically fragmented in the second half of the twelfth century, other major Rus' cities began their own local chronicle-writing traditions. But nearly all surviving Rus' chronicles begin with the text of the Primary Chronicle before telling the story of their own local histories, showing its central importance to their understanding of their shared past. For example, in the Kyivan Chronicle's text is immediately preceded by the text of the Primary Chronicle. The Novgorod Chronicle is an exception, as Novgorod developed its own chronicle-writing tradition very early and its relationship with the text of the Primary Chronicle (as it has come down to us today) is debated (one influential theory argues that the so-called 'younger' version of the Novgorod First Chronicle actually preserves traces of a hypothetical annal called the 'Base Compilation' assembled in Kyiv in the 1090s, making it older than the twelfth-century text of the Primary Chronicle). But there is no question that for all its textual problems and mysteries, the Primary Chronicle remains an absolutely fundamental source for the early medieval history of the East Slavs.

HURI: HURI will soon publish an English translation of this chronicle. Can you comment on the value this translation could provide?

Zajac: The oldest surviving copy of the Primary Chronicle dates to 1377 from present-day northern Russia. This oldest copy (called the "Laurentian" after the monk, Laurentij, who copied it out), was the basis for the older English translation of the Primary Chronicle made by Samuel Hazard Cross and Olgerd P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor and published in 1953---the translation was begun by Cross in 1930 and completed after his death by his colleague.

However, there is another important copy of the Primary Chronicle—the so-called 'Hypatian Copy', which is named after the Monastery of Saint Hypatian in Kostroma (near Yaroslavl in the present-day Russia) where it was discovered. Although this manuscript copy is not as old as the 1377 copy (the Hypatian Codex was written in the fifteenth century), its text is believed to date from the end of the thirteenth-century. It preserves many instances of more accurate readings, closer to the twelfth century text(s) than the 1377 copy. As far as I am aware, the new HURI translation will be based on the Hypatian Copy. It will be exciting to see the changes to the text that will be available for teaching and research.

HURI: You offer a number of interesting anecdotes as examples of how Rus' princesses were involved in ruling and in the religious development of their lands. Do you have a favorite story or figure?

Zajac: It would be fascinating to experiment in writing a history of Christianization in Rus' with women, rather than male clerics or princes, as the central protagonists. Two of my favorite figures in this connexion are the tenth-century Rus' princess Olga (Ol'ha /Helga) and the Byzantine princess Anna Porphyrogenita (d. around 1011), the sister of Emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII of Constantinople and the wife of Volodimir Sviatoslavich of Rus' (d. 1015).

Olga plays a prominent role in the Primary Chronicle and scholars have also justly compared her to powerful queens of Scandinavian sagas and wise women of Slavic folklore. Not only did she avenge her husband Igor's death in 945 through a series of brutal reprisals against the Slavic tribe that murdered him, but she also acted as a regent on behalf of her young son Sviatoslav. At the same time, she saw the manifold advantages of conversation to Christianity. By comparing Byzantine, Rus', and Latin sources we learn that she sent embassies to both Byzantine and German emperors to request missionary priests to Rus'. Latin chronicles call her the "queen" (regina) of the Rus'.

The Byzantine-born Anna, too, is important for acting as a Byzantine cultural ambassador to Kyiv by bringing with her art, architecture, and customs from her homeland. For instance, she imported Byzantine artisans who helped create a stone palace and church in Kyiv. The Primary Chronicle portrays Anna as weeping when her brothers tell her that she must leave Byzantium and marry Vladimir, who must have appeared to her to be an uncouth barbarian. But she eventually agrees to the marriage, according to the Chronicle, after her brothers convince her that she (and not Vladimir!) will be the means by which salvation is brought to Rus'. Anna, in short, is given an apostolic-like mission, despite her female gender. Both Olga and Anna are fascinating figures in early Rus' history and their political, religious, and cultural impact on the future development of East Slavic lands is difficult to underestimate.

HURI: In your article, you explain how princesses were drawing their authority (for their seals) from their patron saints, not (just) their husbands or fathers. Would you say that in some ways, the Church was one of the primary means by which women in this period could have some independence or power?

Zajac: The veneration of female saints in both Catholicism and Orthodoxy and the custom of giving baptismal names to children, who then had their namesake patron-saint in heaven as their special "protector", lent itself to an iconographical and rhetorical discourse of female power that elite women might draw upon. The fact that princesses associated themselves with their female patron saint on their seals—administrative tools for authenticating legal documents and letters------ serves as an illustration of how these elite women could align themselves with female saints in heaven as a way of bolstering their authority on earth. Religious patronage—founding or donating to churches and monasteries and creating a memorial tradition for themselves—was another way in which elite women could participate in the traditions of the church and also exercise agency in the public sphere.

HURI: In our last Q&A, you mentioned two areas where additional research could be particularly interesting: 1) the entourages of well-born women who traveled across Europe (specifically, what happened to those servants/ladies in waiting when they reached a new land), and 2) visual culture as a source of information. I think you address the latter to some extent in the Global Queenship article. Do you have anything else to add on these points?

Zajac: There are all sorts of weird and wonderful surviving objects and manuscript illustrations that were owned or commissioned by elite women from Rus'--- including enamelwork rich in iconography, spindle whorls (weights) with inscriptions of their female owners' names, or amulets inscribed with 'magical' protective charms, to name just a few. While many of these pieces have been well-studied in the context of art history or the history of literacy in Rus', such visual and material culture can also be a fruitful source for further expanding our knowledge of elite women's agency in Rus'. For instance, by looking at the now-lost grand enamelled jewelled cross commissioned by Princess Euphrosyne of Polatsk (stolen in 1941, but still known from images), her seal, and a thirteenth-century fresco in a monastic church depicting her as donor, we gain a greater appreciation of this twelfth-century princess' religious authority, administrative agency, and economic purchasing power.

Finally, information in archives—in both Western and Eastern Europe--- have perhaps not yet been fully utilized. They may still contain documents that can reveal family networks of women who travelled as brides across boundaries. For instance, Alexander V. Maiorov has compared effectively Byzantine and Rus' sources with the genealogical information preserved in the necrology (book of commemoration) of Speyer Cathedral to identify convincingly the family identity of Princess Euphrosyne and to show her family networks. She was the wife of the Rus' prince Roman Mstislavich (d. 1205), the daughter of Emperor Isaac II Angelos of Byzantium, and the sister of Princess Irene-Maria, who was the wife, in turn, of the German king, Philip of Swabia. The commemorative notices in the Speyer Cathedral necrology show us family connections that otherwise might be lost among different sources housed in different national collections and written in various languages. As long we ask new questions, visual and archival sources can still "speak" to us with new information.

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