

Ukraine War–The Russian Break-away States in the Donbass Area

by Geir Sør-Reime



Left, map showing political changes since 2014, Russian invasion; right, Donbas area map

the south on Crimea and in the north close to Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine.

On February 21, 2022, Russia formally recognized the two break-away republics as sovereign states, and the following day, regular Russian forces entered them as a prelude to the full-scale invasion of February 24.

The break-away states claim all the two Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, and the Russian recognition explicitly refers to the borders of the Ukrainian regions as the borders of the two break-away states.

The two republics of Donetsk and Luhansk have a joint postal service called Donbass Post. It issues separate stamps for each republic, though. The stamps for Donetsk typically have the Russian abbreviation for the People’s Republic of Donetsk – ДНР (DNR) – as the country name, whereas the stamps for Luhansk display the country name as ЛНР (LNR – People’s Republic of Luhansk).

Until the Russian recognition of their sovereignty, these stamps were only valid within each republic and for mail between them.

Initially, Ukraine stamps were also on sale at the post-offices in both republics, and mail was exchanged between Donbass Post and Ukraine Post. After a short while, though, Ukraine introduced a full boycott of the break-away republics, so until now, mail was sent to Russia for onward transmission, with additional Russian stamps affixed.

Probably this will change with the recognition of the states and Russia will forward mail from them without any additional franking, as they already do with mail from the Georgian break-away republic of Abkhazia.

Until the recent invasion, Ukraine still controlled around 60% of the territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and continued to issue stamps with motifs relating to them, including a 2012 stamp for the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the Donetsk region, four 2019 stamps showing scenery of Donetsk region and four 2016 stamps showing scenery of Luhansk region.

Shown here are some of the many stamps that have been issued by Donetsk and Luhansk; First, Donetsk:



2016 cosmonauts from the Donbass area



2018 inauguration of Donetsk president Denis Pushilin



2019 honoring the military command in Donetsk



Left: 2021 city arms and street scene of Gorlovka, geologist Pyotr Gorlov
Center: 2021 city arms and street scene of Yenakiyev, railroad engineer Fyodor Yenakiyev
Right: 2021 city arms and factory Donetsk, the Welsh entrepreneur John Hughes



2019 fighting scene, honoring the people’s police



2020 honoring frontliners in the Covid-19 struggle



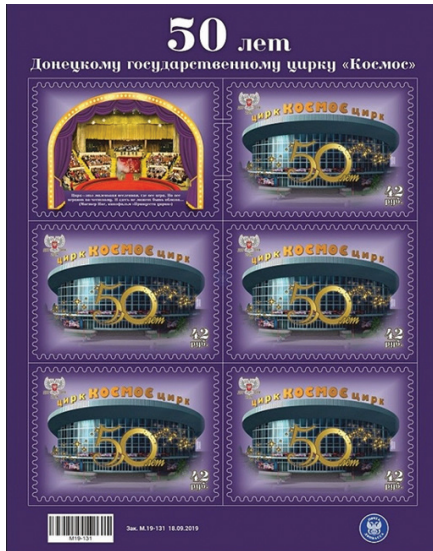
2020 250th anniversary of the birth of Beethoven



2019 150th anniversary of the hero city (during WWII) of Donetsk



2019 partisan leader Sydir Kovpak



2019 50th anniversary of Kosmos Circus



2019 painting by Taras Shevchenko



2017 military orders



2017 heros from Donetsk, heroes monument



2020 150th anniversary of railroad in Donetsk

Ukraina issues with Donetsk themes

Left, Ukraina 2000 Donetsk region

Center, Ukraina 2012 80th anniversary Donetsk region

Right, Ukraina 2019 motifs from Donetsk region



Luhansk issues, page 20



2020 225th anniversary Luhansk



2019 agricultural heroes



2020 fire brigade sports



2020 120th birth anniversary of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



2021 defenders of the homeland



2021 90th anniversary parachute troops



2021 450th anniversary of Don-Cossacks in service



2020 Soviet agents in WWII



2021 New Year



2020 250th anniversary of the Battle of Chesma, Admiral Alexei Orlov.



'Russian Spring' annexation of Crimea



2020 100th humanitarian convoy (from Russia to Donbass area)



2020 Olympic champions from Luhansk



2019 5th anniversary of 'Russian Spring' – regions with Russian break-away attempts in 2014, including Crimea and Donbass area, but also three regions where it failed; Carpatho-Ukraine, Ternopil region and Kyiv region.



2020 the war in Donbass, military commander Aleksey Mozgovoy



2019 5th anniversary of the people's republics of Donetsk and Luhansk (joint issue)



Ukraine 2016 motifs from Luhansk region