

## NTSh of Canada announces 2024 research scholarship and academic publication grant winners

by Ulana Plawuszczak Pidzamecky

The Shevchenko Scientific Society of Canada (NTSh) announced two important awards in 2024. The first is an annual scholarship of up to \$5,000 for researching and writing a scholarly article (in Ukrainian, English or French) on a Ukrainian-Canadian topic. This year, priority was given to research on cultural issues, especially in the visual arts and music. Preference was given to research on the contribution of Ukrainian artists to world cultural heritage and the contribution of Ukrainians to the formation and development of Canadian culture.

The laureate of this year's scholarship is Dr. Lada Tsymbala, a member of NTSh in Ukraine. During her temporary stay in Edmonton from September 2022 to July 2023, she was actively involved in the work of NTSh in Edmonton. From 1999 to the present, Dr. Tsymbala is an associate professor of the Department of History and Theory of Arts of the Lviv National Academy of Arts.

In 2003, Dr. Tsymbala earned a doctoral degree in art studies at the Lviv National Academy of Arts, specializing in decorative and applied arts. The title of her dissertation was "Gold-weaving in Galicia from the 18th to the first third of the 20th centuries: History, typology, and characteristics of art and style." Dr. Tsymbala is the author of numerous scholarly monographs and journal articles, and has been invited to give lectures, conference and other presentations.

Dr. Tsymbala was awarded the scholarship for researching and writing an academic article on the topic "Wadym Dobrolige: The artist's work in Canadian socio-cultural discourse." As she describes, Wadym Dobrolige was a unique multifaceted Ukrainian artist who received his professional art education at the famous Kyiv Art Institute in the 1930s, and after coming to Canada in the 1950s and 1960s contributed to the formation of a holistic model of



Dr. Lada Tsymbala

Ukrainian sacred art in Alberta (he designed the interiors of more than 50 churches) who proved himself a successful set designer, a decorator for many Edmonton theatre performances, and who designed a number of hotels, restaurant complexes and public space interiors. He also organized a number of artistic events in the Ukrainian community of the city, creating a unique artistic image of the city of Edmonton.

As Dr. Tsymbala explains, the work of the academically trained painter (who became known during World War II for the painted portraits he created in his studio in the Heidenau displaced persons camp, near Hamburg, Germany) changed significantly after moving to Canada. In a society of great creature comforts, whose post-war period was characterized by grandiose urban development, the growth of an urban entertainment infrastructure and consumer culture, the need for an artist with an academic worldview was obliged to metamorphose into a need for an artist-decorator, a designer of city holiday scenes, shop windows and department store dis-



Wadym Dobrolige

plays and fashion shows. Despite the artist's numerous initiated and implemented projects and the creation of the posthumous (1973) Wadym Dobrolige Foundation, his artistic legacy remains minimally researched to this day. Dr. Tsymbala's research addresses the problem of correlation between fine (sacred) art in Dobrolige's body of work and his design projects, the conditioning of the artistic features of the artist's works by fashion trends and consumer tastes in the diaspora, as well as the artist's contribution to the historical and cultural heritage of Canada.

The second NTSh Canada award, a publication grant in the sum of \$5,000, was given to the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) for the publication of an English-language translation of Pavlo Khrystiuk's documentary history, *The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1919: A Documentary Analysis*.

As CIUS describes, the English translation of this extremely important scholarly and documentary study of the early stages of the Ukrainian revolution of 1917-1921,



Pavlo Khrystiuk

originally published in Vienna in 1921-1922, is a unique first-person account of the events of the Ukrainian revolution that began in 1917 and of the Ukrainian state that was created as a result and which received international recognition by the Central Powers in February 1918 through the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. These two stories were almost unknown to historians of the October Revolution of 1917, which is conventionally regarded as the "Russian" revolution. This voluminous, more than 1,000-page book (most likely to be printed in two volumes) will be published in the English translation by Alan Rutkowski and will include an introduction by the late Prof. Mark von Hagen, as well as numerous scholarly footnotes and annotations. More about Pavlo Khrystiuk can be found online at <https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=page%5CK%5CH%5CKhrystiukPavlo.htm>; and [https://chtyvo.org.ua/authors/Mark\\_von\\_Hagen/Pavlo\\_Khrystiuk\\_History\\_and\\_the\\_Politics\\_of\\_Ukrainian\\_Anti-Colonialism\\_ahnl.pdf](https://chtyvo.org.ua/authors/Mark_von_Hagen/Pavlo_Khrystiuk_History_and_the_Politics_of_Ukrainian_Anti-Colonialism_ahnl.pdf).

## Innovative...

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March 4, 2022). With no significant surface fleet left, the Ukrainians began to innovate with a vengeance, concentrating on developing small and fast uncrewed surface vessels (USVs) with a low radar profile and significant explosive payload (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, July 25, 2022, June 13, 2023). Ukraine's development and use of naval drones began with a prototype tested in June 2022 after President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tasked the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) with finding a way to end Russian dominance of the Black Sea and create operationally favorable conditions for Ukraine's grain export corridor (Ukrainska Pravda, March 4, 2022; see Eurasia Daily Monitor, September 13, November 3, 2022).

Over two years later, on May 23, SBU head Vasyl Maliuk announced that the security services were the first to use "Sea Baby" surface drones in their special operations (Sluzhba Bezpeki Ukraini, May 23). Ukraine's USVs have even been versatile enough to be used against terrestrial targets. In July 2023, during Ukraine's first attack on the Kerch Bridge, two Sea Baby drones hit the bridge, completely destroying one section of it and damaging the other (UNIAN, November 25, 2023).

The SBU now deploys three types of drones: Sea Baby, Kozak Mamai and the MAGURA V5, named after the goddess of war and victory in Slavic mythology. These

are smaller, faster and much more maneuverable than other similar drones. They are designed solely as "pure hunters" of warships, and SBU specialists constantly work to improve them in conjunction with the Ukrainian Navy (Suspiil'nie Krim, March 4).

The BSF's response to the Ukrainian naval drones has been to shift warships eastward to Novorossiysk and northward into the Sea of Azov. Moscow hoped to lengthen the Ukrainian Navy's operational lines while providing more in-depth defense on harbors than operations in the open sea. By the spring of 2024, then-British Secretary of State for Defense Grant Shapps lauded the new drones' effectiveness and declared that Russia's BSF was now "functionally inactive" (Telegraph.co.uk, March 25). On July 15, the BSF's last corvette in Sevastopol sailed for Novorossiysk. Ukrainian Navy spokesperson Dmytro Pletenchuk noted the withdrawal, adding that while Russia kept several auxiliary vessels at Sevastopol, they did not carry offensive weaponry (Suspiil'nie Krim, July 16).

On July 17, Mr. Zelenskyy signed Ukraine's new maritime strategy, "On the Maritime Security Strategy of Ukraine," into law (President of Ukraine, July 17). The strategy seeks "the transformation of Ukraine into a powerful sea and river state, development of naval potential sufficient to deter potential aggressors from sea and river directions, [and] restoration and development of sea and river potential of Ukraine." Most ominously for Russia, the

strategy seeks "the development of cooperation with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states, conducting exercises, maneuvers and other joint events, [and] ensuring the permanent presence of alliance forces in the Black Sea."

Ukraine's new maritime strategy provoked a tart response from Russia. On July 18, Russian presidential spokesperson Dmitry Peskov warned, "Of course, Russia will take all necessary measures to ensure its own security" (Gazeta.ru, July 18).

Twice in the past two years, Ukraine has bombed the land link between the Crimean Peninsula and mainland Russia (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 18, 2023). The two-track rail line is so shaky that the Russian Army has stopped using it to send trains loaded with heavy equipment, tanks and ammunition. To defend the 11-mile bridge from kamikaze sea drones, Russia has placed booms, barriers, barges and steel nets in the area. With U.S.-supplied tactical cruise missiles capable of reaching all of Crimea, this analyst believes that Ukraine simply is waiting for an auspicious date - perhaps Ukrainian Independence Day on August 24 - to finish off the \$3.7 billion bridge, a pet project of Putin.

The Ukrainian military has not forgotten about the Kerch Bridge. On August 2, during the broadcasting of the national television, Kyrylo Budanov, chief of the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry, said that the Ukrainian military remains focused on destroying the bridge. He told the audience, "Everyone is working. And they are working on long

shots, on this. All this requires a complex solution" (New Voice of Ukraine, August 2).

Even Putin has acknowledged the threat that Ukraine's naval drones represent. Addressing a meeting on June 26 about developing Russian shipbuilding, he noted, "To increase the combat stability of the fleet forces, it is necessary to pay special attention to the speedy introduction of systems for remote detection of threats, including from unmanned aerial vehicles. I am referring not only to the control of airspace by air defense systems but also to the improvement of surface and underwater surveillance systems for the fight against enemy naval robotic systems" (Kremlin.ru, June 24).

Unmanned systems are certain to play an important role in naval warfare in the future. In the Black Sea, both Ukraine and Russia are racing to improve their technology. The Ukrainians are routinely unveiling more modern and capable drones, while the Russians are continuously improving their defensive capabilities to counter this threat. Other countries are learning lessons from the Black Sea. Predicting the future is murky at best, but Ukrainian inventiveness has stymied a superior enemy's "command of the sea," an extraordinary development that all significant maritime powers, led by Putin's Russia, will be forced to consider as they refine their own naval doctrines.

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