

## **Support the current Board of Directors**

Dear members of the Shevchenko Scientific Society,

I write to you as a member of the Nominating Committee and the Chair of the Archives and Library Committee to support Dr. Halyna Hryn and her slate. As a member of the Society for over two decades, I have witnessed rancor-free transitions from one administration to another. The traditional process of affirming the existing board or nominating a new one every three years has provided the Society with continuity and stability. We have avoided divisive electioneering.

This year's contested elections have created a conflict that is generating more heat than light. The avalanche of letters from the alternative slate and those who support it threatens to cloud the real issues. Discussion has given way to vilification, personal insults and outright slander by supporters of the opposition. By selecting and presenting details outside of their proper context, the opposition has resorted to a campaign of slash and burn.

Our nominating committee has worked diligently to draw up a slate of candidates from a variety of professional and scholarly interests. They hail from **eighteen** universities and represent a geographic diversity that demonstrates the nationwide reach of the Society: California, Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington and West Virginia. We are not an exclusively New York-New Jersey club!

Vasyl Lopukh is not running for president. Yet, he is being discussed as though he were indeed in the running. Lopukh is described as a victim of our current president, yet there are many reasons why he was fired after his candidacy became public knowledge. Allow me to present a few reasons, which no one has yet brought up.

Months before the pandemic struck, the library staff assembled over 100 boxes of duplicate materials that had accumulated in the Society's collection over the years. These duplicate items were to be sent to Ukraine. As administrator, Vasyl Lopukh did not lift a finger to remedy the situation by actively investigating the logistics of delivering them to Ukraine. Instead, he complained vehemently that the assembled boxes presented a safety hazard. Not only did he refuse to mail duplicates to Ukraine, he did not mail out or effectively market any of the books that

the Society itself has sponsored over the years. When it was suggested to him that these publications in storage should be sent free of charge to a number of university libraries in the United States—he did nothing. Then, after he was fired, he turned around and complained that these books don't have a wide circulation. Well, they certainly could have if he had done something with them. Unfortunately, some of these books were damaged in a flood in the sub-basement and had to be discarded.

When the board asked him to update the Society's mailing lists he failed to do so. As the Chair of both the Membership Committee and the Elections Committee Vasyl allowed the voting rolls and membership lists to become outdated. Scores of deceased members were still on the roster until last March! Information on paying and non-paying members had to be meticulously verified over the summer. What's more, in addition to overseeing elections as the Administrator, it was a glaring violation of ethics to run for president while chairing the Membership Committee and the Elections Committee—**clearly a conflict of interest!**

Much has been said about the unbalanced focus of the Society's publishing record—its alleged over-emphasis on the humanities. I see it from a different vantage point. At the Library of Congress I come into daily contact with publications from Ukraine in a wide range of subjects. As I catalog these works I often notice the prominently displayed "HTIII" logo and grateful acknowledgments of our financial support. This shows how we indeed are **investing in scholarship** as Natalia Honcharenko points out in the latest issue of our Bulletin <https://shevchenko.org/news-events/bulletin/>.

The current Board has demonstrated flexibility and perseverance during the pandemic. Zoom meetings replaced in-person meetings. A lot of issues requiring immediate attention had to be postponed. It shouldn't surprise anyone to see a burst of activity when it was finally deemed safe to resume a "normal schedule." In a very brief period of time, Dr. Hryn has worked diligently to bring numerous projects to fruition. A host of scholars at various stages of their career have joined the Society. Instead of giving credit where it is due, these accomplishments are being portrayed by the opposing slate as "frantic activities of the current board before these elections." If every action of the current Board is dismissed as being "about the election," then the only thing the current Board can

do is nothing. That is not an option. For the sake of continuity and much-needed stability, Dr. Hryn deserves another term of office.

I strongly support Halyna Hryn for re-election as president. Her accomplishments during such a critical period speak for themselves. I encourage you to vote for the Nominating Committee's slate.

Jurij Dobczansky, Full Member of NTSh-A

December 5, 2021