

Samuel Huntington was wrong. The new wars are not between civilizations but between those who believe in the clash of civilizations and those who think that universal values really exist. Vladimir Putin and the Russians who support him belong to the first group. In their view, it is legitimate to disregard international law in the name of the integration of the Russian-speaking part of Ukraine into Russia. Arseniy Yatsenyuk and the “Maidan generation” belong to the second group. It is in the name of justice and human dignity that a country gathers together today to create a bi-lingual Nation-State. The key to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine lies in the differing mythologies of the two peoples. The understanding of this key opens the door to finding solutions to the war between Russia and Ukraine. The international community has an essential role to play. But this calls for rapid and resolute action and a willingness to accept to reexamine the question of the spiritual foundations of democracy and international law.

This book was published in France in June 2014 and received the Gregoire Orlyk prize of *Ukrainian Perspectives* in the Senate. It was completed in November 2014 for its translation into Russian and, in February 2015, for its translation into English. A translation into Ukrainian is being prepared.

Antoine Arjakovsky has a doctorate in history. He is the co-director of the research department “Society, Liberty, Peace” at the Collège des Bernardins in Paris. He lived in Russia for nearly 20 years and in Ukraine from 1989 to 2011. He was director at the French University College of Moscow, the French Institute at Kiev and the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at Lviv. He has collaborated with different media outlets such as France 24, ARTE, i-télé, LCI, Le Figaro, le Monde, La Croix, Libération, Ukraine Today etc...

ANTOINE ARJAKOVSKY

RUSSIA/UKRAINE: FROM WAR TO PEACE?

(2013-2015)



First published: Antoine Arjakovsky, *Russie-Ukraine: De la guerre à la paix?*, Paris, Parole et Silence, 2014

Layout : Claire Garoux

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Antoine Arjakovsky

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Translation by Jerry Ryan,
Lucy Collard and Stefanie Hugh-Donovan



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*This book is dedicated to Boris Nemtsov
(† 27 Feb, 2015),`
A Russian Patriot,
A Friend of Ukraine,
and A Man of Peace.
Eternal Memory.*



Preface (8 May 2014)

There are plenty of good books on Russia and, to a lesser extent, on Ukraine. But it is hard to find good recent works on Russian-Ukrainian relations.¹ Yet American historian John Morrison considered Ukrainian-Russian relations to be as decisive for Eastern Europe as those between France and Germany were for Western Europe.² It is true that the Russians and Ukrainians share a painful past and are today engaged in open warfare. But these relations between the two largest countries of Europe are also full of potential. They are capable of giving birth to what Mikhail Gorbachev, in 1991, called a ‘common home’, something similar to what happened when the European Community was created in the aftermath of the Second World War. This was possible because not only diplomats but also French and German intellectuals had worked hard to demythify their respective nationalisms. Similarly, although forgotten today, the clarification of mythologies which surrounded the French and the German concerning the Battle of Bouvines (27 July 1214) or the division of Char-

1. Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia, the Post-Soviet Transition*. Oxford, Rowman Littlefield, 2001.

2. John Morrison, “Pereyaslav and After: The Russian-Ukrainian Relationship”, *International Affairs*, No. 69, October 1993, p. 677.

lemagne's empire at Verdun, greatly contributed to cementing peace in Europe. The advantage of those who have happy memories as opposed to traumatic ones is precisely that they know how to forget, in other words, how to understand and forgive. A similar development is still possible in Eastern Europe provided that the same kind of clarification is undertaken as soon as possible by both Moscow and Kiev of their respective identities and their common inheritance of Kievan Rus'.

The idea for this book was born in 2012. I had wanted to write a book on the political situation in Ukraine and Russia. I thought I would have enough time before the next presidential elections in Ukraine scheduled for Spring 2015. But the pace of events that rocked Ukrainian-Russian relations in November 2013, followed by the Russian annexation of Crimea on 18 March 2014, spurred me to change plan and try to complete my project as soon as possible.

On 17 May 2012 Arseniy Yatsenyuk, at the time an MP and leader of the Front for Change party, had received me in his offices in Kiev. He was, in my view, the most credible challenger to President Victor Yanukovich. However in France and more broadly in the West, he was unknown. Foreign diplomatic circles at the time were getting on very well with the Ukrainian government of Prime Minister Mykola Azarov. Despite the high level of corruption in the regime few people dared to raise their voice against a country that was preparing to host the Euro 2012 football championship. There was a huge difference between a country that in 2008 aspired to sign an association treaty with the EU, and a government

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that was totally under the remote control of Moscow whose aim was to integrate Ukraine into the Eurasian Union by January 2015. This had been obvious ever since the Kharkiv Accords of 21 April 2010, which had extended, unopposed, the presence of the Russian fleet in Sebastopol from 2017 to 2042.

I had the opportunity to work in Moscow for six years first as French cultural attaché, then as Director of the French University College, followed by four years in Kiev as attaché for linguistic and educational cooperation in the French Embassy. Then I moved to Lviv, where I set up an Institute of Ecumenical Studies and ran it for ten years. As a descendant of Russian émigrés to France who before the 1917 revolution had lived in Odessa (on my mother's side) and in Sebastopol (on my father's), I am in a position to appreciate from the inside things that many people cannot properly grasp. Chief among these is the fact that Ukraine is a bi-cultural nation, in opposition with the Russian state which, for its part, views national unity exclusively in terms of territory (Rus'), language (Russian) and religion (Orthodoxy). But my PhD thesis on the history of the Russian intelligentsia also taught me to distinguish between the autocratic pro-Eurasian branch of Russian thought and the liberal pro-European one. I am convinced that Russian identity cannot and should not be identified exclusively with the authoritarian, imperialistic trend currently in power at the heart of the Russian State and the Russian Orthodox Church.

Returning to Paris in September 2011 I needed time to devote myself to my new duties in the *Col-*

lège des Bernardins. I have been back regularly to Ukraine to follow the development of affairs in the country and to continue my research. From 21 November 2013 onwards historical events accelerated. Within four months a major political earthquake, unparalleled in the world since 1989, had taken place. President Yanukovich is today on the run. Arseniy Yatsenyuk heads a new coalition government. Russia has annexed Crimea, and despite its international isolation, it is trying to take control of the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk. This in turn has provoked economic retaliation from the West, which threatens to turn the Russian-Ukrainian war into a truly international conflict. French planes are flying over the borders which separate the Baltic States from Russia, the US are reinforcing their fleet in the Black Sea, and more than 40,000 Russian soldiers are on standby for a signal from Putin to annex the new region, to which Russia has already given 'its former name', Novorossija, New Russia.

Against my better academic judgement, I have chosen to write history as it is unfolding, for three reasons. First, there is such a contrast of views over this conflict, such a confusion between the discourses and acts of the powers in the conflict, (and especially between the intentions and actual impact of actions undertaken), that shedding a bit of light, no matter how fragmentary, may help to restore some calm. Moreover, my interviews with Arseniy Yatsenyuk and several members of his entourage who are in government today can help answer many questions about the new power in Ukraine.

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Second, although everything has been changing on a daily basis over the last four months, there remain some unchanging realities. It seems to me necessary to be aware of these in order to go beyond the specific alignments and emotions of the day. My aim is not to defend a ‘pro-Russian’, ‘pro-Ukrainian’, or even ‘pro-Western’ position, but rather to understand each of them. When in Russia I met several times over recent years those who are today the most ardent supporters of the ‘Great Russia’ ideology, from the filmmaker Nikita Mikhalkov to the Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev. I also met those who are its most vigorous detractors, from the human rights activist Sergei Kovalev to Deacon Andrei Kurayev. I do not conflate the whole of Russia with the Kremlin, nor the whole of the Russian church with the Patriarchate of Moscow. Contrary to what some believe, the truth lies neither ‘in the middle’, nor in being ‘detached’ from all involvement. I have spent these last four months trying to inform my fellow citizens about what to me seems ‘true’ in the historical events which we are witnessing, and which we are participating in often without even realising it. In other words, I have defended the Euromaidan demonstrations and condemned the war which the Russian state is waging today, with the complicity of the Moscow Patriarchate, against Ukraine. But this does not prevent me from questioning my own analyses nor from searching for peace and the common good.

Third and lastly, I am well aware that I will not have the time to read all the analyses which are mushrooming around the world about the Russian-

Ukrainian war. Nor will I be able to dwell on all the important moments of these last four months. I write quickly because the clock is ticking and because I am convinced that there are still many opportunities to restore peace. I therefore ask my readers to forgive any inaccuracies which may inadvertently slip in here and there. When there is a fire the first few minutes are critical. I just hope that it is not already too late.

Chapter 1

How did we get here?

25 May 2014 and the continent of Europe is about to experience an astonishing new page in its long history. Among the nations in the West, there is growing dissatisfaction with European institutions, which threatens to bring many populist and anti-European MEPs into the European parliament. In the East, on the other hand, a new president is about to be elected in Ukraine who, by all accounts, is poised to lead his country to ever-closer integration into the European Union. According to a number of polls, the citizens of the EU are increasingly suspicious of what they call the ‘Brussels bureaucracy’. As for the Ukrainians, they defied their government and braved the cold for more than four months in the name of their attachment to the European family of nations, and to the point of triggering the biggest pro-European demonstrations in the history of Europe. Everything is happening as though some believe that they already enjoy the benefits of the European structure chief among which is peace, and therefore now want to free themselves from its matrix – namely, the demanding process of gradually establishing, since 1945, a Confederation of Eu-

ropean States. Others, however, uneasy at the neo-imperial direction Russia is taking, feel that the time has come for a new stage in the ‘de-Sovietization’ of Europe and in the affirmation of their allegiance to the political space defined by the European Convention on Human Rights.

But it is not certain that the elections in Ukraine can be held in satisfactory conditions. It is highly possible that the return of war to Europe would drag Europe back into war. In fact, European consciousness asserted itself even more in the aftermath of the Second World War when it found itself immediately faced with the Cold War and the risk of yet again losing its foundations – namely, the desire for peace and freedom, a concern for justice, and an aspiration towards the universal. The foreign relations service of the EU, headed by Catherine Ashton, was able to show, owing to the Ukrainian crisis, that Europe was not an outmoded bureaucratic structure which had been overtaken by events. Moreover, a number of measures have demonstrated the effectiveness of European soft power. These include: the signing of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement on 21 March 2014; the constant support shown by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe to the young Ukrainian democracy; and the agreement of the 28 Member States – despite the wrangling between the states of the East and the West over the question of sanctions against Russia – to pull Ukraine back within European orbit (in spite of the Azarov government’s earlier refusal to sign the association agreement on 21 November 2013).

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It should be said that since the 18th of March 2014 there has been a global awareness of the threat to world peace posed by the new Russian state. On that day in the Kremlin President Putin signed the decree to annex Crimea to the Russian Federation in open violation of the rules of international law. To this move, strongly reminiscent of a former age, should be added the emergence of a new kind of warfare: hidden warfare. Although we are far removed from the days when declarations of war were sent through diplomatic channels, the war Russia is presently waging in Ukraine has gone a step further in terms of military strategy. We are no longer dealing with deterrent bombings or severing communications networks, but rather with an information war (cf. Chapter 2), coupled with psychological warfare. This has unfolded in three stages: first, considerable sums were invested by the Kremlin to denigrate its Ukrainian adversary to the extent that it no longer even looked like the manipulation of public opinion. This strategy was carried out by the diplomatic and propaganda services. Then, seemingly authentic, sincere and spontaneous uprisings by minorities ‘oppressed’ by a so-called ‘degenerate’ regime, were organised. Throughout this period press agencies and diplomats busily explained that these minorities were in fact part of a common space that, despite appearances, belonged to all. And finally came the third stage which consisted of ‘protecting these minorities’. In this type of warfare, as demonstrated by Anne Applebaum, there is no need for instant victory³. You can

3. http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinion/anne-applebaum-a-fearful-new-world-imperiled-by-russia's-subterfuge/2014/04/06/16/69a28170-c584-11e3-9f37-7ce307c56815_story.html

simply adapt at each moment to the defence capabilities of your adversary. Just like in a game of chess, it is about advancing undetected but with protection so you can beat a sudden retreat at any moment. The Russian propaganda, made up to look like an information service, does not stop operating in this third stage. Rather, it tries to convince its audiences that the minorities are worthy of respect though weak and defenceless in the face of a powerful, hateful and insensitive local (ie Ukrainian) State.

Today everything leads one to believe that after the annexation of Crimea, the Russian State has decided to annex East and South Ukraine. This would give it control of the whole of the Black Sea coast, land access to Crimea, and make it possible to reconnect the region of Transnistria. In several towns in East Ukraine public buildings were captured by soldiers from Russia, using local mercenaries duly remunerated, whereas photos posted on the internet on the 27 April by Russia's international news agency RIA Novosti, apparently show the poor town of Sloviansk surrounded by 37 Ukrainian tanks⁴. Yet there is no mention of the fact that - according to NATO - less than 100 kilometres away from Sloviansk 700 Russian tanks and more than 30,000 men are stationed. But it seems as though everything is not going according to plan for the Kremlin. On the one hand the EU and the USA have responded vigorously and vowed to impose painful economic sanctions on Russia. On the other, the Russian-speaking populations in East Ukraine remain calm and indeed indifferent to these attempts at destabilisation. And above all, the

4. <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/04/26/7023744>

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Russian soldiers stationed in Sloviansk have not concealed their allegiance to GRU, the Russian foreign intelligence agency. They even openly declare that they are waiting for orders from Moscow over what to do with the hostages captured from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In this way they are using all methods to force the Kremlin to face up to its responsibilities.

How did we get here?

A number of theories are currently in circulation among leading experts on the former-USSR, such as Lilia Shevtsova and Timothy Snyder. I will first present their views before advancing my own complementary analysis.

Lilia Shevtsova, who is Russian, teaches in several American universities and is Director of Research at the Carnegie Moscow Center. Drawing upon the theories of Zygmund Bauman and Antonio Gramsci she believes that the world is currently living through an ‘interregnum’. This is a stage in the globalisation process where everyone agrees that the old world no longer functions, but where the rules for the new world are not yet evident. According to Shevtsova the examples of Syria, Iran and also of Ukraine indicate that we are living in a non-polarised world which is undergoing a profound crisis of liberal Western civilisation. The vacuum left by the USA and Europe make it possible for new authoritarian powers, such as China or Putin’s Russia, to emerge. But, she believes, this stage is also one of opportunity: “The West has already been through two crises, those of the 1930s and the 1970s. On each occasion the cri-

sis gave impetus to the liberal Western civilisation to move to a higher stage of development.”⁵

Timothy Snyder is a Professor at Yale University and author of an important book on contemporary European history, entitled *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. He too has an explanation for this sudden return of war in Europe. He published a long article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* on 16 April 2014 entitled ‘Putin’s Project.’ Snyder has no doubt that Russia has turned into an authoritarian or even neo-fascist regime in recent years. “The authoritarian far right in Russia is infinitely more dangerous than the authoritarian far right in Ukraine. It is in power, for one thing. It has no meaningful rivals, for another. It does not have to accommodate itself to international expectations, for a third. And it is now pursuing a foreign policy that is based openly upon the ethnicization of the world. It does not matter who an individual is according to law or his own preferences: the fact that he speaks Russian makes him a Volksgenosse requiring Russian protection, which is to say invasion. The Russian parliament granted Putin the authority to invade the entirety of Ukraine and to transform its social and political structure, which is an extraordinarily radical goal. It also sent a mis-sive to the Polish foreign ministry proposing partition of Ukraine. On popular Russian television Jews are blamed for the Holocaust. (...) The Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine involves generating ethnic violence, not suppressing it. The man who raised the

5. <http://ej.ru?a=note&id=23996>

Russian flag in Donetsk was a member of a neo-Nazi party.”⁶

My own thesis complements those of Shevtsova and Snyder. It starts from the fact that the powers involved in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict seem to be trapped in the current situation. Yet they lack a satisfactory framework for understanding events and consequently taking action. The Ukrainian people have been fighting for three months against a government that is, as everyone today recognizes, both unjust and corrupt. But far from arousing the enthusiasm of their ‘fellow brothers, the Russian people’, Ukraine has drawn upon itself nothing but the wrath of President Putin who has seen his own interests come under threat. Putin has expressed his wish to see a Europe united ‘from Lisbon to Vladivostok’, has expended considerable energy to launch the first phase of the Eurasian union planned for January 2015, and has signed the Geneva Accords to resolve the conflict. Yet in reality he has simply added fuel to the fire, and attracted the suspicion of his neighbours to the point where he has ended up totally isolated on the international scene. France warmly supports the Ukrainian “Revolution of Dignity” but this year is to deliver two Mistral aircraft-carriers, one of which is called Sebastopol, which will guarantee Russia’s effective control of Crimea in years to come. The EU has negotiated a minimal treaty of association with Ukraine that will provide a few euros to get it going, and has

6. T. Snyder, “Putin’s Project”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 16.04.2014, p. 7.

ended up needing to find 11 billion euros needed to integrate Ukraine in future as a full member.

Although each of the parties to the conflict finds itself caught in a trap not of its own making, in my view this is for a basic epistemological reason. Whether or not one has read Samuel Huntington's USA best-seller *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996) anyone with a modicum of culture can quote at least a bit of this Harvard professor's message. His thesis is that after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the crisis of both communist and liberal ideologies, the world is re-finding the foundations of its dynamic, namely through the formation of cultural groupings identified by language, religion and territory. Intuitively, everyone interprets in their own way (which is probably the reason for the book's success) Huntington's paradoxical thesis that: "civilization is the surest safeguard against another world war"; but "clashes of civilizations are now the greatest threat to world peace"⁷. However, this proposition, which is now commonly taught as a popular ideology in most institutes of political science and international relations throughout the world, is highly questionable.

Huntington devotes several pages to Ukraine in his section on the emerging order of civilisations. It is important to spend a bit of time subjecting these pages to critical analysis, because not only are political scientists and diplomats disturbed by this new "civilizational mythology", but also the whole Ukrainian people are. Although Huntington exercises caution

7. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1996.

and suggests several scenarios, as is his custom, he did not for a moment predict what is happening today in Ukraine. He did not foresee the formation of a nation state united by the universal values of justice and dignity, seeking membership of the EU, a situation which thereby led to armed conflict with Russia. In his first scenario Huntington excludes the possibility of armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine because from a 'civilizational perspective' he describes them as "two Slavic, primarily Orthodox peoples who have had close relationships for centuries and between whom intermarriage is common,"⁸. He envisages a second scenario whereby Ukraine "could split along its fault line into two separate entities, the eastern of which would merge with Russia."⁹ This view is more compatible with Huntington's 'civilisational' vision, as it enables him to draw a distinction between an 'Orthodox world' and a 'Uniate world'. But Huntington, who at no point takes into account the link between international values and relations, is obliged to abandon this hypothesis because it would imply for him a deterioration in relations between Russia and the West, which is something he does not believe in. In his second scenario Huntington envisages only a divided Ukraine dependent on Moscow. He does not entertain a vision of Ukraine as a nation state united around values which it shares with the EU.¹⁰ To reiterate, the American academic does not for a moment countenance the idea of Ukraine as a nation state, and only envisages its political and eco-

8. Ibid, p. 167

9. Ibid, p. 167

10. Ibid, p. 167

conomic future in terms of close and exclusive ties with Russia.

Not only have Huntington's predictions failed to materialise but the very foundations of his vision of the world are questionable. Furthermore, Huntington has a typically modern view of the world when the global world is in fact on the point of becoming post-modern. His theory of the clash of civilizations is founded on a relativist, positivist and pessimistic philosophy. He states: "As Western power declines, the ability of the West to impose Western concepts of human rights, liberalism, and democracy on other civilizations also declines and so does the attractiveness of those values to other civilizations."¹¹ It is not the West but Huntington himself who no longer believes in universal values. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights constitutes the legal basis of the UN and the EU and is only disputed by North Korea and Iran. Huntington no doubt wanted to keep his distance from the Western universalism which so often turned into colonialism or neo-imperialism. But it is by no means certain that the 'global process of indigenisation' which he wishes to see appear, is necessarily synonymous with pacification in international relations.

As for the 'return of the religious' which Huntington observes, and particularly what he terms the Resurgence of Islam, is this necessarily equivalent to a return to the spiritual? Is there not a form of positivist blindness in rejoicing in an indiscriminate return of the sacred? Islam is based on the *Umma* before creat-

11.Ibid, p. 92

ing schools of Qur'anic interpretation. And Christianity never defined itself as a religion but rather as an *ekklesia*, a community of men and women walking with Christ. Indeed Christianity is in fact, at heart, opposed to all forms of sacralisation and in this sense can be considered as the origin of the 'modern period as a move away from religion', as the French intellectual Marcel Gauchet has put it. Yet the spiritual revival in Christianity should not be interpreted as linked to the failure of modernity, as has been suggested by Huntington, when quoting Régis Debray's comment of religion as 'the vitamin of the weak'.¹² On the contrary modernity, with its invention of the nation state, has endeavoured to implement one of the constitutive principles of Christianity, namely the indissoluble link between body, soul and spirit.

Finally, Huntington is a typical representative of the pessimistic political philosophy that can be traced back to Hobbes. He writes of: "... the ubiquity of conflict. It is human to hate. For self-definition and motivation people need enemies: competitors in business, rivals in achievement, and opponents in politics. They naturally distrust and see as threats those who are different and have the capability to harm them."¹³ To refute this thesis would take more space than is available here. Therefore I will simply point out that at least two billion people on the earth reject it. For Jews, Christians and Muslims, the world was created good, and man was created in the image of God. Brothers do not turn on each other, but

12. Ibid, p. 101

13. Ibid, p.130

are brothers in humanity. This obviously has clear philosophical and political implications. For if there are no universal values, but only civilisations which must be defined against each other as far as possible to avoid potential friction (which strictly speaking is impossible in an age of globalisation), then truth has been dethroned. Instead, there are only truths, or different representations of truth and absolutely no possibility of reaching agreement at the deepest level. Henceforth international law will only be the law of the strongest as no universal law exists. Finally, there can be only empires which alone are able to maintain homogeneous civilizational groupings as powerful as 'the West', 'China', the 'Islamic World', etc. The imaginary world of Huntington has no room for relational nation states, these post-modern structures which are able to insert themselves into huge civilizational groupings while retaining from Christian modernity the need to maintain a relationship between the soul of the people and the body of the state through the intermediary of spiritual values such as 'liberty', 'equality', or 'fraternity'.

For our topic of the Russian-Ukrainian war, besides the excellent works that already exists on each country¹⁴, it is also important to bear in mind the

14. In particular: Mykola Riabtchouk, *De la Petite Russie a l'Ukraine*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2003 ; Andreas Kappeler, *Petite histoire de l'Ukraine*, Paris, IES, 1997 ; Annie Daubenton, *Les métamorphoses de l'Indépendance*, Paris, Buchet Chastel, 2009 ; A. Joukovsky, *Histoire de l'Ukraine*, Paris, Dauphin, 1993 ; Dominique de Juriew, *Mythes politiques et identité en Ukraine, Passé composé et reconquête du sens*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2003 ; Alexandra Goujon,

consequences of an awareness of the weaknesses of classical political science. I would like to mention here three of them. First, positivist political science must be open to re-examination. It must be analysed in terms of political mythology and the theology of politics (Chapters 2, 3 and 7).

Second, the events of these last five months in Ukraine highlight the emergence of a particular kind of nation state, one that is personalist and bi-cultural, in other words, relational. This original type of state puts paid to Putin's neo-imperial project (Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 8).

Finally, a reading of events in Ukraine invites political science not only to be disengaged and objective, as it claims to be, but also proactive and propositional (Chapter 9).

Révolutions politiques et identitaires en Ukraine et en Biélorussie (1988-2008), Paris, Belin, 2009 ; Marie Mendras, *L'envers du pouvoir*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2008 ; Laure Arjakovsky, *La Révolution de l'Esprit*, Lviv, Paris, IES, UCU, Svichado. 2005.



Chapter 2

The Theological-Political Key

Before providing a narrative of the events which led to the Russian-Ukrainian war we must make a small methodological detour in order to avoid, as far as possible, Samuel Huntington's shortcomings. This requires some intellectual effort but will be amply compensated later by a better understanding of current events. Let us recall our starting point: our need to find a new epistemology, a new organization of knowledge, capable of explaining how and why the main powers on this planet find themselves sucked into war when their original motivations were dictated by their respective interests and sometimes even by a search for the common good.

As the theory of the clash of civilizations is a form of political mythology by another name, we need to define 'mythological thinking'. But this is not in order to better reject symbolic thinking, as universities and political institutes have been doing for decades. It is time we recognize that we ignore the resources of mythology and political theology at our own peril. Political science has been incapable of predicting the major developments of recent decades, such as the fall of Soviet communism in 1989 and the crisis of

liberal capitalism in 2007. Raymond Aron's classic work *Paix et Guerre entre les Nations (Peace and War among Nations)* is completely silent on the type of psychological warfare that Russia is waging today in Ukraine. When a people are terrorized by 40,000 over-equipped soldiers deployed on their borders, the best defense strategy is neither an armed national uprising nor guerilla warfare, but to launch a psychological counter-offensive. It is at the level of the collective consciousness of truth, and of the respective mythologies of both sides that events are playing out today. Victory will be won by whichever side – whether Russia, Ukraine or the Western countries – manages to secure the broadest and deepest legitimacy from their respective public opinion.

This is why discussion of mythological consciousness is so central. Huntington is right to want to bring back the 'religious' into political analysis. The Harvard professor is honest enough to recognize that the collapse of communism is contemporaneous with the religious revival in Russia or Ukraine. Similarly, no one can deny today the theological-political dimension of the Arab Spring.¹⁵ But we mention the mythological and acknowledge its presence and power, in order to draw a critical distinction between mythical and logical thinking. These two forms of thought overlap to such an extent that there are two consequences: Either rationalist thought ends up assim-

15. On this subject, I recommend the book of Jacques Huntzinger which attempts a theological-political reading of the Arab Spring (J. Huntzinger, *Les Printemps arabes et le religieux*, Parole et Silence, Collège des Bernardins, 2014).

lating the *logos* to the *muthos* (whereby mythology is understood in terms of the fabulous or allegorical thinking of the ancients, completely disconnected from reality), or else it denies both (in which case we speak of ‘ideologies’ as forms of outmoded thought for those of us living in the age of full awakening of civilizations). But *muthos* differs from *logos*, just as memory must be distinguished from history. Memory involves a personal narrative, based on an authentic and dynamic experience but which lacks universal recognition. History, on the other hand, is concerned with an authorized narrative based on proven evidence, but which on its own is no longer an immediate, activating force.

Theological-political analysis is about making visible precisely that mythological or symbolic dimension, that non-rational and not immediately communicable part of our reasoning and actions. At the same time it provides frameworks for expression and self-understanding, which allow it to redirect itself more clearly and coherently towards its ultimate objective. According to Roland Barthes political rhetoric is the mythification of power relationships intrinsic to the social order. He understood political myth as a discourse which neither parades nor hides anything but which adapts to produce contemporary meaning. According to Guy Lanque, “Mythification is therefore the elaboration of a narrative text which, far from falsifying reality, tries to give it new meaning, to identify a ritual field and a new cognitive map. Mythification conceals, it channels power, and defines the identity of a nation, and particularly the political identity of the individual facing this imaginary construction and

of his/her fellow citizens.”¹⁶ Such narratives are the source and vectors of identity when they know how to appeal to the imagination and deep desire.

In the case of the Russian-Ukrainian war, two grand narratives are in contention with one another today. On the one hand there is Putin’s narrative, supported by Patriarch Kirill Gundyayev, head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow, and a number of ideologues such as Alexander Dugin and Vladislav Surkov. According to them, to put it briefly, Russia must extricate itself from its state of politico-economic inferiority, indeed humiliation, and rediscover the grandeur of Holy Russia. It must reunite all Russian territories that have Russian-speaking minorities, and thereby create a vast Eurasian empire that could offer a counter-model to Western civilization that is secularized and has entered an accelerated phase of decline.

On the other hand, there is the narrative of a Ukrainian nation, legitimate heir to the Rus’ of Kiev, long oppressed by its Russian neighbor, which is at last liberating itself from a state which is unjust, corrupt and entirely subservient to the Kremlin. This new State will finally be able to rid itself of an Asiatic and brutal Russian supervision, create a state based on democratic law, and integrate itself in the great family of nations at the heart of the EU. Our task here is not simply to unmask the biased interpretations of these two mythological narratives. It is also to redis-

16. Guy Lanque, “préface” in Dominique de Juriew, *Mythes politiques et identités en Ukraine post-soviétique*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2003, p.7.

cover possible areas of overlap and, ultimately, of reconciliation between them.

Towards a Methodology

Raoul Girardet taught history at the Institut d'études politiques (Institute of Political Sciences) in Paris, and is a specialist on French nationalism. He too has noted the mistrust by political science of the imaginary and the symbolic. Political science presents itself as objective and rationally constructed, when in fact most political upheavals are accompanied by 'mythological effervescence'. In his 1986 book *Mythes et Mythologies Politiques (Political Myths and Mythology)*, Girardet presents four very instructive studies on the logic of myth and the symbolic imagination, entitled: 'Conspiracy', 'The Saviour', 'The Golden Age', and 'Unity.' He defines political myth as follows: "Political myth is indeed the fantasizing, deformation or interpretation of reality that is objectively open to challenge. But as a legendary narrative it is true that it also has an explanatory function, in that it provides a number of keys for understanding the present. These form a framework by means of which the disconcerting chaos of facts and events seem to fall into some kind of order. Moreover this explanatory role is coupled with a mobilizing one."¹⁷ However this narrative which gives meaning and mobilizes is ambivalent, as noted by Gaston Bachelard. It cannot be grasped in a Cartesian way because, just like dreams, it is organized around a dynamic of images which interconnect

17. R. Girardet, *Mythes et mythologies politiques*, Paris, Seuil, 1986, p. 13.

and interact. Only a logical approach which respects the exogenous, revealed dimension of myth is capable of giving the narrative coherence and perceptible structure. As Girardet writes: “Dionysus, an irascible god, endures. It is ultimately wiser to recognize his place – his rightful place – than to try to silence him.”¹⁸ Therefore, Girardet continues, the theme of the Saviour is always linked to the desire for purification of nations. This is how this historian has been able to grasp the mythological dynamism of the French Revolution. “In fact, with its ritual, its symbols and its rhetorical lyricism, it was a new form of political religiosity that ended up regrouping around a relatively coherent system of collective values: the cult of the law, of justice, of liberty and solidarity, the celebration of the Homeland, faith in human progress and the birth of a new moral code within people’s consciousness authenticated by Reason.”¹⁹

The limitation of Girardet’s thesis is probably his over-dependence on Emile Durkheim who only considers mythology in connection with his concept of *anomie*. Gilbert Durand, in his book *Structures anthropologiques de l’imaginaire*²⁰ (*Anthropological Structures of the Imaginary*), has shown that the logic of myth must be grasped within mythological constellations which can enter history in periods of latency, and then brutally re-emerge at times of great upheaval in the collective psyche. In sum, mythological thinking is not a weakness of the spirit which comes

18. Ibid, p.191.

19. Ibid, p,189

20. Paris, Bordas, 1969.

to life only in periods of political crisis. It is likely that during such times of crisis the *muthos* overrides the *logos*, whereas in periods of peace the rational overrides the mythical. But it is important to understand today that *muthos* and *logos* are in constant interaction, and indeed are mutually indispensable. The role of political theology is precisely to hold in mind simultaneously both the distinction and the possible and necessary cooperation between these two spheres of spirit and human action.

Mythological thinking lies at the heart of institutional mechanisms and practices in contemporary societies. This applies even where the desires and drives of peoples are more or less enshrined according to region, and not always easy to identify. In particular a population's wish to form a national whole is based on an aspiration to participate in a global mystery, to incarnate a specific vocation, to work for the advent of a kingdom of justice. Evidently this logic is inherited from the Judeo-Christian revelation, which gives nations a specific mission, while incorporating them into the broader perspective of the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth as promised by Jesus Christ. It is clear that the Medieval and modern periods have interpreted this myth of the Kingdom of God on earth differently. The Middle Ages established a continuity between truth and justice, whereas the modern period has drawn a distinction between the true, the good and the just. According to Charles Taylor, the present era is becoming progressively more aware of the limitations of the two previous ones, which witnessed both the gradual stifling of human liberty in the name

of an objectified vision of God as *Pantocrator*, and the gradual stifling of divine liberty in the name of an objectified vision of Reason as self-sufficient.

Let us now see how a thinking renewed by the mytho-logical can both shed light on the dynamic of events taking place in Ukraine and Russia, and propose ways of possible reconciliation between the contradictory interpretations of their respective foundational narratives. In Russia today, just as in Ukraine, there are two concurrent national mythologies which, through lack of dialogue, have produced the two divergent grand narratives of the 'Eurasian world' and the 'Euromaidan'. We need to take this semantic code - which today allows for a bellicose interpretation of the myth to dominate - and replace it with its proper interpretation. In this way we can transcend the pious wishes of international diplomacy to de-escalate the conflict, and contribute effectively to the establishment of a lasting peace.

My thesis is as follows: Ukraine is a bi-cultural country, attached - despite its claims and almost in spite of itself - to a specific identity. But Putin's Russia refuses to accept this and is trying to bring to heel this hybrid identity which it perceives as threatening or contemptible. Only this type of interpretation can make sense of events which have taken place in Ukraine since November 2013, and can even offer solutions to the present crisis and help re-establish peace.

But before relating the narrative of these events and suggesting solutions, we need to identify the deviant interpretations of the original myth by examin-

ing two key periods in the formation of Russian and Ukrainian national consciousness, namely that of the Rus' of Kiev and that of Cossack sovereignty.

The Myth of the Rus' of Kiev

Russian and Ukrainian national mythologies were formed in the contemporary era through the works of Nikolai Karamzin (1766-1826) in Russia, and Mykhailo Hrushevskyi in Ukraine (1866-1934). The former was a state councilor and official historian to Tsar Nikolai I. The latter was very briefly the first president of the Ukrainian People's Republic in 1918, but he was persecuted by the Soviet regime between 1929 and 1934, the year he died in Kislovodsk. Karamzin published a 12-volume *General History of Russia From the Most Ancient Times Up To 1611*, and Hrushevskyi a 10-volume *History of Ukraine-Rus'*.

These two monumental works have moulded the consciousness of millions of Russian and Ukrainian schoolchildren for decades. For both writers the period of Kievan Rus' represents a golden age in national consciousness. The whole history of both countries is judged from the theological-political standpoint of the Rus' of Kiev. From the Ukrainian perspective, Kiev brought both culture and religion to the Russians of the North who in return ravaged the capital of the Rus' in 1147 and weakened the kingdom on the eve of the Mongol invasion. From the Russian perspective, Kiev is the mother of all cities of the northern principalities which, after the fall of the city to the Tatars in 1240, gradually came to call themselves 'Russians' in reference to their Rus' identity. Thus af-

ter 1240 a dual memory was formed regarding these common origins, and lay behind the emergence of two different national mythologies.

Both mythologies make exclusive claim to this common heritage for obvious reasons of physical attachment to their roots but also because of a lack of critical distance. To take but one example: The famous *Russkaya Pravda* (Russian Justice) is a Russian law which Russian and Ukrainian historians have turned into a mythical symbol of the great wisdom of the Rus' of Kiev. Slavophile Ukrainians have pointed out how the law uses a whole series of terms current in modern Ukrainian, such as the *grivna*, the currency used today in Ukraine, which they believe demonstrate the continuity between Rus' and Ukraine. The Russian Slavophiles, following V. Soloviev, consider the law to be the symbol of a right, but they thereby fail to distinguish between truth and justice, and refer to the specificity of 'the Russian idea'. The document dating from the eleventh century, is attributed to Yaroslav the Wise (1016-1054), and is available in a number of versions dating from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. When we actually examine it, we are reminded of the degree of violence which prevailed in the period of the Rus' of Kiev, and of the limitations of legislation at that time. This is illustrated in the extracts below from 18 articles of Yaroslav's *Russkaya Pravda*:

"I. If a man kills another man, the brother must avenge him, the son avenge the death of a father, or the son of the brother or the sister; where there is no avenger, 40 *grivna* shall be payable for the

THE THEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL KEY

man killed. Whether the victim is Russian, a man of arms, a merchant, a fighter, a Slovene or of low status, the figure is still 40 *grivna*.

II. If a man is beaten bloody or bears marks of the beating, he is not obliged to find witnesses; if there is no trace whatsoever of the beating, he shall bring forth witnesses; if he cannot find a witness, the matter shall end there; if he himself cannot exact vengeance, he shall accept 3 *grivnas* compensation from the aggressor in addition to the costs of a doctor."²¹

In a similar way, those who idealize the role of the Church in Kievan Rus' would do well to read Grand Prince Yaroslav's Statute drawn up with the approval of Hilarion of Kiev, and which is equivalent to the Byzantine *Nomocanon*, the ecclesial law which regulates the public affairs of the State.

"If a person kidnaps or assaults a young girl: if she is a Boyar she shall be paid 5 *grivnas* for the attack and the bishop shall also be paid 5 *grivnas*; if she comes from a minor Boyars family, 1 *grivna* in gold to her and 1 to the bishop; if she comes from a comfortable family, 5 *grivnas* in silver to her for the offense and 5 to the bishop; and one *grivna* of silver from the assailant to the bishop; but it is the duty of the Prince to chastise (...)

36. And should a person infringe my Statute, be they my sons, my grandsons, my great-

21. Michel Laran, Jean Saussay, *La Russie ancienne, ix-xvii siècles*, Preface by Fernand Braudel, Paris, Masson, 1975, pgs. 41-42.

grandsons or any member of my family or one of the Boyars; and should they interfere in the jurisdiction I have granted to the Metropolitan, to the Church and the bishops in all towns according to the laws of the Holy fathers, they shall be punished by law. And should a person interfere in the jurisdiction of the Church he shall no longer be called a Christian and shall be cursed by the 318 Fathers.”²²

In view of these cruel distortions of history and memory, Russian (George Fedotov) and Ukrainian (Mykola Riabchouk) historians have called for a ‘demythification’ of the history of Rus’ of Kiev. This reference to the Kievan Rus’ has nothing quaint and folkloric about it in contemporary Russian and Ukrainian consciousness. At the time of the first violent suppression of the Maidan demonstrators by the Berkut on 30 November 2013, they sought refuge in the monastery of St Michael the Archangel, situated a stone’s throw from Independence Square. Everyone immediately associated this event with the last time the Church of Kiev had opened its doors to Kievians fleeing hostile and brutal forces - during Batu Khan’s invasions in the 1240s’. Similarly, we should remember that the most popular figure in Russia today is neither Putin nor Yury Shevchuk, lead singer in the group DDT. It is in fact Saint Alexander of the Neva (1221-1263), the Holy Prince of the Rus’. In the opinion polls he is ahead of even Josef Stalin, who for Russians remains the victor of the Second World War. Alexander Nevsky owes his place in the

22. Ibid, pgs. 50-52.

Russian pantheon to a twofold legitimacy. First, he is revered by the communists, because Serge Eisenstein made a famous film about him in 1938, with music by Serge Prokofiev. And second, he is equally revered by his compatriots because he was canonized in 1547 by the Orthodox Church and his memory has been frequently used in Russian historiography. Peter the Great had Nevsky's relics transferred from the town of Vladimir to St Petersburg. In 2007 the relics were moved again with great pomp and ceremony from the Laura of the Trinity in St.Petersburg to the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow.

Alexander Nevsky was born at Pereslav Zalessky, north of Moscow. He was the son of a Rurikid prince, Yaroslav III of Kiev. He became Prince of Novgorod between 1236 and 1252. It is there that he won fame through his victory over the Swedes on the Neva in 1240, and over the Teutonic Knights on Lake Peipus in 1242. His figure is central to the history of the State both for Ukraine and Russia as he was the last Rus' prince to be installed by Batu Khan of the Golden Horde over the principality of Kiev in 1249. However he did not stay there but became the Great Prince of the city of Vladimir on the Kliazma River, east of Moscow (1252-1263), which thereafter became the political centre of Rus'. Russians today cannot accept that there is a rupture between the Rus' of Kiev and the modern Russian state because Alexander, Prince of Kiev, was also the Great Prince of Vladimir, ie the founder of the proto-state which would become Moscow in the 15th century. The battle cry of Alexander

of the Neva was “Za Rus’, za Veru”, “For the Rus’ and for the Faith”.

Serious Ukrainian historians do not dispute this continuity between Rus’ of Kiev and Moscow. But they reproach the heirs of Kievan Rus’ for having lost their identity by accepting Tatar domination. In fact this issue became a topic of debate in Eurasian circles of Russian émigrés in Paris. Two famous Russian historians have written about Alexander Nevsky: the celebrated professor Georges Vernadski (1887-1973) in Berlin, in the journal *Evrasijski Vremmenik* (1925), and the historian Nikolas Klepinin (1899-1941) in Paris, in a book published by YMCA Press in 1926²³. The task of demythification began among the Russian émigrés in Paris in the 1920s. In fact, the main memorial in Paris for this immigrant community is dedicated to a prince of Rus’ of Kiev, the Cathedral of Saint Alexander Nevsky, built in rue Daru in 1861 at the wish of Tsar Alexander II. But demythification does not mean suppressing the emotional charge of certain facts. It is about re-finding the truth in events and making them intelligible in the conditions of the present time.

In 1927 Ivan Iljin, Professor of Theology at the Institute of Saint Serge, who was himself a Eurasian for a while, wrote a review of Klepinin’s book in the journal *Put’ (The Way)*. He explains why Alexander Nevsky decided to accept the the Khan’s rule. Unlike the Teutonic knights who insisted on religious con-

23. Nikolai Klepinine, *Sviatoi i Blagovernij Velikij Kniaz Alexandr Nevskij*, Paris, Ymca Press, 1927.

version to the Catholic Church, the Tatars only asked for money. Klepinin, says Iljin, was able to show both the real hostility of the West towards the Rus' of the time, and the power of the East which integrated the force of the Rus': "steering a course between the two (the East and the West), the Rus' jealously protected both Orthodoxy and its project of becoming a state." This was not understood by Ukrainian historians for whom the Kievan prince's loyalty to the Orthodox faith was evidence of servility towards the Asian despot.²⁴ For them only the State of Galicia-Volhynia was the authentic centre of the Rus' of Kiev. For Ukrainian historian Hrushevskyi and his disciples the only heir to Kievan Rus' was Lithuania, which in the 13th-14th centuries included most of the Ukrainian territories with Kiev as its capital. Therefore for them the adoption of the name 'Russia' – derived from Rus' – by the Muscovite principality at the beginning of the 18th century constitutes an unjustifiable appropriation of a heritage.

Although Klepinin's work has not been commented on by Ukrainian historians, it was re-published in Russia in the 1990s in hundreds of thousands of copies. But has Klepinin's argument been understood in contemporary Russia as a justification for the state's submission to the Asiatic horde, which would in turn justify the Russian people's submission to Stalin's dictatorship between 1930-1950? Or should the work be read as a justification of a faithful memory to the Rus' of Kiev based not upon territory, since Alexan-

24. V. Iljine, 'Le Saint et fidèle grand prince Alexandre Nevski', *Pout'*, n.8, 1927, p. 158 <http://www.odinblago.ru/path/8/16/>

der Nevsky left his native lands of Kievan Rus', but upon his attachment to the tradition of the Orthodox Church and its holy and non-violent princes, the martyr saints Boris and Gleb?

Ukrainian historiography has also produced an important work, notably in the diaspora. Yaroslav Lebedynsky, professor at INALCO (National Institute for Oriental Studies) in Paris, has studied the emergence of Russia and Ukraine. He has drawn a parallel with the emergence of the kingdoms of France and Germany. These were founded on common Frankish and Christian roots, but gradually differentiated themselves as the concept of the nation-state evolved. Lebedynsky stresses the importance of contextualization for understanding the development of national consciousness. "It should be understood that the Rus' was not a nation state in the modern sense but rather a union of mainly eastern Slavic tribes, related but distinct, which in some sense were 'reincarnated' into independent principalities when the central power weakened."²⁵

Serious historians, whether Russian or Ukrainian, have managed to demonstrate that the Rus' of Kiev is the common heritage of Russia just as much as it is for Ukraine. Neither Russian nor Ukrainian identity can be founded upon a sentiment of exclusive continuity with the Rus'. Therefore the process of demythification is required because through it the most authentic narratives of the foundational events

25. Yaroslav Lebedynsky, *Ukraine, une histoire en question*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2008. http://www.elio.fr/BIBLIOTHEQUE/I_empire_medieval_de_kiev_debats_historiques_d_hier_et_d_aujourd_hui.asp

of national consciousness can be retrieved. It also helps one understand that the value of Kievan Rus' is symbolic before it is political, which in turn paves the way to true reconciliation between Russia and Ukraine today.

The Myth of the Cossack Golden Age

The Ukrainians do not recognize the history of Russia as heir of the Rus', any more than the Russians recognize Ukraine as its historical heir. The Ukrainian historian Yaroslav Lebedynsky has shown how Russian historiography after Karamzin created the myth that Muscovy alone, under the Rurikid dynasty, was responsible for ensuring the continuity of the Kievan state. This was after throwing off the Tartar yoke and undertaking the 'reunification' of old Rus' under the form of the modern Russian Empire. But after having 'liberated' the Ukrainians and Belarusians, the Russian power then denied them their identity as separate peoples. In fact right up until the beginning of the twentieth century, it considered them as groups of Russians whose characteristics were to develop later under Polish-Lithuanian influence.²⁶

The liberating vision of Karamzin demonstrates the misunderstanding of the authentic continuity of Kievan Rus', which can be traced throughout several periods of history: starting within the Polish-Lithuanian state, then during the Cossack period from 1569 to the end of the 18th century, then – in a more hidden oral, religious and folkloric way - in the

26. http://www.clio.fr/BIBLIHEQUE/I_empire_medieval_de_kiev_debats_historiques_d_hier_et_d_aujourd_hui. Asp

regions West of the Dnieper under Austro-Hungarian and Polish domination and in the regions of South and East Ukraine under the Russians; followed, in the modern period, with the 1918 declaration of the Republic of Ukraine, Russia's recognition in 1922 of a Ukrainian republic, and then in 1945 with Galicia, until the eventual emergence of an independent Ukrainian republic on 1 December 1991. Karamzin's history shows above all the Russian desire for political domination as it became the 'older brother' of the 'little Russian' and 'Belarusian' peoples.

However, this 'right of primogeniture', so to speak, is historically contradicted by the simple fact that the Church of the Patriarch of Moscow was not recognized by Constantinople as autocephalous until the 16th century, whereas the autocephalous seat of Kiev can be attested as far back as the 9th century. From an ecclesial perspective, the Russian Church is therefore not the 'older brother' but the 'younger daughter' of the Church of Kiev. This is why even today the Patriarchate of Constantinople only recognizes *de facto* and not *de jure* the occupation of Crimea by the Russian Church since the 1860s. In fact Crimea was part of the canonical territory of the Orthodox Church of the Rus' of Kiev, which was itself under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople from 988 to the 19th century. The ecclesial annexation of Crimea by Moscow has been noted but still has not been accepted or recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch. Vladimir Putin went to Sebastopol on several occasions, accompanied by Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, to reaffirm that Crimea has 'always belonged to the Rus-

sian world' because Vladimir the Great was baptized in 988 at Chersonesos, a suburb of Sebastopol. But both the president and the patriarch carefully omitted to mention that in 988 neither the Russian State nor the Patriarchate of Moscow even existed. Aware of the games of memory, Vladimir Putin announced that he would celebrate the 9 May victory over Nazi Germany by going to Sebastopol on that very date this year (2014). Most likely he will be accompanied by officials from the Patriarchate of Moscow who will thereby be able to appear, on this peninsula which has become Russian again, as apparent heirs to this primitive Christian church.

Let us now move to an example from another symbolic period in Ukrainian identity, that of Cossack sovereignty, the Hetmanate. This now brings us to the modern history of Ukraine. It is worth noting here that the word 'Ukraine', attested to for the first time in 1187, means 'limit' and according to Lebedynsky, certainly meant 'during the period of the Rus', the border region of the nomads of the steppes and more specifically, the region of Pereiaslav south of Kiev. During the Cossack period (16th to 18th centuries) the Ruthenes referred to themselves as Ukrainians and rejected the term 'Little Russians' which had been applied to them by the 'Great Russians'. In actual fact this terminology is more likely to derive from Byzantine vocabulary which drew a distinction between the centre and the periphery, designated by the terms 'micro' and 'megalo'. Note that this is still relevant to the present, since the new Russian power in Crimea toppled the statue of Petro Sahaidatchnyi (1570-

1622) on 27 April 2014 in Sebastopol. The statue had been erected in 2008 by Ihor Tenyokh, Minister of Defence of the Yatsenyuk government.

For the Ukrainians the Cossack leader Petro Sahaidatchnyi is clear evidence that a free and powerful Rus' of Kiev had lasted up into the modern era and had been able to impose its power on the Tatars well before the imperial policies of the Tsars and the conquest of Eastern Ukraine by Catherine II. Hetman Sahaidatchnyi was born in a village in Galicia and he was both political and civil leader of Ukraine from 1614 to 1622. He had been a brilliant student of the Ostrog Academy and managed to form a fleet long before Peter the Great had thought of asking the Netherlands for assistance to turn Russia into a naval power. Sahaidatchnyi's ships controlled not only the Dnieper River but also the whole of the Black Sea. Many Russians are unaware of the fact that the Cossacks ruled over the Tatars even in Crimea during the years 1614-1617. Sahaidatchnyi defeated the Turks and the Tatars at Kaffa (Theodossia) in Crimea and liberated a significant number of Christian prisoners. The Tatar and Cossack memorials in Crimea were suppressed by Catherine II, who renamed Akhtiar using the Greek form of Sebastopol. Although many Russians believe that the whole Orthodox Church of Ukraine 'betrayed' orthodoxy by uniting with the bishop of Rome through the Union of Brest in 1596, this Hetman Cossack provides a counter example. In fact Sahaidatchnyi even convinced the Patriarch Theophan III of Jerusalem to reestablish the Orthodox hierarchy east of the Dnieper. The Greek patriarch agreed to this request and appointed Iov Boretsky

Metropolitan Bishop of Kiev, together with five other bishops. He also helped to consolidate the formation of Cossack elites within the Fraternity of the Epiphany at Kiev, which was later changed into the Orthodox Academy by Metropolitan Petro Mohyla. From a religious and political point of view Russians today should therefore be grateful to Hetman Sahai-datchnyi. But Russian mythology has become exclusivist and imperialist. It does not tolerate the reality of a Ukrainian State which draws its legitimacy from its fidelity to the Rus' of Kiev. Therefore it is simply preparing the way for a revolt of the people of Crimea who have no wish to become a zone of casinos as Vladimir Putin has proposed. Rather they wish to remain proud of their Cossack past, heirs of the Rus' of Kiev and, moreover, of ancient Greece and the first Christian communities of Pontus. It was in fact to Crimea that, during the Roman persecutions of the 2nd century, Pope Saint Clement of Rome was sent into exile where he died.²⁷

Although it is necessary to demythologize Russian memory, it is equally important to desacralise Ukrainian memory of a golden Cossack age, as has been done by the Canadian anthropologist Dominique de Juriew. She shows in particular that “the literary and historiographic mythification of the Cossack era started in the 19th Century.”²⁸ This process of mythification began within the Circle of Romantics of Kharkiv and reached its apogee with Taras Shevchenko, the greatest Ukrainian poet and father of the modern Ukrain-

27. <http://oleg-leusenko.livejournal.com/1373771.html>

28. D. de Juriew, *Mythes politiques et identités en Ukraine post-soviétique*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2003, p.140.

ian nation. Chevtchenko, by re-writing the history of the Cossacks, a people dedicated to the principles of liberty and equality, proposed a new national mythology portraying the 'heroic' struggle of the Ukrainian people against the 'infamous/despicable' Russian and Polish domination.

The work of achieving critical detachment is even more paramount because the Ukrainian national anthem 'Ukraine is not Dead yet', a hymn to the glory of the Zaporog Cossacks, was sung thousands of times during the Orange Revolution of May 2014. It had also been sung between November 2013 and April 2014 in Maidan Square and all the Ukrainian towns which had thrown off the oppression of Yanukovich's government. Below is an extract:

"Ukraine is not yet dead. Glory and liberty are still not dead.

Destiny will smile on us, my brother fellow citizens.

Our enemies will perish like the dew at dawn.

We too shall soon reign marvelously.

We sacrifice our souls and our bodies for our freedom

so as to show that we are brother Cossacks.

We will embark on bloody battle from the Sian to the Don.

And we will not let anyone reign over our land".

This phenomenon of national unity rediscovered through Cossack memory gives the impression that the Hetmanate period was a time of purity and lib-

erty for the Ukrainian nation. It is therefore important to disentangle some of the threads of Russian and Ukrainian memory. Russian and Soviet historiography has systematically portrayed the figure of the Cossack chief Bohdan Khmelnytsky as the hero of reunification with Russia. However he himself believed that the 1654 Pereiaslav Accord he had signed was only with the Russian Tsar Alexis I, similar to his previous agreement with the Polish princes. Nationalist Ukrainian historians believe that this accord was a catastrophe. Timur Mukhamatulin, in his article “Bohdan, why did you hand over Ukraine to the Russians?”, writes: “For Western Ukrainian intellectuals, it was Khmelnytsky who sacrificed the freedom of the nation in his struggle for Ukraine. In the integral text of the poem *Chitche ne vmerla Ukraina* (Ukraine is not yet dead – a part of which was incorporated into the national anthem) written by Pavlo Chubynsky in 1862 and published for the first time in 1863 in the journal *Meta* at Lviv, the author addresses some verses to Khmelnytsky: ‘Bohdan, Bohdan, our valiant hetman, why have you handed over Ukraine to these infamous *moskals* (a pejorative name used for Russians in Ukraine)?”²⁹

Russian historians, for their part, see in the Pereiaslav Accords the magnanimous role of Muscovy in liberating its Slav and Orthodox brothers from Polish hegemony. But according to the historian Lebedynsky the truth lies elsewhere. Two memories

29. <http://www.courrierinternational.com/article2014/04/11/bogdan-pourquoi-as-tu-cede-l-ukraine-aux-russes/pages=all>

have collided because each is unable to recognize the other as legitimate and sovereign heirs to the Rus' of Kiev. "The Ukrainian Cossacks and the Muscovites did not interpret the Accords in the same way. For the Cossacks, Ukrainian territory was an autonomous entity administered by the Cossack army, under the suzerainty of a distant tsar who did not get involved in its internal affairs. For the Muscovites, on the other hand, Ukraine was henceforth part of the Muscovite State and its inhabitants were subjects of the tsar who consented to grant certain privileges to Cossacks and others – city dwellers. This was on the understanding that such privileges which were unilaterally granted could be unilaterally revoked by the autocrat."³⁰

But isn't this interpretation by Lebedynsky, inherited from Hruchevsky, still not somewhat mythified? We would do well to recall the literary memory of the Cossacks bequeathed to posterity by Nikolai Gogol. This Ukrainian author, who wrote in Russian, has shown how bellicose, cruel and unstable the Zaparog Cossacks were. In his short story *Taras Bulba* (1835), the Cossacks glorify the Orthodox faith to the extent that they even kill their own children in the name of the struggle against the Catholic enemy. For Gogol, this story of Taras Bulba killing his own son out of hate for the Polish infidels, was a way of showing that the mythology of the Rus' of Kiev had deteriorated into something nationalistic, anti-Christian and reactionary.

It should also be added that for the Russians, after the Council of Brest in 1596, the Orthodox hier-

30. Iaroslav Lebedynsky, *Ukraine, une histoire en question* op. cit., p. 114.

archy had disappeared East of the Dnieper. In a confessional context, the tsars could not avoid reacting to this state of affairs. Although hesitant because he did not want war with Poland, the second Romanov Tsar, Alexey Mikhailovich (born 1629, became tsar in 1645, and died in 1676) accepted Bohdan Khmelnytsky's offer and thus became "Tsar and Great Autocratic Prince of All Russias, Great (meaning Russia of the time) and Small (meaning Ukraine)."

Finally, let us mention a last crucial point which calls into question the mythological dichotomy in Ukrainian memory between a European Ukraine and an Asian Russia. We should openly admit that the Periaslav Accords (1654) made war inevitable between the two regional powers, Poland and Russia. Even if it could be proved that Khmelnytsky had been naïve, it is still unforgivable, because the war between Russia and Poland was long and contributed to radicalizing both sides. After the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, Europe had changed. It was no longer conceivable for modern States to accept regions of permanent instability. After the conflict of 1686, Russia took complete control of the west bank of the Dnieper. If Ukraine really had been a European country confronting an Asian Russia, how would it have been able to remain on the sidelines of such a development? And how was Russia, considered Asiatic by the Ukrainians, able to assert itself as a great European power during the 17th and 18th centuries?

Conclusion

It is sometimes said that Ukraine is a nation without a state, whereas Russia is a state without a nation. There is some truth in this. Russia was only able to preserve its Orthodox identity and attachment to the Rus' of Kiev, in the face of Teutonic then Mongol adversaries, through a compromise with the Mongol invader. Yet this is precisely what isolated it. After the fall of Byzantium in 1453, Muscovy produced an eschatological, neo-imperialist and - to be frank - sacred vision of the state. The bishops of Muscovy lacked the openness of spirit which characterized the bishops of the Rus' of Kiev. Thanks to Metropolitan Isidore, the Rus' bishops knew that the Council of Florence in 1439 had been a true council of unity. It is true that the bishops of Kievan Rus', under Polish-Lithuanian domination, had a vested interest in finding a common language with the Church of Rome. In any case they kept themselves in a system of dual communion with Rome and Constantinople until 1596. When he returned to Slavic lands after the Council of Florence, Isidore was received as a hero in Kiev. Yet when he arrived in Moscow, the Tsar threw the Greek bishop into prison. This is why in Moscow the shock of the fall of Byzantium in 1453 was interpreted as cataclysmic. The monk Philotheus of Pskov (1465-1542) wrote in 1508 to the Grand Prince of Moscow Basil III: " Know, O most pious Emperor, that all empires belonging to the Christian Orthodox religion have now been reunited in your empire: you are the one and only emperor of all Christians throughout the world ... After you, we await the eternal Empire. Two Romes have fallen, but the third shall survive and there will not be a fourth."³¹

31 Malin V. *Starets Eleazorova monastyrya Filofey I ego poslaniya*, Kiev, 1901, p. 10.

This is where the messianic myth of Holy Russia, last protector of the Holy Byzantine Empire and of Christian orthodoxy, comes from. Alain Besancon, in his fascinating book *Sainte Russie (Holy Russia)*, is wrong to downplay the role which northern Rus' assumed in protecting Orthodoxy after the fall of Constantinople. But he is right to denounce the theological-political confusion that ensued. The myth of 'Holy Russia' was a desperate last-ditch attempt to prolong into the modern era the heretical, semi-Arian model of the Byzantine symphony. According to Besancon, in 16th century Muscovy "the ideology of Russian autocracy becomes stable. The tsar's mission is to extend the frontiers of the Orthodox kingdom. He is not accountable to men but only before God. To resist the tsar is tantamount to rising up against God."³² Russian historians have equally distanced themselves from a number of historians such as Nikolai Karamzin, Vasily Klyuchevky who reproached his senior for his total lack of interest in the dynamics of history and causal relations,³³ and from George Fedotov who in 1945 was the first Russian historian to recognize national Ukrainian identity as separate from Russian identity.

32 Alain Besancon, *Sainte Russie*, Paris, Editions de Fallois, 2012, p. 53.

33 <http://w3.slavica-occitania.univ-tlse2.fr/pdf/articles/28/670.pdf>

Stephane Viellard has taken up the remarks of Klychevsky on Karamzin: "The heroes", Klychevsky notes, 'do not move, do not become greater, do not grow old; they do not change from the moment they enter on stage until the moment they exit' The princes of Southern Rus' between the 11th and 12th centuries represented by Karamzin have the same mentality, the same sensitivity, as those from Northern Rus' in the 14th and 15th centuries.

But no one so far, and especially on the Soviet side, has questioned the autocratic structure of the Russian state and its imperialistic foundations, both of which underpin the mythology of the historian of Nikolai I.

Ukraine, on the other hand, has become a bi-cultural country by virtue of historical circumstances as well as its own its spirit. Its dual memory derives from the fact that it shared its attachment to the Rus' of Kiev with both the heirs to the West of the Dnieper River, and the ancestors of Alexander of the Neva. Indeed from the 18th century some of the heirs of the two memories were reunited in the Russian Empire. This 'Little Russia' had great difficulty in handling this dual memory because in the modern era has proved unable to create a state capable of establishing its dual origin. The Cossack Hetmanate was certainly where the revival of the myth of original liberty took place, but it was unable to consolidate this liberty into a lasting state. Ukraine was divided up in the modern era into the regions East of the Dnieper under Russian domination, and West under Polish and Austro-Hungarian control. Later on the peasants in East of the Dnieper, who inherited this tradition of liberty from the Ukrainian Cossacks, were assassinated *en masse* during the great famine of 1932-1933. As a result their memory was deeply affected.

In conclusion it could be said that Ukraine is a very ancient nation which has been struggling for four centuries, with a dynamic that contemporary psychologists would call resilience, to regain its unity of yesteryear, that unity largely embodied in the myth of the Rus' of Kiev.

Chapter 3

The Information War

Ever since the 1949 publication of George Orwell's novel *1984* it has been common knowledge that totalitarian regimes rely on 'doublethink'. This is a form of schizophrenic and paranoid thinking which does the exact opposite of what it says in order to deceive the enemy. For instance in *1984*, the Ministry of Peace is in charge of war, and the Ministry of truth directs the regime's propaganda. This propaganda is ideological, in that it is based on a complex collection of half-truths. There is nothing problematic about this because, according to this line of thinking, universal truth does not exist. Therefore one can settle for the merely plausible. But the logic of the plausible must itself be put in the service of a myth (whether that of the Aryan race or the class struggle). The propaganda professionals do not need to exert superhuman efforts to misinform the adversary. It is enough to spread semi-truths, even old ones, to convince your opponent to adhere to the only truth that matters, that of the myth. What is important is to constantly repeat these semi-truths because, as Goeb-

bels said, “The more lies there are, the more people end up believing them.”³⁴In the same way, projection should be used, whereby you accuse your adversary of your own failings. The adversary is therefore discredited in the eyes of public opinion, and at the same time the debate is shifted onto grounds which are now under your control. So what is the myth that Russian propaganda is trying to create?

Sociologist Anna Colin Lebedev wrote on her blog: “In 2013 between 15 and 18% of Russians were of the view that Ukraine and Russia should form a single state. A few months later, 58% of Russians thought that Russia has the right to annex territory belonging to another state if it is inhabited by Russians. Therefore 67% of Russians support the eventual annexation of Eastern Ukraine, validated by referendum. Allowing a country to sort out its own internal problems is an option that is virtually non-existent for these Russian citizens. Have they been influenced by propaganda? Of course they have. Nowadays in Russia you would have to be a savvy internet surfer to find a media that has not succumbed to demonizing the Maidan movement. The message conveyed to the general public by the vast majority of media outlets is simple: Ultra-nationalist and anti-Russian Ukraine is a puppet of the West who is using it to weaken Russia.”³⁵

Russian propaganda has had devastating effects on the West. Much of the media and many political fig-

34. Goebbels was considered by Putin himself a “brilliant thinker” on Russian TV in June 2014.

35. <http://blogs.mediapart.fr/blog/anna-colin-lebedev/290314/les-russes-veulent-ils-la-guerre>

ures have supported Russia against the new Ukrainian government which is branded as neo-fascist. And it is not simply a question of the extreme right media and parties. No-one can see properly the game Putin is playing, apart from a few enlightened and extremely well trained observers such as Galia Ackerman. She writes in the *Huffington Post*:

“The Kremlin is trying to rally Jews around the world by invoking the anti-Semitic danger posed by the new Ukrainian government; the Western left-wing public talks of ‘fascism’ and the same anti-Semitism; the right-wing public refers to economic interests which take precedence over human rights; and finally the European extreme right speaks in the name of sovereignty, the defence of a ‘Christian civilization’, of anti-immigrant racism, very much in vogue in Russia, and of homophobia. This is how white is turned into black, and black becomes white as snow.”³⁶

Vladimir Putin has even succeeded convincing many Christian Europeans that he is the best defender of moral values in Europe. In France, for example, a delegation of the *Manif Pour Tous* (Demo for All) movement, led by Mgr Marc Aillet Bishop of Bayonne and Oloron, went to Moscow between 31 March and 4 April – that is to say, just after the annexation of Crimea. There they met Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev and Russian government officials

36.http://www.huffingtonpost.fr/galia-ackerman/antisemitisme-poutine-russie_b_5101663.html?utm_hp_ref=france

and asked for their support.³⁷ This had political repercussions because on 15 April 2014 Deputy Jean-Frederic Poisson addressed the French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius in the National Assembly, and asked him to explain ‘the French government’s unconditional support for Yatsenyuk’s government.’ The leader of the Christian Democrat Party, affiliated to the UMP - l’Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (Union for a Popular Movement), relayed in good faith Moscow’s message: “Behind the apparently popular and peaceful movement, this fantasy revolution of Maidan, lurks a very real attempt at a coup d’État. By supporting the overthrow of Yanukovych Western powers are not only denying Ukraine’s sovereignty and the authority of its elected president, but also closing their eyes to the composition of the new institutions. In fact, the new government includes representatives of the nationalist party ‘Liberty’ or Svoboda, who hold the posts of deputy prime minister, minister of sports and education. They are all part of this resolutely anti-Semitic and anti-Russian pan-Ukrainian union. The biased attitude of the EU and the USA regarding opposition to Viktor Yanukovych can be explained in two ways. Either democratic enthusiasm has blurred their vision, thereby reviving the myth of peoples liberating themselves, or else they are being extremely indulgent. He asks whether France intends to change its position towards the Ukrainian government.”³⁸

37. <http://rue89.nouvelobs.com/2014/03/29/manif-tous-voie-poutinisation-251066>

38. <http://questions,assemblee-nationale.fr/q14/14-53769QE.htm>

The Power of Russian Propaganda

Oliver Bullough, in his book *The Last Man in Russia* (Allen Lane, 2013) describes, through the life of the priest Dmitry Dudko, a country adrift since the 1960s. He explains that media organs such as *Russia Today* have long since ceased any pretence at representing reality. Their objective is militant and based on nostalgia for a Great Russia. The two main Kremlin propagandists are Piotr Tolstoi, presenter of a talk-show on television Channel 1, and Dmitry Kisseliov, Director-General of *Rossia Sevodnia* (which has several foreign language editions). Every Sunday Kisseliov's newspaper is read by more than ten million Russians. 10% of Russians believe it to be the highest intellectual authority in Russia. It warns the Russian population of the resurgence of Ukrainian nationalists, and in particular has it in for Dmitro Yarosh, the leader of (the Ukrainian nationalist party) Pravy Sektor. It also portrays Russia as a fortress under siege from NATO forces, and even dares to threaten the USA with nuclear weapons. The media's finance, personally guaranteed by President Putin, is \$300 million per annum. More generally, according to (internet newspaper) *Ukrainska Pravda*, Russia spent \$721 million dollars in 2014 on propaganda on national television channels. To this should also be added \$202 million dollars to other channels such as NTV or Pervi Kanal, as well as \$86.7 million for RIA Novosti and \$396 million for Arabic, English and Spanish editions. It is worth noting that Ukraine does not spend anything at all on its foreign language communication policy, and that the budget of the Ukrainian State Committee

for Television and Radio is \$87.6 million. Ukrainian members of the European parliament in Strasbourg have shown their colleagues in the Council of Europe broadcasts by Kisseliov with clearly anti-Semitic undertones directed against politicians and journalists such as Serge Buntman, assistant editor-in-chief of Ekho Moskvyy, the only virtually independent radio station in Russia.

These Russian propaganda broadcasts, worthy of North Korean television, set the tone (88% of Russians get their news from television and 60% of them have confidence in what they hear). They are then relayed throughout the whole range of media organs. This is why, according to a poll in 2014 by the Levada Institute, almost 40% of the population believe that the closest model to perfection is the Soviet one (only 21% opted for democracy). Of course, things can go wrong. For instance in December 2013 Liz Wahl, the American presenter of *Russia Today*, resigned live on air in protest “against the Russian government which does not tolerate any criticism of Vladimir Putin”, and in the name of “disseminating the truth.” But more often than not the media do not enjoy this degree of freedom. In particular, the organs of the Russian church are the most reliable transmitters of Kremlin propaganda. According to Anatoly Babynsky, a Ukrainian expert on the Russian Church, “the representation of the events of November 2013-February 2014 in Ukraine by representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church is no different to the messages retransmitted by the Russian

secular power. According to this point of view there is a civil war in Ukraine between two sectors of the population which has led to bloodshed. Yet in reality throughout this period there has not been a single serious conflict between the inhabitants of Eastern and Western Ukraine. It is even surprising that despite the huge crowds who came to demonstrate in Kiev, not a single fight occurred between the civilian populations (I will not mention the organized paid demonstration by the Party of Regions in Marinski Park and which in any case saw no violence). It was not that there was no desire to discredit Maidan. The real opposition took place between demonstrators and representatives of the State.”³⁹

A report in *Ukrainska Pravda* exposed a network of Kremlin bloggers paid 24 Euros a day to flood social networking sites with messages and thereby influence public opinion.⁴⁰ According to Ilia Klichin, editor-in-chief of the television website Dojd’, over the last two years Russia has created “a unique system of indirect control through social networks on the internet. In the morning the *community managers* propose discussion topics to the bloggers which by evening are ‘the talk of the town.’ More surprising still is the fact that the population are completely unaware of this new Ministry of Truth, which hides behind *firewalls* and passwords.” To achieve these ends the Kremlin funds ten media organs. Their targets in Ukraine are obviously the ‘fascists’ of Maidan, the

39.http://risu.org.ua/article_print.php?id=55959&name=open_themes&_lang=ua&

40. <http://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2014/04/24/164770/>

‘banderovtsy’⁴¹ of the government, and the ‘terrorists’ of Pravy Sektor. On the other hand, in mid-April 2014 the Duma passed a law dramatically restricting the freedom of bloggers. From the 1st of August 2014 anyone who writes 3000 symbols on a blog will be summarily bound by the extremely strict laws which control the press. This is how censorship, which since 2000 had concentrated on television, radio and the press, is now bringing the internet to heel. Pavel Durov, the founder of Russian facebook, VKontakte.ru, the most popular social network in Russia and Ukraine, announced in mid-April that he was leaving Russia ‘forever.’ He had refused to give the Russian secret services the complete list of all his followers on the pro-Euromaidan webpages.

Putin’s regime also wants to stifle the last pockets of free speech that remain in the conventional media organs. Radio Ekho Moskvyy was forced to shut down a certain number of blogs, such as the one by Alexei Navalny, one of Putin’s main opponents; the operators of cable television withdrew the Dojd’ channel from their portfolio in mid-December. According to Natalia Sindeeva, director of the independent television channel Dojd’, this was because of her reports on the luxurious *datchas* (second homes) of the

41. Stepan Bandera (1909-1959) was a Ukrainian politician and one of the leaders of National Ukrainian Movement (OUN) in the Western Ukraine. He spent nearly the whole war in a Nazi concentration camp and was assassinated by an agent of the KGB in 1959. Throughout his life, he struggled against two totalitarianisms and he remains a hero for many Ukrainians who followed the same path as he did. But he was denounced as a Nazi pro-Fascist by Soviet propaganda.

party leaders in power, and her criticism of Stalin's policy during the Second World War. In January the director of the Lenta.ru press agency, set up on 1999, was also forced to resign following her refusal to collaborate with the Kremlin's information services. She was accused of having allowed a leader of Pravy Sektor to speak. As a result most of the journalists of her agency also resigned in solidarity with her.

The Fabrication of Events

Examples of the fabrication of counter-truths abound. We will quote here but one example. On Monday 28 April in Donetsk, all Ukrainian and Western press agencies and television stations showed pro-Russian separatists attacking peaceful demonstrators who supported Ukraine unity. According the Ukrainian journalist Denys Kolesnyk from Hromadske TV, "pro-Russian hooligans shouted 'Russia, Russia' while beating people who had come to support peacefully the territorial integrity of Ukraine." (www.info-news.eu). However the Russian press agency ITAR TASS reported on the same day that the 'dozens of ultra-nationalists' were in fact Ukrainians who had attacked 'a peaceful anti-fascist demonstration.' Images disseminated on the internet attest to the blatant lies of the ITAR TASS.⁴² One can clearly see men armed with baseball bats and chains assaulting peaceful demonstrators carrying Ukrainian flags.

42. http://ukrstream.tv/videos/mirni_mitingh_u_doniets_ku_zakinchivsia_krivavoju_biikoju_28_04_2014#.U1_svBmvRAi

The Russian propaganda machine sought relays in Ukraine. Since the Orange Revolution Ukrainian TV journalists willing to obey Moscow's instructions had been driven out of editorial positions. This is why Russia's main support up until the events of November 2013 had come from the Party of the Regions.⁴³ In May 2013 this party organised 'anti-fascist' marches throughout Ukraine. For the occasion (special) manuals for the good militant were drawn up containing 'key messages'. These documents were subsequently discovered in the party offices in February. They relate the key points given to militants, which focused on several issues: the victory of the great patriotic war against fascism ("The Ukrainians of the West dared to claim that between 1939 and 1941 the USSR and the Nazi regime had united against Ukraine"); the fascist thirst for vengeance today in Ukraine (documents were circulated which compared Goebbels' propaganda to that of the Ukrainian nationalist Stepan Lenkavski); the alarming situation since the election of the Svoboda Party to the Rada (with abundant quotes from the most radical proposals of Irina Farion, a Svoboda deputy; and appeals to citizens to rally against all the associates of Tyahnybok – including Yatsenyuk and Klitschko.

Nor did the Russian propaganda machine have any qualms about using the SBU (Ukrainian secret services). For instance, it intercepted a telephone conversation between Victoria Nuland, assistant to the Secretary of State, and Geoffrey Pyatt, American

43.http://lb.ua/news/2014/03/21/260239_antifashistski_temniki.html

ambassador to Kiev. During this routine conversation between diplomats ⁴⁴ Nuland explained to Pyatt that she preferred to work with Arseniy Yatsenyuk rather than with Vitali Klitschko even if this meant breaking away from Europeans who were still hesitant. She had expressed this rather crudely with the words ‘Fuck the EU’. The Kremlin propaganda used this private conversation to stir up rivalries between America and Europe, and especially to try to demonstrate that the USA was meddling in the constitution of the Ukrainian government. The Russian secret services also made public a conversation between Catherine Ashton and the Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet, during which the latter echoed remarks by Olga Bogomolets. This dermatologist, who had treated the injured in Maidan, had told him there were also ‘opposition snipers’ among the injured. She later revised her remarks, stating that she had no proof of this. But that was enough for Russian television to claim that the Maidan demonstrators were all killing each other on 20 February.

Russian television goes even further and actually fabricates events when compromising news appears too implausible. And for this purpose it has its own network of actors. But in March, due to a classic failure of coordination, two television channels used the same actor – Andrei Petkov – to play different roles on each of their respective TV journals. On *Rossia* TV Petkov appeared as a witness to the violence of pro-Maidan supporters in Mykolav. Then on NTV he

44.<http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2014/feb/07/eu-us-diplomat-victoria-nuland-phonerecall-leaked-video>

played the part of agent for the German secret services who had come to support Maidan – both roles of which were filmed in the same hospital bed even wearing the same clothes!⁴⁵

Techniques for Lying

There are several ways of lying. One way is to invent your own version of reality, believe in it firmly in the name of the cause you are fighting for, and above all never deviate from it. Sergey Narychkine, President of the Duma and former KGB officer who then joined the FSB, is so implicated in Putin's politics that he has been affected by the EU sanctions. Nevertheless, on 15 April he went to Paris to taunt the French authorities by taking advantage of an invitation from UNESCO. In spite of the overwhelming testimonies on French television to the presence of Russian soldiers in Crimea, Narychkine had the nerve to produce the following argument, in perfect French and with the courtesy indispensable for a propagandist plying his trade in France:

“The accusations of Western politicians and functionaries concerning Russia's involvement in the events in Southeast Ukraine are without foundation. What are the arguments they use? The fact that the self-defence forces and the popular militias wear uniforms with no insignia: that is blatant stupidity since these uniforms are on sale today in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries. Anyone, you included, can buy them! These forces are also supposed to have

45. <http://kriminal.tv/news/novij-ljap-tv-rossii-i-ntv-vizval-smehu=vsego-mira.html>

Russian weapons: kalachnikovs. Every school child can tell you that kalachnikovs are used today in half the countries of the world. It is one of the best automatic weapons. These people speak Russian: another stupidity. In Ukraine 80% of the population speak Russian and for at least 15 or 20 million of them it is their mother tongue. They display the ribbon of St. George: but this is one of the symbols of the victory of the Soviet Union over the Nazis at the end of the Second World War. I too wear one. It is a symbol which is dear not only to Russians but to all those who fought the Nazis during the war and who reject their ideology”.⁴⁶

However, a week later Putin himself confirmed that the men in green were after all Russian soldiers. It was as though the Russian president could no longer maintain a ‘minimal degree of coherence and plausibility’ essential for propaganda services. The Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov suffered the same disappointment in Geneva on 18th April when he declared before televisions from the world over that Russia was not seeking to invade Ukraine, and “was not interested in destabilizing Ukraine”. Yet at that very moment Putin was declaring before Russian cameras that he would not hesitate to protect the citizens of ‘Novorossija’, thereby giving the region of South Eastern Ukraine the name of a Russian province.

46.<http://www.tv5.org/cms/chaine-francophone/info/Les-dossiers-de-la-redaction/Ukraine-2014/p-27975-Serguei-Narychkine-Les-manifestants-de-l-Est-cherchent-un-dialogue-avec-le-pouvoir-ukrainien-htm>

American journalist Anne Applebaum has drawn attention to a more insidious form of misinformation. Not only does Russian television explain at great length to Russians that Kievians are violent and dangerous, but even its weather forecasts are manipulated and politicized. Applebaum notes on 15 April: “Dark clouds are gathering over Donetsk while there is sun in Crimea’. These language games and disinformation campaigns are now far more sophisticated than anything the Soviet Union ever produced.”⁴⁷

Victoria Sumar, former director of the Ukrainian Institute of Mass Media, and currently assistant secretary to the Security Council responsible for information policy, made a detailed study of Russian television during the month of March. She has published a number of extracts drawn from TV broadcasts (“Kak strachno zit”, *Ukrainska Pravda*, 10 April 2014). In the rhetoric of the Russian mass media, there are certain words which may not be used. For example, Crimea has not been ‘annexed’. It has been “restored to its historical reality” (13March RTR-Planeta.com). Certain key words are repeated ad nauseam (Nazis, fascists, extremists, anti-Russians). Other vague and emotive words are used such as “troubling, problematic, insidious, alarming, suspect, authoritarian...”

In true Soviet tradition, intellectuals are also called upon. Writer Oleg Roy states: “Absolute fascists are absolutist fascists. They have started to read reports

47. http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/anne-applebaum-a-fearful-new-world-imperiled-by-russias-subterfuge/2014/04/16/69a28170-c584-11e3-9f37-7ce307c56815_story.html

by the SS and are now putting them into practice.” (RTR-Planeta 13 March). On 15 March 2014, on the same TV channel, the presenter used a rhetoric which addressed itself to the religious psyche of Orthodox Russians: “The wolves of Maidan are wearing sheep’s clothing. Prime Minister Yatsenyuk is a member of an American totalitarian sect, Scientology. President Turchynov is a Baptist pastor. The former Orange mayor of Kiev is a Pentecostal. Pagan cults are practiced by Pravy Sektor fighters, and hate-filled sermons are spewed from the mouths of Greek-Catholic priests. Not only is President Turchynov a Baptist, but you can also find him among the Charismatics, followers of a very bad and dangerous doctrine. Together they form an assembly of devils.”

Russian propaganda is constantly on the look-out for ‘enemies within’. In Crimea there are billboards in public gardens with photographs and detailed captions on ‘foreign agents’. These include Ilya Ponomarev, the only Member of Parliament not to vote in favour of the annexation of Crimea, Alexei Navalny, Putin’s main rival in Russia, and even Boris Nemtsov, Yeltsin’s former prime minister and fierce opponent of the Kremlin. More recently, on 18 April, Deputy Vladimir Zhirinovskiy violently attacked female journalists who were taking notes during a press conference. He suddenly asked his acolytes to rape them in public. This was to illustrate the point that ‘when women are sexually frustrated they are the weakest link in a country.’ Russian propaganda had in fact already drawn attention to the significant number of women who supported Maidan and were involved in Ukrainian politics.

All things considered is Russian 'news' actually credible?

Kremlin propaganda services will stop at nothing when it comes to Ukraine, as was the case during the Orange Revolution. In October 2004 they did not hesitate to claim, contrary to all evidence, that Viktor Yushchenko had not been poisoned. Ten years later, the same clichés inherited from the Cold War are being repeated about 'nationalistic' Ukrainians, 'extremist' journalists, and 'Uniate, racist and anti-Semitic' priests. On 29 January President Putin set the tone in Brussels by accusing the Europeans of being behind the unrest in Ukraine. Nor are Ukrainian officials spared. In Munich on 2 February 2014 the Foreign Minister of Azarov's government, Leonid Kojara, calmly announced that Ukrainian Dimitro Bulatov, whose Auto-Maidan group organised anti-government protest motorcades, had merely suffered 'a slight scratch on his face'. In actual fact he had been tortured over several days by his Russian kidnappers. His severely injured face and hands pierced by nails speak for themselves. His testimony on the collusion between Russian and Ukrainian secret services is damning.

It is also useful to identify a few of the well-worn features of Russian propaganda, and even more important to deconstruct them. But be warned, the problem with half-truths of a mythological nature, is that they are difficult to dislodge because they are usually connected to those dark areas of the collective memory and unconscious fears. As the saying goes, it takes much longer to grow a forest than to toss a match onto a few dead branches.

The Russian secret services, often relayed by friends of 'Russia's rediscovered greatness', offer an apparently implacable rhetoric. They start by trying to discourage Western readers from taking an interest in such a distant country. Russian diplomats, who claim they themselves rely on their European counterparts, reiterate that 'Ukraine will never be part of Europe.' Therefore there is no point rallying to support Ukraine today. But in fact these Russian diplomats are distorting a position that is noticeably different to that of Europe. European diplomats have always stressed the exact opposite, that Ukraine has a 'European vocation', and that it should be gradually incorporated into the EU. Ukraine has been a member of the Council of Europe since 1996. In 2008, under Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, Ukraine decided, to sign a treaty of association with the EU, which the Council of Europe approved. And we all know what became of it under Yanukovich.

Another half-truth propagated by the Kremlin information services is that: "The Arab Spring is going nowhere." But what about the Tunisian constitution? After all, the history of democracy in Europe and the USA was not built in a day. Is that any justification to reject the desire of the overwhelming majority of a country to have a state that is just and respects its citizens?

Then there is the argument used by all totalitarian regimes to shore up their power: the denigration of 'nationalist minorities' and 'extremists'. Our opponents, we are told, are not who we think. They are terrible pro-fascist nationalists. Stephane Juffa, for in-

stance, in his article “Ukraine: to understand is not to judge”, (Metula News Agency March 2014) openly admits that he does not have a single reliable source, and that he has never even set foot in Ukraine. Yet he has no hesitation in blindly repeating what he hears (eg “Swastikas, ‘Death to the Jews’, on synagogues and demonstration slogans”), or in decontextualizing his treatment of the Svoboda party. In fact it has been proved that this anti-Semitic graffiti did not actually come from Svoboda or Pravy Sektor but the Russian secret services. On 8 April the local leader of Pravy Sektor publicly erased the graffiti with Abraham Wolf, rabbi of the synagogue in Odessa that had been attacked. This was to show that he had nothing to do with these acts of vandalism which he strongly condemned.⁴⁸ But Metula News Agency was nowhere to be seen on that day. “Svoboda, founded in 1991 under a title that leaves little to the imagination: Ukrainian Social-Nationalist Party.” If Svoboda has adopted rhetoric from the 1940s, it is in the name of its 60-year fight against communism. Although it continued to use the wolf-trap (Wolfsangel) insignia up until 2003, it abandoned it ten years later. According to Ilya Ponomarev, Russian deputy to the Duma, reality must be confronted before doing any kind of analysis. After a visit to Ukraine in April he had tried to ‘dispel the myths on television’, and to ‘bring fellow citizens back down to earth’. “I did not meet any members of the *Banderovshina*”; “there are some individuals or small groups of little Nazis, but nothing significant. Pravy Sektor is an organization with a few hundred

48. http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/community/religion_and_policy/56045/

neo-Nazis, a bit like our Russian *skinheads* who they actually resemble a lot (even though the Russians are more numerous and more ‘aggressive)’⁴⁹

Despite this counter-evidence, for many Russians the Ukrainian deputy Oleh Tyahnybok is a neo-fascist leader, and Svoboda a neo-Nazi association. Yet did Tyahnybok ever call for violence during the demonstrations, even when the Berkuts were shooting at demonstrators? Just because you want your country to regain its independence does not necessarily make you a Nazi or neo-Nazi. Tyahnybok had been democratically elected in the Lviv municipal elections of 2010. Ever since he was elected to the Rada (parliament), where his party has 33 seats, ie 7.3%, he has played the democratic game as other Ukrainian parties concede. It is true that in his speeches he praises the Ukrainian national liberation army (UPA) of the 1940s-1950s. I cannot go into details here about the history of Ukraine. Readers are recommended to consult leading historians like Timothy Snyder or Norman Davies. But I will make one point: Galicia, the western region of Ukraine, never belonged to the Russian empire. Because it was violently invaded by the USSR in 1939, it initially welcomed the Germans with open arms. But when the Galicians realized that the Nazis also wanted to subdue them, they fought against both the Soviets and the Germans. Why then brand the UPA as ‘nationalistic’ - using the word pejoratively - when all it was doing was defending an

49. http://censor.net.ua/photo_news/281631/deputat_gosdumy_rf_ne_uvidel_v_ukraine_nikakih_banderovtsev_i_fashistov_na_glazah_rojdaetsya_ukrainskaya

enslaved homeland? Totalitarian regimes certainly know how to divide and rule and turn people against each other. This is not to defend all the actions of the UPA. But is it fair to blame the victims for the crimes of these two great totalitarian regimes?

Useful Idiots

There is a category in the chain of misinformation that the Soviets used to call ‘useful idiots’. These include two figures who in all seriousness claim that ‘Crimea is historically Russian’: Gerhart Schroder ‘German businessman’ and Gazprom employee, and Luc Ferry, ‘Parisian intellectual’ and heir of Andre Gide and Jean-Paul Sartre. In the face of such claims Slawomir Sierakowski wonders whether it is not a case of ‘the Stockholm syndrome of a victim fascinated by his executioner’ (*New York Times* 28 April). In fact it was not until the 17th century that Russia became state, before which it was Muscovy. Ukraine is the successor of the Rus’ just as much as Russia, but with the difference that it reconquered Crimea from the Tatars well before Tsarist Russia. Denys Kolesnyk wrote in response to the website *Herodote* : “According to *Herodote*: ‘Russia, Ukraine and Belarus are three states descended from the Russian nation.’⁵⁰ But to say this is as meaningless as saying that France, Italy and Spain are three states descended from the Italian nation. You can only use the phrase ‘Russian nation’ from the reign of Peter the Great of Russia (1682-1725). He was the one who introduced the term ‘Russian’ to refer to the inhabitants of the Tsar-

50. <http://www.herodote.net/Russie-synthese-1875.php>

dom of Moscow, and on maps, to his country. Before his reign the area had only been referred to by terms such as ‘Moscovia, Moscovie, Moskovia’.⁵¹

In this category of ‘useful idiots’ Sławomir Sierakowski also includes American academic Stephen F. Cohen, according to whom “the West has humiliated Russia by inviting countries like Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to join NATO.” Sierakowski criticizes Cohen for using Cold War notions like ‘spheres of influence’ and for failing to take into account Russia’s neighbours which, like Finland in March, have expressed their desire to join NATO as soon as possible.

More often people only pay attention to Russian news when it reinforces their own mythology on topics that are important to them. For Thierry Meyssan, for instance, what counts is to show that the world, overrun by all kinds of conspiracies, is one huge deception.⁵² Similarly, Ahmed Bensaada only wrote his ‘autopsy of a coup d’etat’ in Ukraine on 22 April to highlight the perverse role the USA is playing all over the world.⁵³ He writes: “At the end of the day you have to accept the evidence that Euromaidan, just like the Orange Revolution, is a movement mainly supported by western (political) backrooms.” Note here his use of the popular rhetorical sleight of hand, whereby you attribute to a person something they never said only to then attack them for it. “Ac-

51. <http://nouvelles-ukraine.blogspot.fr/2014/02/demystification-ds-cliches-sur.html?m=1>

52. <http://www.voltairenet.org/article183316.html>

53. <http://www.les-crisis.fr/ukraine-autopsie-d-un-coup-d-etat/>

According to mainstream Western media there are the ‘goodies’ who follow Tymoshenko and the ‘baddies’ who support Yanukovytsch. But this is a distortion of reality.” After all, Manicheism is a useful propaganda weapon. John Laughland, British geopolitician and Director of the Russian-sponsored Paris Institute for Democracy and Cooperation, is also motivated by his anti-Americanism. In a blatant over-simplification of the situation he tells Radio Courtoisie listeners: “The USA wants to include Western Europe in its post-modern and post-historical ideology and has therefore made Russia its main enemy. Russia is portrayed as representing all the values of the ancient world, such as European culture, Christianity, patriotism and nationalism. The USA, with its materialism, uncontrolled liberalism and rejection of all traditions, wants to incorporate Western Europe into its poisonous value system by including it in the fight against ‘the common enemy in the East’, which is still defending the civilizational foundations of ‘Old Europe’”⁵⁴

A final type of ‘useful idiots’ are those who, like Max Blumenthal in the USA and Michael Prazan in France, talk about the ‘congenital anti-Semitism of the Ukrainians.’ According to Prazan, Ukraine is a country without an identity, a bric-a-brac conglomerate which was formed by whichever way the winds of history were blowing. Prazan, who claims to be a ‘writer and documentary film-maker’, wrote in *Le Monde* in 2008:

54.<http://www.agoravox.tv/actualites/international/article/john-laughland-en-ukraine-1-44375>

“Ukrainian national identity is, to say the very least, paradoxical. Each of the country’s borders, whether in the south with Romania, or *a fortiori* in the West with Poland, has fluctuated during the successive invasions and annexations which it has undergone throughout history. In fact one wonders where exactly the ‘territorial integrity’, mentioned in the Paris declaration signed by the EU, is located. The Nazi invasion of June 1941, like the Soviet annexation ratified in Yalta, has left indelible marks. No matter how surprising this may seem, just as Crimea is consumed by its nostalgia for the USSR, so nationalistic Galicia, formerly Polish and today part of Ukraine, is nostalgic for its allegiance with its Nazi occupier. This gives a new meaning to the phrase ‘pro-West’ which no doubt does not share the same ‘values’.”⁵⁵

There is no point responding to the above comments on the reality to Ukrainian identity and its slow formation over the centuries. Regarding the Ukrainians’ apparent anti-Semitism the reader can consult the book *From ‘Little Russia’ to Ukraine*⁵⁶ by Mykola Ryabchuk, the well-respected director of the Kievan journal *Krytyka*. This will shed light on Symon Petliura’s so-called anti-Semitism. But that is not the point. What is, is that Prazan, author of a book on the fighters of death, can claim: “The genocide of the Jews, in which a large section of the Ukrain-

55. http://www.lemonde.fr/cgi-bin/ACHATS/acheter.cgi?offre=ARCHIVES&type_item=ART_ARCH_30J&objet_id=1050988&xtmc=la_galicie_naguere_polonaise_et_integree_au_jourd_hui&xtr=1

56. Paris, L’Harmatan, 2003

ian population took part, is the subject of constant re-writing of history at the highest levels of the State. Remember that the pits that the corpses of more than a million Jews were thrown into are scattered in a frightening way across the whole of Ukrainian territory. Moreover it is only Soviets and Jewish organizations who treat them as memorial sites, and who have built commemorative gravestones and monuments.” What Prazan fails to grasp is that it was precisely the USSR which prevented Ukrainians from finding out what happened in their history during the 20th century. Neither the Jews of Ukraine nor the Ukrainians as a whole were allowed to learn at school the reasons for the German-Soviet pact and the execution methods used during the Shoah. This also applies to the Holodomor (death by starvation), the great famine of 1932-33 during which more than five million people died. Until Viktor Yushchenko came to power in 2005, no-one even hinted at it in Ukrainian schools.

There has been a large-scale media propaganda offensive against the Ukrainian resistance. It originated in Russia but has been reiterated in Ukraine by the media outlets in the pay of Alexander Yanukovich, the President’s son. The propaganda is then relayed across Europe by a naïve media, attracted by finance but with little regard for checking their sources. On 29 January 2014 the *Guardian* published an article by Seumas Milne on the ‘real causes of unrest in Ukraine.’ His title was: ‘Ukraine, fascists, oligarchs and western expansion are at the heart of the crisis’.⁵⁷

57. Seumas Milne, “In Ukraine, fascists, oligarchs and western expansion are at the heart of the crisis”, *The Guardian*, 29.02.2014,

Milne is a former member of a dissident group from the British Communist party.⁵⁸ Let us consider his arguments in order to respond, albeit briefly. Lesson No.1 from the propaganda experts: an argument, even the most preposterous, can turn into a half-truth simply through silence, ie if no one criticizes it. Lesson No.2: there is no smoke without fire. Therefore the propaganda machine must constantly feed and reiterate rumours and half-truths.

To start with, Milne's article contains a distressing blunder when he claims that the Red Army, unlike the 'Ukrainian nationalists', would have shown great respect for the Shoah. You only need to listen to Leonid Finberg, a Jewish community leader in Ukraine, to discover that the opposite was the case, and that during the Soviet era the regime played down the Shoah. Even as late as 1991 Babi Yar had not been commemorated as the site of the mass executions of Jews in Ukraine. Milne also tells us that the so-called Ukrainian 'nationalists', despite never once having called for violence, have been outdone by the so-called Right Sector. Moreover Right Sector itself is presented by Milne as an organisation when in fact it is nothing more than a group of the more vociferous anti-Yanukovich and anti-Kremlin demonstrators. It does not have a single representative in parliament, and only has a few hundred supporters. Moreover it is Andriy Paroubiy of the Batkivchtchina party who commands the most respect at Maidan and not Right

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan29/ukraine-fascists-oligarchs-eu-nato-expansion?CMP=EMCNEWEML661912>

58. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seumas_Milne

Sector leader Dmytro Yarosh. And it was Parubiy who became president of the National Security and Defence Council in February, not Yarosh. This has therefore nothing to do with the recognition given to the extreme-right parties such as the National Front in France (credited with 20% of the vote in the May 2014 European elections), nor the Jobbik party in Hungary which holds 10% of seats in the National Assembly. In an interview he gave to *Time* magazine on 4 February Yarosh is more anti-Putin than fascist.⁵⁹ And in February he even met the Israeli ambassador to Ukraine to reassure him that Pravy Sektor was against all forms of anti-Semitism and xenophobia. This however raised questions about Yarosh's allegiances. His combative and intransigent attitude was exploited by the Russian media, especially after 22 January in Maidan when aggression by the Berkout (anti-riot police) showed Pravy Sektor's ability to retaliate. As a result some observers even went as far as to wonder about Yarosh's connections with Russian propaganda.⁶⁰ But despite these suspicions of complicity, leading moral authorities in Ukraine, such as Serhiy Kvit, current Minister of Education and Science, assert that Yarosh could not be a Kremlin agent.

According to Milne, Europe - led by Germany - is suspected of pushing Ukraine to sign the treaty of association discussed at the Vilnius EU summit, in order to 'commercially plunder the country.' Yet he is

59. <http://time.com/4493/ukraine-dmitri-yarosh-kiev/>

60. <http://sled.net.ua/dmitriy/yar/pora/snyat/masku/2014/10/03>

silent on the powerful Kremlin pressure which, since last August, has closed its borders to Ukrainian imports to force Ukraine to join its artificial Eurasian Union. Nor is there any mention of the Kremlin's demand that Ukraine adopts anti-freedom laws in return for the Russian loans it has received. The explanation given is that Ukraine is divided into two, and that Eastern Ukraine is 'pro-Russian and pro-Communist'. It is as though Europeans had never seen the pro-Maidan demonstrations at Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy on 26 January on their TV screens; as though there had been no images of the violent attacks which followed, assisted by Russian forces hastily brought in, against brave demonstrators. Milne even states that Ukrainian Donbass 'will be destroyed by European competition'. The same was said to Poland twenty years ago. Yet today Poland is three times better off than Ukraine, thanks to the necessary restructuring undertaken with the support of European institutions.

Milne even goes as far as to invoke the old justification in use since 1989, namely that the police state uses violence simply to fight NATO which is only interested in self-defence and protecting its own interests. By 2004 Moscow propaganda was already claiming that the Orange Revolution was financed by the West. Yet everyone knows it is unaffordable to pay hundreds of thousands of demonstrators to take to the streets for weeks on end in the snow. Yanukovich's government paid a few hundred people to demonstrate one Sunday in Kiev - an experience which in fact lasted only half a day. Today the likes of

American John Kerry and Anders Fogh Rasmussen (NATO Secretary General 2009-2014) are portrayed as being ultimately responsible for massacres even in Egypt, and, if you read between the lines, for the future victims of Ukraine conflict. You can almost hear Putin himself when you are told that the West is to blame for the 1990s collapse of communism, and that the resulting oligarchies and mafias are the product of Western neo-liberalism. Milne even has the nerve to refer to 'Yanukovych's concessions'. Yet what Yanukovych actually did was simply replace an Azarov with an Arbutov on 28 January 2013. He then laid a trap for the opposition, subsequently foiled, by nominating Yatsenyuk to lead the most unpopular government in Ukrainian history. And, as if that were not enough, he used blackmail to demand the liberation of Maidan Square before offering amnesty to prisoners of conscience.

Milne's *Guardian* article ends with suggestions which belie the reality of the Ukrainian police state under Yanukovych, that it is totally under control of its Russian neighbour which has explicitly stated its wish to partition the country. All that is missing are the usual arguments against the Ukrainian Uniate priests. This was left to President Putin to do, as he had launched a diatribe against them in Brussels the day before. He claimed the so-called Uniates did not want 'to be led by Blacks, Jews or Russians'. This is a classic example of misleading propaganda because it quotes out of context the words of a Ukrainian priest uttered on March 2010, and who has since been brought into line by his Greek-Catholic superi-

ors. In actual fact Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Patriarch of the Greek-Catholic Church, is well-known in Ukraine and the world over for his democratic attitude. Moreover the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church believes that the establishment of peace, ecumenism and dialogue are its main mission.

One thing is certain and no doubt Putin, former KGB lieutenant, remembered when he was in Brussels. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church used to be the biggest opposition group against the Soviet regime within USSR borders. Today it could bring down the neo-Soviet regime in Moscow and Minsk through its moral authority.

So where are the real fascists?

Apparently Winston Churchill said, ‘The fascists of the future will be called anti-fascists.’ Be that as it may Russian propaganda statements should be studied closely.⁶¹ Andranik Migranyan, a political analyst and one of the main agents of pro-Russian propaganda in the USA, published an article in the Russian newspaper *Izvestia* at the beginning of April. In it he justified Hitler’s policies in the 1930s, arguing that the fuhrer was right to want to reunite territories where Germans lived. Apparently Hitler’s only mistake was that he also wanted to invade Poland and France. But Migranyan sees nothing wrong with the power politics of the German Chancellor before 1939. Putin

61. <http://euromaidanpr.com/2014/03/21/the-wolf-who-cried-fascist-pathology-of-russian-propaganda-against-ukraine-pt-1#more-4485>

himself, in his press conference of 18 April, went as far as to liken the present situation with the rhetoric of the 1930s. He compared the Ukrainians of the West to 'second class citizens', thereby demonstrating the same logic that had led the Nazis to talk of 'sub-humans'. The French-language paper *Le Courrier de Russie*, faithful purveyor of Putin's policies in France, far from trying to play down what could seem - in the civilized world - an unfortunate slip of the tongue, cited the phrase as one of the five main points in Putin's press conference.⁶² This shows that this use of language was no mere improvisation but a clear move by Putin to a higher level in his denigration of the adversary.

As for the Ukrainian press, on the other hand, it revealed that Putin's father had worked for both the communists and the Nazis during the Second World War. There is also a rumour on the internet at the moment that President Yanukovytsch's own father, Fiodor Yanukovytsch, had been a Nazi collaborator in Belarus during the war. Although there is no way of verifying any of this, it is worth remembering that the separatists presented themselves as racist and anti-Semitic after they seized power in Donetsk and Simferopol. Pavel Gubarev, the self-proclaimed 'people's governor' of Donyetsk, is a member of the openly racist Russian National Unity party.⁶³ Sergei Axionov, leader of the

62. <http://www.lecourrierderussie.com/2014/04/ligne-directe-vladimir-poutine/>

63. <http://www.euromadenpr.com/2014/03/21/the-wolf-who-cried-fascist-pathology-of-russian-popaganda-against-ukraine-pt-1/#more-4485>

Crimea separatists, compared President Obama to a monkey after the USA denounced the annexation of Crimea, and suggested he should be put in a zoo.⁶⁴

I should add that Russian state television is becoming increasingly anti-Semitic. As Galia Ackerman writes: “The anti-Semitic card is still being played by Putin’s regime. And when the voices of Russian Jews are not loud enough to be heard in talk-shows on state television, anyone willing to ‘bear witness’ is invited, including real fascists such as Avigdor Eskin. I was shocked to see this Israeli citizen (who emigrated from the USSR 35 years ago) appear at least twice as a guest on Vladimir Solovyov’s very popular show “Sunday Evening” (*Voskresny vetcher* on Channel *Rossia 1*). Many things about him shocked me: he passionately defended the apartheid regime in South Africa; he uttered a terrible religious curse against Yitzhak Rabin, equivalent to a *fatwa*; he desecrated the tomb of Izz al-Din al-Qassam, precursor of the Palestinian national struggle, by putting a pig’s head on it (for which he served two years in an Israeli prison). This man, who is hated and ostracized in Israel, was chosen to appear on Putin’s prime time television! And he presents himself as a sworn opponent of Ukrainian ‘fascism’ and defender of Crimea’s ‘reunion’! Basically he asserts that the Israeli government is spineless: it should have permanently annexed the Palestinian territories just as Russia annexed Crimea!”⁶⁵

64.<http://www.pravda.comua/news/2014/04/16/7022584/>

65.http://www.huffingtonpost.fr/galia-ackerman/antisemitisme-poutine-russie_b_5101663.html



Chapter 4

The Revolution of Dignity

In spite of everything I have said about the role of historians in the formation of the national consciousness of a country, my narrative of events will necessarily be mytho-logical. I deliberately use the hyphen between *muthos* and *logos* as it both separates and unites them. It is just as much about a history which is trying to produce a convergence of memories, as it is about a narrative illuminated by the dynamics of myth. We must recognise that we are dealing with the confrontation of two theological-political narratives. It is a confrontation that has become blind, and which today has led to open warfare between Russia and Ukraine. Unless a cure for these collective pathologies is found by the main players, this war threatens to drag the whole world into it. I do not intend to position myself in the middle - after all I have already explicitly denounced Moscow's propaganda. Instead I will step back a bit in order to try and identify possible routes to reconciliation. I will start by focusing on the period of the declaration of the Ukrainian nation state (21 November - 27 February 2014).

Ukraine in 2013-4 is an emerging nation state of a new kind. It is a country trying to unite head and body, political power and society. But it is not doing so along the lines of the semi-Arian division in the Byzantine and medieval era. In those days the state was associated with the temporal, and the soul of nations with the eternal. Like many modern states Ukraine is in search of a new synthesis between the political and the social, based on spiritual values such as justice, liberty and equality. The 1989 student-inspired Revolution on Granite ended in the independence of the country in 1990. Then, in 2004-5 the Orange Revolution fought against the rigged elections and ended in the victory of the democratic president Victor Yushchenko. Finally in 2013-4 the Revolution of Dignity fought for the respect of human dignity and the country's pro-European choice, and ousted Yanukovych's corrupt government. Thus three huge series of demonstrations took place in Independence Square in Kiev, and thereafter shaped the collective national consciousness. Maidan, a Turko-Tartar word meaning *agora* has thus become the main memorial site for the Ukrainian nation.

Young Ukraine is a nation state of a new kind in that it has been defined by Arseniy Yatsenyuk as personalist and relational, which is characteristic of Slav Orthodox political culture. Not only does Ukraine see itself as part of the community of European nations, but it also increasingly, as a bi-cultural state. According to most studies, the use of the Russian and Ukrainian languages in daily life is about 50/50. From a practical point of view this is not viable. And

yet Ukraine is one of those countries, like Canada and Switzerland, whose very identity lies in managing this dual allegiance. This happens with difficulty and despite reciprocal suspicions and even naturally and with good humour, depending on the place and time. In fact most Ukrainians are bilingual⁶⁶.

The same applies to the Christian heritage. Most of the 32 million Christians in Ukraine are either Orthodox (25 m) or Catholic (6 m) or Protestants (1m). This confessional division has been one of the main wounds in Ukrainian history. Nevertheless, the genius of Ukrainian Christianity is to have invented in the modern era numerous bridges between these two Christian traditions⁶⁷. The major religious figures in Ukrainian history are precisely those who link the two churches: Metropolitan Petro Mohyla (Orthodox) and Metropolitan Andre Sheptytsky (Catholic). They are also the most respected authorities in the two main Ukrainian universities, The Catholic University of Ukraine at Lviv and the Mohyla Academy in Kiev.

Politically, Ukraine is a country divided between its Soviet legacy and its rediscovered attachment to Ukrainian national identity. Though here too, things are a bit more complex than they seem. As Mykola

66. D. Arel, v. Khmelko, *Regional Divisions in the 2004 Presidential Elections in Ukraine: The Role of Language and Ethnicity*, University of Ottawa, 29. 09-1.10. 2005.

67. *State Secularism and Lived Religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine*, edited by Catherine Wanner, New York, Oxford Univ. Press, 2012.

Ryabchuk has demonstrated⁶⁸ there is a very wide spectrum of allegiances to the two political cultures. It is therefore not possible to divide Ukraine geographically into an Orthodox, communist and Russian-speaking East, and a Ukrainian-speaking, Catholic and nationalist West. This view, commonly held today by political scientists and journalists, does not correspond to the intimate reality of Ukraine, no matter how much reassurance it may provide. This is because it takes no account of the dynamics of nations, the memory of peoples, and hence their mythology. It ignores the ‘qualitative’ so to speak, the networks of sociability and communication, the memories and imaginations, and the daily lives of many mixed Ukrainian families.

The above-mentioned division of Ukraine was the basis of Soviet governance in the country. It was also adopted after 1991 by Presidents Kravchuk, Kuchma, Yushenko and Yanukovych, each in their own way and to differing degrees. As M. Ryabchuk explains, the post-Soviet state is a *blackmail state*, which has produced a non-civil society. It has also prevented the dynamic formation of a coherent nation state in Ukraine. This means, in concrete terms, that the state creates conditions such that in practice none of its citizens is able to survive without violating some law or other. “Businessmen are forced to conceal their income because they are unable to pay all the taxes due on it; teachers take small bribes from their students because they are unable to bring up a family on

68. M. Riabtchouk, *De la Petite Russie à l’Ukraine*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2003.

their miserably low salaries (just as militiamen extort protection money from local shopkeepers); workers make products on the sly in factories which lay them off for months on end and do not pay them. The rest of the population do not pay, for years at a time, their bills for gas, electricity and other communal services. The state seems to put up with these minor (and sometimes not so minor) infractions. But it does so only as long as citizens remain loyal subjects and do not fight back - ie do not try to become real citizens who have their own, independent ideas, actions and expression.”⁶⁹ At the political level, blackmail is rife. The pro-Soviet communist left is wary of attacking the president too much so as not to push him into the arms of the hated West and equally loathed nationalists. The right also fears that the president may turn to the communist leader P. Symonenko, and ultimately to the Kremlin. Handling these fears is, according to M. Ryabchuk, a matter of tactic. The one most commonly used by Soviet and then Ukrainian heads of state was to manipulate memories. While President Kuchma criticised the ‘nationalist West’ during the victory celebrations of 8-9 May, President Yushenko was the first to open up the KGB archives to the Ukrainian general public.

The formation of a *blackmail state* also applies to Russia since Vladimir Putin came to power in August 1999. In September 1999, scarcely a month after he was appointed prime minister, Moscow was hit by a wave of terrorist explosions. They were presented

69. Ibid, p.102.

as Chechen attacks even though no evidence was ever produced to prove it. In fact quite the reverse, many witnesses interviewed by Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaia and former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko, accused Putin of having instigated these attacks. They were both subsequently assassinated. Andrei Nekrassov's 2008 film 'Litvinenko poisoned by former KGB agent' is a damning indictment against Putin. These Moscow-initiated attacks gave the new prime minister a pretext to launch a second war in Chechnya, and to give the Russian people the impression that they were being safely protected from 'Chechen terrorism.' Similarly, President Putin has ordered the Academy of Sciences of Russia to produce a history textbook that will be the only one used in all Russian schools from 2015. According to Russian historian Alexander Rubtsov this book is an ultra-nationalist manipulation of the Russian myth⁷⁰.

Vladislav Surkov was Russian deputy prime minister between 2012-3. He is considered one of the Kremlin's main ideologists since 1999. According to many experts, such as Françoise Thom, Putin's idea of a 'sovereign democracy', as theorised by Surkov, showed its limitations during the mass demonstrations in Moscow in 2011-2.⁷¹ This is why Putin, no sooner had he been re-elected president, than he produced a new ideology aimed at restoring the imperial power of Russia at the time of the USSR. Obviously

70.<http://www.forbes.ru/mneniya-column/istoriya/249845-strannaya-istoriya-kakim-budet-edinyi-uchebnik>

71.http://www.huffingtonpost.fr/2012/0302/russie-manifestations-poutine-moscow-contestation_n_1316798.html

this had implications for Ukraine. According to the current Minister of Education, Serhyi Kvit, Putin was trying to promote the ideology of the Russian World (*Russkij Mir*) among Ukrainians. “This campaign, though largely unsuccessful, has had destructive effects. The tenets of this new ideology are: that Ukrainians and Russians are really one people who share a “common history,” the imperial “greatness” of the Russian Tsars, the “glory” of the Soviet period (particularly exploiting the ideological construct of the “Great Patriotic War”) and the “consolidating” power of Russian Orthodox Christianity (which is once again serving a repressive state system).”⁷²

To establish your authority you have to control memories, which are like the nuclear reactors of national movements. Memories determine how far these nations trust their governments, and respect their neighbours. My argument is that since 2013 the Ukrainian state has become so corrupt that it could not long play off one part of the population against the other. The last shred of trust that the Ukrainian people still had in Putin was his promise to guide the country towards an association agreement with the European Union. But this moral contract was broken by the Azarov government, and was immediately followed by the violent attacks against peaceful students on the nights of 29 and 30 November by the Berkuts.⁷³ As a result a whole nation felt it had been cheated,

72. <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/serhiy-kvit-the-ideology-of-the-euromaidan-revolution-340665.html>

73. Special anti-riot forces of the Ministry of the Interior.

that it had ‘gone to bed the night before in Ukraine and woken up the following morning in Belarus.’

Opinion is divided over the extent to which the Euromaidan events can be called a revolution. Some claim it is, as President Yanukovich was unable to complete his term as president. However, for others it is not, because there was an orderly and legal return to the Constitution of 2004, with Yanukovich’s departure being seen as a simple resignation. I have chosen to use the word ‘revolution’ not in the legal sense but in the spiritual one. The Revolution of Dignity unfolded in four stages: uprising, anger, battle and finally victory.

*The Pro-European Uprising of the Young
(24 November 2013-1 December 2013)*

Initially, between 21 November and 1 December, the young were simply challenging the anti-European policy of Azarov’s government. The first demonstrators were mainly students and journalists who rejected the volte-face of the Ukrainian government on 21 November over the question of signing a partnership agreement with the EU.

In February 2008 in Paris, after Ukraine had joined the World Trade Organisation, (WTO) the broad outline of an agreement of association with the EU had been drawn up. Its key provisions stressed: support for fundamental reforms, economic recovery and growth, governance and cooperation in sectors such as energy, transport, protection of the environment, industrial cooperation, social development and social

security, equal rights, consumer protection, education, supporting youth and cultural cooperation. During the 15th Ukrainian-EU summit on 19 December 2011, EU leaders and President Yanukovich announced that they had reached agreement over the text of the association treaty. On 30 March 2012 the chief negotiators on both sides initialled the document, which contained a section providing for the establishment of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) and which was an integral part of the agreement document. On 19 July 2012 the chief negotiators of both sides initialled the section on DCFTA . On 24 July 2013, at the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council in Luxembourg, agreement was reached on issues that had been subject of discussion over the previous five years⁷⁴. A 1200-page document was accepted by both parties. It consisted of: A Preamble (setting out European values, the state of law, democracy), Seven Titles (which concern foreign policy, trade, economic cooperation in 28 sectors such as banking, insurance, maritime governance, telecommunications, consumer protection, public health, education etc), and 43 Annexes and 3 Protocols.

The EU's External Action Service posted a four-point summary of the agreement on its website:

“The Association Agreement (AA) aims to accelerate the deepening of political and economic relations between Ukraine and the EU, as well as Ukraine's gradual integration in the EU Internal market including by setting up a DCFTA.

74. http://eeas.europa.eu/ukraine/docs/eu_ukr_ass_agenda_24jun2013.pdf

The AA is a concrete way to exploit the dynamics of EU-Ukraine relations, focusing on support to core reforms, on economic recovery and growth, governance and sector co-operation.

The AA constitutes a reform agenda for Ukraine, based around a comprehensive programme of Ukraine's approximation of its legislation to EU norms, around which all partners of Ukraine can align themselves and focus their assistance.

The AA negotiations were not a stand-alone exercise: EU assistance to Ukraine is linked with the reform agenda as it emerges from the result of negotiations. The Comprehensive Institutional Building Programme (CIB) is particularly important in this regard."⁷⁵

The agreement was ambitious and provided for a liberalisation of the visa system for Ukrainian citizens in Europe, and the creation of a free-trade area between Ukraine and the EU. It also provided for economic and scientific cooperation with the EU in Crimea. In return, it demanded a number of reforms in Ukraine, notable reform of its judicial system, a systemic fight against corruption, and an increase in energy tariffs for the population. The EU, and especially France, also insisted on the release of political prisoners, particularly former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. But not wishing to be the cause of any delay, Tymoshenko sent a communiqué from her prison in Kharkiv, asking the European authorities to remove their conditions. The agreement

75. http://eeas.europa.eu/images/top_stories/140912_eu-ua_aa_what_does_the_agreement_offer_v.pdf

published on the EU website at the end of June enraged the Kremlin.⁷⁶ Moscow had wanted the customs agreement between Russia and Ukraine to become political union with the launch of the Eurasian Union in January 2015. This would include, as well as Russia and Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia and the Central Asian Republics. As a result, from July Russia started waging a customs war against Ukraine by blocking its products at the border.

At the same time, international financial institutions were piling on the pressure on Ukraine to carry out the structural reforms to the economy which they had been demanding since 2010. An IMF delegation visited Kiev led by Bulgarian economist Nikolay Georgiev, IMF Mission chief for Ukraine since 2013. At the end of his visit he submitted a report on the measures the Ukrainian government must take:

“Ukraine’s economy shows signs of improvement, but considerable challenges remain. Limited exchange rate flexibility, a large budget deficit, and sizable quasi-fiscal losses in the energy sector have given rise to a large external current account deficit and a steady loss of foreign exchange reserves. The tight monetary policy and administrative measures in support of the exchange rate will likely continue to constrain investment and depress growth. And Ukraine’s significant external financing needs remain a key vulnerability.

“The mission and the authorities consider that a set of comprehensive and credible reforms is needed to

76. http://eeas.europa.eu/ukraine/docs/eu_ukr_ass_agenda_24jun2013.pdf

address vulnerabilities and revive growth. The mission recommends that the reform agenda include: (i) increased exchange rate flexibility combined with policies to strengthen the financial sector; (ii) ambitious fiscal consolidation; (iii) increases in domestic energy tariffs, and (iv) comprehensive structural reforms to improve the business climate and support growth.

“A more flexible exchange rate would boost Ukraine’s export performance and economic growth, especially in the face of volatile export prices and partner country demand. It would also allow more room for independent monetary policy to keep inflation on target. In the medium term, inflation targeting is the appropriate monetary framework for Ukraine, and preparations for its introduction should be accelerated.”⁷⁷

These negotiations with Russia on the one hand, and the EU and international financial institutions on the other, made Ukraine realise that it was time to take decisions. It had to abandon its policy of political and economic indecision. It could no longer play it both ways, as it had hitherto managed to do by feigning ignorance of the growing contradictions between Western and Eurasian development systems. Russian-speaking Prime Minister Mykola Azarov, despite his repeated public declarations in 2013 that he wanted to sign a treaty, gave in - as he himself admitted - under strong pressure from the Russian authorities. On 21 November he reneged on his promises and turned towards Putin.

77.<http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2013/pr13419.htm>

Among the first to react was Mustafa Nayem, journalist for *Ukrainska Pravda*. At about 11h00 on 21 November he called for support for the EU-Ukraine agreement on facebook. Within a matter of hours he had received several thousand ‘likes’. Nayem is in his thirties, and of Afghan and Iranian origin. He is well-known because he appears on V. Shuster’s TV talk-show. He is liked for his impertinent comments on his blog, which is statistically the most popular in Ukraine. He joined forces with Natalia Humeniuk, a young graduate of the Mohyla Academy of Journalism. In October she had just set up *Hromadske.tv*, a TV internet channel. Together with *Ukrainska Pravda*, *Expresso.tv* and *5 canal*, the channel of the deputy and businessman, Petro Poroshenko, *Hromadske.tv*, was one of the main sources of information on Maidan for millions of Ukrainians from November onwards. Together Humeniuk and Poroshenko mobilised the media and the students in Kiev, especially those in the Mohyla Academy. They instigated demonstrations that brought together more than 150,000 people in Maidan square. The movement then spread to other towns in Ukraine, and even led to solidarity demonstrations in major cities around the world such as Paris, Washington and Toronto. In Lviv the students of the Catholic University of Ukraine were not to be outdone. On 25 November they published the following declaration:

“We declare the start of a protest (unlimited) and demand of the President of Ukraine:

The resignation of the whole of Azarov’s government.

The resumption of preparations for the signing of the agreement of association with the European Union, so that the Ukrainian people can continue their journey towards European integration.

The representation of the interests of the Ukrainian people at the Eastern Partnership Summit of the EU at Vilnius on 28 and 29 November.

In the event of our demands not being met, we will be forced to engage in civil disobedience”.⁷⁸

However, after the Vilnius summit between EU and Ukraine (also attended by Georgia and Moldova both of which signed cooperation treaties), the demonstrations visibly died down. On the eve of the summit Yanukovich asked the EU for 160 billion euros, explaining - with a straight face - that Ukraine was a serious country and should not be humiliated.⁷⁹ On 28 November in Vilnius he announced that Ukraine would not sign the agreement. The Europeans, through Stefan Füle, the European Commissioner for Enlargement, left the door open. But everyone realised that after months and months of negotiation the failure of the summit meant that Ukraine was proposing a new strategic option. And the first to realise this was Füle himself, a Czech diplomat who had also studied in Moscow between 1981-5. By Friday night on 29 November there were only a few hundred students and journalists left in Maidan Square. It was then that President Yanukovich, probably un-

78. <http://ucu.edu.ua/news/10729>

79. http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/foreigners/2013/11/viktor_yanukovich_backed_away_from_the_eu_and_toward_vladimir_putin.html

der pressure from the Kremlin, decided to clear the square of these remaining 'nuisances'. With support from A. Klyuev, secretary of the Ukrainian National Defence and Security Council, and A. Popov, acting Mayor of Kiev, the Berkuts were brought from Crimea. They were the special anti-riot forces, brought in to break up the demonstrators under the laughable pretext that the square had to be cleared for a big fir tree to be installed in time for Christmas. The Berkuts behaved brutally and beat up the peaceful demonstrators till they bled. The latter were therefore forced to take refuge in Saint Michael's monastery, a stone's throw from Maidan Square. The hegumen, head of the monastery which came under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Kiev, decided to open his doors to the demonstrators, while keeping out forces of law and order. Meanwhile the journalists who were there broadcast live images of violence on the internet. This shocked the country as it was the first time since independence in 1991 that the state had used such force against peaceful protesters.

The Rector of the Catholic University of Ukraine published a declaration on 30 November explaining why he had decided to demonstrate in both Lviv and in Kiev. The university is located in Lviv and is the only Catholic university in the whole of the former USSR territories. The text reveals the real source of the Maidan protest movement, its adoption of peaceful methods and its spiritual foundations. It is worth quoting large extracts, in order to disabuse those who think that Maidan was an operation financed by the American secret services.

“The government’s order to use force to disperse a peaceful demonstration of students is contrary to the Constitution of Ukraine and the right to peaceful assembly. As such, the president and the government that issued these orders have acted outside the law. The community of the Ukrainian Catholic University expresses its strong opposition to the transgressions committed and demands those who ordered this bloody act as well as their immediate perpetrators to be brought to justice. The boundless cynicism and duplicity of the government is shocking. For some time the president of Ukraine and the highest governmental structures tirelessly convinced the citizens of Ukraine that the European choice of our country is natural, essential, and inevitable. The European vector of Ukraine gained the force of the law. By abruptly changing the course to the opposite direction, the government violated the established law and its promises and now conceals its crimes with lies and violence. For this stunning design of lies and wickedness of the government and its political support, the Party of Regions must bear political responsibility.

(...) We especially appeal to those rectors and faculty members who at the time of communist totalitarianism and during the civic movements in 1991 had the courage to stand on the side of truth. The world has changed, and in the information age you cannot hide safely behind your indifference. Instead, today you have the opportunity to change the image of your moral, civic, and professional legacy in the eyes of younger generations, which are now looking at

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you from the wreckage of EuroMaidan. Do not waste this chance!

(...) Finally, we turn to the government officials who are still able to hear the voice of warning. For three and a half years Ukraine has witnessed cynical lies, manipulation, falsification, selective justice, and economic plunder. On the issue of Ukraine's European choice, we are seeing an escalation of the sin of the state leadership: that what began with deceit, turned into violence against the defenceless. Thus, our protest is primarily spiritual.

(...) In the twentieth century, both Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, while standing on a platform of non-violent civil resistance, radically changed the face of their continents and even the superpower: both the United Kingdom and America, which opposed the demonstrators, finally recognized their own wrongdoings. Is it necessary to explain this with the love and peace that shone during the "Granite Revolution," "Orange Revolution," and on the EuroMaidan? This is the key to overcoming the evil. We, Ukrainians, have experienced a lot of pain, but have always been convinced that sooner or later the truth will prevail. We must not allow anger and impatience to disturb the inner peace that is inherent in the people who defend the truth! We are called on to defend this belief – especially now, when the government is full to the brim with sin, is undergoing such odious convulsions. The evil which pulsates in our society can be expelled only by prayer and fasting – and by

the bright belief that not demons, but God is the Lord of our history, our present – and our future.’⁸⁰

Three members of parliament from the opposition also called for a huge demonstration for the following Sunday. They were: Arseniy Yatsenyuk, leader of the centre left party Batkivshyna, Vitali Klitschko, world boxing champion and leader of the centre right Ouhidar party, and Oleh Tyahnybok, head of the nationalist party Svoboda. On that day, over 700,000 people gathered in Maidan in Kiev, with almost as many in Lviv, to express their anger against the government and to demand the resignation of all its members, particularly V. Zaharchenko, the Minister of the Interior. The Ukrainians, who had been forced to swallow countless humiliations since Yanukovych was elected president in 2010, now had nothing to lose. Something had snapped. The humiliations had included: the Kharkiv Accords which extended the presence of the Russian fleet in Sebastopol from 2017 to 2042; new taxes on small businesses; the growing corruption and ostentatious wealth of the president’s family etc.

*The Defence of the Dignity of Persons
(1 December 2013-16 February 2014)*

With the demonstration of 1 December, the movement was to see a change in scale and in nature.⁸¹

80. <http://ucu.edu.ua/eng/news/1712/>

81. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/02/world/europe/thousands-of-protesters-in-ukraine-demand-leaders-resignation>.

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There were no longer only students and journalists, but now people from all sections of civil society (army, businessmen, doctors, teachers etc) took part. There were even famous figures from the arts such as the singer Ruslana Lyzhychko, 2004 winner of the Eurovision Song contest. She was also a former member of the Ukrainian parliament and had supported Viktor Yushenko during the Orange Revolution. She therefore symbolised the desire for closer union with Europe and for democracy. Another politically engaged singer, also born in 1975, was Svyatoslav Vakarchuk the lead vocalist of Okean Elzy, the most successful post-Soviet rock band in Ukraine. He spoke up in Maidan, and said that although Ukrainians may not be fully conversant with the challenges of European Union, they still wish in the very depths of their being to join the EU. They saw it as a civilised region, where the police do not beat up young female demonstrators, and where judges cannot be bribed with crates of wine. Even Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, Archbishop emeritus of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and a leading moral authority in the country, despite being now almost totally blind, went in person to support the demonstrators and called upon them to 'do good.'⁸²

The demonstration had an immediate impact. Serhiy Lyovochkin, the highly influential head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine, resigned. Five deputies from the Party of Regions, which was

html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

82.<http://www.day.kiev.ua/uk/news/011213-guzar-treba-chinitidobro>

in government, criticized police brutality. Two of them, David Jvannia and Inna Bohoslovska, left the party. But even the resignation of the chief of police, Valery Koryak, was no longer enough to appease the crowds.

Every Sunday from 1 December 2013 to 22 February 2014 between 600,000 and one million people gathered in massive demonstrations. The most important were those of 8 and 15 December, as evidenced by the video archives of Ukrainian channel 5 (www.5.ua).⁸³ Demonstrators were no longer simply demanding European integration. They now wanted the complete overthrow of the government. Very soon people started talking in terms of 'vitche': this was the term used for the weekly gatherings, similar to the word used in the middle ages for gatherings of villagers. An executive committee was set up to coordinate an effective response to problems as they arose, and to provide a common platform. It handled the receipt of financial support which was pouring in from all directions, including foreign countries willing to support the movement. It is likely that even the American Republican Party made donations during John McCain's visit on 15 December - though this cannot be verified. And in any case such support would not have been enough to pay the hundreds of millions of Ukrainians who braved the sub-zero temperatures for months on end. Things were being organised in the same way they had been during the Orange Revolution. Many websites were set up and

83.http://censor.net.ua/photo_news/263595/na_evromayidan_vnov_vyshel_1_million_mitinguyuschih_fotofakt

social network pages dedicated exclusively to Maidan, (such as 'Euromaidan SOS'). These were used to keep demonstrators informed and to offer somewhere to stay for those who had come in from rural areas.⁸⁴ A canteen was set up in the now requisitioned town hall, which offered meals and hot drinks. A church under tarpaulin was erected, and a first aid point created. A check point controlled the entrances and exits to the area, to ensure the alcohol ban was observed. Vladimir Yermolenko described Maidan as the meeting point of three political cultures. First, there was the anarchist culture which rejected monetary exchange and relied on donations and solidarity. There was also a lot of humour, caricatures and provocative slogans in Maidan. For French visitors like Bernard Henri Levy the atmosphere reminded him of Paris in May 1968.

Second, there was the nationalist culture, which made extensive use of the Ukrainian flag (though European ones as well), and sang numerous patriotic songs including the national anthem 'Ukraine is not yet dead.' You could also see Dmytro Shymkiv, the boss of Microsoft in Ukraine, sweeping away the snow as low income workers erected barricades. And third, Maidan Square also symbolised the humanistic culture, with its call for the respect of human rights and the defence of democracy.

The week after the 1 December 2013 demonstration, the anger of the population was aroused even further. This was because the deputies from the Party of Regions, who held a majority in the Rada and were

84.<http://www.maidan.name/en/category/direct-speech/>

allied to the Communist party, refused to sack the government. The rebels had agreed on a policy of peaceful resistance characterised by the occupation of local areas, the boycott of products by pro-regime companies, and calls upon the international community to isolate the Ukrainian government. Immediately after the events of 1 December Boris Nemtsov led a demonstration in Moscow in support of Maidan. But it was severely repressed.⁸⁵ By 8 December protestors had torn down the imposing statue of Lenin in Kreshchatyk street, not far from Maidan Square. The movement was now very clearly a political one. It demonstrated newfound awareness of the need not only to de-communize the Ukrainian state right to its roots, but also to criticize the totalitarianism still present in the country's historical memory and topography. This act launched a wave of destruction of Lenin statues in eastern Ukraine, similar to that which had occurred in western Ukraine in 1991-2, where several hundreds had been destroyed. It was even called 'leninopad', a word with meteorological connotations, meaning 'the fall of the Lenins.'

The Role of the Churches
(1 December 2013-16 January 2014)

Maidan was also the meeting place of different religious cultures. First of all the Christian Churches had a citizen role of great importance. From the very first mass demonstration of 1 December they had explained, through Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, that the kingdom of God must be kept separate from

85. <http://archive.today/HSDJZ>

the Kingdom of Caesar. This is despite that fact that the two cannot be entirely separated either. For the Church, every person is created in the image of God, which confers upon them both rights and duties. The Church also believes that all authority was given by God the Father to Jesus Christ, in heaven 'and on earth' (Matthew 28:18). Therefore the Church can but put the role of the state into perspective, while also trying to meet its communal responsibility to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. Cardinal Husar is the former head (Major Archbishop) of the Greek Catholic Church which has about five million followers in Ukraine. He was one of the first senior religious figures of this Church to propose reconciliation with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church which comes under the Patriarchate of Moscow. His Church had been completely liquidated at the 1946 pseudo-synod of Lviv under the instigation of Stalin and with the complicity of the Russian Church. But despite this, Cardinal Husar's position has always been that the Churches should mutually recognize their errors of the past, and reunite in a single Church of Kiev. Such a Church, both Catholic and Orthodox, did in fact exist in Ukraine in the 17th century. It was only in the 1660s when Ukraine was partitioned between Poland in the West and Russia in the East, that Ukraine lost its ecumenical identity.

Ukraine's mixed identity had for a long time alarmed the Russian Empire. The so-called 'Uniate' Church in Belarus had been banned under Tsar Nikolai 1st, and then again under the USSR. Putin's diatribe against the 'racist and anti-Semitic Uniate priests', in

Brussels on 28 January 2014, just goes to show that the Russian secret services have not forgotten that the Greek Catholic Church was the main opposition force within the USSR during the Soviet era. A few days before Putin's words Mgr Sviatoslav Shevchuk, the present Major Archbishop, had received a letter from the Ministry of Culture ordering him to stop encouraging the demonstrators. He was also threatened that his Church in Ukraine would be completely banned. But the archbishop did not yield to pressure. Instead he published the letter and explained how it contravenes the right to demonstrate guaranteed by the Ukrainian Constitution.⁸⁶ Mgr Borys Gudziak, President of the Ukrainian Catholic University and Greek Catholic bishop in France, Switzerland and Benelux, declared: "The Church is not a political organism. Nevertheless it is called to serve society in which it takes its full and rightful place. Its mission is to stand beside human beings, especially those who are suffering. Our Church wants to be responsible for its faithful, for all people of good will, and for the future of Ukraine. We are guided by the words of Pope Francis when he said 'shepherds must smell like their sheep'. With Pope Francis we prefer a wounded Church, perhaps one even covered in dust from the journey and sweat from toil, a Church who is behind her people, rather than one which is abstract and detached."

The Orthodox Churches in Ukraine have also suffered historical pressures. Since 1991 the Ukrainian

⁸⁶<http://ugcc.fr/declaration-des-eveques-de-l-eglise-greque-catholique-ukrainienne-en-europe-occidentale-sur-la-crisis-politique-en-ukraine/24.01.2014/>

Orthodox Church split into two numerically equal groups, which together contained 25 million followers. This split was because Alexis II, the Patriarch of Moscow, refused to recognise its autocephalous status, which would give it the power to elect its own Primate. But from 22 March numerous voices from both Churches expressed their desire for reunification.

Regarding Lutherans and Calvinists in Ukraine, most Protestant communities (500,000 followers) joined the anti-government resistance, with the exception of Pastor Sunday Adelaja and his Embassy of God. The future President of the National Assembly and Acting President of the Republic will be a Baptist, deputy Oleksandr Turchynov, who was particularly active in Maidan alongside Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

The churches have helped Ukrainians rediscover the fact that above all they form part of the same nation. Alexis Sigov, a young 30-year-old Orthodox Ukrainian, wrote on his facebook page on 24 February: “Up until now I thought of myself as Kievian. But since the revolution, I see things differently. I’d now find it hard to imagine Kievian streets without people from Ternopil rushing about their business, without people from Odessa and their night patrols, without those from Lviv with their characteristic politeness, without supporters of Dnipropetrovsk taking photos of themselves with Dynamo fans, without the Kharkivians who helped me dig my car out of the snow”. In fact in many ways this Ukrainian revolution is reminiscent of the French Revolution. It had its own storming of the Bastille and occupied

the main square of the country for a long time. In Maidan, there were moments of national unity when people died. For three months we heard one single people chant, millions of times, the national anthem 'Ukraine is not dead yet', our own Marseillaise. Our revolution has also had its Flight to Varennes, when Viktor Yanukovych disappeared on the night of 21/22 February. The million dollar question now is whether Patriarch Kirill will refuse to allow the establishment of a national Church, as Pope Pius VI had done.

During this revolution the Orthodox Churches have drawn closer. In mid-December officials from the Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Churches signed a document containing three main provisions. It recognized the legitimacy of the pro-European uprising; it called upon the government to consider the demands of the demonstrators; and it agreed on the non-negotiable respect of the integrity of Ukrainian territory. The document was signed by Metropolitan Anthony of Borispil and of Bovaryh, who was in charge of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (under the Moscow Patriarchate). It was therefore a major snub to the Moscow Patriarchate, which supported Putin's policy of integrating Ukraine into the Eurasian Union by January 2015. Patriarch Kirill responded brusquely on 26 December 2013 by getting an anti-Maidan declaration signed in his Holy Synod. The synod vigorously condemned "the civil tensions and revolutions which can bring no good to the people." Since the beginning of December Metropolitan Volodymyr, head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, had been

calling upon the Ukrainian government to listen to the discontent of the Ukrainian people. But the bishops in Moscow paid no attention to him. Instead they spoke of the need for reconciliation between “the different ethnic and social groups.” This phrase shows a complete misunderstanding of Euromaidan, which was about the Ukrainian people’s deep longing, as shown in all opinion polls, to belong to a larger family of European nations. This was because despite all its weaknesses, the European family places above all other laws, the defence of the dignity of each human being. The Russian bishops’ document went even further and criticised the demonstrators for not taking into account the Patriarchate’s theories that Ukraine belongs to the ‘Russian world’. As we will see below, the Patriarch had in fact been very pro-active in developing over several years a theory whereby ‘Russia’ (and not the Rus’) had received its baptism in 988 in Kiev. As we have seen, this theory is myth, since Russia did not formally come into existence as a state until the 17th century. Moreover until that time Ukraine had been under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

Intellectuals had gathered to form the First of December Initiative Group, which was set up in 2011 and comprised about a dozen leading personalities. These included: Vyacheslav Brukhovetsky, Rector of the Mohyla Academy, Myroslav Marynovych, Deputy Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, as well as religious figures such as the Orthodox thinker Yevhen Sverstiuk and Cardinal Lubomyr Husar. The

Group proposed a series of reforms, starting with the formation of a ‘government of popular confidence’, a return to the 2004 Constitution, and a policy of accelerated rapprochement with the EU.⁸⁷ Lecturers from the Mohyla Academy and the Ukrainian Catholic University, together with the Pedagogic University of Kiev and the Lviv Polytechnic University, set up an open university. It offered free courses to demonstrators who stood for hours on end in the freezing cold. Intellectuals from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church actually dared to speak out and applaud Maidan. Father Cyril Hovorun published an important article on 12 December entitled ‘The Theology of Maidan.’ This was published on the website with the significant title ‘The Rus’ of Kiev’. Hovorun was one of the first to insist on the importance of the concept of ‘the dignity of persons’. He highlighted the theological-political dimension of events:

“For Ukrainian Churches there is always a way out of the grey area of collaboration with a criminal state and following the path of the Confessing Church which fought against Nazism in Hitler’s Germany. Today we need to stop thinking in terms of a state which lives by its laws, and a church which hides behind its metaphysical mysteries. At the time, the collaboration by most German churches with Nazism forced European theologians to rethink this false dualism between the political and the metaphysical. The prevalent idea at that time was that Christ’s lordship covered all areas, including politics. These ideas of

87.<http://1-12.org.ua/prohrami-dokumenty/nationalnyj-akt-svo-body>

THE REVOLUTION OF DIGNITY

Barth and Bonhoeffer can easily be adapted to what is going on in Ukraine today. The Ukrainian Churches have the opportunity to rise to the level of popular consciousness which has been growing rapidly due to the very values that the churches were supposed to represent. It is time for them to change their relationship with those in power. It is time to reconnect with the people, and to learn from them to value and defend dignity, honesty and humanity.”⁸⁸

On the initiative of the rectorate of the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) it was very soon suggested to expand the movement by declaring a state of civil disobedience against the President and his government. Below is the students declaration of 11 December, written the day after the Berkuts had tried again to disperse the demonstrators in Kiev.

“For three weeks the eyes of the world have been on Ukraine. This mass protest movement has been launched by young Ukrainians and students against a corrupt and secretive government. These young people have been occupying the squares of Kiev and other towns and villages in Ukraine, in the hope that the authorities would hear the voice of the people. A million peaceful demonstrators have received important international support, for which the Ukrainian people are extremely grateful. This support has made it possible for us to brave the cold and attacks from the anti-riot police. At the news of a new attack against Maidan on 11 December the government started a large number of legal proceedings. It has also taken measures aimed at preventing Ukrainian and international journalists

88.<http://www.kiev-orthodox.org/site/churchlife/4975>.

from doing their work, and has created fear and anxiety among people. Despite protesters' repeated declarations of their peaceful intentions, their desire to make the voice of the people heard and to participate in dialogue, the Ukrainian authorities have moved on the offensive. Not only have they turned against the opposition and journalists covering events, but also on the students who initiated this huge protest movement. In recent days our university has been subject to all kinds of pressure and intimidation. There have been police phone calls and visits, interviews with our deans and deputy rectors, attempts to get hold of class attendance registers, raids to find the most militant students, summonses before the State prosecutor, and the launch of criminal proceedings against certain students and professors. We are convinced that these and similar measures will only increase. After a new night of repression in Maidan Square, we have therefore decided, together with our professors and as Ukrainian citizens, to withdraw our moral loyalty to the president and government of Ukraine. We take full responsibility for our decision. But now, more than ever, we need your support and assistance. We call upon you to spread news of what is going on: the shameful state of affairs in Ukraine, the pressure on higher education establishments and their students, the violation of constitutional rights and democratic liberties, the mockery of the dignity of persons who only want the prosperity of their country, a dignified, honest and democratic life. We ask you to come to our help, to support and protect the students of UCU and other Ukrainian universities who are struggling to defend not only their freedom, but the rights and

dignity of their fellow-citizens as well.”⁸⁹ This is how the expression ‘the revolution of dignity’ gradually came into being among Ukrainians, who use it to refer to current events.

Maidan was also the meeting place of religions. Every Sunday the *viche* weekly gatherings always began with an ecumenical service, followed by prayers led by a mufti and a rabbi. Both sides were aware that the government was trying to provoke and hence discredit them as ‘the fascist extremists of Kiev’, made a point of publicly demonstrating their support for Maidan. In January, when the walls of the synagogue in the Jewish quarter of Podol, in Kiev, were covered with anti-Semitic graffiti, the Jews did not respond to this provocation but blamed the Minister of the Interior. The Grand Rabbi of Ukraine, Yaakov Dov Bleich, spoke out several times to denounce the provocations by these ‘titushkis’, gangs of criminals armed by the police to do the regime’s dirty work.⁹⁰

89. Translation of the French version which had been translated by A. Arjakovsky.

90. On March 5, Rabbi Yaakov Dov Bleich directly accused the Kremlin of fomenting provocations against the Jews of Crimea in order to legitimize the military intervention. He asked for the support of the World Jewish Congress because, in his view, “the Russians were acting just as the Nazis did prior to the invasion of Austria in 1938”. As early as the end of January, the Israeli Secret Services had information concerning a possible invasion by Russia and amply diffused the information they had on the presence of Russian Cossacks in Crimea. “The Russian media talk of a group named ‘the Team of the Militant Jewish Organization’ which complains of anti-Semitic acts and fears the rise of Fascism in Ukraine (ejc.org/page18/news42909.html). But this group and the way it has been used are provocations

As for Josef Zissels, the leader of Ukraine's Jewish communities, he announced on 1 April in Paris that there had been 560 anti-Semitic incidents in France in 2013, and only 13 in Ukraine. Zissels, a Tashkent-born physician, was also Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress and a former political prisoner of the Soviets.

After an unsuccessful trip to China on 4 December, but backed by strong support from the Rada deputies, Victor Yanukovych went to meet Putin in Moscow on 17 December. There they signed a protocol which poured cold water on all the hopes of those still seeking an agreement with the EU. The Moscow accords of 17 December seemed to bring to a close the chapter of Ukraine's third revolution, that of Euromaidan 2013. Putin's Russia stated it was prepared to give \$15 billion dollars of loans to Ukraine, and to reduce the price of gas by a third. By not submitting the accords to the Ukrainian parliament for ratification, Russia thereby ensured that Ukraine would join the Eurasian Union in 2015.

*The Fight of a Gathered Nation
against a Corrupt State
(16 January 2014-16 February 2014)*

The turning point for the movement took place in mid-January 2013, after the government realized that Christmas celebrations had in no way reduced

and proven such by journalists. In reality, they are a group of Russian Cossacks who give themselves Jewish names in order to deceive public opinion". (eajc.org/page16/news42943.html)

the unrest. Azarov decided to rush through the Rada a series of anti-liberal laws, similar to those in force in Russia. On 16 January twenty anti-democratic and anti-constitutional laws were voted in by a hundred deputies through a mere show of hands, and hence blatant disregard for normal parliamentary procedure. One of the laws provided for prison sentences of up to 15 years for demonstrators. But this law served to radicalize the opposition and increased the support base for the demonstrations throughout Ukraine. Maidan was thus turned into a fortified camp which people started referring to as their 'Sitch', a term used by the Zaporog Cossacks and which nowadays is equivalent to HQ. The Mohyla Academy, which until then had still been functioning, went on all out strike. The 19 January, according to the Julian Calendar, is the Feast of the Theophany, the Baptism of Christ. It symbolises Christ's entry into public life. On that day Hrushevsky Street in Kiev was blocked by the demonstrators. The street is symbolic, as it was named after Ukraine's main historian, and also connects Maidan Square to the seat of government in European Square. The government, supported by the hundred deputies who had just voted through its new laws, used the occasion to attack the assembled crowds on 22 January. The police used live ammunition and three protesters were hit, including one from Dnipropetrovsk and of Armenian origin, and a Belarusian student. The 22 January was in fact a public holiday for the day of National unity. The government could hardly have chosen a more inappropriate date. The same applies to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The most pro-Moscow wing is represented

by Bishop Pavel, rector of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves. On that same day he invited President Yanukovich and the whole government to join the liturgy in the Monastery's Cathedral of the Dormition. During his sermon Bishop Pavel compared President Yanukovich to Christ, and reassured the government that the Church would stand behind it to the very end.⁹¹ In the days that followed journalists and activists were appallingly treated. Some were kidnapped (including from hospitals where they were receiving treatment), and beaten up (eg Tetyana Chornovol, a reporter for *Ukrainska Pravda* who was investigating President Yanukovich's residence in Mezhygiryia). Others were tortured then killed (like Yury Verbytsky), or dumped half dead in the forest (like Ihor Lutsenko). A whole generation of brave young leaders took centre stage. These included: Andriy Parubiy, a deputy of Batkivshyna who took charge of the defence of Maidan (today he is Director of the Ukrainian Security Council), Victoria Syumar, the director of the Institute of Mass Media (she is now the Secretary of the Ukrainian Council of Security, Media Affairs), and Volodymyr Viatrovykh, a historian from Lviv, Director of the Museum of the KGB Archives in a former prison in Lviv, now Director of the Institute of Ukrainian of National Memory.

The first to react to the events of 22 January were American historian George Weigel, and Myroslav Marynovych, Deputy-Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University. In his article 'Bloodlands', Weigel

91. http://society.lb.ua/life/2014/01/22/252662_president_polshinameren_bolshe.html

strongly condemned Yanukovych's regime, and quoted from the 1993 speech by Vaclav Havel, entitled 'The Power of the Powerless.' In it Havel had called upon civil society to 'live in reality', while recognizing that such a stance was both intolerable for a totalitarian regime and always victorious for those who practised it methodically. As for Marynovych, aware that the opposition between State and Ukrainian society had taken on a new dimension, he addressed Western public opinion. He had been irritated by the communiqués from European leaders who had simply expressed their 'deep concern'. He wanted to open the eyes of the European media to what was actually going on in the country. For Marynovych the Ukrainian situation was similar to the rise of totalitarian Nazism in 1938-9.

"Putin's policy is similar to the post-Versailles feelings of humiliation. He wants vengeance and to restore the 'grandeur and glory' of Russia. He wants to create a new division in the world. The role of 'geopolitical pretext', which in 1939 was played by allegedly 'fascist' Poland, is played today by the so-called 'nationalist' Ukraine. For Putin Ukraine is not even a state, but simply a 'territory.' It should therefore disappear as an independent entity, or at least be dissected. The parallels with Nazi policies are obvious. Only those who are blinded by political correctness can fail to see them. But this is very dangerous for the world: Western politicians have been tragically slow to understand the nature of the Ukrainian crisis, and in a few days' time it will be too late. It is no longer a question of some kind of Marshall Plan for Ukraine. In this

respect Europe has been far too slow on the uptake. What is needed is a broad international coalition to put an end to those trying to extract revenge and who delight in playing games with international diplomacy. Remember the lesson of the Second World War: those who refuse to defend their values and exchange them for their own security will inevitably have to forfeit this security if they wish to regain those values that lie at the heart of human civilization.”⁹²

In this fight to the death between Yanukovich’s regime and Ukrainian society, the Ukrainians have become fully aware that they are part of a nation that goes beyond social, political, and religious allegiances. As Serhyi Kvit, President of the Mohyla Academy then Minister for Education in February 2014, wrote in his article ‘The Ideology of the Euromaidan Revolution’, that no amount of provocation was able to divide Maidan. “The Euromaidan was ideologically-friendly and open to everyone. There was no division based on language or ethnicity. Provocations aimed at exploiting LGBT issues failed repeatedly. On the Maidan, LGBT community leaders and the leaders of socially-conservative groups found common ground. Many were surprised when the Euromaidan was supported by football fans, “ultras,” in all of Ukraine’s regions. (...) the Euromaidan brought the issue of national unity in the quest for an effective and democratic state to the forefront. Henry IV of France, likely borrowing the words of Michel de Montaigne, reminded his people that they are French first of all, whether they were Catholics or Huguenots was secondary. Al-

92. *La Croix*, January 22.

though that sentiment was expressed centuries ago, a society's ability to respect individual freedoms and rid itself of corruption is still determined on the national level, within the boundaries of independent nation states, and not on a global level."⁹³

The fact that the first victims of repression were an Armenian and a Belarusian moved the Ukrainian population. The legendary leader of the Tartar community in Crimea, Mustafa Dzhemilev, came to Maidan to tell the crowds that 'he was proud to be a Ukrainian.' One of the most beautiful testimonies came from the Jewish historian Vitali Nakhmanovych. On 4 February he published an 'Open letter to the Jews in the World', in which he declared his support for Maidan. He condemned the anti-Semitic acts incited by the government, and even dared to make an act of contrition for the former attitude of Ukrainian Jews who had always sought support from the authorities at the risk of being hated by the Ukrainians. He explained that although Ukrainians persecuted Jews in the past, it was also because they were living on land that had been confiscated from Ukrainian peasants. Nakhmanovych concluded his letter by proposing a new chapter in Jewish-Ukrainian relations: "Ukrainians are not the only ones who are demonstrating. So are the Russians, the Armenians, the Belarusians, and the Crimean Tatars. And the Jews are there too (...) We have had the privilege of being able to speak out, and of being heard, because of the blood and ashes of the Holocaust. Unfortunately today many of us are trying to exploit the situation for our own benefit or at the

93.<http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/serhiy-kvit-the-ideology-of-the-euromaidan-revolution-340665.html>

very least, to simply wait quietly. This has happened more than once in our history. But today the time has come to remember that our people were given the right to immortality 3,500 years ago. This was not simply because of our covenant to obey God's commandments, but also in order to bring knowledge of him to all peoples. Today, in a country that has been stained by our own blood, 45 million people are also calling for justice and mercy. They want those very things that God used to create the world. Do we really have the right to deny it to them?"⁹⁴

*The Final Victory of Maidan
(18-22 February 2014)*

The climax to the movement took place between 18-22 February. At the Sunday 16 February *vitche* gathering, the opposition leaders arranged to meet the protesters at the Rada two days later. They were to meet in the morning so as to put pressure on the deputies. At 9am on Tuesday 18 February the Ukrainian speaker of Parliament, Volodymyr Rybak, refused to register the opposition's draft law which proposed a return to the 2004 Constitution. This draft law had been approved by the Maidan popular assembly the Sunday before. It had the advantage of proposing a temporary way out of the conflict, by handing the keys of power to a majority coalition led by Arseniy Yatsenyuk. But President Yanukovich opposed it. An hour and a half after the opposition's proposal had been rejected, Lesya Orobets, deputy for the Opposition, wrote on her facebook page that the Ministry

94.<http://eajc.org/page34/news43050html+>

of the Interior's special forces had thrown their first grenades and teargas at the demonstrators who had gathered peacefully outside parliament. At 11h live ammunition was fired on the crowd, and two of the protesters were hit. From that moment all hell broke loose. By 20h the berkuts stormed Maidan. Yatsenyuk called for a ceasefire. Battle raged throughout the night, with tires being set alight and Molotov cocktails thrown. Yatsenyuk's aide, the deputy Alexander Turchinov, was injured. On 19 February, after a night of further Molotov cocktail attacks in Maidan, Yatsenyuk threatened to arrest the opposition leaders, and launched his 'anti-terrorist operation' using Ukraine Security Service (SBU). The Minister of Defence, Pavlo Lebedev, declared the mobilisation of army battalions from Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv to 'clean up Maidan square.' This was despite the fact that no state of emergency had been declared.

Meanwhile, several regions of Western Ukraine (Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano Frankivsk) stormed and occupied State administration buildings. At Lviv, the regime of Yanukovych's regime collapsed completely. The provincial cities, mainly those of the West and South, but also some in the North and East, such as Soumy and Kharkiv, sent thousands of protesters to Kiev. In Khmelnytskyi a woman was hit by police bullets and sent to intensive care. The capital was surrounded by the police who blocked access for protesters. The metro of Kiev was totally shut down. In spite of the night-time assaults, half of Maidan Square was still occupied by demonstrators. At 13h 25 deaths had been recorded (9 of whom were policemen), and

more than 600 seriously injured. A sniper was captured. A foreign delegation, made up of foreign ministers from France, Poland, and Germany (the 'Weimar troika'), announced they would arrive in Kiev on Thursday. Yatsenyuk, who had been in touch with Andriy Klyuyev, the new head of the Presidential Administration, obtained a ceasefire from Yanukovych at about 22h.

By Thursday 20 February, more than 300,000 people had gathered in Maidan Square. Yuriy Ilyin, Chief of Staff, on the instructions of Pavel Lebedev, the Minister of Defence, gave the order to several divisions in Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv, to break up Maidan by force. Towards 9h00 snipers started shooting again at demonstrators. The ceasefire was broken at about 10h00, just as the European foreign ministers were arriving in Kiev. Army vehicles full of soldiers were dispatched to Kiev to evacuate the demonstrators. Trains of police reinforcements were held up before reaching Kiev. More than 700 mercenaries (titushkis) armed with guns and grenades, arrived as reinforcements. But the protestors charged and the police fled. Dozens of demonstrators were shot but the police were still withdrawing. Towards 13h00 the tide changed in favour of Maidan. A group of deputies from the Party of Regions defected. The mayor of Kiev, Volodimir Makeenko, reopened the metro. At about 16h00 the Minister of the Interior made a last abortive attempt to clear Maidan. The negotiations with the Foreign Ministers came to nothing, and, following the USA, the EU imposed sanctions. By the end of the day more than 70 people had been killed. At 22h00, 236 deputies agreed on a cessation of violence and the return of sol-

diers to their barracks. This was the turning point of three months of protest. In the evening, Yanukovych accepted the planned presidential elections. Nevertheless, tensions continued throughout the night in Maidan Square.

The following day, 21 February, negotiations restarted. Vladimir Lukin, who had been sent by Putin to Kiev, met the European troika. Under pressure from the latter Yanukovych agreed to sign an agreement with the opposition at about 9h (eventually signed 16h00). This document was initialled by the troika, but the Kremlin envoy refused to sign it.⁹⁵ At around 17h00, 386 deputies voted in favour of a return of the 2004 Constitution (300 votes were needed to pass it). Yatsenyuk announced that the Rada was henceforth legal and could therefore form a new government and 'stop being directed by the presidential administration'. The 'dictatorial laws' that had been passed in 2010-1, giving the President exceptional powers, were repealed. The Rada also dropped all legal action against the demonstrators that had been initiated by the former regime. At 18h the Rada dismissed the disgraced Minister of the Interior Vitali Zakhartchenko, thereby meeting the first demand the opposition had been making since 1 December. At 18h30 the Rada also released Yulia Tymoshenko, who had been imprisoned for the last three years

95. Lilia Shevtsova reproached the Russian government for criticizing the Ukrainian government for not having respected this agreement and thus for not being legitimate; but the Kremlin did not support it since Vladimir Lukin did not sign it. Moreover, she writes, Russia supported Yanukovych by protecting him within her borders after he fled his country.

by Yanukovych. More and more deputies from the Party of the Regions started defecting and accused Andriy Klyuyev of being responsible for the massacres that had taken place during the week. From 19h the leaders of Automaidan (a sub-group of the Maidan movement) refused to accept the agreement unless it was accompanied by the resignation of the president. The Minister of the Interior Zakharchenko fled to Belarus. Numerous deputies sought refuge in Russia. The security forces withdrew from Kiev, leaving behind them huge stocks of ammunition. Many people tried to leave the country through Juliani and Borispil airports. Deputies were arrested at the borders, carrying sack-loads of money. In the evening, a requiem mass was held for the victims in Independence Square. Maidan protestors rejected the agreement and demanded Yanukovych's resignation by 10h on Saturday morning. Yatsenyuk Yatsenyuk, who had persuaded the deputies to vote for a return to the 2004 Constitution, initiated proceedings to depose the president. That night Yanukovych decided to flee the country by helicopter. His followers hurriedly tried to destroy all the documents of the president's office by throwing them into the residence's lake.

Saturday 22 February saw the final victory of Maidan over Viktor Yanukovych. After news had spread of the president's hasty escape, his luxurious residence at Mezhygiryia was discovered and the extremely compromising documents for the regime were rescued from the lake. After Zakhartchenko fled he announced that he was on the side of the people. The speaker of parliament, Volodimir Rybak, re-

signed. The Kiev Rada chose Oleksandr Turchynov as President. As Yanukovych had failed to sign the law the day before, and as the agreement of 21 February stipulated it must be done within 48 hours, the Rada itself approved the return to the 2004 Constitution. The assembly voted by 247 votes to relieve the public prosecutor, Viktor Pshonka, of his duties. Around 16h Yanukovych appeared on television, refused to resign, and spoke of a coup d'état. The army announced that it was 'on the side of the people'. The Rada stripped Yanukovych of his duties, a move that the Ukrainian people had been waiting for, during the last three months.

Around 20h Yulia Tymoshenko, now released, addressed the crowds in Maidan. To most people's astonishment, she delivered an inflammatory speech, disconnected from reality. Over the previous three months a number of politicians, both male and female (and including from her own party), had worked hard and courageously to defuse the conflict before it totally degenerated. Yet Tymoshenko declared that all politicians were culpable, that victory had been won by the people alone as a result of their action, and that she would make sure 'no-one stole this victory from them' in the future. Many people condemned this populist rhetoric that she delivered while the bodies of the victims were still lying there in Maidan Square.

For the Revolution of Dignity this was not the end of its troubles. On Saturday the congress of deputies from the Party of Regions gathered in Kharkiv. At the instigation of deputy Vadim Kolesnichenko and in the

absence of Yanukovych, it rejected the decisions taken by the Kiev deputies. According to Kolesnichenko, the latter had simply been acting ‘under duress’. He stressed the danger of the situation because extremists now had “15 nuclear reactors”. He proposed that Crimea and the regions of the South secede, and affirm instead their ‘economic, spiritual and confessional union with Russia’. But Mihail Dobkin, the Governor of Kharkiv, and Hennadiy Kernes, the mayor of Kharkiv, precipitously left the Congress. This put an end to the initiatives of the deputies.

Conclusion

The extremely detailed report by two deputies of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (APCE), Mailis Reps, who is Estonian and Marietta de Pourbaix-Lundin who is Swedish, chronicled the violence as it unfolded and culminated in the dramatic events of 19-21 February. On the basis of their report, the APCE decided in April to withdraw Russia’s right to vote in the 2014-5 session of the Council of Europe.⁹⁶ Regarding the possible sponsors of the Maidan massacres, the deputies wrote:

“There are persistent allegations of Russian involvement in the events of 18-21 February in Maidan. This includes Russian personnel assisting operations led by the police and special forces in Maidan. The Ukrainian authorities have launched an official inquiry into the possible implication of Russia in these events. Without wishing to rule on the reliability of these allegations, we

96. http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML_fr.asp?fileid=20712&lang=fr

note the following: not once did Russia apply its considerable influence on the authorities in order to reduce tension and violence. Quite the reverse, high-ranking Russian officials repeatedly urged the Ukrainian authorities to use force to disperse the demonstrators. In this respect the declaration by Russian Prime Minister Medvedev on 20 February 2014 was totally inappropriate. He said the Ukrainian authorities should not allow the protesters to ‘treat them like doormats’.”

Similarly one can question the wisdom of Yatsenyuk’s decision to return to the 2004 Constitution, when it had already been the source of constant tension between Yulia Tymoshenko and Viktor Yushenko between 2005 and 2010. Nevertheless what is important is that this return was done constitutionally.⁹⁷ Yatsenyuk was fully aware, as he had been reiterating since early February, that it was better to adopt a revised version of the constitution that took into account the recommendations of the Venice Commission (particularly the issue of the role of the Public Prosecutor in the balance of powers). But Oleh Tyahnybok and Vitali Klitschko had disagreed with the suggestion. As a result, and in order not to divide the opposition, it was decided on 16 February to restore the 2004 Constitution as it was. Today one of the main issues in the presidential elections is whether the Venice Commission amendments can be passed through parliament before the 25 May elections, or whether the disagreements among the presidential candidates on this issue are too deep. What is clear, though, is that the Ukrainians of 2014 are no longer the same as they

97.http://ipress.ua/news/u_2010_rotsi_konstytutsynny_sudne_skasovuvav_konstytutsii_2004_roku_viasenko_44778.html

were in 2004. They do not want to repeat the mistakes of the post-Orange Revolution period, when they had placed all their hope in one person, Viktor Yushenko. At that time they thought that once Yushenko became president they would be able to rid themselves again of their heavy civic responsibilities. But in 2014 the demonstrators are now aware that it is up to them to bring about the complete overhaul of the system of government. They know that they are now responsible for keeping a close eye on political figures. At the same time, the new generation of politicians have also understood that in order to reform society you need to be able to rely on a society that is both interested and participates. As Serhyi Kvit, President of the Mohyla Academy, wrote: “People have started to realise that change begins with them.”

Finally, the churches have been able to show once again, at this crucial moment in the nation’s history, that they are close to the people.⁹⁸In Maidan Square dozens of priests and pastors from different confessions called upon the faithful to gather together ecumenically around the victims whose bodies were still lying in coffins on the ground. After the ecumenical chapel had been destroyed following the attack of 18 February, the protesters had immediately erected a tent which served as a chapel of rest for the dozens of persons killed by snipers. The Churches assumed this pastoral role at Maidan because, as Father Michel Dymyd, a Greek-Catholic priest from Lviv who was in Kiev since the first protests, confided, “The peo-

98. To keep up with religious news in Ukraine and get full statistics, we recommend the websites: www.risu.org.ua and www.orthodoxy.org.ua

ple were traumatised by the conflicts. They needed to talk to someone, even go to confession. The pent-up energy of the resistance which had been accumulating over three months, and which suddenly began to lose momentum, sometimes led to feelings of hatred. People therefore felt that they had to rid themselves of this negative energy”.

The churches also wanted to exploit this moment of national unity to put into practice their desire for union. The Synod of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Kiev published the following statement on 22 February: “It is time we abandoned our mutual recriminations of the past. It is essential we begin a dialogue that must lead to reunification in the heart of a single local Church of Kiev. We are confident that the Ecumenical Patriarch (of Constantinople) and most of the other local churches will welcome our joint decision to overcome religious division in Ukraine, and that they will recognize the autocephaly of our unique Ukrainian Orthodox Church. We need to turn our words about the need to reunite into action.”

The Moscow Patriarchate preferred a plan for integration rather than reunification. It responded by stressing the need to act ‘in accordance with the canonical organisation of the Church.’ On Monday 24 February the Patriarchate had Mgr Onufri of Chernivtsi hastily elected as acting metropolitan by the synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (PM). This was to replace the ailing Mgr Volodimir. A few hours later Patriarch Filaret (Orthodox Church of Kiev) announced his recognition of the election. But he also explained to Patriarch Kirill of Moscow that his rec-

ognition was not directed at him personally, but at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church: “Rather than teach us the Church canons, Patriarch Kirill would do better to repent, before the Ukrainian people, for all the decisions, decrees, decorations, blessings and encouragement he gave as the Patriarch of a Church to which Viktor Yanukovych belongs.”

A final word must be said here about the victims of Maidan.⁹⁹ Well over a hundred people died and several hundred were injured. But the phrase ‘the heavenly hundred’ has been used instead of precise figures. This refers to the practice initiated by the *viche* gatherings in Maidan of organising citizen patrols in groups of one hundred. These patrols maintained public order in Kiev in the absence of a reliable police force. They were made up of citizens usually only armed with clubs.

Below is a random selection of names of victims, with information gathered on each individual in the hours soon after their death:

Antonina Dvorianiets: 62 years old, from Brovary. On 18 February her body was found on the barricades of Institutska Street.

Iakiv Zaiko: 73 years old. Former deputy at the Ukrainian National Assembly. Editor of the review *The Citizen’s Voice*. He died of a heart attack on 18 February while trying to escape from the Berkouts.

Vlad Zubenko: 22 years old, from Kharkiv, died at the hospital in 28 February as a result of his wounds after having been shot in the stomach by a Kalachnikov.

99. <http://life.pravda.com.ua/person/2014/02/21/153011/>

Olexandr Kalinos: 29 years old, member of Svoboda, from the village of Dounaiv in the region of Ternopil. In 2012 he protested against the new language law. A grenade severed one of his arteries, and he later died in the hospital.

Serhyi Kemski: born in 1980. Graduate in political science from the National University Ivan Franco of Lviv. He wrote articles for *Ukrainska Pravda*, translated from English and was the creator of a data base for the cooperative movement. He struggled against the bribery system prevalent in Ukraine. He loved to go hiking in the Carpathian Mountains and in Crimea. He was a good friend, a romantic and an idealist. He had been at Maidan since the beginning, though initially coming and going. From 17 February onwards, he was there all the time. He saved several wounded people who were lying on the ground during the conflict. He did not carry arms. He wanted to improve conditions in his country. On 20 February he was killed by a sniper who shot him in the neck.

David Kipiani: Born in 1980 in Georgia. He was found with two bullet wounds near the barricade not far from Tsoum. He died later in the ambulance. He worked in a factory which made electrical fixtures. He was at Maidan from the first days. He was a member of the Georgian Hundred and a sympathizer of the party of M. Saakachvili, the Movement of National Unity and of ONG “free zone”.

Vitali Kotsiuba: 31 years old, born in the region of Lviv in the village of Vorobliachin. Died 20 February of a bullet wound. He left a wife and 3 children.

Andri Movtchan: 34 years old, from Kiev. He worked at the Ivan Franco theatre. Was a member of the Democratic Alliance. He was killed by a bullet on 20 February.

Finally, I would like to pay homage to my colleague at the Ukrainian Catholic University, Bohdan Sotchalnyk, a brilliant and generous person.

Bohdan Sochalnyk: 29 years old, historian. He taught at the Faculty of History of the Ukrainian Catholic University. He graduated from the National University Ivan Franko at Lviv, where he had trained as both a historian and a sociologist. He was preparing a doctoral thesis at the University of Warsaw. He participated in many conferences and university summer courses both in Ukraine and abroad.

Chapter 5

The Fabulous Destiny of Arseniy Yatsenyuk

In the history of nations, it happens that exceptional personalities appear at moments of truth. This is the case today in Ukraine with Arseniy Yatsenyuk. Since our first meeting in May 2012, I was struck by the extraordinary personality of this man whose political career has been meteoric. It could be said that Arseniy Yatsenyuk is the exact opposite of Putin. Putin was born in 1952, just before the death of Stalin, in Leningrad, in the heart of the USSR at a time when people still believed in the Soviet myth. Yatsenyuk was born on 22 May 1974 - the year that Alexandr Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the USSR - in Chernivtsi, on the edge of the Empire in a period of stagnation. Putin is an agent of the KGB, nostalgic for the USSR and pretending to have become Orthodox. Yatsenyuk is a practicing Greek Catholic who tries to align his acts with his Christian convictions. The Russian President wants to inaugurate a Eurasian Empire by 2015, basing himself on the historical legitimacy of the myth of Holy Russia, while the Ukrainian Prime Minister wants to de-sovietize the foundations of the Ukrainian State and integrate

it into the European Union by drawing upon the resources of the Church of Kiev. Today, these two men are openly at war with one another. The biography of Vladimir Putin is well known. But even now there is no biography of Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

The formative years

Chernivtsi, Yatsenyuk's native city and also the birthplace of the economist Joseph Shumpeter, the poet Paul Celan and the singer Barbara, only became part of the USSR in 1947. Formerly, this city of Bucovina, which straddled Romania and Ukraine, was Moldavian (1359-1775), Austrian (1775-1918), Romanian (1918-1940). Then after being briefly annexed by the Soviet Union through the Ribbentrop – Molotov pact (1940-1941), it became Romanian again (1941-1945). The Romanians called it Cernauti while the German speakers called it Czernowitz. This region is in the heart of Moldavia. Historically it had links with Galicia, one of the heirs of the Rus' of Kiev, thanks to Prince Danylo of Lviv who stopped the Tatar advance in the 13th century. It was also the birthplace of great personalities such as Metropolitan Petro Mohyla in the 17th century. In the 18th century, North Bucovina, with Chernivtsi as its capital, was given by the Sultan of Constantinople, suzerain of the hospodars of Moldavia, to the Habsbourgs of Austria in exchange for their neutrality in the war between the Ottoman Turks and Russia. This transfer was challenged by the Southern Moldavians as contrary to the vassalage treaty linking Turkey to Moldavia, guaranteeing the territorial integrity of the latter. In July of

1854, during the Crimean War, the Emperor of Austria, Franz-Joseph I, decided to invade the principalities of Moldavia and Valachia coveted by the Czar. At the same time, he signed a defensive alliance with Prussia, and subsequently with France and the United Kingdom on December 2, 1854. The conquest of Sebastopol and the death of the Russian Emperor prevented the conflict between Russia and Austria from escalating. This Austrian epoch was very favorable for the Moldavians of the Carpates. “This city”, said Yatsenyuk, “is very different from other Ukrainian cities and even from Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk. I inaugurated a statue dedicated to the memory of Franz-Joseph there. You see, thanks to him, Ukrainian cultural centres had been founded in the city whereas they had not been allowed elsewhere. It was he who founded the University of Chernivtsi, one of the finest in Europe. And, above all, the Austrians favoured the cooperation of national minorities. There were Ukrainians, Poles, Jews, Romanians and Germans. Everybody got along well. There was a place for each and every one of us. I was able to benefit from this atmosphere in spite of the sovietization of the region. For a long time I thought that everyone in the world lived as we did in Chernivtsi”.

The parents of Arseniy Yatsenyuk, both Ukrainians, originally from the region of Ivano-Frankivsk, belonged to the local intelligentsia. On 22 November 1943, his father, Petro Ivanovych, born in 1941, married Maria Bakai, born on 22 November 1943. Petro trained as historian, taught Russian history at the Faculty of History and was also Dean of the Faculty

of Distance Learning at the University of Chernivtsi. Since part of his family had emigrated to the United States and Canada and he remained in contact with them, he knew where he stood regarding Western capitalism and he was not a Communist. His mother taught French at the University of Chernivtsi and nurtured an appreciation of European culture in her children. His elder sister, Alina, born in 1967, now lives in California. Both speak perfect English. His wife, Terezia commented: “His hobby is English”. “The only still unresolved conflict in the family” Yatsenyuk added with humor, “is that I did not choose to specialize in French as my mother wanted and as my sister has done. You don’t want to tease us too much about this... That said, I was very moved when I first saw the Champs Elysees for real and not just in photos that my mother showed us”. The mother still admires her son: “He has a phenomenal memory. I never doubted for an instant that he would graduate from the University with a red diploma.”¹⁰⁰ This is why Yatsenyuk grew up in an atmosphere “which was not that of soviet reality, where you lived with values and where everyone should study and think about the future of their country.” “One day, when I was 14 years old, the Director of the school threatened to summon my father because I would not take off a small Ukrainian flag I was wearing in my button hole. But I did not remove it and my father supported me.”

During the epoch of Yuri Gagarin and scientific atheism, Communism strictly prohibited religious education, and harassed priests who still dared to baptize children. As was often the case in the region,

100. Diploma of excellence.

the transmission of the faith was from grandparents to grandchildren. During his childhood, Arseniy Yatsenyuk often spent the summer vacation with his grandmother who lived in Kolomyja, in the region of Ivano-Frankivsk. “One day”, recalls A. Yatsenyuk, “she took me to a Greek Catholic church and I asked to be baptised.” Today Yatsenyuk is a practicing Christian. He has great admiration for Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, the former head of the Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine. He especially appreciates his religious vision of the world, very marked by the Orthodox sense of mystery, but also his involvement in the affairs of this world, an aspect of the Catholic sense of the Incarnation. His defense of the protesters, both during the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity, impressed Yatsenyuk greatly. In a necessarily different way – since they belong to the same generation – he also appreciates the current head of the Greek Catholic Church, metropolitan Sviatoslav Shevchuk. During the last four months, both of them have struggled, each in their own way, but on Sundays they always came together at Maidan Square. On Friday 21 May both were in Rome to meet Pope Francis and to ask for his prayers for Ukraine. Yatsenyuk is a post-confessional Christian. He says: “For me, two things are important in the future: freedom of worship and the coherence between faith and acts. Whatever your beliefs, the important thing is not to separate what you do in church and what you do outside of it”. Yatsenyuk insists on the Christian dimension of Ukraine, but this does not prevent him from considering each citizen as a full person, whatever his convictions. “Today” he continues, quoting Cardinal Husar, “we

must see Kiev as a Ukrainian Jerusalem. We belong to different churches, with different languages and different rites, but the great majority of Ukrainians are Christians. We have been united in the past, so we will one day succeed in reuniting again.”

Yatsenyuk was a brilliant student, helped by an exceptional memory and his very strong sense of logic. In 1991, the year Ukraine became independent, he successfully completed School No. 9 of Chernivtsi, a school specialized in the English language. Through his family culture, he had long ago made up his mind about Communism. One day I accompanied him to the forest of Bykyvnia, on the outskirts of Kiev, where the Communist massacres had taken place in 1937-1938, then the Nazi massacres between 1941-1942. After the war, nobody said a word about these massacres. In 1988 during the perestroika, however, the mayor of Kiev gave the order to build a metro station on this spot. Some thought that this was a way for the Communists to hide a source of embarrassment where more than 20,000 people had been executed during Stalin’s regime. Others, on the contrary, who knew that the Nazis had also killed Ukrainians there wanted to remember the terrible consequences of the occupation under Hitler. The fact remains that to this day the Ukrainian State has still not acknowledged the massacres perpetrated by the NKVD, the Security Police of the Soviet State. Pope John Paul II, when he came to Kiev in June 2001, went to the forest of Bykyvnia to pray there. But the State has remained silent right up to the present. Yatsenyuk and Olexandr Turchynov went there in May, 2012. They-

condemned the murders by the Communist regime. But in a press interview, he added this premonitory statement which shows his profound knowledge of totalitarian mechanisms: “We can think that this took place a long time ago. But it didn’t: It happened only a couple of decades ago. From a historical viewpoint, that was yesterday. Can such tragedies occur again? Of course...our task and our mission are to respect the most precious thing we have in Ukraine– the human being, each human life. Free people represent a threat for the regime now in power. But we are strong. We have bowed down before these persons. But we will lift up our heads and the Ukrainians should know that they have a country and a State and no one will take that away from them.”

At the age of 17, Yatsenyuk enrolled at the Faculty of Law of the University of Chernivtsi which had just been reopened after having been shut down during the Soviet era. He recalled that “Under the Soviets, judges, procurators, members of the KGB were all respected, but not the jurists. A lawyer was a nobody. There was no juridical culture. As for the specialists, they saw law as simply an object to be studied. For us, it was something existential that could be made to evolve. My generation wanted to change this situation and reconstruct things from scratch.”

It was there that Yatsenyuk met his great friend Andriy Pyshny. Andriy told me: “At that time, nobody imagined that he would become the prime minister. But Arseniy was one of the most brilliant students at the Faculty. He was very self-confident. He loved to be the center of attention. But he was also very

open and friendly. He spoke English wonderfully well to the point of doing simultaneous interpreting, something few professors dared to attempt. He was a workaholic. But, above all, he was very gifted.” Since Ukraine, at that time, was going through a terrible crisis, with a strong devaluation of the currency. Yatsenyuk therefore first paid for his studies by moonlighting as a taxi driver after classes, thanks to his first car (an old VAZ 2102), and later on as a car salesman. Very quickly, however, while he was still a third year student, he and his friend Andri Ivanchuk set up their own legal practice, Yourek Ltd. It was he who succeeded in convincing the civil servant of the Ministry of Justice, who was astonished at seeing a young man 19 years old, to give him a license to practice on the condition that he did not take on criminal cases. This was the first time in the history of Ukraine that a student received such a green light. He became the head of the practice and persuaded Andriy Pyshny to join it. “This was the great moment of the privatization of State businesses. I remember this time of barter when I was paid by wedges of cheese and crates of butter!” Thanks to the experience he had acquired, he met all the leading figures of the region. This included notably, Ihor Pliujnikov who was a member of the SDPOU directed, at that time, by Victor Medvetchuk. Yatsenyuk traveled more and more often to Kiev. But he was not linked to the Social Democratic Party which was too close to President Kuchma.

In 1997, he was offered work in Kiev. In the beginning he went back and forth so as not to abandon his office. The following year, however, he set up shop

in Kiev where he became a consultant for Aval Bank alongside Sergey Pilipas. “There was a business that handled petroleum products which had a credit of 5 billion grivnas with Aval Bank and which was in serious difficulty. My work enabled the firm to pay Aval Bank and prevented the business from going bankrupt.” He achieved this by forcing the members of the Board of Directors to pay their debts. He noted that they had bought their apartments from their accounts in the Ukrainian Bank but without privatizing them subsequently. “One morning a bailiff came to tell them that their apartments were being repossessed. As a result they rapidly found a solution...” At the end of the year, thanks to this master stroke, Yatsenyuk was made director of the legal department. In 2001, he became the First Assistant to Olexandr Derkach, the Chair of the bank’s Board of Directors. Then, when Aval Bank was bought out by Raffaisen Bank in 2005, Yatsenyuk, who owned shares in the bank, was able to look forward to a comfortable future with more serenity.

2. Marriage and first political responsibilities

Yatsenyuk profited from this period to begin working towards a master’s degree in economics at the Commercial Institute of Kiev and, in 1998, to marry Terezia Gour who also worked at Aval Bank. The couple had two children, Khristina, born in 1999, and Sophia, born in 2004. Terezia who was 4 years older than he, was also from a family of the intelligentsia. But she was Russian-speaking, Kievian and Orthodox. “I studied Russian at the University”, she ex-

plained to me. “I graduated from the Kiev Institute of Culture. In the 1990s, you had to find work. So after my baccalaureate I decided to continue my studies by correspondence, while working at the library of the Polytechnic Institute. Then I turned towards the banking sector, where I worked for 10 years. When our second daughter was born in 2004, I stopped working.”

Terezia’s father is a University professor who specializes in the history of the German Social-Democrats. So the Yatsenyuk family is a mixed family. Little by little Terezia started to speak Ukrainian at home. She also rediscovered her faith by following the Greek Catholic rite of her husband.

“I had not been baptized. My parents were Communists. In 1989, at the age of 19,, I was baptized in the Orthodox Church since I am from Kiev. I believed in God but was not a very serious church-goer. My husband presented me to his Greek Catholic parish. I felt comfortable there. Nine months after our marriage, my daughter Khristina was born, and we had her baptized as a Greek Catholic. At that moment I decided to become a parishioner. The priest did not ask me to go through any particular ritual. Since then, I have been a member of this parish. My husband has the habit of going to the liturgy every Sunday. Now the whole family follows this rhythm. That is why, when someone asks me about my faith, I reply that I was baptized in the Orthodox Church and participate in the life of the Greek Catholic Church. I don’t know if I

am Orthodox or Catholic. I can just say that I go to a Greek Catholic church.”

Terezia is now the Head of the Supervisory Council of Open Ukraine, a foundation set up by her husband in 2007 to make Ukrainian culture known abroad and to help Ukraine integrate itself on an international level. She has been a strong support for her husband, above all during the revolutionary periods of 2004 and 2013, but she has no desire to get more involved. That does not prevent her from having convictions. Her main idea is that priority must be given to national unity. She bases her convictions by referring to the Golden Age of the Rus’ of Kiev: “We must remember history”, she says. “When the princes of Rus’ had disputes, the Ukrainian State was weak and at the mercy of foreign powers. The Tatars and the Mongols were able to invade the Rus’ only because there was disunity among the descendants of Vladimir. We have to conquer our ego – that is the lesson I learned from my father. I dream of a democratic culture something like that of France. I very much appreciated the debate between Hollande and Sarkozy [in 2012]. It was a real fencing duel. Yet when one of them was elected, the other gracefully ceded his place”.

In September 2001, the Yatsenyuk family left for Crimea. The governor of Aval Bank had recommended Arseniy to Valeri Horbatov, the Head of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic, who was himself closely linked to the Ukrainian economist and politician Serhyi Tihipko. There Arseniy exercised the functions of interim Minister of the Economy for a while and then, from November

2001, as full-fledged Minister. He quickly broke the domination of “Krimkhliba”, the business that had the monopoly of bread in the peninsula. And, above all, he obtained the right to collect local taxes. His successes were electrifying. For the first time in the history of the Autonomous Republic, a budget without deficits was approved. But Horbatov had to retire. The new Prime Minister, Kunytsin, did not retain any of the ministers from the preceding team, except Yatsenyuk. He accepted to stay on another year. From 2002, the budget was increased by 26%. He also succeeded in doubling the budgets allocated for education, health and culture. He simplified the fiscal system and ensured that the economic free zones contribute to the budget of the peninsula. Although the population was majority Russian-speaking, he succeeded in having the documentation of the ministry published in Ukrainian. “At the beginning I was not well received. They distrusted me since I was only 25 years old. All the same, during this stay I learned that Crimea is not just Sebastopol and Simferopol. An important segment of the population which lives in the steppes speaks Tatar or Ukrainian. In reality, you have to separate Sebastopol from Crimea. Your average Crimean doesn’t care whether there’s a Russian naval base at Sebastopol or not. What interests him is to be able to attract tourists to the beach resorts. The Ukrainian State must invest in Crimea to be able to provide clean water to the population as well as decent roads. Nothing has changed there since the days of the USSR”.

In January 2003 Serhyi Tihipko, who had been appointed Governor of the Ukrainian National Bank, designated Yatsenyuk as his First Assistant. Arseniy, whose hobby was collecting antiques, found himself propelled almost to the top of the main bank in Ukraine. He accelerated his studies and the following year defended his doctorate thesis on “The Organization of the Supervision and Regulation of Banking Systems”. But he was not inactive during his first months at the bank. For the first time in Ukraine, he put together a system for evaluating and controlling bank operations in real time. In this post, he also succeeded in finding means to finance the nuclear power stations at Khmelnytsky and Rivne. There a new feat made him known throughout Ukraine. When, in the month of September 2004, the currency risked a free fall, Tihipko, cornered by his political support of V. Yanukovych and only occupying an honorary post, ceded all his responsibilities to Yatsenyuk. In October 2014 he became the acting Governor of the National Bank of Ukraine, in the middle of the Orange Revolution when the country was on the verge of collapse and its banking system with it. He tells the story of this period when, with his colleagues – especially Olexandr Shlapak – he saved the national currency in a book “Bankivska taemnitza chassiv Pomaranchevoi revoliutsii” (“Bank Secrets During the Orange Revolution”).¹⁰¹ In the book, he recounts how between 29 September (date of the separatist congress of Severodonetsk) and the first days of December, he and his team decided to limit bank withdrawals to

101. Kiev, Poligrafservis, 2008.

prevent the system, already weakened by a crisis of confidence, from collapsing entirely and returning to the chaotic situation of the early 1990's. "It was only on 3 December that the Constitutional Court accepted that the second round of the presidential elections had been tampered with, and so fixed 26 December as a new date for a second run-off. But in three days from 11/31 to 12/1, 2004 the Ukrainians withdrew more than 1.7 billion grivnas – or about 340 million euros. Moreover, the reserves of the National Bank which were used to back up the grivna on the markets went from 14 billion grivnas in September to 5 billion in December. At this rate, if the National Bank had not reacted, the system would have collapsed before the end of the following week. On November 30 through Resolution 576, Yatsenyuk succeeded in limiting the access Ukrainians would have to their accounts (each Ukrainian citizen, as of December first, could only withdraw 1,500 grivnas in a day – or about 300 Euros, at that time) while simultaneously launching a whole communications campaign to explain the situation to his fellow citizens. As of 1 December, Ukrainians would only be able to withdraw a total of 100 million grivnas, six times less than the day before. The measure proved to be effective. Ten days later, the crisis was overcome. In less than a month, the situation returned to normal. Whereas businesses had 39.8 billion grivnas in their accounts on December 17, by January 1st the level had risen to 41.7 billion. Likewise for individuals; during the same period the sum total passed from 40.9 billion to 41.7 billion grivnas. People had recovered their confidence in the banking system and were again saving money. The Nation-

al Bank was able to continue to refinance the banks and gathered in enough reserves to maintain parity with the dollar. Reminiscing upon the period when the Ukrainians were no longer saving in their national currency but instead bought foreign cars or immediately converted their money into dollars, Yatsenyuk writes in his book: “A country without a banking system is like a body without blood circulation”. Yatsenyuk, barely 30 years old, gave Ukraine CPR cardiopulmonary resuscitation saving from a premature heart attack in the middle of a revolution.

Yatsenyuk had taken his decision against the advice of the majority of professionals, particularly that of the “apparatchik”, Volodimir Stelmakh who was subsequently appointed Governor of the National Bank. Stelmakh was disconcerted to have been shown up by a young economist from the provinces, and was jealous of the success of his younger rival.¹⁰² When Victor Yushchenko was elected president, he did not offer any position to Yatsenyuk. The latter therefore left for Odessa as First Assistant to Vassili Tsushko, the head of the Regional Administration. In the seven months he was there he only had time to bring transparency to the public accounts of the region. He did so with the help of several chosen journalists whom he invited to the sessions of the Regional Council. In September 2005, after the fall of the first government of Yulia Tymoshenko, he was summoned to Kiev by President Yushchenko to take up the post of Minister

102. Later, in 2008, Stelmakh devaluated the grivna (from 5 to 8 grivnas for \$1) and impoverished the nation.

of the Economy in the government of Yuri Yekhanurov.

In this position, Yatsenyuk succeeded in meeting all the conditions imposed by the World Trade Organization to allow his country to become part of this international organization in 2008. He signed the protocol of agreement with the United States, Australia and China. Within several months, he convinced the European Union and the United States to withdraw the Jackson Amendment¹⁰³ and obtain the status “of a State with a market economy” for Ukraine. He succeeded in doing what his predecessors had been unable to do for 20 years thanks to a journey to Kirghizistan together with Mykola Azarov who was the Minister of Finance at that time. There he obliged the Kirghizistan government to regulate its commercial deficit with Ukraine. That lifted the veto of the Russians and showed that Ukraine was really a market economy. In particular, he dedicated himself to reducing corruption prevalent in the public domain of Ukraine.

It was at this time that Yatsenyuk had his first disagreements with Yushchenko. “When I was Minister of the Economy, I explained to the president that we had to end our dependence on Russian gas as soon as possible. I wanted us to turn resolutely towards electrical energy. They held that against me later, but

103. In December 1974, two senators of the US Congress, through the amendment Jackson-Vanik, linked the granting of a most favored nation clause to the Soviet Union to a liberalization of its immigration policy for Soviet Jews. The USSR refused the commercial agreement with this modification.

I replied that one day we will not be able to pay our gas bills. The following year, Yushchenko decided to renew the contract with Gazprom. I told him it was madness because the contract we had lasted until 2009. Moreover it was a barter agreement: we would pay \$50 for the gas in exchange for free delivery. I explained to him that, under no circumstances, could we delete the connection between the shipping of the gas and the transit which was part of this agreement. But the president didn't want to listen to me." It might be added the president's brother Petro Yushchenko, was interested in the new contract, as was Dmitro Firtash, the patron of Rosukrenergo, an oligarch who made colossal fortunes thanks to this new agreement. Yatsenyuk then published an article in the Ukrainian weekly *Zerkalo Nedeli* in which he wrote that this "renegotiation" would lead Ukraine to bankruptcy.

At this point the Yekhanurov government resigned. Yushchenko, who bore no grudges, asked Yatsenyuk, in August of 2006, to rejoin his team. He became the personal representative of the president in the Cabinet of Ministers, a member of the Council of Security and Defense (where he took Andriy Pyshny along with him) and the cabinet member responsible for relations with the Secret Service (SBU). "I prepared a decree which would reform the SBU for Yushchenko to sign. For me, the Secret Service should not be used to chase after political enemies. Its priority should be national defense. Yushchenko signed the decree but, shortly afterwards, I was relieved of this function". During this period, he built up contacts with all the political parties including that of Victor Yanukovych

who was Prime Minister from August 2006 to September 2007. “I had known Yanukovych since 2003. It took me 6 years to realize that it is impossible to do anything with him. He has no principles, no values. His only principle is money. It was he who raised the price of gas from \$50 to \$100 (for 1,000 cubic meters), thereby enriching Russia at the expense of Ukraine.”

Between March and December 2007, Yatsenyuk was Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was only 33 years old at that time. His first task was to facilitate the delivery of Schengen visas for Ukrainian citizens. He improved living conditions for the ministry’s employees. Thanks to his legal skills, he obliged a Construction Company which had not honoured its commitments vis-à-vis the State, to construct a building for the ministry. He was thus able to give on-site accommodation to about 30 civil servants. He established a relationship – if not cordial, at least along the lines of partnership – with his Russian colleague, Sergey Lavrov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. “At least I managed to have dinner with him twice and cheer him up by drinking vodka with him!” The two of them put together a collective agreement of cooperation and regulated the thorny question of black lists of “those prohibited entry into the territories of both countries”. In the legislative elections of October 2007 Yatsenyuk was elected deputy of the presidential party Our Ukraine. In December 2007, he was elected 9th president of the Ukrainian Parliament, receiving 227 votes out of 450. He began by a very sim-

ple measure. The deputies would only be able to vote in their own name. But the Party of Regions, which was a minority with respect to the parties grouped around Yulia Tymoshenko, systematically blocked the activity of the Rada. “I then had the experience of political hypocrisy”.

The great leap

In September 2008, tired of the crisis which violently opposed Yulia Tymoshenko, the Prime Minister, and the President Victor Yushchenko, Yatsenyuk resigned. He realised that Yushchenko and Yanukovich were so hostile to Yulia Tymoshenko that they were willing to go to any lengths to prevent her from governing. Here is what he said in 2012 about the Tymoshenko affair:

“Cancelling the gas contract we had with Russia was enough for Yushchenko and Yanukovich to side with the Kremlin against her. This is what Russia did by cutting off the gas near the end of 2009. Yushchenko and Yanukovich thought that if the country froze, the population would turn against Prime Minister Tymoshenko who had a violent economic crisis on her hands. In spite of everything, she managed to obtain a price of \$235 for 1,000 cubic meters. But Yushchenko demanded that his delegation at the Kremlin step back. Yulia, who had hardly any more reserves of gas, had no choice but to sign and use pressure to change the agreement once she was eventually elected president. In fact, it was not she who personally signed the contract, but the Director of Naftogas Ukraine. I would

have done otherwise. I would have convoked Parliament and I would have said: ‘My friends, either we freeze to death or we sign’. Today, Yulia is in prison because of that agreement. But I do not understand why the Director of Naftogas is the accuser when he should have been the accused. After all, he was the one who signed it when he could have refused to. In any case there was nothing criminal about it. It was not a case of personal enrichment. It was a political process. But the worst is what happened when Yanukovych became president (in 2010). At the time, two companies, Naftogas and Gazprom had signed the deal. But with Yanukovych it became an inter-governmental accord ratified by both Parliaments (with a reduction of \$100/1,000 m³ on the gas in exchange for a military base in Crimea). This contract can no longer be legally challenged! Yanukovych’s mistake is to cede Sebastopol to the Russians until 2042 according to the Kharkiv agreement in exchange for a reduction in the price of gas, is much more serious. What’s more, the current price of gas is \$516/1,000m³, which is exorbitant! They didn’t even get the reduction!”

All this explains why Yatsenyuk distanced himself from President Yushchenko. He decided to found his own political party, the Party of Change, Front Zminy. His friend, the deputy Nikolai Martynenko, helped him to find the necessary funds. He announced the launching of his party on 17 December 2008, in an outspoken article published in the daily paper Den’: “The 17 Appeals for Ukraine”, in commemoration of

the 17th anniversary of the country's independence. In this article he clearly set out his ideas and political program. His first idea was to "support democracy from below" and to "decentralize", that is, in practical terms, to abolish the level of governors and give real power to regional councils. His second main idea was to rid the State administration of the remnants of Communism. "The present situation of Ukraine is that of a post-soviet modernism. Only titles have been changed. But the president still rules as though he were the former First Secretary of the Communist Party. Except that, before, they didn't let him rob the country so much for his personal gain." He proposed a simplified and realistic fiscal policy for business leaders and for the citizens.

Yatsenyuk stood in the presidential elections of January 2010 but, because of a communication campaign totally out of sync (supporters who thought that his image as an intellectual was too accentuated made him pose in a military uniform) he received only 6.96% of the votes, far behind Yanukovych, Tymoshenko and Tihipko. In the month of May, Yanukovych, who had become president, offered him a government position but Yatsenyuk refused it categorically. He wanted to continue his fight and, after the arrest of Yulia Tymoshenko, he sided with the former Prime minister in spite of their political differences. "It has been said that I was dependent on the oligarchs. But that is completely untrue. I don't owe anything to anybody. I would never have been able to ally myself with Yulia Tymoshenko if I had been dependent upon Firtash, Akhmetov or Pinchuk. That would have been

impossible.” In April 2012, at Yatsenyuk’s initiative, all the opposition parties signed a charter of coalition. Yatsenyuk became the leader of the opposition in July following a merger between his party and that of Tymoshenko “Batkyvshyna” (The Homeland). Olexandr Turchynov, the second in command in Tymoshenko’s party, ceded his leadership par interim to Yatsenyuk. From this moment on, Arseniy Yatsenyuk embarked on a marathon campaign in all the cities of Ukraine, as the country was preparing for new legislative elections in 2012.

It was at this point that I invited Arseniy Yatsenyuk to present his views on democracy at the Ecumenical Social Week which I organized in September of 2012 with my friends from Lviv.

“You ask me about my vision of democracy. Democracy is justice for each and every person. First, through the right to vote, it is religious liberty and equality among individuals. But it is also a responsible State which guarantees the rights of persons. The individual is the highest value in democracy. Today in Ukraine we have lost our democratic foundations. It has dishonoured itself by putting itself at the exclusive service of the president. The Court has betrayed the Constitution. Neither Parliament nor the Justice department functions as autonomous structures. But it is they who should be representing and defending the interests of all. Our task is to see that there are honest elections, even if that is difficult, to re-establish Parliament and give democracy a solid foundation. The worst thing today is that an economic oligarchy controls

political power. 35 people in Ukraine control 70% of the GDP! This system functions only through fear. The foundation of democracy is the people, but a people which is not afraid. We must again become free to choose an employment, to live with dignity. ‘Do not be afraid’ said Pope John Paul II.”

I then asked Yatsenyuk what he thought of those who were calling for a purge, with judgments leading to prison sentences, for the crimes of Communism. He made a face and replied:

“It’s too late. The most important archives have necessarily disappeared. Such a purge helped Poland, it’s true, but for us, what we have to do is break the old system apart and create a new one.”

During the same meeting I asked him about his vision of Russian-Ukraine relations especially in Crimea. Yatsenyuk declared that “we must be aware that the Russians are trying to conquer Ukraine”. According to him, they want to extend the 1992 Tachkent Accord on collective security, and incorporate Ukraine into the Eurasian Union. “At present, there is an undeclared war between the East and the West. I do not think that Ukraine should become part of the Eurasian Union. I have a great deal of love for the countries of the ex-USSR, but I don’t see what cultural bonds exist between Ukraine and Kazakhstan. We are a part of European civilization. It is not natural for us to become part of Eurasia.” In Yatsenyuk’s eyes, Ukraine must not fall between two stools. It is clear

that it should follow the example of the Baltic countries and anchor itself in the European Union and in NATO. “To those Russians who tell us that if we join Europe we will only have debts and unemployment while they are offering us love, I reply that 80 years of this “love” have vaccinated us. We want partner to partner relations with Russia. And nothing should prevent us from drawing closer to the European Union. The oligarchic model is destined to perish. An efficient government doesn’t just strike up an agreement among 30 people. We must work for the people and redistribute the national wealth on a large scale”. Yatsenyuk often cites the Polish model as a suitable one for Ukraine to follow. Asked about the problem of Crimea and the Kharkiv Accord which Yanukovych signed in 2010 and which prolonged the presence of the Russian naval base there until 2042, Yatsenyuk replied categorically: “This is a catastrophic agreement. I, for my part, do not accept the presence of Russian soldiers in Ukraine. The problem is that, because of the way the accords were ratified [in 2010], if we were to renounce them, Ukraine would have to pay tens of billions of dollars worth of fines. This is because the pact signed by Yanukovych is linked to the gas contract...” This problem has since been resolved, after the annexation of Crimea by Russia on 18 March, the Douma abrogated the accords. But Yatsenyuk was aware in 2012 that the balance of the military forces in the Black Sea was unequal. Ukraine would never be able to drive the Russians out of Sebastopol unless it had a naval base with military equipment capable of responding to possible Russian threats.

When I pointed out that Mikheil Saakashvili, when he was president of Georgia, also tried to rearm without success, Yatsenyuk took a more martial tone:

“Ukraine is not Georgia. We have a population ten times their size. For example, Ukraine has the potential to build aircraft carriers. We have three factories capable of producing military equipment... Ukraine should be an agent of influence in the Black Sea. When I was speaker of Parliament, we voted a law on this issue in 2008.”

I then asked him: “But how would Russia react in this case?” His response was unequivocal:

“I don’t care, this is my territory – excuse me, this is the territory of our State...I don’t care about the Russian reaction. I didn’t say that we were going to construct a naval base on Russian territory. You see, there must be an agreement on the balance between Russian and Ukrainian forces. You, the Russians, want to keep your old war equipment – keep it! But don’t construct any new buildings. In a word, the Kharkiv agreements can be denounced in Parliament but we cannot get rid of the Russian soldiers – that would be the beginning of a war. So in practical terms we can only influence the quality of Russian arms on our territory. It will be expensive for us to rearm, but we have no choice. Things would be simpler if Ukraine were a member of NATO, since Romania and Turkey are members. What bothers me more than anything else is not that this fleet is moored at Sebastopol, but that these

warships left Sebastopol to kill people in Georgia. And if tomorrow they went and bombed Turkey – that is NATO – Ukraine would be involved in a conflict it would not have chosen...”

The campaign for the 2012 legislative elections was unbalanced. The Party of Regions controlled the State television stations and had a publicity budget 5 times that of Yatsenyuk’s Batkivshyna Party. His party finished behind the Party of Regions but despite electoral fraud, it won 25% of the seats in the Assembly. Since the other opposition parties, Svoboda of Oleg Tyahnybok, and Udar of Vitali Klitschko did not succeed in bringing in enough votes, Yanukovich formed a majority in the Rada with the support of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. The rest is well known. During the Revolution of Dignity, Yatsenyuk, who was present nearly every day with the protesters at Maidan, gave proof of impeccable determination and integrity. When, in February, Yanukovich tried to mollify him by offering him the post of prime minister, he refused. For three months he was in permanent contact with the Heads of State in Europe and in America. On 2 February 2014 he went to Munich where he obtained guarantees of political, economic and financial support from them. It was he who found the juridical solution which resolved the impasse by proposing a return to the Constitution of 2004. Despite his differences with Tyahnybok and Klitschko, the opposition remained united to the end. He also showed extraordinary courage. After the January 16 vote on the laws which curtailed civil liberties, Yatsenyuk, Tyahnybok and Klitschko decided to

fight to the death against these laws. Before the crowd assembled on Maidan, Yatsenyuk declared: “Tomorrow we are going to demonstrate against these laws and I will be the first to do so. If I get a bullet in the head, so be it”. It was already evident in 2012 that the Ukrainian Secret Services were doing all they could to put together a compromising dossier against him and his family. Upon hearing this he replied:

“I’ve already been told 3 times what happened to President Kennedy. There is no need to tell me the same thing 3 times. I am not afraid. If you give in to fear, they are sure to get you. You can only pressure someone who is afraid. But we are all going forward under the gaze of God. Judgment will come from On High”.

On Tuesday 26 February the crowd at Maidan, though reluctant to delegate the sovereignty it had paid for so dearly, gave its confidence to Arseniy Yatsenyuk to direct the nation and choose his government. The next day, Wednesday 27 February, the Rada made Yatsenyuk Prime Minister. He was elected by 371 deputies – a record majority in Ukrainian history.



Chapter 6

A Government of Kamikazes

In spite of this exemplary career, Arseniy Yatsenyuk should not be given mythical status. One person cannot save a nation. It is very clear that Vladimir Putin seized the first pretext to invade Crimea. If it had not been for the 23 February abrogation of the law on languages which allowed Russian speakers from Russia to be recognized in their full identity, the Kremlin would have found another pretext. The Ukrainian Secret Services have published documents which reveal that the annexation of Crimea had been planned for over a year. But the invasion of Ukraine would doubtlessly have taken more time before it could be realized.

Vladimir Putin was the first to take advantage of the situation. On March 18 he declared in the Kremlin: “The new so-called authorities have begun by introducing a bill that would revise the linguistic policy which was a direct violation of the rights of ethnic minorities. But they were immediately “called to order” by the backers of the foreign funds of these so-called politicians. It must be admitted that the mentors of the present authorities are intelligent and know where these attempts to construct a purely Ukrainian State can lead. The bill was put to one side, but is clearly being held in reserve for the future. Today, practically no mention is

made of this attempt, probably on the assumption that people have a short memory. None the less, we can all clearly see the intentions of the ideological descendants of Stepan Bandera, Hitler's accomplice during the Second World War."¹⁰⁴

Thus, in order to explain the action of Yatsenyuk's government, we must begin by treating the crucial linguistic question.

The language law

When I had my first discussion with Yatsenyuk in May 2012, I found that his point of view regarding a national language was not appropriate to the reality of the country. As a former linguistic attache of the French Embassy in Ukraine, I travelled a lot in all the cities where there were schools of the Alliance française, from Odessa to Simferopol, from Kharkiv to Donetsk. During that time I came to the conclusion that the Ukrainian State had not yet realized that a policy of bilingualism was essential if the country wanted to develop harmoniously. The Ukrainian diaspora in France and the United States, often originally from Western Ukraine, does a remarkable job supporting Ukraine. But it is reluctant to broach this subject because before emigrating in the 1930- 1940's it only had experience of a monolingual country. It is this group which now directs the institutions of the Ukrainian diaspora: it is not always willing to listen to the reality of the younger generation of Ukrainian immigrants from the Eastern part of the country. But post-1945 Ukraine is a

104. <http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/6889>

bi-cultural and bi-lingual country which is only slowly becoming aware of its identity.

In 2012, for Yatsenyuk, “there should only be one official language in Ukraine, for language plays an identity role for the nation. Switzerland and Belgium have different stories. In Ukraine we have had the presence of several different Empires, like Austria-Hungary or the USSR. We lost our monarchy with the end of the Rus’ of Kiev. Hungary survived for a long time as a nation because it fought for its language. The survival of Ukraine is only possible with a monolingual State.” The example of Hungary, which was able to preserve its language while being part of the Austrian Empire, is not satisfactory – because Austrian and Hungarian are two totally different languages which can create a cultural barrier. But it is not the same for Russian and Ukrainian whose relationship is comparable to that of Italian and French.

Even if half the country speaks Russian, “it is a myth that there are Russian-speaking Ukrainians who feel that they are not recognized”. Yatsenyuk makes an overly simplistic distinction between daily life and the life of the State:

“When I arrive in Odessa, I reply in Russian when people address me because it is the dominant language there. But my view that the language of the State is Ukrainian should be respected. Can you imagine what would happen if the United States became multilingual?”

The comparison with the United States is questionable. An analogy with Canada is more appropriate. All

the same, in 2012, Yatsenyuk vigorously opposed Yanukovich when the latter pushed a bill through the Rada authorizing the use of Russian as a second language of State, in those regions that requested it (the regions of the South and East have obtained this right). He also thinks, as do the majority of Western Ukrainians, that Eastern Ukraine has become Russian-speaking as a result of Soviet domination (the same as Galicia or Bukovina where Russian was never spoken before 1945). Yet Gogol attests that Russian was being spoken in Eastern Ukraine two centuries ago – at least in the big cities.

Yatsenyuk takes the example of his wife Terezia, who is Russian-speaking and from Kiev and who progressively rediscovered the Ukrainian origins of her grandparents. When I press him, he accepts that Russian could become the second regional language in Crimea. But he gives the impression this is something he would bitterly regret. Terezia has a more nuanced position:

“I am in favour of the development of Ukrainian but without it being forced on people. But I am against using this issue of language for political purposes, as does Yanukovich, who goes around claiming that there is discrimination against the Russian language. I’m not closed to the idea that, in certain regions, there can be a special recognition for a second language. But that should be prepared peacefully and submitted to a referendum. The most important thing is to establish a trend in favour of the Ukrainian language. Above all, Ukrainian must become attractive”.

I realized Yatsenyuk and I fundamentally disagreed when he said:

“Language is an attribute of the State. Russian cannot be a second language of the State.”

For me, first of all, even if it is true that some States like France - are monolingual, other, like Canada, are officially bilingual. Secondly, a sovereign State is a State which recognizes the liberty of its citizens. It is the nation which should choose its language and not the State. Furthermore the idea that Ukrainian would disappear because the power of Russian civilization is too great, is highly debatable. Canada is able to remain bilingual despite having the United States at its border. Countries like Switzerland and Belgium are valuable examples of peace for all of Europe because they facilitate the daily transfer and synthesis of cultures despite the challenges this poses. This is the foundation of peace and therefore of development. The real problem is on the mythological level. As long as memories are not reconciled, as long as distrust dominates, the Ukrainians will always be afraid of being denied in their identity. Yet paradoxially – and herein lies the drama – theirs is a mixed identity. But Yatsenyuk, along with a large number of Ukrainian politicians, both men and women, has not understood this. In my opinion this is why they did not see that Yanukovych, despite being a fugitive from justice, had been elected by the country in 2010, mainly because he was Russian-speaking. Yanukovych’s first speech after his election was given in Russian and this was a very conscious and symbolic gesture. Yet Yatsenyuk protests:

“The election of Yanukovych had nothing to do with the fact that he speaks Russian! Yushchenko was

elected in 2004 and he only spoke in Ukrainian. His election was due to his populist program. Social, not linguistic factors, brought him to power.”

That said, Yatsenyuk does not want to appear anti-Russian either. Diplomatically, he proposes giving Russian the status of a foreign language which will be taught in all schools along with English.

I remember a conversation I had in May of 2012 with Lilia Hrynevych, responsible for education in Yatsenyuk’s party Front Zmyn. Originally from Lviv and a brilliant intellectual, she worked in the department of education in Kiev City Hall. She then became a deputy in Parliament. She is very close to Yatsenyuk. This is what she said to me:

“The people do not see the language question as a priority. It is an issue used by politicians to further their career and not for the good of the nation. As the public opinion polls show, the people of Eastern Ukraine do not feel oppressed because they use Russian. Unlike the Western countries, it was a mere twenty years ago that the Ukrainian language began to renew its terminology. This is also why Ukrainian does not carry the same weight as Russian – especially as the latter is spoken in a country that extends over an immense geographical area. Therefore it is necessary to encourage the use of Ukrainian, including in universities. This also justifies having a Ukrainian language test as a condition for university admission in all the regions of Ukraine. Maybe in 10 or 20 years we will arrive at a point where we will no longer be afraid for the future of our Ukrainian language and will have a stable bilingual society mutually recognized

by all. But today, when the young people see the leaders of the regional parties expressing themselves in a non-governmental language, they have no motivation to learn Ukrainian.”

It was at this point that I became convinced of the contrary – ie that it was too risky for Ukraine to wait another 10 or 20 years. Western Ukrainians do not fully grasp that Eastern Ukrainians do not want just to be tolerated but to be recognized in their identity. This goes far beyond the question of “restrictions on the right to use one’s language”. Instead, the priority of future governments should be to establish, as soon as possible, true bilingualism which obliges State employees to respond in the language of the citizen. This is what Dominique Arel, a professor at the University of Ottawa, has proposed. But he adds that “since symbols count” Ukrainian should remain the sole official language. Russian should have the status of a regional language and learning Ukrainian should be encouraged throughout the country.¹⁰⁵ The condition *sine qua non*, of course, is the prior reconciliation of memories and the return to a state of peace.

Today Yatsenyuk is paying dearly for what I consider an error of judgment. Before he was elected prime minister, Parliament voted, on Sunday 23 February, the abrogation of the famous law on languages of Kolesnichenko and Yanukovych. For five days Ukraine returned to the pre-2012 status with a single State language in all the regions and an ample tolerance for other languages on the ground. It is easy

105. D. Arel, “Double Talk: Why Ukrainians Fight Over Language”, *Foreign Affairs*, March 19, 2014.

to see why, after three months of furious struggle against a president who took orders from Moscow, the deputies' anger symbolically vented itself on the Russian language. It should be pointed out that Yatsenyuk spoke out – in Russian – that day to try to reassure people that this law would not prevent them from continuing to live their Russian-speaking identity. After all, it was only question of repealing a law, nothing had been fixed in stone. Less than five days later, Turchynov, acting president, announced that he would not ratify this vote.

Be that as it may the decision was still a mistake. As soon as he returned from Sochi, Vladimir Putin convoked the Security Council on 24 February to approve the invasion of Crimea within five days. He stirred up the Duma and the Federation Council which gave him the authorization to invade Ukraine on the grounds that “the Russian minority is being openly persecuted”. The media propaganda machine did not have to be encouraged to conflate the expressions “Russian” and “Russian-speaking” and treat them as synonyms. It began to be reported that the “Russians constituted a majority in Crimea, but they no longer had the right to express themselves in their own language”. The reality, however, is that Russian citizens only number some ten thousands out of the 2 million inhabitants of Crimea. From 28 February, without any recognizable insignias, the first Russian soldiers took control of Simferopol. Arseniy Yatsenyuk had just found out where his new office was located. In his first telephone conversation with Angela Merkel, he was criticized precisely over the language

question. The government very quickly announced that it was annulling the 23 February decision of the Rada which Turchynov had refused to sign and that the Kolesnichenko law was therefore still in force. But it was too late. Nothing could stop the Russian propaganda machine any longer.

A New Generation in Power

The new government was roundly criticized, not just in the Russian press, but also in the Ukrainian media.¹⁰⁶ No one appreciated that for the government it was a question of reconciling the irreconcilable Maidan on the one side, the Rada on the other. The Maidan supporters, more idealistic, wanted to project themselves, *hic et nunc*, into a future which was clean and free from all corruption. The Rada, more realistic, did not want the heritage of the past to be wiped out in three months. Yatsenyuk succeeded in finding the balance. The only disastrous appointment was that of Ihor Teniokh as Minister of Defense. When he was selected there had been no plan to wage war with Russia within three days. He resigned after a month when he discovered, to his horror, that many of his aides were in fact infiltrated agents of the Russian Secret Services. But more important, few observers had noticed that, with Yatsenyuk, a new generation had acceded to public office. To illustrate this we will

106. <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/katya-gorchinskaya-the-not-so-revolutionary-new-ukrainian-government-337768.html>

mention three of them: a member of the government, a deputy and the governor of a bank.

Yatsenyuk was not the only Ukrainian who could not see clearly when considering the language question. The same applied to three of his close advisers: Serhyi Kvit, Lesya Orobets and Andriy Pyshny. All three came from the West of the country and were hostile to the Kolesnichenko Law on languages before November 2013. But all three softened their position after Maidan. What changed things was the Revolution of Dignity. During this revolution, the Russian-speaking regions gave no support to the government of ex-President Yanukovich. The only demonstration organized in Kiev during the month of January in support of it was a heterogeneous assembly of miners and mercenaries (titushkis). It only lasted a few hours. The Western Ukrainians understood that they formed a single nation with the Ukrainians of the East not in spite of their linguistic differences but rather thanks to the richness of the contributions of all regions and cultures. This is what Yatsenyuk explicitly told the inhabitants of Donbass when he visited them in April. But on 23 February, everything was still too recent to be able to calmly analyze the situation. I had occasion to talk with these three close councilors of Yatsenyuk after and during the Revolution of Dignity. All three struggled at Maidan for three months. All three took on new responsibilities after the victory of 22 February. Andriy Pyshny, born in 1974, became Chair of the Board of Directors of the country's principal bank, Ochadbank. Serhyi Kvit, born in 1965, became Minister of Education. Lesya Orobets, born in 1982, is a deputy and a candidate for mayor of

Kiev in the municipal elections. They represent three different facets of the Revolution of Dignity. But they also belong to the same new Ukrainian generation of the Revolution of Dignity. I was struck by the points they had in common: a sense of liberty animated by a profound faith, an unflinching determination and courage, full awareness of the new battle to be fought – not against the Russian people but against the dictatorship of the Kremlin.

Lesya Orobets is a brave young woman. Her uncommon moral strength comes from her roots. She was born in Kiev and her parents were from the Western Ukraine. But one of her grandmothers, born in 1928, comes from Eastern Ukraine and suffered from the Holodomor, the great famine of 1932-1933. According to Nicolas Werth, Research Director at CNRS, this famine was a genocide, deliberately planned by Stalin, against the Ukrainian people – as can be seen from the documents in the files of the KGB which were recently published.¹⁰⁷ Today, Russian officials, thinking that they are clearing themselves, claim that the whole of Southern Russia suffered from this inhumane policy. The fact that many regions bordering on Ukraine were also affected does not prevent this famine from being a crime especially aimed at the Ukrainian nation and knowingly decreed by the Kremlin. Moreover no one in the Russian government – which still affirms its juridical continuity with the Soviet State – has never apologized to Ukraine. Roman Serbyn, a Ukrainian-Canadian specialist on this subject, confirmed in November 2013 at the College of the Bernardins, documents in hand, that

107. Nicolas Werth, *La Terreur et le Désarroi. Staline et son système*, Perrin, collection Tempus, Paris, 2007, p.614.

in Ukraine alone more than 6 million people died during the Holodomor. Even the lowest estimates speak of 5 million victims. This means, according to Nicolas Werth, that “more than 20,000 people died each day for six months”. In 1932, Lesya’s great-grandfather managed to escape with his family and settled in Leningrad. “My grandmother’s earliest memory, when she was five years old, was begging for bread in the bars of Leningrad. My family sent packages of provisions for those who stayed behind. But when they returned to Eastern Ukraine, nobody was left. Everyone had died. The packages never arrived”. It is impossible not to draw a parallel between the fact that, each year, an entire nation relives the sufferings of its victims in the month of November, and the fact that the Revolutions of 2004 and 2013 were also in November. The whole moral consciousness of an important part of Ukraine and its diaspora is found in the memory of Communist brutality and the determination not to let it happen again.

Married and the mother of two daughters, Lesya spent nearly the whole winter at Maidan. She was at all the demonstrations, even at the most dangerous hours. The only concession she made to her husband was to walk around in a bullet-proof vest. A brilliant jurist who speaks perfect English and graduated from the Institute of International Relations at Kiev in 2005, she has worked for some large international firms such as Baker & MacKenzie. She became involved in politics when she was very young, What probably triggered it, she says, was the sudden death of her father in a car accident. The circumstances of this accident were never

clarified. But Victor Yushchenko, who was well aware of her father's good standing, invited her to work with him. She was elected deputy in September 2007 on the presidential list, Our Ukraine. Her first battle was to show that she was not just the daughter-of-her-father but that she had competencies useful to the nation. While in this post she succeeded in amending a number of laws which were poorly redacted – or even falsified. She also took on the corrupt deputies, “A tuchka is a deputy who sells himself to the highest bidder. In Kiev, you can buy a deputy for \$500,000.”

Little by little, she linked up with Yatsenyuk. When her mentor, Viktor Baloga, went to work for Yanukovich, she left *Nasha Ukraina*. She joined the Front for Changes Party in 2010 and, when Yatsenyuk chose to reunite with Yulia Tymoshenko's orphaned party, she became a member of the *Batkyvshyna* Party. She was re-elected deputy in October 2012. She then proceeded to fight unceasingly against all of Yanukovich's attempts to pass Russian laws in Ukraine. These concerned matters such as limiting the right to demonstrate, laws supported by the tobacco lobby and passing a bill of the Minister of Education, Dmytro Tabachnyk, on higher education which would have concentrated all power into the hands of a few large universities. She founded the Global Organization of Members of Parliament against Corruption. What keeps her going, she says, is her Christian faith and hunger for justice. She is a great admirer of Cardinal Husar and has published a DVD with his talks.¹⁰⁸ On

108. The book of interviews I did with him exists in English. Arjakovsky, *Conversations with Lubomyr Cardinal Husar, Towards a Post-Confessional Christianity*, Lviv, UCU Press, IES, 2007.

the language question, Lesya Orobets “has learned to become flexible”. “You have to take the personality of each person into consideration. This is one of the principal values of democracy”. For example, she proposes that a student take the entrance exam to the university in Russian if the candidate is not proficient in Ukrainian. But, following the model used in Georgia, she suggests “giving an incentive to take the exam in Ukrainian by increasing the chances of getting a scholarship”. She lambasts the Party of the Regions “which has no concept of bilingualism since it only proposes to push for Russian everywhere possible”.

Lesya is considered as one of the 20 most influential women in Ukraine. After the victory against Yanukovich in February, she started campaigning as candidate for mayor of Kiev. On 30 March she left the Batkivshyna Party to present herself as an independent to the citizens of Kiev in the elections to be held on 25 May next. This new challenge seems overambitious for a young 32 years-old woman. These elections should have taken place several years ago, but they have been repeatedly postponed. The preceding mayor, Leonid Chernovetskyi, had set up networks of corruption which still operate. There are many who want the mayor to be appointed by the Municipal Council and not elected. Moreover, her principal rival is none other than Vitali Klitschko who, two months ago, was considered by many observers to be the next president of Ukraine. Klitschko withdrew from the presidential race in favour of Petro Poroshenko, in order to have a better chance of becoming mayor of Kiev. But nothing and no one can daunt

the young lady, and certainly not Vladimir Putin. After having faced up to Yanukovych for ten years, she understands that the coming years will now be spent challenging the dictator of the Kremlin. In her Facebook she writes: “Putin is getting ready to play on fear to attain his ultimate goal in this drama – the annexation of Ukraine”. But the young woman says she is ready.

Andriy Pyshny is another face of the new Ukraine – this time in the realm of business and finance. A long-time friend of Arseniy Yatsenyuk, he is, like him, part of the first cohort of law students to receive diplomas from the University of Chernivtsi. He also graduated from the Ukrainian Banking Academy, has followed the career of Yatsenyuk and has always been his closest adviser. He moved to Kiev two years after Arseniy. In 2000 he became a legal adviser at Ochad-bank, the largest bank in the country, and moved up the ladder. In 2007, at the recommendation of Yatsenyuk, Yushchenko summoned him to work in the National Committee for Security and Defense. He soon became its Secretary and worked on a number of issues relating to economic and financial security and even social questions. But when Raissa Bogatyriova took charge of this body, he resigned, feeling that she was too close to Yanukovych. With his friend Yatsenyuk, he founded the Front for Change in 2008 because he understood that the older generation of politicians was incapable of changing the political, social and economic situation in Ukraine. He did not want young people to leave the country because they could not find work in Ukraine. He also understood

that a State that subsidizes 43% of the family budget through social benefits, could not last very long under the new conditions of the global world. It was at this moment that he had health problems and suffered partial loss of hearing. This was a major blow for a music lover and fan of contemporary music such as that of Okean Elsa and Dire Straits. But his determination did not weaken. He learned how to read the lips of his interlocutors and use a hearing aid. He followed Yatsenyuk in his struggle to liberate Yulia Tymoshenko and became the Deputy Director of the Batkivshyna Party. His leitmotif was to point out that the government of Yanukovich was illegal since it had duped the nation by changing the Constitution to serve its own ends: “As soon as possible”, he told me in May 2012, “a procedure must be initiated to strip the president of his powers and, above all, to put him on trial for his criminal behavior”. In October 2012, after he had become a deputy, he was given, thanks to a proposal by Yatsenyuk, the strategic post of First Deputy on the Parliamentary Committee for Rules and Regulations of the Rada.

In the course of the Ukrainian Revolution of 2013-2014, Pyshny defended in the courts those activists of Maidan who had been arrested by the police. He regularly accepted invitations of the media such as 5 Kanal and Hromadske TV and gave accurate information, squashed false rumours and called for the people to mobilize. He also published regularly in his blog on *Ukrainska Pravda*. On 21 February 2014, he wrote a powerful article, “One of the Most Important Days of My Life”¹⁰⁹

109. <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/pyshny/5307161c136a3/>

on the decision taken by the deputies the day before to halt the military operation against Maidan. Even though he was married and the father of two little girls, he was not afraid to confront the snipers. On 21 February his first act, as leader of the Batkyvshyna Party was to pass a law in the Rada providing for a pension fund for the victims of the massacre of 19-20 February.¹¹⁰ On 7 March, after the invasion of Crimea, he published a new article, this time to announce “The Bankruptcy of Putin”.¹¹¹ He began by noting that Konstantinov, the new Head of Crimea, on whom Putin was depending, owed more than 1 billion grivnas to Ukreximbank. He then added: “It is not difficult to understand that there is not the least trace of Russian patriotism in what is happening. The idea of Eurasian integration plays no role here. The criminal cannot be a patriot because he is robbing his fellow citizens. Those who think that they are going to return to the USSR with ice cream at 20 kopecks and sausage at 2.8 roubles are seriously deceiving themselves. It is only a question of a banal robbery and a division of the spoils”.

At the end of February certain Western media were taken by surprised by the course of events and not having a single permanent reporter at the scene (in 2013 there was just one French journalist in all of Ukraine who had a permanent residence at Kiev!). The Western media therefore blindly repeated – without critical assessment - the allegations of the Russian press concerning the “neo-Fascist nature of the government”. To take just one example; the excellent specialist on Ukraine, Dominique Arel, noted that the

110. <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/pyshny/5307a28ff11550/>

111. <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/pyshny/5319a83cbl200/>

new Minister of Education, Serhyi Kvit was a former member of extreme-right groups today affiliated with Pravy Sektor. It was also said that he was an “extremist of Svoboda”. In reality, Serhyi Kvit never belonged to any party. He was trained as a philosopher and specialized in the works of Paul Ricoeur and Hans-Georg Gadamer. I had the opportunity to meet him after his appointment as minister. He told me that he had refused a first offer from Arseniy Yatsenyuk because he had numerous responsibilities as President of the Mohyla Academy. But Yatsenyuk explained that his government had to have a quota of members nominated by Maidan. It was then that he accepted the offer— in memory of the three months he had spent alongside those hundreds of thousands of people ready to sacrifice their lives in the name of truth and justice. To treat such a courageous and upright person, the author of a brilliant book entitled *Hermeneutic of Style*, as a neo-Fascist is either pure ignorance or pure propaganda. But Kvit is a man of convictions and does not hesitate to commit himself to the independence of his country. He comes from Western Ukraine, from Uzhorod. Among his family are several Greek Catholic priests and he received his moral education from the example of this Church of the Catacombs. A Doctor in philosophy from the Chevchenko University of Kiev, he has participated in three national Ukrainian revolutions. In 1989-1990, when he was still a young student, in 2004-2005, when he was directing a new center for journalism which he had founded at Mohyla Academy, and finally in 2013-2014, while he was President of this institution. “For me”, he confided, “it was quite

natural to protest in Maidan Square on 21 November. The most difficult part was that, as President of the Mohyla Academy, I authorized my students to demonstrate, which was a huge responsibility. From 16 January on, when we had completely entered into opposition to the government, I was especially afraid that the worst would happen to my students. In the end only one was seriously wounded by a bullet in his stomach. But he received medical attention at Kiev and then in Poland and he's over it now."

Serhyi Kvit is another person who does not mince his words when he speaks about Russia. In an article entitled "No More Dialogue With an Empty Chair", published on 24 April, he states that the Ukrainian government cannot discuss things with the Kremlin, because Putin is incapable of dialogue. "He is simply thirsty for power and violence at the most rudimentary level. In this respect he is totally faithful to Stalin, who loved referenda because 'what counts is not who votes, but who counts the votes'". Kvit does not believe that it makes any sense to organize a referendum in Ukraine today, because Putin only knows the language of force. Serhyi Kvit has done a lot of thinking on the words of Yuri Afanasyev, the famous Russian historian he invited to Kiev. According to the latter, the Russian opposition has no impact on reality for it believes in democracy while the system has remained entirely autocratic. "The only person, whose opposition to the regime has had any effect, is Alexei Navalny, who has understood this fact". Kvit also mentions Zinaida Gippius, a poet of Russian immigration in France, who was one of the first

to understand that Russia should finally leave behind its Asiatic logic. “The idol of unlimited power” says Kvit, “is a heritage of the Mongolian whip”. Kvit is perfectly aware that Putin is more afraid of the new Ukrainian government than he is of NATO or the United States. “For Russian autocracy, Euromaidan has become the most visible menace of the ‘virus’ of Ukrainian liberty.”

Because the government to which he belongs has put into place a system of government which is based on the sovereignty of the people and not on the all-powerfulness of a single person. The Ukrainian Minister of Education does not hesitate to compare the “sovereign democracy” of Putin to the National Socialist regime of Hitler. “What must be destroyed”, says Kvit, “is not only Putin’s power. It is, on the one hand, the system inherited from the Tsars and theorized in the epoch of Nikolai I by the formula ‘Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Populism (narodnost)’,” and, on the other, the political culture of a majority of the Russian population which has a primitive, mythological vision of reality.” Kvit went on to say, with regret, “Today the Russians are animated by an aggressive search for a scapegoat”. On the occasion of a recent conference on dialogue at Brussels, during which diplomats of all stripes tried to convince him to speak to Russian officials, Kvit said: “Is dialogue necessary? Of course it is. But it should be a dialogue among persons who sincerely hope that it will have some results. I’d like to mention here the great European tradition of philosophical hermeneutics which extends from St. Augustine to Gadamer and Ricoeur, where there is in-

sistence on the personal involvement and the sense of responsibility of all the participants. It is this type of rich conversation which gives us the opportunity to find something new, something which did not exist at the beginning of the discussion and which is both the solution and the truth.” Kvit thus refuses any dialogue with the power in place in Russia.

On the other hand, Kvit calls for dialogue with the intellectuals who are still free in Russia and capable of desacralizing the “empty space” of the throne. “The Ukrainian side will be represented by the generation of the victorious Euromaidan which is founded on the idea of diversity.”¹¹²In Kiev, at the end of April, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, a former oligarch imprisoned for ten years by Putin, took up this idea. He organized a vast colloquium at Kiev with the Ukrainian intelligentsia of the Revolution of Dignity. The Ukrainian side was represented by eminent figures such as the philosopher Constantin Sigov, the Director of the Center for European Studies of the Mohyla Academy and Andrey Kurkov, the famous Russian-speaking writer. The Russian side was represented by more than 150 people, including the writer Lyudmila Ulitskaya, organizer of a pro-Maidan Congress in Russia, and Boris Nemtsov, one of Putin’s most lucid opponents.

A Hundred Days for a Hundred Reforms

Let us briefly present the program of Arseniy Yatsenyuk’s government. It would be difficult to imagine

112. <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/serhiy-kvit-no-dialogue-with-the-empty-place-345024.html>

a more catastrophic beginning for the new government. For not only was Ukraine attacked by Russia from the first day the new government began to function, but the government also found itself under immediate pressure from the crowds assembled at Maidan. Those gathered at Maidan, still enraged by the massacre of 19-20 February, had little confidence in politicians – a bit like the sans-culottes of the French Revolution. When Yatsenyuk presented his government to the crowd at Maidan, the minister most heckled was Arseniy Avakov, the new Minister of the Interior. This was not because of his incompetence but because he represented a ministry which had been shamed and distorted by his predecessor, V. Zakharchenko. On several occasions, members of Pravy Sektor stormed Parliament demanding the immediate resignation of the Minister of the Interior. Yatsenyuk and Avakov stood firm. But the Ukrainian journalists were critical of the new government. In a fiery article published in *Ukrainska Pravda*, the newspaper which was supposed to have been supporting the Revolution of Dignity, Serhi Liamets and Viktoriia Podolianets denounced the absence of a coherent program from Yatsenyuk's government. They even vented their rage on all politicians. For them, "the government does not take any responsibility for the reforms. If something doesn't work, Yatsenyuk will only throw up his hands and hand over the dossier to a different bureaucrat."¹¹³

113. V. Podolianets, S. Liamets, "Storokivkoudis", *Ukrainska Pravda*, 3/26/2014.

In spite of the surrounding hostility, within six weeks Yatsenyuk succeeded in obtaining the financial support of the European Union, the United States and several other countries such as Canada and Japan, and above all, of the World Bank and the IMF. All in all, \$25 billion dollars had been secured in two months. Not content with receiving support which had been refused to his predecessor, Yatsenyuk, less than a month after taking office, signed the political chapter of the treaty of association with the European Union. This took place at Brussels on 21 March alongside Herman van Rompuy and Jose Manuel Barroso. This also put an end to the wave of anger which had swelled up throughout the country after Mykola Azarov had refused to sign the treaty on 21 November. It is true that the chapters which were signed are essentially symbolic. But they provided for the future abolition, as of 2014, of visas for Ukrainians who travel within the European Union. The Commission offered emergency aid of one billion euros to Ukraine. Finally, the Commission decided to lower, from the month of May, the duties on imports from Ukraine without awaiting the establishment of a trade free zone – a measure which allows Ukraine to save half a billion euros in 2014. Moreover the Commission provided for the signing of the second chapter after the presidential elections in Ukraine. The European diplomats want a legitimate government, capable of making people accept painful reforms.¹¹⁴

114. http://www.lemonde.fr/europe/article/2014/03/21/l-ukraine-a-signe-un-accord-d-association-avec-l-ue_4386643_3214.html

Although the international financial authorities have agreed to support Ukraine, it is on condition that the State undertakes ambitious reforms, such as a hike in the price of gas, an increase in the age of retirement and the privatization of certain public coal mines. But far from worrying Yatsenyuk, this corresponds exactly with his own program of reforms. Moreover, from the first days of his appointment by the Rada, he asked it to approve his “program of 100 days” which includes 100 ambitious reforms. One of his first concerns was to organize fair and transparent elections for 25 May, 2014. He made this his personal responsibility. His reforms are sometimes painful, like the one adopted on 30 April, which makes military service obligatory for young men between the ages of 18-25.¹¹⁵ When he presented his government at Maidan, Yatsenyuk even warned public opinion that this was a “government of Kamikazes”, ready to make itself unpopular. Moreover Yatsenyuk, immediately announced that he would not be a candidate in the presidential elections. But the Prime Minister relies completely on the support he has in the Rada. The present Parliament is composed of five groups. His party, *Batkivshchyna*, has 88 deputies, the party of Vitali Klitschko (*UDAR* - United Democratic Alliance for Reform) – has 42. The *Svoboda* Party, led by Oleg Tyahnybok, has 33. An important number of deputies in the Party of the Regions, now led by the deputy and former governor of Luhansk, Olexandr Yefremov, have left, so it now only has 127 deputies. Anatoliy Kinakh coordinates

115. In 2012, the Azarov government had the Rada approve the professionalization of the army.

33 deputies and Serhyi Tihipko has influence over 51. The former and present members of the Party of the Regions need the forgiveness of the population for many things and thus have a tendency to support Yatsenyuk, especially when he defends their initial ideas on decentralization. The only radical and irreconcilable opposition comes from the Communist Party (32 deputies) and 40 other non-affiliated deputies.

When you listen to Yatsenyuk, you are impressed by his detailed knowledge of the issues. On the question of the reform of the energy sector, which involves 12 measures of his program, the Ukrainian Prime Minister is not short of solutions.

“My solution today is to liquidate Naftogas and sign a new accord with Russia. We must also reduce our consumption. Our consumption is 52 billion cubic meters, or three times that of Poland. But Poland’s GDP is three times more than ours! We have important reserves of natural gas at Soumy and at Kharkiv. We must also invest in the co-generating installations of our metallurgic industry to reduce gas consumption and to produce less CO₂. I’m a firm believer in the future of liquefied natural gas. It could be shipped from Turkey at the price of \$220. We must simply invest in terminals (a terminal costs \$1.5 billion) instead of subsidizing the Russian economy. In 2011 we paid \$7 billion dollars to Russia – which is the equivalent of 5 terminals. But Yanukovych preferred to busy himself with his own affairs. He had a stadium built in Kiev for \$1 billion dollars when it should have cost \$300 million. Thus \$700 million dollars went

into his pocket and into the pockets of those in his network. Most important I propose to construct new units for our nuclear power stations. Right now 50% of the Ukrainian electrical energy is nuclear. We must just prohibit the privatization of nuclear power stations as they have done in Japan.”

Moreover, the government announced in March that it would study the subsidies to the mining industry of Donbass on a case by case basis. The challenge is to exploit these coal reserves in periods when there is a crisis in the supply of gas, but without continuing to subsidize the ghost companies of the Yanukovich family and the oligarch of Donbass, Rinat Akhmetov who is very close to the Kremlin. Yatsenyuk knows that no region can do without contributions from the State. He has no fear that the regions will become economically independent. That is why, since 2008, the guiding measure of his government program has been decentralization: “My goal is to make the voters feel responsible for the deputies they have elected and that the politicians feel accountable to those who elected them. We must boost the sense of civic responsibility and of political awareness. At the moment on a State level, to avoid either federalizations or fragmentation, this system is being held together by the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the Minister of Interior and the budgetary policy. It is a policy of checks and balances. We will recognize the autonomy of regional development but demand respect for a common law.” We are far from a Bosnian model of federation –as the officials of the Kremlin would like

to see – i.e. a system which would concede a quasi independence to the regions. After an umpteenth public declaration by Sergey Lavrov “intended to be of help to Ukraine” on the need for federalization of the country, Arseniy Yatsenyuk fired back by suggesting to the Russian Minister that they begin by federalizing their own country. The Duma had in fact, at the beginning of April, voted on a law which would do away with municipal elections in large cities. According to Putin, power should henceforth be strictly vertical.

In his hundred day program, the Prime Minister prioritised “the formation of a business-friendly climate”. In particular, this program promised for March 2014, in accord with the National Bank, a “liberalization of the system of control and regulation of currency” in order to boost exports. He proposed a number of laws intended to integrate the norms of the European Union. But Yatsenyuk was aware that he would be judged above all on his ability to halt corruption in Ukraine. Azarov had done his best to avoid implementing earlier laws to put an end to corruption. From February, Yatsenyuk established an “Anti-Corruption Bureau”. The first decisions of the government were to annul the savage privatizations of State-owned companies carried out by the Yanukovych clan during the preceding period. In addition, on 24 March, he passed a law in the Rada which required transparency in all State invitations to tender and all of its spending activities. Yatsenyuk hoped that in this way he would be able to reduce corruption which is estimated by the SBU to be 15% of the State

budget or about 50 billion grivnas/an (\$6.25 billion dollars).

The 44th reform in the government's program provided for the total independence of judges from the executive power "and notably from the President of the Republic". Although Yatsenyuk is hostile to the Constitutional Court, which proved to be totally ineffective under Yanukovych, he nevertheless wants to reinforce the status of Ukraine's High Court. He also proposed a law which would "de-politicize the office of Public Ministry". To these internal measures, the Prime Minister added lawsuits against the previous government. Stepan Kubiv, the new Governor of the National Bank, is a deputy who was able to regroup the opposition around Yatsenyuk in 2012 to obtain the support of the international financial community. He was sent to London. Both Kubiv and Yatsenyuk wanted to recover a part of the financial assets stolen by the previous government and which had now vanished between Switzerland and the Caribbean. The Ukrainian press estimates these sums to be several hundreds of billions of dollars. The Prime Minister also made symbolic gestures. On his first trip to Brussels he bought a second class ticket. This move was very well received by public opinion which, these last few years, was more accustomed to seeing its president construct a private landing pad in the center of Kiev for his personal helicopter.

As for fiscal reform, Arseniy Yatsenyuk is not lacking ideas here either. In order to pass his reforms, he addressed the Rada, in a speech delivered on 27 March. He said the country was on the verge of de-

faulting its payments, that Yanukovych had stolen more than \$100 billion for his personal account, that Ukraine's GDP was going to drop 3% in 2014, and that extraordinary measures must be taken as soon as possible. He envisaged reducing the number of taxes from several dozen to just eight. This would allow him to get rid of a certain number of auditing bodies. He abolished a number of "invisible taxes". He guaranteed the agricultural lobby that it would no longer have to provide quality control certification on their harvests. In month April he had a law passed to modify the Land Law in order to facilitate the creation of businesses. For example solicitors would be allowed direct access to the State property registers. He increased the VAT and the taxes on alcohol and cigarettes. He proposed a new division of fiscal responsibility between the Central State (revenue taxes) and the regions (taxes on landed property). Yatsenyuk is also favourable to the Polish model of a philanthropic tax system whereby a citizen can direct a part of his taxes (2%) towards associations, NGOs or churches.

Finally, Yatsenyuk supports the principle of granting Ukrainian universities autonomous status. These include: the Mohyla Academy, the Catholic University of Ukraine, the National University Ivan Franko of Lviv and the enormous Polytechnic University of Kiev. On 8 April the Rada voted on the first reading of the bill on higher education prepared by S. Kvit, the Minister of Education, with the help of Lilia Hrynevych, a deputy close to Yatsenyuk. This law proposes to restore the agency in charge of evaluating the students for university admission. This agency had been tried

successfully in 2008 by Yulia Tymoshenko's Minister of Education, M. Vakarchuk. But two years later, Yanukovich's pro-Russian Minister of Education of, V. Tabachnyk, re-established the old corrupt system which allowed for bypassing tests or adding other admission requirements for university entry.

The law also created a national agency for quality monitoring of universities. Its objective is to stress the quality of the education in terms of the competencies given to students, rather than respect for epistemological norms which, moreover, are often dictated by ideology or power. At present in Ukraine only 30% of engineers in technology can be immediately employed by the labor market. These minorities are often brilliant and sought after everywhere in the world, but the rest are destined for unemployment or retraining. Moreover, the law gives equivalent rights to the universities whatever their status, number of students and properties. Above all the new law gives more possibilities for universities to have their master and doctoral programs accredited. Certainly, this law does not solve all the problems. To validate new diplomas, the universities still have to pass through a real bureaucratic labyrinth that lasts several years. They still have to obtain a license before receiving accreditation. A system which dates from the time of Stalin cannot be changed overnight. Taras Dobko, Vice-Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, regrets this situation. He believes the Minister of Education does not realize that "a reality on paper is being swapped for a real education".¹¹⁶But he is aware that

116.http://zik.ua/ua/analytics/2014/04/28/ekspert_gotove_na_dokorinnu_zminu_pravyl_gry_u_vyshchiiy_osviti_483198

this law is a first step in the right direction. Moreover, Yatsenyuk has other projects of law ready for May. He wants to promote the creation of private schools in Ukraine, give more autonomy to secondary schools, give regions authority over establishments of technical education, and give universities authorization to publish their own textbooks.

It is too soon to assess the effectiveness of the reforms of the Yatsenyuk government. What is certain is that never since 1991 has a government proposed such ambitious reforms within three months nor gone so far in the “desovietization” of the functioning of the State. In the chapter on international relations of his “Hundred Day Program”, Yatsenyuk laconically proposes to begin, as of February 2014, the following reform: “Renew a dialogue at all levels with the Russian Federation and reopen the work of the Mixed Commission of Dialogue”. He was unaware that President Putin had already given some thought to the matter...



Chapter 7

The Flaws In The Mythology of The Kremlin

As I write these lines on this Friday 2 May 2014, the television channels are showing the torn-apart bodies of around 60 inhabitants of Odessa. As the images reveal there are victims on both sides, of a series of provocations by pro-Russian separatists, aided and armed by the Secret Services of the Russian Army. It also seems that the police of Odessa had been paid off to let this drama happen. The chief of police was immediately dismissed. Before Putin declared war on Ukraine, such scenes were unheard of in this country.

Questions must be asked about this return to war in Europe. It is imperative to understand properly the paradox of the Russian state “which always wanted to do the best it could and could only do what it has always done”, in the famous words of Viktor Chernomyrdin, the former Prime minister of Yeltsin and the Russian ambassador to Ukraine. At the same time, questions must be asked about the short sightedness of Western leaders towards Russia over the last fifteen

years. I had the privilege of working in Russia and Ukraine between 1989 and 2011. Any honest observer could see that since 1994 (the first war in Chechnya) Russia was starting to abandon any attempt to be a democratic nation state. It was equally clear that, once he came to power in 1999, Vladimir Putin, the former KGB agent, wanted to restore soviet power autocratically (with the second war in Chechnya). You only need to read Anna Politkovskaia to understand that external aggression went hand in hand with a systematic internal search for a scapegoat:

“The ‘verticality of power’ is a system of state control in which all those who might think differently from their superiors have been taken out of leadership posts. The administration of President Putin who in practice rules the country, has given a name to this state of affairs: *Nachi*, the ‘ours’ (the name of a national youth organization under Putin). The ‘ours’ are those who are with us. Those who are not with us, are enemies. The overwhelming majority of the Russian media merely describe this dualism: how good the ‘ours’ are and how repugnant the enemy is.¹¹⁷

During the 2004 Orange Revolution, nobody of good faith could doubt any longer that Russia was doing all that it could to prevent the victory of the pro-Ukrainian democratic camp in Kiev. For my part, I wrote an article on “The Intellectual and Spiritual

117. A. Politkovskaia, *Qu’ai-je fait?*, Paris, Gallimard, 2009, p.16.

Foundations of the Contemporary Russian State” in 2008, just prior to the invasion of Georgia. I tried to explain the reasons for the deterioration in the relations between Russia and its neighbours, and the myopia of the Western elites.¹¹⁸ Today, I would have liked to give more depth to this analysis in the light of the excellent book by Marie Mendras, *Russia, Power Upside Down*¹¹⁹, as well as the new open war being waged by Russia on Ukraine, since 28 February 2014.

Marie Mendras is one of the rare specialists in Russia to have understood the need for a mythological analysis of the Russian regime. In her book, she argues brilliantly, and with conviction that the misfortune of the Russians is to believe in “the myth of the strong State”. She writes: “The Russian concept a state is inextricably linked to the history of the imperial project and autocracy, and to the history of the Soviets and Stalinism. Today, a century after the end of the Tsars and more than a half century after the death of Stalin, there is an idea widely held in Russia and in Europe which affirms the natural and inevitable correlation between an authoritarian regime and immensity of territory”.¹²⁰ Maria Mendras is right

118. A. Arjakovsky, “Les fondements intellectuels et spirituels de l’Etat russe contemporain”, conference given 8/27/2008 at the colloquium of reconciliation of La Salette, published in the acts of the conference and reprinted in *En attendant le concile de l’Église Orthodoxe*, Paris, Cerf, 2011.

119. Maria Mendras, *Russie, l’envers du pouvoir*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2008.

120. *Ibid*, p.38.

when she points out the mythical dimension of this belief and the substratum of “Russian identity” which legitimates it.¹²¹ Indeed, even though the European Union is not strictly speaking a State and even though its weaknesses and bureaucracy can be criticized, the state based on rights, democracy and the search for peace is not the exclusive preserve of micro- states like Switzerland. Marie Mendras is also right when she details all the consequences of this belief in a legitimate personal power to create “the verticality of power” and to use absolute violence. She describes with a great deal of intelligence and skill: the manipulation of history on the basis of uncertain memories, with, notably, the non-critical transformation of the “ Rus’ ” into “ Rossija ”; the setting up of a Mafioso system of government which separates the “ours” and “the one left over”; the construction of a society of mistrust and of the figure of the chief, as savior of the nation; the permanent struggle forward by the supreme Sovereign who must fight against his enemies both internal and external.

I would like to add to this analysis by starting with an unresolved question. How is it that Putin, who said himself that his country is declining regards both demographics and corruption, is unable to see the real reasons for the failure of the “Russian system”? Surely this blindness is linked to the very foundations of the “belief” in the myth of the strong State – a myth inherited though a misinterpretation of Russian history. And what should we make of the paradox of more than a hundred million Russians, from a great

121. M. Mendras, *op. cit.*, p.315.

and educated European nation, clinging to a regime which has become neo-totalitarian? I would be more nuanced than Marie Mendras as regards the “intellectual laziness of the elites”, which is her explanation for the cobbling together of a specifically “Russian idea” in an age of globalization. Personally, I think that there is, indeed, a “Russian myth” simply because the history of Russia differs from that of all other countries. Moreover, as a whole series of intellectuals have shown, such as Vladimir Solovyov and Nikolai Berdyaev, Russian thinking is really organized differently from French thinking or German thinking without, however, losing its universality. Finally, the imagination of peoples cannot be reduced to the level of a global consciousness, even though it is true that there are universal principles of humanity and life in society.

My thesis is that the fault lies in a lack of mythological reflection and specifically an absence of theological-political reflection. Since Descartes, there is too much of a tendency in France to consider myth as the inevitable result of faulty thinking, and to underestimate the mythological dimension of all truly authentic thought. It is because Western elites do not recognize the reality of this Russian myth that they often have trouble understanding Putin and are not taken seriously by the Russian elites. Putin enjoys real success because he affirms that Russia does not recognize itself in the evolution of globalization. Because Western elites do not allow Russian elites to use such a mythological language, the latter withdraw into themselves. They therefore become even more entrenched in a mythical thought which is non-critical and non-

mytho-logical. Since March, certain Western political personalities such as Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Barack Obama have finally opened their eyes to the personality of Vladimir Putin and the vices of the Russian regime. But will they succeed in convincing their elites and public opinion back home? It makes sense to try to examine once again the mythological consciousness of the Russians, so as to show the impossibility of the scenario of a Great Russia. After that I will return to an analysis of recent events in Crimea and Southeast Ukraine.

Just before I present my analysis, I want to reiterate my great admiration for Russian civilization, for the poetry of Alexander Pushkin and Boris Pasternak, for *The Way of a Russian Pilgrim* and for *One Day in the Life of Ivan Dennisovitch*. But I cannot consider the present Russian State, nor the patriarchate of Moscow which is the institutional face of the Russian Church, as legitimate expressions of this Russian civilization. The 'State of the Rus', which Putin's Russia claims to be heir to, in spite of its historical limits, was initially founded, as George Fedotov attests, on the non-violence of the holy Princes Boris and Gleb.¹²² Moreover the Russian Church has never, at any time in its history, legitimated the invasion of a foreign country as do today Patriarch Kirill Gundyayev, Metropolitan Hilarion, in charge of the patriarchate's foreign relations, and Father Vsevolod Chaplin, the first assistant of the patriarch and responsible for Church – State relations.¹²³ I will prob-

122.G. Fedotov, *Svyatye drevniei Roussi*, Paris, YMCA Press, 1931.

123.http://www.religion.in.ua/news/ukrainian_news/25069-glava-ovco-mp-schitaet-chto-mirotvorcheskoe-vtorzhenie-rossijskix-

ably be accused of “partiality” or “subjectivity”. But my proposals give me the opportunity to stress that my criticism is not anti-Russian – quite the reverse. My ideas are based on a theological-political analysis presented below and I am ready to defend their scientific rigour. I might add that I have also met the above-mentioned three men on different occasions. I have been able to observe them from up close and no one of them wants to start a third world war. Finally, I invite those who might be troubled by such an introduction to remember that Kantian philosophy, which impregnates today’s universities, is based precisely on the criticism of its premises – but these have to be recognized.

A Sovereign Democracy

As I wrote in 2008, the new Russian ideology which tries to legitimate the suppression of individual liberties in Russia, to counter NATO’s advance towards the East and permit the creation of a Eurasian Union in 2015, is based on three principles: sovereign democracy, the civilizational unity of Eurasia and the Orthodox coherence of the “Russian world”. In 2013 I wrote an in-depth critique of this ideology in two books: *For a Personalist Democracy?*¹²⁴ and *What is Orthodoxy?*¹²⁵

vojsk - ukrainu-budet-garantirovat-ukraincam-tesnye-otnosheniya-s-drugimi-narodami-istoricheskoy-rusi.html

124. A. Arjakovsky, *Pour une démocratie personaliste*, Paris, Lethielleux, Collège des Bernardins, 2013.

125. A. Arjakovsky, *Qu’est-ce que l’orthodoxie?*, Paris, Gallimard, 2013.

To sum up in a few lines my main argument. This Eurasian ideology came into being in Russia during the 1990s in the face of a growing awareness of the danger facing the Russian state, after the collapse of the Communist ideology. It no longer had any spiritual and intellectual foundation which could legitimate its power. Little by little, in an uncoordinated sort of way, the regime made a first attempt to elaborate a new ideology, that of the first Russian émigrés of the 1920s. In the 1990s, Russian society shared the idea that the Russian émigrés were right in opposing the Bolshevik regime. It was with great respect that, in 1994, society welcomed Alexander Solzhenitsyn whose whole anti-Communist thinking – outside of his own experience of the Gulag – was constructed on the work of the great figures of the Russian emigration, such as Ivan Iljine and Nikolai Berdyaev. Vladimir Putin even succeeded in being received by Solzhenitsyn and made it known. But Russian society did not know how to untangle the treads of history and memory of this emigration. It took it as a block and merrily mixed together authors who were in profound disagreement with one another. The Russian emigration itself had built up its own mythology of a heroic generation which knew how to stand firm against the regime of the Soviets, and maintain the purity of the authentic Holy Russia of the Tsarist period. Even when a more critical elite within this emigration was able to criticize Communism as well as the Tsarist Monarchy in the 1990s, the heirs of this brilliant generation of the Golden Age had a great deal of difficulty in coming up with different currents of the School of Paris and the resources that it could

bring to the new Russia.¹²⁶ For my doctoral dissertation which I defended in Paris in 2000, I wrote on the history of the School of Paris. Later I showed that the ideologue of the Kremlin, Vladislav Surkov, who is wrongly said to have been removed from Putin's inner circle of advisers, based himself on the debates of the Russian émigrés during the 1930s. But he only retained the opinions of Ivan Iljine and not those of Nikolai Berdyaev. This latter was, however, opposed to Iljine and got the better of him in an intellectual joust in 1926 – at least within the Russian Parisian emigration community. Ivan Iljine was a philosopher in the Hegelian tradition and proposed the creation of a strong State, founded on the legitimacy of the Church and the use of armed force against the Communist regime. Nikita Mikhalkov made a film on Iljine which was aired on Channel 1 of Russian Public Television. He developed from it a mythological theory of cruciform sovereignty based on the “verticality of power” and the “horizontality of society and culture.” Surkov, for his part, drew from it his ideology of sovereign democracy. He was opposed to the secularized Western vision of the State and proposed a “new balance” between human rights and the rights of public power. The new governance rests on three axioms: the quest for political cohesion through the centralization of State functions; the idealization of the goals of political struggle; and the personification of political institutions.

126. A. Arjakovsky, *The Way, Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration and Their Journal (1925-1940)*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2013.

In my different writings, I have demonstrated, on the basis of an initial criticism by Berdyaev that, from a theological-political point of view, this position was rooted in a fundamental error: it denigrates individual liberty. It only envisages freedom as a sacred gift from God which obliges the person to be in a situation of gratitude and, therefore, of service. But according to Berdyaev, man is a divine-human person, disposing of infinite liberty. He is therefore capable of questioning all forms of authority, even religious authority, if his freedom of conscience is not respected. Berdyaev has returned to the theological tradition of the Christian Church, especially as it was developed through the Greek Fathers and Russian philosophers. This tradition affirms that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God. As we know, not until 2000 did the Russian Church's social doctrine acknowledge the right of every citizen to oppose a totalitarian regime. Up until then, the most common doxa in the Church was to pray for those who govern, whoever they may be, "as the Apostle Paul himself recommends". But this moment of lucidity in the Russian Church did not last very long. In 2007-2008, the Russian Church approved a new "Declaration on the rights and dignity of men". The declaration recognized the reality of "human liberties" but in practice limited the expression of these liberties and opposed to them the notion of "human rights". As Kathy Rousselet has shown, when all is said and done, in this vision of human rights the defense of the State and the Motherland always trump the rights of the individual, the rights of persons and their dignity.

The Russian-Ukrainian theologian Cyril Hovorun, probably the most brilliant of his generation, has shown that this collapse of the official theology is rooted in a misunderstanding of the evangelical notion of liberty; there are, in fact, two liberties in the Gospels: liberty as service (“*elevtheria*”) and liberty as choice (“*antexousion*”). The great misfortune of modern theology is to have lost the antinomic concept of liberty of Christ’s first disciples. For St. Gregory of Nyssa, a Cappadocian Father of the Church who lived in the 4th century, the person has freedom of choice, a divine liberty, which comes to him from his very nature i.e. his uncreated image as attested by Scripture. But he also has a created, unrealised liberty which is entrusted to him to develop, in order to reach the end of a process of deification. The two liberties exist together and, at the same time, man has his own liberty and no one can take that from him. But by considering people as beings who sin, as “slaves and earthworms” according to the expression of Fyodor Tyutchev, the Church has managed to lose even the memory of this uncreated liberty. In the emigration community, Berdyaev was attacked from all sides – beginning with theologians such as Sergius Chetverikov and Georges Florovsky. The latter criticised his views on the infinite liberty of the person as scandalous. With the crisis of the fall of both ideologies communist socialism in 1989 and then liberal capitalism in 2007, it can be said that in fact the whole of modernity has suffered from having lost what the ancient Fathers of the Church considered the heart of Christian revelation: the double liberty

united in a single divine-human person. Socialism, at first religious with Saint Simon, then secularized by Marx, only retained the liberty of responsibility, the restless liberty, that which seeks to bring about, whatever the cost, the Kingdom of God on earth or a classless society. For its part, neo-liberalism, which was first religious with Adam Smith and Tocqueville, then bourgeois with Milton Friedman and Georges Soros, only retained the freedom of choice, the liberty of a confident retreat. This was until it was discovered with horror that the absolute transparency of the markets, which was supposed to permit the balance between supply and demand, was a devastating myth. The Russians experienced this myth of the Chicago School in the 1990s. Even though they remember the queues outside the stores in the 1980s, and even though the expression “chaos of the 1990s” was coined by the ideologists of the Kremlin to denounce the dramatic devaluation of the ruble after the neo-liberal experiment, no one and nothing can get the idea out of their head that the world is called to be a better place. Thus it is that, profiting from this disillusion with Western democracy, the contemporary Russian State has reconstituted itself against the universality of human rights. Rare are those who in Russia, Europe or the United States, listen to the ideas of Michel Camdessus or Jean-Baptiste de Foucauld calling for a Trinitarian redefinition of the economy or a spiritual and personalist interpretation of democracy.

The project of the Eurasian Union

The civilizational unity of Eurasia is another myth which Kremlin propaganda uses to legitimate the creation of an alternative project to the “liberal and secularized” European Union. Ukraine is not the only country to mistrust this project of Putin’s. Nursoultan Nazarbaïev, President of Kazakhstan and Alexander Lukashenko, President of Belarus, also show signs of reticence towards adopting such an ideology. This is because even if it has an element of truth, be it only geographical, it would again place Moscow centre stage in this Eurasian space.

This mythology has also been put together by brilliant intellectuals of the Russian emigration such as the linguist Nikolai Trubetskoy, the historian Georges Vernadsky and the theologian Georges Florovsky. It is based on phonology, on highlighting the “Turanian” elements of Russian culture, ever since the synthesis of the 13th to 16th centuries between Russians and Mongols. It is also based on the specificity of Byzantine as opposed to Latin Christianity. This mythology was rediscovered and revived at the beginning of the 1990s by scholars such as the ethnologist Lev Gumilev, the son of Anna Akhmatova, in whose honor the University of Eurasia was founded at Astana in Kazakhstan, and Nikita Mikhalkov (*Urga, The Barber of Siberia*). But political figures were also involved, such as General Alexandr Ruts koy and, today, close advisors to Putin like Alexander Dugin. The latter is known in France since he is French-speaking and because of his connections with the National Front and with the French pamphleteer Alain Soral. If he wants

a Eurasian Empire, it is because he detests the West and its “degenerate values”. In the opinion of Vincent Jauvert of *the Nouvel Observateur* who met him several times, Dugin is an “obsessed homophobe”, “Putin’s Rasputin” (“Le Raspoutine de Poutine”, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, May 3, 2014). He created the Izborski circle with Vladimir Medinski, the present Minister of Russian culture and Father Tikhon Shevkunov. He is also close to Dmitry Kiselyov, the patron of Russia Today.

It must be said that the first generation of Eurasians in the 1920s, regrouped around the University of Prague, were brilliant in another way. At first Berdyaev was very impressed by the part of truth in this post-Communist ideology, in so far as it had no nostalgic illusions about an eventual return to the epoch of the Tsars. He accepted the idea that the Russian nation had its specificity among other European countries and that this consisted in the mythical theme of “Holy Russia” and not in the imperial concept of Great Russia. For Berdyaev, this mythical theme of “Holy Russia” should be “christified” and not used with a view to conquer. But he was not suggesting that this “christification” meant a return to the regime of Christianity. Berdyaev was not understood. His first critics divided the movement into a left-leaning Eurasianism led by Sergey Efron (which led him to return to the USSR in 1937), and a right wing Eurasianism (which led several Russian immigrants, such as Ivan Iljine, to collaborate with the Nazis in 1933). On 10 February 1929, at a final assembly of the movement at the Guimet Museum in Paris, Berdyaev severely criticized the Eurasians. His comments, published in

the journal *Put* (The Way) defined this new “ideocracy” as “illusory” and “abstract.”¹²⁷

The main criticism that Nikolai Berdyaev and his friend Georges Fedotov had of the Eurasian doctrine was its negation of history. It was as if time was paralyzed in the Eurasian concept. Encounters between civilizations were not possible. The reason for this, according to Berdyaev, was that time had become sacred. Just as the Orthodox liturgy pays little attention to “all earthly cares” to better concentrate on the concelebration, with the angels, of the eternal mysteries, so Eurasian doctrine leaves little place for the history of peoples and institutions. Since the times of St. Cyril of Alexandria, Orthodox theology has always experienced the temptation of monophysism (only one divine nature in Jesus Christ). Those familiar with the history of the ecumenical councils know that it was only with difficulty that Christian theology overcame the temptation to envisage a single will in Jesus Christ (monothelism) who was, however, the God-Man. In a certain way, the heresy of phyletism, condemned by the Orthodox Church in the 19th century, and which consists in identifying the nation with the Church, and the Emperor as the lieutenant of God, has not received a credible alternative in the history of the Orthodox Church. The Eastern Churches, organized locally, have the merit of rejecting any form of universalism which would deny their ecclesiality. But since 4th century Eusebius of Caesarea, these Churches have identified the power of the emperor

127. A. Arjakovsky, *The Way*, op. cit., chapter “The Modernist Constellation”.

with that of Christ. Up until contemporary Russia, the tsar was God's anointed. The Russian emigration understood that the decline of empires signified the "end of the Constantinian era of history". But Eurasianism believed that it had found an alternative by merging the body (formerly regulated by civil authority) and the soul (formerly regulated by the Church). But this only resulted in an apology for totalitarianism. When, in 1926, the Eurasians published an *Attempt at a Systematic Exposition of Eurasianism*, which, in particular, justified the abolition of individual property, Berdyaev took up his pen to denounce "the naturalist and optimistic monism" of their vision. For Berdyaev, a "State which progressively ecclesializes itself to the point of transforming itself into a Church, lacks eschatological inspiration". In his eyes it is question of a state-based utopia and a utopic statism.

*The Orthodox coherence
of the "Russian world"*

Since 2005, the Orthodox coherence of the "Ruskij mir", of the "Russian world", has been assiduously defended by the Patriarch Kirill Gundyayev and his two closest collaborators, Father Vsevolod Chaplin and Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev.¹²⁸ On 26 December in a text of the Holy Synod, the Patriarch vigorously condemned Maidan as a movement manipulated by the West. On 7 January in his Christmas message on the main television channel Rossia 1, the Patriarch again condemned Euromaidan. He reminded his audience that Ukraine is part of the Russian world, with

128. <http://www.rusdoctrina.ru/page95504.html>

Russia, Belarus, Moldavia and “other countries”.¹²⁹ In this Russian world, the Russian people, the Russian language and Russian values play a role of prime importance. This is why wherever there are Russians, they should be protected by the Russian State. The unity of the Russian world is impossible without Ukraine: “the heart of the Russian world today is Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Saint Lavrentij of Chernigov has expressed this in a famous phrase: “Russia, Ukraine and Belarus – that is the Holy Rus””.

On another occasion the Patriarch develops his mythology, his interpretation of the myth. He makes no mystery of the fact that, for him, the political organization of this political space of the Russian world should base itself on the organization of the Russian Church whose competency surpasses the frontiers of Russia.

“How can we define this common civilizational space of the Russian world when today it still lacks common political institutions? At the very base of the Russian world there is the Orthodox faith which we have received from our baptism in the birthplace of Kiev. Thanks to the historical choice of the holy Prince Vladimir, our ancestors joined the family of Christian peoples and began to form the powerful and unique Rus’. Numerous saints – bishops, princes, boyars, priests, monks, and simple lay people – have taught our people

129. http://www.religion.in.ua/news/foreign_news/19244-patriarx-kirill-rasshiril-geografiyu-svyatoj-rusi-teper-yeto-rossiya-ukraina-belarus-moldova-i-drugie-strany.html

to love God and neighbor, to fear sin and destiny and to seek what is good, holy and true. (...) Our people began to become designated by the term “a God-bearing (theophore) people. Not because everyone was holy – we have had many sinners like all other countries – but because of its historical orientation towards these values. It is precisely for this that our land began to be called the Holy Rus’. For a Russian, it is impossible to oppose the “Ukrainian” Prince Vladimir, equal to the Apostles, to the “Russian” St. Sergius of Radonege (I use “Russian” here in quotes), to the faithful “Russian” Prince Alexander Nevsky, to the blessed “Belarus” Saint Euphrosnye of Polotsk, to the “Moldavian” saint Blessed Paisius Velichkovsky, or to the “Rossijskij” Saint Ignatius Bryanchaninov. That would be ridiculous. They are all saints of the Russian land and this is why we should preserve the unique Russian Church, venerate all the saints we have in common, and visit the holy places of the Russian world. I can personally testify how much a pilgrimage to the holy places of the Rus’ strongly forges a sense of the Russian world. During my travels in Belarus and Ukraine, I was struck by the enormous crowds who came to the religious services, tens of thousands of people who wanted to pray with their Patriarch”.¹³⁰

Patriarch Kirill presented these views on several occasions between 2009 and 2012, before different types of assemblies. These included that of 2009 at the Center of Social and Conservative Politics at

130. <http://www.patrirachia.ru/db/text/928446.html>

Moscow where he addressed students of the project “School of Russian Politics”.¹³¹ These views were taken up again by Philip Riabykh, Vice-President of the Department of Foreign Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow, who tried to show their political implications.¹³² During the Christmas Parliamentary Assemblies, Father Vsevolod Chaplin, speaking about Maidan, affirmed that “a minority whose theological formation and political ideas are dubious, contradicts the historical choice of a whole people.” For Chaplin, the historical choice made by the holy Prince Vladimir has united the peoples of the Russian World. “It is clear”, he added, “that today the future of Ukraine cannot be resolved without the intervention of external forces. Intra-national processes are not enough. There will be an intervention, whatever form it might take. There will also be an intervention by forces that do not want Ukraine to remain a part of the Oriental-Christian civilization”. For Chaplin, what is at stake is “the participation of the whole civilization, bound together by a common history, in the destiny of the Ukrainian people”.

V. Chaplin has also distinguished himself for his vigorous criticisms of the Orthodox theology of the School of Paris. It is easy to understand why. The foremost Russian historian, Georges Fedotov, who recognized the specific national identity of Ukraine, was a

131. http://www.religion.in.ua/news/ukranian_news/24462-patriarx-kiril-ne-sxvalyuye-yeromajdan.html

132. <http://mospat.ru/ru/2010/06/17/news20574/>

member of this Parisian school.¹³³ Chaplin criticizes the School of Paris as a whole, despite the fact everyone knows that it is composed of different trends. Chaplin rejects the very heart of the renewal brought about by the Parisian theology i. e. its symbolic, antinomic and eschatological vision of the world. On this point, there is no difference between Georges Florovsky and Nikolai Berdyaev and their heirs, whether Alexander Schmemmann or Olivier Clement. Fundamentally, this School of Paris is at the source of an important intellectual, patristic, ecumenical and theological-political renewal. The hostility towards it on the part of the patriarchate of Moscow takes the form of forcefully trying to recover the principal parishes of the Russian emigration in England, France and the United States, whether through pressure or through the courts. Most of the time it only succeeded in joining forces with the most conservative branch of this emigration, the so-called “Russian Church Outside of Russia” with which it signed an agreement of reconciliation in 2007. But this branch rejects anything that has to do with modernity and ecumenism. As a result the Russian Orthodox Church is sinking ever more deeply in the quicksand of apocalyptic and paranoid mythology.

Of course, the principal enemy of this civilizational vision is, on a political level, the ideology of the nation state. For Montesquieu, good governance does not consist in the fusion of body and soul, state and Church. There is a third term in Christian anthropol-

133. Georges Fedotov, “Sud’ba Imperii”, *Novij Zurnal*, New York, 1947.

ogy, the spirit, which unites the soul and the body. Likewise, on the social level, let us remember that for Montesquieu, it is the “Spirit of the Laws” which permits the harmonious unity of the state and the Motherland. Montesquieu did not hide the theological-political inspiration of his ideas. In 1748 he wrote: “It is wonderful that the Christian religion, which does not seem to have any other object than happiness in the next, still brings us happiness in this life.” For him, the spirit of the laws is founded on love:

“The love of the Republic, in a democracy, is that of democracy; the love of democracy is that of equality. The love of democracy is also the love of frugality. Each person should have the same happiness and the same advantages, should enjoy the same pleasures and form the same hopes; this is something which cannot be expected unless there is general frugality. The love of equality, in a democracy, limits ambition to the sole desire to the sole happiness of serving the Motherland as other citizens do. They cannot all serve the services in the same way, but they should all equally render these services. By birth, a person contracts a great debt towards the Motherland which he can never repay. Thus do distinctions arise from the principle of equality, even when equality appears to have been taken away by agreeable services or superior talents. The love of frugality limits *the desire to possess* to focusing only on what is necessary for the family and even the superfluous for the Motherland. Riches give power which a citizen cannot use for himself because then he would

not be equal. Riches procure delights which one should not enjoy because, all the same, they would shock against equality”.¹³⁴

On the contrary, the social doctrine of the Russian Church considers the republican state as a transitory phenomenon, destined to be consumed in Hell.¹³⁵

From the same ecclesiological point of view, the nation state is seen as something which contradicts the meta-national jurisdiction of the Russian Church. In this sense, the arch enemy of the ideology of the “Russian world” of the patriarchate of Moscow is the Greek-Catholic Church. In 1946, the patriarchate of Moscow tried to suppress this Church by organizing a pseudo-synod at Lviv. Since the Greek Catholic Church emerged from the catacombs in 1989, the Patriarchate of Moscow has relentlessly denounced it and blamed it for all its problems. But the principal characteristic of the Greek Catholic Church – and this is precisely where the Russian Church is most fragile – is that it does not consider the Russian world sacred, as an enclosed and pure space. The Greek Catholic Church is the successor of the Orthodox Church of the Rus’ of Kiev which, by the intermediary of its head Metropolitan Isidore, accepted the Council of Florence in 1439 and remained faithful to it until 1596. In the 17th century this Church, backed into a corner with her faith and her very identity on the line,

134. Montesquieu, *L'Esprit des Lois*, Geneva, 1758, book I, Chapter V.

135. Cf my analysis of the social doctrine of the Russian Church in A, Arjakovsky, *En attendant le concile de l'Église Orthodoxe*, Paris, Cerf, 2011.

had to choose between Constantinople and Rome; it chose Rome. Today the Greek Catholic Church seeks to recover its threefold identity of orthodoxy in the faith, catholicity in its membership and resistance in the face of oppression. This ‘half caste’ identity for some, “hybrid” identity for others, is seen as a threat by the patriarchate of Moscow. Its gesture of 1596 was considered a betrayal by the Church of Muscovy which, unlike the Church of Kiev, first sought the recognition of its autocephaly. This led it to mistreat the Greek bishop who came to announce the good news of unity among Christians. This explains why ever since then the patriarchate of Moscow has considered the choice of the Church of Kiev as a treason. This perception of the Council of Florence as a false and unauthentic council has predominated in Russian and Orthodox historiography down to the present. It must be said that the political and religious situation in the 15th century was radically different in Kiev, Moscow and Constantinople. I wrote a paper which testifies to the rehabilitation of this council which is taking place among contemporary scholars.¹³⁶ It is not a question of idealizing this council but neither is it a question of stigmatizing it. Let us remember that only one Orthodox bishop out of several hundred, Mark of Ephesus, refused to sign it. This ecumenical council was the only one, in the long history of the Church, which brought together the Patriarch of Constantinople and

136. A text which will appear in 2014 in the acts of the colloquium of the University of Lille, Antoine Arjakovsky, “Histoire et mémoire du concile de Florence (1439)”, in *La dramatique conciliaire, coups de théâtre, tactique et sincérité des convictions dans les débats conciliaires, de l’Antiquité à Vatican II*, May 15-17, 2013.

the Pope of Rome, both of whom upheld the union, with the support of the Byzantine Emperor who was also present, along with their respective bishops.

Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev, head of the Department of Foreign Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow, rejects all these facts in his book *Orthodoxy, the History and Canonical Structures of the Orthodox Church* published in Moscow in 2008. In his mythological narrative he fails to distinguish between the Church of the Rus' of Kiev and the Church of Muscovy. On the Council of Florence he writes: "The Catholic Church considers it an ecumenical council. But Eastern Orthodoxy rejected it to the extent that the Orthodox Church had to capitulate and renounce its secular theological tradition. The Russian Church was the first to reject the union."¹³⁷ This is incorrect because the Orthodox Church of Kiev did accept it. But this is a point which determines the whole mythology of the Patriarchate of Moscow today. This was pointed out by Father Sergius Bulgakov in his book *Nearby the ramparts of Chersonesus*, written in 1921 when he was living in Crimea in 1921. The Orthodox Church of the Rus' of Kiev is the Church which remained faithful to this union for as long as possible. As late as 1630, Metropolitan Mohyla wrote to the Pope seeking union with Rome. But this history upsets the mythological memory of the Orthodox Church. This is why Hilarion criticizes the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, heir of the Church of Kiev, so violently and regularly. On 22 March he reproached the head of this Church, Sviatoslav Shevchuk, as well

137. H. Alfeyev, *Orthodoxy*, vol. I, Paris, Cerf, p.120.

as Patriarch Philaret, the head of Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Patriarchate of Kiev for traveling to the United States in February 2014, to solicit support from the State Department. For H. Alfeyev, this was an “irresponsible interference” of the Church in affairs of the state.¹³⁸

The young Ukrainian Greek Catholic theologian, Anatoly Babynsky, responded on 2 April in the Ukrainian review *Patriarkhat*¹³⁹ He does not dwell on the paradoxical fact that it is the Russian Church, whose close ties with the Kremlin are well known, which criticises the Greek Catholic Church for meddling in the affairs of the city. He points out, however, that the Russian Church, so quick to denounce the violence in Ukraine, did not say a word about the annexation of Crimea. Likewise, he does not understand why the Russian Church considers that the desire for integration in the European Union is incompatible with the desire to protect one’s own culture. He seeks to respond to the key issue, i.e. the theological legitimacy of the political revolt of Maidan. The Greek Catholic theologian skillfully draws upon the social doctrine of the Russian Church itself to show that civil disobedience is necessary when the nation and the Orthodox faith are threatened by the state. In addition, Babynsky attacks the Russian hierarchy for not being consistent with the Orthodoxy of faith.

138.<http://www.pravmir.com/metropolitan-hilarion-crisis-ukrainian-society-offers-canonical-ukrainian-orthodox-church-unique-opportunity-unite/#ixzz2zeCOTxiE>

139.http://risu.org.ua/article_print.php?id=55959&name=open_theme&_lang=ua&

In fact, the Russian Church has recognized the 1993 agreements of Balamand which accepted the Greek Catholic Church to be a Church *sui iuris* in the family of Catholic Churches. The Russian Church wanted the Vatican to intervene in the affairs of its Church. This implies that it no longer recognized the specific juridical dimension of the Greek Catholic Church. Thus it is reasoning like the Latin theology of the 16th century which identified the local Church as a part of the Church, which is, moreover, Latin. Babynsky goes on to observe that the Russian Church has missed not only modernity, but post-modernity and globalization. The Ukrainian theologian, who is also known as a benevolent expert on Orthodoxy, recommends a simple rule to the patriarch: recognize the other as the other defines himself. "Imagine", he adds with humour, "the Vatican asking you to obey the decisions of the Patriarchate of Constantinople without discussion, on the grounds that the Orthodox Church is one." Babynsky also reproaches the Russian metropolitan for not understanding Maidan, for not seeing that it was a peaceful demonstration until the corrupt power of Yanukovych opened fire on its own people. For Babynsky, the best proof that the Moscow patriarchate is wrong is that many Orthodox bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church affiliated to Moscow have condemned the Kremlin's aggression and the annexation of Crimea.

Babynsky concludes by saying that, basically, when the social doctrine of the Russian Church, with its adulation of the state, is compared with that of the Catholic Church, there are two conceptions of

the relations between Church and state. He characteristically adds that these conceptions are not on a confessional level, since the Catholic and Orthodox Churches in Ukraine share the same point of view. Both believe that the Church, though separate from the power of the state, is not separate from society and social processes. While the Russian Church only defines itself in relation to the state, the Churches in Ukraine take a stance both towards the state and towards society. From his perspective, what becomes central is the defense of the dignity of the human person and not just the interests of the state or of society. The state must serve society and society should permit the fulfillment of each person. But in the doctrine of the Russian Church, “power is made sacred and called upon to protect society from sin by whatever means”.

The Patriarch of Moscow pays little attention to this kind of criticism. Instead, he makes films which are broadcast on the major channels of Russian television and which celebrate Holy Russia and the unity of the Russian civilizational world. In 2013, Metropolitan Hilarion made a film entitled “The Second Baptism of the Rus’” (which can be seen on youtube). It attributes the “renewal” of the Russian Church of the 1990s to the initiatives of the patriarchate of Moscow. This causal link however, is questionable. The wave of return to the Church by the Russians in the 1990s was in fact the result of the collapse of Communism and its scientific atheism. Patriarch Kirill appears and says his priority is to gather together the lands of Holy Russia. There is even a parallel between the

Trinitarian God and the trinity of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. President Putin also appears in person to tell how he was secretly baptized as an infant. He says how much Stalin loved the Russian Church because in 1941 he addressed the Russian people not as “comrades”, but in a Christian manner as “brothers and sisters”. Putin also explains how much the Church is useful to his foreign policy...

This kind of propaganda film can have a great effect on simple people but it would have a hard time convincing the intelligentsia. Specialists such as Nikolai Mitrokhin have shown that today’s missionary parishes are more the result of the action of Father Georges Kochetkov, Alexander Men’ or Father Paul Adelgheim, than the result of the 1990s reconstruction of the Cathedral of the Savior in Moscow. After all it was in this official temple of the patriarchate of Moscow that, in 2012, the singers of the group Pussy Riot chose to pray to the Virgin to get Putin out of Russia. In Metropolitan Alfeyev’s film, not once does today’s Church ask itself about the reasons for the violent persecutions of the decade 1920-1930. The Church only presents itself as a victim. It would not dream – even for a second – of questioning itself, still less of seeking forgiveness for the long years it compromised itself with the Tsarist regime and, after 1927, with the Soviet regime. Some courageous personalities such as the deacon Andrey Kuraev and Father Paul Adelgheim criticized this irresponsible attitude of the patriarchate of Moscow. They spoke up against the imposition of a verticality of tyrannical power within the Russian Church. But they were

marginalized or even assassinated. The deacon Andrei Kuraev was “resigned” from his teaching post at the Academy of Theology in October 2013. Father Paul Adelgheim was assassinated in July 2013 under conditions which are still unclear.

Conclusion

These brief remarks on the new ideology of the Kremlin are an incentive to study the Russian myth rather than ignore it or consider it as vulgar and displeasing. This is why Berdyaev spent the last years of his life writing and publishing, in 1946, a book entitled *The Russian Idea*. In it he tried to understand just what made up the Russian myth, understood as a subconscious collective memory. He showed it to be the conscious part of the collective imagination. The Russian mythology of Berdyaev is deeply personalist. But this aspect of his work is ignored today in Russia among the elites and by the political class. At the same time, in France, it was mistakenly believed that Berdyaev had become pro-Soviet. But it is my opinion that his personalist vision of Russian history will one day enable Russia to distance itself from Putinism while remaining faithful to its profound identity. In 1933 Berdyaev wrote:

“The true goal is not economic liberty but the liberty of the economy. We say that the person should be governed not by individual interest but by the social service of a meta-personal goal. Society should be organized in such a way that the supreme value of the person, of every

person, becomes its principle and not society, the State or the Nation. That means that the socialization of the economy, the transcending economic individualism, should be done in the name of the person and in such a way that the person might be able to have real – and not formal – liberty”¹⁴⁰.

The vision of Berdyaev is not an isolated one. His friends Nikolai Zernov, Maria Skobtsova and Georges Fedotov all wrote helpful articles on the myth of Holy Russia with the same concern for purifying the mythology. They recognized the thirst for justice and truth which runs throughout the history of Russian culture. But in order to understand the appearance of Lenin and Stalin in Russian history, they wanted to make an act of repentance, something the Russian Church is still not ready to do today. They have shown that, at a certain moment in its history, the Russian Church went astray. For Georges Fedotov, author of a famous article “The Tragedy of the Holiness of the Ancient Rus”¹⁴¹, published in 1931, failure to deal with the conflict between the haves and have nots in the 16th century pushed the Church into the arms of the state and, at another level, produced an increasingly anti-religious intelligentsia. For Maria Skobtsova, in a text written in 1937 entitled “The Types of Spiritual Life”¹⁴², it is because it became frozen in a spirituality which was esthetic, synodal and ritualistic that the Russian Church lost the evangelical sense of Orthodox Christianity as life in Christ in the Spirit. For

140. N. Berdyaev, “Du socialisme personnaliste”, *Novij Grad*, n.7, 1933 (in Russian).

Nikolai Zernov, in an article published in *Put'* in 1936 entitled "Moscow Third Rome", it is by recovering the heart of its identity i.e. the rejection of violence and the taking on the sufferings of others upon one's self, the "churching" of life and the recuperation of the catholicity of the Church, that Russia will eventually achieve the universal mission it so desires to bring to the world. Texts such as these urgently need to be discovered in both Russia and France.¹⁴¹

There are more urgent things for us to consider. As Gilbert Durand has demonstrated, the mythological discourse is a changeable reality which adapts itself according to the circumstances. I was struck by the words of a Russian journalist who was working in Ukraine after having worked in Russia. Vladik Shuster is a man who knows well the mentality of Russian and Ukrainian politicians and, in particular, that of Putin. According to Shuster, the new Kremlin ideology is in the process of evolving towards the idea of a "crusade" and, more specifically, towards the preservation of the sacred treasures of the birthplace of Russia – Kiev. Here is what he stated in an interview on 6 April 2014:

"Crimea, in itself, is a very small thing for Putin. Putin needs Kiev. Putin needs the Laura of Petchersk, the mother of the cities of the Rus'. The foundation of Orthodoxy comes from there.

141. A. Arjakovsky, *The Way, Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration and Their Journal, 1925-1940*, foreword by Rowan Williams, Notre Dame University Press, 2013.

Crimea alone will not satisfy him for very long. When, in a month or two, his popularity dwindles, he will need something else. I'm not very well informed about Putin's physical condition, but to me he's like an insatiable dragon. I'm afraid of what will happen when his popularity ratings drop. I see him as a crusader who wants to liberate the tomb of Christ. This is an ideological platform which can unite the majority of the Orthodox population of the Russian Federation. This is more understandable than the "Russian world" which is an abstract construction and which needs a long explanation. But Putin can increase his prestige in the public opinion polls by using the themes of Church unity, the glorification of the Patriarchate of Moscow, the reestablishment of material and spiritual power (let us not forget that the Patriarchate of Moscow has material properties here below). I believe that Putin is thinking in these terms".¹⁴²

142. <http://www.svoboda.org/content/article/26322602.html>

Chapter 8

The Impossible Scenario Of Great Russia

In a now famous article which has become famous entitled “Putin and the Ice Skater”, which appeared in Moscow on 10 February 2014, Victor Shenderovich compared the Olympic Games at Sochi with the Olympic Games at Munich in 1936. Frightened by the ultra-nationalistic interpretation of Russian history during the opening ceremonies on 7 February, he describes the Russian State as a parasite of the nation and Putin as a usurper who is only interested in his own popularity. After publishing this article on the blog of Ekho Moskvyy, the Russian satirist was treated as a traitor to the nation. He was even the object of a judicial process which is now obliging him to pay a million roubles. Two months later, on 30 April, Shenderovich persisted and explained to a journalist of *Ukrainska Pravda*:

“I have no regrets. On the contrary, I didn’t think that I was as right as I was. Hitler waited three years after the Olympic Games of Munich before he invaded Czechoslovakia. Putin crunched Crimea the day after the closure of the Games at Sochi.”

This aggression is all the more shocking in that on 5 December 1994 Russia, along with the United States and Great Britain, signed Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances which guaranteed the protection of the sovereignty of its borders in exchange for the denuclearization of the country. This text was later signed by France and China. According to the Memorandum, in exchange for the adhesion of Ukraine to the Treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear arms and the transfer of its nuclear arsenal to Russia, Russia, the United States and Great Britain committed themselves to: “respect Ukrainian independence and its sovereignty within its present borders; abstain from any threat or use of force against Ukraine; abstain from using economic pressure on Ukraine in order to influence its politics; seek authorization from the United Nations Security Council if nuclear arms are used against Ukraine; abstain from using nuclear arms against Ukraine; consult the other concerned parties if questions arise concerning these commitments.” The text was signed by Leonid Kuchma, Boris Yeltsin, John Major, Bill Clinton and later by Francois Mitterrand and Jiang Zemin.

*The masked aggression
of Russia in Ukraine*

The launching of the Russian-Ukrainian war took place in three steps. From 27 February to 18 March Russia invaded Crimea, disguised, in a first instance, behind “Ukrainian self-protection forces’, then recognized by V. Putin. Next, from 18 March to 20 April,

Russia again in the guise of “Ukrainian separatists,” took control of two regions of Eastern Ukraine, Donbass and, in a lesser measure, the region of Luhansk. The anti-terrorist operation of the Ukrainian government, which began on 20 April, obliged Russia to take off its mask. On 7 May, President Putin called upon the separatists not to organize a referendum in the immediate future – while keeping his tanks on the Ukrainian border.

Before 18 March, Crimea was composed of an autonomous Republic within the Ukrainian Federation and of a city, Sebastopol, which had its own autonomy, like Kiev. The annexation of Crimea had probably been planned long before, but only as a possibility. It is clear that the victory of Maidan which began on 20 February precipitated things. Moreover, it was probably on 21 February, when the scales tipped in Kiev and Vladimir Lukin fled empty handed to Moscow, that the decision to annex Crimea was taken in Moscow. It was at this moment that the Crimean Parliament announced an extraordinary session. On 23 February, the Crimean Parliament, in a catastrophic meeting, convened under the pressure of armed men. It announced that it did not recognize the interim Ukrainian President. On 27 February, again under the pressure of armed men, it elected a new Prime Minister, Sergey Axionov. The Ukrainian press presented the main protagonists of this coup d’etat:¹⁴³ Sergey Axionov, Prime Minister of the Crimean Region and Vladimir Konstantinov, President of the Parliament of Crimea. Both are well known swindlers. The first,

143. <http://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2014/03/7/7017988/>

born in Moldavia in 1972, has had a Ukrainian passport since 1997. He goes by the name of Goblin and is part of the great bandit gang of the peninsula (he got his training among the “Greeks”). He has set up many shareholding companies, including a commercial center at Simferopol (Berg), and newspapers. Ukrainian justice officials suspect him of participating in several murders.¹⁴⁴ The Russian Secret services took notice of him in 2008 and he soon became a deputy to the Crimean Parliament in 2010. M. Bakharev, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, accuses him of taking control of a boarding school for paralyzed children through his titushkis, and then privatizing it for his personal profit. Axionov accused his detractor of libel, but lost his lawsuit.¹⁴⁵

As for Vladimir Konstantinov, with his business Konsol, he has built a mafia-like real estate empire which controls the construction of all the public housing facilities in Crimea. They have the two largest debts. These are with the banks of Crimea (Konstantinov was condemned by the Crimean Court on 17 February for debts amounting to hundreds of millions of grivnas); of Kiev (Konstantinov owes more a billion grivnas to just one Ukrainian bank, Ukreximbank); also of Russian banks. This would explain why certain Ukrainian deputies consider them puppets of the Kremlin, bound hand and foot.

On 27 February, men in green uniforms took control of the peninsula. On 2 March, Putin denied that

144. <http://www.ru.tsn.ua/ukrayina/temnoe-proshloe-krymskih-separatistov-dose-na-aksenova-i-konstantinova-354904.html>

145. <http://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/articles/2014/03/15/7018918/>

they were Russian soldiers but, in a second time, on 18 March, he recognized that they were, in fact, Russian troops. The head of the Chiefs of Staff in Crimea, Denis Berezovsky, defected and put himself under the authority of the Prime Minister of Crimea. On 1 March, the Council of the Russian Federation authorized the Russian army to invade Ukraine in a response to a “call for help” from Prime Minister Axionov. The members of the Council of the Confederation received false information from its President, Mrs Matvienko, which spoke of Russian citizens being killed in Crimea. Once again operating from behind a mask, Russia, through Sergey Lavrov, made an offer to the United States on 5 March to “mediate” but under a certain number of conditions: that Ukraine does not sign the treaty of association with the European Union; that it postpone its elections of 25 May; that it give Russian the status of State language and adopt a Constitution based on the Bosnian model.¹⁴⁶ These propositions were rejected by the Western chancelleries.

The Russians then passed to the second phase of their operation. The Russian Minister of Defense, Sergey Shhoygu, decided to amass, under the pretext of military exercises, more than 30,000 men at the Eastern border of Ukraine. That was in addition to the 25,000 Russian soldiers in Crimea. Under pressure from them, the Crimean Parliament voted to hold a referendum on the question of a re-enforced autonomy. It was first scheduled for 25 May. Kiev denounced the illegality of this referendum. It was

146 <http://tyzden.ua/105356/Print View>

thus advanced to 30 March, then to 16 March. During the campaign, many journalists were arrested, activists were tortured, the observers from OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and the UN were forbidden to enter the territory being contested. The Ukrainian television channels could no longer broadcast while Russian television channels deployed their propaganda against the government of Kiev and the persecution of “Russians” in Crimea. Chechnyan units, directed by the sinister Ramzan Kadyrov, a Russian who ruled the Republic of Chechnya with an iron hand, sowed terror, especially in the Tatar community. This community very quickly announced its refusal to participate in the referendum. Between 10 and 25 March, the Ukrainian military surrendered one after the other, while the Ukrainian fleet was nationalized by Axionov.

There was no immediate reaction from the Ukrainian government. It was taken by surprise, unprepared for the defection of a certain number of the cadres of the army and the police who were found to be agents at the service of Russia. But the government had also hoped that a non-violent solution could be found. It was only on March 5 that the Court of Kiev asked for the arrest of the President of the Crimean Assembly, V. Konstantinov¹⁴⁷. But it was already too late. The Ukrainian barracks in Crimea were surrounded. As early as March 11, even before the referendum, the Crimean Parliament proclaimed its independence and this was recognized by the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the same way, it was only on 15

147.<http://tyzhden.ua/Politics/105356/Print View>

March that the Rada of Kiev dissolved the Parliament of Crimea. It had been awaiting the decision of the Commission of Venice which, on that day, declared that the referendum was illegal. The day after the “referendum”, which did not offer the Crimean people the option of remaining in the Republic of Ukraine, Moscow gave the result: a majority of 96% of 80% of the voters chose to be affiliated with Russia. Mustafa Dzhemilev, the celebrated leader of the Tatars of Crimea, challenged the Russian figures. He said that in actual fact more than 60% of the population had boycotted the referendum. Moreover, numerous infractions were noted by Ukrainian journalists who had managed to remain on the peninsula. In spite of the condemnations of the Western chancelleries and the total isolation of Russia in the UN Security Council on 15 March, on 18 March, at the Kremlin, Putin, Axionov and Konstantinov signed a document annexing Crimea with Sebastopol into the Russian Federation. Ten days later, Russia unilaterally abrogated the accords of Kharkiv between Ukraine and Russia which provided for the anchoring of the Russian fleet at Sebastopol in exchange for a reduction in the price of gas.

The second phase of the war began simultaneously with the annexation of Crimea. Russia was humiliated again by the UN General Assembly (only 11 of 169 countries supported annexation and these 11 have a dubious reputation such as North Korea and Sudan). Incapable of preventing the signing of an agreement of association between the European Union and Ukraine (political section) on 21 March,

not receiving any response from Poland, Romania and Hungary concerning its proposition to divide Ukraine into spheres of influence, Russia decided to go for broke in its bellicose logic of destabilizing Ukraine. It refused to recognize the new Ukrainian government, continued to protect V. Yanukovych and some of his former ministers, and tried to prevent the presidential elections of May 25 at all costs. On 15 May, S. Lavrov promised to “protect” the citizens of Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk. Three weeks later the first Ukrainian “separatists”, backed by members of the services of GRU, (the intelligence service of the Russian army), coordinated by Colonel Strelkov-Girkin, took over Ukrainian public buildings. The first assaults were at Donetsk on Sunday, 6 April at the seat of the regional administration. The separatists announced the creation of a Republic of Donetsk, incorporated into Russia. At the same time, assault attempts took place at Kharkiv, Mykolaiv and Dnipropetrovsk but these were repelled by local police forces. Avakov, the Minister of Interior, denounced Russia after having intercepted conversations with Russian military forces stationed on the other side of the border. Many Russian citizens were also arrested along with the so-called “separatists”, among them Pavel Gubarev, the head of the “separatists” of Donetsk. A second wave of assaults took place beginning on 12 April in Sloviansk and other cities of Donbass. At Sloviansk, the center of the rebellion, more than 800 persons were combatants armed with Russian military equipment. The next day, the interim president, Olexandr Turchynov, announced to the country that Russia is waging a war on Ukraine and

that he has decided to launch an anti-terrorist operation. It seems that the first troops sent to Sloviansk were totally unprepared for this type of operation. Moreover Russia threatened to intervene if Ukraine carried out its plan. Turchynov decided to stop his troops. Russia then accelerated its taking control of Donbass (with attacks on Kramatorsk, Horlivka and another ten towns) as well as the region of Luhansk.

The United States and the European Union tried to reduce tension between Russia and Ukraine in Geneva on 17 April. Here is the text of the resolution signed by the four foreign ministers: “The reunion of Geneva concerning the situation in Ukraine has agreed to take concrete initial steps to lessen the tension and reestablish security for all the citizens. All parties should abstain from any type of violence, intimidation or provocation. The participants have strongly condemned and rejected all expressions of extremism, racism and religious intolerance, including anti-Semitism. All illegally armed groups should be disarmed; all the buildings illegally occupied should be returned to their legitimate owners; all the streets and other public places illegally occupied in Ukrainian cities should be evacuated. An amnesty will be granted to those who had been involved and to those who had left the buildings and other public places and had handed over their arms with the exception of people known to be culpable of capital crimes. It has been agreed that the special mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) should play a major role in helping Ukrainian authorities and local collectivities to put

into place immediately all these measures of conciliation wherever they are most necessary, beginning in the next few days. The United States, the European Union and Russia promised to support this mission by sending observers. The announced constitutional process will be inclusive, transparent and responsible. It will include the immediate establishment of a large scale national dialogue, open to all the regions of Ukraine and all political groups and it will enable the taking into account of public commentaries and proposed amendments. The participants have stressed the importance of economic and financial stability in Ukraine and will be ready to discuss supplementary support when the above steps have been taken.”¹⁴⁸

But at that very moment in Moscow, V. Putin gave a press conference invalidating S. Lavrov’s attempt at “reconciliation”. Putin spoke of South and East Ukraine as of a Russian region which was called New Russia (Novorossija) at the beginning of the 19th century. Moreover, the document ratified in Geneva which called for the liberation of buildings was not respected by the “separatists”. Worldwide public opinion then became aware that Russia had no desire to calm things down and was hiding behind the actions of the Ukrainian “separatists”. At the end of April, in the face of this awareness, colonel Strelkov (his real name is Igor Girkin), a Russian officer of the GRU, admitted to the media that he was behind the seizure of public buildings in Eastern and Southern Ukraine.

148. <http://monde.blog.la-croix.com/ukraine-le-texte-de-la-declaration-de-geneve/2014/17/>

After a delay of several days, the Ukrainian authorities understood that Russia only wanted to gain time and consolidate its positions. On 24 April, Arseniy Avakov, the Minister of Interior, launched a vast anti-terrorist operation. It registered its first successes on 1 and 2 May. But it was at this moment that the drama of Odessa took place. On 2 May, following provocations from more than 2,000 “separatists” (with many Russians among them), the fans of the Odessa football club tried to react. The city police did nothing to separate the two sides. When everything was over, the trade union building was set on fire. More than sixty people, including a large number of “separatists”, perished and there were several hundred wounded from both sides. The chief of police was dismissed, accused by the Minister of Interior of having knowingly stood aside in order to provoke chaos in his desire for vengeance.

John McCain announced that the United States was ready to ship military equipment to Ukraine. For its part, the Kremlin made known that it was preparing important parades for 9 May in Crimea to celebrate “the victory of the USSR over the Fascists.” President Turchynov declared that there was a risk of provocations everywhere in the country especially in Kiev. The sanctions of the Americans and Europeans had no effect on the actions of the Russians. These sanctions essentially concerned the suspension of visas and the freezing of foreign assets of about forty persons of the new Crimean government, of the circle of Yanukovych and the circle of V. Putin. With the exception of some Russian banks targeted by the United

States, these sanctions have only had symbolic value so far. Following an order from Putin in 2011, the majority of Russian leaders had already repatriated their assets. Others hid them in offshore accounts. But at the beginning of May, European leaders such as F. Hollande and A. Merkel announced that if Russia continued its aggression and prevented the presidential elections in Ukraine, they would impose economic sanctions. These would have more important consequences for Russia since the European Union is Russia's prime commercial partner. They would also have an effect on the European economy since Russia could adopt measures of retaliation in the field of energy policy.

*The programmed failure
of the annexation of Crimea*

The annexation of Crimea, followed by the tentative action to annex "Novorossija", is both the outcome of Putin's mythology and his principal error. We have already studied the deep fallacies of this mythology. It is now a question of presenting the strategic error of the Russian president. His speech in the Kremlin on 18 March concerning the annexation of Crimea is very relevant here, not only for understanding his logic but also to show that it can only lead to failure.¹⁴⁹ I will not dwell on the style of his speech. It is an openly polemic speech as shown in what he said about the Ukrainian government: "However, those who were behind the recent events in Ukraine had a different agenda: they were preparing another

149. <http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/6889>

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overthrow of the government; they wanted to seize power and would stop at nothing. They had recourse to terror, assassinations and pogroms. Nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russian-haters and anti-Semites carried out this coup d'état. They continue to set the tone in Ukraine until the present day." President Putin is clearly acting in bad faith. He claims, moreover, that the people of Crimea have been threatened by the new Ukrainian government.

"In the face of these events, the inhabitants of Crimea and Sebastopol have turned towards Russia to help them protect their rights and their lives and to prevent the spreading of the events which have come about and are still happening in Kiev, Donetsk, Kharkiv and other Ukrainian cities. Naturally, we could not let this appeal remain unanswered; we could not abandon Crimea and its inhabitants in their distress. That would have been treason on our part."

The Russian intervention then began, even before the nomination of the new Prime Minister of Ukraine. V. Putin even had the audacity to deny what was being filmed by cameras from around the world:

"They don't stop talking about some Russian intervention in Crimea, a sort of aggression. It is strange to hear that. I don't know of a single case in history where such an intervention took place without firing a shot or causing any victims."

So, for Putin it is only classed as war when blood flows. At least Putin has a sense of humour. He vaunted the support of the Chinese and Indian peoples, even though the former abstained in the United Nations and the latter voted against the annexation of Crimea. It is also a populist speech:

“Do not believe those who want you to be afraid of Russia and who cry that other regions will follow Crimea. We do not want to divide Ukraine; we have no need for that. As for Crimea, it was and remains a land which is Russian, Ukrainian and Tatar.”

Only a few days after this speech, the Russian GRU organized the seizing of the administrative buildings in Donbass, and the head of the Tatars in Crimea was forbidden residence in his country.

I like to focus now on the grounds for Putin’s position. The Russian President seeks to justify the annexation of Crimea using four kinds of argument: sociological, historical, religious and legal. His first argument is to affirm that 82% of the electorate participated in the voting and that 96% pronounced themselves in favor of reunification with Russia. He adds that “today the Crimean peninsula has 2.2 million inhabitants of whom nearly 1.5 million are Russians.” These figures are false. Very much on purpose, V. Putin confuses ethnic origin and citizenship. The reality is that only 58.3% of the population of Crimea is Ukrainian of Russian origin. To be Russian speaking is not the same as being Russian. That is the whole problem of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The Russian

State thinks that there where Russian is spoken, Russia should assure the protection of these persons. It would be unthinkable for France to organize a referendum in Wallonia on the grounds that the majority of the Belgians are French speaking. The Russian State is influenced by the Orthodox Church of Russia which proposes a “phyletist” or “nationalist” vision of the Church. Since 2003 this Church has been proposing to the Russian diaspora to organize itself on the basis of language and ethnic origin. It pays no attention to other Orthodox communities belonging to other patriarchates and even less to the presence of the other majority Christian Churches in these countries. This is a heresy which was condemned by the Orthodox Church at the end of the 19th century.

Moreover, the census of 2001 shows that only 58.3% of the people are ethnically of Russian descent (there are also 24.3% of Ukrainian citizens and 12% of Tatar descent). It is well known that Mustafa Dzhemilev, Chair of the Mejlis of the Tatars of Crimea said that he had received data from a confidential source affirming that only a minority of the inhabitants of Crimea went to the ballot boxes on 16 March. The Russian Council on Human Rights also affirms that only 15% of the two million inhabitants of Crimea voted for incorporation into Russia (of the 30% of voters went to the polling stations). This information, which reduces still further the figures given by Mustapha Dzhemilev, has been confirmed by Svetlana Gannushkina, a human rights militant, who went to Crimea at the beginning of April with television TSN.¹⁵⁰

150. S. Gannouchkina, “Zametki rossijskovo pravozachitmike o Krme”, 4/25/2014, www.hro.org

The clearest evidence is that the Russian government tried to push the citizens of Crimea to reclaim a Russian passport, but on 15 April only 170,000 had received their Russian passports. Yet the Russian media reiterated that Ukrainians who had not asked for their Russian passports would be considered resident aliens and subject to sanctions which could include prohibition of residence within the territory for five years. But the residents of Crimea did not want to surrender their Ukrainian passports. All the more so because they know that before the end of the year they will be able to move freely within the European Union on a Ukrainian passport. The Russians then required Ukrainians to confirm they are not applying for a Russian Passport. This measure provoked panic and pushed hundreds of thousands of Crimeans to queue up in front of the offices of the militia. But, according to Svetlana Gannushkina, as of 25 April, only 20% of the population had requested a Russian passport. Gannushkina adds that, in addition to the economic crisis, the paralysis of the banking system and the administrative anarchy, the humanitarian situation in Crimea has deteriorated seriously since the Russian intervention. The Ukrainian media are forbidden to broadcast and a large number of Ukrainian internet sites have been forced to shut down. Solicitors' services have received orders to block any attempt to sell real estate. Ethnic minorities are victims of violence at school. Religious services can no longer be held in Ukrainian. The patriarchate of Kiev is obliged to re-register its parishes, something which could lead to its disappearance because it is a Church which is not

recognized by the Russian government. The Tatars of Crimea have even proposed to the Orthodox faithful of the patriarchate of Kiev that they come to celebrate in their mosques – which would be unprecedented in the world. The result is that, with the exception of Sebastopol, the population of Crimea is passing through a period of abandon and deep despair. Even at Simferopol, according to Gannushkina, a sentiment of fatalistic lassitude is making itself felt. The Tatars are up in arms against the regime of Crimea since M. Dzhemilev, their historic leader, has been forbidden by Russia to set foot in Crimea. Dzhemilev had declared, after Putin's speech in which he proposed rehabilitating the Tatar people, that, on the contrary, it was the Russian people who should be rehabilitated vis a vis the Tatar community. It is well known that, in three days, from 18-21 May, 1944, the entire Tartar population of Crimea was deported by the Soviet government. The Rada of Kiev, on the other hand, adopted a text on 17 April, "guaranteeing compensation to minorities deported because of their nationality." Even though this text should have been adopted by Ukraine many years ago, the Tatars feel themselves to be Ukrainian, not Russian, citizens.

Putin's second argument is historical.

"Everything in Crimea evokes our history and common pride. Crimea is the site of the ancient Tauric Chersonese where the Great Prince Vladimir I was baptized. His spiritual exploit, i.e. the adoption of Orthodox Christianity, has predetermined the global base of the culture,

civilization and human values which unite the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The tombs of the Russian soldiers, whose bravery permitted the integration of Crimea into the Russian Empire, are also in Crimea. So is Sebastopol – a legendary city with an exceptional history, a fortress which saw the birth of the Russian Navy of the Black Sea (Applause)”.

We have already spoken enough about the dangers of the link of exclusivist continuity that Putin and Kirill, the Patriarch of Moscow, establish between the Rus' of Kiev and the Russia of today. Let us recall once again that the Russian State was only born in the 17th century. Moreover although Catherine II the Great (1729-1796) empress of Russia signed a treaty with the Ottomans at Kutchuk Kaynardja in 1774, Crimea nevertheless became independent. In reality, the region became a Russian protectorate. But the Russians did not physically occupy Crimea until after their defeat in the war of 1854-56 against France and England. Thus Crimea became a Russian colony between the 1860s and 1922. Not till the 1860s were sumptuous villas for the Russian aristocracy constructed on the coast. The emperors of Russia had their palace at Livadia. After the revolution of 1917, it is incorrect to say that Crimea became Russian because it was actually a Soviet Socialist Republic of Crimea. It only became Russian again in 1945 and Sebastopol in 1948. On February 19, 1954, in the middle of a period of world-wide decolonization, Nikita Khrushchev only rendered Ukraine its own by integrating the oblast of Crimea into the Socialist So-

viet Republic of Ukraine. In 1991, the population of Crimea confirmed its attachment to the Republic of Ukraine through a referendum.

Thus we are far from agreeing with Putin's argument where he plays on generational memories and not on history:

“In the hearts and spirit of the people, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia. This profound conviction is based on truth and justice. It has been transmitted from generation to generation, down through the ages, in all circumstances, in spite of all the dramatic changes that our country has known throughout the 20th century.”

As we have seen, in the course of history, Crimea belonged to Russia for less than eighty years. It is certainly true that Sebastopol remained another twenty years under Russian domination. But there exist precisely historical accords between Ukraine and Russia which, since 1996, provided that the fleet of the Black Sea would remain at Sebastopol only until 2017 (accords modified in 2010 under President Yanukovich to extend until 2042).

Putin's third argument is religious. He claims that Russia drew her faith from the conversion of Prince Vladimir at Chersonese. But it would be dangerous to conclude from this that Crimea should become Russian. It was not because Clovis was baptized by a bishop who was obedient to the Pope of Rome, that Italy should now become French. And it is not be-

cause the Apostle Peter was originally from Galilee that Italy should now invade Israel. It is, however, this crusade mentality which prevails at Moscow.

Finally, let us examine Putin's legal arguments. They are closely connected to his military strategy, so it is necessary to quote him at length:

“But what do we hear from our colleagues in Western Europe and the United States? They say we are violating the norms of international law. First of all, it is a good thing that they finally remember that at least there is such a thing as international law – better late than never. (...) The armed forces of Russia never entered Crimea. They were already there in accordance with an international accord (...) Next point. When it declared its independence and decided to organize a referendum, the Supreme Council of Crimea referred to the Charter of the United Nations which speaks of the right of nations to self-determination. In this regard, I must remind you that when Ukraine seceded from the USSR, it did exactly the same thing – almost word for word. Ukraine invoked this right, yet the habitants of Crimea were denied it. And why? We constantly hear from the United States and Western Europe that Kosovo is a special case. What is it that makes it so special for them? It turns out that it is because the conflict in Kosovo claimed so many human lives. Is that a legal argument? The decision of the international court says nothing about this. This is not even a case of double standards. This is brutal,

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primitive, colossal cynicism (...) I'm going to affirm it clearly: if the local self-defense forces in Crimea had not taken the situation in hand, there would have been victims there too. (...) Since the dissolution of bipolarity on the planet, we no longer have stability. The main international institutions have not been strengthened; on the contrary, in many cases they have suffered grave deterioration. Our Western partners, led by the United States of America, prefer to be guided in their concrete policies not by international law, but by the force of arms. They have come to believe in their exclusivity, in their exceptionalism. They believe that they can decide by themselves what the destinies of the world should be, and that they are the only ones who are always in the right (...) But in fact they have lied to us on several occasions, they have made decisions behind our backs, they have presented us with faits accomplis. This has come about with the expansion of NATO towards the East as well as with the establishment of military infrastructures on our borders. They keep repeating the same thing over and over: "It's none of your business," That's easy to say. (...) Let me also point out that we have already heard declarations from Kiev that Ukraine will soon become part of NATO."

There is a lot of bad faith in this part of the speech. As for NATO, no treaty was ever signed forbidding NATO to incorporate new members. Putin falsely claims that the Ukrainian government declared that it wanted to become part of NATO. Prime Minister

Yatsenyuk affirmed very early and very firmly that, in spite of the annexation of Crimea, he would not ask to join NATO. Moreover, Putin knows that the right of self-determination, granted to Ukraine in 1991, was possible because the Soviet Union came to an end in 1990 under M. Gorbachev (the reason why the Duma now wants to put him on trial). This right was confirmed on 21 December 1991. Putin also knows perfectly well that there was no “provocation” in Crimea prior to Russian intervention. He himself later admitted that there were Russian soldiers behind the “forces of self-defense”. In the final analysis, Putin clearly and entirely justifies his vision of international relations based on the law of the strongest by referring to the example of Kosovo. This is highly disputable as we shall see. But first we need to distinguish between international law and the laws of the nation states which Putin blithely mixes together.

In his speech, the Russian President is referring to the 2010 decision of the International Court of Justice which confirmed the legal validity of Kosovo’s right to declare its independence, as it had done in 2008. Angela Merkel has qualified this comparison as out and out “shameful”. As Paul Linden-Retek and Evan Brewer have shown, the cases of Kosovo and Crimea have absolutely nothing in common for three main reasons. First, when Kosovo declared independence on 17 February 2008, it was no longer under the authority of Serbia but under the protection of the United Nations. Resolution No.1244 of the Security Council is its legal framework. Now, unlike the right of nation states to reject secession of a region – even

if it is autonomous – international law “neither supports nor prevents” a declaration of independence. In 2010, the judges of the International Court of Justice ruled that what is not prohibited by international law is permitted. In such cases, the usage is the degree of international recognition. In 2008, 9 of the 15 members of the Security Council of the United Nations recognized Kosovo as a *de facto* independent State. Thus the declaration of independence only confirmed a political fact. This is clearly very different from the case of Crimea which in March 2014 was still under Ukraine sovereignty. Moreover, on 17 March, all the members of the Security Council pronounced themselves opposed to the referendum in Crimea (with the exception of Russia; China abstained). The second major difference is that, in the case of Kosovo, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia clearly proved ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity had been committed by Serbia against the Kosovars. In Crimea, not a single shot was fired before the “green men” of Russia invaded the peninsula. On the other side, since 5 March, there have been several victims among the Ukrainians and Tatars of Crimea. Finally, unlike Crimea which was annexed by Russia in fifteen days, the recognition of the independence of Kosovo by the United States and the majority of Western European countries took more than eight years. It was only after two failed attempts at mediation that Kosovo came to assume its full responsibilities. These had been by the President of Finland, the Nobel Peace Prize recipient Marti Ahtisari, and the German diplomat Wolfgang Ischinger. Each mediation proposal had included plans for the

co-existence of two nations, Serbian and Kosovar, leaving the form of the final system of sovereignty undetermined –.

At the end of his speech, Putin reveals the basis of his mythology. He believes that Russia suffers the same wound as Germany did when it was divided into two Republics during the Cold War.

“Our nation, however, has unequivocally supported the sincere and irresistible desire of the Germans for national unity. I am convinced that you have not forgotten this. So I expect the citizens of Germany to likewise support the aspirations of the Russians, of historical Russia, to restore unity.”

It is hard to see on what the parallel is based on. In fact it was the USSR which fell apart by itself in 1991, and the independence of Ukraine was not a decision from outside. It reposes on a referendum in which the populations of the East and the South participated massively. Secondly, as we will see now, only a minority of the Ukrainians of Donbass want integration into Russia.

*The South East of Ukraine
does not want to be integrated into Russia*

Do the regions of the South and East of Ukraine want to become part of Russia? That is the question posed by some young researchers of the International Institute of Sociology of Kiev in the eight regions of

the South-East between 10 and 15 April 2014. The survey contacted 3,232 adults from the 8 regions of Ukraine (Odessa, Mikolayiv, Kherson, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Zaporozhye, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk), half by telephone conversations (1,476), the other half by personal conversations (1,756) with at least 400 interviews conducted per region. The margin of error of the sampling was not more than 0.95%. 68.9% of those interviewed identified themselves as Ukrainians, while they constituted 87.8% of Ukrainian citizens (but 90% of those interviewed did not want Russia to interfere in the drafting of the Ukrainian Constitution). Their survey was published on 18 April by Yulia Mostovaya, editor-in-chief of the bilingual Ukrainian newspaper Zerkalo Tyzhden.¹⁵¹

The response to the question posed in the survey was a resounding “No”. Almost all the regions voted against it - 69.7%. The highest margins in favor were the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk, but even these did not go beyond 30.3% and 27.5% respectively of the people surveyed. An average of 15.4% of the population of the eight regions wanted to become part of Russia. In the two regions most open to Russia, about 25% of respondents said that they would be willing to demonstrate in the streets, but 60% of the rest of the population rejected this option. These two regions of Donetsk and Luhansk should be considered separately from the rest of the South East given that in Dnipropetrovsk 89.9% of the population rejected any form of integration (83.3% at Zaporozhye, 89,1% at

151. I. Vedernikova, Y. Mostovaya, S. Rakhmanin, “Iougo-Vostok, vetv dreva nashevo”, ZN, 18.04,2014.zn.ua.

Mikolaiv, 75.7 at Kharkiv, 75.8% at Odessa 75.7% at Kharkiv, 91.1% at Kherson). But there is a pro-Ukrainian consensus in the South-East.

Another indicator on this point could be added: 70% of the population of the South-East does not consider V. Yanukovich the legitimate president of Ukraine. It is true that less than 50% of the population of these regions consider A. Yatsenyuk as the legitimate prime minister. But people are waiting for elections, and also refuse to take up arms. 76.6% of the South-East condemns the seizure of public buildings by the “separatists”. To be sure, the fact that 11.7% of the population supports these actions (which the government calls terrorist) is a worrying sign. All the more so in that at Donetsk and Luhansk 18.1% and 22.4% of the population support them.

This survey has made all of Ukraine realise that it had been wrong to think of the South-East as a homogeneous region. The responses are very different from region to region.

The clearest example is the disparity of opinions concerning Crimea. 44.3% of the population thinks that what has happened is the result of an illegal annexation (Mikolaiv 68.2%, Dnipropetrovsk 61.1%, Kherson 56.7%, Zaporozhye 53.6%, Odessa 46.9%, Kharkiv 42.8%, Donetsk 25.7% and Luhansk 26.8%). Yet 43% of the population believes that “the incorporation of Crimea into Russia is the free choice of the inhabitants of Crimea”. The inhabitants of the region nearest to Kherson are the most skeptical with 6.2% while among those further away in Donetsk and Lu-

hansk, 62.9% and 58.1% believe the information they receive on television i.e. Russian television.

When they were asked about Russian military intervention in Ukraine, only 11.7% of those interviewed supported it (19.3% in the region of Donetsk and Luhansk; but only 4.7% in Kherson and 4.2% in Zaporozhye). 7% would welcome it and 2.1% would even be ready to join the Russian army (the highest figure was at Donetsk with 3.5%). The first things the people want the government to do are, in order of priority: to disarm the population (37.8%), to reestablish political and economic cooperation with Russia (23%), to promote the economic development of the regions (22.4%), to organize presidential elections (17.6%) and parliamentary elections (14.5%), to get away from radical, pro-nationalist rhetoric (16.3%) and to establish a balanced political culture (15.2%). Only 11% of the population (17.1% for Luhansk and Donetsk) want the State to introduce a second official language. The people of the South-East also reject the Russian proposal to federalize Ukraine (it was supported by 11.8%; with 19.1% and 21.6% at Donetsk and Luhansk). On the other hand, people supported the proposition of decentralization put forth by the government of Yatsenyuk.

One of the most striking results of this survey is that in the South-East, which voted massively for Yanukovych in the presidential elections of 2010 and for the Party of the Regions in the legislative elections in 2012 and whose elites made up a large proportion of the cadres of the government (especially the region of Donetsk), 11.3% of the population feel

responsible for the actions of Yanukovych and his entourage over the last four years. At Donetsk, scarcely 2.5% of those interviewed replied “Yes, definitely” to this question on joint-responsibility. This is pretty eloquent and needs no further comment, other than that the region of Donbass had been one of the most sovietized in the USSR.

It was necessary to study in detail the sentiments of the inhabitants of the South and East of Ukraine in order to understand that the project of federalizing Ukraine would be an act of betrayal on the part of the central government of the population that were victims of the activities of the Russian Secret Services. Moreover, at the beginning of May, Vladimir Putin showed on two occasions that he had a direct influence on the separatists: by letting Vladimir Loukin go free, within a half day, then the observers from OSCE who had been kidnapped at Sloviansk. Then on 7 May he advised the “Partisans of the Republic of Donetsk” to not organize a referendum of self-determination on 11 May but rather defer it. For his part, Arseniy Yatsenyuk informed the President of Russia that same day that “no referendum had been set up in Ukraine on that date”. He asked Putin to withdraw all the groups of diversion of the Russian Secret Services from Ukrainian soil and to stop providing arms and financial support to the terrorists.”

Conclusion

We have seen that responsibility for the Russian-Ukrainian conflict clearly belongs to Russia. We have

also noted, in studying his speech of 18 March, that President Putin develops a false argument because of both his own mythology and his lack of historical and legal training. We understood that this mythology and this mistaken argumentation were only a smokescreen. The Russian President manipulates his audience and comes out with bare-faced lies when he cannot get away with half-truths. He is a nihilist at the philosophical level, and only believes in the law of the strongest both on the international and national plane. He is a man with a strong will who manipulates reality according to what he is trying to accomplish. In his press conference of 17 April, he revived the name of New Russia to substantiate his ambitions in this region. He does not hesitate to invoke the desire of belonging to Russia on the part of the inhabitants of this large region comprised of eight oblasts (sub regions), even though the facts show that this region, in its vast majority, reject this solution.

For all these reasons, it is clear that the scenario of Great Russia can only end in failure. The inhabitants of Crimea already had a wake-up call when they heard the Russian head of state propose that the peninsula become a vast zone of casinos. This wake-up call risks being even worse for the populations of Donetsk and Luhansk. They are expecting economic support from Russia when in fact Russia is closing their own coal mines and, unlike Ukraine, has absolutely no need of this industry which would require heavy investment. But the return to reality risks being most painful is in Russia itself. When the people will

rediscover their freedom and find out to their horror that, in the space of two months, hundreds of people died in Ukraine in the name of the dream of bringing Russian lands together. In addition, the “Zatokrym-nash” (the “In any case Crimea is ours” - as they now call the three quarters of the Russian population who support its annexation) will have to take upon themselves important investments to be able to govern the peninsula from a distance. The only bridge which would unite Russia and Crimea is one starting from Kerch and would cost an estimated \$6 billion according to the newspaper Kommersant. Aside from politician Boris Nemtsov and historian Andrei Zubov, those who have attacked Putin’s policies in Ukraine are rare. But at least these two have, thereby saving the honour of Russia.

Chapter 9

The Steps of Reconciliation

In all probability, the forthcoming presidential elections in Ukraine should allow Petro Poroshenko to succeed Victor Yanukovich. The Ukrainians believe that Petro Poroshenko is the man of the hour in so far as he symbolizes the new face of national unity acquired at Independence Square in Kiev and elsewhere in Ukraine. First of all, he is a man who speaks Russian as well as Ukrainian. He was born on 26 September 1965 in Bohhrad, in a Russian-speaking region, not far from Odessa, but he grew up in Vynnitsa and became a deputy of this Ukrainian-speaking region of West Central Ukraine. He comes from a poor region, southwest of the country near Moldavia, but he completed his studies in the capital where he graduated from the famous Institute of International Relations at the University of Chevchenko. He is an Orthodox Christian (the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of Moscow) but defends the Ukrainian identity of the Church and does not side with the pro-Moscow Ukrainian bishops. His mother is of Ukrainian nationality and his father is of Jewish descent. He is considered one of the richest men

in Ukraine (*Forbes Magazine* estimates his personal fortune at more than a billion dollars), but his business Company is well-known since his Roshen chocolates are sold on every street corner and every Ukrainian household can access his television channel, “5 Kanal”. He was part of the team of the former president Victor Yushchenko (who is the godfather of his twins) but he participated in the foundation of the Party of Regions and assumed the post of Minister of the Economy in the government of Azarov under the presidency of Yanukovich. The business world had confidence in him, especially the bankers, since he had been Governor of the National Bank of Ukraine—but he is also respected by the public administration because of his ministerial experience and his direction of the National Council of Security and Defence. Because of his closeness to Victor Yushchenko, he was severely criticized by Yulia Tymoshenko who quickly saw him as a rival, but he also succeeded in working in her government as an efficient Minister of Foreign Affairs between October 2009 and March 2010. He is a man who put himself on the line at Maidan by sharing his ministerial experience and international address book with the national movement. On several occasions, he risked his life at Independence Square, but he also accompanied Yatsenyuk and Klitschko to the Conference on International Security at Munich on 1-2 February, at a crucial moment of the resistance movement. His television channel, Kanal 5, remained objective during the Revolution of Dignity to the point where the government tried to shut it down on 20 February. But the interruption of programmes only lasted a few hours.

Above all, Poroshenko is a man of experience and dialogue. After the Orange Revolution, in Spring 2005, he was accused of mingling personal interests with public responsibilities, but these conflicts of interest were never proven. During the presidential campaign of 2014, he took the initiative by announcing, on 2 April, that he would sell his Roshen Company if he were elected. Moreover, his capacity to form alliances and compromises is extraordinary; he succeeded in convincing Vitali Klitschko not to stand in the presidential elections, even though the latter had announced his candidacy with a great deal of conviction more than a year before. In spite of the opposition of Yulia Tymoshenko, he announced, during the course of his campaign, that he would forge alliances with her party, Batkivshyna, and would work with her, if she accepted, and with Arseniy Yatsenyuk, which would be more likely.

Finally, Poroshenko is a man who knows Russia well, since he has a factory at Lipetsk and makes some of his money there. During his electoral campaign, he announced that his country's membership of NATO was not on his agenda – a sign which might reassure the Kremlin. At the same time his Ukrainian identity is indisputable. With his wife Marina, who is a doctor, and his 4 children, he regularly participates, as is the custom, in feasts celebrating the country's national identity, wearing traditional Ukrainian costumes (religious feasts accompanied by folk dances and songs). But his is an open patriotism, inclusive of differences. His first act as a deputy, in March 2014, after the changing of the Constitution, was to work at

a resolution which would guarantee the rights of the Tatar people.

But a president, as legitimate and competent as he might be, will not be able to establish peace all by himself. The Russian-Ukrainian situation is extremely tense, as was the Franco-German relationship in the past. It could tip the world into a new international conflict if the leaders and citizens of this planet do not provide (and as quickly as possible) the means needed to avoid a war. There are, of course, many possible scenarios based on events. Uncontrolled acts, committed today by one side or the other, could quickly make a full-fledged war inevitable. The priority of the Ukrainian government is to avoid a blood bath in the anti-terrorist operation it is waging and to avoid a “Transnistria scenario” in Eastern Ukraine. It is probable that the recognition of the legitimacy of the Ukrainian presidential elections by Putin’s government, on 7 May 2014, was dictated by fear of the “economic sanctions scenario.” The previous day, the French President Francois Hollande had announced that more sanctions would be inevitable if Russia impeded the Ukrainian presidential vote. However events might evolve, it seems to me that a certain number of measures should be taken by Ukraine, by Russia and by the international community, with a view to gradually promoting peace within the ex-USSR as well as world-wide. It goes without saying that our road map is based on our narrative of the events and our interpretation of the mythological element of the conflict.

On the Ukrainian side

Our analysis shows that Ukraine is now living in a similar time to that experienced in France in 1789. Let it be clear that this is an analogy and not a term by term comparison. The demonstrators at Maidan didn't cut any one's head off as did the "sans-culottes" at Paris. Victor Yanukovich has a profile different from that of Louis XVI and Patriarch Kirill is no Pope Pius VI. All the same, from a theological-political point of view, the same dynamic can be seen in both cases. The Cossack national anthem has never been sung so often on the Ukrainian public squares. The Orthodox Church of the patriarchate of Moscow, in the early 1990s, refused to admit the reality of a local Ukrainian Church. This Church of Kiev, in association with the Greek Catholic Church, is at the heart of the formation of a new Ukrainian nation state. The three Maidans of 1989, 2004 and 2013 represent so many stages in the formation of a new political structure which is post-Soviet but which could also be said to be post-Imperial. Throughout these stages the values of liberty, justice and equality reunited the Ukrainians of the East and of the West. But the winter of 2013-2014 marked a major turning point in the evolution of Ukrainian awareness. The country experienced its symbolic moment of national affirmation against the corruption of the regime through a succession of events: the taking over of Maidan, the flight of Yanukovich, the negative reaction both of the Patriarch of Moscow and the new Tsar of Russia. The latter felt that their vision of the world was being questioned by this new form of democratic

governance under pressure from the “sans-culottes”. The attempts at counterrevolution and the conscription of citizens to save the nation from the invader also entered into this revolutionary dynamic which is now playing itself out under our very eyes. This analogy with the French Revolution should first remind the Russians that, in the modern era, national logic is more powerful and more able to mobilize energies than the logic of Imperialism. This analogy should also remind Western democracies that the social contract between a people and a State always depends on values which themselves determine virtues. Finally, the consciousness of this Ukrainian revolutionary dynamic can help the Ukrainians of today avoid the agonies and wars which France experienced for 200 years with Prussia and then Germany.

A last word on this point: It is not a question of making the nation state sacred. I am perfectly aware of the violence committed by these political regimes in the 20th century. On the other hand, an historical perspective should convince us that we are dealing with a necessary stage for many peoples over at least three centuries. The objective is therefore to be able to imagine the creation of Ukrainian and Russian nation states while allowing them to participate, once the memories are reconciled on both sides and each one in its own rhythm, in larger political spaces.

In my opinion, this newfound consciousness is possible if the Ukrainian elites understand – and this is something which appears clearer from a distance – that, during these recent events, Ukraine has overwhelmingly discovered itself as a bicultural nation.

We have seen this clearly in the course of our narrative. Those who, in 2012, proposed a monolingual policy, a return to a Constitution of 2004 which had not been adapted and a liberal religious policy have now changed. More fundamentally, this means that from now on the Ukrainians should affirm themselves, incarnate themselves even more and make political decisions. A bicultural people usually balk at doing this. I have often heard this anecdote in Ukraine: “What is the difference between a language and a dialect? The language has an army.” This anecdote reveals the care the Ukrainians take to avoid “politicizing” things at the risk of dividing its citizens. The Ukrainians prefer to enrich themselves, without any exterior edicts, or daily mental gymnastics that consist in linguistically measuring the gap between the two connections of things and people. At the same time, today Ukrainians should understand that the simple policy of tolerating the Russian language can no longer be satisfactory. The difference between Canada and Ukraine where the populations are bilingual is that one is at peace for having taken good measures at the right time in favor of the nation, while the other is at war for not having wanted to question its monolingual policy. It is the State which should adapt itself to the bicultural nation and not the contrary. It should make a priority of drawing up a framework that is able to respond to its population in two languages. It should not fear unfair competition from the Russian language since, as can be seen in other bilingual countries, minorities blossom in a system which recognizes them. The example of the Swedish minority in Finland is revealing in this aspect. The Ukrainians can also take inspiration from

the Canadian model which allows the French speaking and English speaking people to live together harmoniously and define themselves both as Canadians. The Ukrainians will have to convince themselves that it is possible for a nation to live its bilingualism while being alongside such a powerful nation as Russia. (such as Canadians who are alongside the powerful USA).

Yatsenyuk was the first to draw out the consequences from this newfound awareness. Here is what he announced on 9 May to the Ukrainians in his address to the nation:

“When we talk of decentralization, we are also talking about our policy towards persons. When it is a question of what feasts to celebrate, what heroes to honor, what Churches to pray in, what language to speak, the response can never be imposed from above. That is something which depends on specific localities. We conserve the law on languages, Kivalov-Kolesnichenko, which was approved by the Communists and the Party of Regions. In the regions where the majority of the people speak Russian, this language enjoys regional juridical status. As the Head of the government I propose that, while leaving Ukrainian as the only official language of the State, the regional councils be given the right to give Russian and other languages a special status. The unity of the nation cannot be assured without learning to listen to one another and without finding compromises.”¹⁵²

152. http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=247279843&cat_id=244276429

On a political level, Ukraine should go forward on the path of decentralization opened up by Arseniy Yatsenyuk. But the Ukrainian government should give priority to protecting its population in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. This will certainly take place through an effort of diplomacy, urging Russia to reconsider the status of Crimea. Arseniy Yatsenyuk has proposed a new referendum for Crimea, this time involving all the concerned parties. This path seems unavoidable unless we want to turn Crimea into a new Alsace-Moselle. Moreover, in order to protect its terrorized citizens of the East, Ukraine owes it to itself to finish off its anti-terrorist campaign and urge the population to leave the combat zones. It is also necessary that Ukraine, which lost with Crimea, its status as a country protected by an international treaty, reflects about the future of its security. In the case of a progressive reconciliation with Russia, Ukraine should encourage the international community to create a new military security organization in Europe. This would be a good way to raise a new awareness of its mixed culture, neither by integration into NATO nor absence of protection, but through the active construction of a new model of European security at an international level.

But the country should also reflect on its Constitution. Ukraine of 2014 no longer wants a Constitution that allows a president to bribe judges of the Constitutional Court and thus easily transform a democratic regime into a dictatorial one. The new Ukraine will not be able to give itself the luxury of another failed Orange Revolution. The power struggles between

President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko have shown, in addition to the lack of maturity on the part of those involved, the weaknesses of the Ukrainian parliamentary republic. This is why, in October of 2011, the Commission of Venice proposed (on the basis of the report of Don Bisson and two members of Parliament from Montenegro and Latvia) a certain number of amendments to the Ukrainian electoral laws. The report points out the following question in particular:

“One of the most troubling points is the method used by the majority to change the electoral system, the threshold for obtaining mandates and the prohibition of the formation of electoral blocs. The introduction of these fundamental changes without a prior public debate risks compromising the legitimacy of the project of law even without considering its application.”

Moreover, as the report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) observes, the Constitution of 2004 codifies the principle of imperative mandate and has cemented the function of control in the procuratura type of the Attorney General. In all probability, the recently approved Code of Penal Procedure and the bill relating to the Attorney General are, to all appearances, unconstitutional according to the terms of the Constitution of 2004.¹⁵³ PACE recommends adopting amendments to the Constitution with a first reading before summer and a second reading

153. <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-fr.asp?fileid=20712&lang=fr>.

in September “before particular interests prevail over the seeking of the common good.” The October 2012 recommendations of the Council of Venice concerning this topic are as follows:¹⁵⁴” The proposed law on the office of Procurator (the Attorney General in the US) is an important step towards a reform of the office of Attorney General of Ukraine which will enable it to be in conformity with European norms. It is designed to abandon the function of control which the Attorney General presently exercises over the administration and takes into account a large part of the criticisms expressed by the Council of Venice in previous notifications. If there are still some points to clarify, it clearly seems, all the same, that it will be difficult to bring about an in-depth reformation of the Ukrainian public ministry without making the necessary modifications to the actual Constitution. The following provisions, in particular, should be clarified: (article 1) In the measure where there is no “principle of opportunity”, but a “principle of legality” in the Ukrainian system, it is difficult to see what kind of balance the attorneys are supposed to guarantee to assure the administration of justice. It might be useful to reformulate the provision (...); (article 9) the hierarchical relationship between the Attorney General (and even his whole bureau) and the politicians should be clarified; (article 17). The political independence of the Attorney General is guaranteed by “a procedure relative to the exercises of powers as found in procedural laws and other laws” – this

154. http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL_AD%282012%29019-f

http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL_AD%282011%28937-f

point too needs to be clarified. Moreover, the disposition which guarantees unconditional measures of security intended to protect the members of the family of the Attorney General and his assets seems far-reaching and should depend on the measure of danger in each particular case.”

In religious matters, the Ukrainian State should allow Churches and religions total liberty, but it must take into consideration the consequences of Maidan. After the role played by religions in this Revolution of Dignity, it would be ingenuous to believe that the role of the State is simply to permit Churches to celebrate their religious practices. The nation received strong support from the different religious communities and, above all, from the Patriarchate of Kiev and the Greek Catholic Church. These two Churches were the bearers of the Ukrainian national memory. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church attached to Moscow knew how to distance itself from Patriarch Kirill and bring its support to those who were involved in combative action. And many Protestant, Jewish and Moslem communities were also active in the different Maidans across Ukraine. This is why the State should now recognize the spiritual and ethical resources of the religious communities and allow them not only to express themselves but to unite among themselves. There should be all the more support for this unity among Orthodox Christians and Catholic Christians. We have seen that the Ukrainian Nation was divided by the Empires in the 1660s at a moment when it was no longer able to hold together its religious identity which was both Greek and Latin (beginning in 1596). This policy of reunification after centuries of divi-

sion risks provoking a conflict with Patriarch Kirill of Moscow. But it should be quite possible to suggest that Patriarch Kirill creates a jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Moscow in Ukraine and to propose that this jurisdiction unites itself to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine within regular assemblies based on the model of what is happening elsewhere in the world. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church should probably renew its bonds with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and also with the Romanian Patriarch and other local Churches, in order to inspire such inter-Orthodox conciliarity and also promote a study of Ukrainian ecumenical reality.

The State should also be solicitous in favoring the teaching of ethnic and religious culture following the recommendations of the European Council in 2008. This type of instruction is secular and brings together the different religious traditions. It could also promote inter-religious dialogue in Ukraine, something which hasn't been done for centuries. To do this, it could profit from the experience of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of Lviv and of Mohyla Academy of Kiev. Finally, the State should set up a fiscal percentage which will enable the Ukrainian faithful to transfer 2 or 3% of their taxes to religious communities, be they associative or convictional. That would enable the Churches to be really independent, national and autonomous.

On the Russian side

President Vladimir Putin finds himself at a turning point in his political career. He can continue on a frustrating path because his country no longer enjoys

the degree of recognition it had in the past. In this position he is bound to apply his nationalist mythology. This path can only lead to the isolation of Russia, a vast and bloody international conflict and a total loss of international recognition. This intransigent course was followed in the past by Slobodan Milosevic and wound up in his trial by the International Court of Justice at The Hague and his death in prison. The analogy with S. Milosevic can be challenged by rightly pointing out that Russia disposes of a power and size much more important than Serbia. It is only a question of an analogy here and not of a comparison. What interests me is drawing up a psychological profile of the post-Communist leader who believes to the very end in nationalist mythology, who is even ready to “dance with the skeleton” of the memory of the original birthplace of the country – according to the expression of T. Snyder – in order to be able to affirm the direct continuity between this mythical origin of the nation and expansionist logic. This path is doomed to end in failure. For in modern times, all the nationalist wars based on the ethnic and pseudo-civilizational principle, have led to the collapse of the countries which waged these wars. This was the case both with Germany under Hitler and the USSR.

But Vladimir Putin has an alternative. He can still have his place in Russian history as the man who, in spite of conflicts within the country and outside of it, has realized the impasse of nationalist mythology, has offered a new interpretation of the special evolution of Russian identity and definitively restored the international aura of his country. Even if, in this case

also, analogies should be distinguished from comparisons, we can look to the figure of General de Gaulle to make President Putin understand that his role is not conclusively sealed by history. Just as General de Gaulle, throughout his career, was considered by many French politicians as a military man practicing “a permanent coup d’Etat” (F. Mitterrand), today he is considered as one of the fathers of the French nation by nearly the whole political spectrum. Just as General de Gaulle was tempted by French Algeria but finally renounced this idea, President Putin has the possibility of getting his country through the clash of decolonization. Once again, the two men are different and their careers cannot be compared, but the analogy consists in understanding that there is never anything definitive in history. For my part, I believe that all is still possible for Vladimir Putin. The President is a cultivated man who sincerely believed, at the beginning of the 1990s, that a new post-Communist world was possible. He is a person who is lucid about the problems of Russia, be they alcoholism or high-level corruption. He has refused the neo-liberal theories which would have led his country to collapse. He has looked for new ideological resources on which to reaffirm the authority of the Russian State. The drama is that he has only found an ideological vacuum and has only been able to identify with the dubious readings now circulating in Russia concerning sovereign democracy, Eurasia and the Russian world. He even accepted to try a two-headed adventure with Dmitry Medvedev which favored the insertion of Russia into the global world. It is not for me to justify or not justify Putin’s career. I am not an examining magistrate.

Moreover, as we have already seen, it is the Russian system which must be changed and not just a single person.

What a shame it is that, at the moment when Russia was opening up, the Western powers and especially the America of George W. Bush, did not try to build international relations of a new quality which would have been both frank in its requirements and principles and authentically inclusive. What was the response of the West to V. Putin's speech at Munich on 10 February 2007? Let us recall this angry cry of the Russian President:

“We are witnessing an ever increasing scorn of the principal foundations of international law. What is more, certain norms and, in fact, almost the whole legal system of a single State – and we are referring, of course, mainly to the United States – has overflowed its national boundaries in all domains: in the economy, in politics, in the humanitarian sphere and has imposed itself on other States. Who profits from that? In the realm of international affairs, more and more we come up against the desire to solve such and such a problem by using what is called political opportunism, based on political situation. Obviously, that is very dangerous, no one feels secure any longer – and I want to stress this – because no one can find refuge behind international law. And obviously, this policy is the catalyst in the arms race.”¹⁵⁵

155.<http://www.solidariteetprogres.org/a-repartir/articles-varies/Discours-de-Vladimir-Poutine-a-la.html>

What were the Western reactions to the request made later by Dmitry Medvedev to reform the European system of security? Here are the propositions of a new European common defence treaty proposed by the Russian President at Evian on 8 October 2008 to the World Policy Conference organized by the IFRI (French Institute of International Relations). These propositions of the Russian President are worth citing in their integrity:¹⁵⁶

“First of all, this treaty should clearly affirm the fundamental principles of security and intergovernmental relations in this Euro-Atlantic zone. These principles should include the commitment to fulfill, in good faith, the obligations to the terms of international law; the respect of the sovereignty, of the territorial integrity and the political independence of the States and the respect of all the other principles established in this truly fundamental document which is the Charter of the United Nations. Secondly, the inadmissible character of the use of force or of the threat of the use of force in international relations should be clearly affirmed. It is fundamental that the treaty guarantees a uniform interpretation and application of these principles. This treaty should equally put into place a unified approach to the prevention and resolution of conflicts within the Euro-Atlantic zone. In this matter, the accent should be placed

156. <http://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-etrangere-2008-4-page-733htm>

on negotiated regulations, taking into account the positions of the different parties and strictly respecting the mechanisms for the preservation of peace. It would, moreover, be useful to reexamine and organize the procedures for the resolution of the conflicts themselves. Thirdly, this treaty should guarantee equal security for all: and I really mean equal security, to the exclusion of any other formula. In this respect, we should base ourselves on three “refusals”: The refusal to assure one’s own security at the expense of others; The refusal to authorize actions which (by the interplay of alliances or military coalitions) weaken the unity of the area of national security; Finally, the refusal of the development of military alliances menacing the security of other parties to the treaty. We should concentrate on the political and military issues for these are the issues of *hard security* which are at the centre of debate today. It is precisely in these domains that we notice a recent dangerous lack of mechanisms of control. Fourthly, it is important that the treaty confirm that no State, no international organization, can have exclusive right to maintain peace and stability in Europe. This also applies fully to Russia. In the fifth place, it seems necessary to establish basic parameters for arms control and reasonable limits for military reinforcement. New mechanisms and procedures of cooperation would also be necessary in domains such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), terrorism and drug traffic. Our common task regarding such a treaty should also be to verify

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how structures which were created in the past can respond to the necessary criteria of today. I insist on the fact that we are neither trying to abolish nor to weaken anything which has existed up until now. All that we want is to arrive at working together more harmoniously on the basis of common rules. Life will determine the best tribunal for these negotiations. And if we agree to carry forward with this project, it will be essential that an international community of experts be associated with it.”¹⁵⁷

European defence policy was, at that time and still is today, practically nonexistent. For its part, NATO, after the Russian intervention in Georgia in 2008, did not have enough confidence in Russia to undertake such a profound reform of international security. The cooperation between NATO and Russia resumed in 2009 but it was only concerned with some targeted subjects such as the common struggle against terrorism and piracy and the authorization of the use of air space for the Western armed forces in Afghanistan.¹⁵⁸ The “strategic concept” approved by the Heads of State of NATO at Lisbon on November 20, 2010, did not take the Russian propositions into account. There was no response to the legitimate question posed by Russia concerning a defence treaty and common security. But everyone knows that there will be no real peace unless that peace is shared.

157. <http://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-etrangere-2008-4-page-733.htm>

158. http://www.nato-russia-council.info/media/105050/nato-russia_council_factsheet_final_2013-11-07_trilingual.pdf

It is certain that the invasion, then annexation, of Crimea only complicates the situation and blocks the horizon of a true dialogue. All the same, a solution must be sought, beginning today. Such a solution commences by reestablishing international law. In 1994, Russia signed the Memorandum of Budapest guaranteeing the frontiers of Ukraine and it cannot take back this guarantee. It seems to me that it is vital to propose to Russia, as soon as possible, an international conference on Crimea, before the situation at Simferopol deteriorates and produces new forms of terrorism. This conference would discuss, with Ukraine, the possibility of a new referendum of auto-determination for the people of Crimea, this time organized under international supervision and with multiple options agreed to by all the parties involved. It would equally be necessary that, at the same time, the international community prepare an international conference on security which would take serious account of the propositions of the Russian government in 2008. Military leaders know that the best way to arrive at relationships of confidence and peace is to make a serious commitment based on mutual guarantees. That has not happened up to now. Too much time has been lost in scrimmaging and double talk.

On the Russian side, this evolution of international relations should be accompanied by an awareness of the impasse of the nationalist mythology. In an age of globalization, the Russian State will no longer be able to confine its state employees within its borders for any length of time as it decided to do in 2013 when it prohibited the members of the Ministry of Interior

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from traveling abroad. In the same way, as can be seen by the recurrent demonstrations in Russia in favor of Ukraine, the vast movement of anticlericalism which is developing in the country and the total removal of the real intelligentsia from the spheres of decision-making, Russia is confronted with a deep moral crisis and a resurgence of interior violence. Finally, the Kremlin's propaganda services cannot always be controlled as they are at present. The experience of the USSR has shown that truth always triumphs. The isolation of a North Korea will not work with a cultivated and informed European people.¹⁵⁹ Thus one of the priorities of the Kremlin should be to liberalize the information market. This will not prevent it from stimulating new forms of communication which draw their professional code of ethics from Russian

159. "What did Belkovski say? That Putin possesses 40 billion dollars in actions in companies directed by his friends of St. Petersburg. According to this report, he would possess 4.5% of the giant gas firm Gazprom (directed by his former aide at City Hall) and at least 50% of the most important private Russian oil export society, Gunvor. This firm is under Guennadi Timchenko who collaborated with Putin in the foundation of a judo club in St. Petersburg. After Belkovski revealed this, it was discovered that Gunvor has a very mysterious structure of properties: based in Geneva, the society belongs to a Dutch holding firm which is itself a subsidiary of a company in Cyprus whose postal address is in the Virgin Islands. Still more troubling is the fact, admitted by its directors, that Gunvor is really owned by three associates, one of whom wishes to remain anonymous. Would this be Putin, as the political scientist affirms?" <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/presidentielle-russe/20120302.OBS2797/russie-la-fortune-cachee-de-poutine.html> This information has been challenged by Guennadi Timchenko, a man who was placed on the sanctions list by the American administration.

spirituality and which will be able to inspire the best experiences from reporters of hope which flourish almost everywhere in the world.

On the other hand, it is certain that the millionaires who have made their fortunes in Russia over the last 15 years will not easily accept the next step of the development of capitalism i.e. national redistribution. But that step is inevitable. Russian society has become one of the most socially unequal societies in the world. The Russian oligarchs should meditate on the anger of the Ukrainian people that built up against Victor Yanukovich and his family. The visit to his residence in Mejugurie the day after his flight and the discovery of his phenomenal collections, of yachts and paintings by the Masters made a deep impact on the Ukrainian nation. The fortune of Putin is estimated at 40 billion dollars. Boris Nemtsov, leader of the party Republican Party of Russia (Parnas), believes that this sum is grossly underestimated. Russia is ranked 6th on the world in the number of its billionaires.¹⁶⁰ It is here that the sanctions can play a dissuasive role for the circle of business men who surround Putin. Guennady Tymchenko, President of the Franco-Russian Chamber of Commerce was placed on the list of sanctions by the American government in the month of March. On April 28, about 15 societies linked to Tymchenko (from the Volga Group to Stroytransgaz) were sanctioned.¹⁶¹ Tymchenko is a close friend of Putin with whom he practices judo. He has at his disposal a fortune estimated at 7 billion dollars. As well

160. <http://fr.ria.ru/business/20121005/196233242.html>

161. <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-04-28/why-the-u-dot-s-dot-is-carpet-bombing-the-business-empire-of-a-putin-ally>

as the Gunvor Group, he is the owner of the Volga Group and a whole series of societies of construction of gas lines, airports and harbor infrastructures. Other close friends of Putin have been sanctioned such as the brothers Arkady and Boris Rotenberg. From the European side, about 50 names have been sanctioned during two series of sanctions in March and April. They include a Vice Prime Minister (Dmitri Kozak), one of the Chiefs of Staff of the Army (Valeri Guer-asimov) as well as a Vice President of the Douma (Lyudmila Chvetsova). This type of sanction has repercussions on the whole of Russian society and could affect the habit of the Russian middle class of passing their vacations in European countries. In fact the ruble could lose much of its value in the months to come if the economic sanctions come into effect. It is clear that they will have more impact when they hit the economy of the Russian oligarchs on a broader scale. These sanctions do not only touch the personal wealth of the upper circles of the Kremlin. They will also considerably limit possibilities of development in Russia, close parts of its market and reduce the level of foreign investment in the Russian economy. In this context Russia fears that France will not deliver two Mistral aircraft carriers with state of the art technology. Finally, the diversification in the supply of energy sources which the Europeans will certainly carry out if the conflict worsens, risks putting Russia into a delicate standoff with China. It is probable that China will exploit the difficulties between Russia and the European Union to negotiate a lowering of the price it pays for the hydrocarbons it imports from its neighbor.

Thus it is very important for the regime to back-track and understand that the nationalist mentality can only lead to the economic, cultural and moral impoverishment of Russia. Russia possesses a spiritual and political heritage quite capable of inspiring a Russian mythology which is open, inclusive and participatory. One need only mention the democratic system of the city of Novgorod in the Middle Ages and, above all, the collection of the great figures of Russian culture, from Alexander Pushkin to Vladimir Vernadsky, who bear witness to its European identity. It is not a question of Russia denying its spiritual and patriotic convictions, dearly acquired in the 20th century by its progressive rejection of Communist ideology. All the same, it would be extremely profitable for Russia to support the creation of a network of independent historians who would be able to write a serene and non-mythified history of Russia.¹⁶² This network could also work in conjunction with a team of independent Ukrainian historians, using the Franco-German model, with the objective of realizing a Russian-Ukrainian history. This network of historians would finally be able to work with universities from all over the world to study the question of lustration, of the purification of the post-Communist memory. It is very evident, therefore, that time must be given for Russia to disentangle itself from its autocratic structures and criticize the cheap mythology which attracted the Russian elites in the 1990s when they

162. <http://www.forbes.ru/mneniya-column/istoriya/249845-strannaya-istoriya-kakim-budet-edinyi-uchebnik>

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came forth from a suffocating trial under a totalitarian government.

Such a task demands that the Russian Orthodox Church recognizes the specificity of the Ukrainian memory of the Rus' of Kiev. If it does this, it would be able to recognize the legitimacy of the development of this Church which is based on its acceptance of the Council of Florence. It seems to me that it is essential that the patriarchate of Moscow, which wants to form its highest cadres both in Moscow and in other university cities abroad, must cease to mythify its past. I might add that the discovery and integration of the new democratic and personalistic interpretation of the myth of the Rus' proposed by the Russian emigrants will not happen overnight. The Orthodox Church in the world, far beyond the borders of Russia, still refuses the critique of Orthodox Scholasticism carried out by certain brilliant personalities of the School of Paris such as Sergei Bulgakov, George Fedotov and Nikolai Berdyaev. I am however, convinced that this will take place for, as I have written elsewhere, the Orthodox Church is being progressively consumed by a number of internal crises.¹⁶³ Most of the Orthodox Churches refused to participate in the ecumenical movement prior to the Second World War. In spite of the fulminations of a couple of hundred monks, they now all participate in institutions of the ecumenical movement. When the works of Fedotov were published in Paris in the 1930s, it was in a very limited edition. Now they can be found

163. A. Arjakovsky, *Qu'est-ce que l'orthodoxie?* Paris, Gallimard, 2013.

in all the university libraries in Russia. Although Father Sergius Bulgakov was considered a heretic by the Patriarch of Moscow in the 1930s, today several of his disciples have been canonized by the Orthodox Church and more and more people think that Father Sergius himself should be declared a saint. Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev himself, in one of his first works, recognized the importance of the theological renewal at the School of Paris.

I would like to add that this distancing from Communism, and from the nationalist mythology which succeeded it, could contribute to the reconciliation of Russia with itself. It would also offer to the world new paths of knowledge which are not disconnected from the spiritual. It is perhaps there that can be found the famous “Russian idea” sought after by Nikolai Berdyaev as well as Nikita Mikhalkov. This reconciliation should take place through a reciprocal rediscovery of the genius of Soviet science and of the profound intellectual riches of the Russian emigration. Sergei Bulgakov (1863-1944) and Vladimir Vernadsky (1863-1945) are two great figures of 20th century Russian culture. The first, an economist by training, expelled by Lenin in 1922, brought about a total renewal of Orthodox theology. The second, the founder of the National Institute of Radium, winner of the Stalin Prize in 1943, is now considered the father of Soviet science.

Both of these men tried to define being, not in the ancient manner, as physis, but as a living, unfinished reality, in relationship with God and mankind. For Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky, the noosphere

(which he distinguishes from the biosphere) was the sphere of the spirit (*nous* in Greek), a concept similar to that of pneumatosphere of Florensky and the noosphere of Teilhard de Chardin. Vernadsky understood the noosphere as the stage of “heavy matter” (corresponding to the state of ether in Sanskrit literature: a non-material reality where all human thoughts are preserved and actualized). The geologist Vernadsky rejected any separation between matter and the spirit (as can be seen by the presence of calcium in minerals, vegetables and animals) but defined life as “living matter”. In his view, all matter which is presently non-animated or inert has the potentiality, the capacity of becoming a living reality.

This form of “pantheism” is distinct from the “panentheism” of Bulgakov, for the latter, nature becomes aware of itself by referring to something beyond itself. But it is very close to sophiology as a science of the interconnectedness of all creation. For Bulgakov, sophiology is, in fact, the science of theanthropic cooperation.

Like Vernadsky, Bulgakov wanted to insist on the presence of life at the most profound levels of immanence and of humanity at the most profound level of transcendence. Both insist on uniting metaphysical concerns and scientific creativity. But they have been divided by political events beyond their control which impedes a convergence of their thought. Today the time has come to let them dialogue again and, through them, to re-think the project of Fiodorov of “a task in common” in this age of globalization, of the depletion of sources of energy and of the post-secu-

lar spiritual renewal. Rather than making sacred the Rus' of Kiev or the Siberian steppe, Russian thought would have much to gain by delving into the Judeo-Christian Wisdom to explain how the spiritualization of the world is possible today. Russian thought would then find allies who are grateful and cooperative.

On the part of the international community

As we have seen, the international community has a decisive role to play today, through a policy of firm sanctions, and of encouragements in the case of success, in helping Russia and Ukraine to find the way to de-escalate the violence. The international community should also question itself, as soon as possible, about the way international security is now organized. I will not repeat the points I have already dealt with but I would like to add three further important points: energy dependence, European construction and the struggle against propaganda.

On the one hand, Europe should lessen its dependence on hydrocarbons imported from Russia. It is well known that France imports 23% of its gas from Russia and Germany 36%. Angela Merkel has declared that this does not yet constitute a level of "dependency" for Germany and that she would favor the defence of international law over good relations with Moscow. Russia is putting the pressure on Ukraine and, since April, is asking for a pre-payment before any gas is delivered. Ukraine replied that it was ready to do this if the price would not rise above what had been contractually decided upon in the Kharkiv Pact. Moreover, on 17 April the European Union, through the

voice of Jose Manuel Barroso, gave a firm response to President Putin and told him that Russia was contractually responsible for its delivery of gas. In the name of the European Union and its 28 member States, M. Barroso added that it was in the interest of the Russian Federation to remain a trustworthy provider given the evolution of the international gas market. He also assured that the European Union agreed to commit to a structured and global dialogue with Russia and Ukraine concerning the security of the provisions of gas and their transport. He noted that relationships in this domain should be founded on reciprocity, transparency, equity, non-discrimination and openness to competition. Barroso emphasized that “since the provision of gas to the European Union is closely linked to that of Ukraine, we are ready to discuss with all the concerned parties how the contractual obligations in this domain should be respected on the basis of market value and the rules of international law.”¹⁶⁴ For the moment, the discussions have not produced results. They are complicated by the fact that Russia has nationalized Naftogaz in Crimea and taken over the natural gas reserves of the Black Sea which used to belong to Ukraine.

On the other hand, as soon as Russia accepts rediscovering itself as European and ceases its relativist civilizational rhetoric, it should again pose the question, already put forward in 1992 by Mikhail Gorbachev, of a common European home. Following the

164. <http://www.menara.ma/fr/2014/04/17/1125235-barroso-%AO-poutine-la-fiabilit%C3%A9-contractuelle-de-la-russie-entant-que-fournisseur-de-gaz-est-en-jeu.html>

recommendations of Philippe Herzog and Claude Fisher, the founder and president of the think tank Confrontations Europe, a new dialogue with Russia must be devised today which could arrive at a common vision of Europe. This should be done in such a way as to avoid the creation of a Eurasian Union which would align the European ultra-nationalist parties, lead to the paralysis of the European Parliament and, eventually, cause a grave crisis in the very project of a European Union. I take seriously the enlightened analysis of Philippe Herzog, the deputy of Michel Barnier at the European Commission in Brussels, who believes that such a European turnabout and such a policy of the construction of a European common home can only be realized through a spiritual turnabout. The Russians and Ukrainians, like most countries of the ex-Soviet bloc, are conscious of the importance of values as the cement of the European political community. But, along with Andrea Riccardi, Philippe Herzog goes a step further. He speaks of the rediscovery of the spiritual dimension of European democracy. "Europe must become again a spiritual value. Andrea Riccardi is right when he says that the multiple challenges of globalization are being taken up today in a pragmatic and technical manner, without true humanistic soundings. Like Riccardi, we believe that it is necessary to cultivate an historical consciousness of globalization and, for us Europe is a project which contributes to this awareness. Too many misunderstandings have been created by tolerating the belief that the Union could act as if it were providence and that is not its goal, and that the Euro-

pean peoples were by definition interested in sharing a destiny, which does not logically follow.”¹⁶⁵

Finally, the international community must realise the violence of the information war which brings Russia and Ukraine into conflict. European intellectuals should support the European ideal rather than coldly accepting the new Eurasian ideology of the Kremlin. To be aware of the information war means first of all I believe, to be conscious of the gap that exists between the atmosphere of peace in the Western world and the ideological war which is being waged on the Russian-Ukrainian front. Let us take an example. On May 3, Edgar Morin published an article in *Le Monde* entitled “Only A Federal Ukraine Can Guarantee Peace.”¹⁶⁶ The article starts with a good intention: seek peace. But it suffers from a bad initial statement: the idea that “Putin is not a furious madman” and thus there is no need to get upset by his policy of annexing neighboring regions. “Because”, Morin tells us, “the Germany (of Hitler) wanted to conquer, Russia wants to recuperate.” Edgar Morin also believes that “the Russian speaking population – in fact, Russian – voted to be attached to Russia, with the exception of the Tatars of Crimea.” Starting, as we have seen, from erroneous premises, Edgar Morin arrives at a Huntingtonian conclusion that the division of civilizations as the best guarantee for stability in Europe. So he proposes to President Hollande and

165. Philippe Herzog, *Europe, réveille-toi*, Paris, Le Manuscrit, 2013, p.190.

166. http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2014/05/03/seule-une-ukraine-federale-garantira-la-paix_4411107_3232.html

to the government of Manuel Valls that they give a favorable reply to the propositions of V. Putin and S. Lavrov regarding the federalization of Ukraine. Words of this kind from an intellectual, whom I respect, hurt and worry me.

Let us begin at the beginning. Since when are dangerous dictators furious madmen? When you look at pictures of Stalin and Hitler in the 1930s (outside of the exalted speeches of the Fuhrer) you see leaders with a lot of poise and even smiling. Stalin loved children and Hitler was very adroit in the way he seized power. I would not put V. Putin among the “furious madmen”, but I do not see why he should be taken for a statesman after the annexation of Crimea - which was a very serious violation of international law. I do not want to demonise Putin either, as I wrote above he could still save face before the judgment of history. But, all the same, I think that it is necessary to dot the “i’s”. . Here is the doctrine of Putin as he presented it to the Valdai Club on 23 September 2013, summarized by Lilia Shevtsova:

“The Valdai doctrine of Putin is hopeless. It’s like a soup where the cook has mixed incompatible ingredients: Sovietism, Nationalism, Imperialism, Orthodox Fundamentalism. This mixture can hardly be called an “ideology” but the fundamental idea presented by Putin is indisputable. The heart of the doctrine of Putin is the rejection of the West understood as a system of liberal and democratic norms – rejecting it both globally as well as in Russia itself (...) Putin is convinced of

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the uniqueness of Russian civilization. (...) The goal is a Civilization-State founded on traditional values primarily held in place by the Orthodox Church. The foundation of this State-Civilization is autocracy. Iran is the closest model to what awaits us.”¹⁶⁷

I might add that Putin is not limiting this model to Eastern Europe.

Secondly, what secret information does Edgar Morin have that he can claim that the population of Crimea is Russian speaking and hence Russian? In my narrative, I explained that today’s population of Crimea is made up, in great majority, of Ukrainian citizens. I pointed out that only a very small minority of the population participated in the elections. Of course, Edgar Morin can prefer to believe the statistics of the Kremlin propaganda machine. But in this case, why the refusal of the presence of observers from UN and OSCE? And how can we explain that the people of Crimea wanted to keep their Ukrainian passports in spite of the pressures from Simferopol? Between the statistics given by an ex-convict (S. Axionov) and those of a militant for Russian human rights S. Gannushkina, I prefer those of Gannushkina. I understand that this is not the fault of Edgar Morin. He believed the reports of French journalists who were sent for three days to Sebastopol and Simferopol and, on the basis of a few hurried street interviews, became convinced that the two million habitants of Crimea dreamt only of becoming part of Russia. But the reality is much more complex. You can be a French

167.<http://ej.ru/?a=note&id=23280>

speaking habitant of Luxembourg without necessarily wanting to be annexed by France.

Finally the most serious point is that the French intellectual adopts the term federation without specifying what S. Lavrov means by this term. In the mind of the Kremlin, it is by no means a question of a German style federal regime. For Moscow, this means the creation of a micro-State which would be Ukrainian in name only, but in reality it would be totally dominated by Russia. Can Morin, as an heir of Voltaire and Rousseau, accept such a negation of the national spirit? The figures which I publish in this book show that the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of Donbass and the region of Luhansk want to be part of a unified Ukraine and are terrorized by the prospect of being integrated into the Russian Federation? Why would Russia believe it important that these lands belong to it? Here too, I have explained that these lands, a bit like Algeria for France (and this is an analogy), were conquered by Russia in the 18th century, but they have never renounced their Ukrainian identity as can be seen by the attitude of these populations over the course of two centuries. How can an attitude which has an odor of times long past and which condones the division of territories without the participation of its inhabitants be justified? While the ideologues of the Kremlin explicitly rehabilitate the policy of Hitler in the 1930s, here is Edgar Morin also suggesting a new Molotov-Ribbentrop pact which ended with the partition of Poland between the USSR and Nazi Germany. And what should we think about this almost surreal phrase of Morin: "If the conflict worsens,

President Putin risks losing his prudence and we risk losing by imprudence”? That is the spirit of Munich. At any rate, nothing concerning Ukraine will be able to be done without Ukraine willing it.

Morin perhaps believed in the propaganda of the Kremlin concerning “the Ukrainian extreme right” without taking into consideration that it is 20 times less important than the National Front in France. Moreover, it is known that the National Front supports Putin and not the pro-European government of Yatsenyuk. In fact Morin prefers that Russian “post-totalitarian autocracy” be left free to devour its neighbors without being molested. His argument is that France would not have the means to make the Russian ogre listen to reason. But that is false. The international isolation of Russia is not viable for very long. And, above all, why accept so easily that the country of Kandinsky and Stravinsky, of Tsvetaeva and Politkovskaia be relegated to a Eurasian world where different values prevail from those of European civilization? One of the slogans of Maidan was the famous “We will fight for our liberty and yours.” Reading Edgar Morin, I am all the more impressed by the profundity of this phrase. The will to dialogue with the Kremlin cannot bypass Ukrainian liberty and, looking beyond, our liberty. I even believe that the sanctions against Russia should not be only on a State level. They should be measures taken by citizens also. The Germans mobilized to prevent the orchestra director Valery Gergiev from being received by the Munich Philharmonic because he is one of the most faithful supporters of the annexation policy of

the Kremlin. European intellectuals would have a great interest to inspire the Germans rather than roll out a new red carpet for the foot soldiers of the Tsar. Polish intellectuals have shown the way at Warsaw when they gave the Solidarnosc prize to Mustafa Dzhemilev, the leader of the Tatar community in Crimea in June of 2014.

On this critical note, both severe and friendly, of the article by Edgar Morin, I will conclude this essay. I started out by taking note of the crisis in political science, obsessed by the mythological schema of the crisis of civilizations. I have shown that this context is simplistic and cannot help us to understand the significance and logic of the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity. I added that the political mythologies in the world today should be studied under the light of political theology. A whole array of intellectuals, from Georges Dumezil to Carl-Gustav Jung, have shown that myth cannot be considered as an inferior thought form of no relevance. On the contrary, the myth represents the tip of the iceberg of symbolic human thought and collective evolutions. To be sure, it should be confronted with critical, rational and logic intelligence. This is not to take away from peoples their desire for justice or their thirst for an eschatological horizon, but to turn this desire and this thirst towards real lands and their common springs.

Today in Russia a completely new, dangerous and violent myth is being created. We cannot be naïve about it. It is said in Moscow that Vladimir Putin encourages all those around him to read a political-fiction novel by Mikhail Yuriev entitled “The Third

Empire: Russia as it Should Become”. This work was published in 2007 at St. Petersburg by the K. Tublina publishing house. In the book, the author starts from the history of the Rus’ of Kiev and passes through all the phases to arrive at modern times. He speaks of the invasion of Georgia in 2008. But he does not stop there. He goes to 2053 where he imagines a world divided into four gigantic empires-civilizations: Russia, the Federation of America, the Islamic Caliphate, the Republic Under-the-Sky (the Indian Confederation is disappearing). Europe is entirely under Russian domination. The narrative describes how the Russian Empire was built. The author speaks about the invasion of Crimea and Ukraine and announces that in 2014 Russia left all the international organizations including the United Nations. The first war with America begins in 2019. In order to put an end to American sanctions and give a warning to the Americans, Russia fires 36 missiles into the desert of New Mexico...



Postface To The English Edition

(21 February 2015)

I'm very happy about the publication of this book in English, Ukrainian and Russian.¹⁶⁸ During the summer of 2014 in Ukraine, I was struck by how much the Ukrainians themselves needed an outside perspective on what was happening to them. I met some Ukrainians so exasperated by the aggression of the Russians that they were progressively becoming incapable of exorcising a fatalistic image of a Russian bear (it's worth mentioning that Vladimir Putin himself identified Russia with a bear in a speech at Sochi on October 24). As a consequence, such people do not want to recognize the bi-cultural aspect of Ukrainian identity. As can be seen by the legislative elections of October 2014 and the massive support of the government's policy in favor of a bi-lingual, bi-cultural and ecumenical orientation, these pessimists constitute a minority. But I thought that it would be necessary that my text be published in Ukrainian in order to show that, for an outside observer such as

168. I'm also pleased that this book received the Gregoire Orlyk Prize, awarded in the French Senate on November 5 by *Perspectives ukrainiennes* and the Ukrainian community in France.

myself, the progressive consciousness of this dual identity does not compromise Ukrainian identity but, on the contrary, accomplishes it.

I also realized how rare it was to find, anywhere in the world, a balanced and global analysis of the Russian-Ukrainian war. I am thinking particularly of a debate I had in late July on the Australian website of ABC with my friend Adrian Pabst on the question of sanctions against Russia. This debate convinced me that it was also necessary to dispel certain myths that can be found about Russia and Ukraine in English literature.¹⁶⁹

From the beginning I wanted this book to be translated into Russian for I am convinced that those who will suffer the most in the on-going conflict are the Russian people. But since there are fewer and fewer reliable sources of information available to them, the Russian people do not realize, to begin with, that their government has undertaken a real war against Ukraine (only a minority of the Russian population see the conflict in Ukraine as the result of aggression on the part of Russia) and that it is their responsibility to demand a policy change towards neighboring foreign countries.

The publication of these translations gives me the opportunity to add a post-scriptum regarding more recent events. I have written this with the same respect for truth as I did in the other chapters and with the same feeling that peace is still possible if the parties act quickly, assume their responsibilities

169. <http://www.bc.net.au/religion/articles/2014/07/24/4053246.htm>
<http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2014/04/01/3975979.htm>

and seek the common good. The new element in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict which has emerged since the publication of my book in France last June is without doubt, the accelerated internationalization of this conflict. The Russian-Ukrainian tension has become a combat that threatens and involves the whole planet. After the failure of the cease-fire decreed by the newly elected President Petro Poroshenko; after the drama of the Malaysian airplane shot down over Donbass on 17 July with 298 victims from Holland, Germany, Australia and Malaysia; after the adoption – in reaction to this action which was rapidly attributed to “pro-Russian separatists” or even the Russian military – of sectorial sanctions by the great democracies around the world (beginning with the United States and the European Union); and after the choice made by the NATO countries at Newport on September 4-5 to support Ukraine against Russia by deploying military manoeuvres in the region (without, however, giving the status of associated member to Ukraine); the conflict can no longer be considered by the leaders of world opinion (with the exception of Russia) as a local civil war. At the end of October, Russia carried out vast intimidating manoeuvres, sending its submarines and airplanes to the borders of the European Union. On 29 October, eight Russian military aircraft were intercepted over the Atlantic Ocean to the west of Portugal. At the same moment, Russian bombers were flying over the Gulf of Finland. These provocations angered NATO and the European Union.¹⁷⁰ Jens Stoltenberg, the new General Secretary of NATO,

170. <http://www.aco.nato.int/nato-tracks-largescale-russian-air-activity-in-europe.aspx>

demanded that the Russian forces leave Ukraine and withdraw from its borders.¹⁷¹ Simultaneously, Russian propaganda in Western Europe intensified. In spite of the facts presented by NATO, “experts” such as Jacques Sapir affirm that there is no proof of the presence of Russian soldiers in Ukraine.¹⁷²

But global public opinion has been obliged to recognize that it is really a question of an international war which has no equivalent since the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq on 8 August 1990. Certain commentators and politicians such as Pavlo Klimkin, the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs, even go back to the Cuban missile crisis of October, 1962. According to Pavlo Klimkin, the eventuality of a new world

171. <http://www.aco.nato.int/video-new-nato-secgen-visits-shape.aspx>

172. In the October 24 issue of *Liberation* Lorraine Millot published an article which concerned Russia's false experts (Helene Carere d'Encausse, Jacques Sapir...).

http://www.liberation.fr/politiques/2014/10/24/les-universitaires-complaisants_1129045 While J. Sapir disputed the way the interview was presented, he confirmed in his blog the opinions he voiced to L. Millot. “The journalist who presented herself on Monday, 8 September, begins her paper with this affirmation: “*He nabs me with a question, exactly the same as that posed by John Laughland of the bizarre Institute for Democracy and Cooperation ‘can you prove that Russia intervened in Ukraine this summer?’*”. That is simply false. This is not the way the conversation began and I’m not so impolite that I would shout at a person who came to see me. When the discussion touched this subject, I asked the journalist if she had proofs of a massive build-up of the Russian Army in Eastern Ukraine. I told her of my doubts about such reports but also of the certainty that Russian society, with the agreement of the government, was generously supporting the insurgents”. <http://russeurope.hypotheses.org/2960>

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war is closer than it has been for the last 50 years. After the seizure of Novoazovsk, a city in the south of Ukraine, on the road between Donbass and Crimea, Western media had to admit that Russia had passed from a hybrid and concealed war to an open and conventional war. The negotiations taking place between the European Union, the United States, Russia and Ukraine concerning the implementation of a cease fire and the peace memorandum of Minsk on 5 and 9 September 2014,¹⁷³ and also the provision of gas this winter to the European countries and Ukraine, have not produced any results as of the time I am writing these lines (30/10/14). It should be noted that, although the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) signed the agreements of 5 and 9 September, it does not appear to be able to ensure they are respected.

At any rate, all this only reinforces the impression that the Russian-Ukrainian war cannot be contained in a bilateral setting in the same way as other conflicts have been frozen, such as those of Transnistria since 1990 and South Ossetia and Abkhazia since 2008. First because Ukraine is an impressive country with a population of 45 million. A conflict between the largest country in the world and the largest country of Europe cannot pass unnoticed. Secondly, the Russian-Ukraine conflict concerns all the countries of this planet in so far as international law has been openly violated by the annexation of Crimea. Finally, world public opinion has understood that with the destabilization of Ukraine, the very future of the European model is being threatened. In a violently anti-Amer-

173 The agreements of September 19 can be found in the following link: <http://www.osce.org/ru/home/123807?download=true>

ican speech given on 24 October at Sochi, President Putin did not hide the fact that other conflicts will follow wherever Russian interests are at stake, beginning of course, with the regions bordering Russia. Indeed, since September the Baltic countries, Poland and even Sweden have been submitted to rude and warlike pressures on the part of Russia. On one occasion it was the kidnapping of an Estonian agent by Russian agents at a moment when President Obama was reassuring the Baltic countries of the unwavering support of NATO; on another occasion it was a question of Russian submarines violating Sweden's territorial waters.

It is impossible to mention all the events which have taken place since May 2014 in this brief post-scriptum given their extent and the analyses linked to this internationalization of the conflict. Readers can reference the summary chronology at the end of this volume. We would simply like to respond to three major questions posed by the very evolution of the conflict since last May in the Russian world, the Ukrainian world and within the international community. As a conclusion, we will return to a description of the role of the Churches and religion in the present context. For our thesis is only being confirmed in the course of these months: there will be no solution leading to a durable peace between Russia, Ukraine and the rest of the world unless there is a consciousness of the theological and political stakes at play in the conflict.

How can the Russians find both order and peace?

Even though I am averse to generalities, I believe that it is necessary to reintroduce “shop talk”, at least up to a certain point. Anyone doing serious research

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today should have recourse to the zigzagging road of mythological thought in approaching social reality. Even the great philosophers such as Berdyaev have followed this road themselves. According to him, the Russians, in the image of Dostoyevsky, have an anarchistic conception of the world. "In the Russian soul there is a thirst for auto-consumption, the dangerous intoxication of losing one's self (...) This character defect can be considered as a national flaw of the Russians; and the elaboration of a spiritual virility represents one of the most vital and important problems for them."¹⁷⁴ Marked by a religious culture that is more liturgical than catechetical, the Russians do not believe that this world is worthy of being regulated. Berdyaev goes on to say: "the apocalyptic dispositions, the need for an extreme end, the defiant and even hostile attitude towards everyday culture, all these are specifically Russian traits, a form of a spirit peculiar to the Russians where both the source of their originality and their spiritual discomforts must be sought (...) In Russia an apocalyptic and nihilistic attitude converge..."¹⁷⁵ For the Gospel tells us that this world is under the domination of the devil. It is doomed to perish. As Solovyov put it, the State has no other function than preventing hell on earth.

This belief is also assumed by those who published the social doctrine of the Russian Church: "The object of civil law is not to transform a world wallowing in evil into the Kingdom of God but to labor so that it

174. N. Berdyaev, *L'esprit de Dostoievski*, Paris, Stock, pgs. 278-279.

175. *Ibid*, pgs. 282-283.

might not become a hell.” This juridical pessimism, hand in hand with a liturgical fervor, calls to mind the phrase of Mgr. Filaret of Moscow: “In Russia there is very little light and a lot of warmth.”¹⁷⁶ But the State itself has no spiritual legitimacy. A reading of the social doctrine of the Russian Church is enough to convince anyone. “The ratification of the juridical principle of liberty of conscience manifests the loss of religious values and objectives in society, of the massive apostasy and the practical indifference to the work of the Church and the victory over sin.”¹⁷⁷ While awaiting the end of the world, the coming of the Heavenly Jerusalem or a classless society, the mission of the State is to manage violence by imposing aviolence stronger than the sum of individual violences. The Russians are not disposed to a theological legitimation of law, but they believe in a paradoxical God, both the Creator of the world and detached from it, who only uses thunder to get people’s attention. It is for this that they desire, above all, an ordered society while believing that this order can only come from the top of the social pyramid.

Putin has grasped all that very well and has wanted to identify himself to this far away god who is both cruel and compassionate. In December of 2013,

176. I used these lines of Mgr. Filaret – which W. Weidle and G. Nivat later assumed – to write a criticism of the contemporary Russian State. Cf. A. Arjakovsky “Les fondements spirituels et intellectuels de l’Etat russe contemporain”, *En attendant le concile de l’Église Orthodoxe*, Paris, Cerf, 2011.

177. *Les fondements de la conception sociale de l’Église Orthodoxe russe*, Paris, Cerf, 2007 (chapter 3).

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in preparation for his ascent to the Olympus of the Games at Sochi, he freed the Pussy Riot group and Mikhail Khodorkovsky from prison. To demonstrate his magnanimity, in his annual address to the Council of the Confederation on 12 December, he went so far as to quote Nikolai Berdyaev the philosopher banished from the USSR in 1922 by Lenin and Trotski and yet one of the greatest enemies of his own regime. In the course of the most important speech of the year, the Russian President denounced the permissive and liberal society of the West as “so-called tolerant, asexual and infertile.” Content with the support he received from the Pope for his role in the Syrian crisis, Putin rejoiced that Russia had become, for the entire world, “the protector of the moral foundations of civilization.” He then went on to defend his conservative stance by citing Nikolai Berdyaev and reading from a book written by the Russian philosopher in 1922, *The Philosophy of Inequality*: “The contribution of conservatism is not to prevent a movement from moving forward or aiming higher, but to prevent a movement from backtracking and lowering its sights towards a return to a more primitive life.” And Putin adds: “By pushing the rest of the world to adopt a ‘progressive model of development’, the West is leading it on the road to regression and towards a huge bloodbath.” The whole goal of the Russian President’s speech was to justify the rearmament of Russia in the name of this healthy conservatism which all peoples await!

The Russian writer of Ukrainian descent, Pavel Protsenko, replied to Putin’s speech in an article

which appeared on the site *Ezhednevnyj Zhurnal* on 30 December 2013.¹⁷⁸ In Protsenko's eyes, Putin did not grasp anything of the explosive thought of Berdyaev. "Berdyaev is vigorously criticizing the work of the reactionary thinker Konstantin Leontiev who rejects the personal principle in religion and replaces Christian liberty by the cult of temporal power. So the Russian President, by linking the struggle to maintain traditions with the defence of his army and navy, unwittingly exposes the anti-Christian sources of his speech to the Council of the Federation." Pavel Protsenko continues Berdyaev's line of thought by showing that Putin's speech, more reactionary than conservative, is no more than a miserable screen, incapable of hiding the systematic corruption of the Russian State. The brutality and hypocrisy of "vertical bureaucracy" are, according to the Russian intellectual, the true sources of the cynicism, corruption and general malaise of contemporary civilization. The Kremlin Chief, in an interview with CNN on 19 December 2013, again summons the Russian people and global public opinion to turn aside from the demi-values of the West and recover "the traditional values" and "go forward." This is why Protsenko finishes his article by referring to the erection of a provisory statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the sinister founder of the Cheka, on Loubianka Square in Moscow: "Go forward, where? Fulfill the secret dreams of veterans of the Special Services? March in a procession with icons and incense from Lenin Street to Stalin

178. P. Protsenko: "Tsennosti Poutina: Konservatismili Sovietism?", *Ejednevnyj Zhurnal*, 12/30/2013.

<http://www.ej.ru/?a=note&id=24116#>

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Square, passing by the statue of Dzerzhinsky while singing the hymn of Mikhalkov? That is certainly a road where no value can be defined.”

If there were still hope last April that Vladimir Putin would assume his responsibilities and choose the path of decolonization as General de Gaulle did in his epoch, it is clear in the month of October 2014, the Russian President opted for the nationalist-communist road in the steps of the Serbian ex-dictator Slobodan Milosevic. The great error of the intellectuals after the fall of the Berlin Wall was to believe that Communist ideology had fallen apart. They considered that Cuba and North Korea were only historic residue and that China and the ex-USSR no longer had anything to do with Communism. They were reasoning as rationalists who identify ideology with a body of doctrine. The mythology of Gilbert Durand could have been very helpful to them at that moment. Communist ideology, in fact, has never been chemically pure. This was the main thesis of Nikolai Berdyaev in his 1938 book published by Gallimard, *Sources and Meaning of Russian Communism*. The dialectical materialism introduced by Nikolai Bukharin and integrated into the ideology of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had nothing to do with *Das Kapital* of Marx. Lenin himself did not hesitate to allow a market economy when that became necessary at the moment of the NEP (New Economic Policy) in 1923-25. Finally, what can be said of a country which, in 2014, continues to celebrate Stalin in its manuals and maintains a cult to Lenin at the heart of its capitol? We can thus imagine how certain mentali-

ties have been unable to step back, through an effort of criticism and an attitude of repentance, from an ideology, which was, according to Stephane Courtois and Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, the most murderous of the 20th century. The ideology of Communism is a mythology which is undergoing a new mutation today to maintain itself in power. The officer of the KGB, Vladimir Putin (no one really leaves these organs) is seeking to transform the Russian-Ukrainian war and his own thirst for power into a world-wide conflict of civilizations. He divides today's world into the world of post-Modern license, incarnated by the United States and Europe and the world of traditional values represented by Russia and its allies (Brazil, India and China). His trip to Belgrade on 16 October must be seen in the light of this context. In an interview with a Belgrade journal, he blows on the embers of Serbian anti-American nationalism:

“Washington has actively supported Maidan”, Putin says, “and when its creatures in Kiev have plunged the country into a civil war, it started to accuse Russia of having provoked the crisis. Now President Barack Obama, from the heights of the tribunal of the General Assembly of the United Nations, mentions “Russian aggression in Europe” among the three principle threats to humanity alongside the mortal fever Ebola and the Islamic terrorist State. Given the restrictions imposed on whole sectors of our economy, it is difficult to qualify this approach other than hostile. The United States has even made blustering declarations about the suspension

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of our cooperation in space exploration and atomic energy. They have frozen the activity of the Russian-American Presidential Commission which was created in 2009 and made up of 21 working groups which were concerned with, among other things, terrorism and drug trafficking. We hope that our partners will realize the absurd character of these attempts to blackmail Russia and will remember that discord among the great nuclear powers has weighty consequences for strategic stability.”¹⁷⁹

In the same way, in his violently anti-American speech at the Valdai Club in Sochi on 24 October, the Russian President sought to weaken the policy of sanctions approved by the international community by reducing it to a lust for power on the part of the United States. He also shows that he has not understood the particular ethic of the capitalist system: “Politics and economy cannot be mixed”, he said, “but that is what is happening now. I’ve always thought, and still think today, that sanctions imposed for political reasons are a mistake which will harm everyone.”¹⁸⁰ This is exactly the opposite of the position of most specialists of the history of capitalism beginning with Max Weber and Karl Polanyi for whom the development of capitalist societies is founded on a base of values.

179. Interview with V. Putin by ‘POLITIKA’, Belgrade, 10/16/2014

http://www.alterinfo.net/interview-de-poutine-a-‘politika’-belgrade_a107246.html

180. Speech by Putin at the Valdai Club, Sochi, October 24, 2014, <http://www.sayed7asan.blogspot.fr/>

Vladimir Putin, who was formed by the school of the KGB and not by the European Schools of Commerce, is persuaded that “the pragmatic approach and position in the world of affairs in the principle countries” is going to prevail. This is without taking into consideration the ethical position of the chief captains of Western industry. Putin would not have supported the remarks of Christophe de Margerie, the PDG of Total, the owner closest to the Kremlin, on 20 October 2014, when after a conversation with the Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, he stated that “Whether we like it or not, we will accept the sanctions imposed by the European Union.”¹⁸¹ The manager of Total thus gave the lie to the remarks of Lenin who thought that the Western capitalists were ready to sell even the cord which would be used to hang them. It well might be that his sense of honor, his refusal to be intimidated and his business flair cost him his life.¹⁸²

The contradiction which Putin faces is that the national-communist option is not compatible with the position of a Head of State who respects international law. While he renders homage to the role of the

181. Pierre Avril, “A major actor and an ally for Russia”, *Le Figaro*, 10/22/2014, p.19.

182. Indeed, it is hard to imagine, as the early morning communication of the Kremlin on 20 October wanted the public to believe, that a drunken snow plow driver would be capable of haphazardly hitting a plane ready for takeoff. Today the Russians admit that the responsibility of the death of the director of Total should include the control tower of Vnukovo airport. But it is a young trainee who is being incriminated...

OSCE in Ukraine, Putin pays no attention whatsoever to the recommendations of this organization.¹⁸³ Even though he laments that the world is no longer regulated by juridical and political instruments, his philosophy of international relations, laid bare in his Sochi speech, is founded on relationships of force and not of law. It suffices to mention the case of frozen conflicts incited by Russia in Transnistria or in the Caucasus. Russia was ready to annex Abkhazia at the end of 2014 by proposing a treaty of “integration” to this region of Georgia which the Kremlin, in 2008, pushed to proclaim itself as a separatist entity. Thus it is that in Sochi Putin opts for the arms race and the multiplication of conflicts: “Ukraine (...) is one of the examples of these types of conflict which affect the international balance of powers and I think that it certainly will not be the last. This is the source of the real and proximate threat of the destruction of the present system of agreements concerning the control of weapons.”¹⁸⁴ Through his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov, Putin also expresses support for “elections” in early November in Donbass under the surveillance of the Russian occupation army.

So it is that about a year after his speech to the Council of the Federation, Putin confirms that “Russia has made its choice.” “Our priorities are to improve our democratic institutions and open economy even more to accelerate our internal development, taking into account all the positive modern tendencies observed in the world and consolidating our society on

183. <http://www.osce.org/ukrainemonitoring>

184. <http://www.osce.org/ukrainemonitoring>

the base of traditional values and patriotism” (speech at the Valdai Club).¹⁸⁵ But his biased vision of “traditional values” can no longer delude. Censure is more and more common in Russia to the point that now many articles on the internet are emailed with passages censored by black lines. When on 9 September 2014, the famous journalist Yulia Latynyna asked “If we are not the West, then who are we?” she saw her article streaked with black lines by the ROSKOMNADZOR on the site of Novaya Gazeta. She made this affirmation: “I have bad news for those in power, for the journalists and ideologists of Fascism: Russian culture became great when Russia became European.” When Lyudmila Ulitskaya, the most celebrated Russian writer in the world today, was in Vienna last August to receive the Austrian Prize for European literature, she wrote an article for Spiegel with the resounding title: “So Long Europe!” She writes: “Russian policy today is suicidal. It represents a danger for Russia, to begin with but it can also provoke a third world war.” Along the same lines, associations that receive finance from Western partners are obliged to declare themselves under the derogatory title of “foreign agents”. On 10 October Memorial, the principal organization for human rights and a critic of the past Soviet rule was banned through a ruling of the Ministry of Justice and the Russian High Court of Justice, another indication of the imbrication of the judiciary and executive powers in Russia.

There is no longer any alternative. For the Russian people to again recover both order and peace,

185. <http://www.sayed7asan.blogspot.fr/>

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they should take leave of President Putin and the national-communist option as soon as possible. They should also put Communism on trial as soon as possible. Philippe de Lara agrees with this point of view in an article entitled “Poor Russia” which appeared in Slate on 30 October:

“The largest country on the face of the earth does not know what it is or what it wants to be. Vladimir Putin is, without doubt, a man with a keen but narrow intellect who sees the real world through the optic of the Secret Services, but who has known how to express the existential problem of Russia in his own way and who made people hope that he was going to resolve it by bringing together, in his person, Russian nationalism – in both its Slavophile and Stalinian modes – and Eurasian imperialism, a nostalgia of being victimized (We live badly and nobody loves us) and imperial aggressiveness (our missiles are 10 years ahead of the Americans). This ideological cocktail unites contraries: the Tsars and the Bolsheviks, Russian Orthodoxy and Slav-Aryan neo-paganism, the moral conservatism of the Church and the revolutionary preaching of Alexander Dugin which is a sort of New Age Fascism. Its only coherence, assured by totalitarianism in the past, is the construction of a mortal enemy which serves all purposes: the West and its fifth columns which are the cause of all evils. All that seems like a parody: the USSR 2,0 (as the partisans of Putin sometimes define their project) is not the USSR – i.e. a mighty

power – it is rather a State which is in the process of leaving the international game (which is what is called a *rogue State*) while still dreaming of being a power. Ridiculous but formidable, as we are reminded by the bloodshed in Ukraine since February, in this non-linear war (...). Russia (...) immediately took refuge in amnesia, then the rehabilitation of its Soviet past, grotesque because of bad faith and lack of culture. The trial of Communism did not take place. As long as this amnesia and denial drag out, Russia will be miserable and dangerous; this will not be Russia but the zombie of the USSR.”¹⁸⁶

Since Putin acceded to power in 1999, the Russians have come to believe that their country is surrounded by enemies without being able to establish a cause to effect relationship between the policy of the Kremlin and the increasing hostility of the international community. They also lacked the means to distance themselves from their media system. As Lev Gudkov, the famous Russian sociologist wrote, prior to November 2013 there was no aggressive attitude towards Ukraine in Russia. When the movement of Maidan began, 65-70% of the Russian population considered that this was an internal affair. Thus the Russians, victims of the suffocating propaganda machine of the regime, need above all an outside referent which will permit them to orientate themselves in relation to their own reality. In this context, the publication in the United States (New York, Simon and Schuster), in September 2014, of a book entitled *Putin's kleptocracy. Who owns Russia?* should be considered a major event. The author

186. <http://www.slate.fr/story/93657/russie-crise-identite>

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is the American historian Karen Dawisha, a professor of Political Sciences at the University of Miami in Oxford, Ohio. She leaves nothing standing of the image of the statesman which Putin has pretended to be for the last 15 years. Thanks to her research but also thanks to that of courageous Russian journalists who investigated the archives of the Stasi and KGB (and who often paid with their lives because of their research) Karen Dawisha describes the progressive formation, over the last 20 years, of a system of organized theft of the resources of the entire country by a group of people from the Secret Services and also from the world of bandits who were close to Putin. She meticulously documents her accusations by concentrating on her investigations into the Rossia Bank, Petromed and also into the construction of an impressive number of palaces by Putin during the past 15 years. She takes up and verifies the investigations of the principal figures opposed to Putin, Alexei Navalny and Boris Nemtsov. She writes: “Transparency International estimates the annual cost of bribery to Russia at \$300 billion roughly equal to the entire Gross Domestic Product of Denmark or 37 times higher than the \$8 billion Russia expended by the 2007 on ‘national priority projects’ in health, education and agriculture.” Russia, where 110 billionaires control 35% of the country’s wealth, experiences wider inequality than any of the developing countries (BRIC).¹⁸⁷ Her conclusion is the following:

“Instead of seeing Russian politics as an inchoate democratic system being pulled down

187. <http://books.simonandschuster.com/Putins-Kleptocracy/Karen-Dawisha/9781476795195>

by history, accidental autocrats, popular inertia, bureaucratic incompetence, or poor Western advice, I conclude that from the beginning Putin and his circle sought to create an authoritarian regime ruled by a close-knit cabal with embedded interests, plans and capabilities, who used democracy for decoration rather than direction. In other words Russia is both a democratic failure and a resounding success – that is, a success for Putin and his cronies and a success on their terms” (op. cit., p. 8)

The argument that Putin would be the only decent politician in Russia today who can maintain order in this immense country has an element of truth. The public opinion polls show that the two leaders who enjoy the most popularity in Russia after Putin are the Communist Gennady Zyuganov and the ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. But it has to be understood that this is a reality created haphazardly by the propaganda of the regime which has manipulated public opinion and the survey institutions for 15 years. Moreover, Russian public opinion remains very volatile. Lev Gudkov, one of the leading specialists in the subject, affirms that between March and September of 2014, the support for Russian intervention in Ukraine fell from 74% to 38-40%. At present, only 25% of Russians believe that Russia is conducting an open war with Ukraine (as opposed to 70% of Ukrainians). According to the sociologist, when the Russians learn the truth, the popularity of Putin will suffer a brutal decline.¹⁸⁸ Add to that the inevitable devaluation of the rouble and the ensuing inflation and

188. Svoboda, 10/23/2014.

it can be understood that the actual level of popularity which the regime enjoys risks being rapidly wiped out.

Moreover, there actually is a generation of politicians capable of governing the country democratically. Boris Nemtsov¹⁸⁹, the ex-governor of Novgorod and the vice prime minister under Boris Yeltsin, is Putin's most serious and credible opponent. But Lev Shlosberg believes that there is a generation of Russian political figures who have the same qualities which allowed the generation of A. Yatsenyuk and Petro Poroshenko to impose itself in Ukraine: integrity, tenacity and courage. Lev Shlosberg, 45 years old, is a deputy of the region of Pskov. He is also the regional head of the democratic party Iabloko, founded at the beginning of the 1990s by Grigory Yavlinsky. On 25 August 2014, Shlosberg, who also directs an independent regional magazine, *Pskovskaia Gubernia*, published a survey at the closed-to-the-public burial, at Vybutakh (in the region of Pskov), of two soldiers of the 76th division of paratroopers who died in August from "unclarified causes." The article insinuates that these probably involved Russian soldiers killed

189. In his blog on facebook, the ex-prime minister gives a pedagogical demonstration of the Kremlin's lack of professionalism. In particular, he shows that the sur-evaluation of the rouble by the Central Bank of Russia can be calculated by rapports with variations in the price of gas, "Gas at \$100 should correspond to a rate rouble/dollar of 36.2 roubles, for a price of gas at \$90 the rate of the dollar should be at 40.2 roubles, for gas at \$80 (as is the case today) the rate should be 45.25 roubles. For gas at \$70 the rate \$/rouble should be 51.7."

on the Ukrainian front. The journalists who covered the event were threatened and beaten up. On 29 August, Lev Shlosberg himself was violently attacked by three men who broke his nose and caused a cranial trauma which resulted in temporary amnesia. But the Russian deputy did not let himself be intimidated. In 15 October he published a vitriolic article after Putin announced the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Russian-Ukrainian border (this announcement was not followed by any immediate action – as of 27 October only 2,000 of the 17,000 soldiers had returned to their bases – and that does not take into account the Russian soldiers present within Ukraine.) Shlosberg thinks that the original error of Putin was to want to control Ukraine, to rely upon Yanukovych and to allow himself be caught up in a spiral of violence:

“In just one year Putin has lost everything. The friendship of peoples; policy; security; the economy; glory; peace. This defeat has come about only because in the beginning the same politician bet on the president of a foreign country, pushed him to refuse his national and international commitments, was astonished by the angry reaction of the population of this country, refused to adopt a peace plan which included anticipated elections and the resignation of the leader who had committed himself, launched a campaign of economic blackmail, then the threat of using violence, then the “repatriation” of foreign territory and finally, when his successes went to his head, he arrived at trying to take almost a third of the land of this foreign State. This was

a senseless and cruel attack. The Russian State was broken by this assault. It was incapable of accomplishing its mission. But while it failed to achieve its ends, thousands of persons died both in Russia and Ukraine. Not all the bodies have been found, recognized and buried. It will take years to draw up a list of the dead. For others the “manoeuvres” are over, at least for the moment. The lessons of these “manoeuvres” are terrible and bloody. Nothing leads us to think that the Russian State is going to try to understand what happened and draw lessons from it or at least have compassion on the victims. But that would be so simple, so humanly understandable. Cease to make people suffer. Repent. And go away. It takes a real man to do that. The “manoeuvres” have revealed that in the ruling elements of the Russian State there is no room for either the divine or the human.”¹⁹⁰

How will the Ukrainians be able to find both justice and peace?

The Ukrainians believe more than the Russians do that the world is worthy of being valued because it has been created by God.¹⁹¹ Since the spring of 2014, the Ukrainian spiritual leaders, whether it be Cardinal Husar or Patriarch Filaret have defended the idea of a defensive war, for a nation has the right to pro-

190. <http://www.trueinform.com>

191. A. Arjakovsky, *Entretiens avec le cardinal Husar*, Paris, Parole et Silence, 2005. (english translation: *Conversations with Lubomyr, cardinal Husar*, Lviv, UCU Press, 2007)

tect lives. Moreover, for these leaders, peace is not a “cease-fire”, an intermittent period between two periods of violence. Peace is the fundamental order of the world and is based on the link of love which unites people both as families and as nations. The State has an honorable mission. According to the Gospels, Pilate himself received his power from God. But the State, if it wants to honor its mission, should conform itself to the image of the Creator God who is also a God of justice.

President Poroshenko probably wanted to act in conformity with this image of a heavenly Father who is both judge and compassionate. Last 27 August, after he had dissolved the Rada and called for anticipated legislative elections, he judged that the Ukrainian Communist Party, headed by P. Symonenko, should not be outlawed in spite of all its compromises with the Russian power structure. The Ukrainian President declared that “the best purge will be that of the elections.” This was, without doubt, a wise decision because the Ukrainian Communist Party, massively rejected by the people in the elections of October 26 (less than 4% of the votes), will not sit as a group at the Rada of Kiev for the first time since 1922 (but certain Communist deputies did succeed in getting elected by a majority vote). This is a decisive change which also bears witness to the fact that Russia and Ukraine have chosen two completely different political paths. But this evolution should not impede the Ukrainians from being the first to put the Communist system on trial on a deep and comprehensive level.

But the risk in Ukraine is not to be able to find the balance between a legitimate desire for justice and the patient formation of a democratic Nation-State. Eastern spirituality is eschatological. It desires the coming of the Kingdom *hic et nunc* on the same level as that proposed by the traditional Eucharistic liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. All the same, the Patriarch of Constantinople does not identify the Eucharistic liturgy with the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. As John Erickson, the Dean of St. Vladimir's Institute in New York put it, it is a question of realizing the loving divine-human relationship in which Christians can participate in a "foretaste" of the Kingdom. John Chrysostom united the sacrament of the brother to the sacrament of the altar precisely because he understood that the liturgical cult could not be separated from political and social work which requires constant efforts on the part of each one.

Yet the frustrations linked to the corruption of the regime are such that the Ukrainians might want to impose, in a few weeks, a legal State without being prepared to work on it as a long term project. In the month of October, several deputies of the Rada were violently thrown into the garbage trucks by an angry mob. Impatient people likewise obliged President Poroshenko to dismiss the Minister of Defence, Valeri Geletei, who, according to the weekly *Dzerkalo Tyzhden*, was guilty of having marched at the head of a big military parade in the center of Kiev on 24 August, Independence Day, when, he had been warned the night before of a massive entry of Russian troops into Ukraine. Yet it was this man who had subdued

two thirds of the enclaves occupied by the Ukrainian separatists supported by Russian soldiers and led the forces of the anti-terrorists to the outskirts of Luhansk and Donetsk on the eve of the 24th. As Geletei proudly announced at the end of August “Ukraine has won the hybrid war waged by Russia. Without that, Russia would never have sent its soldiers to Novozovsk.”

After having taken refuge in the private sphere for a very long time,¹⁹² the Ukrainians wanted justice and peace to come about at once, without individual effort on the part of each person. The famous Ukrainian intellectual Taras Voznyak, who favored the party of Petro Poroshenko, did not hide his anger in the editorial he published on 27 October, the day after the legislative elections, on the site *Ukrainska Pravda*. In his opinion, the Ukrainians should have voted massively in favor of President Poroshenko to avoid divisions in the pro-democratic camp as was the case after the Orange Revolution. Actually, it seems to me that, on the contrary, the Ukrainians showed a great deal of wisdom in electing a strong pro-European majority favorable to reforms which risk being painful. Taras Voznyak is the first victim of this sin of impatience that he denounces in the Ukrainians. But the editor of the Journal *Yi* had it right. Democracy is a more effective mode of governance than dictatorships but it takes time and it is not certain that the Ukrainians

192. The most famous proverb in Ukraine is “Moiakhata z krayu” “my cottage is a long way off,” which signifies that the Ukrainian peasant doesn’t want to get involved in the affairs of the world.

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have the spiritual resources necessary for a long term struggle.

To hold out for the long haul, the Ukrainians have to pass through three challenges. First of all, the Parliamentary coalition must have clear objectives, hold on to them and remain united. It must avoid the scenario of last August when President Poroshenko thought about replacing A. Yatsenyuk in the post of Prime Minister with V. Grosman, the former mayor of Vinnytsia. Yatsenyuk did not take this lying down and warned the country, through a speech in the Rada and on television, that the coalition could not be dissolved unless some important new laws were passed. He had to place his post as prime Minister on the line, but in the end he succeeded in foiling the awkward manoeuvre of the president, passing a budgetary law and keeping his post as the head of the government. After the elections of 26 October, the pro-Maidan and pro-European coalition was amply victorious with more than 70% of the seats. It is composed of the three principle winners in the voting, the Popular Party of Yatsenyuk, the Poroshenko bloc and the Samopomich Liberal Party created by Andri Sadovyi, the young and dynamic Mayor of Lviv. In order to arrive at their objective of a closer relationship with the EU, the deputies will have to submit to the discipline proposed by A. Yatsenyuk in virtue of the powers which the Constitution of 2004 grants to the prime minister. But the Prime Minister should recognize that the Ukrainians do not want an honorific president. When the voting of the Ukrainians after May 2014 is studied, it is clear that people are

counting on a harmony between a president who disposes of a national investiture (who should become responsible for the “power bloc” along with the Minister of Interior, of Foreign Affairs and the head of the army) and a prime minister, head of the majority at the Rada (in charge of economic, social, sanitary, education policy....).

From a theological-political point of view, the choice of the Ukrainians in 2014 could be interpreted as a desire to have a President of divine right, but deeply human and a lover of peace, and a Prime Minister of human right but who would be capable of orientating the country towards the assembled family of European nations guided by law, development and justice. This means that the prime minister and the president should find a consensus in advance concerning the choices they want to make for the nation. Thus, for example, President Poroshenko should recognize that A. Yatsenyuk and A. Avakov are more realistic about the war-like intentions of Russia, while these latter should recognize that the soft power proposed by Poroshenko is often slow to show fruits but more effective in the long run. Fundamentally, the Ukrainians desire a separation of responsibilities between the executive and legislative branches while hoping for a continuity of authority between the President, the Prime Minister and the national assembly. This has important consequences for the judicial reform which is going to be put into place during the coming months. Justice in Ukraine will only be effective if it enjoys a full autonomy regarding the executive branch (symbol of the Father) and the legislative

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branch (symbol of the Son) but as soon as it conforms itself to the national will (symbol of the Spirit) as revealed by the choice of the pro-Maidan parties in the elections of October 2014, a legal State is founded based on the value of the dignity of each human person. This will necessarily lead to some constitutional adjustments during the next few months. Let us hope that the theological-political debates enlighten the new balance of powers in Ukraine.

Without confusing speed and precipitation, Petro Poroshenko and Arseniy Yatsenyuk should none the less approve, as soon as possible, the pro-European laws proposed since February 2014 by the government which took power after Maidan and which still have not yet been voted on for lack of a majority in the Rada. Indeed, these laws are going to shake up Ukrainian society (as was the case for Polish society during the period 1991-1995); if they are not adopted rapidly they could make the pro-European coalition unpopular. The economy of the free market can only bear fruits if a whole combination of measures which give confidence to citizens and investors is assured. Russia is going to make Ukraine pay a heavy price for distancing itself from the Eurasian sector by continuing its tactics of destabilization. In addition, the Ukrainian oligarchy and the administrative framework will try to resist a new anti-corruption legislative system envisaged by the government which eliminates guaranteed income and traditional mechanisms for avoiding taxes. The Ukrainian State also envisages the renewal of the Ukrainian judicial system. The government of Yatsenyuk should, therefore,

verify that the committee in charge of the cleansing of corrupt aspects of the regime can function with total independence (while avoiding the terror of the sans-culottes). What is at stake during the next two years is nothing more nor less than making Ukraine pass from a neo-feudal and mafia-like oligarchical system to a modern democratic and transparent capitalist system.¹⁹³ The Rada, above all, should undertake painful reforms in fiscal affairs, the price of oil, gas and electricity, together with energy conservation. The deputies should equally return to the task of modifying the Ukrainian Constitution to enable a real decentralization of powers. Finally, the deputies should support the Ukrainian government in its negotiations with Russia on the price of gas. It is obvious that the support of the FMI, of the World Bank and the European and American democracies will be decisive in enabling Ukraine to pass through this period of profound transformation of the country's administrative and economic organization and aim towards energy independence. Georges Soros, the American financial expert and founder of the think tank Vydrozhenia in Ukraine, published an article in several American and European media in October 2014 calling upon the Europeans to invest massively in Ukraine:

“It is high time for the members of the European Union to wake up and act like countries which are indirectly at war. It is better to aid Ukraine to defend itself rather than having to battle alone. In one way or another, the internal contradiction between being

193. Cf the description of the mafia-like oligarchical system in Russia and Ukraine in *Les oligarques*, by Christine Ockhrent, Paris, Robert Laffont, 2014.

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at war and remaining faithful to budgetary austerity should be eliminated. Where there is a will, there is a way. Let me be more precise. In its last report, published at the beginning of September, the IMF estimated that in the worst of cases, Ukraine would need a supplementary support of 19 billion dollars. Conditions have deteriorated since then. After the Ukrainian elections, the FMI should revise its basic provisions in consultation with the Ukrainian government. An immediate injection of at least 20 billion dollars is needed with the promise of more in case of need. The partners of Ukraine should furnish a conditional complementary financing for the initiation of the program supported by the FMI, at their own risk and in conformity with standard practice.”¹⁹⁴

A second challenge for the Ukrainians is to be capable of resisting the Russian invasion and proposing alternative peace solutions. The conflict in the Donbass region has claimed more than 3,700 Russian and Ukrainian lives since April according to the UN. It has also caused the displacement of several hundreds of thousands of persons. The cities liberated by the Ukrainian army during the summer, such as Sloviansk and Severodonetsk, have greeted their liberators as saviours. But the inhabitants of these cities, as well as those liberated in the region of Luhansk, continue to feel abandoned by those in power in Kiev. This explains why, in the elections of 26 October, they voted mainly not for the party of President Poroshenko (considered as too distant as well as those

194. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/nov/20/wake-up-europe/?insrc=hpss>

of Lyashko and Tymoshenko who only totaled 30% of the votes – which is 3 times more than in the last elections of 2012), nor for the Party of Regions (the pro-Russian party of V. Yanukovych which is now completely discredited) but voted 57% for the “Bloc of the Opposition” of Yuri Boiko (the former energy minister of V. Yanukovych) and certain communist deputies of the party of S. Tyhipko.¹⁹⁵ Yuri Boiko adopted a pro-Ukrainian position but he is faithful to his old networks of power.

Yet on Sunday, 12 October, the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko addressed his people on television to announce “Five pieces of good news.” The aggressor has been stopped in his advance in Eastern Ukraine; the ceasefire is being more and more respected on the front lines; more than 1,500 Ukrainian prisoners have been freed; the forces of the Ukrainian Army and National Guard have received reinforcements and new military equipment; the cities and villages which have been liberated have again found order and peace under the Ukrainian flag. President Poroshenko also announced that Austria, France and Germany were preparing to deliver drones to Ukraine which will enable it to keep watch over its borders with Russia. The previous day, the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, had ordered the Russian troops stationed on the Ukrainian border (more than 17,000 soldiers) to return to their base at Rostov on the Don. But this decision, which was not carried out, was in reality part of the policy of disinformation used by the Kremlin. The Russian government had in fact,

195. <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/10/30/7042691>

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signed the agreements of Minsk on 5 and 20 September. At Minsk, the Ukrainian authorities, the Russian government (through its ambassador to Ukraine), the OSCE and representatives of the auto-proclaimed “Popular Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk” signed a protocol of agreement for the application of the cease-fire. Along with amnesty for the combatants and the creation of a buffer zone, the plan included a special status with more autonomy for the Eastern regions during a period of three years.

Is this a reason to believe that the Russian-Ukrainian war is in appeasement? Nothing is less sure. For the Russian soldiers have neither abandoned Crimea nor the zones occupied around Luhansk and Donetsk. The war zones have been devastated and there is need for reconstruction as soon as possible, before winter makes the humanitarian situation too tragic. At Milan, on 17 October, in spite of the presence of Angela Merkel and Francois Hollande, Vladimir Putin and Petro Poroshenko could not reach an agreement to put the protocol of Minsk into practice. This is why the sanctions adopted by the international community should be maintained until the territorial integrity of Ukraine is restored. As Arseniy Yatsenyuk said in New York, at the General Assembly of the United Nations, the international community cannot tolerate the rejection of international law, founded on the sovereignty of Nation-States, without opening the way for many new conflicts throughout the world. For this reason, France confirmed at the

end of October that, given the present context, it could not deliver the *Mistrals* to Russia (in spite of the declarations of Dmitry Rogozin, the Vice Prime minister of Russia, concerning a delivery by France on 15 November – a fact that was denied by the Elysee).¹⁹⁶ These sanctions are certainly painful for the Russian economy. On 8 October for example, throughout the day the Central Bank of Russia spent 1 million dollars per minute to defend the rate of the rouble. Russia has lost at least 4 points of growth since the beginning of the conflict with Ukraine.

The Russian-Ukrainian war in Donbass should not let us forget the other conflict between the two countries in Crimea. The Ukrainian intellectual Myroslav Marynovych published an article on 7 May about the Russian occupation of the peninsula in which he not only resolutely opposes the annexation of the peninsula by Putin but also proposes a scenario for resolving the crisis.¹⁹⁷ For Marynovych, the essential is to understand that the situation is absolutely not frozen.

“I hear the chorus of sceptics asking: ‘Do you seriously believe that the imperialist Russian hawks are going to give back Crimea some day?’

196. On October 16, Francois Hollande had indicated that the delivery of the ships to Russia was conditioned to an integral application of the peace plan in Ukraine and a cease-fire “totally respected” between the Ukrainian Army and pro-Russian separatists.

197. M. Marynovych, “How will Ukraine get Crimea back?” May 7, 2014.

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117683/ukraine-will-get-crimea-back>

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Yes, I believe this. In the 20th century alone, my natal region of Galicia was part of four empires (Austro-Hungarian, Russian, German and Soviet) each one of which convinced people that they would always remain. The imperial ambitions of Russia are founded on nothing more than money from gas and propaganda. But such ambitions are becoming more and more anachronistic. Moreover, the unifying slogan of Euromaidan – that this was a battle “for our liberty and for yours” – might reveal itself to be true for the Russians themselves. The anarchy of Putin has revealed the hidden evil of his rule and could become his downfall. In Ukraine, Russia might still want to seize a source of ideological legitimacy for its empire, but its hour is past.”

So, as difficult as it may seem, Ukraine has a chance to recover Crimea. But it first should become an accomplished democratic nation; this is the only way to preserve its independence and defend itself against Putin. Ukraine should recover Crimea but not for itself. The recent crisis confirms that the only organized force in Crimea is represented by the Tatars of Crimea. The protection of their political and cultural identity is the key to the restoration of justice on the peninsula.

The Tatars of Crimea have faced serious setbacks, but they can still gain the right to become a nation. The Mejlis of today has shown that it is ready not only to protect the rights of its own people but also to take into consideration the rights of other ethnic peoples and neighboring nations. In the case of a Russian-Ukrainian

treaty, Crimea could be legally returned to a democratic Ukraine but only as a region with an autonomous government. How long would this autonomy last within Ukraine? That is difficult to say. But if it should enter with Ukraine into the European Union, as far-fetched as that may seem, this question would become irrelevant. Crimea would be part of the country of Europe.

All that probably sounds rather Utopian of course, given the fact that Russian troops are now stationed on the Ukrainian frontier and the pro-Russian “separatists” occupy government buildings in the East. Moreover the governing elite which surrounds Putin is convinced that Russia is going to rule the world.

But that is an illusion. The Russian oligarchs are going to realize this sooner or later. What we are witnessing today is the agony of a dying empire. Russia can still do much harm by drawing the world towards new military confrontations, but it cannot stop the progress of civilization. Ukraine can come out of the crisis in Crimea as a stronger nation, but that means seizing the opportunity and fighting for it.¹⁹⁸

Finally, a third urgent issue at stake for the next two years is that the Ukrainians should provide themselves with new communication tools. It is known that networks all over the world diffuse images emanating from Russia when treating of events in Ukraine. When the Malaysian airplane crashed, it was the perspectives of the Russian journalists of *Lifenews* who were present at the scene of the crime which was broadcast on television sets the world over. Most of these same Western television chains call upon Russian-speaking

198. Ibid.

or pro-Russian “experts” to shed light upon Ukrainian actuality. No French television channel gave information about the Ukrainian version of the crash of the flight of Malaysian Airlines on 17 July 2014. But on 6 August 2014, Valentin Nalyvaichenko, the head of the SBU (Ukrainian Secret Services) declared in the television studio of Savik Shuster that his services had all the proofs necessary to understand how the tragic events of 17 July unfolded. Notably, he broadcast intercepted telephone conversations between the Russians of Donbass and the Russians in Russia just after the drama. According to Valentin Nalyvaichenko, the Russians who were losing ground to the Ukrainian Army at the beginning of July, had planned to shoot down a Russian plane of Aeroflot above the village of Pervomaisk and immediately send images of the drama through *Lifenews* to arouse the indignation of the Russian nation and thus justify the invasion of Ukraine. But the Russian officers of the GRU who were charged with carrying out this sinister mission confused the village of Pervomaisk with that of Pervomaiskoie, about 50 kilometers away and that would have led them to shoot down in error the Malaysian Airline plane which crossed the Ukrainian sky at the same time. This thesis is difficult to believe in so far as it brings the cruelty of the Kremlin to the fore. It is, however, the official version of the Ukrainian government and is based on tangible proofs. So it is surprising that this explanation of the tragedy was not presented or discussed in any of the French media.¹⁹⁹

199. Western public opinions live to such a degree in a logic of peace that the irrationality of warlike behaviors is more often ban-

A second example of faulty communications on the part of the Ukrainians can be taken from the period of 20-24 August when the Russians were trying to send humanitarian convoys into Ukraine, under the cover of the International Red Cross. International public opinion saw nothing wrong with Russian trucks coming to the aid of a population worn down by three months of fighting since the Russian television presented these trucks as packed with foodstuffs and essential items. There was no one in the Ukrainian media capable of explaining things in a language Europeans could understand, that the suffering populations had been bombed mostly by the Russian Army, that the trucks were three quarters empty (according to British journalists they served to bring back to Russia the bodies of the victims of the Russian Army as well as military material from the Ukrainian factories of occupied Donbass) and that the International Red Cross had refused to give its patronage after the Russian government refused to conform to its rules.

This is a reason to be glad that a Ukrainian private television channel in English has come into being: <http://uatoday.tv/> Its budget, however, is not comparable to that of the sole Russian television channel in French, *La Russie aujourd'hui*, which announced

ished from the analyses and reportings. But the apparent irrationality of war does not necessarily mean that it is false. From the point of view of imperial logic, it is rational to dynamite public buildings and then accuse the enemies one wants to invade. Anna Politkovskaia had brought together proofs that Putin was responsible for the terrorist attacks of September 1999 at Moscow and Volgograd. These attacks had provoked the second war of Chechnya on 1 October 1999.

that it will be ready to broadcast in France in 2015 through sputniknews.com; its budget is estimated at more than 30 million euros per year. It would then, be logical that the Ukrainian government invest in the creation of a television channel capable of broadcasting worldwide in several languages. Victoria Syumar, the former director of the Institute of Mass Medias, who was in charge of the information policy of the Ukrainian National Defence Council between February and July of 2014, and recently elected deputy of the Popular Party of Arseniy Yatsenyuk, is probably the person best placed to define its structure.

How will the international community be able to find order, justice and peace at the same time?

One of the major theses of our work is that Western democracies will not be able to find the path of peace unless they take seriously the reproaches addressed to them by the neo-traditionalist cluster which is taking shape, a cluster which, in certain cases and because it has not been understood, becomes radical and breaks up into neo-fundamentalist groupings. According to personalities as brilliant as George Weigel²⁰⁰ and Chantal Delsol²⁰¹, if Western democracies do not reconsider the question of their values and their virtues, the spiritual foundations of their juridical and constitutional systems, they could well let themselves be led by the black holes of secularism, i.e. individu-

200. G. Weigel, *The Cube and the Cathedral – L'Europe, l'Amerique et la politique avec ou sans Dieu*". Ed. Table ronde, 2005.

201. C. Delsol, *Les pierres d'angle. À quoi tenons-nous?* Paris, Le Cerf, 2014.

alism and populism.²⁰² In order to maintain a firm language regarding Russia without making it look like an oppressive discourse ad extra nor letting it be challenged by groups ad intra who are attracted to relativism or even juridical nihilism, the international community should dare to recover the path of interiority, of questioning the meta-judicial foundations of its own values and facing up to the inter-convictional and inter-religious debate with new energy. Only a work of this type will enable, for example, the directors of FIFA – the International Federation of Football – to understand that its desire to organize the World Cup in Russia in 2018, cost what it may, is a delusion which might cost them their reputation along with more money than they ever imagined.

One would have to be blind and deaf to not admit that violence in our world is growing from year to year. The summer of 2014 has been marked not only by the Russian-Ukrainian war but also by the resurgence of open warfare between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, by the increasing conflict between Sunnite and Shiite States in the Near East, by the entry of the United States, along with an important coalition of States in the war against the Islamic State and by a quantity of other conflicts elsewhere in the world. Everything is happening as if the elites of the planet had not learned the principle lesson demonstrated by the fever of ideologies in the 20th century. Be it at Chicago or Paris, for the last 25 years

202. Cf the series of colloquiums “Does democracy have a spiritual value?” which we organized at the Research Department SLP of the College of the Bernardins and which were published by Parole et Silence in 2013-2014. Cf also my essay, A. Arjakovsky, *Pour une démocratie personnaliste*, Paris, Lethielleux, 2013.

the discourse of the elites has been content to affirm that political power must be separated from religious power in order to construct a lawful State – which is not false but it is very inadequate. Nobody dares to point out that the origins of the deadly ideologies of the 20th century can be found in the effective exclusion (although not always declared) by the modern State of the religious aspirations of the peoples and in the censure, by the power of the university, of the regulations of these aspirations offered by theological rationalities. The licensed critics of theological-political rationality prefer to invent new beliefs such as “the end of history” which will come about with the advent of democratic consensus.²⁰³ In spite of the fact that Marcel Gauchet and Peter Berger had recognized in the years 2000 that the theory of the disenchantment of the world had seen its day, new prophets announce the times of a new post-Christian secularity.”²⁰⁴

Fortunately, there are signs of renewal of political philosophy and political theology. For Armand Puig i Tarrach, the Dean of the Faculty of Theology of Catalonia (Barcelona) and a member of the community of Sant’ Egidio, “the process of globalization should take into account a fundamental difference between “strategic” peace and “preventive” peace. Peace can-

203. The FIFA financed and produced a film clip in October which recognized Crimea as an integral part of the Russian Federation even though this annexation was condemned by a majority of the member nations.

Xxxviii Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, 1992.

204. Michel Onfray, *Traite d’athéologie*, Paris, Grasset, 2005.

not be the fruit of a globalization which links everything to economic calculations; it should become a “preventive” peace within a globalization which seriously envisages the dream of a world peace and the end of all wars. In any event, it can no longer remain as a notion of peace which limits itself to speak of an absence of conflict.” According to the Spanish theologian, “a globalized world cannot subsist unless justice is globalized. Justice is the content of peace, above all in a world where interests of great importance can cause the forgetfulness of the needs of the poor and insignificant. Peace is the great gift of God which resumes all the good things accorded to the human race.”²⁰⁵ Therefore, according to Puig i Tarrech, Ministers of Peace should be designated to bring about preventive peace alongside the Ministers of Defence who are responsible for strategic peace.

This disconnection between, on the one hand, dialectical reasoning (or the strategy of the threat) and on the other hand, open reasoning which understands authentic peace as a gift (what each human being experiences when he is for-given) has marked the reflection of the philosophical current known as Radical Orthodoxy. The English philosopher and theologian John Milbank, has rediscovered the Christian vision of being from a meditation on the three Persons in God. His ontology is based on the contingency of the created world, on the fact that this creation is fully realized only in God and on the idea of unity in difference. This is why only Christianity can go beyond

205. Conference given at the College of the Bernardins, February, 2013.

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the contradictions of former thought between polis and oikos, polis and psyche, or unity and difference.

“The reconciliation [of virtues with difference] is possible because Christianity has a more emphatic conception [than Plato and Aristotle] of virtue as something that aims at [...] a fundamental condition of peace. If the *polis* can assign a role to everyone and grant a virtuous way of life, then justice should be possible. And a justice which consists in living together in harmony, rather than a simple mutual tolerance, implies a real peace which is more than a suspended state of war. But [...] because of the gravitational attraction of the Greek *mythos*, Plato and Aristotle are finally incapable of imagining an ontological civil peace which exceeds the state of suspended war. This marks the limit of their attempt to go beyond secularity and the source of all the antimonies concerning their conceptions of virtues. The most radical imagination of peace within the Christian *mythos* and the separation of this imagination from every dialectical foundation protect the Christian vision of virtues from all threat of deconstruction – something which is only possible in terms of Greek philosophy and metaphysics. Derrida and Deleuze only half-realized this, because they didn’t grasp the new singularity of Christian theology.”²⁰⁶

206. John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory, Beyond Secular Reasoning*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990, p.331. Quoted by Adrian Pabst, “La théologie de John Milbank et Radical orthodoxy” in *Radical or-*

Thus, if the international community wants to attain an order of justice and peace, without having to “convert” to Christian dogma, it must rediscover the meaning Christianity has given to the notion of peace. For that it must free itself from stale theologies which confuse the merciful Pantocrator with Jupiter, reduce the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to a great watchmaker. It will then find an understanding of the Creator as a just God who acts in the world at the service of this order. This involves serious work on the theology of politics as we recommend right from the first chapter of this book. On the occasion of the colloquium held on 9 October, 2014, at the College of the Bernardins on “Ukraine and Europe: New Challenges,” in cooperation with the Catholic University of Ukraine and about forty intellectuals and diplomats from fifteen different countries, including a strong Ukrainian delegation (bishop Borys Gudziak, Volodymyr Turchynovsky, Mihailo Minakov, Sophia Opatska) and Europeans (such as Jean-Sylvestre Mongrenier, Chantal Delsol, Joanna Nowicki, Galia Ackerman). Father Capelle Dumont, presented a paper in this spirit:

“For its part, Russia, because of its recent and distant past, is penetrated by two ideas of “totality” which are in juxtaposition to one another; on the one hand, there is a totality which I would qualify as “Utopian” in which the destiny of a people is played out in the name of a dialectical and necessary progress of History, and on the other hand, a totality which I will call “nostalgic”. The truth of the first “totality”

thodoxy. Pour une révolution théologique, Paris, Ad Solem, 2004, pgs. 41-42.

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resides in “looking forward” towards an historical-political reconciliation to be won whatever the price might be – and we know that this price was very great. The truth of the second “totality”, on the contrary, resides in “looking backwards”, which promises the rediscovery of the unity that was lost. The Russian authorities of today seek to revive the ancient myths such as Pan-Slavism and the Slavic Brotherhood or the Third Rome, myths which have absolutely nothing to do with historical reality, but whose activation reveals the deep fear of seeing a Ukraine which is not just autonomous but powerful. The question is then: in the name of which of these two totalities is the Russian-Ukrainian conflict situated? It is possible to defend the thesis that the successes Russia has had among its own population in this conflict are due to the ambiguity maintained and even deliberately fostered concerning it. One cannot help being struck by the historical complicities, sometimes concealed but very real, that “certain” – and I stress “certain” - religious authorities have been able to establish with the first and maintain with the second. (...) it can be agreed that the situation of the Ukrainian nation taken as a whole expresses a daring rejection of totality and a tenacious struggle against its destructive effects. It remains to be seen whether the different forces which form it, can in the present condition where chaos is never far off, continue to include in their demand for a national and cultural identity, the paradigm of alterity, a paradigm which is both the cornerstone of democracies and their point of vulnerability. Cornerstone because it offers speech which is both differentiated and regulated; vulnerability because it can

provoke an inane cultural fragmentation. It is here that the European experience and tradition, which is precisely a spiritual experience and tradition of otherness, has an historical and ethical responsibility towards Ukraine, which solicits it for very profound reasons. This responsibility consists first of all in Europe, humbly verifying on its own foundations, the frontier between identity and its possessive derivative on the one hand, and between otherness and its fragmentary derivative on the other hand.”²⁰⁷

Father Capelle thus concludes that the European nations, both marked by Christian culture and less and less faithful to their heritage, should make first a start with self critique. They would then find themselves on the wide road of a European renaissance. According to Gaetane Ricard-Nihoul, the representative of the European Union in France, this renaissance is founded on a revised understanding of the project of Jacques Delors of the European Federation of Nation States.²⁰⁸ For Delors, the European Union will not disappear from the Nation-States. It will give them a second life in a globalized world. “The future of the European continent will play itself out in the acceptance of a permanent dialogue between cultures and levels of power, in the necessarily imperfect character of the search for a collective compromise, and in the construction, in spite of everything, of a common project.”²⁰⁹ But, above all, this effort of criticism on the part of the Europeans should lead to a period of detachment and self-con-

207. Conference at the College of the Bernardins on 9.10.2014.

208. G. Ricard-Nihoul, *Pour une Federation européenne d'Etats-nations*, préface by Jacques Delors, Paris, Larcier, 2012.

209. *Ibid*, p. 179.

fidence such as Francois Villeroy de Galhau recommends in his publication *L'espérance d'un Européen* (Odile Jacob, 2014). This confidence and this hope are founded in the realization, after 1945, that the very genius of the identity of Europe is the person, the defence of human dignity from the Habeas corpus of 1215 to the dissident movements of the decade 1970-1980. It is therefore, a question of a new narrative of Europe written and told by multiple voices in an open, plural and democratic manner, but with the clear consciousness that there is truly a European identity founded on common values. This project, undertaken at the level of the Presidency of the European Union (within the project of a new narrative for Europe), of the European Parliament (with the opening of a Museum of European History in 2016) is also a priority at the Centre of Research at the College of the Bernardins.²¹⁰

Andrei Zubov, the great Russian historian, banned from the Institute for International Relations of Moscow after having publically condemned the annexation of Crimea, points out this gap which exists today between the Russian and European mentalities. In a recent interview, he spoke his mind about the Russian-Ukrainian war. According to Zubov, there is a gap between Russian public opinion and that of the Western countries - which Ukraine is now joining – concerning the relationship between nation, State and the individual. In Zubov's eyes, in the 1930s "Europe thought of nation as an organism, but after 1945, Western Europe arrived at a completely different idea

210. Cf A. Arjakovsky, "How to write a new narrative for Europe?" *The Mind and the Body of Europe: A New Narrative*, preface by Jose Manuel Barroso, Brussel, Bozar, 2014.

of the nation. From the person seen as a cell in the national organism, the Europeans arrived at the vision of the person as the central value of the national body. This mentality, absolutely new and different, enabled the construction of the new democratic Europe.”²¹¹ It offered an escape from the complex of inferiority, from paranoia and revenge and opened up to the post-rational logic of openness to others, of mutualization and cooperation.

How can the Churches contribute to peace in the ex-USSR?

The rabbis who are reproached for often answering a question by asking a question have the habit of saying that half of the answer is always found in the way the question is formulated. So with two questions, a response is always found! So the question posed here could be answered by another question: How can Christians themselves contribute to peace? For too long in the past, Christianity has been objectivized and reduced to its institutional and clerical aspect. It is not a question of minimizing the importance of the definition of the visible Church as the Body of Christ. It is a question of remembering that this Body is also a mystical Body to which everyone belongs in some degree or another as the Catholic Christians have affirmed in the decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* of 21 November, 1964 during the Second Vatican Council. Defined as a “mystery” and no longer as a secular institution, the Church of Christ again affirms that it “subsists” not just within the Catholic

211. <http://life.pravda.com.ua/person/2014/07/22/175554/>

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Church but also among the other Churches and communities, Orthodox and Protestants. Orthodox Christians have strongly defended this dogmatic and experimental fact in the 20th century through the voices of such great personalities as Patriarch Athenagoras and Father Sergius Bulgakov. The Patriarch of Constantinople, in the *Tomos Agapis*, also declared that the Churches of Rome and Constantinople were sister Churches and consequently, Christians were much more united than one would think when looking at the *Una Sancta* from the outside. As for Protestant Christians, they have always given more importance to this spiritual vision of the Church than to its institutional incarnation. They actively stimulated the founding of the World Council of Churches and its department Faith and Constitution which unites all the Christian confessions in a sole organism of theological reflection.

This evolution of the ecumenical movement only reached Ukraine recently. The first and only Institute of Ecumenical Studies in the ex-USSR only dates back to 2004. The events of the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Revolution of Dignity in 2014 above all, have changed the scenario. Mikhail Cherenkov, a Ukrainian Protestant layman, gave a stimulating analysis of the events of November 2013 – February 2014 in the course the Seventh Ecumenical Ukrainian Social Week organized by the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at Lviv in October 2014.²¹²

212. The Ukrainian Ecumenical Social Weeks have been organized since 2008 by the Institute for Ecumenical Studies at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv since 2008 in association with the

“Maidan symbolizes a new era in the relations between Protestants and society. For the first time an important opening and confidence towards religions has joined together with a serious and high expectation. The events and challenges of Maidan have corrected the understanding the Church had of its mission in the world. The relations between the Churches and society have acquired a double and interactive character. Missiology was able to become fully present and achieved on Maidan Square. The Church has had the historical good fortune to see society, not as a passive actor that receives the sacraments, but as an active subject capable of formulating questions and creating positive conditions for dialogue. The Church has been able to see itself not as the center of missionary activity, but as part of the events that are happening and as the servant of the *missio Dei*. Such an understanding of missiology goes beyond ecclesiocentrism and rehabilitates the person and society as subjects-collaborators in the history of liberation and salvation, in the establishment of the Kingdom of God as the highest trans-social and trans-confessional reality. Specialists of religion speak of the birth of a new form of religiosity at Maidan, ‘the Citizen Church’. This term comes from the ‘two-faced missiology’, when the Church sees itself as part of civil society and when society looks upon the Church as ‘its own’”²¹³

ensemble of the Churches in Ukraine, a great number of social and charitable organizations and numerous university and institutional partners – beginning with the Kiev City Hall and its mayor, Andri Sadovyi.

213. M. Tcherenkov, “Missiology AfterMaidan: an opportunity for Ukrainian Protestants”, intervention at the Seventh Ukrainian So-

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An objective observer of the religious situation in Ukraine, viewing it from the star Sirius, could have good reasons for disputing this positive and ecumenical interpretation of the present activities of the Churches in Ukraine. He would mention the letters of 14 August addressed by Patriarch Kirill, Head of the Orthodox Church of the Patriarchate of Moscow, to international organizations but also to the Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I. These were made public on the site www.mospat.ru where he complained of the activity of “Uniates and heretics” who, according to Kirill, were destroying “canonic Orthodoxy in the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk” and fanning the flames of a real “inter-religious war”. This observer will cite the 1 September replies of Mgr. Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and of Patriarch Filaret (Denysenko), the Head of the Orthodox Church of the Patriarchate of Kiev, denying any spiritual dimension in the conflict and explaining that all the cultural and confessional tendencies were represented among the soldiers at the front, conversely incriminating the support given by the Patriarch of Moscow to the expansionist politics of President Putin.

It is true that facts are not lacking to support the thesis that the Moscow Patriarchate is compromised with the Kremlin.²¹⁴ Patriarch Kirill never once con-

cial Ecumenical Week at Lviv on 10/2/2014.

214. Cf Antoine Arjakovsky, “Le règne contesté de l’orthodoxie russe”, *Le livre noir de la condition des chrétiens dans le monde*, directed by Jean-Michel di Falco, Timothy Radcliffe and Andrea Riccardi, Paris XO editions, 2014, pgs. 696-703.

demned the annexation of Ukraine by Russia nor the destabilizing operations of the Russian Army in the Donbass region. This summer he personally decorated Guennadi Zyuganov, the leader of the Communist Party and one of the principal supporters of Putin's policy of annexation. Nor did Kirill Gundyayev hesitate to bless a Sukhoi factory of military material at Kom-somolsk on the Amour in the region of Khabarovsk on 16 September and justify the war waged by Russia in Ukraine by affirming that "Russia could not be the vassal of any other power."²¹⁵ Patriarch Kirill makes no secret that his spiritual guide (duhovnik) is the Archimandrite Iliia Nozdrin, a monk at Optina Monastery. The Archimandrite calls the faithful to pray to God to punish those who oppose the establishment of "the New Russia, of Belarus, of Great Russia."²¹⁶ For his part, Patriarch Filaret accuses Patriarch Kirill of basing his support on "two or three dubious cases", to pretend that there is an inter-religious conflict in Ukraine. He says he does not want to point out "the dozens of examples of clerics from the Patriarchate of Moscow who bring ideological and material support to the project of the New Russia." We can add to this disastrous picture of the ecumenical situation in Ukraine and in Russia, the fact that the United Nations has condemned the new Russian authorities in Crimea for persecuting the national and religious minorities on the peninsula.

But this distant and critical perspective, as necessary as it might be, only grasps one aspect of the

215. <http://www.newsru.com/russia/16sep2014/kirill.html>

216. Religion.in.ua of 31.10.2014

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situation. First, a distinction must be made between the policy of the Patriarchate of Moscow and that of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church which is under the protection of the Patriarchate of Moscow. Although a favorite of Kirill, Metropolitan Onufri, was elected Head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Patriarchate of Moscow) last August, the synod of this Church has clearly separated itself from the positions of the Moscow hierarchs by condemning the expansionist projects of Russia and the annexation of Crimea. Courageous bishops, such as Mgr. Filaret Kutcherov, the bishop of Lviv of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Patriarchate of Moscow) have shown that it was possible to be Orthodox, faithful to tradition, a patriot and to express one's self freely. Mgr. Filaret has not hesitated to write an open letter to President Putin publically condemning his annexation of Crimea.

Secondly, the elites, and not just the crowd in Maidan, of the different Catholic and Orthodox Churches have demonstrated that they are ready to unite on a theological and pastoral level, with the initiation of official discussions between the Orthodox (Patriarchate of Kiev) and Catholics (Greek Catholic Church) at Lviv in the beginning of October during the Seventh Ecumenical Social Week within the framework of the Ukrainian Christian Academic Society. The official character of these discussions has certainly been relativized by Mgr. Sviatoslav Shevchuk, the Head of the Greek Catholic Church, after Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev complained at Rome during the synod on the family. All the same, the recordings of this session of the SACU bears witness to the profound unity between clerics and lay peo-

ple on the interpretation to be given to the events of Maidan (cf in particular the interventions of Father Michel Dymyd, a Greek Catholic priest, and Mgr. Ihor Issichenko, the bishop of Kharkiv of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church).

More generally, the ecclesial institutions will not be able to oppose themselves for very long to this groundswell which is now upsetting the Ukrainian religious landscape. Disappointed by the lack of liberty of their hierarchs, several dozens of parishes have already chosen to leave the Patriarchate of Moscow in Ukraine. The hour is grave. The political accusations of the Patriarchate of Moscow against the Ukrainian “Uniates and heretics” which have been repeated since the beginning of the 1990s, are now transformed into an open conflict between the two countries. The Ukrainians have understood that the best antidote to this false and aggressive discourse of the Patriarchate of Moscow consists in showing, at all costs, the inanity of these accusations. It is true that most of the Catholic and Orthodox bishops in the world prefer the status quo of the strategic peace in Ukraine to the arrival of a true ecumenism of life, at the price of a redefinition of confessional frontiers. But the “theology of Maidan”, defended by Cyril Hovorun, a Ukrainian Orthodox theologian, reveals that the groundswell of the popular movement in favor of justice and human dignity is more powerful than the little institutional arrangements. If the Ukrainian Churches present in the country do not grasp this quickly, they risk being the first victims. The Protestant Churches which supported the regime of Hitler in the 1930s suffered terribly after the Second World War.

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At a medium term, this groundswell could affect the generation of clerics and lay people in Russia itself who only understand the Church as an ark of salvation. The history of the Church reveals, however, that the zealots only represent one current within the Church. Alongside these intransigent faithful, the Church has also made room for converts for whom the Church is, above all, the Body of Christ and who take seriously the proclamation of the truth of the Gospel; and also room for the spiritual people who see the Church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit and who cannot bring confessional borders into conflict as the inspiration of the Spirit; and room for the rebels who, because they know that the justice of the Father is superior to that of men, cannot accept the intransigent violence of the “whitened sepulchres”. This new awareness was realized in the Orthodox world by figures who have been canonized, such as St. Maria of Paris, the author of the famous article written in 1937, “The types of the spiritual life”, published in Paris in 1997 by YMCA Press. This vision of the presence of different religious attitudes within each of the Christian confessions and the need to encourage dialogue between them, is shared by Catholic theologians such as Hans-Urs von Balthasar. It could well combine with the awareness of the Ukrainian Protestants, to renew the very understanding of ecclesiology and mission within the Catholic and Orthodox Churches in Ukraine.

The political stakes are huge. It is a question of restoring to the Ukrainians and Russians of the 21st century an awareness that they have a political responsibility as citizens and the hope that they can,

each one in his place, contribute to building a better and more just society. The most striking aspect of the post-Soviet collective consciousness is the absence of a political sense in the population, itself founded on an absence of a sense of responsibilities. Lev Gudkov says it well when referring to the Russians: “When we ask: are you ready to accept sacrifices in the name of the annexation of Crimea: the lowering of your pensions, of your salaries, only 5 to 7% would respond positively. The majority answers ‘we’ll have to see’; ‘I have nothing to do with all that’ (...) People always support the State nominally, but that does not mean that they are ready to assume their responsibilities.”²¹⁷ Thus it is that the task of helping the lay people of Ukraine and Russia understand that the Church is diverse, that it is not the Kingdom but has a mission to tend towards it, that every act of justice is essential to its accomplishment, that the Church blesses every man and every woman to participate, each at his or her level, in the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth in the spirit of the Gospel and of the reconciled ecclesial tradition – that this task is a good citizen’s duty and worthy of much more consideration both on the part of the international community and the leaders of the Churches which are involved.

To conclude, let us return to a renewed vision of mythology. It is in being faithful to the baptism of the Rus’ and the heritage of the holy princes Boris and Gleb, the sons of Vladimir I, that the Russians and Ukrainians of today might be able, in my opinion, to work effectively for peace. We know that these two princes freely accepted to take upon themselves

217. *Svoboda*, 10/23/2014.

the violence which pervaded the reigning family in the 11th century in order to make peace and public welfare possible. But the political heritage of Boris and Gleb is not the face of passivity in the face of evil. This is what Tolstoi believed - which revolted Ivan Ijine at one time but now fits in well for cynics who seek to profit from such naiveté. The philosophy of peace of the holy princes Boris and Gleb was, on the contrary, that each one should assume his own responsibilities at the risk of his own life. Public power only has meaning and legitimacy in the measure in which it places itself, at the price of its fame, of its power of its longevity, at the service of peace and justice. The common spiritual heritage of the Rus' of Kiev is probably found in this vision according to which the State should limit itself, and accept some social violence; in order to give a greater chance for peace, for the progressive penetration of the earthly Jerusalem by the Heavenly Jerusalem.

A final word: After the February Agreement in Minsk, how to avoid all-out war between the West and Russia?

The new peace plan agreed in Minsk on 12 February will only have a short-term effect on the conflict in East Ukraine. Even if the spirit of the Minsk agreement is translated into realities on the ground – allowing for the preservation of Ukrainian sovereignty and the withdrawal of Russian forces in exchange for the decentralization of power in Ukraine – the positions of Russia and the West remain too far apart to guarantee peace in Europe beyond the short-term.

The distance between Russia and the West was on full display during the annual Munich security conference on 7-8 February. European diplomats were clearly shocked by the speech given by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. Despite clear evidence to the contrary, Lavrov continued to issue blanket denials about the presence of Russian troops and weapons in the East Ukraine conflict zone. Lavrov also claimed that existing United Nations resolutions allow any given region to unilaterally declare its independence. This claim produced much mirth among European political leaders, despite the fact that it clearly represents a direct threat to numerous European countries – including EU member states – which have significant Russian-speaking minorities.

The exchanges in Munich highlighted how far apart the two sides are in their interpretation of the Ukraine crisis. Even if the latest Minsk peace plan does not directly result in the partition of Ukraine, there is a danger that it could nevertheless come to be seen as a repeat of the 1938 Munich agreement, which saw Britain and France agree to Nazi Germany's partition of Czechoslovakia.

The current top priority must be finding a peaceful settlement that can secure long-term stability for Eastern Europe as a whole. The route to long-term peace must involve a number of factors. First and foremost, Western leaders must combine their diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict in East Ukraine with material support for the Ukrainian military. European leaders should stop seeking to prevent America from supplying Ukraine with the weapons the country requires. America estimates that it will have to provide Ukraine

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with USD three billion of armaments over a three-year period. America's leaders clearly have a much better understanding of the military realities than their European counterparts. Neither the OSCE nor the Ukrainian army has been able to prevent the intervention of regular Russian army troops into Ukraine at any point from the first Minsk agreement of September 2014 until the bombing of Mariupol and the current clashes.

Secondly, Western countries, the IMF and the EU should support the Ukrainian government's efforts to implement reforms in the country's economic sector and administration. Writing in the *New York Review of Books*, George Soros recently estimated the cost of supporting Ukraine through the reform process at USD fifty billion. The foundations already appear to be in place for a major reform effort in the country – the current Ukrainian parliament is the most reform-minded in the country's history, with an unprecedented mandate to eradicate the corruption inherited from the Soviet system of government. Western nations have a vested interest in creating a Ukrainian state which is based on the rule of law and free market economic principles. The example of the reform program implemented in Poland in the 1990s provides strong evidence that the West can expect impressive returns from their investment into Ukraine. The Poles themselves would surely agree – their living standards have increased threefold over the past 25 years.

Thirdly and most importantly, Western countries must defend their basic values and share their understanding of the truth with the Russian public. This is the cheapest of the key measures which the Western community must adopt, but it is also arguably

the most difficult to realize. Ever since Putin came to power in Russia in 1999, the Western world has been ideologically on the defensive. For example, it took an entire year for the French government to acknowledge the existence of a war in Ukraine, but even now many in Paris refuse to recognize exactly who is fighting. The intellectual and political elites in both France and Germany continue to be heavily influenced by Russian propaganda. They regard Russia as an entirely separate world, and refuse to accept that such a thing as universal truth exists. Nicolas Sarkozy has recently repeated the claims of Marie Le Pen, commenting that she sees no harm in the people of Crimea 'voluntarily reuniting with Russia,' despite the fact that this decision was taken without the participation of the Ukrainian state and in violation of international law.

Serious analysis of the Crimean referendum, coupled with the public statements in January 2015 of Russian agent Igor Girkin, leave little room for doubt that the so-called popular movements in favour of Russia witnessed in Crimea and East Ukraine over the past year, were both organized by Russia itself and without any regard for the opinions of the local populations. Meanwhile, the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Ukraine in the course of 2014 served to comprehensively debunk the allegations about an 'extremist fascist Ukrainian threat' promoted and propagated by the Kremlin. In parallel to these events, the London inquest into the death of former Russian secret service agent Alexander Litvinenko has revealed the mafia character of the Putin regime.

Many in Europe now appreciate that we are fast approaching the last chance to avert a major escalation. More than 5,500 Ukrainians – both soldiers and civilians – have lost their lives in the East Ukraine conflict so far. This figure does not include the suspected thousands of Russian dead. Almost one million people have had to flee their homes and become refugees. If Western countries had been prepared to listen to genuine experts and had not been so easily led by those who sought to promote Russian propaganda, then the crisis might have been averted for a fraction of the price which must now be paid.

Today we need to re-establish a dialogue with the Russian people. In the 1990s, the Russian public was ready to reject Soviet Communism but was not yet prepared to embrace Western liberal values. We must provide Russian audiences with credible information – in the Russian language - about the corrupt schemes established by the Putin regime over the past fifteen years. We know that the Soviet regime began to unravel following the publication in Paris of Solzhenitsyn's 'Gulag Archipelago' in Russian in the 1970s. We must also support the Russian Orthodox Church to reform. A Russian culture and theology more open to notions of Western democracy is already evident within Russian émigré communities.

Last but not least, we must support opposition forces within Russia in order to prevent the collapse of the Russian state in the event of the fall of the Putin regime. Despite the messages being promoted by the Kremlin, there are credible alternatives to Putin.

The West needs to live up to the commitments made to Ukraine in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. Until there is a genuine referendum in Crimea, the sanctions regime against Russia must remain in place.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

(21 November 2013 – 11 February 2015)

Thursday 21 November 2013:

One week before the summit meeting at Vilnius, the government of Yanukovych announced that it will not sign the agreement of association with the European Union.

Sunday 24 November:

More than 100,000 people attend a demonstration in Kiev in favor of a rapprochement with Europe. Those manifesting decide not to leave Independence Square (Maidan Nezalejnosti) in the center of Kiev. The media rapidly divides into those who support the demonstrations (kanal 5, Hromadske TV, Espresso TV, Facebook) and those who oppose them in Ukraine, (kanal 1, Inter) and abroad (Russian channels): Vesti, 1 kanal...Euronews, Bloomberg, Financial Times, Wall Street Journal....)

Thursday 28 November:

Summit meeting of the European Union in Vilnius. Yanukovych is present but Ukraine confirms its change of mind.

Saturday 30 November:

After the violent dispersal of young students and journalists on Maidan Square by special forces of the Ministry of Interior (Berkut) during the night of Fri-

day-Saturday, a demonstration is announced for Sunday. Those participating in the demonstration were able to take refuge in the church of Saint Michael thanks to the support of the patriarchate of Kiev. This was a symbolic event since it was in this same church that the habitants of Kiev protected themselves from the attacks of the Tatars in the Middle Ages.

Sunday 1 December (referred to as the “Day of Anger”):

Demonstrations at Kiev, Lviv, Odessa, Kharkiv. The City Hall at Kiev was occupied by the dissidents. The decision was taken by three opposition leaders (Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Vitali Klitchko, Oleg Tiahnybok) to stay in Maidan Square until the government of Azarov resigned, Youlia Tymoshenko was released and the presidential elections were moved up. Appearance of the “titushkis”, civilians, often ex-criminals, used by the police to sow disorder, provoke, even kidnap and terrorize those participating in the demonstration. Maidan becomes organized along the lines of a Cossack camp. A church is erected where Catholic and Orthodox services are held. Sentries (sotnia) protect the square and patrolled the city to guarantee order.

Wednesday 4 December:

To the surprise of everyone, V. Yanukovych made a visit to Beijing.

Sunday 8 December:

About a million persons participate in a demonstration in Kiev. The opposition called for the resignation of the Minister of Interior, V. Zakhartchenko. The government did not react. After a second attempt, the demonstrators succeeded in toppling a statue of Len-

in which was standing on Khreshchatyk St. in Kiev, in front of the Bessarabe Market. This is the beginning of a movement called “Leninopad” which, in the space of two months, will tear down about a hundred statues of Lenin throughout the country²¹⁸.

Tuesday 10 December:

During the night, the Berkuts tried to disperse the crowds without success. Demonstrators at Maidan organized themselves to prevent a repetition of this type of manoeuvre. Telephone numbers were exchanged in order to text messages to each other in case of absence.

Wednesday 11 December:

After the deputies of the Party of Regions (the majority party allied to the Communist Party) refused to dissolve the government, the insurgents set up an organized policy of passive resistance (occupation of buildings, boycott of products of pro-government businesses, appeal for the international isolation of the Ukrainian government...)

Tuesday 17 December:

The agreements of Moscow appeared to close the chapter on the third Ukrainian revolution after that of 1989 (which led to the independence of the country), that of 2004 (which led to the election of President Yushchenko) and that named Euromaidan of 2013. Putin’s Russia was prepared to loan 15 billion dollars to Ukraine and reduce the price of gas by a third. By avoiding the procedure of ratification by the Ukrainian Parliament, this almost assured the entry of Ukraine into the Eurasian Union in 2015.

218 <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/02/23/7016002/>

December – Mid-January:

Those who participated in demonstrations were arrested and imprisoned. The appearance of the Auto-Maidan: dissidents go by car to the residence of Yanukovich to put pressure on him and deny him freedom of movement. The Berkuts made several attempts to disperse the crowds at Maidan Square but they were unsuccessful. Christmas is celebrated in Ukraine on January 6. After the holidays, an unsuccessful counter-demonstration was organized on Marinski Square, near the presidential palace.

Thursday 16 January:

By a show of hands and without respecting Parliamentary procedures, the Rada approved 20 undemocratic and unconstitutional laws. These laws provide for up to 15 years imprisonment for taking part in a demonstration. The laws strengthened the resolve of the opposition and increased demonstrations everywhere in Ukraine. Hrushevsky Street was blocked.

Wednesday 22 January:

Three dissidents die in clashes with the police. Several activists (Youri Loutsenko, ex-Minister of Interior, Ihor Lutsenko, Youri Verbytsky, Dmytro Bulatov, a leader of the auto-Maidan) and journalists were captured and most of them are tortured. Demonstrators protected themselves with wooden bats and Molotov cocktails. The patrols of Maidan went to the hospitals because the titushkis were removing the wounded.

Thursday 23 January:

Five of the 25 regional administration offices were occupied by the dissidents. Football fans at Kiev and Donetsk supported the demonstrators. There were al-

ready more than 1,500 wounded including 150 among the police, 30 nurses and 70 journalists.

Friday 24 January:

President Victor Yanukovych met with representatives of the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (CUEOR). Two days previously, this same Council published an offer to mediate between the people in revolt and the government. He names Andriy Kluyev chief of the presidential administration.

Saturday 25 – Sunday 26 January:

Demonstrations of support occurred throughout the world, even in Russia and Belarus where activists were brutalized by the police. Ten regional administration buildings were occupied. Yanukovych offered government posts to Yatsenyuk and Klitchko who refused them. Violent clashes occurred in Dnipropetrovsk. The oligarchs V. Pinchuk and R. Akhmetov break with Yanukovych and appeal for peace.

Monday 27 January:

There were more and more testimonies that Russian soldiers are being sent to Ukraine. There were two more deaths.

Tuesday 28 January:

Parliament annuls nine of the laws passed on 16 January but continued to support the policy of terror and the sending of “death squads”. The police visited dissidents at their homes and lawsuits multiplied. After the resignation of N. Azarov, Arbutov became the new acting Prime Minister. The illegal dealings of the brothers Serguei and Andriy Kluyev, close associates of V. Yanukovych in Austria, were discovered.

Wednesday 29 January:

It was -20 degrees at Maidan when European and American delegations arrived at Kiev. Parliament passed a law granting amnesty to arrested dissidents but President Yanukovich intervened to prevent them from ratifying this vote.

Thursday 30 January:

Yanukovich refused to sign the amnesty law and called in D. Bulatov, who was ill and had been tortured by the Russians (his ear cut, his hands pierced by nails) and left half-dead at the edge of a forest. While he was in the hospital, the police tried to arrest him. Some deputies succeeded in stopping the police.

Sunday 2 February:

M. Azarov, the former Prime Minister, left Ukraine in a private plane and rejoined his son in Vienna. The Security Conference in Munich (with V. Klitchko and A. Yatsenyuk) discussed the Ukrainian question.

Monday 3 February:

Yanukovich returned to the scene after the departure of the European delegation. Statistics were released on that day: 1,739 victims of the repression and 136 journalists attacked (chesno.org). Casings of steel bullets were found at the sites of the demonstrations, whereas the police claimed they had only used rubber bullets.

The Kremlin secretly sent several thousand soldiers from the Special Forces of the Russian Ministry of Interior (spetsnaz) to spread terror throughout UkraineUkraine. When these soldiers were found near Kiev, the Ukrainian Minister of Interior was obliged

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to recognize their presence. Several dozen cases of kidnapping and torture have already been reported.

Tuesday 4 February:

Two members of the Udar Party were assassinated (Oleg Garyaga, Vitaly Serpokrillov). The television channel TV Dojd', the only channel in Russia to report events with objectivity, was withdrawn from satellite transmission.

Thursday 6 February:

Andriy Parouiby, deputy and security chief of Maidan, denounced provocations on the part of the Government.

Saturday 8 February:

V. Yanukovych went to the inaugural ceremony of the Olympic Games in Sochi.

Wednesday 12 February:

The Hryvna is devaluated by 20% (on 1 December, 1 Euro=11 Grivnas; 1\$ =8 Grivnas).

Sunday 16 February:

During the large weekly demonstration at Kiev, the deputies of the opposition announced a new demonstration would take place on Tuesday. The Tatars of Crimea declared their support for Maidan and their resistance to pro-Russian currents in their region. On that day, 7 dissidents died and one policeman (from a heart attack) but numerous reports from the morgues revealed there were many unidentified bodies being held there.

Tuesday 18 February:

At 11h00 real bullets were fired at the crowd. Two of the dissidents were struck. From this moment, everything is in turmoil. At 20h00 the Berkuts attack Maidan. Yatsenyuk calls for a cease-fire. Fighting

continued throughout the night in Maidan Square with flaming tyres and Molotov cocktails. The deputy Olexandr Turchynov, the second in command of the Batkyvshyna Party, was wounded.

Wednesday 19 February:

Yanukovych threatened to arrest the opposition leaders and launched an “anti-terrorist operation” via SBU.

In spite of the attacks during the night, half of Maidan Square remained occupied by the dissidents. At 13h00 there are 25 dead (9 of them police officers) and 600 seriously wounded. A sniper was captured.

An announcement stated that a delegation of the Foreign Ministers from France, Poland and Germany would arrive at Kiev the following day.

Thursday 20 February:

The United States imposed sanctions against Ukrainian politicians.

There were more than 30,000 people in Maidan Square. Yuri Iljin, the Chief of Staff, acting under the orders of the Minister of Defense, Pavel Lebedev, gave instructions to several divisions from Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv to use force to disperse the people in Maidan. Around 9h00 snipers again began to fire into the crowd. The ceasefire was broken. More than 700 titushkis, armed with rifles and grenades arrived as reinforcements.

But the dissidents charged and put the police forces to flight. Around 13h00 the tide turned in favor of Maidan. A group of deputies from the Party of Regions defected. The Mayor of Kiev, Volodimir Makeenko, reopened the subway. At about 16h00 the Minister of Interior made a last attempt to evacuate

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Maidan. The negotiations with the foreign ministers failed and the EU imposed sanctions.

In the morning, Volodimir Konstantinov, the Speaker of the Parliamentary Assembly of Crimea, threatens a shut-down.

Friday 21 February:

Tensions continue in Maidan during the night.

The Parliament of Crimea announced an extraordinary session.

Vladimir Lukin, sent to Kiev by V. Putin, met with the troika.

The United States adopted sanctions against Ukrainian officials.

In the face of pressure from the troika of Weimar, V. Yanukovich agreed to sign a memorandum with the opposition at 16h00. The agreement is initialed by the troika but the emissary from the Kremlin refuses to sign it.

Towards 17h00, 386 deputies voted for a return to the Constitution of 2004 (300 votes were necessary). Yatsenyuk announced that the Rada can now name a new government and “cease acting as a sub-section of the presidential administration”. The “dictatorial” laws passed in 2010-2011, which gave exceptional powers to the president, were abrogated. The Rada freed dissidents prosecuted by the preceding regime from any lawsuits. Around 18h00 it dismissed Vitali Zakharchenko, the disgraced Minister of Interior, whose departure had been the very first demand of the opposition, dating back to 1 December. At 18h30 the Rada released Youlia Tymoshenko who had been imprisoned for three years by V. Yanukovich. An increasing number of deputies left the Party of Regions

and accused Andriy Klyuyev for the massacres which took place during the week.

At 19h00 the leaders of the Auto-Maidan refused to accept the agreement unless it was accompanied by the resignation of the president. The Minister of Interior, V. Zakharchenko, fled to Belarus, numerous deputies fled to Russia.

The dissidents at Maidan demanded the resignation of Yanukovych before 10h00 on Saturday. During the night, V. Yanukovych hurriedly left Kiev.

Saturday 22 February:

The President of the Parliament, Volodimir Rybak resigned.

At the instigation of Vadim Kolischnichenko but in the absence of V. Yanukovych, the Congress of deputies from the Party of Regions at Kharkiv refused the decisions of the Rada. The congress claimed it was being “terrorized”.

The Rada at Kiev chose O. Turchynov as President. Since Yanukovych had not signed the law on the previous day and since the agreement of 21 February ruled that he do so within 48 hours, the Rada itself declared a return to the Constitution of 2004. The Assembly, with a margin of 247 votes, dismissed the Attorney General, Victor Pshonka. At approximately 16h00 V. Yanukovych appeared on television, refusing to resign and spoke of a coup d’etat.

Sunday 23 February:

Olexandr Turchynov was elected as interim President of Ukraine. The Party of Regions, whose spokesperson is Olexandr Efremov, believed that it had been deceived by Yanukovych and his corrupt family. Parliament invalidated the Kolesnichenko law regarding

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languages. Yanukovych, who was in Crimea where he received the resignation of Andriy Klyuyev, chief of the presidential administration. The fortune of A. Klyuyev and his brother Serhiy, a politician, is estimated to be more than 227 million dollars. An arrest warrant is to be taken out on them both on March 7 and their banking accounts blocked by the EU.

Monday 24 February:

Patriarch Filaret called the Orthodox to unite without delay. Soon after, the Patriarchate of Moscow dismissed Metropolitan Volodymyr, head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, from his duties. In agreement with Patriarch Kirill, the synod of Ukrainian bishops replaced him with Metropolitan Onufry of Tchernivtsy, a faithful follower of Moscow. Arseniy Yatsenyuk affirms that the Ukrainian State is on the verge of bankruptcy and that the preceding government had run off with more than 70 billion dollars. Angela Merkel reproached the Ukrainian government for its decision on the language law and advised more prudence. Arseniy Avakov became the Minister of Interior and Valentin Nalyvaichenko head of the SBU. Both take notice of the Russian movements around Crimea.

Tuesday 26 February:

The Berkuts were disbanded. The grivna reached a record 10.5 per \$1. Maidan accepted the proposition of a new government formed by Yatsenyuk. The UDAR Party refused to participate in view of the candidature of V. Klitschko in the presidential elections.

Wednesday 27 February:

Yanukovych, who was being sought by Interpol, asked for Russian aid to intervene in Ukraine. The

Rada named Yatsenyuk Prime Minister. He was elected by 371 deputies, the largest margin ever. The Rada voted for his new government and reform program. Obama no longer recognized Yanukovych as president, while Putin did not recognize the new Ukrainian government. The European Parliament supported the new government²¹⁹, and regretted that sanctions against the former regime had not been applied sooner, encouraged the signing of a treaty of association with Ukraine and gave it the right to submit its candidature to the European Union. Sergei Axionov became the new Prime Minister of Crimea.

Friday 28 February:

Russian intervention in Crimea: Unidentified men clothed in green intervene in Crimea from Simferopol airport. As was learned later, the operation was coordinated by Colonel Igor Strelkov, an agent of the GRU, the Counter-Espionage service of the Russian Army. According to Valentin Nalyvaichenko, head of

219. Cabinet of Ministers elected by 331 deputies: Prime Minister: Arseniy Yatsenyuk; First Vice Prime Minister: Vitali Yarema (defense); Vice Prime Minister: Olexandr Sytch; Minister of Justice: Pavlo Petrenko; Minister of Finance: Olexandr Shlapak; Minister of Economy: Pavlo Sheremeta; Minister of Education: Serhyi Kvit; Minister of Social Affairs: Liudmilla Denissova; Minister of Ecology: Andri Mohnik; Minister of Culture: Evguen Nischuk; Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers: Ostap Semerak; Minister of Health: Oleg Musisi; Minister of Energy: Yuri Prodan; Ministry of Youth and Sports: Dmitro Bulatov; Minister of Interior: Arseniy Avakov; Minister of Agriculture: Ihor Shvaika; Minister of Infrastructure: Maxime Burbak; Minister of Defense: Ihor Teniokh; Minister of Foreign Affairs: Andri Dechytsia. <http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2014/02/27/7016528>

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the SBU, the Ukrainian Secret Service, this operation had been planned for 2 years.

Igor Strelkov (whose real name is Igor Girkin), 43 years old, Commander of the militias at Sloviansk, is a Colonel of the GRU, the Counter-Espionage department of the Russian Army. He was at the head of the rebellion in the East. According to the Ukrainian Secret Services (SBU) Igor Girkin was born on 17 December 1970 and is a resident of Moscow. Once again, according to the SBU, he accompanied Patriarch Kirill in his 2013 voyage to Crimea. In February of 2014, he crossed the Ukrainian border to go to Simferopol, the capital of Crimea which was incorporated into Russia in March. In an interview with the popular Russian daily Komsomolskaia Pravda, he declared that he did not have any intention of “stopping at Donetsk.” “We want to liberate Ukraine from the Fascists”, he declared, qualifying this ex-Soviet Republic as “a failed State” for which the international community “is not going to start a third world war.”

Press conference was held with Yanukovich at Rostov-on-Don in Russia.

Turchynov vetoes the annulment of the law concerning languages.

Saturday 1 March:

The Prime Minister of Crimea requested Russian aid to assure peace and calm. Putin was authorized by the Council of the Federation to send Russian troops to Ukraine. The Council had received false reports from its president, Mrs Matvienko, that Russian citizens had been killed in Crimea. The Russian Consul

General in Crimea, Viatcheslav Svytychnym, denied these rumors.

Sunday 2 March:

The Commander of the Ukrainian fleet in Crimea, Denis Berezovsky, defected and placed himself under Russian authority. Taruta became chief of the regional administration of Donetsk. Photos show the implication of Russian citizens in attempts to destabilize the cities of Eastern Ukraine (such as the man who raised the Russian flag over the regional administration of Kharkiv). In Moscow, more than 50,000 people demonstrated against the invasion of Ukraine. More than 300 people were arrested.

Monday 3 March:

Yanukovich requests Putin to invade Ukraine. The Russian Black Sea Fleet demanded the surrender of the Ukrainian Fleet. Russia discontinued the reduction of the price of gas which it had granted to Ukraine in December. On the Moscow Stock Exchange the RTS lost more than 10%. The G7 excluded Russia and refused to attend the meeting with Russia planned to take place at Sochi.

Tuesday 4 March:

Vladimir Putin denied Russian intervention in Crimea. Although he refused to consider the Ukrainian government as the legitimate representative of the Ukrainian State (whose territorial integrity he is supposed to respect), he demanded 2 billion dollars owed in back payments for gas.

Wednesday 5 March:

The Commission announced a plan of aid for Ukraine which would involve at least 11 billion Euros.

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Thursday 6 March:

The United States imposed sanctions against Russia. Neither the representatives of the United Nations nor those of OSCE were able to enter Crimea.

Friday 7 March:

There were 30,000 Russian soldiers in Crimea. Journalists suffer violence. The Ukrainian television channels are replaced by Russian ones.

Saturday 8 March:

Incursion of Russian forces in the region of Kher-son (laying out a mine field).

Sunday 9 March:

Journalists and the leader of Euromaidan were arrested in Crimea. The observers of the OSCE were unable to work. Chechen units under R. Kadyrov sow terror.

Monday 10 March:

Ukrainian military personnel in Crimea were obliged to surrender, one after the other. The Ukrainian fleet is “nationalized” by Axionov.

Tuesday 11 March:

After the declaration of independence by the Parliament of Crimea and its petition to become a part of Russia, A. Yatsenyuk spoke up and told the inhabitants of Crimea what is in store for them – the destiny of the peoples “of Abkhazia, Ossetia and Transnistria.” According to the Prime Minister, these regions have only received very weak support after grandiose promises and are now torn apart by all sorts of trafficking and corruption. But the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Lavrov recognized the “independence” of Crimea.

Wednesday 12 March:

O. Turchynov explained that Ukraine is not equipped to do battle in Crimea, given the pressure

exerted by the Russian troops amassed on the Eastern borders of Ukraine. Moreover, most of the Ukrainian forces are stationed on the Western borders. V. Putin denied that “the men in green” were Russian soldiers and went on to affirm that these are auto-defence militias.

Thursday 13 March:

The oligarch D. Firtash was arrested in Vienna. The infrastructure of Naftogas in Crimea was nationalized and entrusted to Gazprom. France and the European Parliament denounced the referendum in Crimea as illegal.

Friday 14 March:

Following a meeting organized by Russian Special Forces at Donetsk, two people died and 50 were injured. The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that it wanted to protect Donetsk.

The leader of the Tatars in Crimea, Deputy Mustafa Dzhemilev, former president of the Mejlis (Assembly) of the Tatar people of Crimea, one time Soviet dissident and Ukrainian deputy, announced that the war initiated by the Russian government signified the end of the current Russian regime.

Saturday 15 March:

The Rada of Kiev dissolved the parliament of Crimea. The Commission of Venice recognized that the referendum in Crimea was not legitimate. Russia used its veto against the resolution of the United Nations Security Council concerning the illegitimacy of the referendum in Crimea. Russia finds itself completely isolated since 13 of 15 members voted for the resolution and one country (China) abstained. Verbal clash between Vitaly Churkin, the Ambassador of Russia

at the UN, and Samantha Power, the Ambassador of the United States to the United Nations. Russia promised to protect the citizens of Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk.

Sunday 16 March:

In a “referendum”, the inhabitants of Crimea voted in favor of integration with Russia. Refat Chubarov, head of the Medjlis, the Assembly of the Tatars in Crimea, affirmed that 60% of the population of Crimea did not vote, while President Putin affirmed that 96% of the people voted for integration with Russia. Journalists took note of numerous irregularities, amongst which was granting the right to vote to Russian citizens not registered on the voting lists.

Monday 17 March:

The Rada orders mobilization of the Ukrainian armed forces. Russia tried to form an international group of “aid to Ukraine” and specifies what it expects of Ukraine: Crimea, federalization, Russian and Ukrainian as State languages, the defence of minority rights, municipal and regional elections and non-interference in the affairs of the Church. The USA voted sanctions against 10 Russian and Ukrainian individuals.

Tuesday 18 March:

Putin affirms in a speech made in the Kremlin that Crimea will never belong to the “banderovtsy”, and criticized the decision of Nikita Khrushchev. He signed the annexation of Crimea and Sebastopol. The great majority of the countries in the world do not recognize this annexation. A deputy from Svoboda, Igor Mirochnichenko, born in the region of Sumy, forced the resignation of Olexandr Panteleimonov,

Director of the television channel NTKU (first chain of national television). His physical intrusion into the offices was filmed and sent out on the internet. He justified himself by explaining that, in times of war, it is unacceptable that the first channel of Ukrainian television continuously shows images of Moscow. This chain was completely controlled by the son of V. Yanukovich and the former Minister of Interior. After the death of a Ukrainian officer in Crimea, A. Yatsenyuk declared that the conflict with Russia had become a military conflict. S. Fühle, the European Commissioner of Expansion, proposed the integration of Ukraine into the European Union.

Wednesday 19 March:

Ihor Teniokh, the Ukrainian Minister of Defence, and Vitali Iarema, the Vice Prime Minister, were refused entry into Crimea. Ukraine refused to participate in a summit meeting of the Community of Independent States.

Thursday 20 March:

Russia closed its borders to Ukrainian produce. The United States adopted economic sanctions against Russia and the bank of Gazprom.

Friday 21 March:

The EU and Ukraine signed the treaty of association (political chapter). Arseniy Yatsenyuk signed the document M. Azarov had refused to sign on November 24. The EU promised a regime without visas before the end of the year. The EU also extended its sanctions against twelve Russian persons. Two aides of Serge Kurchenko, one of the godfathers of corruption in Ukraine, were arrested. Yevhen Bakulin, the Director of Naftogaz, was arrested. The police

discovered more than 2 million dollars cash in the apartment of M. Prissiajniouk, the former Minister of Agriculture.

Saturday 22 March:

Even though V. Putin had promised to protect the Tatars of Crimea, M. Dzhemilev was forbidden entry into Crimean territory. The last Ukrainian garrisons were assaulted by the Russians. These garrisons offered no resistance.

Monday 24 March:

The Russian Duma, through the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Poland, proposed to Poland, Hungary and Romania that they divide up Ukraine among themselves. The Russian deputy, Vladimir Jirinovski, suggested that Ukraine only be allowed to conserve its central region along with Kiev. The Ukrainian Council of Security ordered Ukrainian troops to withdraw from Crimea.

In Moscow, Professor Andrey Zubov was excluded from the MGIMO (Moscow Institute of International Relations) for having compared the annexation of Crimea to the annexation of the Sudetenland.

The President of the Council of Security, Andriy Paroubiy, announced that within the framework of the operation known as “the Russian Spring”, Russia had amassed 100,000 men at the borders of Ukraine and was actively at work within the country through small armed units whose task it was to destabilize the situation in Eastern and Southern Ukraine.

In the Hague, Ban Ki-Moon, UN General Secretary, reproached the countries which signed the memorandum of Budapest in 1994 (which guaranteed the territorial integrity of Ukraine in exchange for its de-

nuclearization) for not respecting their commitments. These countries are the United States, Russia, Great Britain, France and China.

Tuesday 25 March:

Dmytro Yarosh, the leader of Pravy Sektor, again calls for the dismissal of the Minister of Interior, Arseniy Avakov, because of the death on the previous day, of O. Muzychka of the Pravy Sektor at Rivne. The police justified themselves by saying that the suspect wanted to defend himself with his arms when he was arrested by the Sokil (Units from the Ministry of Interior). Stepan Kubiv, the Director of the National Bank, denounced a dozen banks which had money-laundered more than 142 billions of grivnas in a year.

Wednesday 26 March:

Sergui Kunysine, a deputy of the UDAR, representative of President Turchynov for Crimea, resigned because of the lack of confidence in the presidency.

The deputy Inna Bohoslovska, who was the first to leave the Party of Regions on December 1, accused the group of deputies who work for Rinat Akmetov of playing Russia's game by wanting to prevent the elections set for May 25. Akhmetov sides with Dobkine against Tihipko.

Naftogaz announced a 50% increase in the price of gas from 1 May. Yatsenyuk obtained from Western Europe gas priced at \$100 less than Russia was asking.

According to the opinion polls, Petro Poroshenko appeared to be the favorite for the elections. The following day, Klitchko announced that he is ready to withdraw in favor of Poroshenko in the forthcom-

ing elections and says that he wants to be Mayor of Kiev.

Thursday 27 March:

Arseniy Yatsenyuk announced that Ukraine is on the brink of bankruptcy because of the policy of the preceding government. The budget of the Ukrainian State for 2014 shows a deficit of 71.6 billion grivnas. The budget for territorial communities, which amounted to 79.8 billion grivnas, has been entirely siphoned off by V. Yanukovych and M. Azarov. Moreover, the price of gas rose to \$385 or even \$480 for 1,000 cubic meters since 1 April; almost double the price since the agreements with Moscow (\$268). The deficit for Naftogas is 33 billion grivnas. With Ukravtodor and Ukrzaliznitsa, the Ukrainian State has a deficit of 140 billion grivnas (12.7 billion Euros). Yatsenyuk concluded: “In 2014, Ukraine was lacking 289 billion grivnas (29 billion Euros), but the Ukrainian government would not authorize bankruptcy.” He counted on augmenting taxes on large enterprises and on alcohol and cigarettes. He foresees a decline of 3% of the GDP and an inflation of 14% in 2014.

Russia was humiliated at the General Assembly of the United Nations when 100 countries voted in favor of Ukraine and condemned the annexation of Crimea. 58 countries followed the lead of China and abstained. The 10 countries which support Russia are the “traditional suspects” of international relations: North Korea, Sudan, Syria, Zimbabwe, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba, Belarus and Armenia. The Russian Ambassador Churkin affirmed that “the General Headquarters of the American Embassy in Kiev was in the trade union building” and that “it was from

this building that snipers fired on the dissidents and the police.” In 2008, Georgia received the support of only 48 countries.

Pravy Sektor stormed the building of the Rada. Its members demanded the resignation of Avakov, the Minister of Interior and of Teniokh, the Minister of Defence. Around 22h00 they left the building.

Youlia Tymoshenko announced she would stand in the forthcoming presidential elections.

Friday 28 March:

Russia terminated Kharkiv Pact on the presence of the Russian fleet at Sebastopol. Ukraine replied that, as a consequence, the Russian fleet should leave Crimea. Russia asserted that ethnic minorities were being persecuted in Ukraine, especially the Germans and the Czechs.

The Tatars of Crimea offered the use of their mosques for worship to the Orthodox Christians of the patriarchate of Kiev whose parishes had been taken away from them. The Tatars want to create their own autonomous territory in Crimea.

Sunday 30 March:

Russia proposed to Europe and the United States that a federal system of government be imposed upon Ukraine. The Ukrainians tell Russia to take care of itself first since there are no forms of decentralization in their own country and the situation of ethnic and religious minorities is judged to be “catastrophic”. The Americans, through John Kerry, the Secretary of State, replied that nothing would be done without the approbation of the Ukrainians.

Monday 31 March:

The Regional Council of Donetsk, presided over by Andri Chichatski, demanded a referendum and

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the guarantee that Russian will be a State language. Sergui Tihipko, a presidential candidate, promised to give that status to the Russian language.

Pravy Sektor liberated the Dnipro Hotel in Kiev and left its weapons behind.

Anders Fog Rasmussen, the General Secretary of NATO, explained that Russia is keeping 40,000 troops on the eastern border of Ukraine and demanded that Russia de-escalate the situation. NATO ceased all co-operation with Russia.

Wednesday 2 April:

Peugeot Citroen was accused of participating in networks of corruption in Ukraine (purchase of ambulances by the State).

Thursday 3 April:

Twelve Berkuts are arrested for acts of violence committed in February.

O. Turchynov declared himself in favor of joining NATO if Russia did not halt its aggressions.

According to Valentin Nalyvaichenko, the head of the SBU, and Arseniy Avakov, the Minister of Interior, the “anti-terrorist” operation of 19-20 February was decided on February 18 by Yanukovych and carried out towards 23h00 by the head of the SBU, Yaki-menko, in collaboration with V. Zakhartchenko, the Minister of Interior. Victor Zubrytski, the Director of Media Holding Kontakt was in charge of coordinating, through Yevhen Zhilin (organization OPLLOT), the actions of the titushkis, the kidnapping and torture of journalists and dissidents. Links between the Ministry of Interior (Yuri Fedki, Stanislas Rogozin) and O. Chebotariov, who controls an important part of the liquor market in Ukraine were discovered.

Nalyvaichenko declared he had strong reasons to believe that the Russian FSB participated in the massacres of February 19-20 in Maidan Square since he had proof of the presence of about 20 officers of the Russian Secret Service at Maidan Square from mid-December to mid-January. From mid-January, military equipment from Russia was delivered through the Juliany and Gostomel airports in Kiev.

Obama agreed to open lines of credit for Ukraine and approved new sanctions against Russia.

Yanukovych, in a press conference, objects to being deprived of his residence in Mezhyhirya and his large collection of cars which are housed there. "That's my hobby. I liked that and I still do. Who has the right to take that away from me? That is my very soul!" But the ex-President does not recognize the ownership of the massive bar of gold found in his office.

Friday 4 April:

American Secret Services intercepted a conversation between two Russian ambassadors in Africa (Zimbabwe and Malawi). It would seem that the Russian plans also included "Catalonia, Scotland and Alaska."

Saturday 5 April:

Lech Walesa believed that V. Putin should be judged by the International World Court in the Hague.

Pro-Russian Ukrainian extremists are arrested in Luhansk where they were preparing an assault on public buildings.

Sunday 6 April:

At Donetsk, separatists took the regional administration building by assault around 13h00. Two thousand pro-Russian demonstrators cheer them on. At the same time, separatists forcefully occupied the seat

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of the SBU in Luhansk. The regional administration in Kharkiv was also surrounded. Other attempts took place elsewhere in an obviously coordinated operation. Avakov denounced the actions of Yanukovych and Putin.

Monday 7 April:

The separatists announced the creation of a Republic at Donetsk and ask to be incorporated into Russia. At Kharkiv, the separatists are obliged to leave the administration buildings. At Mykolaiv and Dnipropetrovsk, local authorities resisted assaults. The SBU arrested the person who coordinated the operations of the separatists at Luhansk: his name is Serguievitch Bannykh and he was a Russian citizen.

Tuesday 8 April:

The separatists who had occupied the seat of the SBU at Donetsk evacuated the premises.

Tihipko, along with 15 deputies, left the Party of Regions.

Parliament adopts the law on judicial integrity.

Wednesday 9 April:

Ukraine ceased to import Russian gas. A. Chichatski, the head of the Donetsk Regional Council, stepped down. 77% of the inhabitants of Donetsk say they have no problem using Russian. V. Putin demanded that Ukraine pay for its gas in advance. He also wrote to J. M. Barroso. In a letter made public on 10 April, addressed to 18 European leaders, of which 13 are members of the EU, V. Putin challenged the Europeans to assure the payment of billions of dollars of debt incurred by Ukraine; otherwise their supply will be threatened. This threat was all the more weighty for the EU since it imports the quarter part

of its gas from Russia and nearly half of this passes through Ukraine.

The Russian President demanded consultations to set up joint measures to stabilize Ukraine's economy and assure the transit of Russian gas.

Failure of anti-Maidan demonstrations in Odessa.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the European Council condemned Russia for the annexation of Ukraine.

Thursday 10 April:

The Russian Duma called into question the manner in which the USSR collapsed in 1991 and wanted to put Gorbachev on trial.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe suspended Russia's voting rights until 2015 because of Crimea.

Yatsenyuk calls upon Europe to create a new system of defence.

Friday 11 April:

In Crimea, Axionov required civil servants to surrender their Ukrainian passports. Very few Crimean citizens request a Russian passport. The Russian government then decided extend the time required for obtaining one. But the inhabitants of Crimea should henceforth make a declaration if they refuse the Russian passport and this obliges them to displace themselves.

The Euro reached a record high of 19 grivnas, 13.8 for \$1.

Yatsenyuk asked the separatists of Luhansk to surrender. He believed that federalization will produce "a multitude of little Yanukovychs". On the other hand, he defended his vision of decentralization.

Saturday 12 April:

Separatists, accompanied by men clad in green, took over the public buildings of the city of Sloviansk by force. Other cities are also attacked by men in green in the region of Donetsk (Tchervonni Liman). At Kramatorsk there is a shoot-out between the militia and the separatists.

The Russians want Mikhail Dobkin, the presidential candidate of the Party of Regions, to represent the separatists at Geneva. The head of the region of Donetsk, the businessman Serguei Taruta, condemned the actions of the separatists as illegal and immoral.

Sunday 13 April:

A new condemnation of Russia within the Security Council. O. Turchynov announced that Russia is waging war on Ukraine and spoke of the anti-terrorist operation in the region of Sloviansk.

In Kharkiv, there was an exchange of gun fire between pro-Russians and pro-Ukrainians. The Ukrainian Secret Services claim that Russian terrorists paid pay \$500 for the assault of a public building.

Monday 14 April:

Turchynov did not exclude a referendum on the territorial integrity of Ukraine. The police station of Horlivka was taken by force by an officer of the Russian Army. It was discovered that another Russian, Alexander Borodai, a well-known politician, was coordinating the actions of the separatists²²⁰.

220. <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/04/14/7022426/>

Maidan exerted pressure on the Rada. The Security Council told the vitche of Maidan that its actions are playing into Moscow's hands.

Tuesday 15 April:

The EU extended its sanctions to include S. Arbutov and three others who are close to V. Yanukovich.

Ukraine imports gas through Poland. The Attorney General's office opened an inquest on Oleg Tsarov, the Deputy of the Party of Regions who was trying to coordinate the separatists.

The SBU revealed that the financing of the terrorists passes through Russian banks.

Terrorists attack the Kramatorsk airport.

Through the interception of telephonic communications on skype, the SBU discovered that the separatists were receiving their orders from Moscow and were waiting support for Crimea. From Moscow, the wife of Pavel Goubarev, the separatist from Donetsk was arrested by the Ukrainian police, was communicating with Serguei Axionov of Crimea. Their conversations were made public.

The EU promises a loan of 11 billion euros to Ukraine.

Wednesday 16 April:

The City Hall at Donetsk was taken by assault. The new Ukrainian Minister of Defence is Mihailo Koval. Ukraine arrests 23 officers of the GRU of Russia (Counter-Espionage Unit of the Russian Army).

Russian media announced that V. Yanukovich will return to Ukraine for Easter.

A failed assault on the military barracks at Marioupol left three dead and 63 wounded.

Thursday 17 April:

A four part reunion at Geneva. A document calling for measures to lessen the tension, signed by the EU, Russia, Ukraine and the United States, was made public.

Putin, in the course of a press conference, admitted that the men in green who are in Crimea, are in fact Russian troops. He reminded his audience that he had received the right to invade Ukraine from the Council of the Federation. He demanded guarantees for the inhabitants of “New Russia” (Novorossija – the name of a province of the Russian Empire in the early 19th century) which, according to Putin, extended from Kharkiv to Donetsk. He considered Western Ukrainians to be “second class” citizens, while Eastern Ukrainians are part of the Russian people. He says that he will not recognize the forthcoming Ukrainian elections.

The European Parliament asked for economic sanctions against Russia and wanted Ukraine (along with Georgia and Moldova) to become part of the EU.

The free trade zone between Ukraine and the EU will come into effect on 1 November.

The Rada voted for the creation of a citizens’ television channel.

Friday 18 April:

J.-M. Barroso said that he was ready to negotiate the question of gas with V. Putin. But he stated that Russia had a contractual obligation to transport the gas to the frontier of the EU. Moreover, he added: “the contractual reliability of Russia as a provider of gas is at stake.” He warned Russia about ceasing its

deliveries: “We strongly call upon you to avoid such measures which will raise doubts about your hope to be considered as a reliable provider of gas in Europe.”

A.Yatsenyuk and O. Turchynov were prepared to give Russian the status of regional State language and to give economic and financial autonomy to the regions. The two men promised amnesty to those who surrendered their arms.

The separatists rejected the Geneva Accords.

Olexandr Yanukovych, the son of the ex-president, is being sought by international justice.

Ukraine asked the Court of International Justice in The Hague to open an inquest on the killings at Maidan on 19-20 February.

Iliia Ponomarev, a Russian Deputy, confirmed that Russian spetsnaz (special forces) are active in Eastern Ukraine. The SBU revealed that in two thirds of the cases of persons arrested for separatism, Russia was implicated.

Saturday 19 April:

A.Yatsenyuk strongly condemned the anti-Semitic acts of the Donetsk separatists. He also condemned the propaganda against the Roms in Sloviansk. “We will not accept the development of xenophobia in Ukraine and a return to the Dark Ages. The ideology and practice of pogroms which is being exported by one of our neighboring States will not pass through Ukraine. Ukraine is a multi-confessional and multi-national country.”

Sunday 20 April:

The Ukrainians were celebrating Easter. The religious leaders appealed for calm and unity. Patri-

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arch Filaret condemned Russia. Arseniy Yatsenyuk congratulated his fellow citizens: “The shadows will never overcome the light. Ukraine will always defend dignity and liberty.”

After a shootout in Sloviansk three people were found dead. Russia immediately accused the organization Pravy Sektor without any proof other than calling cards found in the vicinity.

Monday 21 April:

Joe Biden, the Vice-President of the United States, visited Ukraine. He assured the government of his support but asked it to aggressively combat networks of corruption.

After the “rehabilitation of the Tatars of Crimea” by Putin, Mustafa Dzhemilev retorted that “it is Russia that should be rehabilitated in our eyes.”

At Luhansk, the separatists launched an appeal for a referendum. Taruta, the governor of Donetsk, excluded any referendum on May 18. Finally, a pretence referendum will take place on Sunday, 11 Mai in certain cities of Donbass and the region of Luhansk.

Kiev forbade Russian television channels to broadcast in Ukrainian territory.

In Moscow, Valeri Kaurov, head of the Orthodox separatists of Odessa, created the Popular Republic of Novorossia.

Tuesday 22 April:

In Crimea, this day marks the end of the period for refusal of Russian citizenship.

O. Turchynov requests the resumption of the anti-terrorist campaign, given the fact that Russia has not respected the agreements of Geneva. Serguei Lav-

rov reacts by saying that Russia will intervene if the Ukrainians use force.

A. Yatsenyuk invites journalists visit his apartment in Kiev as a sign of transparency and also in order to show the difference with the preceding government.

The Deputy Volodymyr Rybak of Horlivka has been tortured and assassinated. The SBU accuses the Russian Igor Bezper, an agent of the GRU, of the crime.

The separatists of Luhansk, as well as those of Donbass, finally reject the project of an autonomous popular Republic, given the little support they have among the people.

A public opinion poll gives 32.9% of the votes of the first round to Petro Poroshenko and 9.5% to Youlia Tymoshenko. Serguei Tihipko has 5%. All the other candidates have less than 5%.

V. Nalyvaichenko denounced the permanent acts of intimidation on the part of the Russian Army “for the last month and a half.” He estimates that there are 40,000 Russian soldiers on the borders, 700 tanks and armored cars and 250 airplanes. One part is massed near Belgorod, in the direction of Kharkiv; another is near Rostov in the direction of Donetsk; a third group is farther south. In addition to all this, there are 10,000 soldiers in Crimea.

Thursday 24 April:

The anti-terrorist campaign in Sloviansk is resumed. After a shootout, Putin denounced the violence of the Ukrainian State. Putin proposed to transform Crimea into a zone of gambling casinos.

The IMF recommends a loan of up to \$17 billion for Ukraine.

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Russian propaganda announced that foreign soldiers are in Sloviansk.

Germany forbids the sale of arms to Russia.

According to the Russian Minister of Defence, Serguei Shoygu, the Russian army is approaching the Ukrainian border. The Ukrainian Army halts its anti-terrorist activity.

The Council of the Russian Federation proposes the entry of peace-keeping troops into Eastern Ukraine.

Friday 25 April:

A mission of the OSCE is taken hostage by the terrorists of Sloviansk. President Turchynov declared that this capture could not have taken place without orders from Moscow.

Saturday 26 April:

A journalist is taken hostage at Sloviansk; this is the 18th since the beginning of April. Russian planes are detected in Ukrainian airspace.

Russia decided to cut off the water supply to Crimea and makes it seem as though this was a decision of the Ukrainian government. The latter denounced the Russian propaganda. Thanks to a canal which parts from the Dniepr, Ukraine supplies 85% of Crimea's potable water.

The G7 announced new economic sanctions against Russia.

In Crimea, the separatists destroyed the statue of Petro Sahaidachny (1570-1622). It was this Cossack, the Hetman of Ukraine from 1614 to 1622, who, after the Union of Brest, allowed the Orthodox

Church to reconstitute its hierarchy through the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Sunday 27 April:

Three officers of the Alpha Unit of the SBU are captured at Horlivka and transferred to Sloviansk. The chief of the terrorists in the region, Igor Strelkov (this is a pseudonym), a Russian officer of the GRU, was shown on television alongside the officers who had been tortured. He proposed an exchange of prisoners, those of the OSCE for the separatists arrested by the SBU. A. Merkel pressures Putin for their liberation. But Putin does not communicate with Heads of foreign States.

Monday 28 April:

A series of North American and European sanctions against Russia; the American sanctions are aimed at the immediate entourage of V. Putin: Tymchenko, Rottenberg, Kovalchuk, Sechin... The European sanctions are much less ambitious and only affect terrorists in Crimea and the region of Luhansk and Donetsk.

300 pro-Russian militants attack the Privat bank at Donetsk of Igor Kolomoyskyi, the Governor of the region of Dnipropetrovsk.

The mayor of Kharkiv, Hennadiy Kernes, an ex-convict, is wounded by bullets.

A group demonstrating for Ukrainian unity at Donetsk are beaten up.

Tuesday 29 April:

American Secret Services record telephone conversations at the Russian-Ukrainian border between pro-Russian terrorists and Russian Secret Services at Moscow. John Kerry tells the press that these are the

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same agents who operated in Georgia, Crimea and now in Luhansk and Donetsk. They consider these methods used by the Russian State as “the vilest and most degrading that exist.”

The Regional Administration building at Luhansk are seized by terrorists.

A.Yatsenyuk called on all the political forces to arrive at a consensus regarding a new constitutional project before 25 May. This project will then be sent to the Commission of Venice. “We do not have much more time. We now have to act fast. The new Constitution should propose a new division of power to avoid a return to anarchy and to assure that the people again become sovereign.”

Wednesday 30 April:

Two men are arrested in Kharkiv for plotting sabotage. They were getting their orders from Russia.

The Town Hall at Alchevsk is seized by separatists.

The Ukrainian government announced a referendum on the territorial integrity of the country by region, is to be held at the same time as the presidential elections on 25 May. This decision will be rejected by the Rada a few days later because of the tensions with Russia.

Thursday 1 May:

President Turchynov signed a law making military service obligatory for young men between the ages of 18-25 who do not have the right to postpone it. In 2011 Ukraine had voted for an all-volunteer army.

V. Putin demanded that Ukraine withdraw its troops from the border.

In Donbass, the terrorists took two more administration buildings by force. The Attorney General's office in Donetsk is in the hands of the insurgents.

The International Monetary Fund agreed on a \$17 billion loan to Ukraine.

Friday 2 May:

A drama in Odessa: 42 people die following confrontations between pro-Ukrainians and pro-Russians which led to the burning down of the offices of the Trade Unions. 125 persons have been wounded and hospitalized – among them 21 police officers. The images shown on youtube revealed that everything began with provocations by pro-Russian separatists against supporters who came to participate in the Odessa-Kiev match and support national unity in Ukraine. But the police did not intervene. The Chief of Police of the region of Odessa was dismissed and an enquiry is being held. .

Friday 9 May:

The Ukrainian Secret Service reveals irrefutable proof of the coordination of the Russian Army in activities relating to a referendum in the regions of Eastern Ukraine on the creation of the “Popular Republic of Donetsk” whose results are known in advance.

Saturday 10 May:

The orderly organization of the referendum of 11 May 2014 on the auto-proclamation of the “Popular Republic of Donetsk” will be assured by the “Orthodox Russian Army.” Representatives of the “Russian Orthodox Army” will be present in all the voting sites but dressed in civilian clothes so as not to attract at-

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tention, according to Mikhail Verin, the representative of the army.

Monday 19 May:

The governors of the regions of Louhansk and Donetsk announce that the presidential election will take place on 25 May. 2784 international experts will be present during the presidential elections in Ukraine.

Investigations concerning the events in Odessa on May 2 are underway. After an initial examination of the substances recovered in the Trade Union Center, experts found traces of chloroform which was not part of the inflammable materials found in quantity at the site. Chloroform impedes breathing. Those in charge of the investigation have asked Israeli authorities for technical assistance. The Israeli experts were asked to help establish the quantity of this substance which was found at the site.

At Sloviansk and Kramatorsk (Donetsk region), the pensions and salaries of functionaries cannot be paid because of terrorist risks. Several buildings have been seized by the separatists. This money will remain on hold until it can be paid. Switzerland set up new sanctions against the Russian Federation. They affect thirteen people close to the Russian president.

Sunday 25 May:

The voters gave the victory to Petro Poroshenko in the first ballot with 54.7% of the votes or 9,857,308 of 48,118,750 votes (20% of the electors while Youloa Tymochenko came in second with 13% (2,309,812 votes).

Friday 6 June:

Meeting between P. Poroshenko and V. Putin in France, in the presence of Presidents F. Hollande and

B. Obama along with David Cameron and Angela Merkel on the occasion of ceremonies commemorating the invasion of Normandy.

Saturday 7 June:

Ukraine has a new president: Petro Poroshenko – a businessman and pro-Western statesman, 48 years old. He took the oath of office on the Constitution and the Gospels before Parliament.

At Uzhorod, region of Transcarpatia in Western Ukraine, the Ukrainian Secret Service arrested a group of Russian journalists from the first Russian channel “Pervykanal” as agents of the Russian Secret Services. The Russian journalists presented themselves as Finnish reporters and showed press cards from the Finnish television channel “MTV3”.

Tuesday 17 June:

The Ukrainian Army continued to surround the separatists and mercenaries and drew near to the city of Louhansk.

There was an explosion in a gas line in the region of Poltava. It will not have any affect on the delivery of gas to Europe. According to some media reports, journalists from the channel Russia Today arrived at the site 10 minutes after the explosion.

The dissolution of Parliament and an anticipated election were requested: the current Parliament is not representative. The Udar Party of V. Klitchko proposed that Parliament vote on its own dissolution.

The United States announced new sanctions against Russia.

The General Secretary of the United Nations condemned the attack on the Ukrainian airplane during the night of 13-14 June as well as the demonstration

in front of the Russian Embassy in Kiev which was followed by attacks on the building.

Friday 27 June:

Ukraine signs the economic chapter of the Agreement of Association with the European Union.

Monday 30 June:

According to data released by the Ukrainian Ministry of Interior, the terrorists have violated the cease-fire 108 times. Since the beginning of the truce, 27 military personnel have died and 69 have been wounded. According to the National Council of Security and Defence, since 29 June 2014, the terrorists have violated the cease-fire 8 times; as a result of their bombardments, 8 civilians have died.

The time limit for the truce announced by Poroshenko, in the framework of his peace plan, expired. Russia affirmed the necessity of extending the cease-fire. However the terrorists continued to accumulate forces and military material from Russia in the anti-terrorist occupational zone.

According to a spokesperson of the Center of Information of the National Council of Security and Defence, the population of Donbass is increasingly opposing the terrorists. For example, at Sloviansk a demonstration group asked the terrorists to stop firing on the positions of the anti-terrorist operation and to leave the region. Separatists dispersed a part of the demonstration. Others who demonstrated have been arrested and forced to work on the construction of fortifications. The spokesperson added that the situation in Donbass is worsening. The terrorists of the regions of Louhansk and Donetsk are trying to extend

their activities to other regions, especially the region of Kharkiv.

Tuesday 1 July:

Ukraine did not extend the cease-fire in the East. The hope of an improvement in the relations between Ukraine and Russia has not lasted very long. During the night of Monday-Tuesday, Kiev decided that it will not prolong the truce in the East of the country.

Wednesday-Thursday 2-3 July:

On 2 July chief diplomats of Ukraine, France, Germany and Russia assembled in Berlin. They appealed for dialogue and agreed to restart negotiations. P. Poroshenko was ready to change his decision to lift the cease-fire if all the conditions which had been evoked at Strasbourg ten days earlier were respected. This includes, among other things, the freeing of hostages and the liberation of administrative buildings. The objective is to arrive at a bilateral cease-fire monitored by the OSCE.

Anti-terrorist operation: Since the beginning of the operation, 27,000 persons have left the regions of Donetsk and Louhansk and more than 200 Ukrainian soldiers have perished. The number of civilian victims approaches 100 but remains difficult to estimate.

One of the leaders of the separatists, the self-proclaimed mayor of Horlivka (Donetsk region) was arrested by the Ukrainian Secret Services when he tried to buy machine guns in the region of Zaporizhia. Other leaders of separatist and terrorist bands flee Sloviansk (Russian region) and are arrested by Russian border guards.

The activists of the different NGOs of Maidan continue their demonstrations outside of the Ukrainian

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Parliament: in spite of the dramatic events in Eastern Ukraine, there is an urgent need that the reforms be put in place, especially the judicial reform, (the anticipated legislative elections are also part of their claims).

Crimea: The owners of hotels, hostels, pensions and rooming houses are selling their furniture. The tourist season is not flourishing; there are very few tourists on the beaches of Crimea.

14 July 2014:

According to Dmitri Tymchuk, the Head of the Center for Political and Military Studies “Informational Resistance”, the Russian Armed Forces of the Headquarters of General Direction of Information will be introduced into Ukraine on 15 July. Russia is preparing for a large scale military invasion of Ukrainian territory. “The Russian Federation is planning to introduce special Armed Forces of the General Direction of Information”, Dmitri Tymchuk states. “Over the weekend we have received irrefutable proof that armed groups of reconnaissance and sabotage from the General Direction of Information are arriving in the region of Rostov. According to our information, the assignments of the troops to intervene in Ukraine are fixed for July 15. This information has been confirmed by various sources. For the moment, we do not know how they are going to organize themselves for the intervention. Will they intervene as peace-keeping forces or as “little green men” such as we have already observed in Crimea in the month of April?” The expert pointed out that, according to his information, it is unlikely that these sabotage groups are being brought into Ukraine as “peace-keeping

forces”. It is more a question of sabotage operations where the Russian military will work alongside the terrorists of Donbass.” Tymchuk goes on to say that “Previously the heavy Russian military equipment was transported by hired truck drivers. Today the tendency is that the transport of essential arms be done by regular teams complemented by Russian soldiers. So we can speak of a real Russian military invasion in the Donbass region.”

Thursday 17 July:

Crash of the plane of Malaysian Airlines over Donbass: 298 passengers and crew all died. The enquiry of SBU will reveal that this was an action carried out by the Russians with Russian arms (land-air missile BUK) to justify the invasion of Donbass. But the target error caused a strong international reaction and will postpone the entry of Russian forces into Ukraine until the end of August. The German enquiry affirmed that the responsibility for the drama belongs to the pro-Russian separatists of Donbass.

Friday 18 July:

Urgent meeting of the Security Council of the United Nations. Adoption of a declaration calling for “an exhaustive and independent international enquiry into the destruction of the Boeing of Malaysian Airlines.

Monday-Wednesday 18-20 August:

Anti-terrorist operations: Fighting intensifies near Donetsk and Louhansk. The Ukrainian Army and National Guard are making progress: the objective is to separate Horlivka from Donetsk.

The situation in Louhansk is critical and approaching a true humanitarian catastrophe.

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The cities which have been liberated are returning to some normality; electricity and telephone service have been restored. The inhabitants of these cities still remain distrustful of the Ukrainian Army and the National Guard. The local elites hide themselves;

Since the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of the anti-terrorist in the regions of Donetsk and Louhansk, nearly 100,000 persons have sought refuge in other areas of Ukraine.

Russian humanitarian convoy: the convoy is still on the border. It is inspected by representatives of the Red Cross. But Ukrainian authorities will not give security guarantees for the transportation of the humanitarian aid.

Agreement of Association: the regional summit is scheduled to be held in Minsk. The signing of the economic chapter of the Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union is the object of the reunion. The Russian president, other representatives of the authorities of the Tariff Union States as well as representatives of the European Union will assemble at Minsk on 26 August. The announcement of the site of the summit provoked mixed feelings among the euro-integration experts. Minsk is a capital not often visited by European politicians.

Thursday-Friday, 21-22, August:

Fighting continued in the towns around Donetsk and Louhansk. The Ukrainian Army took control of the city of Illovaïsk. But a few days later the Ukrainian soldiers are caught in a trap by the Russian Army, suffer a terrible defeat and lose many soldiers.

The honorary Consul of Lithuania is kidnapped and killed at Louhansk.

The Russian humanitarian convoy crosses the Ukrainian border. A. Yatsenyuk, the Ukrainian Prime Minister declared that Ukraine had not given its authorization and Russia alone would be responsible for its content. The Red Cross did not inspect the convoy”; only 34 vehicles out of several hundred were opened by representatives of the organization.

Angela Merkel arrived at Kyiv on Saturday.

Sunday 24 August:

Dissolution of the Rada: The anticipated elections will be held on 26 October.

Monday 25 August:

End of the hybrid war in Donbass: on the day of the Ukrainian national holiday, Putin simultaneously orders the entry by force of a “Russian humanitarian convoy” and the taking of Novoazovsk situated on the coast of the Azov Sea. Russian troops surround the Ukrainian army at Illovaïsk and advance as far as Mariupol.

Thursday 26 August:

Poroshenko and Putin shake hands at Minsk but tension is still high. They agree to the necessity of calming things down in Ukraine.

Friday 5 September:

Cease-fire: The Ukrainian authorities and the representatives of the self-proclaimed “Popular Republics of Donetsk and Louhansk” sign a protocol of agreement for the application of a cease-fire effective as of Friday 5 September at 18h00.

According to the Russian media ria.ru, which quotes Igor Plotnitski, the “Prime Minister” of the “Popular Republic of Louhansk”, the self-proclaimed “Popular Republics of Donetsk and Louhansk” have

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the intention of separating themselves from Ukraine. “We envisage following our policy based on separation. The cease-fire is only an imposed measure. We still have much work to do” (Plotnitski). According to the Russian media Itar-Tass, the future status of the “Popular Republics of Donetsk and Louhansk” was not discussed during the reunion of contact groups at Minsk. “We did not deal with this question, we only spoke of the cease-fire,” said Plotnitski.

The Ukrainian President Poroshenko told journalists: “We are ready to take important measures, including the decentralization of power, economic freedom for certain parts of the regions of Donetsk and Louhansk, the guarantee of the right to use any language whatsoever and the protection of cultural traditions.”

The BBC journalist Daniel Sanford writes on his Twitter account: “The cease-fire begins with the fact that I have already received a letter of invitation from Novorossiya for a press conference which will take place on Tuesday on why Ukraine has violated the cease-fire”.

The airport of Donetsk remained under the control of the Ukrainian Army. The Ukrainian “cyborgs” – the name given to the elite unit in charge of protecting it – will succeed in holding it at least until the end of October in spite of heavy losses. The airport of Louhansk, however, is controlled by the terrorists.

According to Andriy Lyssenko, the spokesman for the Ukrainian National Council for Security and Defence, the Federal Service of Migration of the Russian Federation gave to the representatives of the “Popular Republic of Louhansk” a list of residents in the

region of Louhansk who have obtained refugee status in Russia during the anti-terrorist operation. Lyssenko states that the leaders of the “republic” were envisaging using the apartments and houses of the refugees to provide temporary lodging for activists and Russian troops. These would be “nationalized” later.

George Zilberbord, an eminent member of the Jewish community in Ukraine, is killed by pro-Russian militants. He was a member of the Council of Administration of the Jewish community of Donetsk. When bandits came to pillage the village where he lived, Zilberbord and the Head of Security tried to arrest them. Both were killed.

At the NATO summit at Newport in 5 September, David Cameron, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, declared that the European Union will apply new sanctions against Russia in spite of the cease-fire. But if the cease-fire holds up and peace returns to Eastern Ukraine, the sanctions will be lifted.

Monday 8 September:

The European Union approved a new series of sanctions against Russia in the framework of the Ukrainian crisis, but specified that the application of the sanctions would take several days in order to give Russia time to make efforts to restore peace. Following an emergency meeting of the ambassadors of the 28 member states of the European Union at Brussels on Monday evening, Herman van Rompuy, the President of the European Council declared that “Taking into consideration the situation on the ground, the European Union is ready to revise the newly approved sanctions in their totality or partially. The sanctions prepared last week by the European Commission and

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approved unanimously on Friday evening are a supplementary turn of the screw to the sanctions decided last July in order to strike the capacity of the Russians to obtain international financing. In addition to the five public Russian banks already banned, State enterprises in the sectors of petrol and defence will be similarly targeted, except Gazprom, given the European dependence on this provider.

Moscow let it be known that it will take measures of reprisal. Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev, in a rare interview for *Vedomosti*, the Russian daily business journal, says that he regrets that Moscow took so long to react to the sanctions already imposed by the United States and the European Union. He believes that the sanctions “by and large miss their target” and added that “unfortunately, we are witnessing the inertia of a certain way of thinking and the temptation to have recourse to force in international relations.” He repeated the threat of forbidding the use of Russian air space by Western countries serving Asia from Europe. Such a measure would add hours of flight time but would also affect Chinese travellers. Aeroflot would also lose \$200 million in royalties. Finally, the Russian government decided to prohibit the importation of food products and Western consumer goods to Russian territory.

Tuesday-Thursday 9-11 September:

Anti-terrorist operation: According to many media reports, the cease-fire in Eastern Ukraine is unilateral. The terrorist and separatists continued to fire at points controlled by the Ukrainian Army. Between 5 September – 30 October several hundred Ukrainians have been killed.

The Ukrainian Secret Security (SBU) arrested 256 mercenaries 21 of whom are of Russian nationality.

Since the beginning of the cease-fire, more than 1,200 hostages have been freed by the terrorists. Among them are many military personnel and officials of the Secret Service.

According to a spokesperson of the Anti-terrorist Operation Center, a wall is being constructed along the borders with Russia. It was not specified where the construction began.

Several Russian “humanitarian convoys” are said to have crossed the Ukrainian border without authorization during September-October.

Tuesday 16 September:

Ukraine and the European Union simultaneously ratify the agreement of association and free exchange.

The Parliament of Kiev voted on a law giving a special status to “certain districts in the regions of Donetsk and Louhansk” and on a law “preventing lawsuits and repression against those who participated on the events in the regions of Donetsk and Louhansk.” This does not apply, however, to those who have committed serious crimes (“those who have blood on their hands”). The Svoboda Party and Batkyvshyna did not vote for this law in all its integrality. Certain districts of Donbass receive a special status and powers, as well as a large range of rights to auto-determination for 3 years. The local population can thus participate in the political life of the region and even form units of “popular police”. Article 10 of the law calls for elections in the regions of Donetsk and Louhansk on Sunday, 7 December 2014. Func-

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tionaries should also elaborate and approve the State program which will define the principal objectives in view of the “creation of conditions for a balanced territorial development and the restoration of the production and exportation of the industrial potential of the region.” The financing will be calculated as part of the State budget. Moreover, in conformity with the law on the “Principles of the Linguistic Policy of the States”, Ukraine guaranteed the equal use of languages, including Russian, both in public and private with the hope that the use of these languages contributes to their development.

In the evening, Parliament approves what is called the “purification” law which will enable a reform of the public system, but also of Parliament, and the eradication of the former regime. The law was approved among difficulties. The members of Parliament were under pressure from demonstrators chanting “Purification!” who tried to force their way through lines of police officers in front of Parliament.

Wednesday-Thursday 22-23 October:

Putin, after a trip to Belgrade, tried to obtain the lifting of the sanctions at Milan, where a forum of the European Union and Asia was being held, in exchange for an adjustment of the Russian position on the delivery of gas to Ukraine. But the Europeans supported Poroshenko and demanded that the agreements of Minsk be put into effect.

Friday 24 October:

Upon his return to Sochi, President Putin delivered a violently anti-Western speech at the Forum of the Valdai Club.

Sunday 26 October:

Legislative elections in Ukraine: The Popular Party, created in September by A. Yatsenyuk, won the proportional vote with 22% of the votes, just ahead of the Party of the Bloc of Petro Poroshenko (21%). Next came the Samopomitch Party, followed by the Opposition Bloc Party, the Radical Party of Liashko and the Batkivshyna Party of Youlia Tymoshenko. Neither the Communist Party nor the Party of the Regions are returned. The Svoboda Party with only 4.7% of the votes will not be part of Parliament. Many deputies from the former Rada, however, succeed in returning to the Rada thanks to a majority vote. The party of the President has a total of 132 deputies. The party of Yatsenyuk has 83. The party of Andriy Sadovyi has 33. The party of Boiko, 29. The party of Lyashko, 22. The party of Tymoshenko, 19. Among the 106 other deputies, 96 were unaffiliated, 6 from Svoboda, 1 from Pravij Sektor, 1 from Silna Ukraina, 1 from Partia Volia and 1 from Zastup. Adding the votes of the first three parties, the coalition has a majority, 248 seats.

Thursday 30 October:

Arsene Yatsenyuk and Petro Poroshenko are working to form a coalition and a new government with the support of the Samopomitch Party. This will probably be led by the man who was chosen Prime Minister by the crowd assembled in Maidan in February of 2014.

An agreement on the delivery of gas to Ukraine during the winter was signed at Brussels by Gazprom and Naftogas in the presence of Jose Manuel Barroso. The price of gas was fixed at \$378 for a thousand cu-

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bic meters. This will be the last gesture of support to Ukraine before Jean-Claude Juncker takes over the Commission. Ukraine owes Gazprom \$4.6 billion which must be paid by the end of the year to cancel debts. It will receive the support of the European Union and the World Bank to honor its debt. But Ukraine maintains its complaint against Gazprom before the Arbitration Court of Stockholm.

In less than a year Ukraine has changed completely. It got rid of its former corrupted president and his mafia-like clans. It has elected a new president, a new prime minister and a new pro-European Rada. It has succeeded in distancing itself from Russia at the price of thousands of deaths and tens of thousands of wounded or displaced persons. It has seen the amputation of Crimea and a third of the regions of Louhansk and Donetsk. Throughout all these events, Ukraine discovered that it is a bilingual, bicultural, ecumenical and European nation.

Wednesday 11 February, 2015

The talks in Minsk between Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany have produced two documents: a joint statement that sets out intentions and broad objectives, and a more detailed 13-point Russian-language document entitled “A Complex of Measures for Fulfilment of the Minsk Agreement.” The joint statement, adopted by Vladimir Putin, Petro Poroshenko, Angela Merkel, and Francois Hollande, commits their respective countries to respect Ukrainian territorial integrity and seek a diplomatic solution to the crisis based on the original Minsk agreement signed in September. France and Germany also promise to offer assistance in restoring the banking system in the

conflict areas eastern Ukraine, which should provide significant economic relief to local people.

And all countries support trilateral talks between Russia, Ukraine, and the European Union to ensure gas deliveries and allay Russian concerns over the EU association agreement with Ukraine.

Terms of Minsk Agreement:

1. Immediate and complete ceasefire in Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine to be strictly implemented starting from 00:00 on February 15.

2. Parallel withdrawal of all heavy weaponry of over 100mm caliber by both sides in order to create a 50km security zone. Multiple rocket launcher systems to be withdrawn to create a security zone of 70km. Tornado, Uragan and Smerch rocket systems and Tochka tactical rocket systems to be withdrawn to create a security zone of 140km. Ukrainian forces are to withdraw from the current line of contact. Militant forces are to withdraw from the demarcation line established by the 19 September 2014 Minsk memorandum.

Withdrawal of all heavy weaponry to begin not later than the second day following the ceasefire, and must be completed within 14 days. The OSCE monitoring mission will oversee this process of heavy weapons withdrawal with support from the trilateral contact group.

3. The OSCE monitoring mission should monitor and verify adherence to the ceasefire regime using all available tools including satellites and drones.

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4. On the same day that the withdrawal of heavy weapons begins, a dialogue must start to prepare for local elections in Donetsk and Luhansk regions in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and Ukrainian laws on the temporary status of Luhansk and Donetsk regions. Dialogue must also begin to address the future status of these regions.

Within 30 days of the signing of the declaration, Ukraine's parliament must adopt a law identifying the territory which falls under the terms of the temporary status of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The territory should be based on the demarcation line established in the 19 September 2014 Minsk memorandum.

5. An amnesty must be introduced to prevent prosecution or punishment for those connected with events in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

6. All hostages and detainees to be released in prisoner exchanges based on the 'all for all' principle. This process must be completed on the fifth day following the complete withdrawal of heavy weaponry at the latest.

7. Access to humanitarian aid must be facilitated in line with international norms.

8. Steps must be taken to reintroduce social and economic support infrastructure in Luhansk and Donetsk regions including pensions, communal services and tax services within Ukrainian jurisdiction. In order to achieve this, Ukraine will resume banking system services in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions.

9. Control of the Ukrainian state border in the conflict zone must be returned to the Ukrainian government on the first day following local elections in the conflict zone and following implementation of point

11 of the Minsk memorandum governing Ukrainian constitutional reform.

10. Withdrawal of all international armed units, military equipment and mercenary forces from the territory of Ukraine under the supervision of the OSCE monitoring mission; disarming of all illegal units and armed groups.

11. Constitutional reforms must establish a new Ukrainian constitution by the end of 2015 which includes clauses allowing for the decentralization of power and recognizes the specific status of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in agreement with representatives of these regions. Legislation must also be adopted to reflect the special status of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions by the end of 2015.

12. Under the auspices of the Ukrainian law on the temporary status of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, all issues regarding local elections to be discussed and agreed together with representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk regions within the framework of the trilateral contact group (Ukraine, Russian and representatives of the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics). Local elections are to be carried out in line with OSCE standards and under the supervision of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

13. Increase the work of the trilateral contact group by establishing working groups to manage the implementation of each relevant point of the Minsk memorandum. These working groups will reflect the composition of the trilateral contact group.

Saturday 21 February:

1\$=25 grivnas.

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The separatists armed by Russians did not respect the new Minsk Agreement. After the Fall of Debaltseve on 18 February. Col. Andriy Lysenko, a spokesman for the Ukrainian military, said 20 tanks, 10 mobile rocket systems, and about 15 trucks had crossed the Russian border on Friday into the area of Novoazovsk, the main separatist held town in the area. Novoazovsk, 25 miles east of Mariupol, has been in rebel hands since a lightning offensive, which NATO believes was spearheaded by regular Russian forces, in September. Separatist leaders and front-line rebel troops based on the Azov coast have been open about their ambition to “liberate” Mariupol, though they have made few significant advances in the area in the months since.

Acknowledgements

I would like to give a warm thanks to my friend Jerry Ryan who accepted to translate my work into English for the third time.

I am equally indebted to Stefanie Hugh-Donovan and Lucy Collard who accepted to edit this book.

And I would like to thank all my friends who accepted to supervise this publication: Matthew Matuszak, Jeffrey Wills, Lea Halim, Maria Malanchuk.

Many warm thanks to my friend Daniel Schmidt for his support and to my sister Claire Garoux.

Finally, I thank my wife Laure and my children Mathilde and Etienne. Not a line of this book would ever have been written without their permanent encouragement.