

YEAR 1991
AND ITS HISTORIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
IN POST-COMMUNIST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Conference commemorating the 30th anniversary of the dissolution of USSR

Wrocław-Kraków, 1-2 December 2021

Prof. dr hab. **Andrzej de Lazari**

Liberal „I” and right-wing „We” in Poland and Russia

When on November 15, 1989, Lech Walesa began his speech in the US Congress with the phrase „My, Naród” and Jacek Kalabinski conveyed it in English as „We the People”, the words with which the American Constitution begins, congressmen gave him an ovation. But did they - Walesa and the congressmen - have in mind the same idea then? I will try to show that they did not and also the difference between the perception of individualism and collectivism by liberals and the Right.

Prof. dr hab. **Marija Czerniak**

Mythologization of the Soviet Past in the Russian Mass Literature of the 21st Century

Nostalgia for the past, interest in redrawing history is a peculiar way of avoiding the present: the lack of understanding of the present in modern literature is obvious. The processes of creating new historical myths in the mass historical consciousness make works of mass literature especially significant for identifying certain sociocultural trends.

Keywords: Popular literature, mythologization, family saga, alternative history

Dr hab. **Malgorzata Abassy**, prof. UJ

„Modernization” and „civil society”: the “battle cries” of the post-soviet epoch

This paper is based on the theory of an epoch’s ‘battle cries’ by Victor Vinogradov. Making a map of the notions of the post-soviet reality, focused around the words of ‘modernization’ and ‘civil society’ is the aim of the research.

The discussion will start from the brief, retrospective statement that creating the new order of the USSR after the Bolshevik revolution was initiated with the struggle for words. A new map of the reality was created then, within which some words were eliminated while the others changed their semantic scope. Their meanings limited possibilities of the Soviet person.

In the 1990’s many of the previously significant words lost their creative power. In this paper a hypothesis is put forward that, after the words *perestroika* and *glasnost*, *modernization* and *civil society* were the words that became the main landmarks on the map of the new reality.

Regarding the issues and methodological tools, this paper is situated within the frames of culture studies, including element of language studies and social science.

Keywords: Russia - civil society - modernization – language

Prof. dr hab. **Alina Mozolevska**

The Role of Post-soviet Nostalgia in the Conceptualization of Counter-discourse in Ukrainian Political Communication

Nowadays it is impossible to talk about Eastern European politics without mentioning the terms “soviet” or “post-soviet” that are still a part of political and critical debate. The soviet past is still impacting the present of some countries that due to the transitional period of their socio-political systems, continue to experience the political, economic and security effects of URSS rule and still zigzagging between democracy and authoritarianism.

This paper is concerned with the investigation of the possible intersections between Ukrainian political discourse and post-soviet rhetoric in contemporary political digital communication. In this paper we would like to focus on the role of the post-soviet nostalgia in the digital communication. We will study the main discursive strategies of construction of idealistic image of soviet word and the ways of manipulation of the sense of disappointment in the power institutions and the distrust in the present political system. The dataset is composed from the posts in public Facebook groups. Following questions will be explored: What are the main narratives that are used to build the antagonism between the reality and the soviet past? What is the role of personal soviet experience in the verbalization of post-soviet nostalgia? What are the main means of articulation of nostalgia?

Prof. dr hab. **Natalia Jakovenko**

The impact of 1991 Events on Ukraine’s European Aspirations

When Ukraine declared independence from the Soviet Union over 30 years ago, it was difficult to imagine what its future would hold. The people’s mood was one of enthusiasm and unlimited potential. However, despite the euphoria of the day, the country faced an uphill struggle. The country was struggling with weak levels of gross domestic product, and massive unemployment seemed inevitable. The political manoeuvring between West and East was typical for Ukraine for many years. So called “multi-vectoral foreign policy” meant to keep distance from Russia and to speak about European integration as a top priority for the country. Ukraine was indeed avoiding both integration processes led by Russia and reforms needed for real, not declarative European integration.

Relations between Ukraine and the European Union were first established in December 1991, when Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, holding the presidency of the EU at that time, officially recognized Ukrainian independence on behalf of the European Union.

Together with this, the intention of Ukraine to develop the relations with the EU based on the principles of integration was announced. In the Decision of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (the Parliament of Ukraine) adopted on the 2nd of July 1993 «On the Key Directions of the Foreign Policy of Ukraine», Ukraine declared its European integration aspirations for the first time. The document indicated that «the priority of Ukrainian foreign policy is Ukrainian membership in the European Communities, as long as it does not harm its national interests. In order to maintain stable relations with the EU, Ukraine shall conclude a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the implementation of which shall become the first step towards its association and, later, full membership in this organization».

Dr hab. **Krzysztof Fedorowicz**, prof. UAM

Armed conflicts in the South Caucasus and their impact on the process of transformation in the region

The collapse of the USSR led to many ethnic and interstate conflicts in the South Caucasus. The process of transformation of the new states took place parallel to the ongoing armed conflicts. This definitely had a negative impact on the changes made. Nationalism and armed violence became the main determinants of the political systems of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in the 1990s. Thirty years after the collapse of the USSR, many of these conflicts remain unresolved. They remain "frozen" or are being renewed. Thus, they continue to have a very negative impact on the process of transformation of the three countries of the South Caucasus.

Keywords: South Caucasus, conflicts, transformation, problems, unrecognized states

Prof. dr hab. **Serhii Plokhii**

Who Killed the Soviet Union? Revisiting the Soviet Collapse Thirty Years Later

"I find it hard to think of any event more strange and startling, and at first glance more inexplicable, than the sudden and total disintegration and disappearance from the international scene...of the great power known successively as the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union," wrote the dean of American Sovietology, George F. Kennan, in 1995.

What can account for such "inexplicable" development? The answer I offer to this question is quite simple: the Soviet Union was in its historical foundations and some of its key policies an empire and collapsed under the burden of its imperial legacy. In that sense its collapse can be compared to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary in the wake of World War I. The perception of the Soviet Union as Russia or a nation-state, and the absence of the formal peace treaties on par with the Treaty of Versailles or the Yalta and Potsdam conferences, as well as public ceremonies celebrating the winners and humiliating the losers in the Cold War obscured Kennan's view, and did not allow him to see the historical parallels to the Soviet collapse of 1991.

The Soviet Union died a death of an empire falling along the lines of the ethnic borders that served as a foundation for the borders of its constituent republics. That was a pretty banal story of the twentieth century full of the imperial downfalls. No other regions played more important role in the fall of the Soviet Union as a quasi-imperial state than the former western borderlands of the Russian Empire. My lecture will be focused on the contribution of Ukraine, the second largest Soviet republic, and a key western borderland of the USSR to that process, but I will place the story of that contribution in a somewhat broader context, which I outline below.

The downfall of the Soviet Union began in the most recent additions to its territory—the lands annexed in the course of World War II, first in the wake of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and then recaptured from Nazi Germany in 1944–45 as a result of the Yalta agreements. In the forefront of mobilization against the Soviet center were the Baltic states, especially Estonia and Lithuania. The former was the first Soviet republic to declare its sovereignty, meaning that its laws took precedence over those of the Union.

Lithuania, for its part, was the first republic to declare itself completely independent of the Soviet Union. It did so in March 1990 at the first session of the freely elected Lithuanian parliament. Even the Communist Party of Lithuania abandoned the USSR, declaring its secession from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Leadership passed to

representatives of an alternative elite from the ranks of intellectuals and technocrats, not unlike the process in Eastern Europe a few years later.

The Baltic drive to regain the independence lost in the flames of World War II had a ripple effect throughout the Soviet Union. To deal with the Baltic “Popular Fronts”—pro-independence organizations that sent hundreds of thousands of people into the streets to achieve their goal—Moscow and the local party elites organized “International Fronts” that sought to mobilize Russian and Russian-speaking minorities in the republics.

Russian mobilization in the western borderlands of the USSR soon spilled over into Russia itself. The “Russia first” approach united Russian nationalists and democrats, propelling Gorbachev’s former protégé and then his sworn enemy Boris Yeltsin to the position first of head of the Russian parliament and then to that of Russian president. Yeltsin’s victory resulted from several mobilizations, first of nationalists and then of democratic activists in the major cities. Finally, there was the backing of newly organized workers who went on strike over economic conditions, expecting that Russian authorities could help them when Union officials had failed.

By June 1991 Moscow had two presidents, one of Russia and the other of the USSR. But in Russia, unlike in the Baltic republics, opposition to the center was led by a former party boss, not by an intellectual, as was the case in Lithuania, where the former music professor Vytautas Landsbergis played roughly the same role as Yeltsin. Even though Yeltsin publicly abandoned the Communist Party and then suspended its activities, the new Russian elite never made a clean break with the communist past, as did its counterparts in the Baltics. That was a consequential difference.

The mobilization in Ukraine, the second-largest Soviet republic after Russia in size of population and economy, combined elements of the Baltic and Russian mobilizations. In the parts of western Ukraine annexed by the Soviet Union on the basis of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, it followed the Baltic model, focusing on issues of history, language, culture, and national sovereignty. Ukraine’s declaration of independence from the Soviet Union in the wake of the failed August 1991 coup in Moscow came not only as a result of the alliance between nationalists, democrats, and striking workers in the Donbas region but also thanks to the support of the party apparatus, which had been threatened by Boris Yeltsin’s suspension of Communist Party activity.

On December 1, 1991, Ukrainians delivered the final blow to the Soviet Union by voting overwhelmingly for independence. The Baltics were effectively gone by that time, as was Moldova and a good part of the Caucasus. But the Belarusians and Central Asians, who counted on a continuing supply of subsidized gas and oil from Russia, were in no hurry to leave. Even resource-rich Kazakhstan was hesitant about independence, partly because of its large Russian and Slavic population. But Russia’s decision to recognize Ukrainian independence and not bear the economic burden of the Union without Ukraine’s substantial human and economic resources spelled the end of the USSR. The Belarusians and Central Asians had to leave as well, willingly or not.

On December 25, 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev announced his resignation as president after the Soviet Union had already ceased to exist as a legal entity, having been formally dissolved by the leaders of the Union republics. That turned out to be the beginning of the process of

disintegration, not its end. Like the fall of the empires of the past, the fall of the USSR turned out to be a process rather than an event.

Prof. dr hab. **Mária Bátorová**

Slovak Culture after the Velvet Revolution of 1989

In the current study, I explore the connections of culture and arts with the 20th Century historical and political processes that have shaped the developments after the 1989 “Velvet” revolution in Czechoslovakia and after the founding of independent Slovak republic (1993).

The complexity of Slovakia’s historical development provides a wide repertoire of discourses and an abundance of artistic and cultural works. These can serve as a litmus test (or a seismograph) of that societal development in parallel culture, in literature, as well as in arts – in particular in action art.

Based on specific examples of literary and artistic ouevres, this paper will show that various types of infiltration by the totalitarian regime disable full guarantees of freedom of arts and of the possibilities of its presenation. Given the fact that the post-communist countries are exhausted from focusin on own development, there is a paradox: even though these countries are now free and could reflect about other countries freely, there is no interest in each others’ cultures and post-communist societies know almost nothing about each other.

Prof. dr hab. **Hanna Barvenava**

What the culture of Belarus revealed at the end of the 20th - beginning of the 21st centuries

Culture, primarily the art of Belarus at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century, went a rapid path from rejection of the themes of socialist realism to a new free art. The main themes of the works were the glorification of historical figures (Grand Duke Vitovt, Kastus Kalinovsky and many others), the declaration of independence of Belarus, its rich traditions, human freedom, democracy, etc. The rapidly developing Belarusian culture since 1990 has nurtured, created a solid foundation Belarusian society for democratic development. At the same time, the church was being revived. Since 2010, there have been strong repressions against cultural figures and organizations. Cultural institutions were taken away, closed, radio stations were banned, television programs were dismissed by creators (Valentin Elizariyev, Yuri Zigamont, Vladimir Nyaklyaeu and many others) because "why feed the enemy." A life-and-death cultural battle began. Over the past decade, creative people have organized themselves, created independent cultural platforms (Ў), scientific conferences (International Congress of Belarus Researchers), courses for teaching the Belarusian language (Learning the language again), educational programs (Traveling with an amateur), websites and many others. In 2020-2021, on the soil prepared over decades, a powerful political and artistic explosion took place, which drew a thick line over the communist past, demonstrated a clear desire of Belarusians for freedom and democracy.

Keywords: Belarus, art, dynamics, democracy, socjety

Prof. dr hab. **Joanna Orska**

The Avant-Gardes of Czechoslovakia and Poland: A Transnational Approach to Surrealism in the Art and Poetry of Socialist and Post-Socialist States

Historical avant-gardes constituted a crucial and formative element of the experience of modernity for Central and Eastern European countries that were under some form of the Soviet influence as early as the 1920s. From a transnational perspective, this experience is sometimes problematised in the context of the culture of multi-ethnic and multi-cultural regions with often unspecified boundaries and identities. Important aspects of this experience include both cultural, totalising phenomena of modernity (like avant-gardes), as well as the constant pressure from the Soviet Union, which during the Second World War and afterwards became the geopolitical centre of power for part of Europe. However the paths and destinies of the 'nationalised' avant-garde movements in this region of the world are different, despite the similarities of individual artistic solutions. I would like to present a brief historical overview of the two avant-gardes mentioned in the title of this paper by referring to the phenomenon of slow penetration of surreal elements of Czech (and to some extent Slovak) poetry into the consciousness of Polish poets during the political transformation of 1989 and 1991. This successful change was possible thanks to the finally permitted Polish translations, but also and above all thanks to the coming overground of the Czech resistance art, which included post-war surrealism.

Keywords: Avant-garde traditions, avant-garde transfers, political transformation, postsocialism, postmodernism

Dr hab. **Marek Jedliński**, prof. UAM

Genesis and Stages of Formation of the Russian cultural Traditionalism after the Dissolution of the Soviet Union

The paper will present the shaping of traditionalism as a cultural phenomenon. The dissolution of the Soviet Union revealed the importance of conservative-traditionalist attitudes present in the culture of post-Soviet societies. Today's and Putin's Russia is a consequence of attitudes noticeable earlier. Another significant aim of the discussion in this paper is to specify the premises of Russian cultural traditionalism and provide evidence of its deeper existential (nostalgic and sentimental) concerns. In this way it is possible to validate the presumption on the universalist or even primeval nature of the traditionalist attitude, which lies at the heart of cultural traditionalism.

Key words: traditionalism, conservatism, culture, USSR, Russia.

Dr hab. **Anna Skotnicka**, prof. UJ

Year 1991 in Russian prose

The goal of this article is to establish how the events of 1991, which are commonly associated with the fall of the USSR, are depicted in Russian prose. Swietlana Aleksijewich is the only author who describes these events and depicts reactions to them. Instead, most of the writers, including E. Vodolazkin, V. Pelevin, M. Makanin, P. Sanayev, A. Iliczevsky and S. Lebedev portray in their works the moment of the August Coup, even though it often plays only a marginal role in the story. Therefore, the author analyzes selected fragments isolated from the entirety of the respectful works, and examines them outside their original contexts, paying attention to motifs, images, and notions they contain.

Prof. dr hab. **Oleksandr Pronkewicz**

Rhetoric of “Liberation” in Sergiy Loznitsa’s Documentary Film *The Event*: a Critical Look from 2021

The presentation will be focused on Sergiy Loznitsa’s documentary *The Event* telling about the reaction of the city of Leningrad to the coup d’état undertaken in 1991 by the self-proclaimed by the State Committee on the State of Emergency. The documentary film contains recordings of voices of officials pronouncing speeches, of ordinary people who make comments about the news which they receive on the radio and from leaflets of songs and poems performed at meetings, and of texts of slogans placed on the walls, on the barricades, etc. The objective of the presentation will be to analyze the use of concept “fascism” in the everyday discourse of politicians and protesters and compare it to rhetorical practices of the contemporary Russian propaganda production about Maidan and the Ukrainian post-Maidan reality. Another objective of the study will be to scrutinize the image of Yeltsyn as a new Russian God or a Russian Tsar to whom simple citizens are ready to delegate responsibility for their lives. *The Event* by Sergiy Loznitsa is a valuable document which reflects the naivety of the Russian civic society deceived by the *perestroika* populism. Its voice in the film is Anatoliy Sobchak, the Mayor of Leningrad, surrounded by future creators the new Russian imperialism.

Keywords: everyday political discourse, conceptual analysis, rhetoric and discourse analysis, fascism, image of a political leader, *perestroika* populism.

SEKCJA 1

Prof. Dr. **Eleonora Shafranskaya**

Archival direction in modern Russian literature

Archival files related to the crimes of the authorities against civilians became available after the collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1991. For modern writers with a civil position, these historical documents have become a source for creating artistic subjects (the archival prose of Natalia Gromova, “The Novel of Testimonies” by Alexander Lipkov, etc.). In a universal human sense, they testified to the practice of working with grief. In the report, we present a block of archival materials (“cases” of Polish artists) and the proposed version of working with them in a literary text (in Sasha Filipenko's novel “The Red Cross”).

Keywords: repression, Butovo, executed Polish artists, archival documents in fiction literature, contemporary literature

Prof. Dr. **Alfia Smirnova**

Guzel Yakhina’s travelogue novel "Echelon to Samarkand": from the elimination of historical trauma to the author's mythology

The question of the nature of genre of G. Yakhina's novel "Echelon to Samarkand" is of particular interest and remains controversial: is it legitimate to consider it as a historical narrative, does it fit into the paradigm of "Soviet narratives", are the definitions of a novel-myth, novel-parable applicable to it? - these are the questions that inevitably arise before the reader. The report defines the specificity of the author's model of the world - analyzes the artistic structure of the work, the chronotope, reveals the plot-forming function of *the path motive* as the movement of a train with street children from Kazan to Samarkand, as a

catastrophic "shift in the norm", as a spiritual process that includes genetic memory and the elimination of historical trauma.

Keywords: Guzel Yakhina, travelogue novel, historical trauma, author's mythology

Dr Natalia Nepomniashchikh

Contemporary drama: three different approaches to portraying the Soviet past (Nikolai Kolyada, Yaroslava Pulinovich, Yulia Tupikina)

The paper focuses on how modern playwrights portray the reality of the Soviet past which does not exist any longer. The choice of different approaches is not solely determined by the generation gap; it also depends on the practical purpose that a play is to fulfill on stage. For example, Nikolai Kolyada's *Time Capsule* is nostalgic and sentimental in order to appeal to the viewers that long for the long-passed time when they were young. Yulia Tupikina had a specific task to write a play about building the Bratsk Hydroelectric Power Station ordered by the Bratsk Drama Theater, while Yaroslava Pulinovich' *Endless April* focuses on the historical repeating trauma. What do these different texts and authors have in common?

Keywords: Contemporary drama, plot, motive, the Soviet past

Prof. Dr Rashmi Doraiswamy

Svetlana Alekseevich's 'Second Hand Time': Living in two Worlds simultaneously

Svetlana Alekseevich's works are on the borders of documentary, testimonial and oral history narratives. She deals with the 'big' events of history, as well as the small experiential, daily narratives, through her recordings of voices. These voices are the innermost thoughts; at the same time, they are outer expressions of these thoughts; they are monologues and dialogues at the same time. They catch the nuanced tones of happiness and despair. The voices are testimony to the lifeworld of the speakers. In 'Second Hand Time' Alekseevich touches upon the lives of people who have lived through the post-1991 years into the XXI century. The memory of the past, the new relationships of the present and the trauma of dealing with both are captured in the work.

Keywords: Testimony, history, Soviet, post-Soviet, memory

Dr Ilona Motejunajte

About Two Post-soviet Generals: the Novels "The General and His Army" (1994) by Georgy Vladimov and "The General and His Family" (2020) by Timur Kibirov

The report is devoted to the comparison of novels about generals written in different periods of post-Soviet history. The author examines the compositional and narrative techniques, with the help of which the writers reproduce the features of the "Soviet" as specific. The satirical tendency to depict the general in Russian literature, the tradition of "lieutenant prose", the popularity of the family novel genre in modern literature, and the postmodern play form the background for comparison of novels. They reveal changes in attitudes towards the Soviet past and reveal that the exposure of Soviet ideology develops from an emphasis on the tragic in history to its de-heroization with the help of the comic. The use of psychological techniques shows how writers separate in their characters the universally human and the historical. Thus, writers not only comprehend the past, but also react to their contemporary

attitude towards it. A comparison of the novels reveals the changes that have taken place in society over the 30 post-Soviet years.

Keywords: G. Vladimov, T. Kibirov, novels, Soviet past

Prof. Dr. **Ranjana Saxena**

„Christened with Crosses: Notes taken on my knees” by E. Kochergin. Stories, memory, memories

The Prof twentieth century was a cruel century. The First World War, the Holocaust, the Gulag, the Second World War, the collapse of the Latin American authorities, the struggle for freedom from communism in the countries of Eastern Europe, accompanied by ethnic cleansing! A sense of unaddressed injustice prompted the opening in many countries to establish truth and reconciliation committees.

There is also a perception in Russia that the country has not yet recovered from the trauma of the Stalinist era. The autobiographical book of the St. Petersburg theater artist Eduard Stepanovich Kochergin, who was taken away as ‘son of enemy’ to spend his childhood in state orphanages, - "Baptized with crosses: notes on their knees", which in 2010 received the literary award - "National Bestseller" is important in this context.

As through these memories the transfer of memory from generation to generation takes place. In turn, this is the process by which biographical knowledge contributes to both the creation of collective memory and the representation of a common past.

The paper would be an attempt to look into this work in the context of memory studies.

Keywords: memory, intergenerational memory, repression, trauma and reconciliation

Dr hab. **Aleksandra Zywert**, prof. UAM

"Don't look for the living, look for the dead" (Sergey Lebedev, *People of August*)

In the novel *People of August* (2016) the author begins with a personal, family history, but rather quickly reaches the level of universal human problems. Time is of prime importance here - from 1991 to 1999. For the author, the 90s is the main time of the end of the national silence about all those (various) secrets that had so far been doomed to silence and oblivion. As a result, the story (in both real and abstract aspects) plays the key role in the novel. In this context, no less important is the problem of the (actually tragic) “generation of perestroika”, people who came to live at the turn of history and seek the truth about themselves and their entire homeland.

Keywords: Sergey Lebedev, memory, history, oblivion, Russia

Dr **Svietlana Martjanova**

Representation of the Soviet past in the works of T.Yu. Kibirova

The subject of analysis in the report is the forms and methods of representation of the Soviet past in the prosaic experience by T.Kibirov "Lada, or Joy" and a number of poems. The narrative about the Soviet experience arises in stories about the past of characters, in excursions into the history of the scene, anecdotes, ironic descriptions of Soviet mythology and references to the works of F. Engels, digressions about the eras of Soviet life According to Kibirov, the worst features of post-Soviet reality do not look like an antipode, but a consequence Soviet experience. Dialogue with Russian and foreign classics and the myth of

demons, dating back to the works of A.S. Pushkin and F.M. Dostoevsky. Kibirov as a writer defends humanity, pity and tries to maintain faith in the power of literature and hope for the "interpretive efforts" of the reader.

Keywords: myth, Soviet mythology, quotation, dialogue, literary classics.

Prof. Dr. **Anna Stankiewicz**

"Time from which Eternity was Pumped out": novels *Aviator* and *Justification of the Island* by E. Vodolazkin

The report analyzes the concept of time presented by E. Vodolazkin in his novels *Aviator* (2016) and *Justification of the Island* (2020). The general principle of constructing the artistic world of novels is the combination of the society life facts and the ultimate metaphor. For all the dissimilarity of the pictures of the world of the analyzed novels, they are brought together by a general idea of the history of Russia and, more broadly, of Europe in the late 20th – early 21 st centuries, as about the ongoing tragedy, the overcoming of which is possible only through building the personal history of each person.

Keywords: E. Vodolazkin, time, eternity, history, society

Prof. **Ranjana Banerjee**

The Family Saga as a Prism for Rethinking the History of Soviet Russia (Based on the Novel "A City Written from Memory" by Elena Chizhova)

One of the most common motives in Russian literature of the post-Soviet period was the theme of revisiting the past through poetic analysis and reinterpretation. Naturally, the period of Soviet power in Russia became the object of the most intense research. It is a well-known fact, that Russia in the 20th century experienced catastrophic upheavals: revolutionary cataclysm, devastating wars, the disastrous consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union. These events left a tragic imprint on the people's mind, distorted and shattered the lives of millions of people, as was repeatedly written about in the works of writers of the Soviet period. However, the depiction of these events and characters was often ideologized and biased. Conforming to the literary concept of "socialist realism" - the events were described from one particular point of view. The motif of optimism and heroic deeds of Russian people, highlighted in these works, did not always correspond to the historical truth. Writers of the post-Soviet period tried to look at these events differently. Drifting from the set norms, they try to perceive these events through the eyes of an ordinary person- a witness, a participant, a victim of these events,. Elena Chizhova's novel, "A City Sketched from Memory", is an attempt to revisit these events through the prism of a family saga; the emotional perception of the relatives and friends, family members, living. It is not a song of feat, but a tale of bitterness, resentment of ordinary residents of St. Petersburg, who survived the turbulent and troubled years of the upheavals of the twentieth century Russia.

Keywords: Memory, St. Petersburg, family chronicle, big history, witnesses' response

Dr hab. **Elżbieta Tyszkowska – Kasprzak**, prof. UW

Soviet Childhood. The Image of Soviet Reality in Anthology 'Skip the Line'

In my paper I will present an analysis of the anthology 'Skip the Line', which was published in 2021, 30 years after the dissolution of the USSR at the Moscow publishing house AST. The

collection, compiled by Elena Shubina and Daria Saprykina, contains stories and essays about the Soviet era. The authors - well-known modern prose writers recall their youth in the Soviet Union. Nostalgia for the youthful years is mixed here with the image of Soviet life, the naive children's perception of Soviet reality, the first encounter with the communist ideology. Separate recollections of the authors add up to the way of life in the USSR, which includes events, people, everyday life, objects. This world of the Soviet man is presented in many ways and with different intonations - from lyrical to playful.

Keywords: modern Russian prose, Soviet Union, Soviet life, recollection, childhood

Prof. dr hab. **Liudmyla Shevchenko**

Artistic presentation of Soviet and post-Soviet day-to-day reality in the Russian prose of the past decades

The phenomenon of day-to-day culture is in the center of attention of culturologists and philosophers, sociologists and psychologists, semiotics, ethics and aesthetics scholars. Literature also shows the socio-cultural transformations of day-to-day reality of different epochs in a construction of images. 21st century novels where the first years after the break-up of the Soviet Union are artistically analyzed are of particular interest.

The article, based on the works in anthropology, semiotics, psychology and commansology, and using a complex of methods of analysis of poetic texts, aims to do the following:

- 1) Analyze how the existence of a Soviet and post-Soviet person is presented in the works by V. Makanin, Y. Poliakov, L. Ulitskaya, O. Slavnikova and S. Aleksievich;
- 2) Define the differences of post-Soviet and Soviet day-to-day life from the so-called "traditional" one (L.G. Ionin) in their presentation in the prose of the last decade;
- 3) Analyze which of the spectrum of changing narratives and symbols are highlighted by the writers in their presentation of the evolution of day-to-day life.

Keywords: everyday life, culture, lifestyle, mythologems, poetic techniques

SEKCJA 2

prof. **Oksana Mikheieva**

The Development of National Identities in Ukraine (1991-2020)

Modern Ukrainian statehood is formed as a consequence of the crisis and centrifugal tendencies in the USSR. These processes were accompanied by a sharp rise in national consciousness in the Soviet republics, which subsequently became the basis for the formation of independent states. Soviet policy towards nations was ambivalent. On the one hand, a new socio-cultural community "Soviet people" was being formed through the efforts of the state, on the other hand, nationality was ascribed status, i.e. it was ascribed to a person from birth. The nationalities fixed in the passport, and the blurred boundaries between the Soviet republics formed a situation in which the perception of nationality and the territory of the national republic were torn apart. Identities of Ukrainian citizens have been affected by the legacies of Soviet policies, which forced simultaneous coexistence of an ethnic identity and an all-Soviet one, and decoupled ethnic identity from statehood and citizenship. Ukraine's declaration of independence in 1991 posed a major challenge to the people who automatically became its citizens. In this presentation, using a quantitative approach (censuses of 1989 and 2001, sociological research data) and a qualitative approach (in-depth interviews), we will

examine how national identities have changed in Ukraine over 30 years of independence. Quantitative indicators of the ethnic or national identities of the population of Ukraine since 1991 show a noticeable spread of declarative Ukrainian national identity. However, a closer examination of the subjective parameters of this sense of self reveals heterogeneity and ambiguity in these declarations. Considering these data in the context of historical dynamics allows us to understand how people reconfigure their identity system, to find a way to adapt it to a new context.

dr **Guzel Yusupova**

Ethnic Minorities in the Nationalizing Context: Everyday Ethnicity and Cultural Revitalization in Tatarstan

Russia's multicultural society with the Soviet legacy of being an ethno-federation has been transformed significantly since Vladimir Putin came to power. During the first decade of his presidency, Putin built an effective 'vertical of power' along with significant change in centre-regions relations towards state centralisation. Over the next decade, ethnic minorities in Russia have contended with a new political drive by the president towards the cultural homogenisation of Russian citizens, instigated by his national state agenda. Limitations of civil liberties and restrictive legislation have undoubtedly affected the existence and the ways to express minority nationalism when it is considered a threat to authoritarian government, which is the case of the contemporary Russian Federation. I argue that the complex context of authoritarianism and market economy creates tipping points towards the growing importance of ethnic minority identification as a basis for social solidarity.

dr **Vera Dubina**

«A polka dot History»: History scholarship in the Public Space of the 1990s in Russia

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the departure of the "leading role of the party" from the scene, Soviet historical scholarship lost its grounds. At the same time, the public demand for "historical truth" was enormous. With the opening of archives, the rehabilitation of the repressed, and the publication of secret documents (such as the Hitler-Stalin pact) in the media, the Russian public was overwhelmed with enormous amount of documents and publication. People lined up for volumes of and Sergei Solovyov historical writing, looking for guidance in pre-revolutionary historiography, which was unable to meet the high public demand. Professional historians at that time did not enjoy the trust of society because of their ideological past. Therefore, at this time the most fabulous and fascinating scientific theories blossomed, competing for the place vacated by Marxist-Leninist determinism. This is a time of competition between a great variety of historical narratives, which gives us an insight into the attitudes toward history in society and the new place it has acquired in public space over the years.

mgr **Elena Gordienko**

Documentary Theatre as a Means of Interpreting the Past: Performing Soviet and Post-Soviet History in Contemporary Russia

Contemporary Russian theatre has known a wave of documentary performances that present the episodes of recent, including traumatic, history. They often contest the controversial

Soviet heritage that has been shaping the mental, discursive and even corporal patterns of Russian people. Theatrical performances can immerse the audience into a special space, choosing not only theatrical but also real places where the "zeitgeist" of a past era is still alive, so that the audience through a performance begins to see that the spectres from the past are haunting (J. Derrida) the present Russia. There will be analysed the productions *The end of the century / the end of the circle* by Alexey Vartanov, *Vyatlag* by Boris Pavlovich, 1968. *The New World* by Dmitry Volkostrelov and *Homeland* by Andrey Stadnikov, that deal with the issues of collective and cultural memory, in which the events of the past become a point of reference for the self-reflection on the identity of contemporary Russian people.

dr Svetlana Shakirova

Women`s movement and feminism in Kazakhstan: Post-Soviet context

If we briefly describe what we have been doing in the last 30 years after the USSR, we will get such a picture.

Feminism of the 1990s

In the 90s, we were pioneers of the women's movement, part of the global Beijing process, the first feminists and genderists on the public landscape. The words *gender*, *gender equality*, *gender and development*, *sexism*, *stereotypes*, *violence against women* were introduced by us into the circulation of NGOs and the media. We are taking the first steps in communicating with foundations, writing applications for grants and starting to receive them.

Feminism of the 2000s

The 2000s are coming - it's time for the strengthening and growth of the women's movement, the activation of all international agents in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Central Asia and the post-socialist space as a whole. Their professional approach to work, poorly concealed managerialism and project format make us part of the global UN system. Alternative NGO reports are written for all government reports on the implementation of conventions. The word 'feminism' is welcome, but in the official space it is more often replaced by 'gender'.

In each infrastructure, investment, loan project of international organizations, a specialist on gender and social issues is provided. The projects are very different – education, women's entrepreneurship, violence, human trafficking, peacemaking, ecology, water use, agriculture, road infrastructure, etc. The National Commission on Family and Women's Affairs under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan shows all ministries the importance of gender equality, gathers their representatives (*gender focal points*) for regular meetings and demands to report on the dynamics of gender policy promotion. These actions may cause resistance on the ground, but no one openly speaks out against it – it is indecent.

The network communication of the CIS women's movement and different countries is growing stronger. It seems to me that there is no such scale of interaction between countries and regions of the world as there was in the 1990s-2000s. There are many like-minded women abroad, and we know what is going on with them. Cooperation and friendship are sincere, contacts are regular, networking is supported through email and group mailings. NGO events are reflected in the media and women's information networks, booklets, leaflets, conference materials, project reports, collections of articles are published. NGOs open their websites, publish newsletters, magazines. International summer schools on gender studies and various topics are held in Issyk-Kul, Borovoye, near Almaty and abroad.

Intellectualism has never been alien to the civic sector and the women's movement. It includes all women with higher education, university teachers, engineers, specialists. The number of seminars, trainings, workshops, conferences is off the scale. It didn't take a week or two at most that we didn't meet.

Speaking about the problems of the women's movement in our region, I identified the following pain points:

Doesn't women's movement of our countries support orientalist paradigm? Looking at what is happening in our region, we can say that there is a certain symptom of Orientalism. For example, at international women's networks we often speak as exotic Other for "diluting standards." Consequently, we have to appeal to the worst forms of discrimination and inequality of women in order to legitimize our activities, which we feel is a kind of orientalist service to the West. Proliferation of the issues of bride kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan, sex traffic of women in Central Asia, self-immolation by women in Uzbekistan, marriages arranged by parents in Tajikistan, sexual workers in Kazakhstan – aren't these typical orientalist clichés and stereotypes? (Shakirova, 2008)

Feminism of the 2020s

Today, the main activity of the women's movement is concentrated in social networks, research is rare, and networking is intensifying on the eve of March 8 and 16 days without violence. There are still no mass actions, but the speeches of even a small number of feminists, human rights activists get an energetic response in social networks.

Facebook and Instagram have now moved all the activity. Streams of feminist demonstrations are coming from Bishkek, Almaty and other cities, showing in real time what is happening there. A couple of minutes after the start, photos and videos from the scene are uploaded to the FB. You can watch what is happening from afar and feel a sense of belonging. FemAgora 2019 showed how the organization of women's actions has progressed over the years.

And how has the content of the discussions changed? Firstly, there is a noticeable bias towards LGBT topics. Groups advocating for the rights of minorities openly position themselves in the field of feminism.

Burning themes that mobilize feminists today are *violence against women* and *uyat (shame in Kazakh)*. The scandals with Bayan Esentayeva, and then with Zakova, became a sign of feminism reaching the masses. After it, the activity of the 'NeMolchi' movements and #metoo is perceived normally. The society discusses feminist issues openly on social networks and at home, in parliament and in classrooms. Feminism has matured to become a mass phenomenon. Calling yourself a feminist today is not scary, but stylish.

Have the methods of working and promoting feminism changed over the years? Yes and no. On the one hand, it seems that foreign funds are stepping on the same rake, promoting projects similar to the previous ones and not quite successful at the time. On the other hand, from the fact that such forms of work were used earlier, today's reality has hardly changed. Feminism wins not only by waves, but also by routine "a drop sharpens a stone". Sexism and terry-cloth chauvinism have not weakened, and their representatives, causing a wave of feminist indignation, seem to receive special satisfaction...

So, what do we have today?

- Feminism in social networks.
- Feminist projects supported by foreign foundations (Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Soros Foundation-Kazakhstan, etc.
- Annual March demonstrations.
- The core of sustainable, professionally working NGOs (crisis centers, shelters).
- Feminist art.

Feminist issues in a pandemic

At the beginning of April 2020, Dubravka Zarkov writes that Covid-19 has become a great equalizer: it equally affects celebrities, heads of state and ordinary people. It is difficult for the disadvantaged, migrants, the poor, women, the unemployed. Both in poor countries, for which poverty is endemic, and throughout Europe. Although according to WHO reports, fewer

women than men are exposed to the virus, there is a danger to women's sexual and reproductive health.

Dubravka's article ends like this: *"Will we be vigilant enough to recognize the moment when the militarization and securitization of health arguments no longer hold water? Will we be brave enough to fight against them? And will we be wise enough to do the fighting together with those most affected?"*

The pandemic regime has made homes hyper-visible and open. The house under capitalism is often recognized as a paradise in the center of a heartless world, but the pandemic exposes all the inveterate problems of society and the family, and at the same time the house can become a place of more violence and exploitation of women, children, poor, deprived people than before.

Feminist authors argue that the coronavirus pandemic has exposed not just a health crisis, but a crisis of capitalism and patriarchy in general (Ceuterick, 2020). Gender inequality within families has intensified, and resistance to it naturally arises in the form of open discontent among women and attempts at organized actions for the creation of collective and systemic care. People were able to find a way out of despair and apathy, for example, in humor and irony about the distribution of family responsibilities between wife and husband, inept or inventive ways of men to perform or evade housework. As a result, horizons are opening up for strengthening the feminist agenda: the pandemic has clearly shown what the volume and value of women's domestic work and care for family members are. It remains to be hoped that by recognizing this, society will begin a long-term transformation of the home and professional spheres.

30 years after Socialism: conclusion

For 30 years, post-Soviet researchers have been trying to convey to their foreign colleagues the idea that most of the achievements of socialism, including in the field of equality of women and men, were such an everyday reality of our life that does not require proof.

Comparing the situation of women in post-Soviet countries with the situation of women in developing countries of Africa and Asia has always depressed us and caused disagreement.

We have repeated many times the famous phrase of the Russian General Lebed: *"The one who does not regret the loss of the USSR has no heart. The one who hopes for a return to the USSR has no mind."*

These 30 years have taught us to appreciate what we have lost - not by choice. And be able to cope with the circumstances of life in which we find ourselves.

And a positive ending:

The future of feminism, I think, is excellent. It will continue to grow stronger all over the world. In Central Asia, it will be enriched with new themes, movements, personalities. I am sure that Islamic feminism will show its spiritual power in the countries of Central Asia, it has appeared in Kazakhstan, but it does not actively manifest itself yet. There is a basis for the emergence and expansion of socialist feminism, which in previous years was not particularly held in high esteem. I am sure that feminism will become an ideological inspirer of social change in Kazakhstan, perhaps a leaven for political fermentation, and certainly will show its energy and creativity in the future.

dr Spolveiga Daugirdaitė

January 13, 1991, in Lithuanian art

The report is intended to analyze depiction of the Soviet aggression against the newly restored Republic of Lithuania in January 1991 in literature, theater, art.

Less than a year after the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Lithuania, January 13, 1991, 14 people were killed by Soviet troops in Vilnius while defending the Television

Tower, which retransmitted Lithuanian radio and television programs. Possibly these human sacrifices, which attracted the attention of the world media, stopped the further actions of the Soviet army and substantially contributed to the preservation of Lithuania's independence.

Currently, this day is included in the list of memorable days in Lithuania as the Day of Defenders of Freedom. In commemoration of it, when the flags of the Republic of Lithuania are raised, various memorial events take place (among others, the Freedom Prize has been awarded in the Parliament (Seimas) since 2011, commemorations, special lessons at the school, special running on the streets of Vilnius since 1992).

The victims and the events of January the 13th are commemorated in memorials in various places in Vilnius (in Antakalnis cemetery; near the television tower; near the Television and Radio building; a fragment of the barricades are preserved and covered near the Parliament House). In the fiction, the stories of these days of a young state are usually depicted episodically, in the general context of the transition period. These events are depicted as a background of heroes's personal events (in Vanda Juknaitė's short story *Stiklo šalis* (Glass Country, 1995), in Zita Čepaitė's detective novel *Paveikslas* (The Picture, 2015), in Tomas Vaiseta's psychological novel *Ofėjas, kelionė pirmyn ir atgal* (Orpheus, A Journey Back and forth, 2016), in the ironic novel *Geležiniai gyvatės kiaušiniai* (Iron Snake Eggs, 2020) by Saulius Šaltenis, a signatory to the Act of Independence. The performance "Barikados" (Barricades) by young playwrights – Lithuanian Goda Dapšytė and Latvian Jānis Balodis, which combines documentaries and fantasy, represented the interpretation of January 1991 of a young generation (2014, Lithuanian National Drama Theater, by Latvian director Valters Sīlis). The report will discuss possible reasons why artists relatively rarely choose to depict January of 1991, which showed the determination of Lithuanians to restore independence and the agony of the Soviet Union.

Key words: Lithuania's secession from the USSR; January 13, 1991, in Lithuania; depiction of historical events in literature; commemoration; documentary and fiction in art

Dr hab. **Tomasz Stępniewski**, prof. KUL

What should be the policy of the European Union in terms of war between Russia and Ukraine in Donbas

Dr **Nelly Bekus**

Protest Imaginaries and the (Former) Post-Soviet Identity Dilemmas in Belarus

The protests of 2020 in Belarus have often been described as a new 1989 and there is no doubt that the emancipatory appeal of the Belarusian protests is similar to the one that sustained the 1989 revolutions. But will building the democratic system – the major aspiration of the Belarusian protesters – follow the scripts of liberalisation and Westernisation in evidence in other Eastern and Central European countries? Will self-determination in post-Lukashenko Belarus follow a scenario modelled on the patterns adopted by other Eastern European and post-Soviet states, where ethnocentric national identities and the memory of victims of communism became distinctive markers of Eastern European post-communism? Examining the symbolic dimension of the protest repertoire the paper discusses how the protests rearranged the system of historical and cultural references that shaped the foundation of the Belarusian collective memory and identity discourses since 1994. It reveals how a broad

variety of actors engaged in contention activated a process of re-signification of the cultural and political symbols and ideas and led to the formation of a blended socio-cultural imaginary, which integrates previously disconnected and competing projects and ideologies.

Dr Andrzej Szabaciuk

Immigration policy of the Russian Federation as a tool to counteract the demographic collapse in the state

The decomposition of the Soviet Union has started a period of political and economic destabilization in almost every post-Soviet state. The liberalization of migration restrictions resulted in the mass emigration of ethnic and national minorities (Jews, Greeks, and Germans). Later also economic migrants. The decline in living standards has resulted in a family crisis and the biggest depopulation since World War II. At the beginning of Vladimir Putin's presidency, the authorities began to see migration policy as a panacea for population problems. These actions went hand in hand with the expectations of Russian businesses suffering from a shortage of workers. Initially, the rather liberal system was tightened, which resulted from the fear of uncontrolled immigration from Central Asia and the South Caucasus. At the same time, access to the Russian labor market has become an important instrument used in the policy towards the states of the post-Soviet area, losing its importance as an instrument of the state's population policy.

Keywords: Russian Federation, migration policy, population policy, xenophobia, Islamophobia, Central Asia

Dr hab. Antonina Kozyrska, prof. UMK

Status of the Russian language in the post-Soviet area

For many years of the Soviet Union's existence, the status of the Russian language was semi-official, although its place in the public space began to increase from the late 1930s. It was not until the 1990 when the law on the languages of the nations of the USSR solidified its status as an official language throughout the USSR. The law legalized the factual situation and was a form of response to the union republics passing their own language laws in 1989-1990. After the imminent dissolution of the Soviet Union, the independent states began to implement their language policies, guided by their own national interests. The result of these actions was the diverse status of the Russian language (as a state language, official language, interethnic or minority communication).

The main purpose of the presentation is to discuss this differentiation in the post-Soviet states, primarily in the formal and legal aspects. Specific tasks include answering the following questions: how were the changes made in the linguistic legislation of the former union republics justified; what were the factors determining the choice of a certain direction of language policy and its change in the area of interest; what were the socio-cultural effects of this choice; did the legal status of the Russian language reflect its actual position in public and social life? In addition, attention will be paid to the reaction of the Russian Federation, its involvement in the promotion of the Russian language in the post-Soviet area, including its presentation as the language of interethnic communication and the language of international organizations.

Dr Rafal Kęsek

Oligarchy in the political and economic life of selected post-Soviet states. Comparative perspective.

The oligarchization of economic and political life in the countries created after the collapse of the USSR is one of the main factors determining the forms and dynamics of the transformation of post-Soviet countries. Over the past thirty years, oligarchs in the post-Soviet area have actively participated not only in the distribution of state property. At the same time, thanks to the acquired capital resources, they directly or indirectly shape the policy of the countries created on the ruins of the USSR. They participate in the political process as owners, sponsors, leaders of political forces, often occupy official state positions, influence legal and institutional solutions, and are a system-creating factor. Significantly, they often become victims of political and economic rivalry in individual countries of the former USSR. Analyzing the influence of oligarchy on the internal policy of selected post-Soviet countries, we can see the problem of a specific "leadership duality", which leads not only to mutual penetration and interdependence but also to a confrontation between the political and economic spheres. In the individual countries of the former USSR, this confrontation takes different forms and produces different results.

Keywords: Oligarchy, politics, economy, USSR, transformation

Dr hab. Michał Wawrzonek, prof. AIK

Politics of Memory in Eastern Europe – the Ukrainian case

Ukraine had become an independent state in 1991 and after that a long process of shaping a new political community started. It gained a new dynamics after the events related to the "Dignity Revolution". They increased activity of different memory agents in the Ukrainian memory field. The main goal of the presentation is to examine particular conditions which they have to cope with. On the one hand they attempt to reestablish and to rediscover those parts of the legacy which have been distorted and aborted during the Soviet period. At the same time, a thread of "return to Europe" became one of the core elements of the current political agenda in Ukraine – especially after the "Dignity Revolution". Thus these agents have to handle with different mnemonic "European standards". One of them is a tendency to search for an „all-European” universal transnational approach to assessment of the past.

Reassessing the legacy of the Soviet period and a process of "decommunization" are another challenges for promoters of the politics of memory in Ukraine. The issues related to the politics of memory strongly affect relations between Ukraine and its neighbors. Particularly this concerns Ukrainian-Russian relations. Politics of memory is one of the elements of the hybrid warfare between Russia and Ukraine and is considered to be a part of Ukrainian security politics in a broader meaning. In general, consequences of the activities held by the Ukrainian memory agents very often cross beyond the borders of the Ukrainian memory field and they affect relations of Ukraine with its external environment.

Key words: politics of memory, decommunization, nationalism, Ukrainian-Russian relations, Ukrainian-Polish relations, Ukrainian-Israel relations

SEKCJA 3

o. dr **Taras Bublyk**

From Catacombs to Freedom: The UGCC in the period of Socio-Political Changes in Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s

The author of the report will present the situation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church during the collapse of the Soviet Union. The peculiarities of the movement for the Church's legalization, the forms and methods of the Greek Catholics' struggle for the freedom of conscience will be analyzed too.

prof. dr hab. **Igor Halagida**

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in 1980-1990s (casus of Poland) The Greek Catholic Church in communist Poland was a phenomenon. A particularly interesting occurrence was the active secular movement that emerged in the 1980s. Thanks to the transformations of 1989, Greek Catholic structures were renewed, although in a slightly different shape than before the war.

o. dr **Oleh Turij**

Vision and Mission of the Ukrainian Catholic University

Historically the Ukrainian Catholic University is the successor of the Greek-Catholic Theological Academy in Lviv, founded in 1928 by metropolitan Sheptytsky, and the Ukrainian Catholic University in Rome, established by metropolitan Josyf Slipyi in 1963, after his release from Soviet prison camps. The Theological Academy was revived in independent Ukraine in 1994. In 2002, it was reorganized into a university whose aim is to "educate public leaders and professionals to serve both in Ukraine and internationally for the glory of God, the common good, and the dignity of the human person".

Uczestnicy panelu: Rektor UKU ks. dr hab. Stefan Batruch, prorektor ds. misji UKU Myroslav Marynowicz, poseł na sejm RP, dziennikarz GW Mirosław Czech

prof. dr hab. **Valentyna Kharkhun**

Allocating the Past: Ukrainian Parks of Soviet Monuments

Leninopad (shedding Lenin monuments) which occurred in Ukraine during and after Euromaidan (2013-2014) raised the problem of maintaining and exhibiting Soviet material legacy, primarily monuments. Establishing thematic parks was regarded as one of the most promising ways to deal with Soviet monuments. Yet, Ukrainians who were discussing preservation of Soviet monuments avoided in most cases any consideration of the controversial examples found with those existing parks in post-socialist countries.

This paper analyzes the situations which occurred from the establishment and operation of Soviet monument parks in several East European countries. By distinguishing major peculiarities with this memorialization genre and its diverse implementation in other countries, this research actualizes the appropriate context for understanding and evaluating Ukrainian approaches for creating Soviet monument parks. The paper will discuss the following issues: How do you situate the Soviet in a post-Soviet space? What symbolic values do Soviet monuments possess as traces of the past? How are ideological meanings and artistic representations of the Soviet past embodied in monuments? Can they be used to create an appropriate and readable narrative of the Soviet past? And how might parks as entertainment sites serve the idea of commodification and commercialization of the Soviet past? This paper

will contribute to the continuing discussion about the role of Ukrainian parks play in preserving Soviet material heritage and how these sites may be exploited in creating a vision of the Soviet past.

Key words: Soviet material heritage, parks of the Soviet monuments, memorialization, narrative of the Soviet past.

prof. dr hab. **Lyudmyla Tarnashynska**

The price of freedom: the discourse of the sacrifice of the generation of the Ukrainian Sixties

1991 became a landmark year in the recent history of independent Ukraine. Thus, after the collapse of the USSR and the adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine on July 16, 1990, the people of Ukraine confirmed the historical document „Act of Independence of Ukraine”, approved by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on August 24 this year. The drivers of these revolutionary, groundbreaking events were the passion generation formed in 1960-1970: members of the Ukrainian national-democratic liberation movement, particularly dissidents, and more broadly, the Ukrainian Sixties. Among them were Vyacheslav Chornovil, the initiator of the proclamation of these fundamental documents, human rights activist Levko Lukyanenko, their associates Bohdan Horyn, Mykhailo Horyn, Mykhailo Kosiv, Les Tanyuk, Iryna Kalynets, who were joined by well-known writers Ivan Drach, Dmytro Pavlychko, Roman Ivanychuk, Borys Oliynyk, Volodymyr Yavorivsky and others. The Ukrainian Sixties, including dissidents and those who shared their national orientations and values, accepted the challenge of the times and took responsibility for the country's fate. Most of them paid a high price for liberation from the imperial yoke and Ukraine's freedom. Thus, human rights activists and „prisoners of conscience” have laid down their lives on the altar of freedom. The extremely high price of freedom, fully paid for by the Ukrainian intellectuals, was converted into the first democratic transformations in Ukraine. The Sixties, who in the 1960s and 1970s declared their right and duty to „be themselves,” in particular, not to betray their ideals (including truth, freedom, justice, responsibility, civic courage, etc.), faced the challenge of „re-creation of the world” (I. Drach) at the level of national social transformations. The authority of the name, which was carried by dissidents and, in particular, writers of the sixties as a banner of the national idea, united around them many supporters. Not all of them went into politics. There were also those who renounced high-profile social roles and chose literature, such as the poetess Lina Kostenko or the poet and unsurpassed tribune Mykola Vingranovsky. Thus, the generation of Ukrainian Sixties and dissidents played a significant and productive state-building role, asserting Ukraine's independence in the legislative and executive branches of government in the early 1990s. At the same time, they remained in the intellectual field of Ukraine and the world, making great efforts to de-Sovietize Ukrainians and establish new democratic values in the post-Soviet space.

dr **Joanna Bobula**

Theatrical activities in public space on the example of the contemporary art project "ГОГОЛІВФЕСТ"

The development of the theatre and festival movement in Ukraine in the period of socio-cultural transformation is part of one of the theatrical trends related to the idea of presenting

performances outdoors, referring to the origins of the theatre, which has been operating in a specific place, "under the open sky" since ancient times. Twentieth-century supporters of the idea of leaving the theatre indoors (building) and returning to outdoors (squares, streets, parks, gardens, train platforms, courtyards or castle ruins), apart from great perspectives of an authentic landscape, saw the possibility of their theatre reaching everyone, including spectators lost for other shows (as understood by Zbigniew Raszewski).

At the beginning of the nineties of the 20th century, the festival movement, understood as a theatrical play, became one of the factors in the revival of Ukrainian theatre, which had to adapt to the new socio-political, economic and cultural reality. The perspective of thirty years of dynamics of Ukrainian theatre (and paratheatrical) festivals makes it possible to systematize them and indicate the foremost directions of development.

We are particularly interested in the theatrical activities of the originator of one of the most recognizable Ukrainian festivals - Vlad Troitsky - Гогольfest - who, consistently since the establishment of the experimental theatre DACH (ДАХ) in Kiev in 1994 - "opens territory for creativity", in subsequent projects pursues the goal of the theatre as a means for spiritual self-realization. Rejecting the traditional forms and methods of Ukrainian theatre, the founder of the eponymous polyphonic and multicultural festival of contemporary art presents a wide spectrum of arts in an interactive, public city space with their buildings and people.

Keywords: cultural transformation - theatre festival - outdoor performances - contemporary art

dr Marta Zambrzycka

Ukrainian art and the heritage of totalitarianism, based on Arsen Sawadov's photo series

The topic of the paper is the theme of totalitarian heritage in two photographic series by the Ukrainian artist Arsen Sawadov, realized in the 1990s: *Marxism de Sade* (Марксизм де Сад) from 1998 and *Collective red* (Коллективне червоне) from 1998-1999. Arsen Sawadow is a Ukrainian painter and photographer, one of the most important figures in Ukrainian contemporary art, a representative of the "new wave" (Ukrainian postmodernism) in Ukrainian art. In his works, the artist uses the aesthetics of shock and provocation, taking up the subject of settling accounts with the heritage of the communist past.

Keywords: photography, memory, totalitarianism, postmodernism, provocation

dr Ryszard Kupidura

When we liked to talk about the future, or Polish-Ukrainian discussions in "Kultura" and "Zeszyty Historyczne" in 1989-1994

The end of 1991 is more or less in the middle of the period, the beginning of which is marked by the dates 1989-1990, when partially free parliamentary elections were held in Poland and in the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, and the final censorship falls on the years 1993-1994, when the next elections in these countries signalled the clear fatigue of both societies with the transformation and the will to return to the past. The discussions held in "Kultura" and "Zeszyty Historyczne" accurately reflect this change in atmosphere from enthusiastic to more and more distant. Bohdan Osadczuk, who in the first half of 1990 wrote about the spirit of mutual tolerance at the meeting of Polish and Ukrainian parliamentarians in Jabłonna,

wrote about year 1994 that "it is leaving the political stage into the past as a symbol of political failure, passivity, inertia".

The task set by the author of the paper is to look at the above discussion from a thirty-year perspective, describe it according to the main participants, threads taken, etc., as well as attempt to trace a series of "sequences" of not only postulates and hopes, but also fears, which the architects of the Polish-Ukrainian understanding shared with their readers.

Keywords: Poland-Ukraine, "Culture", "Historical Papers", political transformation, international dialogue

dr Michał Siudak

In search of identity. Ukrainian historical policy 30 years after the collapse of the USSR

Researchers of Ukrainian national identity have long pointed out that contemporary Ukraine is not a homogenous whole in terms of language, religion, ethnic composition and geopolitical orientation. One of the most important issues significantly influencing the Ukrainian sense of national separateness is the choice of an appropriate historical policy and finding a pantheon of heroes and an ideological base on which to base and build a pan-Ukrainian national identity and solid foundations of statehood, which for Ukraine - situated on the border between East and West - would at the same time be a geopolitical and civilisational choice. After 1991, unlike the other countries of the Soviet bloc, Ukraine did not begin to build its own historical narrative.

During the presidency of Leonid Kravchuk, Ukraine relied on the tradition of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the West Ukrainian National Republic, as well as the myth of the Sich Riflemen. His successor, Leonid Kuchma, referred to the Cossack tradition. After the so called Orange Revolution, the next president of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, at least at the beginning of his term, strove to build a modern Ukrainian consciousness around the Great Famine, but at the end of his presidency he decided to focus on the tradition of Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) - Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UIA) and on 20 January 2010 signed a decree in which he posthumously awarded Stepan Bandera the title of Hero of Ukraine "for indomitable spirit in defence of the national idea, for heroism and sacrifice in the struggle for an independent Ukrainian state". Viktor Yanukovich rather did not concern himself with historical policy and on the contrary, on 9 December 2010 he liquidated the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, which was established on 3 March 2007. Negligence in the sphere of historical and identity policy, among others, became one of the causes of the annexation of Crimea and war in Donbass.

A major change in Ukraine's historical policy, meaning a greater than before attachment to history and its role in shaping the future, took place in the first half of 2014 - the appointment of Volodymyr Vyatrovych as chairman of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance can be considered a symbolic beginning of a new era. Ukraine began to refer to the political achievements and military actions of the OUN and the UIA, which had a negative impact on Polish-Ukrainian relation.

dr Olga Kich-Maslej

The state of research on the heritage of post-immigration areas in south-eastern Poland (covered by the displacement of the Ukrainian population in 1944-1947 and 1951) before and after the political and systemic transformations in Poland and Ukraine

The speech concerns the state of research on the heritage of post-immigration areas in south-eastern Poland (covered by the displacement of the Ukrainian population in 1944-1947 and 1951) before and after the political and systemic transformations in Poland and Ukraine.

Keywords: Post-immigration areas of south-eastern Poland, cultural heritage, historical heritage, difficult heritage, oral history.

SEKCJA 4

prof. dr hab. **Mykola Zhurba**

Democratic Perversions¹ of Ukrainian Society as a Post-Soviet Legacy

The attempt to distinguish the ontological properties of perversions of democratic governance in eastern Ukraine, to outline the main causes and mechanisms of their action in individual and social life and to develop an effective program to reduce the impact of these negative manifestations, primarily in the field of education has been made in the conducted study.

It is noted that 30 years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there is still nostalgia for the “Soviet” person, who does not allow cutting the umbilical cord with the past, and as a result, a new distorted non-viable content is being built according to the old form (according to the principle of “historical pseudo-morphoses” by O. Spengler): quasi-democracy, quasi-patriotism and latent separatism. It is emphasized that quasi-democracy is a kind of democracy that is built on the laws of authoritarianism and dictatorship, the possibility of only one true vision and world perception of reality, and is also implemented based on systematic propaganda, which is inherent, first of all, in the post-Soviet countries.

It is emphasized that the practical application of the advantages of democratic governance should ensure the further destruction of the worldview of the “human-Soviet”, which, unfortunately, still remains relevant in the post-Soviet space. What will homo (post)sovieticus be in the new globalized world? The question remains open...

The conducted research will expand the search for the classical theory of democracy and outline new forms (taking into account territorial affiliation) of perversions of democratic governance (quasi-democracy, quasi-patriotism and latent separatism). The results of the study will be of interest to specialists and experts from different countries involved in the study of democracy and democratic governance issues, as well as international organizations and donors who invest a lot in the improvement of the situation, primarily in post-Soviet countries.

Keywords: quasi-democracy, quasi-patriotism, latent separatism, democracy, post-communist nostalgia.

dr **Natalia Teres**

¹ Perversion - the changing of something so that it is not what it was or should be (*Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus*)

Toponymy of Kyiv in Times of Democratic transit: from totalitarian to national-state content

Since late 20th century, the cardinal changes having taken place in political, humanitarian, and scientific spheres have directly affected the existing toponymic landscape of Ukrainian cities, villages and settlements.

The driver of this socio-political process is the state toponymic policy. To implement this policy, the creation of a new structure and updating of existing state toponymic institutions were needed. These institutions collect, research, codify, standardize and use obtained toponymic information, and process new data on toponymic processes in the past, the relationship with historical and socio-economic phenomena, everyday life, worldview and mentality of people of different generations. This work is carried out by both public authorities (administrative, research) and public commissions and organizations.

The process of overcoming the Soviet totalitarian toponymic landscape went through several stages. During the first stage (1991 – 2004), the formation of the state system of toponymic policy took place, including in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine and regional centers. The second period lasted during 2004 – 2013 and the third began in 2014 and is going on to this day.

dr **Tomasz Lachowski**

Genocide is not just a physical extermination. Soviet crimes against the nations of Central and Eastern Europe – an international law perspective

A renown Polish lawyer, Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959), the intellectual father of the concept of genocide, understood crime of genocide as a series of actions resulting from a coordinated policy aimed at annihilating a given community by breaking down its political and social institutions, culture, religion or language of a given nation, and therefore not only as an extermination in a purely physical sense. Although his concept was not fully reflected in the text of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948, while analyzing the Soviet policy towards societies that did not voluntarily join the USSR, Lemkin assessed the criminal actions of the Soviet authorities committed against Ukrainians (*the Holodomor*) or the nations of the Baltic states (for instance, the mass deportations) as genocide not in opposition to the above-mentioned UN Convention, but fully in accordance with its provisions.

Main aim of the paper is to analyze selected crimes of the Soviet Union as a crime of genocide in the light of international law, the result of which was to create a new “Soviet man” (*homo sovieticus*) and the simultaneous destruction of fully independent nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, the paper tries to answer the question whether it would be possible to establish a special international tribunal to try Soviet crimes.

Keywords: genocide, Soviet Union, international law, “Nuremberg-2”

dr **Bartłomiej Garczyk**

Polish diaspora in Kazan after 1991

The article presents the history of the Kazan Polish diaspora after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The text outlines the ethnic structure of the city and the Genesis of the Poles. After 1991 in Russia become a cultural ethnic minorities renaissance. Kazan Poles also benefited

from democratization and began building organizational structures. This is, the Genesis of the Polish National Culture Society „Orzeł Biały” and the Polish-language education.

+dr hab. **Agata Domachowska**, prof. UMK

'Tito eternally alive? - Montenegrin memory of the Yugoslav leader

Marshal Josip Broz Tito was the undisputed leader of the Yugoslav state for almost four decades. His lengthy rule significantly influenced the fate of the state that fell apart in 1991 and the state of a multinational, multi-religious, and multicultural society. Currently, in each of the post-Yugoslav countries, the memory of Tito is shaped differently.

The aim of my speech is to present the memory of Marshal Josip Broz Tito in Montenegro – in a state that had the status of a republic under Tito. However, Montenegro did not have the same status in the interwar period, when it was also part of the then Yugoslav state. What is more, the times of communism and the rule of Tito played a significant role in shaping a national identity different from the Serbian one – Montenegrin national identity.

Keywords: Montenegro, Tito, Yugoslavia, Western Balkans

dr **Adrian Madej**

Contemporary identity discourse on the literary map of Andrzej Stasiuk

Andrzej Stasiuk often uses the form of literary reportage in his work. Called by Magdalena Marszałek ‘a literary cartographer of the Eastern European province’, he talks about this part of Europe which may be described as a kind of geopolitical project, in contrast to the Western European center. Stasiuk often reflects on the condition of the Polish society in the context of travels to other post-communist countries, pointing to the similarities and differences in *reconciling* with the past. The experiences of dictatorship, along with the progressing integration and the intensification of the global phenomena, affect the identity discourse in Poland and other countries in the ‘east of the west’, as Stasiuk describes the Central European region. This discourse leads to an emotionally charged ideological debate. As a consequence, public identity discourse is dominated by the experience of the past, which, as Jurij Andruchowycz writes, have us by the throat and is translating into political projects which are supposed to redefine the paradigms of collective memory. A frequent leitmotif in Stasiuk’s prose is the topic of journey, which becomes his *licentia poetica* and a starting point for reflection on the components of identity in this part of Europe, which the author calls Central Europe.

The aim of the paper is to analyze selected stories and essays by Andrzej Stasiuk, in which the author investigates the attempts to dominate the public discourse by the politics of memory based on the countryman/stranger concepts. It is especially visible when we talk about opposing and rejecting values ascribed to the so-called Western liberal democracy and multicultural societies. According to Stasiuk, it is a manifestation of ‘unresolved’ history caused by the imposed communist system.

Keywords: identity, reportage, political conceptions, public discourse

dr **Joanna Małgorzata Banachowicz**

Echoes of Peter Handke's "Winter Journey," or the writer in the fire of criticism. The consequences of the literary fascination with fairytale Yugoslavia in the works of the Austrian Nobel Prize winner

In the late autumn of 1995, Peter Handke traveled to Yugoslavia, a country scarred by civil war, which has always been an important point of reference in his work as a place to remember his multicultural roots. In many of his works, the writer returns to his native Carinthia, which in his eyes is an extension of the fairy-tale Yugoslavia, a country that has painfully disintegrated before his eyes. The result of this trip was an essay published a year later, "A Journey to the Rivers. Justice for Serbia" („Eine winterliche Reise zu den Flüssen Donau, Save, Morawa und Drina oder Gerechtigkeit für Serbien") and Handke's intention was to target the media reporting on the Balkan war. The book very quickly became the subject of passionate discussion (the writer was accused of glorifying the perpetrators), its echoes were revived again in 2019 when Peter Handke was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Keywords: Peter Handke, "A Journey to the Rivers", Serbia, the Nobel Prize in Literature

dr **Tetiana Dzyadevych**

The Promise of an Early Post-Time in the context of Post-Truth: *The Moscoviad* by Yuri Andrukhovych and *Generation P* by Victor Pelevin

As Giovanni da Col describes contemporary global enchantment with post-truth he notes that terms like "fakery, forgery, fiction," like the verb "to feign," come from Latin verbs referring to "the productive, creative, and inventive activity of shaping and molding, *facere*, *fabricare*, and *ingere*," and asserts that they cannot be clearly distinguished from poetic and poietic activity.¹ It convened to discuss and to comprehend what had happened to the global perceptions of the real and the fake. In a similar vein, anthropologist Alexei Yurchak has situated post-Soviet and post-Cold War discourse within the larger global process of movement toward post-truth, fabricated realities, and absurdity.² Yurchak's work traces the etiology of these attitudes toward pseudo-realities that, in many aspects, is rooted in the early post-Soviet/post-Cold war period. He describes a development from certainty about the falsehoods and fabrications of the previous ideology, to the current relativistic *nominalism*. In this light it becomes easy to see how these changes in social epistemology sit conformably with the poetics of postmodernism.

It is against this broader political, cultural, and epistemological background that I would like to examine in more detail Yuri Andrukhovych's *The Moscoviad* (1992) and Victor Pelevin's *Generation P* (1999). The two novels are symptomatic of their respective national literatures; they afford a window through which to compare differing perspectives on the collapse of the Soviet Union. My comparison aims to sketch out divergent conceptions of political subjectivity from a post-Soviet *Ukrainian* and post-Soviet *Russian* position. My reading of the two novelists' work aims to reflect on their perspectives on an interrelated set of themes including: truth/post-truth, reality/pseudo-reality, and freedom/un-freedom. While the value of my analysis is that it seeks to set them within a larger framework of epistemic changes and

¹ Giovanni da Col, "Preface," in *Fake: Anthropological Keywords*, (Chicago: Hau Books, The University Chicago Press, 2018), X.

² Alexei Yurchak, *Fake, Unreal, and Absurd*, Ibid, 91 – 108.

transformations of political subjectivity, it will be useful to briefly consider other related scholarly work.

Keywords: Truth/post-truth, reality/pseudo-reality, freedom/un-freedom, postmodernism/postcolonialism

dr hab. **Andrzej Polak, prof. UŚ**

Literary awards in Russia after the turn of 1991. Ideology and the market

Literary awards are an important aspect of the literary life of every state and society. In the case of Russia and the Soviet Union, their functioning is directly related to broadly understood politics. In Soviet times, the award of the Stalin/Lenin Prize often meant becoming a classic of Russian literature. 1991 is a turning point in this context. It was then that the patronage of the state (state awards), deciding on a place in the literary hierarchy, gained competition in the form of a free market, which soon established various types of more or less ephemeral non-state awards, connected, which is inevitable in Russian conditions, with various political options. In this paper, I am going to take a closer look at the multidimensional involvement of the awards granted to Russian-language writers in the sphere of politics and ideology. I will also try to answer the question of whether it is possible in Russia to completely separate awards from non-literary matters.

Keywords: literary awards, Russia, politics, 1991

dr **Tomasz Nakoneczny**

Post-Soviet Russia in the view of the West: discursive forms of mapping

The paper will be an attempt to review the leading Western discourses on Russia after 1991, distinguished by their intellectual (humanities and social sciences) and political (geopolitical doctrines, strategic concepts, etc.) strength. By traditionally placing Russia in the role of an empire, regional or global geopolitical player, we sometimes forget that it is also subject to processes of discursive appropriation by external opinion-forming centers. The image of Russia, appearing at the starting point under the banner of the Russian Empire, has been shaped in the western world since the end of the 16th century, and in the course of the four centuries that separated us, it underwent numerous modifications and reevaluations. As part of his presentation, the author will try to answer a few important questions, making use of not only the analysis of selected meta-Russian narratives after 1991, but also constructing the initial narrative-imagological structure, which will be treated as a comparative reference for the former. The above-mentioned questions will include the following: a. What changes or shifts in the discursive mapping of Russia have occurred between the sovietological discourse and the most important political doctrines of the West during the USSR and the dominant narratives that emerged after the collapse of that state? b. whether, and if so, to what extent, occurring in the above-mentioned in the area of continuations or discontinuations should be considered a manifestation of cultural changes in the West itself? c. or do they rather belong (and then - which of them?) to permanent imaginary structures formed at an early stage of discursive mapping of Russia? d. How does contemporary Russian thought react to Western forms of representation? e. How does it affect Western discursive mapping options?

Keywords: discursive mapping – the West - Russia - post-sovietism - sovietology - postcolonialism - world-systems theory - strategic doctrines

dr **Joanna Kula**

„What is this place called?” Chechen War in the Collection of Essays *A Map of the Motherland* by Pyotr Vail

Pyotr Vail (1949-2009), a Russian writer born in Riga, emigrated from the Soviet Union to the United States in 1977. In the 1990s he travelled through the vast areas of his former homeland, which has no longer existed: from the Solovetsky Islands in the North to Georgia in the South, from the western borders of European Russia to the Far East and Kamchatka. The result of this trip is a collection of travel essays (travelogue) entitled *A Map of the Motherland* (*Карта родины*, 2003).

One part of this publication, which stands out significantly from other texts, as the author emphasized himself in the preface to the 2007 edition, is a series of reportages about the first Chechen war. Chechnya in 1995, where Vail appeared as a journalist, was a place condemned to conflict. Four elements: country, nation, culture and state, allowing for achieving social harmony, remained in contradiction there.

The aim of the article is to try to explain these ambivalences through the prism of Vail's reportage-essayist narrative. The unspoken questions, reflective deviations, and intertextual suggestions made by the author make a reader to consider this particular piece of writing about the first Chechen war not so much in the category of non-fiction literature or just journalism, but in the broader context of relations between Russia and the Caucasus.

Key words: Vail, essay, reportage, USSR, Chechen war

dr **Jan Witzak**

Pre-totalitarian examples of the communist cinematography of the RSFSR of the silent period in the context of the redefinition of the cultural heritage of Russia's past after 1991

Using selected examples of film works of post-revolutionary Russia, the author shows the changes in their evaluation occurring during the following crucial periods in the history of the USSR (Stalinism, the thaw of N. Khrushchev's thaw, L. Brezhnev's era of stagnation, M. Gorbachev's Perestroika), emphasising the breakthrough role of 1991 in the reliable evaluation and interpretation of Russian films from the 1920s.

Keywords: Soviet avant-garde, Soviet cinematography, Factory of the Eccentric Actor, "Man with a Camera" by Dz. Vertov. "The Overcoat" by G. Kozintsev, L. Trauberg.

Prof. Dr. **Taras Kuzio**

Soviet Legacies on Identity in the Post-Soviet Space and How They are Orientalised in the West

Firstly, legacies. The division of the former USSR into groups of countries was pre-determined by their Soviet legacies. In the USSR, the 3 Baltic states, Ukraine, Armenia, and Georgia had the largest dissident and nationalist movements. The 3 Baltic states joined EU and NATO and Georgia and Ukraine, who had 3 colour revolutions, joined the EU's Eastern Partnership. Armenia was a special case because of geography and has always been pro-Russian. Central Asian states had no dissident movements and never declared independence. In 1991 the communist elite took control of the states after the FSU disintegrated. In the 3

Baltic states and Georgia the opposition came to power. Ukraine was in between the Baltic states and Central Asia with a coalition of national communists and former dissidents until the Orange Revolution. Among the 3 eastern Slavs only Ukraine declared independence and held a referendum on independence. Russia and the USSR were one and the same in the eyes of Russian nationalists and therefore Russia could not declare independence from itself. Even Russian democratic dissidents did not seek independence for the Russian SFSR. In late 1991, Russia captured the Soviet state in Moscow and undertook state building from the top down. A KGB-run meritocracy was inevitable. Ukraine and other non-Russian republics undertook state and nation-building from the bottom up. Among the 3 eastern Slavs only Ukraine had a national communist tradition. In Russia this was impossible as Russians viewed the USSR, not Russian SFSR, as their homeland. In Belarus the "imperial communist" tradition was dominant and national communism was very weak. In Ukraine the "imperial" and "Little Russian" tradition was headed by Communist Party leader Volodymyr Shcherbytsky (1972-1989). Belarus had a very weak ethnic identity in the USSR. In Soviet Belarus there was only 1 dissident. Alyaksandr Lukashenka represented the more dominant Soviet Belarusian national identity. Ukrainian political prisoners were the largest proportionately in the Gulag of any Soviet nationality. In Ukraine the Donbas and Crimea had dominant Soviet identities but this was too small to control Ukraine. When the Donbas attempted to capture Ukraine in the 2004 elections and in 2010-2013 during Yanukovich's presidency it provoked two colour revolutions, preventing Yanukovich from being fraudulently elected and forcing him to flee from Ukraine. Competition between "ethnic Ukrainian" and "eastern Slavic" (i.e., that implemented in the USSR and since 1994 in Belarus) identities was heated in 2004-2014, when the Party of Regions expanded from its Donbas base, but the 2014 crisis and Russian military aggression has led to the victory of "ethnic Ukrainian" identity and the demise of the pro-Russian camp. Secondly, continental Western European orientalism towards Eurasia (that is, the former USSR without the three Baltic states) which has always had a difficult time imagining the region as part of Europe. Western European orientalism has prevented the EU from envisaging Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova as European countries (in a similar manner to the EU being unable to view Turkey as part of Europe). It has meant the EU has never considered offering these three countries a membership perspective with the Eastern Partnership offering only integration and 'enlargement-lite.' Orientalism towards Eurasia is especially prevalent in Germany and France where anti-Americanism leads to a desire to include Russia as part of Europe as a balancer against American power (irrespective of the fact Russia left Gorbachev's 'common European home' and declared itself to be a Eurasian country as long ago as 1996 when Yevgeny Primakov became Russian foreign minister). Most French politicians view the three eastern Slavs as 'Russian' because they look at Ukraine in a similar manner to how Paris views Provence or Brittany. For the last one hundred years Germany has pursued a foreign policy of ignoring countries lying between itself and Russia to forge a strategic partnership with Russia. This foreign policy is the source for the Putinverstehers (Putin Understanders). Russophilism is prevalent in academia; for example, in the belief Crimea has 'always been Russian.' The biggest number of experts in Europe on Ukraine, for example, are in Poland and the UK; in France and Germany academic focus continues to remain on Russia as it did when the USSR existed. Germany's backing for Nord Stream I and II is under the misguided view that economic relations will change

Russia's authoritarian regime. This naïve view of the political benefits of economic cooperation and trade has been shown to be wrong about China and is wrong about Russia.