



Prof. Dr. Andrii Portnov
photo: Piotr Mordel

**TOPIC: Omeljan Pritsak and the Soviet Secret Services:
An Attempt at a Critical Reading of the Declassified
KGB Documents**

SPEAKER: Prof. Dr. Andrii Portnov, PRISMA UKRAÏNA
Research Network Eastern Europe (Berlin)

MODERATOR: Prof. Dr. Annette Werberger, Chair of
Eastern European Literature, European University Viadrina
(Frankfurt/Oder)

DATE: 29 April 2025, Tuesday

TIME: 18:00–19:30 (Berlin Time)

This lecture will be held in English.

Registration is open until April 28, 2025 at: berlin@ukrainet.eu

The event will be held on the Zoom platform. During the discussion, you can also use the chat option, or formulate your questions in advance and send them to the following email address: berlin@ukrainet.eu. Please note that the presentation will be video-recorded, so we recommend keeping your microphones and cameras off during the lecture.

Dear ladies and gentlemen! Dear colleagues! Dear friends!

The German-Ukrainian Academic Society and the Embassy of Ukraine in the Federal Republic of Germany invite you to attend the lecture series “Science First Hand” on “**Omeljan Pritsak and the Soviet Secret Services: An Attempt at a Critical Reading of the Declassified KGB Documents**” by **Prof. Dr. Andrii Portnov**, PRISMA UKRAÏNA Research Network Eastern Europe (Berlin).

Report summary: The intellectual biography of Omeljan Pritsak (1919–2006), one of the most productive, influential, and controversial Ukrainian historians of the 20th century, has yet to be written. A renowned Turkologist who studied in Lviv, Berlin, and Göttingen, Pritsak became a professor in Hamburg after World War II, the first professor of Ukrainian history at Harvard in the 1960s (1968), and the founding director of the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (1973). Pritsak’s biography is full of mysteries, starting with a rather complicated World War II experience (when a former Soviet prisoner of war became a student at the University of Berlin) and his 1959 trip to Soviet Ukraine to visit his mother. New evidence on both episodes, as well as other aspects of Pritsak’s biography, is now available thanks to a recently declassified three-volume “Linguist” case from the State Archive of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine. In his talk, Prof. Portnov will analyze these documents and briefly present his forthcoming book “Omeljan Pritsak and the Intellectual Origins of Harvard’s Ukrainian Miracle”.

This lecture series is organized by the regional group of the German-Ukrainian Academic Society / UKRAINET with the support of the Embassy of Ukraine in the Federal Republic of Germany. Contact: Dr. Olesia Lazarenko (berlin@ukrainet.eu)

www.ukrainet.eu; <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8473594>



SPEAKER:

Prof. Dr. Andrii Portnov is a historian. He graduated from Dnipro National University (M. A. in History) and Warsaw University (M. A. Cultural Studies) and defended his PhD Dissertation at the Ivan Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Lviv (2005).

Since 2012, he has been living and working in Germany, first as a Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study Berlin (*Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin*) and the Alexander-von-Humboldt Fellow. He taught Ukrainian and East-Central European topics at the Humboldt University and the Free University of Berlin, the Universities of Basel and Potsdam, the Free University of Brussels, and SciencesPo Lyon.

In 2018–2025, he was a professor of Entangled History of Ukraine at the European University Viadrina. In 2015, he founded and has since directed the PRISMA UKRAÏNA Research Network Eastern Europe at the Forum Transregionale Studien Berlin. In July 2023, he was elected a regular professor at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Ukrainian Free University.

Prof. Portnov is the author of more than 10 books and over 250 academic publications on the intellectual history of East-Central Europe, Ukrainian historiography, the history of Polish-Ukrainian relations, German-language Ukrainian studies, urban history, genocide and memory studies.

In 2022 he published *“Dnipro. An Intellectual History of the European City”* (Academic Studies Press) which received Ab Imperio Book Prize. In 2025 his German-language *“Introduction into Ukrainian Studies”* (Nomos) will be published.

The organizers of the event:

- German-Ukrainian Academic Society
- Embassy of Ukraine in the Federal Republic of Germany

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