

Interview with Natalia Ligachova (NL). Interviewer: Roman Kabachyi. Place of record: Kyiv.

RK: What are the main stages in your life that you consider important? Who shaped you?

NL: I am 54 years old and I was shaped not only by the history of independent Ukraine; a certain time of my life took place in Soviet times. In general, the main person who laid some consciousness of reality in me was my mother. Her way of life was a tough opposition to Stalinism, but then she had a romantic perception of Lenin: "Lenin was good, Stalin was bad." Regarding the last one, her perception was formed under the influence of a peer who was a member of the party, and when it was Khrushchev's speech at the 20th Congress, and members of the party were acquainted with him, and the rest do not. Mom's aunt talk her more or less everything about it. Secondly, thank God, we did not have anyone in the family who was repressed, but my mother faced with those who were repressed. She remembers how friends were coming and taking the men in front of her. So that is what formed the opposition to Stalin in me, and then there were maybe some books or "thick" magazines. When I was 16, it was somewhere in the 1978-1979 year, I wrote the story "The excess", I felt that something in the Soviet Union was going wrong, and that the intellectual elite that was forming in in the contradiction to the values that should have been. I tried to listen to the "voices" as a child, while I was still at school.

RK: Where did you grow up?

NL: I grew up in Nikopol. I was born in Vladivostok, but I am Ukrainian, it is just that my mother has lived there for 10 years. When I was 3 years old, we moved back to Nikopol. I was reading "between the lines". I remember a book by Ilya Ehrenburg. I remember certain things, details of the books and magazines. In this way I was showed that something was going wrong in the Soviet Union. I was also fascinated by philosophy from the age of 12. And also That was also something that formed my critical perception. I was also reading the works of Lenin and at the time of the first university year I understood that in Lenin's works those

**Influences**  
History of  
Independent  
Ukraine  
Family  
(mother)

**History**  
Soviet Union  
Khrushchev's  
speech to the  
20<sup>th</sup> Party  
Congress.195

**Influences**  
Stories  
about  
repressed  
people in  
Stalin's time  
Books

**Influences**  
Book by Ilya  
Ehrenburg  
Philosophy  
Lenin's  
works

limited liberty of speech, that was at that time, it was freed only “temporarily”. On the first year at the university I wrote a paper where it was said that it was Lenin himself who said that the liberty of speech — it is the value of the democratic society and that those limits that were implied, they were provoked by the necessity of the counterrevolution, but in the reality now everything is quite and it is needed to be returned.

RK: It can be even said that this paper had something in common with “Internationalism or russification” by Ivan Dziuba [the appeal of the dissident Ivan Dziuba to the soviet government on the purpose of “Lenin’s politics” that was meant to be, as in the late USSR, lead to the destroy local languages]...

NL: Yes-yes, it had something in common with Dziuba. But I have got some problems after it, I was studying at the faculty of journalism at the University of Kyiv. I had some support from several professors and things settled somehow. I was talked to. I was not called [examination] — it was forbidden for me to go to Czech Republic: there was a practice of student exchange, 7 students go there, and 7 students come from them. And they did not let me (even though I was a class monitor) and another student. We went to the KGB, but they said that “there are no complaints on you”. And now I understand why they did not let me go, it was tied to my views, before the 4<sup>th</sup> year I stand well, there were something else: during this trip professors accused a student in homosexuality and as I am a very direct person they could apprehend that I would not accept manipulations.

But when we had a construction team on the first year, several people with whom I was friends, they also had hostility towards Stalinism and Stalin, and we faced that some of our classmates have another opinion on it, and that was weird. Shock, because for me it was an axiom, I thought that Lenin was not ok, though I did know a lot...

During the entrance I frequented some clubs, I can even say that they were decadent, and I was learning a lot from them, but in a certain moment I became afraid. I understood that I was entering the rotation of people who are on the edge of being imprisoned, I did not want that. I say this honestly — I was afraid, I cut myself off their communication, but they were somewhere.

**Influences**  
Education

**Influences**  
Dissident  
clubs

Education  
(teachers)

In my school there were several teachers who formed certain critical thinking, with literature, etc.

Of course, the year 1991 had a big importance for me — the situation in Moscow, the coup of August. Till that moment I was not the supporter of Ukraine's independence — I accepted the democratization, Horbachev's perestroika. The democratic development was very important to me. I did not support "national liberation movement", it was too far away for me. But when the putsch took place, and as a result Ukraine announced about its independence I started to hail it, because I understood that we were going different ways. After that I became an ardent advocate of the independence.

RK: Did the church have an influence in your education? Or it did not "exist" as such?

NL: The church? My grandmother, Irina Alekseevna, and my grandfather were very pious. The factor of church existed. They baptized me, because as my mother was in Vladivostok she did not baptize me, and when we moved here I was 4-5 years old and they secretly baptized me, because all this was not welcomed. I did not apprehend it, even if my grandmother was very pious, and there were religious books and icons (we lived at her place), but in principle, I was an atheist. It was something related to granny that I respected, but I argued about it, because I was pioneer and then Komsomol member. It was only at the mature age that I changed a little, — now I am an agnostic, I believe that there is something divine. I go to church, I was baptized in the Orthodox Church, of course, but now I go to the Greek-Catholic one. I do not consider myself as a true believer, I did confess a few times...

RK: Maybe, it is impossible to grow up in the soviet times and be a believer as our grannies were?

NL: The destinies shape differently; there were believers at that time, I have never had an opposition, though.

#### History

GKChP in August 1991  
Gorbachev's perestroika

Declaration of Independence of Ukraine in August 1991

#### Influences Religion

RK: Nikopol is an industrial town, you left it with a release or you love your little motherland?

NL: No, I do not love much my motherland. I have my relative there, my childhood went there, and this town is related to many nostalgic memories, but I early understood that I want to live in another scale. When I had the choice to study in Moscow or in Kyiv, that was 1970<sup>th</sup>, deep USSR, I did not want to go to Moscow, because I thought that it was too far away and too large-scale. Moscow is a big city, I did not want to live in a small one, but Kyiv seemed to me like something in the middle. Nikopol is an industrial town, but it is, as any provincial town, grey. I visited Kyiv being a pupil, and I understood that I want to live in such atmosphere.

**Influences**  
Nikopol

Kyiv

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Revolution on the Granite

**Revolution on the Granite**

RK: You chose Kyiv — how do you relate to the Revolution on Granite?

NL: I did not participate. I was working on the television at that time, in the cinema redaction, we were doing the program “Everything about cinema”. I apprehended it positively, was present on the first meeting of “Movement” (People’s Movements) when it was only being born in 1988, when they started to talk about Vasyl Stus for the first time, started the program about it with Viacheslav Bruhovetskyi. I harked to it, but it was not close to me — as I say till 1991 I did not support national movement. I saw the democratization of Gorbachev’s persona. I saw “Look” [political program of Vladyslav Listiev in Moscow, he was killed in 1995] and was geared up on this wave.

**Granite History**  
The first conventions of People’s Movement of Ukraine

**Influences**  
Mikhail Gorbachev „Look” political program of Vladislav

**Place**  
October Revolution Square

NL: Yes.

RK: Did you know those students who protested on the October Revolution square?

NL: At that time no. Later I met Volodia Cheremes, but it was after the events. It was completely different circle of people; I was not related to it.

**Orange  
Revolution**

RK: Is it possible to call you a human of the Russian culture, as Byelorussian writer Svetlana Alekseevich?

NL: In principle, yes. I grew up on the Russian literature, I read a lot of western authors, especially after I had my 12 years birthday — those who were available: Max Frisch, Hesse... but first of all I grew up on Russian literature. Ukrainian literature ... Lesia Ukrainka yes, Marko Vovchok and Ivan Franko — they are not my kind of literature. At that time we have not knew Hvylovyi yet, we read him a little at the university, but still I cannot say that I am a big fan of Ukrainian literature, but not the contemporary one. When such figures as Andruhovych, Zabuzhko, Zhadan appeared — I was reading all of them, my daughter reads them as well. Since the Soviet times Lina Kostenko was some kind of divine figure, I remember very well, when we were reading “Marusia Churai” — Kostenko became the ideal for me very early. Plus, I met her husband while working on television.

**Influences**  
Russian  
literature  
Western  
literature  
(Max Frisch,  
Hermann  
Hesse)  
Lina  
Kostenko's  
literary work

RK: Wasn't she the ideal for because she was not printed?

NL: This shade was also important, but she is a genius poet, and firstly I valued what she wrote.

RK: You recalled that you assisted to the first conventions of the Movement. Did you consider certain members narrow-minded nationalists?

NL: Because I was working on the television in such intellectually strong editorial office of cinema programs I started to communicate with Skuratovskii, Dziuba, Bruhovetskyi. I met Skuratovskii even earlier — when I was on my 3<sup>rd</sup> year at the university, his wife Irina Panchenko taught us Russian literature, she liked me, and she suggested writing a paper

**Revolution on  
the Granite**

“Protopop Avacuum”, very unexpected subject. I wrote it, got the second place on the Republican Olympiad, and in the certain moment I met Skuratovskii. And as from the 1<sup>st</sup> year I was interested in this tendency of dissidence in the Soviet times, it was very interesting for me — I have never had non-acceptance to Movement, never. It just was not close to me. I was worried by democratic processes, but not national liberation. I related to them positively because they were against the soviet system, but it seemed to me that the perestroika main is much more important, than the o of Ukraine.

RK: One of the demands of the rebels was to make our men serve on the territory of Ukraine...

NL: I supported it, the same as the Masol’s resignation. We went to the Maidan to give them to eat. But for me it was “someone somewhere”, even if I accept it, I do not participate.

RK: Ok, after Ukraine declared its independence, there was a feeling that the new Ukrainian journalism should be born with it?

NL: Coincidentally, in 1991, in August, when the putsch took place and the independence was announced, a month later I gave birth to my daughter, Katia. Therefore, I fell out of the active process; I was sitting with a baby. But in 1992, when there were difficulties with money I started to work as an external author of the first independent newspaper “Kievskiy Vedomosti”. So one can say that I am one of those who were creating this independent journalism. I was not engaged in political processes — I was reading everything, there were a popular evening newspaper — “Vechirnyi Kyiv”, I had friends who worked there, Ivshyna in “Prapor Komunizmu”, then she moved to “Kievskiy Vedomosti” as well.

RK: What was more difficult to do — start new project as “Vedomosti” or restart the existed one? UT1 is still in process of reforming... The newspaper “KoZa” (“The Independence”) also tried to reborn from “Komsomolskoe Znamia”, but it did not turn out well.

#### Actors

Vitaliy Masol

#### Place

Independence

Square in Kyiv

#### Activity

Supplies (food)

#### Influences

Work

NL: New private editions were better. The regeneration was made by shots of that soviet epoch, plus there was tendency in our national consciousness that started at the same time and where did it lead? If we take, for example, “Rabochiaia Gazeta”, it a soviet edition, and “KoZa” also in the end became soviet, and “Vechirnii Kyiv”.

Nevertheless, despite the attitude that a lot of people have towards Sergei Kichigin [the chief editor of “Kievskiy Vedomosti” in 1993-1996] there were three pillars that were important: “Kievskiy Vedomosti”, then Aleksandr Shvets spited and created “Vseukrainskie Vedomosti”, then “Zerkalo nedeli” appeared and finally “The Day”. I think that these editions made the foundation for the new Ukrainian journalism. Regardless what they became.

RK: Was there a feeling of the liberty of speech in 1990<sup>th</sup>?

NL: Yes, yes, yes. It was even not in 1990<sup>th</sup>, but in the end of 1980<sup>th</sup>, the liberty of speech was something that had a great value and a great importance, because after the arrival of Gorbachev all archives were opened, “thick journals” started to appear, we started to read Solzhenitsyn, it was such an outburst of information. Actually, besides that we felt nothing from “perestroika”. A lot of people were creating cooperatives and stuff like that, but as was very far from such things, for me perestroika was that fact that a lot of information came out thanks to the liberty of speech. I appreciated it. I had one funny moment — when I was on my last months of pregnancy I went to see my mum in Nikopol. There I was put in the maternity hospital, so I was there, in my native town and suddenly there is a putsch. I hear everything about it in this maternity hospital, there people who come to visit me, it was forbidden to come up on the second floor, so my classmates were like how are you, how is your health? And I: how can you ask about my health if there is such things are happening right now; and was hoping that everything would be fine, that finally we would take the path of democracy and there are fear and horror! For me democracy it is the access to the information and the liberty of speech.

**History**  
Gorbachev's perestroika  
The freedom of speech at the end of 1980's

**History**  
GKChP in August 1991

RK: Can we call the beginning of 1990<sup>th</sup> “wild outburst of the liberty of speech”?

NL: Then yes, you could call it like that. Because at that time there were such Mass Media that I already named or even “KoZa” and “Vseukrainskie Vedomosti, when they still were not under the power of big capitals and a lot was decided by editors and editions. We felt it on the television as well, when the severe pressure of the Party left and it became very interesting to work. I came to the television in 1984, I worked in the department of social research, and in 1987 I moved to the edition of cinema programs and stayed there till 1984. I saw myself the zone of permitted to widen. It turned out that I was the first in 10 year to invite — it was forbidden to invite on TV Romana Balaiana, I did not know about that — and here is his film that came out and I decided interview him. I asked nobody, I just called and he agreed. And it turned out that a lot of older colleges wanted to interview him, but they could not catch the moment when it was already permitted. And it came out as who was I, and how was possible...

RK: What did happen when everything started to move away, was it related to Kuchma as such, oligarch?

NL: It started with the premiership of Petr Lazarenko. In 1996 when Lazarenko came to Ky the first “reservation” started to appear, and also there was a government pressure on Media. But then when they started to remove Lazarenko and started to put pressure on “Pravda Ukrainy” started to run its course.

**History**  
Leonid  
Kuchma’s rule  
(1994–2005)

RK: So, at that time politicians finally realized that Mass Media can be an influential tool?

NL: There was a precedent in 1994 when during the electoral campaign Kravchuk tried to secure the channel Gravis that was under Kuchma. My classmate, Olya Tkachuk, was its general director. But Kravchuk tried to close it because the channel was criticizing him. It did not turn out well, there were sharp indignation, but there was the first try. But such pressure and reserved campaign started with Lazarenko.



RK: Did they try to close certain Mass Media, to shut them up?

NL: I cannot remember concrete example in time of Lazarenko... Latter Petr Shevchenko from "Kievskie Viedomosti" was killed [the reporter of "Kievskie Viedomosti" from Lugansk disappeared 12.03.1997, and 1303 he was found hanged. Pavel Lazarenko was prime-minister of Ukraine from 28.05.1996 till 18.06.1997]. There was a famous suit of Surkis to "Vseukrainskie Viedomosti" that were closed when Ruban left, but that was in 1998. There were also the persecutions toward "Pravda Ukrainy" of Lazarenko in late Kuchma's presence. The pressure was put on "The Day", there were always some tax inspectors, they could close them, but they did not. In any event we spent the whole electoral campaign of 1998-1999 the rough rise of an oppositional edition. We [Natalia Ligacheva worked in the newspaper "The day" from 1996 till 2001 and during the last year she was substitute of the chief editor Larysa Ivshyna] did not hold back ourselves, for me it was freely to work, because we were writing what we wanted.

#### History

The Ukrainian presidential election of 1999

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The Orange Revolution

Orange Revolution

RK: But in any event to 2004<sup>th</sup> they tightened the screws on everybody...

NL: But yes. The independent editions such as "Ukrainska pravda" that appeared, but practically the press and television were subjugated.

RK: Was there a feeling of hopelessness?

NL: In principle, yes, there was a feeling of hopelessness. It was easier for us because "Telekritika" appeared in 2001 and we were working in absolute freedom and in the way we wanted without any fear before the government. But in the summer 2004, I remember that such feeling appeared — we did not believe that Maidan and the revolution could happen. When we disclosed the manipulation, we were fighting, the first monitoring appeared in 2003 and

#### Emotions

Hopelessness  
Fear

#### Actors

Telekritika  
Victor  
Yanukovich

#### Internal policy

Manipulation

#### Activity

Writing tough articles  
"Journalistic revolution" in

wrote tough articles, as Valka Rudenko wrote, “Telekritika flames with the fire of revolution” — they mocked at as in such way. There was a fear that Yanukovych would win the election and thought like, should I leave this country, were coming, that there was no future. But we were fighting for the “journalistic revolution”.

RK: Can you tell about it in more details? When you founded “Telekritika” you understood that we need to consolidate journalists? You started to create media society... Not in every post-soviet country you can find so many media organization.

NL: I came to “Telekritika”, because in “The Day” we could write freely, but when Marchuk did not make it on the second round, he went to collaborate with Kuchma. Tania Korobova and several other authors left right away. I stayed relating till certain moment to the ideas of Ivshyna that we do not stop criticizing the government, but we do it in a less rough for defending the theory of “little affairs”. Gradually. I did not accept that he negotiated with Kuchma and I did not go to vote in the second round, where Sumonenko and Kuchma were, but I accepted the turn of the newspaper from tough critics to more moderate. Concerning television during the long period I did not feel constraint, I was writing what I was thinking, but maybe expressing myself in a more soft way. But when in 2000<sup>th</sup> the assassination of Gongadze and Pinchuk happened then the channel ICTV invited the trio —Dmitrii Kulikov (now he is a Russian political engineer), Nikolai Kniahzytskii and Dmitria Kisiekiowa from Moscow and that started to bleach Kuchma in different way, I started to write and noticed for the first time that my texts did not pass Ivshyna. That was a shock for me.

**History**  
The Ukrainian  
presidential  
election of  
1999

I do not know by Ivshyna was driven, but it seemed to Marchuk and Ivshyna are friends with Kiseliov. I do not know was it driven by Marchuk’s work for National Security and Defense Councilor by this friendship. In any event there were a certain amount of articles written by me that were not accepted. Regardless my corrections that I was trying to put. It started to irritate so I published a few of them on the “Ukrainska Pravda” under the transparent pseudonym Tania Lapina. One of these articles came out on 31th of December 2000. And then Oleg Ivantsov, the substitute on politics, sent for me (I was a substitute on social problems) and said that Larisa Alekseevna asked not to do so the next time. As it turned out

letter Larisa just asked to talk and do not recall her. But I hurtled Ivshyna. There were a tense situation in “The Day” and I decided to leave. I tried to join the project of Yurchuk from Yurii Kravchenko [the minister of Interior ministry of Ukraine during 1995-2001, was related to the Gongadze case], went to them on the interview. It was a short project, it was closed very quickly when it came out with a big portrait of Kravchenko.

I did not like the conversation with them, so I stayed in “The Day”, I continued writing columns on critics of television. I was read by different embassies, they started to invite me — Germans, Americans. I became good friends with the press attaché of German embassy Sabina Stehr, she loved to gather journalists, writers, poets. She spoke well Russian, she organized parties at her place. In a certain moment I said to her that I want to leave “The Day”, but I do not know how to do so, and what to do next, maybe start a journal on television critics... She promised to think about it and said after a while: we do not have money, so the newspaper is out of the question, because it is expensive, but it is possible to talk about Internet with Americans. She presented me to Mark Tamplin, the first counsellor of US ambassador. He said right away that he could give you a cheque on 25 thousand dollars. At that time I was far from project administrating, so that was incredible for me. I was contacting at that time with Lavrik, Alazonia, Pihovshek; it was Kostia Mihailichenko who helped me to write the first project, he work with Biacheslav Pihovshek. The project was on one page: the half of the page it was the description, another one — budget.

It took me several months to find with whom I could do it, because I did not understand how I could create NGO, I was afraid that some kind of dependency would appear. Finally, Americans suggested to me to work with Internews - Ukraine, I met them and finally started “Telekritika”. In the beginning there were 2-3 projects from Internews, we in some way continued what I started in “The Day”, to talk more specifically it was critics on certain TV programs, on the other hand we could not let pass “Ukraine without Kuchma” with censorship of this kind. In 2002 there were protests against Medvedchuk’s affairs that appeared and were related to the Manifest against the censorship, all kinds of meetings, the creation of the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine, and before that against the creation of the Commission of Journalistic ethics. Journalistic work started to combine with social activities. We together with the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine and the Kyiv Media Tra

## History

Protest action  
„Ukraine  
without  
Kuchma”

“Journalistic  
revolution” in  
October 2004

Union participated in the reorientation (Sergei Guz' headed the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine, and Egor Sobolev — the Kyiv Media Trade Union), Sobolev started to prepare "journalistic revolution". There were hearings on the censorship, the liberty of speech there was the preparation in the parliament to put the law on censorship into the legislation. Then, when the Orange revolution started, we participated in the movement of broadcasting.

RK: So, on the one hand, the government continued to tighten the screws, but you say to it: we do not agree? Can you tell in more details about "journalistic revolution"?

NL: Starting from 2002 the protest against "temniki" [the orders to Mass Media from the President's administration how to elucidate events, their appearance is related to Viktor Medvedchuk]. Roman Skrypin wrote that it is impossible, several people left their work places — Andrei Shevchenko left the New Channel, Oles' Kovalchuk left Tonis, all this was supported by Mykola Tomenko, who headed the committee on the liberty of speech in Verhovna Rada. There were certain successes — we brought in a bill on the ban of censorship, there were hearings in the parliament and "temniki" were read from the rostrum of Verhovna Rada. But the situation on the TV channels was not changing much even though under the Manifest there were 500 signatures. In 2003 Shevchenko, Henyk-Hlibovyt'skyi, Skrypin and several other managed to persuade Poroshenko to create the 5<sup>th</sup> channel. And when we were creating in 2002 Kyiv Media Trade Union it was headed at first by Andrii Shevchenko, who left the 5<sup>th</sup> channel, he could not be the head of the Trade Union. It was needed to find him the replacement. And during these discussions Sergii Gud'z from Dniprodzerzhyn'sk (now Kamianske) he entered the organizing committee on the creation of Kyiv Media Trade Union, I offered him to become a head — The Kyiv residents had their own things to do and they did not want to leave it. Gud'z agreed.

On the summer of 2004 I understood that Sergii is not capable of working with Kyiv residents, he has no authority, no one knew him. He could not work effectively with journalists from TV channels I order to make them make a statement against censorship. Sobolev got the situation when he left "Ukrainian news", he became free and could devote himself to the public activities. And then, I do not remember whose initiative it was, there were several

## History

„Journalistic revolution” in October 2004

## Actors

Kyiv Media Trade Union  
Sergii Gud'z  
Vitaliy Shevchenko  
Egor Sobolev  
Yevhen Glibovyt'skyi  
Natalia Ligachova  
Cherenko

Journalists from different TV channels

Journalists of TV channel „1+1”  
Aleksandr

people gathered at the office of Kyiv Media Trade Union — Gudz, Shevchenko, Sobolev, Glybovytskyi, me and Cherenko, who worked at that time in the “Telekritika”. We offered to Sergii to leave his post, start a new job to organize all-Ukrainian Independent Media Trade Union of Ukrain. He did not agree right away, it took us several hours to convince him. Then on this meeting we chose Egor Sobolev, who thanks to that started to work with journalist from the central channels — they were gathering in the Shevchenko Park. In principle, he was preparing this revolution. Plus, at the same time there was a pressure on the 5<sup>th</sup> channel, journalist started to fast... against that background there was a statement of 40 journalists from different channels on the fact that there are pressures and “temniki”. They came with that on the stairs of Ukrainian Independent Information agency and declared it. People from the channel “1+1” did not join them, because they wanted more rough statement. Their own. But after they did not join, the substitute of Aleksandr Rodnianskii [Vladimir] Oseledchik, “was crying and weeping”, said that he is under the danger if they make any statement. As a result, there were no statement from the journalists of “1+1”, Seven workers from this channel did not agree with such situation and they wrote letter of resignation.

RK: And Pihovshek also was working on the “1+1” at that time?

NL: Yes. We did not communicate at that time, from 2002 or 2003. He was on the side evil, he was working with Medvedchuk and Surkis. We had an article came out at that time entitled “Fonit”, she was quite important. Pihovshek was doing an everyday program “Epicenter”, plus the his politics and the one of the members of Social Democratic Party was the following — the plots they were doing more or less normal, rarely broke journalistic standards, and then Pihovshek in his part was turning everything upside down. They did not show Yushchenko for more than 100 days. They were corrupting certain journalists, it was not like on Inter that they could fire for one’s position — you do not want to do this — you do not do this; you do not want to film it — you do not film it; you do not want to voice it — you do not voice it. It was made by other people. Wachtang Kipiani was writing about techniques at the same time he was working on “1+1”. Moreover, Kuchma was under the pressure Honhadze’s death and people were not fired because of their position. They were controlling

#### Actors

Viacheslav Pichovshek

#### Activity

Media corruption

#### Actors

INTER TV channel Vakhtang Kipiani

#### History

Georgiy Gongadze’s death in 1999

everting, but specific journalists were not under the pressure. That is why they could hold themselves. Pihovshek did a lot himself, he was saying “” conditionally speaking. And journalist, some did it for money; some did not do it at all.

So, seven workers did not agree with such politics and left: Natalka Fitsych, Yulia Borisko and other we did interviews with all of them. “Journalistic revolution” happened one month before the Orange one, 22 October. One month before the second round of the elections. And, of course, everything after that everything began. Those who signed the statement made themselves obliged to keep to the standards. “Telekritika” was monitoring how everything was going. We denounced Inter that was up in arms against Aleksei Mustafi, he had his own program. We supported those who were doing well. But in the article “Fonit” I wrote that those journalists who did good stories but still they were put in the manipulative program of Pihovshek, were assisting it and legalizing it. That is the first. Secondly, there were a program about Yanukovich where it was not said about his convictions, this kind of programs about president candidates, and there were no program on Yushchenko. The program was made by Lesia Sakada-Ostrowska. We were shocked, plus Ania Herman declared about his convictions [“the mistakes of youth”], then we decided to call Lesia, we considered her as a normal human being. Ania Sherman calls her and it runs out that Sakada cries: “My family doesn’t talk to me!”, dam, how could you. Pihovshek somehow persuaded her to do such a program. And we publish this conversation with her. At that moment there was a hunger strike on the 5<sup>th</sup> channel, I came there and told about this situation with Lesia Sakada... — we lived in the situation of a pressure, statements, drilling. There were also the march on the Khreshchatyk after the closing of the 5<sup>th</sup> channel. There were a lot of people who did not believe that it was possible to change something. For example, one of those who left “1+1” Igor Skliarevskii. After the march we were discussing our next steps in “Baraban”.

RK: Is it important for journalists to be accepted or for those like Pihovshek it does not matter — he made his thing, gained money, and you live with it?

NL: Yes, it is important. But it is acclimatized in our environment, unfortunately. On the subject of Pihovshek, when all this happened, he got afraid and he started to look for the

**Internal Policy**  
Pressure  
**Event**  
March on the Khreshchatyk  
Closing of the 5<sup>th</sup> channel  
**Actors**  
People

contacts with up, and I started to talk to him for a short time. Allegedly, he became different, normal and sane mind. The new government did not accept him, so he attached himself one more time to the members of the Party of Regions and his return in your environment became impossible.

RK: Did it seem to you that Yushenko did not believe in his victory, that he did not contribute in the development of the Mass Media that was close to him, such as —“Young Ukraine”, “Without censorship”, the 5<sup>th</sup> channel survived thanks to Poroshenko...

NL: I believe that the President does not need to meddle in Mass Media. I think that when Yushenko came to power, they had giddiness because of successes, there was a lot trust and they thought that they got everything on the string. The situation was difficult both for Yushenko and Timoshenko, she had the possibility to subjugate “Vseukraiskie viedomosti”. It looked like if they staked to negotiate with the oligarchs and to buy all the presence on the TV channels. This logic could be explained somehow because since that time it became known that the newspapers do not have that much of weight and the television is much more important. And TV — it is big money that only oligarchs have. Or you need to be an oligarch, like Poroshenko, but he is greedy and that of a big oligarch, if you compare with Kolomoiskii or Firtash. Yushenko did not have big means, he was not a poor man, but he was not rich either. He was all the time on someone else’s pay. The Yushenko’s mistake was that he was convinced by Porosheko, [Aleksandr] Tretiakov, and Ira Heraschenko, as I understand, that there is no need to create social broadcasting, but that is enough to control those that already exist. There were no need to develop “our” Mass Media, but it was needed to break the system in order to make the new pluralism born. Just imagine if from 2005 the government would normally invest in the development of social broadcasting in order to a make megaphone for the society. In that case western donors would also participate and this megaphone would be able to compete with oligarchs’ channels, it would set its own rules. Instead of it they were controlling the 1th channel and were buying the presence time on the private channels. Timoshenko was buying and she is doing it till this very moment,

#### Actors

Victor  
Yushchenko  
Yulia  
Tymoshenko  
  
TV channels  
The oligarchs  
Petro  
Poroshenko  
Aleksandr  
Tretiakov  
Iryna  
Herashchenko



Yuschenko when he was in power, it was free. When Yanukovych came it was the same thing, when Poroshenko came — no one criticizes him anymore.

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## The Revolution of Dignity

## Revolution of Dignity

RK: It is said that one of the achievements of Orange Revolution was the affirmation of the liberty of speech. But when in the time of Yanukovych the pressure on Mass Media started one more time, it was the “oligarchic pluralism” that was operating, that something went wrong besides the absence of the public TV?

NL: This liberty of speech transformed very quickly into the liberty of corruption possibility. In 2005 Savik Shuster came to work with us, wait for it, thanks to Victor Pinchuk. But. This first year was very important for Savik, there were certain sluices that opened, that were closed in time of Kuchma. We started to talk about anything we wanted, about politics, about our position. And then his show transformed into dogs’ fighting, pluralism was very big there, but this pluralism was paid out. There was an oligarchic competition of possibilities: who paid — got to the channel. In 2006-2009 there is a bloom of paid out materials, the long system of disposable or repeated hit on the air and relationships between politicians and TV channels. They stopped to invite independent experts; the experts that started to appear were paid out or they were appointed by party headquarters. The liberty of speech quickly transformed into oligarchic bacchanalia of paid out broadcasting. In 2005 we relived the beginning of 1990<sup>th</sup>, we found out how is who. And then we saw the competition of populists that were paid out by oligarchs.

RK: So, it is possible to say that the Revolution of Dignity was also against these fake and foam in Mass Media?

NL: This revolution was an offence on the fact that the bon-bon of approaching with European Union was given and then taken. And this protest was both from the society and

## Motivations

Desire for EU integration

## Actors

Civic society

The oligarchs

Dmytro Firtash

Rinat Ahmetov

Sergiy

Levochkin



from the majority of oligarchs wanted the bon-bon. Maybe only Firtash did not want it. And Ahmetov wanted normal relationships with the West, but they could not even understand if Putin will go till the end. Ahmetov and Levochkin were ready for the EU; we know how they were trying to convince “red directors” from the Party of Regions who did not want to go there. They understood that it was fraught with events. Till the last moment Yanukovich thought that he was going to European Union, and then after the trip to Russia he changed his path.

RK: How can you evaluate the role of journalists during Euromaidan and after it?

NL: As opposed to 2004 when the journalistic revolution happened from the from below, and it was the forerunner of the big one, and in 2013-2014 the journalists on Maidan — as Mustafa Nayyem, appeared themselves. A lot of them were TV workers; they were elucidating it with emotional support, as “1+1” did it, for example, only because Kolomoiskii was supporting this revolution. There was no journalists’ role as an independent force in the Revolution of Dignity, as in the Orange Revolution. That was private owners who allowed them to behave that way. I do not say that if private owners did not allow there were still a lot of journalists who would come out on Maidan as simple participates. But Mass Media was behaving that way, because of private owners. Journalists did nothing against the private owners. There was the famous meeting of Kolomoiskii with the journalists from “1+1”, he warned them that there could be repressions; they said that they were ready; I cannot say how it was in reality, but I suppose that if he did not allow them to show thing in that way, there would be a lot of discharges. I am sure that if Tkachenko said to behave them as INTER, they would do so. And the unity of private owners and journalists was seen on INTER, where journalists carried such position though out the whole period of Maidan. Till 24 February 2014, when they came out with a statement when it was impossible not to do so.

#### Actors

Journalists

Mustafa

Nayem

TV workers

„1+1” TV

channel

Ihor

Kolomoiskii

Private

owners of TV

channels

INTER TV

channel

RK: And now, do we have the liberty of speech?

NL: Now there is the liberty of speech, there is external pluralism, because there are enough platforms, where it is possible to critic anyone. Including Poroshenko: there is Hromadske, there are programs on investigative journalism on the First National that are financed by Western donors. But there is a rough censorship of private owners, and there is the absence of critics of Poroshenko on all TV channels. They do not speak against them. There are informational channels such as Newsone or 112, where there can be such critics, but in the very soft and limited dimension, but it concerns only Poroshenko. [Grey cardinals of Petro Poroshenko Bloc] Konenko, Hrabovskii and others can be found on the channels such as 112 and Newsone. On the central channels there were much less investigations because of public broadcasting— besides the 1<sup>st</sup> Ukrainian National.

RK: You want to say that we need to be happy because we have Newsone, “Viesti” and 17<sup>th</sup> channel?

NL: The channel 112 becomes better, Newsone — not so. The channel 17<sup>th</sup> shows more Russian programs, communicates with Donbas and does not criticize Poroshenko; “Vesti” does only manipulation. On Newsone and 112 our monitorings show that they do more or less balanced information. There is its permanent circle of experts, Muraiev, for example [the formal owner of the channel that belongs to the representatives of the Yanukovich party], but they do balance it. On Newsone it happens in the same way, but, as I understand, there are also arrangements with the government and a certain control President Administration. There were no arrangements with the government on the 17<sup>th</sup> channel and “Vesti”, at least till this moment, but there are a lot of manipulations. It is better to devise “Vesti”: the radio “Vesti” — it is better there, and the newspaper — it is worse. There is also Strana.Ua [The chief editor is Igor Huzhva, who the founder of “Vesti” is holding], it is also difficult there. There is no need to thank them, because they manipulate, they do not constructive and non-manipulative critics. That is the problem. It is bad that it is impossible to criticize the President on central channels. On the other hand, I as the citizen of my country, understand that if the tough critics on the central channels will add to the Mass Media that can criticize him, it will be the end for this country. Because there should be some kind of people’s trust

towards the government in the time of war. One cannot excite the society's hatred to the government. What did Lenin? In order to make enemy Germany and not tsar. And what if now we make the main enemy Poroshenko and not Russia, we will not win. In reality I am for the self-censure. Poroshenko should be criticized but this critics should be constrictive. Plus, there is this critics from Dima Hnap and Seriozha Leschenko. When we give the information we check it one hundred times. Seriozha comes and says: according to my information. I do not understand it.

RK: Will there be one more Maidan?

NL: Now, I think, there will not. Regardless the fact that no matter what is happening Ukrainians behave themselves much better than the part of the elite, that is ready to destroy the country in the battle with corruption. The society understands the priorities and it counteracts the external aggressor. Everyone understands that if there is a third Maidan it is fraught with the loss of the country.