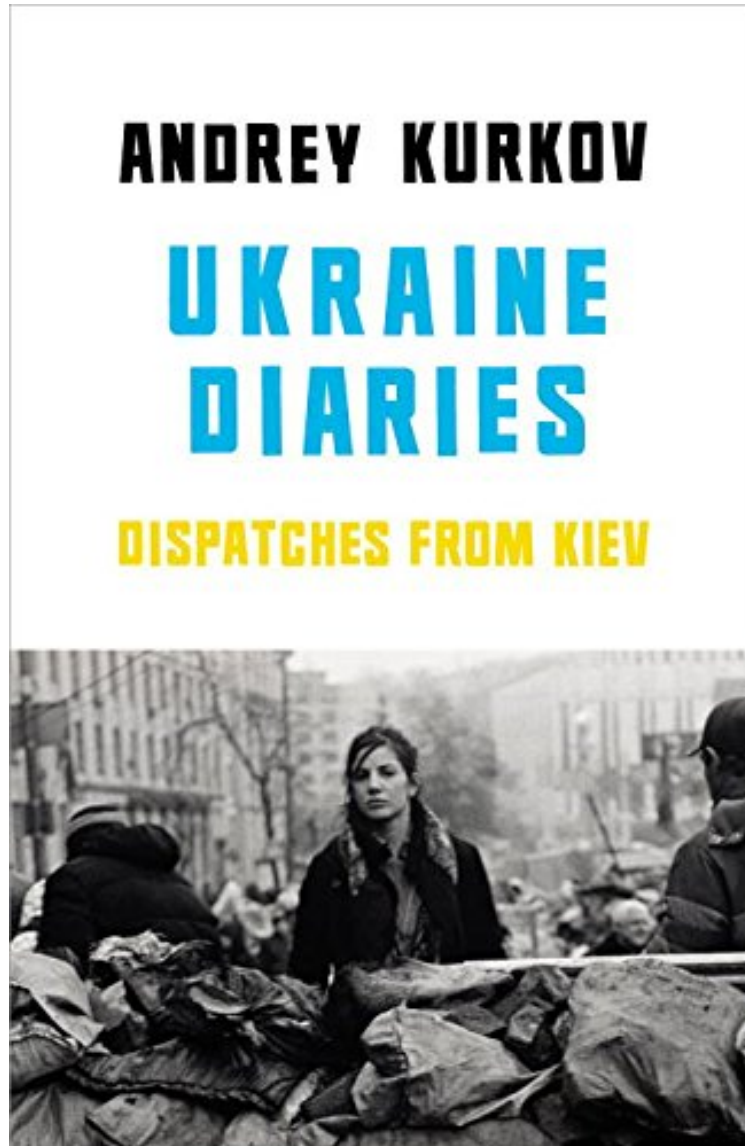


(Mobile pdf) Ukraine Diaries: Dispatches from Kiev

Ukraine Diaries: Dispatches from Kiev

Andrey Kurkov

*audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC*



 Download

 Read Online

#579174 in Books imusti 2015-04-01 2015-04-01Original language:UkrainianPDF # 1 7.80 x .90 x 5.10l, .60 #File Name: 1846559472272 pagesHarvill Secker | File size: 56.Mb

Andrey Kurkov : Ukraine Diaries: Dispatches from Kiev before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ukraine Diaries: Dispatches from Kiev:

23 of 24 people found the following review helpful. Captures the confusion, suspicions and elation as Ukraine breaks free of a local despot only to confront RussiaBy Graham H. SeibertAndrei Kurkov is a novelist living in Kiev with his English wife and three teenage children. He is also a diarist - he has made a habit of practicing his craft by capturing his impressions of each day's events.His diary rings true as just that - a diary. It is entirely in the present tense. It has

not been redacted to look prescient, nor has the author gone to much trouble to ensure that a reader who is not familiar with Kiev, Ukraine and the politics of the area knows what is going on where. The Maidan uprising and subsequent Russian invasion have been awash in propaganda, mostly from Russia though the West does its part. This diary serves as a database of observations by a (very alert and well connected) common man of events as they happened. He assumes that the readership of his diary shares the common knowledge of people in Kiev. He does not go out of his way to make the case that: * President Yanukovich was Putin's choice for President of Ukraine, and Russia was deeply involved in installing and manipulating him. * Therefore, the Russian FSB (national security service), successor to the KGB, played a large role in Ukrainian politics. Under Yanukovich Ukraine's analogous SBU did likewise, though their service of Ukraine's real interests after Yanukovich left has impressed this reviewer. * Putin is aggressively working to reestablish Russia's empire. This has been evident through his wars in Georgia and Moldova, and his constant bullying of Ukraine Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Baltic states. He uses natural gas prices, promises of loans and trade restrictions to constantly jerk them around. * The Moscow Patriarchy of the Orthodox Church is essential an organ of the government, subordinate to Putin. Peter the Great brought them under his control three centuries ago. The evidence of the diary will convince the reader that these suppositions are correct. Kurkov makes a number of wry comments about the transparency of the lies offered by Yanukovich and Putin, and about Yanukovich's stupidity. This diary quote could have come from anyone in Kiev: " This country has never had such a stupid president before, capable of radicalising one of the most tolerant populations in the world!" There are some very important terms that Kurkov does not explain. For example: * The titushki are paid troublemakers that Yanukovich bused in from the countryside to cow the more civilized urbanites of Kiev. They are thugs: members of local fight clubs. They would be promised 400 hryvnia (then, about \$50) to raise havoc. One of Yanukovich's many mistakes was to constantly stiff these thugs, paying them less than the agreed amount. * The berkut were the highly trained riot police. They use tactics going back to the Roman "turtle" and improved during the US antiwar riots of the 60s and 70s. They generally moved in a phalanx, protected by large shields. They were armed with truncheons and rubber bullets. Disciplined as they were, they would probably not have used live ammunition without authority. * The byudzhethniki (the root word is budget) are low-level civil servants, encouraged/coerced to turn out in support of the government. Wikipedia will be useful for looking up others. The diary describes where events took place. It will be convenient to keep Google Earth open in a window as you read the book. Important places are: * Lazarevka is where Kurkov has his dacha, his country house. There are tens of places by that name. This has to be the tiny village 40 miles west of Kiev. * The places he describes in Crimea are along the southernmost coastline, a beautiful and rugged stretch reminiscent of the Amalfi Drive, France's Corniche, or California's Big Sur. * Downtown Kiev is quite small. It is a five-minute walk from Kurkov's house to Maidan, another five to the houses of parliament, and just another five to the presidential mansion. All of the action took place within ¼ mile of the main drag, Khreshetik, which is a bit more than a half-mile long. The diary assumes that the reader is familiar with events. He does not describe the shootings on Maidan or the invasion of Crimea, assuming that the reader knows what is going on. It will be useful to have a chronology of events at hand. This book ties in neatly with other books on Russia and the war. Letters from Russia (Penguin Classics) clearly describes the tsar's power, his instruments for projecting that power, and the country's foreign policy objectives. They have not changed in 175 years. Archie Brown's The Rise and Fall of Communism describes how it worked in the 20th century. Timothy Snyder's Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin describes how Russia and Germany made Ukraine the bloodiest place on earth for a decade and a half. John Keegan's A History of Warfare starts with a description of the Cossacks - the same Cossacks that Putin has revived to serve as his palace guard and terrorists in Ukraine. Lastly, Putin's Wars: The Rise of Russia's New Imperialism describes the extensive planning that went into the wars in Chechnya, Georgia, Crimea and now Ukraine. Nothing is by accident. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Ukrainian crisis, seen by the common man By Abaldess "When nothing in particular happens in the life of a man and his country, the man might believe his existence to be stable and eternal... The man who lives in one of the world's 'hot spots', or simply lives next to an active volcano, has a different view of time." (loc. 87 Kindle version) "Ukraine Diaries" shows the "different view of time". The time is late 2013 and early 2014. Yanukovich refuses to sign the Association Agreement with the EU. Protestors gather in the Maidan and are beaten. Yanukovich flees. Putin takes over Ukraine and unrest spreads through the Donbas. In the meantime life goes on: Kurkov travels to Lithuania for a conference, hands out literary prizes and takes the family on vacation to Crimea. This is not a scholarly work. It does not delve into history. It does not quote figures, documents or reports. It does not aspire to be systematic. It is a personal, genuine account of life in Kiev during the crisis. It is history seen by the common man. And it is superbly written. Look at how Kurkov explains what the protests were trying to achieve "If everyone accepts the rules, the the poor police officer will find himself bound by them as well. If we don't accept them he will maintain the right to take ice creams for his children from the kiosk without paying for them" (loc. 166, Kindle version) "Ukraine Diaries" is unique among books on the Ukrainian crisis. I greatly enjoyed it. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. On-the-spot reporting By Jeffrey Huntington This is a journalistic treatment of the author's experiences before and during the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014. The author is hardly disinterested or impartial, but he writes as a worldly person who has seen a lot of bad news and doesn't get excited easily. How this will all play out, we have yet to

learn. The author is a famous writer of mystery novels, very dark, and in a uniquely Ukrainian style.

An acclaimed novelist offers Ukrainian dispatches from the heart of Kiev -16°C, sunlight, silence. I drove the children to school, then went to see the revolution. I walked between the tents. Talked with revolutionaries. They were weary today. The air was thick with the smell of old campfires. *Ukraine Diaries* is acclaimed writer Andrey Kurkov's first-hand account of the ongoing crisis in his country. From his flat in Kiev, just 500 yards from Independence Square, Kurkov can smell the burning barricades and hear the sounds of grenades and gunshot. Kurkov's diaries begin on the first day of the pro-European protests in November, and describe the violent clashes in the Maidan, the impeachment of Yanukovich, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and the separatist uprisings in the east of Ukraine. Going beyond the headlines, they give vivid insight into what it's like to live through—and try to make sense of—times of intense political unrest.

"Andrey Kurkov's *Ukraine Diaries* offer a unique personal insight into one of the world's most complex trouble spots. The fact that Kurkov lives in the heart of Kiev, and the fact that he can write so well, give an eloquence and immediacy to his account of day to day life in the teeth of a crisis. This is history, with feeling" -- Michael Palin
"[Kurkov writes] in the style of an informed but convivial flaneur, and his entries crackle with irony and humour" -- Marcus Tanner * *Independent* * "Controlled rage and wry wit, nicely captured in Sam Taylor's translation... Kurkov's diaries are valuable" * *The Economist* * "As his diaries make clear, real life has outstripped his blackly comic fiction for surreal detail, political cynicism and latent menace" -- Ben Hoyle * *The Times*, Book of the week * "The power...lies in the interweaving of the extraordinary and the mundane" -- John Thornhill * *Financial Times* * About the Author
Andrey Kurkov graduated from the Kiev Foreign Languages Institute, and worked for some time as a journalist, did his military service as a prison warder in Odessa, then became a writer of screenplays and author of critically acclaimed and popular novels, including the bestselling *Death and the Penguin*. Kurkov has long been a respected commentator on Ukraine for the world's media, notably in the UK, France, Germany, and the U.S.