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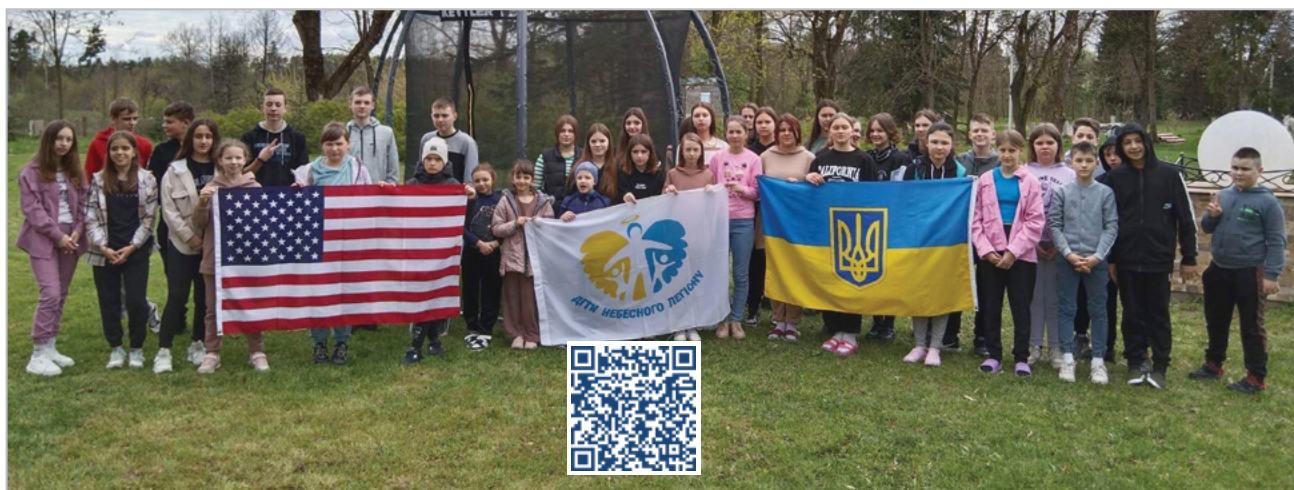
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SPECIAL FOR HROMADA

Vitaliy Portnykov | Notes for November

# THE LONG WAR DANGER



General Valery Zaluzhnyi's article in *The Economist* and the article dedicated to President Volodymyr Zelensky in *Time* magazine have unexpectedly become a rubric in Ukrainian society's perception of the war. If until recently it could be said that a large number of citizens considered a quick end to hostilities realistic, now it can be said that more and more people are thinking about the prospect of a long war, a war by definition.

This war is part of Russian President Vladimir Putin's plan. The Russian leader seems confident that what he could not achieve in three days, he could achieve in three years. Or in 13 years, because the Russian economy is rapidly shifting to military tracks and the population approves of Putin's goals for the restoration of the so-called "historical Russia".

And here, of course, the main question is what to do with Ukraine and its allies in such a situation. General Zaluzhnyi proposed a plan to transform positional warfare into maneuver warfare, but this would require appropriate logistics and new weapons from the Western allies. Only time will tell to what extent the West will be willing to listen to these wishes. For now, however, it is possible to identify a certain crisis in the aid process itself. The American Congress has not yet approved the package of aid to Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan proposed by the president; on this issue, consultations between Republican and Democratic congressmen continue, so it is not even possible to say what compromise will be reached and when the vote will take place. And the capabilities of the Ukrainian army and the viability of the Ukrainian economy and state as such will depend on what the level of American aid will be.

And from the point of view of Euro-

pean partners, you have difficulties. Just in November, Ukraine unexpectedly encountered a blockade of its borders by Polish carriers, allegedly dissatisfied with the competition of their Ukrainian colleagues. Not so numerous, this protest, one could say, has already had an impact on the state of the Ukrainian economy. At the same time, the Polish government, which will soon lose its power to use the opposition forces that won the last parliamentary elections in the country neighboring Ukraine, is in no hurry to solve the problem – the history of the protest of Polish farmers, which was used by the Polish authorities for pre-election purposes, is being repeated. And if earlier such actions caused legitimate fears about how the process of European integration of Ukraine will actually take place, now we can talk about problems that are already appearing today.

And this once again reminds us of the difficult situation in which Ukraine finds itself 21 months after the beginning of the Russian aggression. Of course, such a situation could have been foreseen, already a few months after the beginning of the conflict observers stated that as the war continues, the external interest will decrease day by day, and, unfortunately, new conflicts will inevitably arise, which will find themselves in the center of attention of the civilized world. And the war in the Middle East, which – very unusually for this region – is not short, but has been going on for months, has become a good illustration of the truth of this thesis.

This means that the Ukrainian state and society should prepare not only for the continuation of a long and exhausting war, but also for the fact that Ukraine will not be in the center of attention. And this means both the search for military solutions in conditions of relative stability of the front, and the search for political solutions. By political solutions, I mean not so much waiting for some "negotiations" – I am sure that the Kremlin does not need negotiations with Ukraine at all – but the search for security models that could localize the war and create conditions for its end in the foreseeable future. And that means accelerating Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration and creating conditions for real – and not

declarative – security guarantees. Former NATO Secretary General Andres Fogh Rasmussen spoke about one of the options in November, suggesting that Ukraine be accepted into NATO as soon as possible and that Article 5 of the Washington Treaty be extended to the territory where no military action is taking place. Although we cannot yet say that Kyiv, Washington and the capitals of other Alliance countries agree with the former Secretary General's proposal, the most important thing is that the search for integration options continues.

As well as the search for options for integration into the EU. The President of Moldova, Maya Sandu – this country, together with Ukraine, may soon be offered to start negotiations on accession to the European Union – suggested that the integration should take place "in stages", that is, first the territory under the control of the legitimate authorities, and only then the region actually controlled by Moscow – Transnistria. And if they agree with such an approach, it may be relevant for Ukraine, and later for Georgia. For now, the question of whether the integration process will be successful if Russia continues to exercise control over parts of the territory of Ukraine, Moldova or Georgia remains open.

Discussing the topic of European integration reminds us, of course, of the tenth anniversary of the Euromaidan in Kyiv – when hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets to prevent a change in the country's civilizational choice. But of course this Maidan was about more than just integration with the EU. Its main result was the birth of a political nation, without which no state can be built.

If you think about it, Maidan was about that from the very beginning. After all, the Association Agreement with the European Union was perceived by statist Ukrainians precisely as a safeguard against a possible takeover by Russia – which, it seems, Viktor Yanukovich himself did not realize until almost the very end, seeing both the European Union and Russia exclusively as reservoirs for his own enrichment.

The unexpected rejection of the agreement became a real trigger for the further development of events and



accelerated them. Yanukovych personally destroyed the fuse that allowed society to get along with him and his criminalized bandocracy until a certain time. But already in the first days of the Maidan, the masks were finally burned, and the president of the country, which was supposedly ready for the European course, finally turned into a disgusting hard "pahan". The regime, which was not particularly democratic before, began to build authoritarianism literally by hand, and in a few weeks we ended up not even in Yanukovych's Ukraine, but in Putin's Russia – and not in Putin's Russia, which was then, but which will have to emerge as a result of his attack on Ukraine. Society, which to many seemed "frozen," inert, and disappointed by the results of the previous Maidan, has now acquired a bright intensity and a tendency to self-sacrifice. Moreover, if the Maidan of 2004 was an uprising in which society was oriented towards the leaders and the victory of Viktor Yushchenko in the election of the head of state, this time it was precisely the political leaders who were oriented towards society.

Against this background, our political nation was born before our eyes. Before our eyes, Ukrainians ceased to be an "ethnic project" aimed solely at

survival and self-preservation, a "linguistic ghetto" where strangers are treated with apprehension, and became a broad association of people of various ethnic origins. People who need Ukraine.

Subsequent events only cemented this community, but we saw it as a reality in the days of this Maidan. And that is why Maidan Ukraine outgrew the post-Soviet Ukraine, with its amorphous childishness and unwillingness to choose its own future. And this kind of Ukraine – the Ukraine of people ready to stand up for their future – was decidedly not a good fit for Putin's

Russia, and, it seems, for any Russia. Therefore, the Kremlin's response to the victory of our revolution could only be intervention. To avoid intervention, we would have to lose.

And to agree to the final degradation and "integration" of Ukraine – of course, the same thing that Putin is trying to do now, only now with the help of tanks and missiles instead of traitors in government offices.

But we won. We won in a seemingly hopeless situation. This gives us hope that we have a chance to fight back and save Ukraine in the difficult situation of a long war.



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## SPECIAL FOR HROMADA

Oles Doniy

## A LONG WAY TO VICTORY



On the evening of November 1, the website of the influential magazine *The Economist* published an article by the Commander-in-Chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, entitled "Modern Positional Warfare and How to Win It". The article did not appear in the Ukrainian press and was addressed primarily to the world's political elites.

The article acknowledged several bitter facts and detailed the military and technical needs of the Ukrainian armed forces.

Ukrainians have long been subjected to bravura promises by official and semi-official government spokesmen to end the war, or at least its "hot phase," in "two weeks," "two or three months," "six months," "by the end of the year," and so on. Zaluzhnyi recognizes the bitter truth that the war has entered a "positional form". The general does not give a time frame for this phase, but by analyzing the news from the front, we can clearly establish its beginning. The conditional "hot" or "mobile" phase of the war lasted from February 24, 2022, to November 11, 2022, the day of the liberation of Kherson. During this period either significant attacks of the Russian aggressors or liberation of Ukrainian territories by our troops took place. From November 12, 2022 to the present day, the front line from space has been practically static. During this time (which is more than a year) we have lost the territories of two cities (Bakhmut and Soledar), and our troops have liberated the territories of several villages, with de facto parity in terms of mileage. But Zaluzhnyi doesn't just state this parity; in the last sentence of the article he emphasizes why he wrote it: "in search of new and non-trivial approaches to overcoming military parity with the

enemy."

In addition to recognizing that the war has taken on a positional form, and that this is extremely disadvantageous for Ukraine and advantageous for our enemy, the commander-in-chief makes several other points that can be compared to an icy downpour. Zaluzhnyi clearly points out the enemy's superiority in weapons, carefully listing in what areas and of what types. He also reminds us of the human and, accordingly, mobilization resources: "Compared to Ukraine, the Russian Federation has almost three times the human resources for mobilization."

The proposals of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are well thought-out, and most of them are addressed to our allies, on whom we depend for the supply of certain types of weapons.

However, the general's article does not deal with political issues, and there is no analysis of what direction the scenario could take if the desired equipment is not delivered, or is delivered as it is now – with a delay compared to the capacities of the fascist Russian Federation, which are constantly growing after the aggressor country's economy was put on a military track.

These are political questions that must be raised and resolved by the top political leadership of the Ukrainian state.

Last month, two all-Ukrainian coalitions of civil society organizations: "For the Transformation of Ukraine" and "Ukraine Will Win", which together include more than 150 organizations, have organized a series of roundtables to work together to find answers to the political component of the new situation. The series of roundtables is united under the common name "The Way to Victory" and is held at the largest state news agency, Ukrinform, in Kyiv, and my colleagues entrusted me with moderating these events.

The first round table was entitled "What it takes to win" and began with an article by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Valeriy Zaluzhnyi. But given the rather diverse and professional composition of the experts (for example, General Serhiy Kryvonos, a former combat officer and Deputy Secretary of the National Se-

curity and Defense Council (NSDC) of Ukraine, was among them). The proposals were not limited to a repetition of the theses presented in the article. The main thesis was the need to create our own military-industrial complex. After all, if the war has entered a "positional phase" and may last indefinitely, then exclusive dependence on military supplies from Western countries will not guarantee timely and adequate actions to repel the aggressor. The figure of 15 years was expressed as a weighted average scenario for the duration of the war, based on biological and mathematical analysis, in particular on the probable life expectancy of the leader of the fascist Russian state, Vladimir Putin. The logic of this assumption is obvious, because as long as Putin is alive, Ukraine will not be safe from his maniacal plans of conquest. So, at least as one of the likely scenarios, this one is worth analyzing and, accordingly, carefully preparing for.

According to the experts, the situation in the country is unsatisfactory in terms of thorough preparation. Therefore, at the next, second round table, two concrete proposals for the immediate correction of the domestic political course in terms of support to the front were discussed in detail. The first proposal concerned the resumption of the government under the conventional name of the "government of war". In order not to frighten Ukrainian and Western society too much with a bellicose name, some experts suggested calling it a "technocratic government," but everyone agreed that it should become the engine for rebuilding the economy in a military way. Such a government should bring together professional managers who would be given sufficient authority to carry out this ambitious and extremely important task. The question immediately arose that the successful operation of such a newly created government would require the authorities' agreement to radically reduce the informal powers of the presidential administration, which, although not enshrined in the Constitution, is at the head of the entire executive vertical in Ukraine. However, there was no consensus on this issue in the discussion, or rather, there was consensus among experts and



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leaders of civil society organizations, while the Verkhovna Rada deputies from the Sluha Narodu party who were invited to participate and were present did not express enthusiasm or even agreement with this innovation. This shows that the government is not yet aware of the depth of the internal problems and, accordingly, of its own tasks. The next proposal, on the other hand, did not cause any internal resistance from the authorities. The participants of "The Way to Victory" proposed the creation of a permanent negotiating and expert platform that would include representatives of 1) the government, 2) civil society, 3) academia, and 4) business. At the very least, the creation of such a platform would give the authorities a chance to use the intellectual potential of not only their political power.

The third round table was titled

"How to increase motivation during war". It was about increasing motivation for mobilization. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine directly addressed the problem of mobilization in his speech. But increasing motivation is not only a question of mobilization resources, it is a national problem, there is growing frustration in society, psychological problems in the families of those who have lost loved ones, in the families of those who have been seriously injured, those who have left and separated families need motivational support, in fact, every citizen of Ukraine needs it to some extent.

The fourth round table was devoted to the topic "What changes should be made in the electoral legislation? Today, the authorities are extremely negative about the need to restore democracy and hold elections for the

presidency, the Verkhovna Rada, and local governments. Instead, experts and civic activists propose a number of innovations that would make it possible to hold elections even during the war, guaranteeing the safety of citizens and the right and opportunity to participate in the electoral process, regardless of whether they are in the trenches or in forced emigration.

The roundtables "The Road to Victory" showed that in order to defeat fascist Russia, we must first win the competition on the ideological level, and all factors are important here: democracy, motivation, the ability to create an innovative economy and the ability to create an innovative army. If we defeat Russia on the ideological front, we will also win on the military front. And we must win!



## SPECIAL FOR HROMADA

Katerina Manoff | Ukrainian Roots, American Branches

## THE OLD WOMAN OR THE YOUNG GIRL?



When you hear the word Ukraine, what images come to mind? Do you see fearful faces crowded in shelters? Ruins of schools and apartments? Or maybe flag-draped headstones at cemeteries, sprouting up across the country like macabre stone gardens?

For many years, I associated Ukraine with outdated Soviet-era rooms in drab cement buildings, with rugs hanging on the walls and china on display. Millions of rooms that all looked like the same room. Ukraine also meant corruption, hopelessness, elderly people on the edge of starvation, orphanage directors stealing toys meant for children.

I came – or, rather, was brought – to the United States as a child, a few weeks shy of my 8<sup>th</sup> birthday. Faint memories of my first-grade classroom and the woods by our dacha soon faded, and my main source of information about Ukraine became my world-weary, cynical babusia. She showed me photos, which all seemed to be taken in the room with the rug and the china. She talked about the low pensions, the bribes she brought her doctors before an operation, pervasive corruption in every institution.

On Saturdays, in Ukrainian school, the history and literature we studied were no better. It was all starvation and serfdom and getting conquered by one evil empire or another. Despite a fierce will to be free, freedom always remained just out of reach. Brief interludes of liberty rapidly gave way to subjugation.

When I got old enough to read the news, they too seemed to confirm my grandmother's bleak perspectives. Independence had finally come, but Ukraine remained weak. Ukraine was struggling with corruption. When I was seventeen, there was a revolution, but nothing seemed to change.

Another decade passed, a decade

during which I went to college, married an American, launched my career, and drifted ever further from my homeland.

It took another revolution to open my eyes. On Maidan, I saw a new, young, energetic Ukraine. A 21<sup>st</sup> century nation a world away from the USSR. The Revolution of Dignity jolted me into action. Since my specialty is education, I began reaching out to Ukrainian education nonprofits as a volunteer, applying best practices I'd learned in the US to improve educational outcomes for Ukrainian youth. Then, I started my own organization, which has now provided jobs to 30+ Ukrainians and served over 20,000 young people in Ukraine.

In these past few years, I have discovered a whole new side of Ukraine. I've been surrounded by positive young people who envision and actively reach for a better future. People who stay. People who build.

My incredible team – smart, energetic, and fluent in English – could be launching their careers at multinational companies. But instead, they come to my little nonprofit because they want to do good. My students don't speak great English – yet – and they overcome their fear and sign up to speak to strangers online in a foreign language, pushing themselves to grow and learn.

In addition to my staff and students, I've been so fortunate to cross paths with dozens of founders who lead tech startups, nonprofits, and other businesses. One of them is Oksana, a mother of three who runs her own school of leadership in Vinnytsia. Oksana and her children left when the war started, but then they came back. Over coffee earlier this month, Oksana told me that her city is blossoming – new businesses are popping up everywhere. "It's as though people understand there's no moment like today. No one's waiting. Every week, I feel like I see a new hair salon, a new cafe, a new store."

My grandmother still calls me to talk about the latest scandals – who is stealing donations for the ZSU, and who's collaborating with the Russians. The news is still bleak and I still tear up while reading Ukrainian classics. But these things don't define Ukraine for me anymore.

There is a famous illusion – an image that is at once an old woman and a young girl. Ukraine is just like that, isn't



it? There is no right answer – the girl and the crone are both there. Which do you see? Which do you choose?

These days, I regularly meet and talk to hundreds of Ukrainians from all walks of life. I see such a wide range of views. Some casually describe a recent vacation to Kyiv – how wonderful it was to see family and friends. Others flinch when I mention I'd like to travel to Ukraine this summer – "But there's a war?" they say, as if I am a child or an idiot.

I've met refugees from Kyiv who say things like, "There is no Ukraine left. There is nothing to come back to." And I've met refugees from Kyiv who have already returned. On the phone they say that life is good, and they just got a new dog, and the kids are at the roller rink so they can't say hi, but they're enjoying school, it's just gone online for a few weeks to renovate the bomb shelter, but soon things will be back to normal.

Today, when I hear the word Ukraine, I think of my colleague Mykola walking down a train station, men melting away from the crowd as conscription officers lead them away. I hear the sirens. I imagine the front lines and I feel the despair.

But I also see little Sasha and Yana playing with their new puppy by their beautiful home on the outskirts of Kyiv while their mother shows me her garden. I see Khrystyna's team in Lviv, making and personalizing leather passport holders, dog collars, and keychains in a rainbow of colors. I see Oksana's students in Vinnytsia practicing their presentation and negotiation skills.

Both may be true, but today, I choose the girl.



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ДЛЯ ДІТЕЙ

# Вітрячок та польова миша

## Українська народна казка

Серед широких полів стояв Вітрячок. Дули вітри, разносячи новини у всі кінці світу, і Вітрячок з тріском повертався, намагаючись не пропустити жодної з них.

Південні вітри повертали Вітрячка в одну сторону, а північні — в іншу. Іноді він крутилася дуже швидко, іноді повільніше, але ніколи не було так, щоб Вітрячок стояв тихо.

Багато польових жителів Вітрячка побоювалися і близько до нього не підходили.

— Він такий тріскучий! — шепотіли між собою кроти.

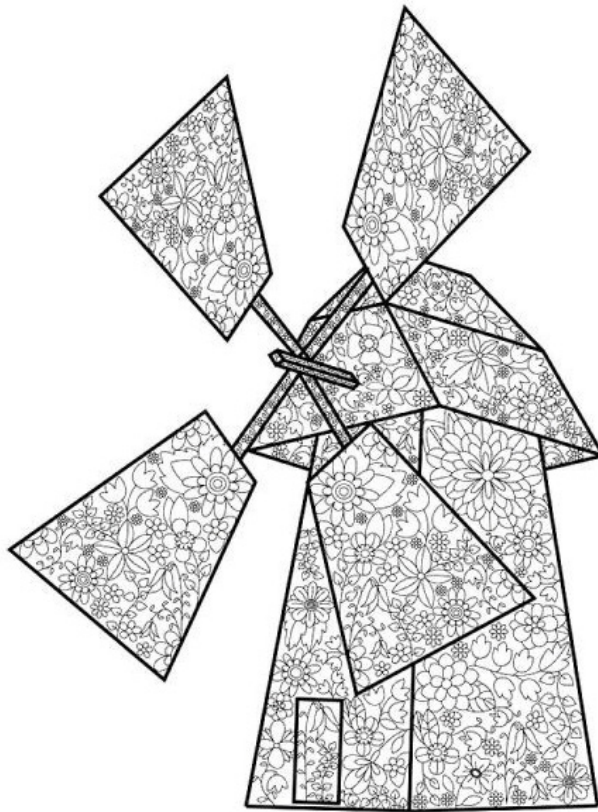
— До нього страшно підійти! Завжди тріщить! Розлякує всіх навколо!

— Еге ж! Еге ж! — піддакували черв'ячки.

— Поруч з ним ритися неможливо!

Через це Вітрячок стояв сам-самісінький. І хоча завжди був у курсі того, що і де діється, поділитися новинами йому було ні з ким.

Якось у ті поля, де стояв Вітрячок, навідалася польова Миша. Вона виявилася дуже сміливою. Послухавши розмови місцевих жителів, вона вирішила сама довідатися, що ж це за Вітрячок такий, і пішла прямісінько до



Вітрячка.

— Добридень! — привіталася Миша. — Я — польова Миша!

— Привіт! — здивувався і одночасно зрадів несподіваній гості Вітрячок. — Я — Вітрячок.

Миша продовжила:

— Як справи? Чула, ти місцева знаменитість. Всі тутешні жителі тільки про тебе й говорять.

— Всі про мене говорять, всі мене знають, але ніхто зі мною не дружить, — поскаржився Вітрячок.

— Хочеш подружитися зі

мною? — запропонувала польова Миша.

— Хочу! — зрадів Вітрячок. — Давай дружити!

— Давай! — тоненьким голосочком пропищала Миша.

Вітрячок голосно задзижжав, повертаючись на вітрі, і задоволено залопотів крильцями.

— Тоді приходь до мене в гості хоч щодня! Приходь завтра! — запросив Вітрячок Мишу.

— Добре, — погодилася та.



Наступного дня Миша, як і обіцяла, прийшла в гості до Вітрячка.

— Ой, привіт! Як справи? — привітався Вітрячок, і, не вислухавши відповіді Миші, зразу затріщав:

— А ти знаєш, що я сьогодні чув? Північний вітер приніс новину про те, що бабаки на сусідньому полі весілля справляють. Вони такі маленькі й смішні, і вуха у них стирчать. Уявляєш? Вуха стирчать! Ха-ха! А ще наречена у бабаків така маленька і хвостата. Мені-то, звичайно, байдуже, яка там у них наречена, але, здається, що тут щось неправильно, якщо така хвостата — і вже наречена. А ще північний вітер розповів, що поруч з бабаками, в норі, живе лисиця, якій взагалі ці весілля бабаків не до вподоби. Вони так сильно шумлять, коли святкують весілля, що лисиця їх постійно ганяє, — без угаву тріщав Вітрячок.

Він з величезною швидкістю і без зупинки повідав Миші про те, що чув від північного вітру.

Потім Вітрячок згадав все, що чув від південного вітру, і переключився на новини з півдня.

— Ну, гаразд, — у паузі між тріском несміливо перебила польова Миша чергову оповідь Вітрячка. — Мені вже час додому. На добраніч.

— На добраніч! — попрощався Вітрячок. —

Мені з тобою так цікаво! У нас така чудова дружба виходить. Приходь завтра!

— Добре! — пообіцяла Миша. Голодна, так як весь день нікуди не могла відлучитися від розмов Вітрячка, і втомлена від величезної кількості почутого, вона попленталася додому спати.

Наступного дня Миша зробила, як пообіцяла: прийшла в гості до Вітрячка знову.

— Привіт! — привітався Вітрячок, ще здалеку запримітивши свою подругу, та одразу ж, без угаву, затріщав. — Як добре, що ти прийшла!

І, як і попереднього дня, він базікав без зупину, переказуючи новини про своїх польових сусідів, птахів з найближчого лісу, риб з далеких морів і багато іншого, що приносили вітри і про що чув Вітрячок.

Миша знову сиділа і тихо слухала, не вимовивши ні слова. А коли настав вечір, почала прощатися. Тоді Вітрячок втретє запросив Мишу прийти до нього в гості.

— Добре, — пообіцяла Миша. — Прийду.

На третій ранок Миша знову прийшла в гості до Вітрячка. І цього разу, ледве її помітивши, Вітрячок став базікати про те, як провів ніч, про що міркував і чого б йому хотілося.

Коли і третій день

підійшов до вечора, Миша, перервавши базікання Вітрячка, тихо вимовила:

— Знаєш, взавтра я йду на інше поле. І ... ймовірно, ми з тобою вже не побачимося.

— Як? — здивувався Вітрячок. — Чому ти йдеш і кидаєш мене? Ми ж дружимо!

— Пробач, — відповіла Миша. — Ймовірно, я дружити не вмію.

Вітрячок весь затрясся і голосно закричав:

— Я тобі всю душу тут відкривав, всім з тобою ділився, розважав тебе, як міг, а ти мене зрадила! — він скрипів і тріщав, показуючи своє обурення.

— Пробач, — знову попросила вибачення Миша. — Вибач мене, будь ласка.

— Ну і йди! Бачити тебе не хочу! Зрадниця! — ображено, злим голосом тріщав Вітрячок.

Змахнувши сумно хвостиком, вся в сльозах, Миша повільно пішла геть. Вітрячок та польова миша більше ніколи не бачились.

— Ой-ой-ой! — зітхнули кроти. — Хіба так дружать? Хіба у них була дружба? Миша робила тільки те, що цікавило Вітряка. Вітрячок, насправді, ніколи не цікавився Мишою. Вітрячок лише базікав про себе, пліткував, розкривав чужі секрети і обмовляв інших. Ось Миша, бідолаха, і не витримала.

\* \* \*

## PRESS RELEASE

**Ukrainian business owners will be able to study at Stanford Graduate School of Business free of charge: CfE accelerator announces a program for small and medium-sized business owners**



The CfE accelerator of the Ukrainian Catholic University, in collaboration with the Stanford Graduate School of Business, is launching a free educational program for 42 Ukrainian small and medium-sized business owners – Stanford Ignite Ukraine. The Program will begin in February 2024 and take place for 4 weeks online and 3 weeks in-person at the Stanford Graduate School of Business campus. The organizers cover the cost of tuition, accommodation and basic logistics costs.

"Networking in the Stanford GSB environment is a unique opportunity for Ukrainian entrepreneurs to see the wider market and its rules of the game, increase ambitions, rethink, and develop their businesses. Participants will receive feedback from investors, field experts, and entrepreneurs of Silicon Valley and will become part of the Stanford Graduate School of Business community," said Ivan Petrenko, CEO of CfE accelerator.

The Program is created for small and medium-sized business owners with at least 3 years of business leadership experience and intent to scale, develop innovations, launch new products/services, attract investments,

enter new markets, or other growth ideas for their enterprise in Ukraine.

"The resilience, ingenuity, and perseverance of the Ukrainian people inspire the world, especially how business innovates in war conditions. Stanford Ignite Ukraine is exactly the Program that will help Ukrainian leaders and their businesses thrive while minimizing possible risks," Professor Yossi Feinberg, Stanford Ignite Program Director, said.

The idea of creating an educational opportunity for Ukrainians belongs to Nataliya Anon, who is a director of the UCU Foundation and one of the patrons of the Ignite Ukraine program: "After graduating with the MBA at Stanford GSB, I dreamed that Ukrainian entrepreneurs would also learn from the teachers of one of the world's best business schools the knowledge and experience that will help them not only develop their own business but also allow them to compete in international markets."

Stanford Ignite Ukraine is implemented with the support of the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Catholic University.

"For Ukrainian small and medium-

sized businesses to develop even more actively, it is important that entrepreneurs can borrow international experience, deepen their knowledge, reach a new level, and, as a result, create jobs and restore the economy of Ukraine. After all, 81.7% of all those employed in business work in small and medium-sized enterprises," Yuliia Svyrydenko, First Vice Prime Minister, Minister of the Economy of Ukraine, said.

Stanford Ignite Ukraine aims to implement the experience gained and ambitious ideas within existing enterprises in Ukraine.

"At the UCU, we believe in cooperation. Because only cooperation with strong leaders makes it possible to achieve great joint results, we strive and dream that tomorrow Ukraine will be talked about as a 'country of economic miracle' and as a 'country of decent life,'" Taras Dobko, Rector of the UCU, said.

The Program description, selection criteria, registration form, and other details are on the [CfE accelerator website](#).

Deadline for applications: 23/12/23 at 11:59 p.m.

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## UKRAINIAN NEWS

## Total enemy combat losses



According to the General Staff, total enemy combat losses from February 24, 2022 to November 30, 2023 are approximately as follows:

personnel – about 328,760 individuals were eliminated,  
tanks – 5,551 units,  
armored personnel carriers – 10,340 units,  
artillery systems – 7,909 units,  
MLRS – 910 units,  
air defense systems – 600 units,  
aircraft – 323 units,  
helicopters – 324 units,  
operational and tactical level UAVs – 5,954 units,  
cruise missiles – 1,567 units,  
warships and boats – 22 units,  
submarines – 1 unit,  
motor vehicles and tankers – 10,361 units,  
special equipment – 1,124 units.

## Military aid for Ukraine



The **United States** is ready to allocate up to \$500 million to support Ukraine's energy system, which is under threat of Russian strikes before the onset of cold weather.

This was announced on November 17 during a press briefing by Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Jeffrey

Pyatt. "The United States has already provided more than \$520 million in energy sector assistance to Ukraine. We know that another \$500 million is on the way," he said.

**On November 20, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announces that the United States will provide the Armed Forces of Ukraine with a new defense aid package.** He said that the new assistance was announced during a visit by US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin. The Pentagon will provide artillery weapons, among other things.

"There is a new defense package for our country from the United States. I am grateful for it. In particular, there will be more artillery – shells that are needed right now," Zelenskyy said.

**German Ambassador to Ukraine Martin Jaeger** said that Germany would transfer two more IRIS-T air defense systems to Ukraine by the end of the year.

He said this at the Formula for Ukraine's Success forum on November 13. According to him, Germany and Ukraine have agreed to supply additional Patriot and IRIS-T systems. By the end of the year, it is planned to supply Ukraine with two more IRIS-T air defense systems in addition to the three previously delivered.

**On November 14, Germany handed over a new military aid package to the Ukrainian Armed Forces**, including ten Leopard 1A5 tanks, armored vehicles, and more than a million rounds of ammunition. The new aid package from Germany includes:

- 10 Leopard 1A5 tanks (total delivered: 30, remaining to be delivered: 105);
- 14 Band-vagn 206 tracked all-terrain vehicles (total: 60);
- five Warthog tracked ambulances;
- one thousand 155 mm shells (total: 19500);
- WISENT 1 armored demining vehicle (total: 11);
- 10 VECTOR reconnaissance drones (total: 142);
- 10,000 protective goggles (total: 90,000);
- 14 GO12 radars (total: 46);
- three border protection vehicles (total: 233)
- four 8x8 HX81 tractors and four semi-trailers;
- 16 Zetros trucks (total: 216);
- three cars (total: 300);
- 13 MAN TGS trucks (total: 25);
- 1.4 million rounds of ammunition (47.1 million in total).

**November 15 German company Rheinmetall announces that it plans to supply the Ukrainian army with**

**Caracal airborne tactical vehicles.** Ukraine will be the first country to use these vehicles.

**November 21 Germany provides Ukraine with an additional military aid package worth €1.3 billion.** This was announced by the country's Defense Minister at a meeting with his Ukrainian counterpart Rustem Umerov, Tagesschau reports.

The package includes, among other things, four additional T-SLM IRIS air defense systems and artillery ammunition. Pistorius also promised Ukraine 20,000 155-millimeter artillery shells.

**On November 22, the German government handed over a new military aid package to the Ukrainian Armed Forces.** It included armored vehicles, equipment, and ammunition:

- 20 Marder armored personnel carriers with ammunition
- 1 Winsent-1 demining tank
- 5 Warthog Ambulance tracked carriers
- 2380 155 mm caliber shells
- 2428 cryptophones
- 2 8x8 HX81 tractors
- 2 semi-trailers
- 9 vehicles (trucks, vans, all-terrain vehicles)
- 2 ambulances

On November 13, the **United Kingdom** Ministry of Defense provided the Armed Forces of Ukraine with additional winterization assistance. This time, the Ukrainian military received more than 82,000 helmets, more than 25,000 sets of winter clothing, more than 10,000 sets of body armor, and more than 70,000 operational dry rations.

**The United Kingdom will soon additionally fund three assistance programs for Ukraine.**

This was announced on November 16 by British Foreign Secretary David Cameron during a visit to Odesa, the government's press service quoted him as saying. He said that the plan provides for the allocation of 18 million pounds of financial assistance through humanitarian organizations.

Thus, 10 million pounds will be allocated to the Ukrainian Red Cross Society. Another 7 million pounds will go to the volunteer organization Nonviolent Peaceforce, and 1.4 million to the Mercy Corps.

The **Japanese** government provided Ukraine with several dozen vehicles and equipment for demining.

The Ukrainian military and law enforcement received, among other things, 40 vehicles, 50 metal detectors, 150 containers, and fire extinguishing liquid.

On November 17, the **Lithuanian** authorities handed over a new batch of aid to Ukraine. This time, the Armed Forces received generators, field beds and dry rations. It is reported that the 160 kW stationary diesel generators are designed to provide electricity to facilities in places where there are no power lines (or they are damaged).

**On November 22, Lithuania handed over another package of military aid to the Armed Forces of Ukraine.** It includes ammunition and winter gear. Lithuania delivered 3 million units of 7.62x51 mm ammunition to Ukraine. The Ukrainian army also received remote detonation systems.

The **Dutch** government has reserved 2 billion euros for military assistance to Ukraine next year. This is stated in a statement published on the official website of the Dutch Ministry of Defense.

The money will be used to purchase ammunition, maintain already delivered platforms and systems, and strengthen Ukraine's air defense "so that the country can continue to defend itself against attacks on critical infrastructure."

In addition, next year, the country's authorities will continue training the Ukrainian military.

The **Bulgarian** Parliament voted on November 22 to ratify the agreement with Ukraine on the supply of armored personnel carriers.

## Ukraine has received financial assistance from the European Union



**An additional €110 million for humanitarian aid programmes in Ukraine was allocated by the European Commission on 14 November.**

The package will be in two parts: €100 million will be used to provide assistance to Ukrainians who have

been affected by Russia's full-scale invasion and €10 million will be used to support programmes for refugees from Ukraine currently in Moldova.

This funding will allow EU organisations and partners to provide services such as cash assistance, food, water, shelter, medical care, psychosocial support and protection to Ukrainians.

In addition, the EU will provide Ukraine with a further 84 electricity generators from its strategic reserves, in view of possible Russian attacks on energy infrastructure.

It should be noted that the total amount of humanitarian aid provided by the EU to Ukraine has already reached 843 million euros.

**The European Commission also transferred another tranche of 1.5 billion euros in macro-financial assistance to Ukraine on 22 November.**

This was announced on Wednesday 22 November on Twitter by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen.

"Europe's funding has been supporting Ukraine's economic stability and public services since the beginning of the war with Russia. Today we are disbursing a new €1.5 billion," she wrote.

According to von der Leyen, EU assistance to Ukraine has reached €85 billion and will continue. In particular, Brussels intends to provide 50 billion euros to Ukraine by 2027.

## The European Parliament will open its office in Kyiv



The European Parliament has agreed to open an office in Kyiv to strengthen support for the Ukrainian parliament at the request of senior Ukrainian government officials.

This is reported by Euractiv, citing a document from the European Parliament.

As noted, it is likely to be an office

in Kyiv. It is noted that the decision is aimed at facilitating relations with the Ukrainian parliament, and was adopted on the evening of Monday 20 November.

"The EP has agreed to open an office in Ukraine in order to strengthen its support for the Parliament, following a request from the government of Ukraine, according to a document from the EP secretariat," the article reads.

## Coordination Headquarter – Russia refuses prisoner exchange



Russia has effectively frozen the exchange of prisoners with Ukraine since August this year.

This was reported by a representative of the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Petro Yatsenko, in an interview with *Presente Vremya*.

"Negotiations are going on, work is being done. But in fact, since the summer, Russia has frozen exchanges. They are not taking place to the extent they used to," he said.

According to him, Ukraine is ready for the exchange "even tomorrow", as we are already running out of places to hold Russian prisoners.

"We know that the conditions in which our defenders are held in Russia are much worse than those offered by us as a European country that adheres to the Third Geneva Convention on the Treatment of Prisoners of War," Yatsenko said.

According to him, Russia is not interested in the fate of its prisoners, which is why it is delaying the exchange and creating various obstacles.

According to the website of the Ministry of Reintegration

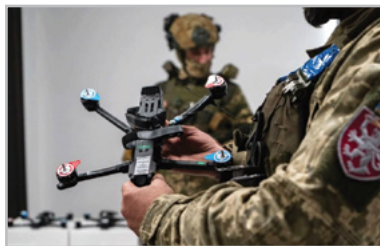
of the Temporarily Occupied Territories in Russian captivity, as of 17 November there are still more than 4,000 people in Russian captivity.

As of 17 November, more than 4,300

Ukrainian citizens were still in Russian captivity, most of them military personnel.

Thus, 4,337 Ukrainian citizens remain in Russian captivity, including 3,574 military and 763 civilians.

## New large batch of FPV drones for Ukrainian armed forces



The Ukrainian military has received three thousand FPV drones, paid for as part of Operation Unity.

This was announced by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Digital Transformation Mykhailo Fedorov via Telegram on Monday 20 November.

According to him, each drone was equipped with Ukrainian ammunition and delivered to 19 military units. The drones will help to target enemy positions and equipment more effectively.

## Polish truckers announce extended blockade



Polish truckers will continue and extend their blockade of the border with Ukraine. The Poles are planning to stay on strike until February.

Their leader, Rafal Mekler of the far-right National Movement, announced this on Facebook.

"We have made another request. The

protest in Dorohusk (Yagodyn-Dorohusk checkpoint) has been extended to 1 February 2024. It will be accepted without objection," he wrote.

Meckler also announced the extension of the blockade to the fourth checkpoint, Medyka-Shehyni, from 23 November. According to him, farmers will join the blockade.

As a reminder, a strike by Polish truckers on the Polish-Ukrainian border began on 6 November. They are demanding the abolition of visa-free traffic for Ukraine. By 22 November, some 4,000 truckers had gathered at the Polish border.

On 21 November, Ukrainian hauliers responded to the Polish action by staging a warning action on the Polish border near the Krakowiec-Korczowa checkpoint.

## Ukrainian border checkpoint temporarily unblocked by Slovak truckers



Slovakian truckers have temporarily unblocked truck traffic through the Vysne Nemecke checkpoint on the border with Ukraine.

This was reported by the State Border Guard Service.

At the same time, cars and buses are entering and leaving the checkpoint as usual.

## According to the armed forces, how many female military personnel take part in combat operations?





Currently, the number of women in the Ukrainian Armed Forces exceeds 62,000. At the same time, there is a record number of female soldiers on the battlefield in recent history.

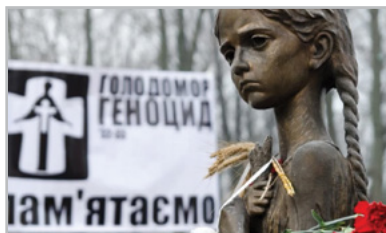
This was reported by the Military Media Centre on 20 November.

"If in 2014 the total number of women in the Armed Forces was 49,926, of which 16,557 were servicewomen, then as of October 2023 (according to the Armed Forces Personnel Centre) the number of women in the Armed Forces increased to 62,062, of which 43,479 were servicewomen," the statement said.

According to Deputy Defence Minister Natalia Kalmykova, "we have the largest number of women on the battlefield in Ukraine in recent world history".

Thus, about 5,000 female soldiers are performing tasks in the combat zone.

## The Holodomor has been recognised as a genocide of the Ukrainian people by yet another state



The State of New York has issued a proclamation on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor, reiterating its recognition of the Holodomor of 1935-1933 as a genocide of the Ukrainian people.

This was reported by Ukraine's ambassador to the United States, Oksana

Markarova.

According to the diplomat, New York State has also declared November as a month of remembrance of the Holodomor genocide in Ukraine.

"We are very grateful to New York Governor Kathy Gokul for her solidarity with Ukraine," Markarova wrote.

To date, more than 33 American states have issued proclamations recognising the Holodomor as genocide.

## Draft law on the status of English in Ukraine adopted in first reading



The Verkhovna Rada has passed in first reading a bill on the use of English in Ukraine, which proposes to establish English as one of the languages of international communication in the country.

The bill proposes to establish English as one of the languages of international communication in Ukraine, and the state should promote its learning by citizens.

Candidates for the following positions should be required to speak English

- Category A public service, as well as Category B and C services, the list of which will be determined by the Cabinet of Ministers;
- Heads of local state administrations, their first and second deputies;
- Military officers performing military service under contract, the list of which is established by the Cabinet of Ministers;
- middle and senior police officers of the National Police of Ukraine, positions of senior officers of other law enforcement bodies;
- Prosecutors;
- tax and customs authorities, the list of which is determined by the Cabinet of Ministers;
- Heads of public sector bodies, the

list of which shall be determined by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The State should also facilitate the learning of English by citizens, including by ensuring that the language is taught in schools and kindergartens.

## Which European countries have the highest number of working refugees?



The highest employment rate of Ukrainian refugees is in Poland: 65% of Ukrainians of working age have found a job. Poland has the largest number of people displaced from Ukraine – more than 950,000.

In second place is the UK, where 61% of Ukrainians fleeing the war have found work.

In Sweden, 56% of the displaced persons from Ukraine have found a job (41.4 thousand in total), in Lithuania – 53% (50.7 thousand Ukrainian refugees) and in the Czech Republic – 51% (368.7 thousand).

In Denmark (39.7 thousand registered IDPs from Ukraine), the Netherlands (94.4 thousand) and Estonia (50.5 thousand), 46% of Ukrainian refugees have found a job.

About one third of Ukrainians found a job in France, where a total of 70,600 displaced persons were registered. In Ireland (97.5 thousand), 28% of the refugees found a job.

Germany (1.1 million), Italy (167,500) and Switzerland (66,100) have the lowest employment rates for displaced persons from Ukraine – 19% each.

Switzerland plans to facilitate the employment of Ukrainian refugees. According to the Swiss parliament, this should double the proportion of employed Ukrainians.

Nearly 4.9 million IDPs are officially registered in Ukraine, 40% of whom are employed.

# OCCUPIED IDENTITY

## How Russia represses people in the temporarily occupied territories for showing loyalty to Ukraine

**Anton Shramenko**

Although the claim that "Russia's arrival was eagerly awaited in the Russian-speaking territories" is one of the key theses of the enemy's propaganda, the reality is the opposite. In all the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories there is a large number of people who remain loyal to Ukraine and are waiting for its victory. Some of these people are even ready to risk their safety and lives to actively help their country win. Patriots of Ukraine are organizing sabotage in the occupied territories, directing fire and providing the Ukrainian services with important information on the movement of enemy military equipment and personnel.

For example, operations such as the explosion of an occupation group in Henichesk on the morning of September 15 (about 10 Russian soldiers were injured), a strike in the Bay of Sevastopol, which destroyed the Rostov-on-Don submarine and the large landing ship Minsk on the night of September 13, are all the work of Ukrainian saboteurs of the Atesh movement. In addition, the movement's saboteurs are constantly attacking patrols in the occupied Ukrainian cities, especially in Luhansk and Mariupol.

The Russian military is well aware of the existence of the guerrilla movement and is using all its strength and resources to suppress it and identify our agents. For the occupier, the sabotage situation is so serious that since November, the Russian army has been increasing the protection of railway trains, especially in the temporarily occupied Crimea. The occupier is mobilizing additional personnel to escort freight and passenger trains.

The occupiers are afraid. The successful actions of the Ukrainian saboteurs encourage them to monitor even more closely any manifestations of civilian loyalty to Ukraine and to suppress them.

We all remember the viral video of the attack on the headquarters of the Black Sea Fleet, where the woman filming the moment says with joy: "It's started!". The occupiers tracked her down, and on October 5, the woman was arrested. She was forced to apologize to the invaders for saying the Ukrainian word. The video of her apol-

ogy shows her sad and crying. According to her, she answered in Ukrainian because she "lived in Ukraine all my life. She sent the recorded moment of the shelling to her friends, who shared it among Telegram channels.

But for many Ukrainians who publicly show their loyalty to something Ukrainian, the matter does not end with a video apology.

For example, the Bakhchysaray District Court in Crimea prosecuted six participants of a wedding where Ukrainian songs, including "Chervona Kalyna" were played.

"In the banquet hall of the Arpat restaurant... the wedding organizer allowed the performance of the Ukrainian song 'Chervona Kalyna,' the lyrics of which contain the words 'to free our Ukrainian brothers from Moscow's shackles,'" reads the protocol of the "police" of annexed Crimea. The owner of the Arpat restaurant received the harshest punishment for this "terrible crime" – 15 days in prison. A DJ and a wedding guest received 10 days in jail each, the groom's mother – 5 days, the bride's mother and the restaurant owner's wife – 50 thousand rubles in fines, as they have minor children.

After the story of "Chervona Kalyna", the so-called head of the annexed Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, threatened Crimeans with persecution for publicly supporting Ukraine.

Ukrainians who run patriotic channels on social media are subject to even more severe punishment by the occupation authorities.

On August 20, Russian FSB officers arrested the administrators of the telegram channels RIA-Melitopol and Melitopol is Ukraine. The arrest took place as in a Hollywood blockbuster – as part of a special operation in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions. Special forces jumped over fences, broke down doors and dragged the detained "terrorists" into the yard and pushed them into armored cars. It's worth noting that the whole process was filmed by the cameras of Russian propaganda TV channels.

Now the security forces will prosecute the detainees under articles on high treason (Article 275 of the Criminal Code) and espionage (Article 276 of the Criminal Code). They face sentences ranging from 12 to 20 years in prison.

The purpose of all these actions is to intimidate the civilian population. To

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show what will happen to those who do not want to love Russia.

According to experts, Russia is creating a separate register of "dissidents" in the occupied territories. People on this list will be subject to constant surveillance with inspections and "preventive talks". As a punishment, they can also be deprived of Russian citizenship, which will lead to deportation.

"Over the past two weeks, Rosgvardia has conducted 279 searches of local residents holding Ukrainian passports. People were detained and offered either a cellar or Russian citizenship and a Russian passport. Unfortunately, such events are quite regular," says Vira Yastrebova, director of the Eastern Human Rights Group.

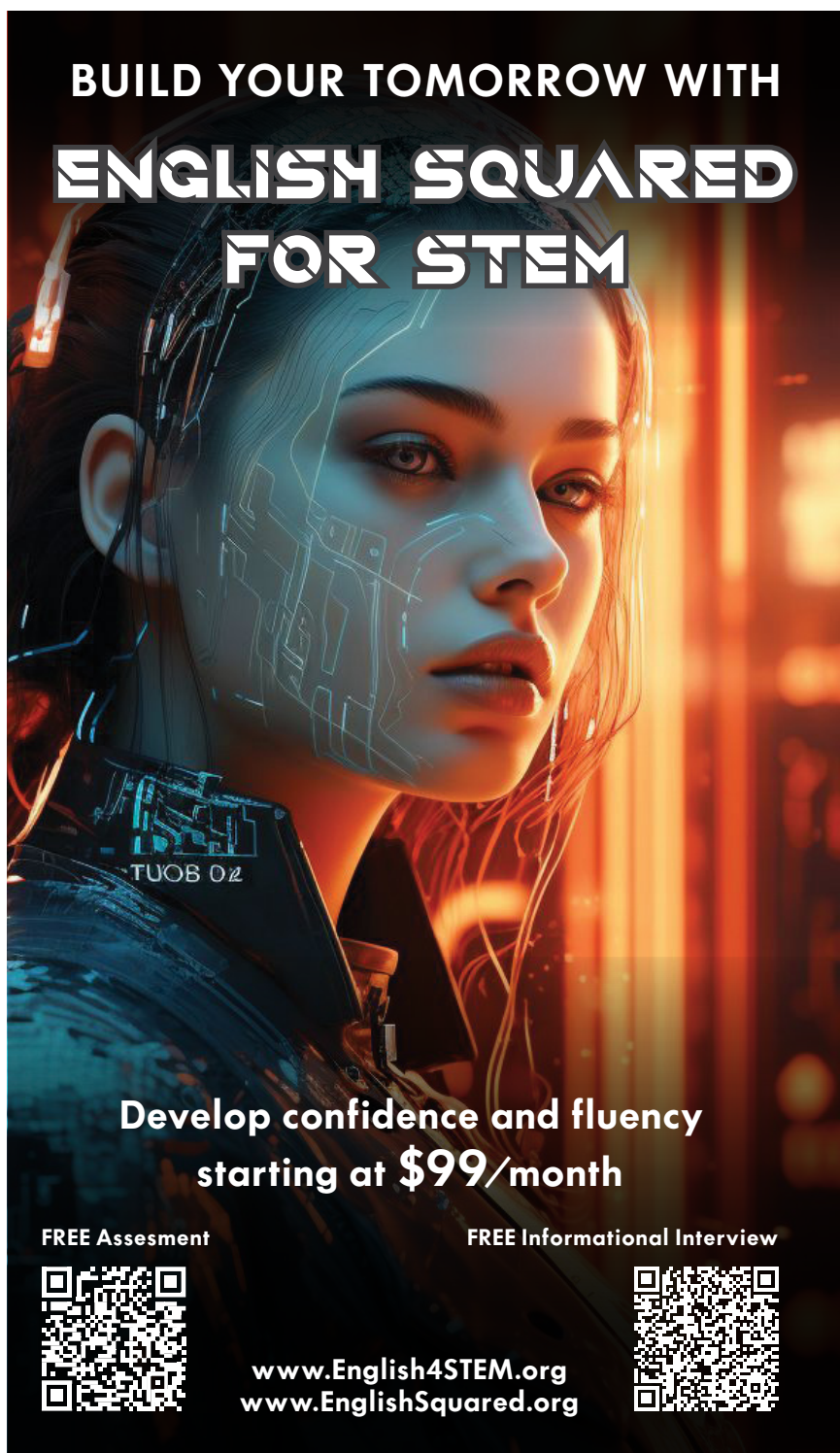
The occupation "authorities" carefully filter the content consumed by both adults and children. Experts have repeatedly recorded cases of phone checks in schools. At first it was teachers who did this, but lately it has been representatives of the occupation security forces.

"In fact, they take away children's phones and install software that monitors what content children consume. They also monitor the correspondence of the students. When they check the phones, they scan the installed programs – games, Ukrainian websites or information resources. In this way, the occupiers are trying to identify pro-Ukrainian children in the temporarily occupied territories, because they see them as potential resistance," Yastrebova said.

In their report, the human rights activists note that the occupation authorities are using the media to create the impression that young people support the actions of the invaders and "welcome" integration with Russia.

"In the temporarily occupied Luhansk region there are facts that children are involved in weaving camouflage nets for the Russian occupation forces. It should be noted that this whole procedure takes place with the obligatory dressing of young Ukrainians in military uniforms. This is a measure of militarization with the use of child labor".


At present, Russia is trying to create an information vacuum in the temporarily occupied territories, where there is simply no place for information from the free part of Ukraine. The task of the occupying authorities is to eradicate as much as possible the Ukrainian identity of the occupied people. We can only wish endurance and patience to the Ukrainians who find themselves in these terrible conditions, and a quick victory so that Ukrainians will no longer be punished for being Ukrainian.




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# BELIEVING IN VICTORY

## Two pensioners from Ivano-Frankivsk region used their savings to buy kamikaze drones

**Inna Mikhno**

*"With such people, we will defeat the enemy! The deed of two pensioners is worthy of imitation!" – This is the caption of a Facebook post by the Rozhnyativ village council of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast about the admirable act of Rozhnyativ resident Lyudmyla Skubrieva and her relative from Kyiv, Halyna Gil. The pensioners donated almost 20 thousand hryvnias each to buy two kamikaze drones for the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The heroic deed of the pensioners has become an example of patriotism and support for the army in the rear of the country.*

**"Such a contribution is exciting and inspiring!"**

What is more, this act instantly made the two pensioners the most popular women in Ukraine, which Vasyl Ryabchenko, the head of the Rozhnyativ community, never doubted. According to him, the village council's phones are constantly ringing with people who want to talk to the benefactors and express their gratitude for their support.

"They transferred the money from their savings to buy drones for the 10<sup>th</sup> separate mountain assault brigade Edelweiss. The community previously purchased three Kamikaze drones for one of our naval units. Entrepreneurs joined this campaign. "After that, she came to me and said: "I want to buy a drone to shoot down a tank! Later she called me and said that another woman, her relative from Kyiv who was staying with her at the time, wanted to join the collection. We placed an order and added the missing amount from our coordination center. They came to the village council to see the drones with their own eyes and were interested in their functionality. They did not want to make their charitable act public. But this is a very positive example of helping the military. You can complain, talk, or just do such good deeds. I am sincerely grateful that we have such people in Ukraine. The military unit also thanked them. This is the story of cooperation with these two beautiful and incredible women," the head of the village council told the Hromada newspaper.

**"I want to have a kamikaze drone that can shoot down a tank"**



Mrs. Lyudmyla Skubrieva agreed to talk with Hromada. She is from Rozhnyativ and will be 67 on New Year's Day. She is a working pensioner who travels to Italy every three months to work. She also has an interesting hobby – she likes to sew. This is not surprising, since before the collapse of the Soviet Union she worked in a sewing factory in Ivano-Frankivsk. Due to the lack of work at home, she began to "travel" to different countries to work.

His younger brother Leonid Holubovskiy was a soldier who fought near Bakhmut: in the first days of the war he returned from working in Poland and went to the front. In June he was wounded and underwent extensive rehabilitation. He was declared partially fit, but continues to serve in the local anti-terrorist unit. Her older brother, Oleksandr Holubovskiy, lives in Zaporizhzhya, is retired but continues to work as a railroad worker. He also wanted to join the armed forces, but the years have not allowed him to take up arms.

In fact, this is not the first time she has helped the military. She has been trying to help the Ukrainian army since the beginning of the war. She has also contributed to fundraisers for thermal

imagers, car repairs, buying stoves, etc.

"This year we are already buying drones. I'm not the first, Rozhnyativ has bought drones before. At that time I came from a job, so I had that amount of money. But of course we all save, as they say, for a rainy day. My younger brother is a soldier, so I know that his friends help the army. Today the whole Ukraine is collecting. So I asked him what I could do to help. He said, "My friends bought drones and sent them to the marines. Where can I get these drones? It's not something you can buy in a store. He told me to contact the village head. So I did. I want to have such a drone, I said, to make my contribution to this war, to participate in the defense of our Ukraine. I'd like to have it hit a tank or a truck, if I'm lucky. I thought, just one drone is probably a long procedure. So I came home and asked my aunt to participate in the purchase: "Don't you want to buy a drone? That would be two, better than one." She agreed. About 20 days later, we got a call saying, "The military has submitted an application! We'll buy it!" said the pensioner.

Her aunt, Halyna Hil, lives in Kyiv, but

when Russian troops began storming and occupying the Kyiv region, she moved to her sister's house in western Ukraine the next day. After the region was liberated, she went to visit her home, but due to the renewed threat of power cuts, she was forced to continue staying with her relative. And of course, at such a respectable age, she is increasingly drawn to her home.

She is a retiree. She never left her job for long and retired at the age of 81 (!). She spent more than 60 years of her life working at the Kyiv Hydrometeorological Center.

"At that time a drone cost 18,500 thousand hryvnia, but a month later the price had already risen. But the chairman assured us that he would add the necessary amount. And less than a week later, we got a call that the order had arrived. I really wanted to see the drone in action. Naturally, I was very impressed. There is a drone war going on now. We need drones, more drones, to save the lives of our people and destroy the enemy. That's why I chose the kamikaze drone, because we were offered different types of drones from the list – both reconnaissance and more expensive ones. I try to follow the news. I need to know what is happening at the front, how and with what they are fighting, what weapons they are using. I look at the reports of the General Staff. I am very worried. So I constantly listen to military experts on YouTube," Liudmyla says.

In the conversation he is very concerned that maybe this help is not enough, that more needs to be done. So he is embarrassed by the attention of journalists today and believes that there are people who have made a much greater contribution to Ukraine. And this is, of course, first and foremost our military.

"For example, I am amazed by people who have a minimum pension and donate money to the armed forces, help the guys and give to the cause. Fortunately, we have a lot of them. Some have 50, some have 100, whoever can. I admire those people more. It gives me the creeps when they tell me that retirees have a pension of a little over 2,000 and a disability, and they still donate money. We have an active and aware community, people help as much as they can. If I go to work, I'll buy another drone," she says.

The full-scale war caught up with Lyudmyla Skubriyeva, who was working as a laborer in Italy. She returned to Ukraine with feelings of confusion and insecurity. But, she admits, her soul was warmed by the thought that



Рожнятівська селищна рада

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her home was waiting for her.

"I was worried, but I knew that I was going to my country, where I have my own land and home. No, no, I will never exchange Ukraine for any other country! We live with the hope that Russian troops will not come and drive us out of our homes," she sighs heavily.

At present, Mrs. Liudmyla is on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, so she prays every day for Ukraine, for the military, and for our victory.

"I thank our military, I don't know how else to thank them. How many lives were taken from us, and again in Rozhnativ we said goodbye to a soldier... May God protect them and give everyone the strength and courage to defend themselves and continue to have faith!

I dream that Ukraine will be free at last, that we will win. We pray for Ukraine and for peace, for our soldiers. We pray for the fallen soldiers. And for the Ukrainians to endure all the hardships. I also pray for our enemies, that the Holy Spirit will descend upon them and they will become peacemakers and leave our country forever," the volunteer concluded.

**The black wing of war**

According to Vasyl Ryabchenko, the Rozhnativ community, like the rest of the country, felt the black wing of the war. Russia has claimed a total of 25 lives from the community, 18 of them killed are Ukrainian soldiers.

"Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, we have set up a coordination center to support the armed forces. It deals with extra-budgetary funds. We collect funds ourselves every month, and the village council office transfers them. Our cultural department initiated the "Art Front" by collecting funds at the market. Each Starosta district has its own campaign. We have taken care of the boys who are fighting for our community and we try to cover all their needs. The last action we held was to buy thermal underwear, raincoats, etc. and send them directly to each of our guys. At the expense of the local budget, we bought five drones for military units in Zaporizhzhya and Donetsk. Last year we also bought an anti-drone rifle for the anti-terrorist unit in the Zaporizhzhya sector. We are not a wealthy community, but we try to help as much as we can," the village head summed up.



# A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE RISE OF THE UKRAINIAN CHRISTIAN CHURCH

**Jaroslav Zurowsky**  
Winnipeg, Canada

The current status quo likes the idea that Slavs/Ukrainians were pagans until 988 CE and who more or less were enlightened by kind Western Christian missionaries from the Imperial Church. This handy tale is easy to teach and the status quo must not be challenged. However, historical facts show otherwise despite many attempts at suppressing them.

The Slavic connection to Christianity appears from the very start of Christianity. The tale of the Apostle Andriy reaching Kyiv is very credible. There was a trade route which stretched from Antioch northwards towards Kyiv and as the new Christian religion followed the trade routes as it spread, Andriy could very well have followed it first to Kyiv, and then taken the east west route to Mainz, Germany, where the Celts were centered before they wandered off to Scotland. In fact, early Christian historian Eusebius writes that Andriy was sent to the Scythians.

Also, prior to Eusebius, the third century Christian ideologue, Origen alludes that the devil showed Isus Khrystos the Scythian kingdom during Isus Khrystos' stay in the desert.

However, other historical information also lends support to this early Christianization.

In the Bible, in Paul's letter to the Colossians, which was written between 50-60 CE, it is mentioned that some Scythians were Christians. There had to be serious documentation that the "arch-enemies" of the Greeks were Christians in order for it to be noted by Greek Bible transcribers and maintained in the text. And there is. In the middle of Galilee, not far from Nazareth, in the region where Isus Khrystos preached, there was a city called Scythopolis, now known as Beit She'an. Scythopolis arose in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE and gained its name from the Scythian "mercenaries" who settled in the region. Scythopolis was located at the crossroads of the north south and east west roads. Thus, access to Egypt was very easy. Scythopolis was also known for producing high quality wines and linens. The Scythians were also known for trading in "Scythian emeralds" which were very popular among the Romans circa 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. These emeralds



*St Cassian*



*Brandon plaque, 800-850 A.D., Great Britain, culture: Anglo-Saxon, medium: gold; black*

were brought to the Middle East from somewhere north east of the Don River which supports the existence of the trade routes.

Also, note that Galilee at that time was a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural region and not strictly Judaic, so Isus Khrystos was preaching to various people. Between 330-636 CE, a Byzantine Metropolitan was centered in Scythopolis as this was the most prosperous city in the region. Thus, there is a strong Scythian Christian connection.

Another important figure in Early Christianity is Cyril of Scythopolis (circa 525-558 CE). He is mainly known for his historical writings recording the lives of various saintly people who lived in the region, emphasizing that



*The silver coin issued by Princess Olha around 950 depicted the Christian crucifixion and St. John the Baptist's falcon.*



*Gold plaque depicting an eagle, Scythia, 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.*

the city of Scythopolis had residents who were quite educated.

Easy access to Egypt, meant people could to travel to Alexandria, Egypt to study there, which is what Scythianos [Scythianus] did. His birth name is unknown but he was known as Scythianos based on his Scythian ethnic origin. What is known is that while in Egypt, he married an Egyptian wife. However, what he accomplished after his studies is important. Around 50 CE, Scythianos travelled to India where he stayed there for two years studying eastern religious thought. Then he returned to Jerusalem where he was known to debate with the apostles who had remained in Jerusalem introducing them and others to the doctrines





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of Empedocles and Pythagoras among others. He also wrote four books, Mysteries, Treasure, Summaries, and the Gospel of Scythianos. Unfortunately, his books have been lost. However, his student, Terebinthus, continued his work following his death. Due to the political situation, Terebinthus moved to Babylon with Scythianos' writings. There he instructed a former slave named Cubricus into the teachings of Scythianos. Cubricus changed his name into Mani, which means "debate" in Persian. Cubricus/Mani returned to the Holy Land and is credited with beginning the Manichean movement, which contained many Buddhist influences. And as Manicheism was not part of the Imperial Roman Church, it was condemned and persecuted, but it did influence many, including the Cathars in Southern France.

As the Scythians were ancestors of the Slavs, with some historians suggesting that Scythian culture began to morph into Slavic culture as early as

the early 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, we can look to early Christian beliefs and see if there are any similarities between the first Christians and Slavic/Ukrainian culture. One thing jumps out. The first Christians greeted each other with an offering of bread and salt. Ukrainian tradition to this day maintains that visitors are similarly greeted with bread and salt.

In Eastern Orthodox Christian marriage ceremonies even today, the priest places golden crowns on the heads of the bride and groom. This same ritual is recorded in a Gnostic Christian text with connections to Galilee, The Story of Aseneth, which seems to be from the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> second centuries CE. And, as Gnosticism was being suppressed by the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, this marriage ritual must have travelled north to Scythian lands very early in the development of Christianity, before the Imperial Church clamped on alternative Christian thought.

Also, early Christians as well as

others, held funeral feasts to be at one with the deceased. This is similar to the Slavic custom where a post funeral meal is shared to honour the person passing on to the next world. If Herodotus can be trusted in his histories, a more intriguing Scythian/Christian connection appears. Herodotus is quite antagonistic and denigrating when it comes to writing about the Scythians. When describing Scythian funeral practices, he mentions that when a common person died, the body of the deceased was treated with spices, oils etc. The deceased person's family and friends mourned for a period of 40 days, after which the body was interred and the soul presumably departed to the heavens. As Isus Khrystos was a common person, the 40 day period following the Resurrection until Voznesinnya/Ascension can be seen as a Scythian influence. And even today the Ukrainian church continues the practise of the Sorokousty service during Lent as well as the service at

the 40 day mark following a person's passing.

Scythians do appear elsewhere in the development of early Christianity, and a brief scan of historical documents locates them. An example is St. Theotimus [feast day April 20<sup>th</sup>], the Bishop of Scythia Minor [Bulgaria/Romania] who died circa 410 CE. He came from mixed Roman/Scythian parents and was known for being an educator and writer. One of his main accomplishments was that he was the teacher of St. John Cassian, also known as the Scythian [Feast Day February 28/29<sup>th</sup>]. In antiquity, he was called the Scythian, but today, because his written works that survive are in Latin, many try to rename him as St. John the Roman erasing his Scythian roots.

Born in 360 in Scythia Minor, in the Dobruja region of Bulgaria and Romania, with the given name of Cassianus or Kassianos, he had the advantage of coming from an affluent family which could afford a great education for him. Thus, he was fluent both in Greek and Latin as well as other languages.

Early on, he travelled to Bethlehem where joined a hermitage as a monk and took on the name, Ioannes. From there, he travelled to Scete, Egypt where he lived many years with the desert fathers. As a supporter of Origen, he fled from Egypt to Constantinople where he came into contact with St. John Chrysostom. Here, he was ordained as a priest and because of his linguistic skills was sent to Rome following the forced exile of John Chrysostom in 404 CE in a failed attempt to negotiate support a return for the deposed patriarch. Between 404-415 CE, Kassianos served as a priest in Antioch, which was on the trade route to Kyiv.

In 415 CE, Kassian was sent on a mission to the Greek city of Massilia, now known as Marseille, France. Massilia was a city that opposed Julius Caesar and his Roman rule thus their anti-Roman stance was well rooted. Kassianos' task was to establish Egyptian style monasteries there, which he did. It was in Massilia that Kassianos wrote most of his works that have survived until the present day. They were directed at the Roman Church and thus were in Latin regarding monasticism and other Christian topics. Of major importance were his writings about sin, which were later transformed by others into the Seven Deadly Sins and which are still accepted by the Eastern Orthodox Church today.

There is another important connec-

tion between Antioch and the Scythians/Slavs. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, a dish called Kollyva arose among Antioch's Orthodox Christian community. Kollyva was made with cooked boiled wheat, sweetened with honey containing nuts and dried fruits. It was to be served at Christmas and anytime ancestors were worshipped. Essentially, it is what Ukrainians refer to today as Kutia. In fact, another older name for Kutia in Ukrainian is Kolyvo or Kolyva. Thus, it is evident that Kutia has early Christian roots and is not connected to any pagan non-Christian tradition.

These examples of Scythians being active in early Christian life, debunks the notion of that the Slavs/Scythians needed salvation in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and were barbarians ignorant of Christianity.

The first Christians considered their God to be a giving God, one who gives everything away as in this description from Enoch 1, found in the Nag Hammadi Scriptures – "he has no envy, which means that all he owns he gives away, without being affected and suffering no loss by his gifts. For he is rich from the things he gives away and finds rest in what he graciously bestows." Is this giving God not like the Slavic DazhBog, who the "pagans" worshiped. DazhBog was associated with the sun and early Christian writers also connected the Christian God to the sun. The halos behind the heads of saints are clearly a sun symbol. Also, early Christians described the presence of God as sunrays. One cannot see a sunray, but the sunrays allow for people to see what there is.

Please also note that Enoch 2, an early Christian text only survived in Old Slavonic. Considering that Enoch 1 and the other Nag Hammadi Scriptures were being suppressed by the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, this document, Enoch 2, reached Slavic lands quite early in history.

The Ukrainian Tryzub [trident] is not a Greek borrowing. Kindly see my article on the Tryzub-Trisula connection. The flaming prongs represent the three phases of time – past, present, future – as well as the attainment of the light of knowledge which all are to strive for, away from Ignorance, Desire [of material goods] and Wrath. Please read the Gospel of Mary for more. For early Christians, it was understood that these same flames of knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment descended on the heads of the apostles.

The status quo likes to bring out the tale of Cyril and Methodius and their

trek to the Slavic lands. Yet they conveniently forget to mention the part that states that when the good monks reached the Slavic lands, they found the Bible already translated into Old Slavonic. As the Eastern Church was in the realm of influence of the Pauline Church, this is not a surprise as one of the hallmarks of the Pauline Church was to translate liturgical and religious texts into the local languages, which would have been, Old Slavonic. And with the Bible translated into Old Slavonic, with a sizeable Christian community, it would only be natural for a Slavic ruler such as Knyahynya Olga to be a Christian and to build a church in Kyiv at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, Ivan Ohienko in his history of the Ukrainian church, writes that circa 900 CE, on the street now known as Khreschatyk in Kyiv, there was a church named St. Elias, which supports the existence of a Christian community in Kyiv prior to 988 CE. As Ohienko points out, in September 900 CE, the parish of St. Elias celebrated Christmas. This is not a misprint because when the Imperial Roman Church moved Christmas from September to December to coincide with the celebration of Saturnalia and Mithras, the Christian Churches south of the Mediterranean Sea, continued to celebrate Christmas in September. The fact that this Kyiv church celebrated in September, emphasizes that Christianity first came to Ukraine not from Rome or Byzantium.

Also, note that silver coinage issued by Knyahynya Olga circa 950 CE, did possess the image of the Christian Crucifix as well as the falcon of the St. John the Evangelist. Again, this would only have been done if there was a sizeable Christian community in Kyiv at the time. Also, note that the coin did have Arabic writing on it and does not possess the image of the ruler of Kyiv, unlike Byzantine coins who possessed the image of the various emperors.

There has been debate as to which script Cyril and Methodius created, the Glagolitic or Cyrillic, if any even. Looking at the Glagolitic Script, it is reminiscent of Armenian writing. And Armenia has for centuries had trade contacts with the Kyiv region. Also, Armenia declared Christianity as the official state religion in 301 CE, almost a century before it was declared the official religion of the Roman Empire. Armenia received its Christian influences from the Egyptian Coptic Church. Comparing the Armenian and Coptic script, the connections between the two are very evident. And as the Coptic

Church is one of the oldest Christian denominations, their Christian beliefs are among the oldest to be found.

The Coptic Church even has its own calendar dating system which predates the one used by western society today. The western dating system was created by Dionysius Exiguus in mid 6<sup>th</sup> century CE as part of the Imperial Roman Church rewriting its history. Thus, while western society today may be living in 2023, the Coptic world would be living in 7516, while similarly, the Slavic calendar will be declaring it to be 7531. This connection to the Coptic Church must have been very early as starting in the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE, with the rise of Islam in the Middle East, communication between the Slavic world and Coptic world would have been very difficult if it at all possible. Again, it emphasizes a very early Christian connection for the Ukrainian Slavic Christian Church. And let us also not forget that the first complete Christian Bible, both New and Old Testaments, appears in 367 CE in Egypt in Coptic. The Coptic Church later added four more books to the New Testament, while the Syrian Church eliminated some.

The Scythians were known to travel vast distances and their treks took them to the region now known as Pakistan and Northern India where between the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BCE and 392 CE, they were dominant in and created what is known as the Indo-Scythian culture. Thus, it would have been easy for Scythianos to travel to India using the Scythian trade routes. Coin collectors know that the coins issued

by the rulers of the Indo-Scythian region used Greek Script, even on the earliest coins from the 1<sup>st</sup> Century CE. Greek was used because it was a common language understood by most learned travellers. The name of the Scythian leader, Rajavula appears in Greek lettering on a coin from 10 CE. Please note that the *-ula* ending to a name in Old Slavonic means son of. Other names of Scythian leaders from the Pakistan region include Yolamira (125-150 CE) and his sons Bagamira (150 CE) and Hvaramira (160-175 CE). The endings of these names are very similar to names we know today from Old Slavonic and other Slavic languages such as Vladimir, Slavomir, Lubomyr, Kholstomir, etc.

Therefore, Scythians knew and utilized Greek, emphasizing that the Cyrillic script used by Eastern Slavs is derived from Greek, but not by way of the good brothers Cyril and Methodius.

The Scythians cannot take claim for bringing Christianity to India. Whereas, the Scythian region of influence is in Northern India, the first Christian enclave is in Kerala in Southern India. Started in 52 CE, Kerala is on the trade route to the Arabian Peninsula. St. Thomas would have taken a short boat ride across the waters to get to Kerala rather than take the long overland route in the north. This Christian settlement has religious relics from the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries CE. They use the Coptic Cross as well as Syrian Liturgies, emphasizing the early arrival of Christianity to the region.

But what is important to add is that the region of influence of Scythian cul-

ture stretches all the way to the border of western Tibet, where the Bon-Po religion reigned and where we find the Tryzub-Trisula.

One more item needs to be added. In 16<sup>th</sup> century Ukraine, there existed the concept of a monk living a "Skytske zhyttya" [Scythian life] or being a "Skytalyk". This long-standing tradition meant adopting a lifestyle of poverty, prayer, silence, and service to others in order to save the souls of others. This Christian altruism accredited to the Scythians even in the 16<sup>th</sup> century emphasizes how significant a role the Scythians played in the spread of Christianity among the Slavs. According to the late Ivan Ohienko, the Pochaiv Monastery was a "Scythian" monastery, before the arrival in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century of the Miraculous Madonna Icon and funding from Anna Hoyska paid for the monastery's expansion. The question arises was this monastery originally based on teaching of St. John Kassianos the Scythian who established Egyptian style monasteries in France, or someone similar who has been forgotten. St. John Kassianos did write about and promote the Hesychasm idea of Monasticism which included the notion of a hermit lifestyle. These ideas were later the basis of St. Paisius Velichkovsky's writings on monasticism in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Never-the-less, these arguments point out that the Ukrainian Slavic Scythian connection to Christianity is much, much earlier than the official line, and demands that more honest serious research be undertaken.





# DAY OF THE UKRAINIAN ARMED FORCES

**Myroslav Hrekh**

The calendar of important dates shows that on December 6 we will celebrate the Day of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In fact, for the past year and eight months, every single day has been Armed Forces Day for us, because every day we listen to the news from the front, look at the maps, worry about how our boys and girls are fighting the Russian occupier, and pray for them.

To talk about the Armed Forces, we need to understand how they are organized. So, the Armed Forces of Ukraine have the following general structure:

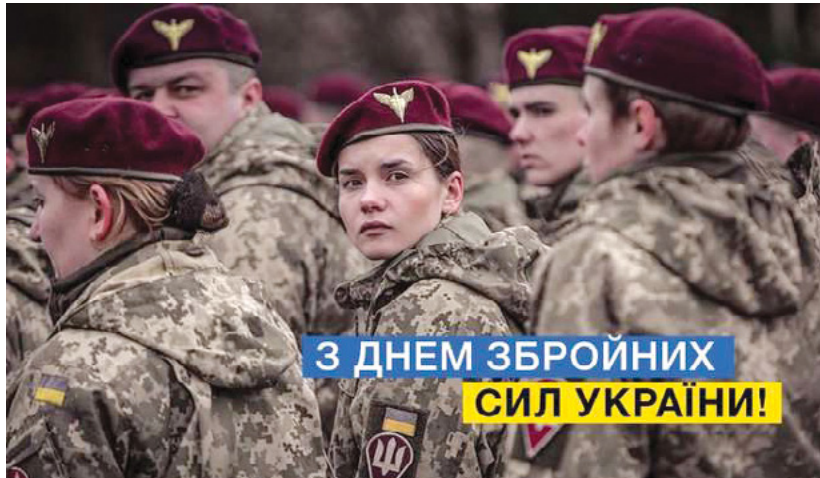
- The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
- Joint Forces Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
- Branches of the Armed Forces – Ground Forces, Air Force, Navy;
- separate services of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Special Forces, Territorial Defense Forces, Logistic Forces, Support Forces and Medical Forces;
- separate services of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Air Assault Forces, Communications and Cyber Security Forces;
- military command and control bodies, formations, military units, higher military educational establishments, military educational units of higher educational establishments
- Institutions and organizations not belonging to the branches and individual services of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The Army is the largest independent branch of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Organizationally, it consists of the Land Forces Command, Operational Commands "South", "North", "West", "East", the Reserve Corps and units directly subordinated to the Land Forces Command.

The Army also includes military educational institutions and a system of military commissariats.

The military units of the Land Forces are divided into the following branches

- Armored troops
- Mechanized troops
- Rocket and Artillery Troops
- Air Defense Forces of the Land Forces
- Army Aviation
- Special Forces (Combat Support)
- Intelligence, Communications, Electronic Warfare, Engineering, Radiological, Chemical, Biological



Defense, Automotive and Road, and Logistics units.

• The Land Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are the largest independent branch of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They are armed with tanks, armored personnel carriers, infantry fighting vehicles, armored reconnaissance vehicles, self-propelled artillery, towed guns and howitzers, multiple launch rocket systems, mortars, tactical missile systems and attack helicopters.

• Artillery is the primary means of defeating the enemy by fire. It performs up to 70% of the total task of defeating the enemy by fire. Army aviation is the most agile branch of ground forces, designed to perform tasks in various conditions of general combat.

• Protection of Ukrainian airspace, aerial reconnaissance and protection of ground and naval units are the responsibility of the Air Force. Tactical and transport aviation is subordinated to the Air Force Command of Ukraine. One of the main tasks of the Air Force is to protect the airspace over Ukraine. For this purpose anti-aircraft missile troops have been created.

• The main source of information about the air situation over and around Ukraine is the radio engineering troops. The Air Force also includes engineering, communications and electronic warfare units.

• The maritime space of Ukraine, which includes the internal waters and the territorial sea of Ukraine, is divided into two maritime zones: "Black Sea", which includes the territorial waters and internal waters of Ukraine in the Black Sea; and "Azov", which includes the internal waters of Ukraine in the

Azov Sea and the Kerch Strait.

• The Airborne Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine is a separate branch of the Armed Forces designed to act as airborne troops and perform combat missions in the tactical and operational rear of the enemy.

• The Special Operations Forces can be called an elite branch of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The Special Operations Forces are staffed by specially trained professionals with special skills in intelligence, direct action and military support to carry out complex, dangerous and sometimes politically sensitive operations conducted by the Special Operations Command.

• On January 1, 2022, the Territorial Defense Forces were created. The TRO forces include 25 brigades consisting of more than 150 battalions.

After the start of the full-scale invasion and taking into account the mobilization of the Armed Forces, the number of the Armed Forces was about 700 thousand.

The Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (abbreviated as AFU) is a branch of the Armed Forces of Ukraine that has fighter, bomber and transport aircraft, as well as anti-aircraft missile troops and radio engineering troops.

The Naval Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (abbreviated to the Navy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine) is a branch of the Armed Forces of Ukraine whose purpose is to protect the sovereignty and state interests of Ukraine at sea, to defeat enemy naval groups in designated naval zones independently and in cooperation with other branches of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and to support the Land Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in

the coastal zone.

The Naval Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are designed to deter, localize and neutralize armed conflicts and, if necessary, to stop armed aggression from the sea, both independently and in cooperation with other services of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, military formations and law enforcement agencies in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine, laws of Ukraine and other regulatory acts, based on the principles of international law and general principles of military art.

Before the Russian-Ukrainian war, the Ukrainian Navy had 15,470 personnel, including 1 frigate, 5 corvettes, 3 minesweepers, 2 landing ships, 1 submarine, 49 auxiliary ships and 35 aircrafts.

Today, the number of the Armed Forces and its individual units is classified.

It should be noted that the Armed Forces and the Ukrainian Army did not appear out of nowhere, but have a long history. Here is a brief summary of what Wikipedia tells us:

"The history of the Ukrainian army dates back to B.C., when various tribes lived on Ukrainian lands and formed armed units to repel invaders. The written history of the Old Slavs begins with Kievan Rus. Prince Ihor, Princess Olha and subsequent princes recruited an army consisting of the prince's troops and the people's militia to defend their homeland. In the times of Kievan Rus, the basis of the Ukrainian army was made up of military squads, which constituted the permanent military force of the prince. Their number was relatively small, about 2 to 3 thousand people, or even less. The army of the Galicia-Volhynia Principality was organized on the model of the traditional Russian army, but with some local peculiarities. Danylo Halytskyi carried out a reform in which he created a princely army, independent of the boyar's troops, recruited from the "common people" and the landless nobility. The army was divided into heavily armed "squires" and lightly armed "archers". The squires wore chain mail and helmets, carried spears, swords, and shields, and fought on horseback or on foot. The archers, armed with bows, protected the squires from the flanks and started the battle by hitting the enemy with arrows. The army maintained the strength and power of the state and defended its borders.

But the Tatar invasion in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries led to the decline of the Ukrainian state and its army. As a

result, the lands of Ukraine fell under the Lithuanian, Polish, Hungarian and Moldavian flags.

The fifteenth and eighteenth centuries in the history of Ukraine are the period of the Cossacks. Initially, the Cossacks had no military organization, but gathered in bands of several dozen people. Their weapons were simple: bows, spears, axes, sabers, primitive rifles, their tactics were local warfare, and their goal was booty. It was only in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that the Cossacks explored the areas below the Dnipro rapids – the so-called Nyz – and began to build Cossack fortifications, the Sich (from the word "to cut"). At the turn of the 40s and 50s of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Cossacks built a powerful fortress on the Dnipro island of Tamakivka (near the modern town of Marhanets, Dnipro region). It is believed that this was the first Cossack stronghold in the history of Ukraine, the Zaporizhian Sich.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the Zaporizhian Cossacks rose to the level of the best European armies. The infantry, which was the main branch of the Cossack army and was considered the most advanced in Europe, was especially notable for its military prowess. The Cossack infantry fought heroically against the enemy, using a special tactic: they stood in three lines (the first fired, the second fed the cannons, and the third loaded them). The Cossack infantry was good at storming enemy fortresses and also fought bravely at sea.

In 1774, after the signing of the Kyuchuk-Kainarjia Treaty, the Russian Empire gained access to the Black Sea along with the Crimea. With the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in decline and on the verge of partition, there was no longer any need for the Cossacks to exist in their historic lands. At the same time, the preservation of the Cossacks' traditional way of life led to conflicts with the Russian authorities. Catherine II issued an order to destroy the Zaporozhian Sich community, which was carried out. Most of the Cossacks fled from Zaporozhia and organized themselves into the Azov, Bug, Danube, and Transdanubian Cossack armies.

At the beginning of the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829, Istanbul ordered the Danubians to oppose the Russian Empire. From May 18, 1828 to 1829, 1,500 Cossacks led by the Cossack Yosyp Hladkyi seized the military office and treasury and defected to the Russian Imperial Army near Izmail.

After the war, the tsarist gov-

ernment settled the Cossacks on the Azov coast and formed the Azov Cossack Army. However, many Cossacks decided not to come under the yoke of the Russians and were settled in Banat and Vojvodina, and also remained in the Danube estuary, later settling the towns of Galats, Izmail, Vilkoovo, Kiliya, and Tulcha.

During the Crimean War, military Cossack units were formed from the remnants of the Danube Cossacks on the side of the Allied forces. In October 1853, Mykhailo Tchaikovsky achieved the official creation of regular Cossack units in the Ottoman army. On January 23, 1854 the Danube Cossacks took the military oath. A banner of the Zaporozhian Sich was brought to the Cossacks from Constantinople, and Sadiq Pasha (Mykhailo Tchaikovsky's name in the Ottoman Empire) received the title of "Mirian Pasha" (Cossack Ataman) from the Sultan. After the war, the Cossack units were disbanded. This was the end of the glorious history of the Ukrainian Cossacks.

During the First World War, Ukraine became an arena of confrontation that caused significant human losses and destruction of infrastructure. This had a significant impact on the creation of an independent Ukrainian state and its armed forces, the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic.

After the fall of the Russian Empire, numerous military formations were formed on Ukrainian lands, including units of the Free Cossacks, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army of Makhno's father, and others.

After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ukrainian Galician Army, based on the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, rose to defend the Western Ukrainian People's Republic.

After Ukraine declared its independence on August 24, 1991, it inherited from the USSR one of the most powerful armed forces in Europe, equipped with nuclear weapons and relatively modern weapons and military equipment.

On August 24, 1991, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine decided to take over all military formations of the Armed Forces of the former USSR located on the territory of Ukraine and to create one of the key bodies, the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine. Thus, 14 motorized rifle, 4 tank, 3 artillery divisions and 8 artillery brigades (9,293 tanks and 11,346 combat vehicles), 1 special forces brigade, 9 air defense brigades, 7 combat helicopter regiments, 3 air forces (about 1,500 combat aircraft) and a separate air defense army came

under the jurisdiction of Ukraine. The strategic nuclear forces deployed on the territory of Ukraine had 1,272 intercontinental ballistic missiles and about 2,500 tactical nuclear weapons. At the time of Ukraine's declaration of independence, the number of troops in Ukraine was about 980,000.

Let's take a look at how the Ukrainian state has taken care of strengthening its defense capabilities and developing its armed forces, and how each of Ukraine's leaders has done so. Let's start with Leonid Kravchuk. He did not even think that anyone could attack Ukraine, especially his "friends" the Russians. The same applies to the next president, Leonid Kuchma, although there were clashes on the island of Tuzla, but they did not teach him anything. Kuchma became the creator of Ukraine's "neutrality" in political and military aspects, he signed an international agreement, the so-called Budapest Memorandum, concluded on December 5, 1994, between Ukraine, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States on guarantees to Ukraine in connection with its non-nuclear status. On the same day, Ukraine acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Has this made the Ukrainian army stronger or strengthened its defenses? Missile production was curtailed, nuclear weapons were transferred to Russia, which then violated this agreement in 2014 by seizing Crimea and starting a war in Donbass. Would Russia have dared to attack us if we had nuclear weapons? I doubt it. How the next president, Viktor Yushchenko, strengthened the armed forces is still a mystery. Not to mention Yanukovich, who infiltrated the army and all security forces with Russian agents. It would seem that the "people's" President Petro Poroshenko, under whom the Russian intervention began, should have taken great care of the state's defense capabilities. Yes, he did, but he was more concerned with his own enrichment. He put the corrupt Svynarenko in charge of the defense industry, which he looted, and six ammuni-

on depots were blown up under his watch. How useful they would be on the front lines now. Next is Zelensky, who at the beginning of his term believed in Putin's peacefulness, wanted to look him in the eye, declared temporary ceasefires, and separated the fronts. Thank God, in the end he came to his senses, realized what "rasha" is, gained courage and bravery, and learned to resist the aggressor. That's all. Thirty years later we have what we have. We go around the world with our arms outstretched, asking for weapons. And where is ours? It has been blown up, stolen and sold, or simply given away out of goodwill. That's why I write the positions of all presidents with a small letter, because they deserve nothing more.

It is good that despite all the hardships the Ukrainian people found strength and courage to fight the enemy, restored the Cossack spirit that had been instilled in our soldiers, and found such commanders as Valeriy Fedorovych Zaluzhny, who know how to defeat the enemy. However, there are certain inappropriate things and mistakes. We thought that the enemy was stupid and cowardly, that he knew what the fortifications were doing, that we lacked weapons, and we attacked him head-on, thus thwarting the counteroffensive. But well done to them for changing their tactics, for taking care of their fighters first and foremost, for putting thousands of racists on the battlefield and turning their equipment into junk, for skillfully defending themselves and not retreating. It is clear that in life, and especially in war, everything is not so simple, and there are mistakes. The main thing is to recognize them, draw the right conclusions and avoid them in the future. This is what General V.F. Zaluzhny said in his article in The Economist. He also said that our allies had unreasonable expectations, as they did not provide enough weapons at Ukraine's request, delayed their delivery and wanted a quick victory. I remember that after the successful expulsion of the racists from the Kharkiv region, Zaluzhny asked for 300 tanks

to drive them further to the border. Were they delivered? Yes, they were, six months later, and then with a big creak. The time was wasted, the opportunity was lost. I said: "A spoonful is a spoonful." Our partners and allies, the collective West, played it safe in their fear of nuclear war and partially succumbed to Putin's blackmail. After all, they have nothing to lose, their soldiers are not fighting on the front lines, and Ukraine should cope as best it can. And Ukraine is doing it: successfully defending itself and launching counterattacks in the Kupiansk, Bakhmut and Avdiivka areas, advancing in Zaporizhzhya, creating bridgeheads on the left bank of the Dnipro, holding the front in the Kharkiv area, giving the occupiers nightmares with drone and missile attacks in Crimea, and clearing the Black Sea of Muscovite ships. So, not all is lost and not everything is so bad. On the contrary, a wave of a kind of perseverance, resilience, stubbornness and anger is now rising in the ranks of our soldiers, which will undoubtedly lead to future successes. We must believe in victory as they do, and each of us should do our best to bring it closer.

Armed Forces Day is a national holiday. It is a holiday with an aftertaste of bitterness, because our armed forces are now in the midst of war, and despite their successes, victories and failures, they are suffering losses. Losses of men and equipment. The loss of at least one soldier is a painful experience for their families and for every true Ukrainian. These bloody scars on the souls of our people will never be forgotten, and the Muscovites are already reaping the fruits of our hatred, burying hundreds of thousands of their thugs, and will continue to do so for a long time. We will never forget, we will never forgive our destroyed and burned towns and villages, the destitute, the killed and maimed people, the orphans and kidnapped children. Muscovites – revenge will come inevitably! Death to the enemies!

Glory to Ukraine!

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Ukrainian National Women's League of America, Branch 107



ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL

# UKRAINIAN CHRISTMAS

IN WOODSIDE

Food | Arts | Crafts | Performances | Workshops

Saturday **DECEMBER 9** 11 am – 5 pm



**The Village Hub**  
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## РІЗДВЯНІ БЛАГОСЛОВЕННЯ! Christmas Blessings!



Ми молимося за всіх, хто страждає внаслідок цієї несправедливої війни. Ми молимося за всіх, хто мужньо і жертвовно захищає Україну.

Фундація Українського Католицького Університету безмежно вдячна усім своїм жертводавцям в Америці за віддану підтримку Українського Католицького Університету впродовж цього року. Ваша моральна і фінансова допомога дозволила УКУ й надалі залишатися маяком надії у цей надзвичайно важкий час. Щиро дякуємо!

Нехай Бог благословить Вас і Вашу родину і дарує всім нам мир, радість та перемогу в наступному році!

We pray for all of those who are suffering from this unjust war.  
We pray for those who bravely defend Ukraine.

Ukrainian Catholic University Foundation is grateful to its donors in the United States for their support of Ukrainian Catholic University throughout the year. Your support has enabled UCU to continue to be a beacon of hope during this tremendously difficult time. Thank you.

May God bless you and your family and grant us all peace, joy and victory in the coming year.

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## EVENTS 2023

## DECEMBER

Ha/Su	Пн/Mo	Вт/Tu	Ср/We	Чт/Th	Пт/Fr	Сб/Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## 9 DEC UKRAINIAN CHRISTMAS IN WOODSIDE

**Ukrainian National Women's  
League of America, Branch 107**

**Where:** The Village Hub, 3154  
Woodside Rd, Woodside, CA 94062

**When:** Saturday, 11 AM — 4 PM  
Ukrainian National Women's  
League of America, Branch 107, is  
proud to present Ukrainian Christmas  
in Woodside, the Bay Area's first  
Ukrainian Christmas Festival and  
Market! The festival will feature  
Ukrainian Christmas foods, crafting  
workshops, a fine selection of goods  
from Ukrainian artisans and vendors,  
as well as live music and dance  
performances. Whether you come to  
learn more about Ukrainian traditions,  
to find that perfect holiday gift, or to  
celebrate your cultural heritage, there  
will be something for everyone!

When you buy a Ukrainian  
Christmas in Woodside T-shirt, mug,  
hat or tote bag, you will be supporting  
a national UNWLA drive for urgently  
needed medical aid to hospitals in  
Ukraine, as well as other UNWLA  
humanitarian and social initiatives.

Experience the warmth of Ukrainian  
culture and indulge in the rich flavors  
of our cuisine. Don't miss out on  
borscht, varenyky, kovbasa, sweet  
poppy seed buns and many more!

Immerse yourself in the art of  
crafting traditional Ukrainian doll  
figures at our captivating Motanka  
workshop.

Learn to create intricate, nature-  
inspired ornaments with expert  
artisans, adding a touch of Ukrainian  
tradition to your holiday decor.

Join us for a creative journey, where  
you can design and paint your unique  
ornaments, leaving a personalized  
touch on your holiday decorations.

Celebrate the season with joy  
and capture it all in our Christmas  
photo booth. Don't forget to swing  
by between 11 am and 1:30 pm to  
catch up with our dear friend Iryna  
Novosyolova and snap a fantastic  
Christmas photo!

Celebrate with us as our talented  
performers bring music, Ukrainian  
traditions, and fun to the stage,  
creating an entertaining experience  
for all to enjoy with Julia Houk (violin),  
Sophia Sokolovych (violin), Lesia Houk  
(piano), Sofia Ishchuk (bandura, Zoloti  
Maky Ukrainian Dance Ensemble,  
Ivanna Taratula Filipenko (Ukrainian-  
American mezzo-soprano) and her  
daughter, Juliana Filipenko (lyric  
soprano), Dylan Wojsiat (cello)!

### Tickets

General Admission: **Free**

Food Pre Order: **\$25**

Workshops: **\$20**

<https://branch107.unwla.us/>

## 16 DEC UKRAINIAN VECHORNYTSI

**Ukrainian American Coordinating  
Council, Ukrainian Event Center  
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**Where:** Ukrainian Event Center and  
Music Hall, 345 7<sup>th</sup> St, San Francisco,  
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**When:** Saturday, 5 PM — 10 PM

What is waiting for you:

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Evening parties have a charitable  
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shirt

**Tickets: \$75.00**

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## 25 DEC CHRISTMAS

## 24 FEB SKOFKA — NORTH AMERICAN TOUR 2024

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