

МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ  
ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОУКРАЇНСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ ТЕХНІЧНИЙ  
УНІВЕРСИТЕТ

КАФЕДРА МІЖНАРОДНИХ ЕКОНОМІЧНИХ ВІДНОСИН  
ТА ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ



**Практичний курс  
іншомовного наукового спілкування.  
Методичні рекомендації щодо вивчення дисципліни для здобувачів  
другого (магістерського) рівня вищої освіти спеціальності  
В9 «Історія та археологія»**

**Кропивницький 2025**

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Затверджено  
на засіданні кафедри  
МЕВ та ІМ  
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Кропивницький 2025

Практичний курс іншомовного наукового спілкування. Методичні рекомендації щодо вивчення дисципліни для здобувачів другого (магістерського) рівня вищої освіти спеціальності В9 «Історія та археологія».

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Автор: В.І. Миценко, доцент кафедри МЕВ та ІМ, к.п.н., доцент

Методичні рекомендації призначені для здобувачів освіти 2-го рівня спеціальності “Історія та археологія”.

Основну увагу звернено на розуміння специфіки лексико-граматичних засобів мовного стилю, вдосконалення навичок ознайомлювального, переглядового і вивчального читання літератури.

Тематика текстів не тільки забезпечує багатий лексико-граматичний навчальний матеріал, а й має велике пізнавальне значення.

*Many people don't know that much about Ukraine, other than maybe the flag and the fact it's in Eastern Europe. So here are 12 interesting facts about the country!*

### **1. The largest country in Europe**

Ukraine is the largest country in Europe. At 603,628 sq. km., it stretches from Russia in the east to Poland in the west, with the Black Sea running along its southern border. It's nearly three times the size of the UK and beats the second biggest country, France, by 50,000 sq. km. The state is divided into 24 oblasts (counties). With such a large area, Ukraine has a lot to offer. From the beautiful Carpathian mountains that offer picturesque landscapes of forests, rivers, and valleys, to beaches found near the city of Odesa and vibrant cultural cities like Kyiv and Lviv. Not only is it an extremely large country, but also a very unique and exciting one.



### **2. Seven UNESCO World Heritage sites in Ukraine**

Ukraine is home to seven sites protected by the UNESCO World Heritage List. These include Kyiv's Saint-Sophia Cathedral and Lviv's historic center, Chernivtsi University, as well as unique wooden churches in the Carpathians and the beech forests that surround them. More information about these sites can be found in our other article.

### **3. The Ukrainian language**

The most common myth is that the Ukrainian and the Russian languages are very similar. In fact the most closely related language to Ukrainian is Belarusian. They share 85% of lexical similarity. Polish and Serbian are in the second and the third place. These languages are similar to Ukrainian by 70%. Only then comes Russian – 62%. If we talk about grammar and phonetics our language has 22-29 features in common with Belarusian, Czech, Slovak and Polish. With Russian – only 11.

### **4. Transport**

Ukraine has a well-developed system of public transportation. Every large city and regional center is connected to the railway network and receives passenger trains daily from other major cities. Many cities also contain cheap and efficient bus and tram

services, costing as little as 0.5\$. Airports in Ukraine are easily accessible by public transport and service buses, or taxis which would cost about 0,4 \$ per km. To reach Kyiv Boryspil Airport you can also take an express train from the railway station.

### **5. The world's deepest metro station**

Arsenalna, along Kyiv's Sviatoshynsko-Brovarska train line, is the world's deepest metro station at 105.5 meters below the ground. Staring down from the top of the steep escalator to the darkness of the metro below can be quite scary. However, their construction took place during the cold war era; the threat of nuclear bombs meant such deep-lying stations could protect the citizens of Kyiv from such disaster. Thus, the influence of conflict in the 20th century can be seen, even in such mundane activities as the morning commute to work.

### **6. Ukrainian Cuisine**

The traditional Ukrainian diet includes chicken, pork, beef, eggs, fish, and mushrooms. Ukrainians also tend to eat a lot of potatoes, grains, and fresh and pickled vegetables. The Ukrainian cuisine is extremely varied and exciting, with different ethnic minorities and a rich multicultural history bringing a range of different foods to the table. Nonetheless, popular traditional dishes include varenyky (boiled dumplings with mushrooms, potatoes, sauerkraut, cottage cheese, or cherries) and holubtsi (stuffed cabbage rolls filled with rice, carrots, and meat). The most famous Ukrainian dish is borscht. Whilst many Russians claimed it derived from the motherland, many Ukrainians passionately believe they are the founders of this dish. It consists of soup made from beetroot, cabbage, and potato; true borscht also contains meat, most commonly, pork. Famous Ukrainian drinks are Lviv beer, horilka (vodka) with pepper, medovukha – horilka with honey, Zakarpattia wine, and Lviv coffee. Ukrainians prepare very tasty desserts: cheesecake (syrnyk), poppycake (makivnyk), honeycake (medivnyk), and many many others.



## **7. Chicken Kyiv is not from Kyiv**

Contrary to popular belief, the delicious stuffed chicken breast dish is not from Kyiv. In fact, there are several suggestions as to its origins. Whilst some believe that it was created in the Russian Empire, others have suggested that it was created in France and became assimilated into Russian culture under the name, Côtelettes de volaille. It was then renamed Chicken Kyiv by New York restaurants trying to appease their Russian clientele in the 20th century. Neither Chicken France nor Chicken New York, have the same ring to them though...

## **8. Weather**

Ukraine has a mostly temperate, continental climate. Precipitation is disproportionately distributed; it is the highest in the west and north and the lowest in the east and southeast. Winters vary from cool along the Black Sea to cold farther inland. Average annual temperatures range from 5.5 °C–7 °C in the north to 11 °C–13 °C in the south.

## **9. Complex history**

Ukraine's history is both incredibly interesting and complex. Its unfortunate geography meant that it has changed hands many times throughout the centuries. Arguably, its modern routes can be traced back to the Kyivan Rus, a powerful medieval state that thrived in the middle ages, but was struggling by the 12th century. The following



centuries saw Ukraine change hands between the Mongols, Ottomans, and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, with Cossack communities attempting to live independently in some areas of Ukraine. During the 18th and 19th centuries, however, Ukraine was divided between the Habsburg Empire and the Russian Empire. By the 20th century, the Habsburg Empire had all but collapsed. In 1918, Ukraine was annexed by the Soviet Union, a status that would characterize their existence throughout the 20th century, as the breadbasket of the USSR. Whilst Ukraine's struggle throughout history

has been extremely tough, cultural influences, from Habsburg architecture to Soviet monuments, give the country a wealth of depth and expression.

### **10. Chornobyl**

Ukraine was at the heart of one of the biggest catastrophes of the 20th century. Chornobyl Nuclear Powerplant exploded in 1986, leaving a once-thriving community of Ukrainians completely destroyed. The effects of the explosion were felt far and wide, and have recently been dramatized, albeit brutally honestly, in HBO's recent series of the same name. Recently, it has been possible to return to Chornobyl. Here, you can witness the destruction caused by this disaster, and understand yet another obstacle that Ukraine has managed to overcome as a country.

### **11. Young Country**

Following on from Ukraine's complex history, it is also one of the youngest countries in the world. It was only in 1991 that the country finally achieved its independence. Such a feat gave many young Ukrainians hope that their country would thrive on its own in the near future. The years succeeding this independence have still been difficult, with Russia continually flexing its muscles. But Ukrainians are proud, patriotic, and, undoubtedly as a result of their history, strong. With accelerating agricultural and IT industries, there is much hope and opportunities for the country barely older than most millennials.

### **12. Festivals**

There are many different festivals and fairs in Ukraine. Ukrainian musicians are flourishing in rock, pop, jazz, folk, electric, drum, and bass. Hence, festivals, such as Dubno-fest and Leopold Jazz Fest in Lviv are extremely popular. Moreover, Atlas Weekend festival is one of Europe's biggest festivals, attracting over 500,000 people this year, showing contemporary modern popular music.

Source: 12 facts about Ukraine 12 facts about Ukraine : <https://vidviday.ua/blog/en/12-facts-about-ukraine/>

# **Impressive facts about Ukraine you haven't heard before**

## **Impressive facts about the culture and history of Ukraine**

1. The world's first constitution, which outlined the rights of citizens and the government, was drafted and enacted in 1710 by Ukrainian Hetman Pylyp Orlyk. For comparison, the U.S. Constitution was drafted and adopted in 1787.
2. Zaporizhzhya Sich - a socio-political and military-administrative organization of the Ukrainian Cossacks, founded in 1553-1554, today considered one of the first democratic entities in the world.
3. Of the 12 Lavras in the world, 4 are located in Ukraine: the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra (Kyiv, has existed since 1051), the Pochayiv Lavra (Pochayiv, Ternopil region, since 1833), the Holy Dormition Sviatohirsk Lavra (Sviatohirsk, Donetsk region (received the status of a Lavra in 2004) and the Holy Dormition Univ Lavra of the Studite Statute (Univ since 1898).
4. Ukrainian folk songs have become the basis for many world musical masterpieces. For example, George Gershwin's composition "Summertime" was written on the basis of the Ukrainian lullaby "Oh, Sleep Walks by the Windows", which he heard performed by the National Choir of Ukraine under the direction of Oleksandr Koshits.
5. Ukraine gave up the third largest nuclear weapons arsenal in the world (after the United States and Russia). At the time of its declaration of independence, more than 1,000 nuclear warheads and missiles were deployed on the territory of Ukraine. Why? The answer is here.
6. The world's oldest map, carved on a mammoth bone, and the oldest settlement of Homo sapiens were found in Ukraine, in the village of Mezhyrichchia, Rivne region. They are 14.5-15 thousand years old.
7. Ukraine is home to the world's civilizational cradle, older than the Egyptian pyramids and Stonehenge - the Stone Tomb complex in Zaporizhzhia region.

## **Amazing facts about the nature and resources of Ukraine**

1. In 1929, the USSR declared that about 60% of all proven gas reserves were concentrated on the territory of Ukraine, after which the country became one of the

largest exporters of natural gas to Europe for a certain period of time. Today, Ukraine ranks 3rd in terms of shale gas exploration in Europe, ahead of only Poland and France.

2. Ukraine has the largest reserves of manganese ore in the world, 2.3 billion tons or about 11% of all deposits on Earth.
3. The Ukrainian cave "Optimistic" is the longest gypsum cave in the world and the second longest after the "Mammoth Cave" in the United States.
4. Ukraine has 1/4 of all black soil reserves on the Earth.
5. The world's only underwater river is located in the Black Sea. If it were on land, it would rank sixth in terms of water volume (22 thousand cubic meters per second).
6. Ukraine has its own Maldives - amazing beaches with white sand and clear blue sea. They are located on the protected island of Dzharylgach in the Kherson region, which was destroyed by Russia. It is worth noting that the local flora and fauna are listed in the Red Book, and that mustangs and camels used to live here.

### **The most interesting facts about Ukrainians**

1. The first song to be performed in space was "I look at the sky and think", sung by Ukrainian cosmonaut Pavlo Popovych on the Vostok-2 spacecraft specifically for Ukrainian spacecraft designer Serhiy Korolyov. It should be noted that even Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX, called him one of the best specialists in the industry.
2. Ukrainian Yuriy Kondratyuk, developed the "stopping theory" on a celestial body with a strong gravitational field, which was successfully used by the Americans to land on the moon.
3. Ukrainians are one of the most educated nations on the planet in terms of the number of citizens with higher education.
4. Ukrainian Yurii Burdiak saved Winston Churchill's life during the Anglo-Boer War in Africa. At that time, Churchill was captured as an ordinary journalist, and Burdiak, who was the commander of one of the Boer units, saved the future leader of England from execution.

Source: [https://visitukraine.today/blog/2884/impressive-facts-about-ukraine-you-havent-heard-before?srsId=AfmBOoq0ASFbZDF5zvbNKVFtAVMvzcrBXq1SS\\_WGtKKOfIo23K8UFyZn#impressive-facts-about-the-culture-and-history-of-ukraine](https://visitukraine.today/blog/2884/impressive-facts-about-ukraine-you-havent-heard-before?srsId=AfmBOoq0ASFbZDF5zvbNKVFtAVMvzcrBXq1SS_WGtKKOfIo23K8UFyZn#impressive-facts-about-the-culture-and-history-of-ukraine)

## **Ukraine's most mysterious city: what to do in Kropyvnytskyi and how Ukrainian Stonehenge got there**

Kropyvnytskyi is a regional city, and almost no one knows anything about it.

It's so provincial, they say, what can be remarkable there? There's no sea, no mountains either, planes don't fly there, and there aren't many trains, you don't hear about tourist routes, what to visit there at all?

A province located in the heart of Ukraine? What a paradox! How can it be that there's nothing beautiful, interesting, or remarkable in the country's center?

Kropyvnytskyi is one of Ukraine's most unexpected regional centers for visiting travelers. Here you can enjoy the architecture with houses in the style of European "palazzos"; the monuments of high classics and modernism, Moorish, Baroque palaces, houses with facades combining Gothic, Rococo, and Renaissance give the city a special charm.

Not everyone knows about it, but Kropyvnytskyi is the birthplace of Ukrainian professional theater. On October 27, 1882, the Yelisavethrad Theater hosted the first performance under the direction of Marko Kropyvnytskyi; it was in honor of this world-famous theatrical figure that the city received a new name. It was the "Natalka Poltavka" play by Ivan Kotlyarevsky. Maria Zankovetska played the role of Natalka. This date is officially considered the birthday of the first Ukrainian professional theater.

The theater has since been rebuilt, unsuccessfully repaired, it was mutilated so that the building has almost lost its original beauty. But on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the theater, the renovation was finally made, which completely restored its former greatness. Try to estimate the scale of the restoration: 5000



square meters of the stucco was restored, 1000 square meters of gold leaf were used. Now the theater building is impressive, visitors seem to be transported to the previous

century. Now the townspeople are rightly proud of the architectural masterpiece and rejoice because their city is the cradle of the Ukrainian National Academic Drama Theater.

Dvortsova Street (or Arkhitektora Pauchenka Street) is the main pedestrian street of Kropyvnytskyi. Here, almost every house is a real work of architecture. The street is crowded but very quiet. Many cozy cafes, large windows, beautiful houses. Here you get the impression that you're in a small European town.

The largest museum in the city is the regional art museum. Expositions, interesting events, various exhibits are constantly changing there: everything is for cultural recreation. The staff of the art museum often conducts interesting popular science lectures, various masterclasses, liked by the residents of the city and its guests.

Kropyvnytskyi Museum of History and Local Lore is the best landmark of the Kirovohrad region's development history. The museum is located in the heart of the city. The splendor of its architecture pushes visitors to want to get acquainted with it in more detail. You'll be even more impressed by this architectural achievement when you enter its ancient halls, which breathe history and tell about the people of the region, their exploits, and achievements. The Kropyvnytskyi Museum of Local Lore is one of the oldest in central Ukraine, which has permanent and thematic exhibitions. The museum has more than 80,000 exhibits, and there are 6 Scythian statues in the courtyard.



The famous Yelisavethrad artist Oleksandr Osmerkin's house-museum is also located on Dvortsova Street, a little further from the city center. It's located in a stunning house, built by architect Yakiv Pauchenko in 1899, the artist's uncle. It really looks like a fairy tower. Here the artist spent his childhood and adolescence.

The museum is small, intimate, but cozy and soulful. The museum has 3 halls. In one hall, there are paintings, sketches, drawings, personal belongings, photos, and documents of the artist. In others, you'll see the works of his talented students. There are

art and photo exhibitions of local authors, creative and musical evenings. It's definitely worth a visit.

The Yelysavethrad Jews Historical Museum is the first Jewish museum in Ukraine, created thanks to the efforts of community volunteers who collected information and documents about Kropyvnytskyi's Jews. The process of returning to the origins, awareness of the history, and significance of Jews in society became the driving force for the creation of a historical museum.

Originally in a beautiful Moorish-style house, which was built in the mid-19th century, there was the Great Choral Synagogue. Now there is a museum. In the yard, there are a beautiful garden and benches. You can sit and listen to performances from the music school opposite.

Memorial House-Museum of Marko Lukych Kropyvnytskyi is not located in the city center. But if you're a theatergoer, you should definitely find and visit it. The museum's collection includes many antiques, one way or another connected with Kropyvnytskyi. Here, you'll find furniture, musical instruments, clothes of that time, letters, photos, old posters. The building has a special atmosphere, a feeling as if time has stopped.

From 1829, Yelisavethrad (Kropyvnytskyi) became the center of military settlements in the south of the Russian Empire. The headquarters of the reserve cavalry corps were located in the city, and a cadet cavalry school was being planned. In 1847, Nicholas I personally laid the foundation stone in the complex, and its full-scale construction began in the spring of 1848. When emperors or their entourage came to the city, the complex was furnished accordingly by bringing furniture and carpets from rich city houses, and the building was transformed from barracks into a palace.

The buildings of the complex can be visited only from the outside. They have always belonged to the military. The military unit has long and firmly settled inside the building. Between the buildings of the school lies the old Kovalevskyi Park (which previously had a parade ground) with a century-old fountain, as well as St. Andrew's Church. This is where Dvortsova pedestrian street starts; it's best to start your acquaintance with the city from this area.

Everyone who comes to Kropyvnytskyi from the north or the east is met by Archangel Michael, the guardian angel of the city and all of Ukraine. The unveiling of the "Guardian Angel of Ukraine" monument in Kropyvnytskyi was timed to the 2000th anniversary of the Nativity of Christ and in honor of the 250th anniversary of the city. The monument is a majestic and impressive sight. The perimeter of the column base is marked with the inscription: "God, Save Ukraine." This is a favorite place for photos of newlyweds and guests of Kropyvnytskyi.



The history of the Transfiguration Cathedral dates back to 1788 when a wooden single-throne church was consecrated at the request of Grigory Potemkin-Tauricheski. Ten years later, the temple burned down, and construction, which had started in 1806, ended in the temple collapsing. The new building, which has survived to this day, was consecrated in 1813. The cathedral houses the relics of saints, valuable icons, among which the main shrine of the locals, the icon of the Yelisavethrad Mother of God which is considered the patron and protector of the city.

A well-groomed yard, a flower oasis, and a small pond with a fountain create an atmosphere of tranquility. Visit this place, and you'll see everything for yourself.

The stone church of the Blessed Virgin Mary with a bell tower was built at the expense of the Greek community of Yelisavethrad. Initially, this place was a wooden temple built in 1766 by Greek merchants. In 1898, the building was rebuilt. The interior preserves ancient paintings, which were restored in 1905. This cathedral is the first and oldest in the city. During its existence, it has never been closed.

The Church of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin is also located in the historical part of the city. The church was built in the early 19th century in the neo-Russian architectural style designed by the famous Russian architect Konstantin Ton. Fragments of the painting by the artist Feodosii Kozachynskyi of the late 19th century have been preserved in the church's interior. In Soviet times, the temple was closed; then it was used for repairing equipment, storing salt and glass containers. The historic territory

adjacent to the temple was built up with five-floor buildings. Locals say that in our time it was restored at the private expense of a foreigner, whose parents once, before leaving the country, got married in this temple. The atmosphere is special. You can feel peace and purity.

At the corner of Dvortsova (Arkhitektora Pauchenka) and Pashutina (formerly Nevska) streets, there's a gorgeous building: Isaac Goldenberg Water Hospital (now it's the 3rd city hospital, so you're unlikely to get inside). But what you can see from the outside compensates for this little trouble. The house was designed by architect Yakiv Pauchenko in the Moorish style in the late nineteenth century. They used very unusual brickwork and decorative elements: plaster, stunningly beautiful carved doors, columns, geometric patterns. Be sure to take a selfie near these fantastic doors.

Oleksandr Pashutin is the most famous mayor of Yelisavethrad, an honorary citizen of the city, a great philanthropist. During his tenure as mayor, one of the first trams in Ukraine and the first professional Ukrainian theater appeared in the city, a water supply system was launched, several markets were equipped, and many administrative buildings were built. The monument is a statue of Oleksandr Pashutin, holding a chair, symbolizing the transfer of power to successors.

If you were in Kropyvnytskyi and didn't sit on Pashutin's chair, consider that you weren't there. That's what the townspeople say. People photograph themselves on a chair and sit down to rest. The monument itself serves as a landmark for many meetings and rendezvous.



"Public service must be the purpose of life": these words are engraved on the pedestal and serve as a guide for current and future rulers of Kropyvnytskyi.

An electric tram was launched in Yelisavethrad in 1897. The city became the fourth owner of narrow-gauge tram lines in the Russian Empire. Horse trams were used in many cities at that time. It was a very popular mode of transport. The traffic took place on 3 routes. There were winter and summer cars. These trams were used until the occupation of the city. In 1997, a memorial sign was erected on the 100th anniversary

of this memorable date. And although there have been no trams to Kropyvnytskyi for many years, the memory of them is still alive today.

This place in Kropyvnytskyi deserves special attention in the spring when the park is covered with incredible colors of thousands of tulips! You should go there at least for the sake of a "tulip" photoshoot, which you'll definitely never forget. However, at other times of the year, the arboretum is no less beautiful and interesting. There will be something



for the entire family to do. Plenty of flowers, well-groomed places, various cafes where you can relax. There are more than 40 types of attractions for children and adults: from the simplest ones for the youngest children to youth extreme ones. There's a mini zoo, a large roller coaster, and hiking trails. Great place to relax!

The Fortress of St. Elizabeth. The construction of Yelisavethrad began with it. What the fortress was like in the distant 18th century can now be judged only by the layout of the fortress in the museum of local lore. And it was made in the form of a six-pointed star, protected by bastions, and surrounded by a deep moat with water. Judging by ancient drawings and photographs, the fortress gave the impression of an unbreakable fortress and played a role in stopping the raids of Turks and Tatars on Ukrainian lands. So far, only large earthen ramparts remain of the fortress, but throughout Europe, there are a dozen of similar fortresses even in this state, so for Ukraine, this monument is worth its weight in gold. It's best to visit the Fortress of St. Elizabeth with a guide who'll tell a lot of interesting facts about it.

25 kilometers from Kropyvnytskyi, near the village of Mykolaivka, there's green space, a house, and an estate, where the famous and talented Ukrainian writer and playwright Ivan Karpenko-Karyi lived. It used to be a real "oasis in the steppe," as the playwright called his own estate, and now the estate of the Tobilevych family is a state reserve museum. The estate was founded in 1871 by Ivan Karpenko-Karyi's father, Karpo Tobilevych, who named it after his wife Nadiia. Initially, the family ran their own

farm here, and when Ivan returned from three years in exile, he decided to settle here permanently and turn the estate into a beautiful corner of native nature.

Getting here on your own by public transport is inconvenient, it's better to buy a tour at a travel agency or go there by car. On the territory of the estate, there is a house, a pond, a park with old oaks. The house exhibits more than 2,000 exhibits preserved by the Tobilevych family, like household items, manuscripts.

In autumn, the traditional "Veresnevi Samotsvity" theater festival takes place here.

Source: <https://rubryka.com/en/article/where-to-go-kropyvnytskyi/>

## **Ukraine must be**

*is an initiative spearheaded by the Ukrainian law firm Vasil Kisel and Partners, in collaboration with renowned historians Serhii Plokhii and Yevhenii Monastyrskyi.*

*Our mission is to highlight Ukraine's pivotal geopolitical role throughout history, serving as a crucial outpost between Europe and Asia. "The Shortest History of Ukraine" will take you through the nation's major historical epochs, placing them within a global context to offer a comprehensive understanding and shed light on lesser-known events.*

*We urge the international community to intensify its support for Ukraine amidst the genocidal war waged by the Russian Federation, striving together for the triumph of human values and life.*

### **Introduction**

The Independence Square (Maidan Nezalezhnosti) in Kyiv burst into flames in the crucial winter of 2014 as the Euromaidan protests gained momentum. Gathering despite the frigid temperatures, thousands of Ukrainians shouted, "Ukraine is Europe!" This rallying cry went beyond a simple request for democratic change; it was an important affirmation of a historical fact: Ukraine and Russia were parting their ways. Ukraine's orientation toward Europe can be tracked back to the 9th century when the powerful state of Kyivan Rus' was established in and around Kyiv. The conversion of Prince Volodymyr the Great to Christianity in 988 marked a turning point in Ukrainian culture. His son Yaroslav the Wise became known in historiography as the "father-in-law of Europe" given the matrimonial ties of his family to the European rulers. With the fall of Kyivan Rus in the 13th century, the distinctions between Russia and Ukraine came to the fore. The former ended up under Mongol control while the latter joined the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. While Muscovy became an autocratic centralized state, the decentralized Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which nurtured nobiliary democracy, had a different kind of impact on Ukrainian territories. Political independence and a heavy dose of European culture defined these areas, in sharp contrast to the growing authoritarianism in Moscow. A distinctive course for Ukraine was further cemented by the ascendancy of the Cossack Hetmanate in the

mid-17th century. A symbol of defiance against foreign dominance, this semi-independent state was lauded for its democratic leadership and military prowess. The Ukrainian spirit persisted even after the Treaty of Pereyaslav, which ceded some Ukrainian territory to Russia in 1654. A cultural renaissance in the 19th century and dogged resistance to Russification helped keep Ukraine's unique identity alive throughout centuries of Russian domination. The Holodomor, the Great Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933, brought about by Stalin's ruthless policies, put this resilience to the test in the 20th century. Still, the tragedy has only served to fortify Ukraine's determination. After the Soviet Union had collapsed in 1991, Ukraine made history by declaring independence and setting out on a path toward democracy and European integration.

### **Medieval Roots: Kyivan Rus'**

Kyivan Rus', a powerful state that modern Ukraine traces its roots, rose to power in the early medieval period on the expansive Eastern European plains. Kyiv flourished as the capital of the Slavic, Baltic, and Finno-Ugric confederation, that emerged in the 9th century. Thanks to its advantageous position on the Dnipro River, the city served as a hub for vast trade networks that connected Byzantium and Scandinavia.

When Prince Volodymyr the Great converted to Christianity and established Byzantine Orthodoxy as the official religion of Ukraine in 988, it was a watershed moment in the country's history. While Kyiv and its environs became Christian in very short time, it took centuries to convert to Christianity the northern parts of the realm of what is now Russia from those of Kyivan Rus', which meant that the latter would be more closely aligned with the Byzantine Empire's rich cultural and religious traditions. Renowned for its advanced legal



code, the Rus'ka Pravda, and architectural marvels like the Saint Sophia Cathedral, completed in 1037, Kyivan Rus' flourished as a cultural and economic center. Literacy

and education flourished during this time, and the religious writings and chronicles composed by monastic scribes are considered foundational works of Eastern Slavic literature. Yet political disintegration started with Yaroslav the Wise's death in 1054. A patchwork of principalities, all competing for control, emerged from the once-unified state. The cultural and religious traditions of Kyivan Rus' continued to shape the region's identity long after the state itself had disintegrated. In the 13th century, as Moscow and the northern principalities struggled under Mongol dominance, the lands of Ukraine were integrated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. During this time, the cultural legacy of Kyivan Rus' was maintained and carried on within a different political framework, which served to further isolate the Ukrainian territories from the growing influence of Muscovy. Through generations of political instability, the religious and cultural legacy of Kyivan Rus' has persisted. Ukraine set out on its own historical path, rooted in its mediaeval origins. A combination of early Christianization, cultural prosperity, and resilience allowed its people to carve out a unique identity apart from their neighbor to the east.

### **Early Modern Encounters: Ukrainian Lands in European Context**

An important turning point in the history of the Ukrainian territories occurred when Kyivan Rus' collapsed because of the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. Over the next centuries, Ukraine's political and cultural identity was formed in a European setting separate from Muscovy's path. Much of what is now Ukraine was part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania by the mid-14th century. This autonomous state welcomed political and cultural diversity. The princes of Lithuania had taken over Kyiv by 1362. The legal traditions of Kyivan Rus' were preserved through the Statutes of Lithuania. Because of this legal continuity, local traditions and practices were able to last, giving rise to a unique culture that incorporated elements of both Eastern Slavic and European traditions. The Union of Lublin, which took place in 1569, united the Ukrainian territories with the elective monarchy and noble democracy that made up the Kingdom of Poland. The elites of Ukraine were able to cultivate democratic traditions with the support of this union. As ideas from the Renaissance and Reformation spread across the area, the Ukrainian nobility, influenced by Polish culture, adopted Western European

practices. In 1576, the Ostroh Academy was founded and flourished as an educational institution that encouraged intellectual and cultural development. While this was happening, the Tsars further entrenched their authority over Muscovy, a republic whose authoritarian and isolationist policies ran counter to the ideas circulating in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Cossacks rose to prominence under the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and fought for their rights in the face of Polish Catholic domination. The establishment of the Cossack Hetmanate in 1648 following the Khmelnytsky Uprising was a direct response to Polish attempts at control, highlighting the enduring desire for self-governance and resistance to foreign domination. Under the rule of Lithuania and Poland, the Kyivan territories were divided and incorporated into neighboring feudal entities. However, the time was defined by significant political and



cultural transformations as well. While deepening the incorporation of Ukrainian intellectual and legal traditions into the European context, it also contributed to the establishment of a tradition of educational progress, legal pluralism, and resistance to autocracy. A unique identity deeply rooted in European traditions was fostered and maintained in the Ukrainian lands by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and, later, by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

### **Constructing Early Modern Statehood: Cossack Hetmanate**

The Cossack Hetmanate emerged in the middle of the 17th century as a separate political entity, further establishing Ukraine's distinctiveness from Russia. Bohdan Khmelnytsky's 1648 uprising against Polish rule that led to the establishment of the Cossack Hetmanate, was more than just a rebellion; it was a proclamation of the Ukrainian people's unique cultural and political identity. Unlike the hereditary monarchy of the Russian Tsars, the Hetmanate's elective leadership—where the Cossacks chose the Hetman—was a defining feature of the new state. Initially, the Hetmanate entered a strategic alliance with the Russian Tsar in 1654 through the Treaty

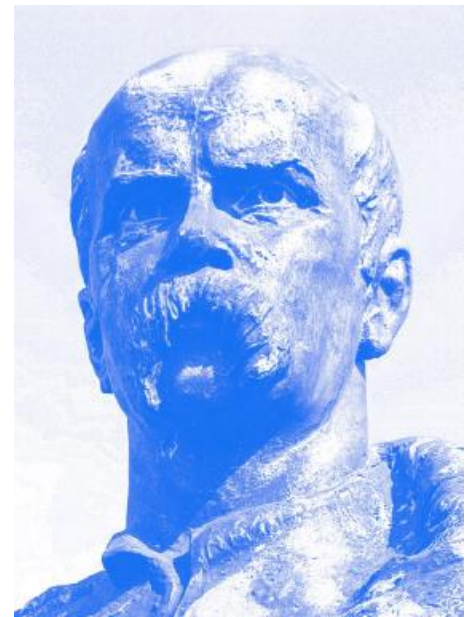
of Pereyaslav. This alliance was meant to provide autonomy and protection from Polish oppression, a delicate balancing act that Moscow relentlessly worked to undermine. Some historians mistakenly claimed that this agreement marked the start of a smooth integration with Russia. However, it marked the beginning of a complex struggle for establishment of control, which underscored the Hetmanate's determination to maintain its independence. Unusually for its era, the Hetmanate's administration was highly democratic. Most decisions concerning administration, elections, and foreign and military affairs were made by the Cossack Rada (Council), a meeting of Cossack officers that resembled a kind of representative democracy. Unlike Muscovy's highly centralized government, this system encouraged political engagement, trust in collective management, and resistance to autocratic authority. Throughout the 18th century, Muscovy and later the Russian Empire worked to erode the Hetmanate's independence. Catherine II made efforts to establish Russian control over the Ukrainian territories after the initial abolition of the Hetmanate in 1764. In 1775, the Russian troops destroyed the Zaporizhian Sich, the historical core of the Cossack polity. A long history of defiance against foreign dominance and dedication to self-governance was ingrained in the legacy of the Cossack Hetmanate, which persisted even after these endeavors. This era cemented a strong, distinct, and unwavering Ukrainian identity, lending credence to the idea that Ukraine's historical path has consistently been one of independence and self-governance, not servitude to Russia.



### **Age of Empires: Ukrainian Identity Under Russian and Habsburg Rule**

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Ukrainian lands were divided between the Russian and Habsburg empires. The cultural and political struggle during this period of imperial dominion demonstrated the resilience of Ukrainian identity despite external pressures. Following the Polish partitions in 1772, 1793, and 1795, the majority of what is now Ukraine was annexed by the Russian Empire. The destruction of the Cossack institutions around the same time became part of Catherine II's policies to consolidate

imperial control and systematically dismantle what little autonomy Ukraine had. This made the Ukrainian polity blend in with Russia's autocratic system and rendered it less noticeable. On the other hand, after the first division of Poland in 1772, Austrian rule was established over Western Ukraine. The Habsburg crown tolerated a certain amount of cultural and linguistic diversity as it promoted a more pluralistic policy. Here, in the 19th century, the Ukrainian national movement discovered a rather welcoming climate, which sparked the development of the national culture. The Greek Catholic Theological Seminary at the University of Lviv became a hub of intellectual activity in Ukraine and helped cultivate a national consciousness that stood up to Russian attempts at managing diversity with assertion of homogeneity. The Valuev Circular of 1863 and the Ems Ukaz of 1876, which severely limited the use of the Ukrainian language in print, were emblematic of the Russian Empire's Russification policy, which aimed to suppress Ukrainian culture and language. These policies slowed but did not eradicate the national awakening, which sought to preserve Ukrainian distinctiveness. Ukrainian activists and intellectuals like Taras Shevchenko became icons of defiance against cultural suppression, with their writings celebrating Ukrainian heritage and identity. At the same time, Ukrainians in the Austro-Hungarian Empire enjoyed more cultural freedom despite political marginalization. In 1873, the Shevchenko Scientific Society was founded in Lviv, promoting Ukrainian literature, history, and ethnography. This cultural thriving contrasted sharply with the repressive policies imposed on Ukrainians under Russian rule, illustrating the different ways in which Ukrainian identity developed under the two empires.



Ukrainian political activism peaked in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when prominent figures like poet Ivan Franko and historian Mykhailo Drahomanov fought for national and social rights in Austria-Hungary and federalism and greater autonomy in the Russian Empire, respectively. Their activities highlighted a longing for

independence and a defiance of imperial rule. Imperial rule was a time of cultural resilience and active resistance, not passive submission. Ukrainians developed a strong sense of national identity despite the country's comparatively liberal atmosphere during Austro-Hungarian rule and the severe Russification policies of the Russian Empire.

### **Through War and Revolutions**

At the turn of the century, political activity in Ukraine surged as the nation balanced the demands of the Russian and Habsburg empires. Ukrainian governorates within the Russian Empire were subjected to harsh Russification policies, which led to the rise of political movements. In 1876, the Ems Ukaz forbade publications in the Ukrainian language, which sparked a resistance movement and the formation of secret societies. The formation of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP) in 1900 brought about a dramatic shift because it advocated for social justice and Ukrainian independence. The Ukrainian Social Democratic Labor Party, which was established after the dissolution of the RUP in 1905, followed the lead of the Russian revolutionary movement in its support of socialist national self-determination. After the Russian Revolution in 1905, there was a short period of political liberalization during which Ukrainian activists could openly advocate for cultural and political rights. The resurgence of Ukrainian-language publications and the establishment of the Ukrainian Scientific Society in 1907 were manifestations of this heightened sense of political and cultural confidence. Following the failure of the 1905 Revolution, the Tsarist government reinstated harsh control over the nationally minded activists, compelling numerous Ukrainian politicians to return to clandestine methods of activism and political advocacy. Austro-Hungarian Galicia, on the other hand, gave Ukrainians more leeway to participate in politics. In 1899, it became a boiling pot for Ukrainian nationalism when the Ukrainian National Democratic Party was formed. This party aimed to achieve political independence and promote Ukrainian education and culture. The formation of the Ukrainian Radical Party in 1890, which advocated for agrarian reform and social justice, further demonstrated the growing political consciousness of Ukrainians in Galicia. These groups were a huge help to the Ukrainian community as it sought to organize and articulate its national objectives. To highlight the increasing militarization of the Ukrainian national movement in the

Habsburg Empire, the Sich Riflemen were established in 1912. In case of an impending armed confrontation, they were preparing to protect Ukrainian interests. Ukrainians were part of a broader trend toward independence movement preparations when they joined this paramilitary group.

World War I further intensified the Ukrainian national movement. In June 1917, following the February Revolution prompted by the abdication of the Russian Tsar Nicolas II the Central Rada, a Ukrainian national council led by the renowned historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky, declared autonomy, spearheading the movement for self-determination. In November 1917, they went a step further and established the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR), a separate state linked to Russia by federative ties. By taking this step, Ukraine solidified its position as an important factor in the post-imperial world, challenging the interests of the Bolshevik government in Petrograd. In January 1918, Ukraine declared full independence from Russia. The West Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) was proclaimed in November 1918 following the collapse of the Habsburg Empire in the west. In January 1919, the ZUNR swiftly united with the UNR, demonstrating a coordinated endeavor to consolidate Ukrainian territories and declare independence amid the war's chaos. However, Polish forces quickly opposed the unification, sparking the Polish-Ukrainian War and further complicating Ukraine's fight for independence. For a brief period, Ukrainian statehood was preserved under German occupation based on the March 1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which acknowledged Ukraine's independence from Soviet Russia. However, after Germany's defeat in November 1918, the Bolsheviks advanced into Ukraine. The UNR fought to protect its independence from Soviet rule, but by 1920, the Bolsheviks had essentially conquered Ukraine, and by 1922, the country had become a part of the Soviet Union. The vigorous political activity in Ukraine from the late 19th century through World War I provided a solid foundation for Ukrainian nationalism. During this time, the Ukrainian political movement was strong and unwavering in its pursuit of independence and national unity, paving the way for similar struggles in the future.

## **The Soviet Era**

By attacking a young republic and establishing a parallel Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic in early 1918—formed by a group of socialists and communists with a nationalist bent who were eager to join forces together with the Bolsheviks in the chaos that followed the fall of the Russian Empire—the Bolsheviks were posing a threat to Ukraine's independence. By 1920, the Bolsheviks had taken nearly all of Ukraine under their control, officially launching their rule over the country. Part of the Soviet government's 1920s indigenization (*korenizatsiya*) strategy to win over local elites and build trust among Ukrainians was to promote Ukrainian language and culture. This policy was more of a political ploy than an actual priority for the Bolsheviks, but it did increase the number of schools, newspapers, and publications in the Ukrainian language. Ukraine was already deeply embedded in the Soviet framework by the 1930s, when Stalin's policies took a dramatic turn towards Russification and centralization. In the early 1930s, Ukraine endured the devastating Holodomor (man-made famine), caused by Stalin's policies of forced collectivization and grain requisition. Between 1932 and 1933, millions of Ukrainians died in this artificial famine, which was a calculated terror tactic to quell Ukrainian resistance and eradicate any challenge to Soviet power. The Ukrainian peasantry became the primary victims, suffering both from starvation and the destruction of their national identity and resistance. World War II turned Ukraine into a major battlefield, resulting in immense loss of life and widespread devastation. During Nazi Germany's occupation from 1941 to 1944, atrocities such as the massacre of Jews at Babyn Yar and brutal reprisals against Ukrainian civilians and partisans occurred. Amidst this chaos, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) emerged, fighting against both Nazi and Soviet forces to gain independence for Ukraine. After the war, the Soviet Union intensified its efforts to suppress Ukrainian nationalism. Numerous religious and intellectual leaders were deported and arrested in the late 1940s and 1950s. Ukrainian literature and the arts experienced a brief renaissance during the Khrushchev Thaw in the 1950s and 1960s when some cultural restrictions were relaxed. However, this period of relative liberalization was short-lived, as the Brezhnev era reinstated strict controls, leading to the repression of the dissident movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Despite the

collapse of nationalist resistance in Western Ukraine, the will to resist remained strong. The Ukrainian Helsinki Group, founded in 1976, exemplified the ongoing fight for human rights and national autonomy. Ukrainian dissidents like Ivan Dziuba and Vyacheslav Chornovil fearlessly opposed Soviet tyranny, advocating for political and cultural liberties. In the late 1980s, Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika policies sparked a fresh wave of opposition. These changes reignited Ukrainian national activism, with leaders increasingly calling for greater independence. The 1986 Chernobyl disaster, which exposed the Soviet regime's disregard for Ukrainian lives and the environment, further galvanized Ukrainian society. This led to the creation of Rukh, initially a movement supporting Gorbachev's reforms and later advocating for Ukrainian independence. This mobilization culminated on August 24, 1991, when Ukraine declared its independence following a failed coup attempt in Moscow. This triumphant reassertion of Ukrainian sovereignty came at the same historic moment as the collapse of the Soviet state, following decades of unwavering resistance and a persistent desire for self-determination.

### **Independence Restored: Road to Europe**

On August 24, 1991, Ukraine declared its independence from the USSR, marking more than just the emergence of a new nation from the rubble of the Soviet Union. It was an assertion of a national identity, one that sought to revive its independence and democratic values. It was a moment that marked a beginning of Ukraine's determined pursuit of nationhood. Although aligning with Europe and distancing itself from Russian influence was not an obvious choice initially, the overwhelming support of over 90% of voters in the December 1991 referendum underscored a clear separation from Soviet control and a strong desire for self-governance. This public mandate laid the groundwork for the massive undertaking of state-building in the post-Soviet liberalized environment. Amid economic turmoil and rampant inflation, Ukraine struggled in the early 1990s to construct a stable political system. In a major step toward establishing democratic rule with Parliament's primacy over the President, Ukraine approved its Constitution on June 28, 1996. Despite the political instability caused by power struggles among parliament, the presidency, and oligarchic forces, the constitution upheld

Ukraine's dedication to democratic principles. There was widespread corruption, hyperinflation, and a decline in living standards during the haphazard shift from a planned to a market-oriented economy. Despite all these setbacks, Ukraine kept trying to become economically independent and integrate into global markets, particularly by forging closer links with European institutions. A rigged presidential election was fixed and Ukraine's commitment to democracy was reaffirmed in 2004 by massive, peaceful protests known as the “Orange Revolution”; this made the country's desire to integrate with Europe even more clear. During this time, Russia’s geopolitical ambitions faced a serious challenge as Ukrainian values began to converge with European ones. However, because of the disjointed nature of European reforms in Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovych’s 2010 election signaled a return to policies that supported Russia. His tenure was characterized by the state's wealth being amassed by his family and close associates, a strengthening of relations with Russia, and, paradoxically, a promise of EU membership. However, on November 21, 2013, Yanukovych gave up on his plan to sign the long-promised Association Agreement with the EU in return for Russian promises of benefits for him personally.

This marked the beginning of the popular uprising, which became known as the Revolution of Dignity. Winter 2013–2014 was a watershed moment for Ukraine and, by extension, for the whole Europe. The protest was launched at Independence Square with a couple hundred students who felt betrayed by the government that had promised them a future with strong ties to the EU. Just over a week after the protest began, a small group of students who camped out in the Square were severely beaten by riot police ordered by the Yanukovych government. This sparked a national outcry and the following day, hundreds of thousands of people all over Ukraine joined the demonstrations in Kyiv and throughout the country. When riot police and special forces supported by Russian curators opened fire on protesters on February 18-21, 2014, the Revolution had reached



its pinnacle. As a result, 108 people, also known as the “Heavenly Hundred,” lost their lives and over a thousand were injured. President Viktor Yanukovich fled the country and was subsequently removed from office in February 2014, marking a major victory for the pro-European movement and paving the way for further relations with the EU.

### **Independence Challenged: The Russo-Ukrainian War**

Following the ousting of President Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014, Russia loomed as an imminent threat to Ukraine. Nonetheless, most countries’ reactions to Russia’s March 2014 annexation of Crimea were generic statements expressing concern, but not taking any actions. This belligerent action immediately set the stage for the subsequent war in Eastern Ukraine, where Russian-backed separatists had already declared independence in parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The outbreak of the war, the biggest struggle for Ukraine’s territorial integrity since 1918, claimed the lives of thousands and forced millions from their homes. Because of this, Ukraine went through a complete transformation. The Ukrainian armed forces were significantly modernized after years of neglect. By 2016, the military had undergone significant improvements, enhancing its ability to protect the nation from future aggression. Prolonged warfare during this period showed the urgent need for Ukraine to fortify its defenses and assert its sovereignty. Ukraine made remarkable strides toward economic stability between 2014 and 2022, despite ongoing challenges. Ukrainian economic recovery has been significantly accelerated thanks to the government's access to crucial financial aid from the EU and the International Monetary Fund. The loss of vital industrial capacities in conflict zones had a devastating effect on the country's economy, making this an absolute necessity. Economic integration between Europe and Ukraine took a giant leap forward in 2017 when the provisions of the Association Agreement with the EU came into effect, which, among other things, included a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area that brought promises of prosperity to the Ukrainian business. The agreement compelled Ukraine to reform its economic policies, governance, and the rule of law, which was designed to benefit the country in the long run, and it also opened new markets. Well into the 2010s, Ukraine successfully maintained its independence and democratic institutions. With the passage of numerous

reforms, the nation drew closer to the EU's institutional framework. These included, among other things, the reform of the New Ukrainian School, the reform of healthcare, the introduction of an open land market, and the decentralization reform, which gave local communities more administrative and fiscal autonomy. On the political side, things were much the same. Voters gave comedian and political outsider Volodymyr Zelenskyy a wide mandate to end the war and fight corruption when he was elected president in 2019. Zelenskyy has set his sights on reforming the corrupt judiciary and reducing oligarchic influence. Despite numerous pro-European reforms, the impenetrable Minsk agreements—imposed by Russia and supported by France and Germany—formed the main obstacle to ending the protracted armed conflict in Donbas. The Minsk agreements, which were supposed to end the conflict in eastern Ukraine, failed to materialize. The Donbas continued to be an epicenter of protracted warfare despite numerous attempts to reduce the conflict's intensity. The Ukrainian government persisted in trying to resolve the conflict through diplomacy and in building up the country's military despite these setbacks. The conflict reached an impasse in February 2022 when Russia invaded Ukraine. The goal of Russia's unprovoked aggression was to topple the Ukrainian government and restore Russian control over the country. Mariupol, Kharkiv, and Kyiv were among the cities hit hard by the invasion, leading to a humanitarian disaster and unprecedented destruction. The Ukrainian resistance, however, was relentless, because of the people's years of preparation and steadfast determination to defend their homeland. The international community rallied behind Ukraine after the full-scale invasion. The West imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia and provided humanitarian aid in addition to substantial military aid. This international support was crucial in helping Ukraine fortify its defenses and resist the aggressor. There has been no change in Ukraine's resolve notwithstanding the protracted conflict. Under President Zelenskyy's decisive leadership, the country has valiantly fought this existential threat, with the unwavering support of friends both at home and abroad. In their common fight to defend their sovereignty, Ukrainians have grown united as a nation, strengthening their democratic values and resilience.

## **CODA: If Ukraine Had Fallen**

There would be a war. There would have been far-reaching consequences beyond the mere seizure of territory had Russia occupied Ukraine in 2022. There would have been an immediate and brutal crackdown on intellectuals, political activists, and leaders in Ukraine. There is evidence that Russian forces in February 2022 had kill lists on hand. This proves that Russia's goals in Ukraine were far more ambitious than just gaining control of land and people; it aimed to destroy the very essence of Ukrainian resistance and identity. It is utterly absurd to believe that Russia could accomplish its objectives by establishing yet another puppet regime similar to those in Transnistria or Abkhazia. Maintaining an atmosphere of perpetual danger and unpredictability was Russia's primary objective, rather than conquering territory in Ukraine. In today's interconnected world, democratic regimes rely on stability, and this kind of uncertainty can be a potent weapon in their arsenal. With Russia's victory, Europe would have had to decide between a postponed war or direct confrontation. Because the West was afraid to confront Russia aggressively in 2014, a full-scale invasion took place in 2022. With its grip on Ukraine firmly established, Russia would have to seek to broaden its dominance with an invasion of the Baltic states and the incorporation of Moldova. Furthermore, Russia would have bolstered its military capabilities by utilizing the 40 million people living in Ukraine, including experienced soldiers, along with the country's abundant mineral resources and agricultural riches. With control of Ukraine, Russia could have influenced food prices around the world and eroded European security over time. A few years later, when Russia continued its push into Eastern Europe, it would have invaded other countries, taking advantage of their weak states due to pro-Russian sentiment among some politicians, lack of determination, and the constant fear of war. These countries would have capitulated one by one. Before the Russians crossed the Vistula, there would not have been a full-scale confrontation between Russia and Western democracies, which could have precipitated a global conflict. If Ukraine had fallen, there would have been a greater chance of another world war because Russia's thirst for conquest is far from satisfied. Ukraine and Ukrainians are an essential bulwark today, preventing a bigger war and maybe altering history's trajectory. Ukraine is fighting for

more than just its independence; it is also fighting to sustain the international order that respects and protects democratic values and national sovereignty.

*Vasil Kisil and Partners is a leading full-service law firm in Ukraine, established in 1992.*

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