

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2016/05/07/ongoing-russian-ukrainian-intricacies-i.html>

Ongoing Russian-Ukrainian Intricacies (I)

MICHAEL AVERKO

5/7/2016

Diversity Among Russians and Ukrainians

It's difficult (if not impossible) for an essay to fully cover all of the related Russian-Ukrainian complexities. Hence, articles on the subject at hand serve to encourage a follow-up. Alexander Clapp's lengthy April 25 *National Interest* article «How to Join a Ukrainian Militia» has some key omissions.

Among them is Nadiya Savchenko's association with the Aidar group, which Clapp describes as the least reputable of Ukrainian nationalist militias. When compared to Clapp, some other sources are more negative on that militia. Uncritically lauded by the Obama administration and some other Western officialdom, Savchenko received Western attention after her incarceration in Russia, where she's serving a controversial sentence for complicity in the killing of two Russian journalists in eastern Ukraine. (Savchenko and Aidar are discussed in my Strategic Culture Foundation piece of this past March 17.)

Some of the Ukrainian nationalists oppose the EU – something that Clapp doesn't really get into. He notes some socially conservative thinking in the Ukrainian nationalist militias, which greatly explains their opposition to the comparatively more liberal minded EU.

Concerning the Ukrainian nationalist militias, issue can be taken with the degree of pro-Polish sentiment expressed in Clapp's article. Oleksandr Muzychko, a slain close confidant of former Right Sector leader Dmytro Yarosh, openly stated anti-Polish views, along with negative comments about Russians and Jews. Lesser known folks have said the same as well. By no means complete, the Polish support for Ukrainian nationalists isn't without second guessing in Poland. This apprehension has to do with the contemporary Ukrainian nationalist lauding of the OUN/UPA/Bandera legacy, which violently opposed Poland for a period prior to and during WW II.

With some validity, Clapp says that much of the present day pro-Stepan Bandera sentiment is ignorantly premised and doesn't in itself always reflect extremist thinking. Without being substantively contested, such ignorance on Bandera and the extremists (among his supporters) can lead to more provocative comments and action. Prior to Hitler's political ascendancy, Germans en masse were considered one of the more cultured and educated of peoples.

In alternative media, the recently appointed head of Ukraine's Rada (parliament) Andriy Parubiy, has been critically assessed for his extremist views. In contrast, some others highlight his change (over the last few years) to a different political grouping as a moderating change. Notwithstanding, it's still within reason to regard Parubiy with suspicion.

The recent appointment of Volodymyr Groysman as Ukrainian prime minister, has included a reference to his Jewish origin. His predecessor Arseniy Yatsenyuk has some Jewish background. Jews are among the prominent Ukrainian oligarchs involved with the Kiev regime. One can find varying instances of anti-Jewish behavior in Russia, Ukraine and the West. The level of this behavior varies. As the Soviet Union was breaking up and thereafter, some Jewish organizations and individuals have lauded the vastly improved condition for Jews in Russia. Likewise, Ukraine has received some kudos on that particular.

More so than in the past, modern day human rights challenges are more likely to include less of an anti-Jewish message, on account of the efforts made in highlighting and condemning anti-Jewish behavior, in conjunction with intolerant forces having other targets for disdain. With this in mind, the trumping of good conditions for Jews can serve to cover-up other human rights abuses. (Retired Israeli General Ephraim Sneh lauds Azerbaijan's treatment of Jews, as a basis for good Azeri-Israeli relations. Meantime, Azerbaijan has been the subject of numerous human rights related criticism.)

When downplaying the level of anti-Jewish manner in Kiev regime controlled Ukraine, the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko falsely claimed that Jews in Crimea (since its reunification with Russia) are barred from attending synagogue services. The likes of Euromaidan Press and StopFake probably didn't mention Poroshenko's aforementioned fallacy.

The acclaimed US journalist Robert Parry, has emphasized the suppression of ethnic Russians in Kiev regime controlled Ukraine. This is too broad of a characterization which serves as propaganda fodder for pro-Kiev regime advocates, who seek to discredit the counter-Euromaidan/pro-Russian position. This can be done by noting that Russian is spoken in Kiev regime controlled Ukraine, with some ethnic Russians expressing support for the Kiev regime over Russia.

For accuracy sake, Parry and some others should emphasize that the counter-Euromaidan/pro-Russian stance is held by some ethnic Ukrainians. The Euromaidan suspect Donbass region is mostly populated with people listed as ethnic Ukrainian. In addition to personal accounts, polling indicates that most of Crimea's ethnic Ukrainian population support that area's reunification with Russia. Since Crimea's reunification with Russia, a small percentage of Crimean residents have left for Ukraine. During this period, a greater number have migrated from Ukraine to Russia than vice-versa.

Ukrainian born ethnic Ukrainians Vladimir Medinsky and Valentina Matviyenko are appointed Russian government officials. There's the matter of political division among families with former Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic roots, as noted in Alexei Pankin's April 20 Russia Insider article «Ukraine's FM's Father-In-Law Is Russian General Who Helped Reunite Crimea With Russia».

Clapp explains the ethnic Russian participation in the Ukrainian nationalist militias as an opposition to the Russian government. These Russians come across as individuals who're the opposite of constructively critical pro-Russian advocates. Their position sidesteps numerous anti-Russian biases evident in Kiev regime controlled Ukraine (some of which are described in my July 7, 2014 Global Research article, in addition to some of my commentary in the Strategic Culture Foundation and Eurasia Review venues).



There're interesting twists and turns regarding the fighters in the Ukrainian nationalist militias. As an example, Belarusian Azov militia fighter Sergei Korotkikh, once belonged to a party that sought to restore the Russian Empire. Several sources have described him as a neo-Nazi.

I respectfully question Clapp's claim that approximately half of the Aidar militia are ethnic Russians. An earlier *BBC* piece notes a Chechen (not ethnic Russian) presence in that militia.

Clapp quotes Aidar fighters invoking the name of Allah. Could Clapp be lumping together Chechen Russian nationals with ethnic Russians? On the subject of Chechens fighting in Ukraine, the referenced *BBC* piece and some other sources say that this ethnic group has been more evident on the counter-Euromaidan/pro-Russian leaning Donbass rebel side than the Kiev regime's.