

Ukrainian non-fiction

Anatomy of Hate. Putin and Ukraine

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The new book by the author of „Zelenskyi without make-up“.

Russia's war against Ukraine is the most important event in the life of President Vladimir Putin. He staked everything on this war: the future of Russia, his political career, his well-being and even his life. He has already dedicated his entire presidency to trying to conquer Ukraine.

For him, the "Ukrainian question" became, without exaggeration, a matter of life and death. Putin's hatred of Ukraine rests on a good foundation – the Ukrainophobia that has prevailed in Russia for centuries.

This book is, of course, about when, how and why Vladimir Putin started the largest continental war in Europe since World War II – from a Ukrainian perspective. Because the West has learned but still must continue to learn that the Eastern European perspective on these events matters. Especially the view of Ukraine, which, as a direct victim, also defends the values of the West. Telling us even more about the history of this decision-making, which is also rooted in Putin's personal relationship with Ukraine, this book is an almost exclusive look behind the scenes of this relationship.

Rudenko has been a political journalist in Ukraine since Putin came to power in Russia and even before. Since then he has built up a network for insider and first-hand information, which gives him access to people who know Putin well or who met him directly during their work. For this book he interviewed and spoke to the following:

Yuri Shvets, Putin's former classmate at the Academy of Foreign Intelligence
Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine (2004–2010)
Vladimir Ogrzyzko, Foreign Minister of Ukraine (2007–2009)
Valentin Nalyvaichenko, head of the SBU (2006-2010 and 2014-2015)
Pavel Klimkin, Foreign Minister of Ukraine (2014–2019)
Roman Tsymbalyuk, UNIAN's own correspondent in Moscow (2008-2021), the only Ukrainian journalist accredited in Russia 2014-2021
Mark Feigin, deputy of the State Duma of Russia (1994–1995), Russian opposition activist, lawyer
Andrei Piontkovsky, Russian opposition leader and Putin critic
Konstantin Eggert, former editor-in-chief of the Russian BBC service, opposition Russian journalist



THE AUTHOR

other translations
25 languages

sample translation
English

other titles
Zelenskyi without make-up
Battle for Kyiv

Sergii Rudenko was born 1970 in the Sumi region in Ukraine. He is a publicist and television journalist, author of a weekly author column for Deutsche Welle and anchor man at „Espresso.TV“. He worked for the Ukrainian service of Radio Svoboda, was the editor-in-chief of the editions „Now“, „Gazeta 24“, „Glavred“. He is founder of the book portal „Bukvoid“. He became famous by his quite critical political biography about President Zelenskyi translated into more than 25 languages.

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Long Synopsis

Preface. The climax of Putin's omnipotence and powerlessness.

Russia's intervention in Ukraine was not only the culmination of Putin's omnipotence, but also the culmination of his powerlessness. On February 24, 2022, the aggressor Putin entered the international stage as an occupier, hoping to terrify Ukrainians and their allies. He waited for Ukraine and the West to surrender. Instead, Russia encountered resistance in Ukraine.

1. Ukraine is not Russia. War for Independence. XX-XXI centuries

Putins Russia's war against Ukraine is a logical continuation of Moscow's numerous attempts to destroy Ukraine and Ukrainians over the last 300 years. Over the past 100 years, not a single generation of Ukrainians has lived without war. Putin wanted to put an end to Ukraine's attempts to strengthen itself as an independent and sovereign state. But he miscalculated.

2. Putin's honeymoon in Ukraine. 1983

Putin spent his honeymoon with his young wife Lyudmila in Ukraine. The honeymoon was hectic and obviously not entirely successful. The couple traveled in a Soviet car, which regularly broke down and, of course, affected the mood of the newlyweds. Apparently, this sentiment was ultimately reflected in Putin's attitude towards Ukraine. He didn't love the country. More specifically, he hated it. And also the people who lived there. Putin was a typical KGB officer for whom most Ukrainians were nationalists who deserved a place in Siberia. The President of the Russian Federation always considered the "real" Ukrainians and Russians as one people and therefore, frankly, did not understand why Ukrainians spoke their own language and not the commonly understood Russian language.

3. Ukraine and the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union. 1985

The collapse of the Soviet Union was a personal tragedy for Putin. He has spoken about this publicly more than once. At the same time, the collapse of the USSR opened the way for Ukrainians to achieve real independence. Perestroika, declared by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985, strengthened Ukraine's national liberation movement. The result was the declaration of an independent Ukrainian state.

4. Revolution on Granite. Ukrainian students as destroyers of the USSR. 1990

In October 1990 there was a large student protest in the center of Kyiv - a mass hunger strike with political demands. The USSR was on the verge of collapse. It turned out that Ukrainian students were the ones who put the final nails in the coffin of the Soviet Union. This was the first Maidan in Kyiv, which accelerated Ukraine's path to independence. The author of this book also took part in this unique protest.

5. Prelude to the annexation of Crimea. Russian spy Lashkul. 1994

In 1994, an official of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation, Vyacheslav Lashkul, came to Kyiv. That was when the author of this book met him. Lashkul addressed the issue of a possible transition of Crimea to the Russian Federation. He met with the Speaker of Parliament, politicians and public figures. All this was a prelude to the annexation of Crimea.

6. The first attempt to annex Crimea. President Meshkov's uprising. 1994

In 1994, the first and so far only president of the peninsula, Yuri Meshkov, was elected in Crimea. Under the control of Russian secret services, he tried to break Crimea away from Ukraine through a change at the top of the secret services and local authorities. Only a sharp reaction from Kiev and a special operation by the SBU made it possible to stop the first attempt to annex Crimea.

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7. Why Yeltsin thought of Ukraine when he woke up in the morning. 1997

When Vladimir Putin entered the administration of the President of the Russian Federation in 1997, Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kuchma signed a Great Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. Yeltsin had to put an end to the misunderstandings between the two countries. However, it turned out that this agreement, which mutually confirmed the independence of both countries by recognizing their borders, was a forged document. Yeltsin was so proud of this document that he publicly urged Russian officials to think of Ukraine when they woke up. Putin understood this call in his own way.

8. The Fourth World War performed by Putin. 2000

In the early 2000s, a so-called "mobilization group" formed around Vladimir Putin. At the head was Yuri Kovalchuk, an old friend and ally of the current President of Russia. In the early 1990s, both participated in the export of strategic raw materials from the Russian Federation, subsequently founded the notorious Ozero cooperative near Priozersk and, with Putin's inauguration as president, began developing resources throughout the country. Kovalchuk was one of those to whom Putin always listened. The latter believed that Putin's presidency was intended to restore Russia's influence in the world. And this could be achieved, as Kovalchuk believed, through a new world war that would return power in the world to Putin and Russia. It is this Kovalchuk plan that Putin has been implementing for 23 years.

9. Murder of journalist Gongadze. Kuchma is on Putin's hook. 2000

On September 16, 2000, in the first year of Putin's presidency, journalist Georgi Gongadze was killed in Ukraine. It later became known that Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma was involved in the affair. After Gongadze's disappearance, wire-tapping records from Kuchma's office were released. As a result, Ukraine and Kuchma found themselves in international isolation. Russia helped Kuchma. This all looks like a carefully planned special operation by Russian secret services. Is it like this? More details in this chapter.

10. Humanitarian and cultural annexation of Ukraine by Russia. 2001

In the early 2000s, Ukraine came under Russia's strong humanitarian and cultural influence. The Kremlin has done its best to "occupy" Ukraine. Literature, cinema, television and music were full of Russians. All this allowed Putin to raise a new generation of Ukrainians who sincerely believed that Ukrainians and Russians were one people.

11. The first rehearsal for the war between Russia and Ukraine. Tuzla island. 2003

In September 2003, Russia, led by Putin, almost provoked a war on the island of Tuzla. It is located in the Kerch Strait and belongs to Ukraine. Moscow wanted to appropriate it by annexing it to the Taman Peninsula – by building a dam. When only 100 meters remained between Russian workers and Ukrainian border guards, President Kuchma intervened and convinced Putin to stop work in the strait. He acted like he didn't know anything about it. The Ukrainian army was ready to use weapons. At that time, it was a miracle that war didn't break out between Ukraine and Russia.

12. How Putin's Russia turned Ukrainians into „Nazis.“ 2003

On October 31, 2003, exactly a year before the presidential elections, Yushchenko and his associates flew to Donetsk to hold their party conference there. The author of this book was also among the guests. In Donetsk, Yushchenko was greeted by a not entirely sober crowd and large posters depicting Yushchenko in a Nazi uniform. During this period, Kremlin political strategists actively promoted Yushchenko's involvement with Ukrainian Nazis in the Ukrainian media. In fact, it was during this time that the image of the "Ukrainian fascists" began to form. 20 years later, Putin speaks of Ukrainian Nazis as a seemingly confirmed fact.

13. Yushchenko poisoning. Dioxin from the FSB. 2004

In September 2004, when it became clear that the finalists in the presidential election would be two winners – Yushchenko and Yanukovich – Yushchenko was poisoned with dioxin. At that time, Yanukovich was openly supported by Russia and Putin personally. The former head of the Security Service of Ukraine, Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, claims that Yushchenko was poisoned by Russian intelligence services. A chapter about why this crime did not go to trial and why Putin was not held liable for Yushchenko's poisoning.

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14. How Yanukovych hand-fed Putin and Medvedev. 2004

In the 2004 presidential election, Putin leaned on Yanukovych to bring all or part of Ukraine under his own control. Russia helped Yanukovych in the fight against Yushchenko. However, all of Putin's efforts were in vain. Ukrainians protested. Yushchenko won. This made Putin angry, but he did not abandon his plans to annex Ukraine.

15. PiSUAR for Putin. The first attempt to divide Ukraine. 2004

During the 2004 presidential election, Yanukovych and his supporters, with the support of Russia, made the first serious attempt to divide Ukraine. The first congress of deputies took place in the city of Severodonetsk. There was an announcement about the creation of a southeastern autonomous republic of Ukraine, which was abbreviated as "PiSUAR" in the Ukrainian translation. Yanukovych and Co., with the participation of Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, threatened to divide Ukraine. But this attempt was unsuccessful. Unfortunately, none of those involved ever had to answer to the law. The Kremlin puppeteers led by Vladimir Putin also remained in the shadows.

16. Ukraine's gas princess on a political pea. Yulia Tymoshenko. 2008

The rise of Yulia Tymoshenko is the story of a career in Russian gas trading. As a result, Tymoshenko became a multimillionaire and influential Ukrainian politician. This is a story about how Tymoshenko made a pact with Vladimir Putin against him during Viktor Yushchenko's presidency.

17. Russian Ambassador Chernomyrdin on Minister Ohryzko's carpet. 2009

In 2009, a serious diplomatic scandal broke out in Russian-Ukrainian relations. The Russian ambassador to Ukraine and Kremlin envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin was summoned to the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry. Then-Foreign Minister Vladimir Ogrzyzko warned Chernomyrdin about the inadmissibility of his rude language towards the Ukrainian leadership. Moscow was angry. Ogrzyzko was dismissed from his position as foreign minister under pressure from the Kremlin. Putin, then at the head of the Russian government, made every effort to protect his ambassador to Ukraine and remove Ogrzyzko from his post.

18. Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity. Massacre in the center of Kyiv. 2013-2014

The events in central Kiev in the winter of 2013-14 were Putin's last attempt to tame Ukraine, cut it off from Europe and NATO and save his protégé Viktor Yanukovych. Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity led to a bloodbath. Yanukovych fled Ukraine. Putin sought the annexation of Crimea and started a war in Donbass.

19. The day of liberation of the Ukrainian authorities from the FSB. 2014

After Yanukovych fled Ukraine, the Maidan representatives who came to power inherited a country that had until recently been run by the Russian secret services. Former head of Ukraine's Security Service Valentin Nalyvaichenko talks about how Putin's Russia managed to create a whole network of FSB officers in Ukraine who de facto ran the country.

20. Annexation of Crimea. The beginning of the war in Donbass. Minsk agreements. 2014

The first period of the Russian war against Ukraine. Annexation of Crimea. Putin's justification for the occupation of the Crimean peninsula. "Little green men" in Donbass. Spring-autumn 2014 military campaign. Execution of Ukrainians in Ilovaisk. The Minsk Agreements written by Putin.

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21. PTN PNH. Putin as a Meme in Ukraine. 2014

With the start of Russian military operations against Ukraine, Vladimir Putin becomes the hero of numerous memes in Ukraine. In March 2014, fans of the two football teams "Metalist" (Kharkov) and "Shakhtar" (Donetsk) chanted "Putin is an idiot" during a joint march through Kharkiv. Since then, this chant has been performed by football fans in many arenas around the world. In June 2014, then-Foreign Minister of Ukraine Andriy Deshchytsia publicly repeated the phrase "Putin is an idiot." Subsequently there were dozens of interpretations of this song. Putin was referred to as "Puil" and his cars were marked with "PTN PNH" license plates. Attitudes toward Putin in Ukraine have turned to contempt and public disrespect. This apparently greatly offended the Russian president. On the first day of the great war, Putin attempted to take Kharkiv, a city where he would forever be nicknamed "Khuilo."

22. "I shake hands. Thank you. Hugs." How Poroshenko tried to contain Putin. 2014-2019

In June 2014, President Poroshenko came to power in Ukraine. He promised to end the war in Donbass in a few weeks and reach an agreement with Putin. However, this did not happen. Russia blackmailed Poroshenko and forced him to make mistakes. Including the first Minsk agreement that Putin forced Poroshenko to accept. As was also the case with the second Minsk agreement. Poroshenko tried to contain Putin. However, he did not succeed in this. He tried to flirt with Putin, but this also had no result. Following Poroshenko's resignation from power, recordings of alleged conversations between Poroshenko and Putin were published, in which Poroshenko appears in an unflattering light.

23. Viktor Medvedchuk. Godfather of Putin and Medvedev in the role of Gauleiter of Ukraine. 2015

Viktor Medvedchuk is Putin's most important confidant in Ukraine until February 24, 2022. He is a kind of godfather for the Kremlin ruler, and the man who wanted to become head of Ukraine after the Russian army invaded. During Kuchma's presidency, Medvedchuk led his government, then founded pro-Russian parties and movements in Ukraine. He is involved in the creation of a pool of pro-Kremlin television channels, which Zelensky successfully destroyed. Medvedchuk prepared Putin's arrival in Ukraine. But these preparations were disrupted. After the start of the great war, Medvedchuk ended up in custody and was then exchanged by Putin for captured Azov fighters. Putin saw the story with Medvedchuk as a personal insult by Zelensky.

24. How Putin made Zelensky president of Ukraine. 2019

After Zelensky's victory in the 2019 presidential election, Putin expressed contempt for his Ukrainian counterpart. Putin underestimated Zelensky. And this became clear after February 24, 2022, when Zelensky, as head of the people, stood up for the defense of his country. Zelensky dreamed so much of becoming president of peace, but was forced to become president of war. And strangely enough, it was Putin, or more precisely the war, that made him the real president of Ukraine.

25. Putin's ultimatum. 2021

At the end of 2021, Vladimir Putin gave the civilized world an ultimatum: the West must take Russia's interests into account and stop NATO's eastward expansion, and Ukraine must remain in the Kremlin's sphere of influence. Putin made several public appeals to the leaders of Western states, asking them to take his demands into account. Against this background, Putin continuously prepared for war against Ukraine.

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26. Putin is a murderer of Ukrainians and the "Russian world". 2022

The outbreak of the great war in Ukraine ended the existence of the "Russian world" in Ukrainian society. Those who until recently had illusions about the good "Tsar" Putin very soon felt what the real "Russian world" is. These include bombings on peaceful cities, shootings of civilians and violence. Putin has become a murderer not only of Ukrainians, but also of the "Russian world". During the year and a half of war, Russia did its best to unite Ukrainians and create real popular resistance against itself.

27. The ideologist of the Russian war is on duty in Ukraine. Timofey Sergeytsev 2022

In April 2022, political strategist Timofey Sergeytsev, a Kremlin ideologue, published an article in the state agency RIA Novosti where he proposed to destroy Ukraine and Ukrainians. In Ukraine, this text was perceived as an action program for Putin's team. What Sergeytsev wrote was completely consistent with the actions of the Russian army in Ukraine. Ironically, Sergeytsev worked with Ukrainian oligarchs and politicians for a long time and earned his first millions from them. Now he acted as someone justifying the murder of Ukrainians and urging Putin to destroy Ukraine.

28. Pseudo-historian Putin. Inside story from the owner of the Kremlin. 2023

Over the past decade, Vladimir Putin has tried to play the role of historian. Several texts have been published in his name in which Putin tries to prove that Ukraine as a state never existed and that Ukrainians were actually invented by Count Pototsky. Putin's pseudohistory forms the basis of Russian historical scholarship and has become the main justification for Russia's attack on Ukraine.

Instead of an afterword. A different Ukraine.

Without Putin and his personal hatred one would have to invent it. Because the bloody war that he unleashed in 2022 changed Ukraine. Putin's hatred left Ukrainians no choice. Today everyone understands: either they - us, or we - them. And this understanding gives strength to millions of Ukrainians trying to defend their country. It is unclear what Putin hopes. But no one in Ukraine will ever allow him to turn Ukraine back into a Russian-controlled state. Today we don't just have to bring our children back from bomb shelters to kindergartens and schools. We must create a strong state that no violent neighbor dares to invade.

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