



Ukrainian Studies Newsletter

At the University of Washington



Issue 7, June 2014

News from USEC

During winter and spring quarters 2014 Ukraine’s Euromaidan Revolution and its aftermath continued capturing our attention and mobilized our efforts to accurately comment on what was happening on the Independence Square in Kyiv to the American audience. All the events related to things Ukrainian on campus reflected the tumultuous and groundbreaking times in Ukraine. The Ellison Center of Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies hosted two roundtables devoted to Ukraine, one in January and another one in April; the Russian Youth Organization hosted its own panel in which two members of USEC, Dr. Eugene Lemcio (SPU) and Prof. Laada Bilaniuk, were presenters. Our Committee sponsored an April 8 talk by Jennifer Carroll, a UW Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology who did her fieldwork research in Ukraine and was an eyewitness to the events on the Maidan in Kyiv. Another graduate student, Christi Anne Hofland from the Jackson School of International Studies and Evan School of Public Affairs, participated in the Annual Social Studies Leadership Retreat, giving a talk on Ukraine’s Euromaidan in mid-March and again at the UW seminar “Exploring the History and Charting the Crisis: Understanding Ukraine” that took place in April. It was uplifting to see not only students and faculty at these events but also members of the local Ukrainian community.

We are also happy to report that in the 2013-2014 academic year the Slavic Department continued offering courses in Ukrainian literature. Dr. Maria Rewakowicz taught a course “Literature of the Ukrainian Diaspora” during winter quarter and another one in spring titled “The *Other* in Ukrainian Literature: Female Characters and Authors.” The continued success of Ukrainian Studies at UW cannot happen without your active involvement and we do count on your ongoing support. To find out more how you can help, please contact Co-Chairs, Prof. James West of the UW Slavic Dept. (jdwest@uw.edu) or Dr. Maria Rewakowicz of the UW Slavic Dept. (mrewakow@uw.edu). You can also contact the UW Slavic Department at 206-543-6848 or visit the Endowment web page at: <http://slavic.washington.edu/fields/ukrainian>

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Two Panel Discussions on Ukraine

Christi Anne Hofland

1st Panel: “Ukraine’s Euromaidan Protests”

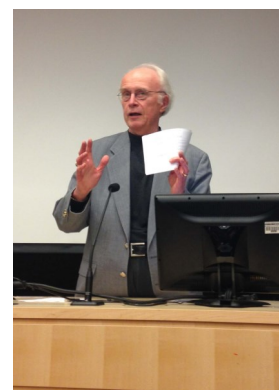
On January 21, 2014, the Ellison Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies hosted a roundtable panel discussion entitled “Ukraine’s Euromaidan Protests.” The idea to organize a panel started in early December, when the Euromaidan protests had just begun. Fall quarter was coming to an end, so the organizers decided to schedule the panel in January, thinking by that time the protests would be over, and the panel could reflect on what had happened. No one anticipated the protests would escalate to such scale by the time of the panel discussion.



The event featured four panelists. First, Dr. Scott Radnitz, director of the Ellison Center, gave an overview of the situation from a political science framework. He pointed out some differences between the Orange Revolution and the Euromaidan protests. For example, he said the Orange Revolution protested the fraudulent elections of Viktor Yanukovich, but at the time of the Euromaidan, Yanukovich had been democratically elected to the presidency. Whereas during the Orange Revolution, protesters were united by a common goal for re-elections, the goals of Euromaidan were more nebulous. He also pointed out political theory on social mobilizations, saying protests are more

likely to succeed when they are non-violent: strength in numbers is a critical factor for protests. He also discussed the need for international support, which at the time of the panel was unclear. The United States, for example, had offered only unsubstantial rhetoric.

Next on the panel, Dr. Eugene Lemcio, Professor Emeritus of the New Testament at Seattle Pacific University, spoke about religion on the Maidan. He summarized the diverse landscape of religion in Ukraine, which includes the Orthodox churches of the Moscow patriarchy as well as the Kyiv patriarchy, Roman Catholic, Ukrainian Catholic, and Protestant groups such as Baptist and Lutheran. He gave examples of prayer being a part of the protests; the Ukrainian Catholic Church, for example, set up a prayer tent. This act was against the law, but the church said they had to go to where the people were. Dr. Lemcio also briefly discussed the Jewish and Muslim communities, who were at the time keeping a lower profile, but exhibited pro-European tendencies in the Maidan.



Following Dr. Lemcio, Dr. Volodymyr Lysenko, Senior lecturer at the UW Information School and Ellison Center faculty, spoke about cyber-security in Euromaidan. He said cyber-security tactics resemble the same as during the Orange Revolution. During the Euromaidan, the Ukrainian government behaved as governments in Russia and Belarus. For example, everyone in Ukraine had to register SIM cards.

The final panelist was Dr. Olha Krupa, MPA Assistant Professor at Seattle University. She gave a clear overview of key actors in the Euromaidan, such as the protestors versus police and government versus opposition. She showed that primarily young educated students started the protests, but soon the demographics expanded to include mothers, grandmothers, young and old. She talked about a new phenomenon in the Euromaidan, Titushky (paid insurgents), who were not present in the Orange Revolution. She noted some key themes in the Euromaidan: calls for geopolitical choice and government reforms, the worsening economic situation since Yanukovich's election, the lack of leadership among protestors, and social media that presented too much information and not enough analysis.



The panelists' presentations were followed by a question and answer session.

Audience members included university students and faculty as well as community members, with strong representation from Seattle's Ukrainian American community. The question and answer session was interrupted midway when a member of the audience read a twitter post saying the first protestor had been shot and killed by live ammunition from riot police.

2nd Panel: "Ukraine and Russia: Regional and Global Implications"

On April 10, the Ellison Center hosted a second panel discussion in response to rising tensions between Russia and Ukraine following the annexation of Crimea on March 17. The panel was titled, "Ukraine and Russia: Regional and Global Implications." It sought to address the questions, what is going on? What is Russia trying to achieve? What does this mean for relations between regional states and the wider international community? As with the previous discussion, this event consisted of four panelists: Dr. Arista Cirtautas, Dr. Chris Jones, Dr. Volodymyr Lysenko, and PhD candidate Will Murg. The presentations were as follows:

Dr. Scott Radnitz, Director of the Ellison Center
Overview of the Ukraine/Crimea/Russia Situation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dq4itxfCFQ0>

Arista Cirtautas, Affiliate Faculty, International Studies
Jackson School of International Studies

Europe's Role in the Ukraine Crisis

(no video available)

Chris Jones, Associate Professor, International Studies
Jackson School of International Studies

Security Implications of Ukraine/Crimea/Russia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErwvkLUBAuo>

Volodymyr Lysenko, Lecturer, International Studies
Jackson School of International Studies

The Euromaidan Perspective on Crimea

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyEB2jnJQRE>

Will Murg, Doctoral Candidate, Political Science
University of Washington

Implications of Crimea for Russian Domestic Politics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6tBPTXP-fc>

As with the previous roundtable, the panelists' presentations were followed by a question and answer session. Tensions in Ukraine were mirrored by tensions during the question and answer session, which was monopolized by commentaries from attendees holding pro-Putin views.

UW Graduate Student Shares Experiences of EuroMaidan

Jennifer J. Carroll



From the end of November, 2013, until late March, 2014, my life was consumed by the EuroMaidan protests. I had been living in Kyiv, Ukraine, for nearly 8 months when the demonstrations began. My apartment was located only 15 minutes away from the barricades, if you travelled by foot. Hardly a day went by when I was not inside the barricades, documenting the activity inside.

My research connections offered me an unusual level of access to the inner workings of EuroMaidan. I was in Ukraine to conduct my dissertation research on drug use and addiction treatment, and most of my primary contacts came from local NGOs and advocacy groups. They were socially active, politically aware, and, following the genesis of anti-government protests in Kyiv, heavily involved in EuroMaidan.

On Tuesday, April 8, 2014, I was invited by the Endowment for Ukrainian Studies, the Department of Slavic Studies, and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Washington to give a public lecture on the EuroMaidan movement. With the aid photographs, detailed maps, and stories of my personal experiences, I offered a complete overview of the EuroMaidan protests, from the earliest events in November to then-president Viktor Yanukovich's decision to flee the country and the subsequent political fallout.

EuroMaidan was and remains much too big to discuss in a single hour. Unable to share everything that I felt needed to be shared, I chose to focus on four significant observations that I made throughout the course of the protests—observations that reveal much about the character of the activists who gathered in Kyiv's Independence Square and of the government forces that tried to oppress them. First, I used concrete examples of both brute police force and low-stakes terrorism to show how Yanukovich-led government forces sought to incite fear and further violence from the protesters. Next, I spoke about the central role that money played in the moral narrative of EuroMaidan, a protest movement motivated by political corruption and shaped by the actions of thugs, soldiers, and mercenaries for government hire. With photographs from EuroMaidan events and stories of the diverse individuals I met and came to know inside the barricades, I demonstrated how successfully Ukrainians were mobilized across gender, age, regional, and class divides.

Finally, and most important of all, I tried to show EuroMaidan to my audience in Seattle as the activists in Kyiv understood it: as a declaration of dignity. EuroMaidan was not a project of war or rebellion; it was a project of creation. It constituted the re-building of society. Activists filled and curated a public library. They hosted a public and family-friendly art center. The Open University of Maidan offered educational programs in history, political science, and sociology to packed rooms that were standing room only. Activists built inside the barricades the type of society that they wished to see on the outside.

Events such as this public talk are terribly important. They not only help to raise awareness of the current crisis in Ukraine and the geo-political significance of the country. They also counter act the powerful waves of propaganda, ignorance, and misinformation that have colored the world's perspective on Ukraine with a false hue. The UW Endowment for Ukrainian Studies has my gratitude for this opportunity to share a portion of the true story of what happened at EuroMaidan.



The Russian Youth Organization Panel

The Russian Youth Organization at the UW sent an open invitation through the Internet to members of the Ukrainian Community to participate in a panel discussion on March 6 about events that eventually led to the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. I responded, not knowing until the meeting itself who the various representatives from either side would be. Consequently, I prepared to speak about claims regarding religious repression in the peninsula (for which I was somewhat qualified) and about claims regarding the state of language usage (for which I was not). To my great relief, Professor Laada Bilaniuk (a specialist on the latter at the UW) came to provide an expert's perspective. She showed convincingly that the propaganda on this subject did not correspond to the realities "on the ground" among various regions, social groups, and family units.

I reported that firsthand accounts from leaders of diverse religious confessions—Christian (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant), Jewish, and Tatar Muslim—revealed no credible evidence supporting claims that the interim government in Kyiv was trying overtly or covertly to restrict the free exercise of their faith—whatever the language. Consequently, anything to the contrary had to be the result of propaganda by local separatists and/or the Russian Federation.

Overall, others on the panel did their best to present evidence and arguments from their various disciplines and professions in what was bound to be an awkward discussion. Because the meeting was open to the public, the atmosphere became quite emotional, even confrontational, as members of each community expressed themselves on the subject—citing anecdotal evidence and personal experience rather than attempting a more dispassionate, academic case for their positions.

Eugene E. Lemcio, Ph.D.

Emeritus Professor of New Testament at Seattle Pacific University

Founder and Immediate Past Co-Chair, the Ukrainian Studies Endowment Fund at the University of Washington

If you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to the UW USE, here is how you can do it:

1. *Donate online by going to the Slavic Department website:*

<http://slavic.washington.edu/fields/ukrainian>

Click on one of the two Funds listed or on "Make a Gift". You will then be directed to various Slavic Dept. Funds, including two Ukrainian Studies Funds. You can select either **Endowed Fund for Ukrainian Studies**, created to endow a Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the UW, or, **Friends of Ukrainian Studies Fund**, which supports ongoing activities in Ukrainian Studies such as a lectures series or language and culture instruction.

2. *If you prefer, you can mail your contribution (payable to: **UW FUSF** if you want to support the **Friends of Ukrainian Studies Fund** or payable to: **UW USE** if you want to support the **Endowment Fund**) to:*

Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
M253 Smith Hall, Box 353580
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195-3580

Please indicate on your check to which Fund you would like to donate, Endowed Fund for Ukrainian Studies, or Friends of Ukrainian Studies Fund.

Pursuant to RCW 19.09, the University of Washington is registered as a charitable organization with the Secretary of State, State of Washington. For information, call the Office of the Secretary of State, 1-800-332-4483.