



RECENT INTERVIEWS: V. YUSHCHENKO, Y. TYMOSHENKO, A. KWAŚNIEWSKI, V. ADAMKUS

### “Fate of Freedom in Eastern Europe” Conference



On 22-23 September 2016, the [European Civilization Chair](#) at the Natolin (Warsaw) campus of the College of Europe hosted the major international conference "The Fate of Freedom in Eastern Europe: Autocracy – Oligarchy – Anarchy?". Find out more [here](#).

### Interview with Mr. Mykola Ryabchuk



We have already interviewed a number of prominent figures including V. Yushchenko, Y. Tymoshenko and A. Kwaśniewski. We present fragments of the interview with a reputed Ukrainian public intellectual, Mykola Ryabchuk. Find out more [here](#).

### Publication opportunities



We are cooperating with three journals to prepare special issues related to the 3R project. Find out more [here](#).

### February 2017. The Final 3R conference in Natolin



“The Three Revolutions. Portraits of contemporary Ukraine” will be hosted by the College of Europe, Natolin. Find out more [here](#).

## “Fate of Freedom in Eastern Europe” Conference – a summary



On 22-23 September 2016, the [European Civilization Chair](#) at the Natolin (Warsaw) campus of the College of Europe hosted the major international and interdisciplinary conference "The Fate of Freedom in Eastern Europe: Autocracy – Oligarchy – Anarchy?".

Speakers came from Belarus, Canada, Finland, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, the UK and the USA. Over 100 people – students and guests from Warsaw and beyond – were present as historians of various eras, political scientists, philosophers, politicians and diplomats discussed the potential for stable government founded on liberty in the region

from Poland to Russia, from the Middle Ages to the present.

Following a welcome from the Vice-Rector of the Natolin Campus, Mrs Ewa OŚNIECKA-TAMECKA, and an introduction from the Chairholder, Professor Richard BUTTERWICK-PAWLIKOWSKI, the keynote lecture was delivered by Professor Robert FROST of the University of Aberdeen on "Liberty and Self-Government. The Polish-Lithuanian Union and the Embodiment of the Renaissance Commonwealth". Six panels considered the problem of freedom in the region in relation to the themes of oligarchy, citizenship, diversity, anarchy and sovereignty, autocracy, and democracy, before the summing up at a round-table session chaired by Professor Andrzej NOWAK, one of the College's visiting professors. Several of the participants are also involved in the Three Ukrainian Revolutions (3R) project carried out in the European Civilization Chair.

Much discussion focused on the relative roles of exterior and internal factors in the blossoming and fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; opinions were divided over the potential of its legacy and memory to bring together the Belarusian, Lithuanian, Polish and Ukrainian nations in the twenty-first century. Considerable attention was devoted to the present condition of liberty in Belarus and Ukraine, while the potential for democracy at various times in Russian history was also explored. One of the principal themes that emerged from the discussions was the inadequacy of liberalism when deprived of an underlying sense of the common good (*res publica*) pursued by a political community of citizens with shared cultural reference-points. This was linked by some speakers to the need to pursue republican visions of liberty that include both positive and negative understandings of freedom. Some participants emphasized the need for independence as the *sine qua non* of liberty; others explored how freedom could be cultivated in various kinds of voluntary union between political communities.

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## Interview with Mr. Mykola Ryabchuk



In recent weeks, the 3R interviewer, Mrs. Iwona Reichardt, has had a conversation with a well-known Ukrainian public intellectual, Mykola Ryabchuk. The interview began with questions about Mr. Ryabchuk's personal background and other factors affecting his political formation. Then Mr. Ryabchuk reflected on the general atmosphere of the Revolution on Granite, notable participants, and described a rather disturbing incident when football fans approached the Maidan square. He expressed his doubt whether the Revolution on Granite should be indeed called a fully-fledged revolution as it failed to lead to any

deeper, structural changes. In the interviewee's opinion, the student-protesters' naïveté was the primary reason for missing the opportunity to push for more radical institutional changes. Nevertheless, he pointed out that importance of the Revolution on Granite consisted of displaying "certain ability for mobilization".

Commenting on another display of such mobilization, the Orange Revolution, Mr. Ryabchuk, pointed out that in comparison to the Revolution on Granite, it was better organised. At least partially, it was a result of the institutionalization of opposition and its preparation to lead the protests. In the interviewee's opinion, decent leadership and the presence of foreign observers were two significant reasons for peacefulness of the protests. He has also noted an unusual degree of solidarity between the protesters and their willingness to share, for example, accommodation and other facilities.

Due to its spontaneous beginnings, the Revolution of Dignity had few evident leaders. Mr. Ryabchuk suggested that the opposition politicians chosen to negotiate with Yanukovich's government seemed the only viable representatives. However, he has also pointed out that ever since the Orange Revolution, the Ukrainians tend to treat their politicians with an even greater reserve.

When asked about the Ukrainian idiosyncrasies common to all three revolutions, the interviewee implied that while the revolutions had a perceptible European imprint, the answer lies in the combination of idealized idea of freedom, strive for dignity and skepticism towards the authorities. He also remarked that in case of the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity, they were "caused by some kind of brutal breaking of rules by the authorities of their own rules". He also pointed out that the revolutions suggested in spite of extensive work by Yanukovich's spin-doctors.

Towards the end of the interview, Mr. Ryabchuk commented on the recurrence of the UPA tradition. Being fully aware about the perception of the UPA in Poland and the West, he distanced himself from the discourse, but pointed out that there was a perceptible shift of emphasis towards sacrifice, patriotism, hopeless fighting with a stronger opponent. Importantly, the people inspired by this discourse no longer accept the last part of the slogan "Glory to Ukraine, glory to the heroes, death to the enemies", which points to "a healthy social core".

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## Publication opportunities



In cooperation with three journals – New Eastern Europe, Przegląd Natoliński and Wrocławski Rocznik Historii Mówionej – the 3R team prepares the special issues with content related to the 3R project.

In order to learn more about the topics, deadlines, and style guidelines please contact us at [3r.natolin@coleurope.eu](mailto:3r.natolin@coleurope.eu).

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## “Three Revolutions. Portraits of the contemporary Ukraine” – February 2017



Building upon inspiring presentations followed by fruitful debates during the conference “Revolutions, Maidans and Protests in contemporary Ukraine. The current state of research and future directions”, the 3R team would like to invite you to another international conference organized within the framework of the 3R project.

The event preliminarily entitled “Three Revolutions. Portraits of the contemporary Ukraine” will take place on **27-28 February 2017** at the College of Europe, Natolin campus and is meant to be the culmination of our project. You may register and obtain further information by sending an email at [3r.natolin@coleurope.eu](mailto:3r.natolin@coleurope.eu).

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