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Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union

President's Message

Dear Readers,

I'd like to extend a warm congratulations to all of you for successfully concluding yet another academic year! As we head into spring and make plans for our summers, I invite you to enjoy reading through this collection of submissions from Ukrainian Canadian students.

I'd also like to invite you all to attend the 2015 National SUSK Congress, which will be held May 7-10, 2015 in Montreal. This year's Congress theme is *Vive le SUSK!* and its aim is simple, but bold: to provide students of Ukrainian heritage from across Canada the opportunity to deliberately meet, network, develop, and create tomorrow's community. This year's Congress offers a rich opportunity for Ukrainian Canadian students to further their skills for professional and community development, increase their knowledge and awareness of our community's reaction to and activities relating to current events in Ukraine, and take their place as active members of the Ukrainian Canadian student community. SUSK National Executive elections will also take place at Congress, and I invite all students to review the available positions in the SUSK Constitution: <http://susk.ca/about/susk-constitution/> Being a part of SUSK is an incredible opportunity, and one that should not be missed during one's student years. I highly encourage all Ukrainian Canadian students to join us for Congress and consider becoming involved in our National Executive.

Hope to see you all in Montreal this May!

З повагою – Regards,

Christine Czoli

SUSK President





A Meeting with Josef Zissels

Завдяки підтримці «Українсько-єврейської зустрічі» (Ukrainian Jewish Encounter) 3 березня 2015 року в Оттаві відбулася зустріч української громади із Йозефом Зісельсом, Віце-президентом Світового Єврейського Конгресу та Головою Всеукраїнської Асоціації Єврейських Організацій та Громад (Ваад).

Юлія Зубрицька, студентка магістерської програми факультету права Оттавського університету записала основні тези, виголошенні паном Зісельсом під час зустрічі. З цієї причини інформацію подано від першої особи.

Хочу розпочати словами Президента США Ніксона: «Якби моя мама була тут, вона була би щаслива бачити, як ви мене тут хвалите.”

Майдан є найбільш адекватна форма протесту проти тих зухвалих форм приниження гідності людини, які виникли в Україні. Майдан – це третій етап української ревоції: починаючи з 1991 року, продовжуючись в 2004 році. Сподіваюся, що це буде останній етап.

Чому так довго? Відповідь ховається у критичній масі людей, які можуть транслювати інтереси та ідеали всіх принижених у своїй гідності та правах. У 2004 році вийшов помаранчевий майдан і спочатку здавалося, що цього достатньо. Однак виявилося, що ні. В 2013 на майдани всієї України вийшло 5 мільйонів людей. Це успіх. Що нам вказує на те, що це успіх? Почалася війна. А це означає, що вона виникла через вакуум



влади, коли Росія почала нав'язувати свою думку, щоб не передати владу до рук людей, які прагнуть змін.

2004 рік був етноцентричним, яскраво проукраїнським. 2013 рік означував народження політичної, а не етноцентричної України. Половина майданів України говорила російською мовою, те саме відбувається зараз на фронті. Це означає, що в Україні народилася європейська політична нація.

В чому сутність цього конфлікту? Це не є конфлікт міжетнічний (між росіянами і українцями); це не є міжконфесійний конфлікт (між християнами московського і київського патріархатів); це не міжмовний конфлікт. Натомість, це – цивілізаційний конфлікт, який полягає в демократичному виборі понад євразійським. Як тільки Росія помітили що Україна відривається від цієї лінії, Росія застосувала зброю.

Вакуум влади був глобальний і він розповсюджувався на всі сектори економіки. Ніхто не вірив, що при такій кризі влади можна протистояти російському режиму, але майдани показали що це не так. Феномен волонтерства будуть вивчати далі все більше і більше. Це ті 5 мільйонів осіб, які замінили владу і взяли на себе відповідальність за розвиток подій в столиці України, а також зараз закривають собою фронт під Маріуполем і в інших містах протягом останніх 6 місяців. Армія почала співпрацювати із волонтерами лише в листопаді минулого року.

Чи реально чекати від Росії закінчення війни? Чи правильно ми розуміємо мотивацію для швидкого її завершення? У моєму розумінні,





треба подивитися на Молдову 1992 року, Грузію 2008 року, Угорщину 1956 року, Чехію 1968 року. Вони показують нам, як Російська імперія реагує на протистояння. Як ці країни реагували? Вони раділи розвалу. Але запитаймо себе: що це було для росіян? Як сказав Путін на саміті в Бухаресті, «це найбільша геополітична трагедія 20 століття», бо росіяни звикли жити в сильній імперії.

Ми різні і це треба зрозуміти, бо ми маємо різні реакції при однакових обставинах, навіть коли ми говоримо однією мовою. Уявіть собі: зранку людина робить моніторинг свого організму, не розплющуючи очей. В ході цього процесу виявляється, що неможливо нашупати свою ногу чи руку чи вухо. Як тепер йти на роботу? Так само і росіяни: вони відчувають біль від «втрачених кінцівок». Все, що вони хочуть – це коньролювати весь простір, який колись був російським. Це така російська паранойя, яку важко зупинити. Ми навіть не знаємо, де цей простір починається і закінчується! Завтра Білорусь, після завтра Азербайджан, адже вони хочуть контролювати...

Якщо це зрозуміти, то тоді видно, що це є системна проблема і треба об'єднати весь світ, щоб зупинити цього монстра і сказати: живи собі, Росія, так, як ти хочеш і не зазіхай на весь світ. Багато людей не розуміють, що це виклик всьому світу, адже поляки нас, наприклад, розуміють. Це – виклик Росії проти світу.

Я не хочу порівнювати Путіна із Гітлером, бо тоді і зараз – це різні обставини. В 1930-их роках була Ліга Націй і всі дивилися, як Німеччина





нарощає сили і всі хотіли з нею торгувати і всі думали, що якщо вона буде воювати, то тільки із противниками, як то Росія. І це була та помилка, що призвела до втрати 60 мільйонів життів.

Що ми бачимо тепер? Всі хотять торгувати і збагачуватися. Всі мають коротку пам'ять. Невже треба чекати 10 років, щоб зупинити цю страшну заразу, що суне з Росії? Чи не мусимо ми об'єднатися зараз проти російської агресії? Хто може це краще зрозуміти, як не ми? Переживши Голодомор, репресії, катастрофи, в яких втратили життя Ваші батьки...

Ми, єbreї, пережили Голокост і тому ми відчуваємо, як ніхто, ті страшні страждання. Я втратив родичів в Голокості, а друзів – в совєцьких таборах. Ми можемо говорити для пробудження людей.

Я пишаюся, що на майдані загинули 3 єbreї, а також пишаюся солдатами та інструкторами, які зараз підтримують українську армію. Дуже часто показую паралелі між Ізраїлем та Україною: приклад того, як вчитися. Вчитися себе захищати. Україна вчиться лише 1 рік, почекайти трохи. Ізраїль вже майже 100 років, як вміє себе захистити. Люди сьогодні, не чекаючи команд, допомагають. "Israel supports Ukraine" об'єднує тисячі волонтерів. Це природний процес.

Я пропоную створити міжнародну «коаліцію за демократичний вибір», яка б допомагала морально та фінансово. Будь-який народ, який хоче відріватися від авторитаризму, повинен мати на кого покластися. Всі ці країни мають проблеми пропаганди і військові протистояння. Світовий





конгрес українців в серпні проголосували за таку коаліцію. Етнічні діаспори країн, що пережили соціалізм повинні насамперед приєднатися. Україна повинна бути першою, хто приєднається до такої ініціативи, бо про Україну зараз знають і говорять всі.

Сьогодні я зустрівся із лідером єврейської громади Оттави і він сказав, що вони готові приєднатися. Завтра я зустрічаюся із східноєвропейською організацією в Торонто. Уряд України знає про цю ініціативу, але я не хочу, щоб ця ініціатива була контролювана державою. Громадянське суспільство повинно контролювати цей процес самостійно. Я зустрівся із послами європейських країн і попросив їх сприяти розвитку таких рухів. Я хочу, щоб ці рухи самі вибирали що, як і за які кошти вони це роблять.

Десять років тому ми робили таку коаліцію в США для того, щоб скасувати поправку Джексона-Веніка. Тому я думаю, що нам і зараз повинно вдатися. Ми не можемо кинути такі гроші, які кидає Росія, але ми можемо залучити енергію людей, які будуть жертвувати своїм часом. Це політична допомога лобіювання своєї позиції в ЮНЕСКО, щоб уряди могли розуміти що вони відповідальні допомогти. НАТО повинно захищати демократію.

За вікнами весна. Це час єврейських і християнських свят. Завтра святкують Пурім – коли єреї врятувалися від персидського царя. Цариця Естер славна за те, що Бог її підняв так високо, щоб вона змогла врятувати свій народ, а це не випадково.





Це не випадково і для нас, коли ми отримали освіту, досягнення, для того щоб використати це для порятунку. Я вірю, що ми це зробимо.

Iuliia Zubrytska
University of Ottawa





Papers And Projects: Better Or Worse Than A Final?

The past few weeks of my life have been fantastic. I just finished my fourth year at the Alberta School of Business, I have one more term of school left, and I had zero final exams to worry about these last few weeks. That's because all I had due was papers and projects. After handing in my last paper, I celebrated with a few drinks with friends, then a few days later started working for the summer. Two weeks of April hadn't even gone by and I was already earning money. I watched my friends Snapchats and Facebook posts about how many exams they had left (at lunch time of course), and usually sent a good luck message back and everyone always sent back a thank you, but not without also asking "How many finals do you have left?".

I'm no stranger to finals, for 10 terms (spring and summer courses here people) I have found myself in some corner in whatever library had the least amount of students eating their twelfth meal in a row from Subway. As much as I loathe finals, I started to wonder if final papers and projects really are the best way to evaluate how much someone has learned from a course. But then I realized this was a stupid thought, and papers and projects are definitely a better evaluation of how much someone knows. It is incredibly rare to be somewhere in your career and being forced to complete a paper about some topic which was discussed about eight weeks ago for three and half minutes. You usually have some advanced notice, where you are able to read up on the subject, provide reasoning and references, and maybe even throw in some constructive appendices. The best papers and projects, I believe, are when you, or your group, must submit an outline of what you're going to do. Then the professor understands what your initial thoughts are, how you plan to continue with the paper, and is able to provide feedback for you to work off of. Then you go off, write your paper, and you feel more confident that you will receive a higher mark.





as your professor has already seem a snippet of what is to come.

Now allow me to debate with myself just one last time as there is also value in writing exams. It involves time management skills (read: cramming), being able to think quickly and critically, and understand different ways of formulating a strong argument or answer in a short amount of time.

Students should be able to write exams well and they should not be completely abolished. However, when it comes to fourth year courses that are incredibly in depth and require critical thinking and referencing articles, it is absolutely useless to hand a student a two hour multiple guess exam and say “here’s a one hundred question exam with a bunch of statements and you have to figure our which are correct. You have no chance to argue differently or come up with some creative ideas or basically have any say in anything that is going on. So good luck, and if you get stuck, just remember I didn’t make any funny patters with the answers where you should see a 3d stereogram pop up. Or maybe I did. I can’t remember. A TA made this exam for me.”

So, should you just be writing papers towards the end of the term like I did? Or should you be writing an exam that you may start crying over when you realize that this is not Econ 101 anymore and you must do more than just draw some supply and demand curves and your love/hatred for Adam Smith’s invisible hand. I believe it should be a good combination of the two. Every so often it is appropriate to write an exam, and other times a paper or a project is a better way for a student to show what they have learned. So, with the spirit of me not having written any exams this term, I wrote this up as if it were a timed exam seeing as I have not referenced anything or





made any fancy graphs or even been able to do a prpoer splel chek and I think I may have run out of ti

Cassian Soltykevych
University of Alberta

The Globalization of Colonization

“Today we are wantonly zapped by the electromagnetic radiation of the telecommunications industry. We are wage slaves to the economic machine together, plied by drugs both prescription and illicit, fed genetically-engineered foods, made to find means for our survival in corporate fantasias. If any one of us dares to protest, we risk being maced and stun-gunned, or corralled into concentration camps. In today’s world we are all colonized.”¹ (Chellis Glendinning)

In the present day empires of the United States and Canada, many of us have been brainwashed into believing that colonization no longer exists. *Colonization*, the process of one group asserting control of an area which is the home of another group, is considered a thing of the past. *Colonization*, taking something that belongs to someone else and rationalizing it – happens every day. *Colonization* is often believed to be a process that died with the authority of the kingdoms of the “great” Western European powers of the “colonial era.” This era was a period when the “powers that be” spread control of their “empires” throughout the world. It would seem as though we still live in this same era today!

We continue to forgot, or chosen to ignore, that colonization continues to exist in one form or another throughout this world. We have denied this reality to the point in which it can even be academically stated, by scholars, that the

¹ A quote from activist and author Chellis Glendinning.





“recolonization” of regions is now beginning. How can “recolonization” be taking place when the process of colonization never ceased to exist?

Colonization, whether at home, Africa, the Middle East, or in Ukraine, continues to happen when a foreign group wants ultimate control of an area and the environmental resources (and profits) that come with it. One-hundred years ago 85 percent of the planet existed under forced domination of European colonial powers.² Now, our North American Empire (along with other “nations” such as China and Russia) represent a new force of colonization at home and abroad. In North America, federal governments continue to participate in the exploitation of Indigenous peoples. From the first days of colonization in our region, policies (whether that be the “Doctrine of Discovery” or the “Indian Act,”) have been implemented to take rights away from the people who had been living in the region prior to it becoming a “colony.” In the United States, the prison system now holds more African-Americans than the slave ships of the past. There are more black men in the United States prison industry (because privatization has allowed economic profits to be made off of these people) than there were slaves in 1850.³ In Africa exist 39 of the 50 lowest rated countries in terms of the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) rating of “human poverty,” yet billions of dollars flow offshore from Africa into private (non-Native) accounts every year. Worldwide since 1990, the feminism of global poverty has created a reality where approximately 30 million women and children have been trafficked for prostitution and sweatshop labor.⁴

² Chellis Glendinning. *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens.*, pg.1, 2003.

³ From a Brown University Study. November 18th, 2014. <http://www.politifact.com/rhode-island/statements/2014/dec/07/diego-arene-morley/brown-u-student-leader-more-african-american-men-p/>

⁴ *Development and Social Change* by Philip McMichael.





From the sex trade and *the colonization of women*, to Russia attempting to assert “sovereignty”⁵ in Ukraine, colonialism is still the ultimate source of terror on this planet.

In our world, colonization seems to now be directly linked with the exploitation of economic benefits from environmental resources, especially oil. The United States has been trying to colonize the Middle East since the 1990’s. It is often stated that the events of 9-11 caused the United States to enter the region. The fact that the United States began to use force to assert control in the region prior to 9-11, suggests this statement is not true. The amount of money that can be made off the regions oil proves the statement to be false. For all the dead Iraqi children, killed in the United States colonizing effort since 1990 (what the United States military would classify as “collateral damage”), “terrorists” would have to kill 100 times the number of Americans who actually died on the day of 9-11. Again, this would just equal the amount of children that have been killed by the United States in what can be considered their attempts to establish a colony in the Middle East since the early 90’s.⁶ Who are the real “terrorists?”

In our world, colonization no longer needs to be rationalized through differences in race or creed. What a present day colonial efforts looks like can be easily viewed by what is happening in Ukraine. Russia continues to assert “sovereignty” in Ukraine because they want the area to be their colony. This is the same reason Stalin (and the Soviet Union) executed anywhere from 10 and 20 million Ukrainians in the man-made famine of 1932-33. Russia wants to control the area. Since Ukrainians decided to remove their former (Russian) President Yanukovych from power, a man who implemented polices which supported Russian interests over the interests of the Ukrainian people, Russia has forcibly entered

⁵ Supreme power and authority.

⁶ *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens*, by Ward Churchill. Published in 2003, Pg.14.





Ukraine. Russia needed to support what they believe to be their “colonial” interest. Russian leaders do not seem willing to passively accept losing the economic benefits that come with having the region as a “colony.” Is it to protect people who they claim to be “ethnic Russians,” or to support their own economic interest that Russia has entered by force the “disputed” area? The history of foreign groups wanting to “conquer” Ukraine, for its rich land and access to the Black Sea, suggests that Russia is more concerned with profits rather than people.

The worldwide tendency to exploit areas and people to reap the financial “benefits” can be considered the *globalization of colonization*. This is a process which has a universal vision of unequal outcomes. That unequal outcome is to “damn” the people who are Native to their land, in order for a more “powerful” outside group to increase their control (and in doing so, their power). Instead of acting as though colonization is over, we should instead ask ourselves if this worldwide policy of inequity can ever truly end. Present day actions, and lack of push back against colonization (on a global scale) would suggest that in one form or another, this process will never cease to exist on this earth. Colonization is now much more than just a Western-European issue of the empirical age. It is now a global issue. People wanting what is someone else’s, being willing to step on someone to get what they want, and putting themselves before others, unfortunately, does not seem to be going anywhere fast.

John Kiesman
University of Manitoba





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Looking Back and Moving Forward

Every year before the National SUSK Congress, each SUSK National Executive member must report on their year with SUSK, by identifying executed and ongoing projects and offering recommendations for the incoming executive. As the current SUSK Alumni Director, I have the unique position of analyzing and arranging SUSK's collection of archives. These archives serve as the organization's collective memory that promotes a sense of identity and enables members to understand their history so that they can create a better future.

After finishing my exams, I decided to delve back into the pile of folders, where I discovered the final executive reports for the 1994/1995 SUSK National Executive. Although they were written twenty years ago, many of the reflections and recommendations are relevant today. Here are a few examples:

- The 1994/1995 SUSK Secretary, Adrianna Tatarka, reported that she completed a rough draft and revisions of the “SUSK Member’s Handbook”, which served as a practical guide to creating and operating a Ukrainian Student Organization (USO). Although other resources have been created since then, the goal of building the capacity of USOs remains. SUSK aims to compile a “best practices” of successful past projects database, which will equip USOs with valuable lessons and advice for successfully running a community organization.
- The 1994/1995 SUSK External Relations Director, Stephan Patten, reported that he spoke at the Ukrainian Canadian Professional Business Association (UCPBA) Eastern Conference in Ottawa about the benefits the UCPBA can “accrue from working closer with local university organizations”. The mutual





benefit in fostering a healthy student/professional relationship was not only desired then, but continues to be now. This year, SUSK hosted a series of networking events in major cities across Canada, collaboration with Ukrainian Canadian professionals, including UCPBAs.

- The 1994/1995 SUSK President, Pavlo Grod, ended his executive report with: "[Let's] continue to grow from the foundation that has already been built". I believe the contributions of the 2014-2015 SUSK National Executive have built upon the foundation laid long ago in 1953, and hope future Executives continue to give back and reap the benefits of active Ukrainian Canadian student community life.

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Acknowledging the Armenian Genocide : Similarities with Holodomor and why it matters.

Although the situation in Ukraine is demanding a lot of our attention lately, there are other historical events worth paying attention to, as they seem to parallel episodes in our own history.

This year marks the centennial of the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian genocide is marked by Armenians around the world on the 24th of April, because on that day in 1915, more than 200 members of the Armenian intelligentsia in Istanbul were rounded up, imprisoned and ultimately killed. This was followed by mass deportation of Armenians from Western Armenia (now Eastern



Turkey) and death marches across the Dier Zor desert to Syria. Over one-and-a-half million Armenians perished throughout the repressions.

The Armenian and Ukrainian genocides have a lot in common both in the way the atrocities were committed, as well as in how they were dealt with after:

1. In Ukraine as well as in Turkey, the survivors of tragic and often incomprehensibly brutal events often internalised the pain, and seldom if ever spoke about their experiences. Consequently, the next generations were sometimes unaware of the extent of atrocities committed on their elders.
2. Just as for Ukrainians in USSR, for Armenians who lived and still live in Turkey, recognising the genocide (Holodomor for Ukrainians , and forced death marches for Armenians) as such was forbidden. The crime of knowing “too much” was severely punished and any information suppressed.
3. Both the Armenian and Ukrainian Genocides share another characteristic: the fact that once people within both communities started learning and sharing their experiences, they had to face the active suppression of facts from the governments of the perpetrators and overwhelming indifference of the world where media considers old stories a “closed chapter” and seldom focusses on days long-past.
4. Breaking that cycle of indifference by sharing information and educational efforts is probably the biggest obstacle for the recognition of the Genocide for both Armenian and Ukrainian communities. It took Armenians 4 decades of efforts to get 26 countries to recognise the events of 1915 as Genocide. It took almost 70 years to resurrect the memory of Holodomor and 23 years since Ukrainian independence to have Holodomor declared a Genocide by 23 countries.





The work of education, dissemination of information and recognition of both tragedies is not over. It will have to continue to keep the memory of victims alive in both of our communities as well as in the world consciousness. I am proud to note that award-winning Ukrainian writer - Marsha Forchuk-Skrypuch - has recently written a Young Adult novel remembering the Armenian Genocide - *The Dance of the Banished*.

We cannot expect others to “know” about what we keep hidden, and by sharing that we know and feel we stand a chance to educate others and make them appreciate the complexities of history, politics but most of all our very own lives. A new milestone was reached by the Canadian government, when it unanimously adopted Motion M-587 by Canada on the 24th of April 2015 as *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month*. I think as Canadians, we are on the right track, but still need to keep going in order to get worldwide recognition of crimes against humanity, condemnation of future events, and reconciliation and reparation of past events. History tends to repeat itself so let us remember not to repeat its most horrific chapters.

I would like to thank my Armenian colleagues at work and in my faculty who took the time to share their thoughts with me and raise awareness of the Armenian genocide amongst our school community.

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Putin's Desperate War

Russia's Struggle to Re-Capture Ukraine

The war in Ukraine has now reached its twelfth month, and tensions show no signs of de-escalating. Begun as a stealth invasion by the Russian Federation in March, the conflict has left thousands dead and over 1 million displaced from their homes.⁷ Accusations of mass human rights abuses are circulating,⁸ culminating with the shooting down of flight MH17 last May. While Petro Poroshenko carries out reforms in Kyiv, the Donbas region, Ukraine's industrial heartland lies in ruins. Many question what Vladimir Putin's end goal is in Ukraine, and what the consequences are for Europe. Moreover, the Western powers seem either unwilling, or unable to stop his invasion.

The Kremlin's need to exert influence in its neighbors' affairs does not apply uniquely to Ukraine. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Moscow still held some influence in the capitals of the successor states.⁹ A long line of Kremlin-friendly leaders, in exchange for support and protection from Moscow, allowed the Russian Federation a fair amount of influence in neighbouring states. Kremlin friendly leaders such as Victor Yanukovich of Ukraine (who fled to Russia upon his deposition and adopted Russian citizenship)¹⁰, Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus¹¹¹²

⁷ "Ukraine Conflict: UN Says Million People Have Fled." BBC News. September 2, 2014. Accessed October 7, 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29029060>.

⁸ Charbonneau, Louis. "U.N. Says Pro-Russia Rebels in Ukraine Murder, Kidnap and Torture." Reuters. August 26, 2014. Accessed October 7, 2014. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/26/us-ukraine-crisis-rights-un-idUSKBN0GQ1TA20140826>.

⁹ Friedman, Thomas. "Who Will Influence Whom?" The New York Times. April 26, 2014. Accessed October 7, 2014. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/27/opinion/sunday/friedman-who-will-influence-whom.html?smid=fb-share>.

¹⁰ Walker, Shaun. "Ousted Ukrainian Leader Viktor Yanukovych Reported to Be in Russia." The Guardian. February 27, 2014. Accessed October 7, 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/27/viktor-yanukovych-russia-ukrainian-president-moscow>.





and Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine¹³ all allowed the Kremlin a fair bit of say in the daily running of their countries. After the ‘Colour Revolutions’ in Georgia and Ukraine a decade ago forced the latter leaders into early retirement and replaced them with more democratically inclined leaders, Putin planned his retaliation. During Ukraine’s Orange Revolution, the Kremlin provided overwhelming political and economic support for Yanukovich, and assisted openly in his political campaign.¹⁴ Victor Yushchenko’s 2004 dioxin poisoning was also linked to the Kremlin,¹⁵ in an effort to remove the pro-Western candidate from the running. Moscow responded to Georgia’s 2003 Rose Revolution by invading the country four years later.¹⁶ Apart from a brief hiatus after the 2004 Orange Revolution, Ukraine’s path since independence has been decidedly compliant to Moscow’s interests, especially since the election of Victor Yanukovich in 2010.¹⁷

That situation changed in February of 2014. With the deposition of Yanukovich and the election of a pro-Western candidate bent on European integration in an overwhelming majority,¹⁸ Putin faced a very critical dilemma. The loss of Ukraine was less of an economic danger as it is a political one for Putin. Kyiv’s

¹¹ "Profile: Alexander Lukashenko." BBC News. September 1, 2007. Accessed October 7, 2014.

¹² "Profile: Mikheil Saakashvili." BBC News. September 27, 2012. Accessed October 7, 2014.
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-19740960>.

¹³ Åslund, Anders. "Kuchma's Stagnation, 1996-99." In *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy* (Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2009), 101.

¹⁴ Åslund, 182.

¹⁵ Though Putin’s administration refuses to admit that it provided the dioxin, it has been confirmed that it came from a Russian laboratory. Åslund, 186.

¹⁶ King, Charles. "The Five Day War: Managing Moscow after the Georgia Crisis." *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 6 (2008) <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64602/charles-king/the-five-day-war>.

¹⁷ "Profile: Ukraine's Ousted President Viktor Yanukovych." BBC News. February 22, 2014. Accessed October 7, 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25182830>.

¹⁸ "Poroshenko Wins Ukraine's Presidential Election" *CBC News*. May 26, 2014. Accessed October 8, 2014.
<http://www.cbc.ca/thecurrent/episode/2014/05/26/petro-poroshenko-wins-ukraines-presidential-election-1/>.





successful revolution sets a dangerous precedent for the rest of the post-Soviet space. Concerned citizens in other, more autocratic post-Soviet states such as Armenia, Belarus, even Putin's Russia may begin to push harder for reform, transparency and rule of law in their countries, envisioning a revolution of their own. Traces of Ukraine's new pro-EU stance may make their way into the hearts and minds of Russians, chiseling away at their confidence in Putin's model of governance. Faced with the potential loss of enormous influence, Putin invaded eastern Ukraine as a warning remnant of the Brezhnev Doctrine: We reserve the right to intervene where the status quo is threatened.

The danger in the crisis is that Putin will keep moving westwards, since to back away from a defiant Poroshenko would mean admitting defeat. Putin will push forward especially if he sees a weak Western reaction, which, so far has been mixed. The greatest danger is for the European Union, which, if Ukraine were annexed entirely, would be living next door to an authoritarian state with a history of invading its neighbours. Ukraine as a quasi-independent, but failed state would also be catastrophic for Europe. The refugee crisis would put strain on neighbouring EU states such as Poland, Slovakia and the Baltics. Another danger for Ukraine is that of potential war crimes and human rights abuses. Already, mass graves have been reported in the Slovyansk area¹⁹ and further violence against civilians, especially those who remain neutral in the crisis or support the Ukrainian Forces, could turn Ukraine into a massive humanitarian crisis.

The West's role in this crisis is crucial. Without a strong and unified response, Putin will continue to bully Ukraine. Stronger sectorial economic sanctions are needed, especially ones that target Russia's financial and nuclear sectors, isolating Putin until he removes his forces. More crucial still, is support from NATO in the

¹⁹ Sabra Ayres, "Mass Grave Uncovered in Eastern Ukraine," *AlJazeera America*, July 24, 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/grave-mass-slovyansk.html> (accessed October 5, 2014).





form of a joint international peacekeeping mission with Ukrainian forces. This would strengthen the Ukrainian military, already weakened by years of corruption and financial cuts under Yanukovich and enable it to regain the territory it held in late August.²⁰ A peacekeeping mission would also lessen the chances of further escalation of violence against civilians in the region, and help with the delivery of aid. In this case, soft power may be less effective in the crisis in a region where politics are often played out with sticks, not carrots.

In conclusion, the West must act swiftly and decisively in Ukraine before it is too late. Putin's continual belligerence can only be halted by a unified and effective Western response that is military, diplomatic and economic. The so far lack of a unified multilateral response from the West has not only encouraged Putin, it has cast light on the vulnerability of NATO itself. The kidnapping of an Estonian official in August highlighted Baltic vulnerability to Putin's onward military march. If the West doesn't act now, it risks losing not only Ukraine, but also possibly the rest of Eastern Europe, where many EU and NATO members are located. Putin is, above all, a realist; demonstrating that blustering objections from the West will not halt his army, but only show him he has nothing to fear.

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²⁰ Aleksandr Lapko, "Ukraine's Own Worst Enemy" *New York Times*, October 7, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/08/opinion/in-war-time-corruption-in-ukraine-can-be-deadly.html?_r=0 (Accessed October 8, 2014).





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