JEWS *and* UKRAINIANS

A MILLENNIUM OF CO-EXISTENCE

PAUL ROBERT MAGOCSI

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Second Revised Edition

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WITH APPRECIATION

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INTRODUCTION

There is much that ordinary Ukrainians do not know about Jews and that ordinary Jews do not know about Ukrainians. There is even more that Jews and Ukrainians do not know about themselves. As for the general public, here again there is considerable ignorance about these two peoples who have lived together for more than a thousand years in the lands that today comprise the European country known as Ukraine.

To fill this gap, we decided to write a book telling the story of Jews and ethnic Ukrainians in a completely new and perhaps risky manner. We chose to construct a parallel narrative, looking at patterns of settlement, history, traditional culture, religion, language, publications, literature, theater, architecture, art, music, the diasporas of both peoples, and their role in the political life and society of contemporary Ukraine. In an attempt to make a long story short, we have tried to present through a streamlined narrative our vision of Ukrainian-Jewish co-existence in all these fields. We have told the story leaving aside mutual accusations against Jews by Ukrainians and against Ukrainians by Jews. Put another way, we as authors have chosen to be narrators, not polemicists, although we do address certain polemical issues in the text inserts.

Writing separately, one of us concentrated on the ethnic Ukrainians, the other wrote mostly on the Jews, although in some cases we changed or supplemented each other's role. While we sought to enlighten our readers about the distinct cultural profile and different historical destinies of these two peoples, what emerged from our parallel narrative was a single story in which ethnic Ukrainians and Jews displayed as many similarities as differences.

Such a statement may seem paradoxical, considering the popular perceptions and stereotypical images held by both groups. Ethnic Ukrainians quite often saw Jews as lackeys, whether of Polish magnates, Russian landlords, or communists; as exploiters of the poor Ukrainian peasant; and as landless and cunning opportunists. Jews, in turn, saw Ukrainians as rustic, violent, rebellious peasants responsible for the destruction of Jewish communities during the mid-seventeenth-century Zaporozhian Cossack uprising and the eighteenth-century *haidamak* revolts, for the pogroms in the 1880s and 1919, and finally as people who helped the Nazis perpetrate the mass murders of Jews during the Holocaust.

Yet once we told the story of ethnic Ukrainians and Jews together, quite a different picture emerged: that of two decidedly heterogeneous peoples with a shared narrative. Their story may be one of difference, yet it is one with many chapters of commonality in which both ethnic Ukrainians and Jews appear as multilingual, multicultural, mobile, and highly culturally productive peoples. By emphasizing internal complexity, our story proves that there is no such thing as "the Jews" and "the Ukrainians." Stereotypes about a people can exist in the popular imagination, but they come to naught once one explores the concrete historical, linguistic, religious, cultural, political, and artistic reality behind these stereotypes. What we thought would be merely informative turned out in the end to be instructive.

The Jewish presence in today's independent Ukraine is much different than it was in the past. Before World War II, Jews made up more than 15 percent of the population in Ukrainian lands; at present, they represent a mere 0.2 percent of Ukraine's population. Yet the significance of the Jewish people cannot be conveyed in figures alone. In other words, the fate of some 100,000 Jews in today's Ukraine is as important as the fate of all of the

other peoples who comprise the country's 45 million or so citizens.

This book was conceived by two historians of diverse origin who believe that knowledge and understanding of the Jews and ethnic Ukrainians as distinct peoples should replace the bias and prejudices through which for too long each people has imagined the other. In order to achieve the goal of mutual understanding, it would behoove each people to explore the other as a historical entity and as fellow human beings who are the carriers of a specific culture, body of religious belief, language, and social values. To help in this process, we needed to delve into the concerns, phobias, strivings, sorrows, and hopes of individual ethnic Ukrainians and Jews before we would be able to say something about them as representatives of their respective ethno-national group.

Perhaps we can share with readers our understanding of the historical experience in Ukraine as one that has not only divided ethnic Ukrainians and Jews but also brought them together. While this book may not change perceptions, it may be a first step that will bring knowledge about Jews to ethnic Ukrainians and knowledge about ethnic Ukrainians to Jews. It may also be a welcome source of information for anyone interested in learning more about the fascinating land of Ukraine and two of its most significant peoples.

STEREOTYPES, MISPERCEPTIONS, AND COMPETING STORIES

Jews and Ukrainians first began to interact on a significant scale in the early seventeenth century. It was at that time that historical memories began to form and the tone for subsequent relations between both peoples set. Since then, subsequent events have spawned new memories, often couched in stereotypes and prejudices, that remain deeply embedded in the social and cultural psyche of many (but certainly not all) Jews and Ukrainians to this very day.

The basic stereotypes derive from the following dichotomy. For Jews, Ukrainians are fundamentally antisemites ready to attack Jews at a moment's notice. For Ukrainians, Jews are economic exploiters and, as the willing tools of foreign rulers, they always exploited the Ukrainian people. The following lists contain only a few of the differing perspectives and narratives—some of which reflect historical reality, others blatant prejudicial stereotypes— that continue to cloud relations between Jews and Ukrainians wherever they may live.

JEWS

Chmiel [Khmelnytskyi]—may his name be erased—instigated the first genocidal catastrophe in the modern history of the Jews.

The *Haidamaks* were criminal outlaws, who reveled in robbing everything they could find and in brutally killing Jews—even small children and pregnant mothers—at our sacred site of Uman and surrounding areas.

UKRAINIANS

Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, our valiant Cossack leader, is a national liberator, defender of the Orthodox Christian faith, and creator of the first Ukrainian state in modern times.

The *Haidamaks* under Zaliznyak and Gonta were brave peasants seeking freedom from the oppression of Polish Catholic landlords and their Jewish servitors.

Our people were forced to seek refuge in America because of the anti-Jewish pogroms that began in the 1880s in the Ukrainian lands of tsarist Russia.

Our people were denied their language and their very identity as Ukrainians because of tsarist oppression.

Petlyura, the *pogromchik*, was responsible for the pogroms of 1919, during which tens of thousands of Jews in Ukraine were murdered.

Symon Petlyura was known for his sympathy toward Jews; as head of the Ukrainian National Republic, he issued orders to stop attacks against them.

Schwartzbard was justified in avenging the pogroms against Jews; it is not surprising that a French court acquitted him for shooting Petlyura.

Independent Ukraine's head of state, Symon Petlyura, was murdered in cold blood on a street in Paris by the avenging Jew, Schwartzbard.

Traditional Jewish religious culture and economic life was undermined by Soviet rule. Those Communist leaders who may have been of Jewish ancestry renounced their heritage and were not Jews.

It was a Jewish-Communist conspiracy that created the Soviet Union, a new empire ruled by Jewish commissars who destroyed Ukrainians and their culture.

Soviet Jewish cultural institutions were dismantled in the 1930s and many Jewish agricultural colonies suffered during the famine.

The Great Famine (*Holodomor*) was Ukraine's Holocaust. Stalin's henchman, Kaganovich, was only one of many Communist Jews who helped impose an artificial famine that killed as many as ten million Ukrainians in the 1930s.

Babi Yar, the ravine outside Kyiv, is a major Jewish killing site and the beginning of the Final Solution which in Ukraine took the form of a Holocaust by bullets.

Not only Jews were killed at Babyn Yar. As many, perhaps more, of the victims were Soviet prisoners-of-war starved to death and Ukrainian nationalists who were shot because they opposed the Nazi German occupation.

The Holocaust in Ukraine was carried out by the Nazi occupiers with the full cooperation of the Ukrainian police and Banderite nationalist extremists. Most Ukrainians were collaborators: at best, they were indifferent to the fate of their Jewish neighbors; at worst, they carried out pogroms and helped round up Jews for their slaughter.

Over four million Ukrainian civilians and 1.4 million military personnel were killed during the Nazi German occupation. Many, at great risk to their own lives, tried to save Jews.

Ukraine has little if any respect for its Jewish past and present, which only reflects its institutionalized antisemitic cultural norm—in short, it's the ugliest place I ever set foot in.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Ukraine became an independent state. Despite all its difficulties, we finally have our own country where bias based on ethnic or religious prejudice against fellow citizens is absent.

CHAPTER 1
The Land and its Peoples

Ukraine is territorially Europe's second largest country. A land rich in natural resources, Ukraine has since prehistoric times attracted numerous peoples from Europe and Asia, all of whom came there in the hope of finding a better life. Among those peoples are ethnic Ukrainians and Jews, whose story is the subject of this book.

Physical geography

The present-day country of Ukraine covers about 232,200 square miles (603,700 square kilometers), making it roughly the size of Germany and Great Britain combined, or, in the North American context, the size of Arizona and New Mexico combined. Its 48.4 million inhabitants (2001) make Ukraine the sixth most populous of Europe's forty-eight countries, after Russia, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy.

Ukraine's landscape is not very complex. Most of its territory consists of lowland plains and plateaus that at their highest rise only to about 1,600 feet (500 meters) above sea level. Virtually the entire southern half of the country is flat steppeland that in the past had been covered by a wide variety of lush grasses and shrubs. The rich black earth (*chornozem*) of the steppe has for centuries allowed for easy cultivation and incredibly productive harvests of a wide variety of grains (especially wheat), fruits, and vegetables, in particular sugar beets. Underground Ukraine has extensive mineral resources, notably iron ore and coal

2. Northern ranges of the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine's Transcarpathian oblast.

that is especially abundant in the eastern part of the country. The far western part of the country, which includes the Carpathian foothills of historic Galicia, has oil and natural gas reserves that were developed in the late nineteenth century, then seemingly exhausted by the second half of the twentieth century, and with new technology are about to be exploited once again in the early twenty-first century.

As one travels farther north, the open steppe gives way to a mixed forest zone of rolling hills and plateaus that are conducive to smaller-scale agriculture and dairy farming. It is only at the extreme edges of Ukraine's territory that there are mountains: the Carpathians in the far west, near the borders of Romania, Slovakia, and Poland; and the Crimean Mountains in the far south, along Crimea's Black Sea coast. In

1. *Opposite*: Ukraine's rich agricultural landscape.

MAP 1

modern times these small mountainous areas have become home to health resorts and have encouraged tourism, whether it takes the form of skiing and hiking in the Carpathians or restorative sanatoria and bathing in the mildly salty waters of the Black Sea at the foot of the Crimean Mountains.

The possibility for humans to exploit Ukraine's natural wealth is in large part a function of its climate. Most of the country has moderate continental temperatures, which average +23° F/–5° C in January and +68° F/20° C in July. Adequate rainfall allows for an annual growing season of 205 days. It is also true that the steppe region is subject to hotter temperatures and dryer winds, which in the past have caused widespread steppe fires and periodic droughts that at times have resulted in famine and extensive loss of life.

Nevertheless, Ukraine's physical geography has traditionally been quite favorable to human habitation. With hardly any real natural barriers (the Carpathians in the far west being the exception), a wide variety of peoples—both friendly and unfriendly—have for millennia had easy access to Ukraine. Its agricultural wealth has made Ukraine the "breadbasket" of whatever state ruled the area, allowing for extensive grain exports and, usually, an abundance of foodstuffs for human consumption. Finally, its mineral wealth has encouraged industrialization and allowed millions of the country's inhabitants to find employment in the largely urban-based modern society that is Ukraine of today.

Human geography

Present-day Ukraine shares borders with seven countries: Russia and Belarus to the east and north; and Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova to the west. In the south, Ukraine is washed by the waters of the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea, beyond which is Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

Like most countries, Ukraine is made up of several regions, some of which are quite distinct in

terms of their geographic and cultural make-up. Historically, the most important of these regions have been Volhynia, Galicia, Podolia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia in the west; Chernihiv, Poltava, Sloboda Ukraine, and the Donbas in the east; and Zaporozhia, the Black Sea Lands, and Crimea in the south. Independent Ukraine is divided into twenty-four administrative entities called oblasts and one autonomous republic based in the Crimean peninsula. Although most of the historic regions no longer exist in any formal sense, awareness of their location is essential for understanding the historical past and cultural landscape of Ukraine.

Until the twentieth century, the vast majority of Ukraine's inhabitants lived in rural areas. Cities, which were more like small towns with on average five to ten thousand inhabitants, had existed on the territory of Ukraine since pre-historic times. Of those that still

exist today, the oldest find their roots in the medieval period and for the most part are in the north-central and western parts of the country: Kyiv (the capital), Chernihiv, and, moving westward, Lviv, Chernivtsi, and Uzhhorod. Farther west are three medieval cities, which, although outside the political boundaries of Ukraine, are located in territory inhabited by ethnic Ukrainians as well as in the past a significant number of Jews. These include Brest (formerly Brest-Litovsk) in present-day southwestern Belarus and Chełm/ Kholm and Przemyśl/Peremyshl in present-day southeastern Poland. Of particular importance during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were several towns in western and central Ukraine (Nizhyn, Bratslav, Dubno, Ostroh, Slavuta, and Uman, among others), which were centers of flourishing markets that fostered both regional and international trade. Cities in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine came into being somewhat later and were connected with the expansion of Russian imperial rule, whether in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Kharkiv, Poltava) or the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Katerynoslav/Dnipropetrovsk, Oleksandrivsk/ Zaporizhzhya, Yuzivka/Donetsk, Mykolayiv, Odessa, and Simferopol).

Like many cities throughout central and eastern Europe, those in Ukraine were traditionally inhabited by peoples who, in terms of ethnicity, language, and religion, differed from the ethnic Ukrainians in the surrounding countryside. Whereas Jews eventually came to form a substantial proportion of the inhabitants in most towns and cities, especially in western and south-central Ukraine, the presence of other groups varied, depending on where a given city was located. Aside from Jews and a generally small percentage of ethnic Ukrainians, cities in the western regions of the country contained a substantial percentage of Romanians and Austro-Germans (in the case of Chernivtsi), of Poles and Armenians (in the case of Lviv), and of Hungarians (in the case of Uzhhorod); cities in the center and east included numerous Russians; and cities in the south had large populations of Russians, Greeks, and Crimean Tatars.

Ukraine's ethnic diversity was not limited to its urban areas. Whereas present-day Ukraine is, like most European countries, a multi-ethnic state, the relative size of the country's various peoples is significantly different than in earlier times, largely as a result of the demographic engineering—in the

MAP 2   UKRAINE: HISTORIC REGIONS

MAP 3

form of forced resettlement, starvation, and murder on a massive scale—that characterized much of the twentieth century. The result is that today, out of a population of about 48.5 million, by far the majority of inhabitants are ethnic Ukrainians (77.8 percent) and Russians (17.3 percent), followed in order of size by smaller numbers of Belarusans, Moldovans, Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Romanians, Poles, Jews, Armenians, and Greeks, all of whom together make up only 3.5 percent of Ukraine's population.

By contrast, the relative size of these various peoples was much different in the past. For instance, at the close of the nineteenth century, when the first comprehensive statistical data was being collected, the total number of inhabitants on the territory of present-day Ukraine was 30.6 million. In comparison with the present, about the year 1900 ethnic Ukrainians comprised a smaller proportion (72.4 percent) of the population, as did the Russians (9 percent), while the relative and in some cases absolute number of other groups was much higher than today: Jews (8.7 percent), Poles (4.2 percent), and Germans (2.1 percent).

The geographic distribution of these groups varied widely, with most Russians concentrated in the eastern and southern historic regions (Sloboda Ukraine, Donbas, Zaporozhia, Black Sea Lands, Crimea), Poles in the west (Galicia, Volhynia, Podolia), Germans and Romanians/Moldovans in the west and south (the former in Volhynia, Zaporozhia, Black Sea Lands; the latter in Bukovina, Podolia, Zaporozhia), and Greeks in the south (Black Sea Lands and Crimea). Certain groups were concentrated almost exclusively in one region, such as the Belarusans (in Chernihiv), Crimean Tatars (in Crimea), and Hungarians (in Transcarpathia).

With regard to Jews, their geographic distribution also varied. At the dawn of the twentieth century (1897/1900), the vast majority of the 2.6 million living on the territory of present-day Ukraine were found in its central, eastern, and southern regions. Those regions, which were located in the Russian Empire, were part of an area known at the time as the Pale of Jewish Settlement, that is, lands west of the Dnieper River, which had until the 1790s belonged to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Of the nearly two million Jews living in the Pale

of Settlement, the largest proportion in Ukrainian lands were in the tsarist provinces of Volhynia (13.3 percent), Kiev (12 percent), Podolia (12.2 percent), and Kherson (12.3 percent), the administratively distinct metropolitan district of Odessa (30.8 percent), and the neighboring province of Bessarabia (11.7 percent), which today is part of both independent Moldova and Ukraine. Of the 681,000 Jews living at that time in present-day Ukrainian territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, by far the largest proportion was in East Galicia (79.1 percent), followed by Transcarpathia (11.2 percent) and Bukovina (9.6 percent)— see map 13.

The demographic situation today is radically different. As a result of the tragic events of the twentieth century—including artificial famine, two world wars, the Holocaust, and most recently post-Communist economic disparities—the total population of Ukraine is on the decline. The number of ethnic Ukrainians has remained stagnant at about 37.5 million, while the number of Jews has dramatically decreased in comparison to what it was at the beginning of the twentieth century. Today their number stands at 84,000, only 0.2 percent of Ukraine's population. Most live primarily in cities, with the largest concentrations in Kyiv, Odessa, Dnipropetrovsk, and Kharkiv.

CHAPTER 2
The Historical Past

Of the 2,600 years of recorded history on the territory of Ukraine, the first two millennia witnessed the evolution of several civilizations focused southward toward the Black Sea and from there linked through the Bosporus and Dardanelles straits to the Aegean and Mediterranean worlds. This southward thrust was a reflection of the symbolic relationship between sedentary civilizations based along the shores of the Aegean and Mediterranean seas (Greek city-states, the Roman and Byzantine empires) and the nomadic-pastoral tribal peoples (Scythians, Sarmatians, Khazars, Polovtsians, Mongols, and Tatars) who set up polities on the steppe hinterland of Ukraine and southern Russia.

The relationship between Ukraine's sedentary and nomadic civilizations was based on trade and commerce. The nomadic-pastoral tribal polities extracted raw materials (agricultural products and human slaves) from the Ukrainian hinterland and oversaw trade from the Far East and Central Asia in exchange for manufactured goods and luxury items produced in the Aegean-Mediterranean world. Into this mix came at times other traders from the north, the most prominent of whom were Scandinavians known as the Varangian Rus'. Beginning in the ninth century CE, these Varangians mobilized the sedentary East Slavic tribes, and together they created a new polity known as Kievan Rus'. This marked the beginning of a process whereby a good portion of

3. The acropolis at Panticapeum (near modern-day Kerch), center of a federation of Greek city-states based in Crimea, 2nd century BCE, reconstruction.

MAP 4 · TRADE ROUTES, 8th–10th CENTURIES

Ukrainian lands were gradually drawn northward and westward and integrated into the socio-economic and cultural networks of the rest of Europe north of the Alps.

Pontic and steppe civilizations

Greeks, Scythians, and Khazars

The first stage in Ukraine's historical evolution began about 650 BCE, when settlers from Greek city-states (especially Miletus and Megara) set up colonies along the northern shores of the Pontic, or Black Sea, including Tiras and Olbia at the mouths of the Dniester and Southern Buh rivers and Chersonesus and Theodosia in Crimea. About the same time, an Iranic tribal people known as Scythians arrived from the east and soon dominated the steppe hinterland. The Greek city colonies along the Black Sea served an intermediary function through which foodstuffs traded by the Scythians were sent on to the Aegean-Mediterranean world. This mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship was subsequently continued by other steppe-based tribal peoples

(Sarmatians, Alans) and the Black Sea coastal cities, which took the form of an independent political entity (the Bosporan Kingdom, after 480 BCE) or of dependencies of the Roman Empire (after 63 BCE) and of the East Roman, or Byzantine, Empire (after the 520s CE).

Among the most influential of the nomadic tribal steppe polities was the Khazar Kaganate, or Khazaria, which came into being about 650 CE. Based north of the Caucasus Mountains in the lowlands between the Caspian Sea and Sea of Azov, Khazaria's sphere of influence extended northward across the open steppe encompassing what is present-day southern Russia (the lower Volga and Don river valleys) and central and southern Ukraine as far as the mouth of the Dniester River. Kyiv, for instance, was at the far northwestern edge of the Khazar sphere, while in the south Khazaria's sway ended at the Crimean Mountains, leaving the coastal cities of the Crimean peninsula under the hegemony of the Byzantine Empire.

For at least two centuries (650–850 CE), the Khazars kept peace among the various nomadic-pastor-

4. *Karaite Cemetery in Crimea* (1856), painting by Italian artist Carlo Bossoli.

al peoples living in the steppe, which allowed them to control the commerce and trade from Central Asia and from the Arab world south of the Caucasus that passed through their territory toward the Black Sea trading cities and capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople.

Among the merchant traders who reached the Khazar Kaganate were the Varangian Rus' from the north. Rus'-Khazar relations were based on the exchange of furs and slaves for silver, spices, and luxury items that Khazaria acquired from its far-flung trading network. Experts in building vessels for transport along rivers and the open sea, the Varangian Rus' eventually bypassed the Khazars. They established a more direct route that began in their Scandinavian homeland (present-day eastern Sweden), crossed the Baltic Sea and Gulf of Finland, and proceeded via several rivers and lakes through Russia and Belarus until reaching the Dnieper River, which allowed them access to the Black Sea and the largest known commercial emporium of the time—Constantinople.

Jews and Karaites

Jews, as part of a growing diaspora in the Mediterranean basin, moved to Ukrainian lands during the first centuries of the Common Era. The first Jews in Ukraine were maritime merchants who settled in the coastal towns of the Black Sea, which they co-founded with Greek colonists. Jews traded in commodities from China, Persia, northern Africa, northern Europe, and, later, the Byzantine Empire. For several centuries, they were concentrated in Crimea and around what is today Kerch, Sevastopol (ancient Chersonesus), and the mountain-top settlement of Chufut-Kale near Bakhchysarai. Several *matsevot* (gravestones), ruins of synagogues, ritual baths, and other archaeological artifacts attest to their historic presence in the Crimean peninsula. These mostly Jewish tradesmen founded small yet vibrant traditional communities with a characteristic Judaic infrastructure centered in and around the synagogue, the study of the traditional (written and oral Torah — Ukr.: *Pyatyknyzhzhya*) texts, and

5. *The Invitation to the Varangians* (1913), painting by Viktor Vasnetsov depicting the arrival of Riuryk and his brother in northern Rus'.
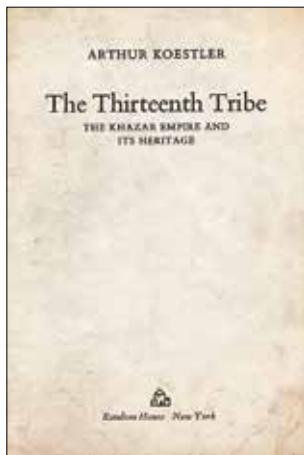
6. Title page of Arthur Koestler's myth-making book (1976), which argues that eastern European Jews are descendants of the Khazars.

Judaic religious rites based on rabbinic traditions. They later came to be known as the Krymchak, or Crimean Jews.

Crimea's Jewish communities functioned peacefully until the ninth century CE, when they were joined and at times threatened by groups of Karaite migrants. The Karaites were anti-rabbinic Jewish sectarians from Persia who passed through the Land of Israel on their way to southern Crimea. They settled in Theodosia (today Feodosiya), which was to become in subsequent centuries the most significant of all Black Sea ports. Several centuries later, after the Black Sea coastal areas of Crimea came under direct Ottoman rule (1475), the new authorities, following Islamic practice, tolerated both groups but designated them differently: the indigenous Krymchaks as "Jews with earlocks," and the Karaites who were disrespectful of rabbinic law as "Jews without earlocks."

Jews also settled in Ukrainian lands that were within the sphere of the Khazar Kaganate. As popular medieval legend has it, in the eighth century the pagan king of Khazaria, Bulan, arranged for a debate between the representatives of three major monotheistic religions. He found Judaism the most rational and convincing faith and, therefore, himself converted to Judaism. Eventually, Bulan brought rabbinic scholars to his court and Judaized the entire realm, thereby allegedly transforming the Khazar Kaganate into the only existing and prosperous medieval Jewish polity. Based on subsequent Arabic travelogues, the Bulan tale proved to be nothing but a later medieval legend known as "the choice of faith," something familiar to many peoples, including Ukrainians and Russians.

Indeed, there were groups of Jewish merchants living in Khazar lands, where they conducted mission-ary activity otherwise outlawed in Christian Europe. But even if some members of the ruling elite may have converted for a brief period to Judaism, the Khazar Kaganate was never a Judaic polity. This is attested by archaeological sources—from coins to pottery to graves—and by the fact that when the kaganate fell to the armies of Rus' the Khazar rulers were by religion Muslim. In short, the story of Khazaria's conversion to Judaism may be considered nothing more than a trope in a polemical discourse in medieval Hebrew literature originating in Muslim Spain.

Kievan Rus'

All along the route from the Varangian (Baltic) Sea to the Byzantine Greeks, the Scandinavians set up trading posts, with Novgorod in present-day Russia and Kyiv in Ukraine eventually becoming the most prominent. The trading posts grew into towns and cities, which before the end of the ninth century evolved into a political entity known as Kievan Rus'. Initially governed by Scandinavian Varangians who were steadily being replaced by local East Slavic tribal leaders, Kievan Rus' extended its political influence over a wide expanse of territory stretching from the Gulf of Finland and the upper Volga River in the north to the point where the open steppe begins in the far south. In modern-day terms, this included western Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine as far south as the Ros River, beyond which was the open steppe.

Medieval Kievan Rus' and the steppe peoples

This far-flung realm was a typical European medieval political entity—a loose conglomerate of principalities headed by rulers linked by family ties, who traced their lineage to the founding dynasty named after the mid-ninth-century Scandinavian chieftain, Hroerkr/Riuryk. The Riurykide princes throughout the Rus' realm nominally paid homage to the family's senior member, the grand prince resident in Kyiv. The realm reached its apogee during the late-tenth and eleventh-century reigns of grand princes Volodymyr/Vladimir ("the Great," r. 980–1015) and Yaroslav I ("the Wise," r. 1019–1054). Kievan Rus' was dynastically integrated with the rest of medie-

MAP 5

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val Europe, since the sons and daughters of its grand princes married into the ruling houses of Norway, France, Poland, and Hungary, among other countries. In terms of culture, the Kievan realm was closely linked to the Byzantine Empire, with which it maintained active economic ties and from which it received in the late tenth century Christianity according to the Eastern Byzantine rite. Eastern Orthodoxy became the official religion of all the Rus' principalities and ever since has remained the dominant religious culture in those lands regardless of which state rules them.

Most of modern-day Ukraine's territory was outside the realm of Kievan Rus', since the steppelands were initially controlled by the Khazars and later various Turkic nomadic pastoralists, while far southern Crimea and its Black Sea coastal region were controlled by the Byzantine Empire and its allies. In the 960s a dynamic Rus' grand prince (Svyatoslav) destroyed the Khazar Kaganate. Thereafter, the steppe became an unstable zone inhabited by warring nomadic Turkic tribal groups (Pechenegs,

8. The Mongol invasion of Kievan Rus' as depicted in the 16th-century manuscript, the "Illustrated Chronicle of Ivan the Terrible."

7. Reconstruction of the center of Kyiv, the capital town of Rus', as it looked like in the eleventh century.

Polovtsians, etc.), who were in almost constant military conflict with Kievan Rus' for most of the rest of its history. The most destructive of these warriors from the east were the Mongols, who, with their vast armies comprised primarily of various Turkic tribal groups from Central Asia and known by the generic term *Tatar*, conquered many of the leading cities of Kievan Rus' between 1237 and 1241. The city of Kyiv itself fell to the Mongols at the end of 1240, and within the next few decades Kievan Rus' as a distinct political entity came to an end.

The independent principality and later kingdom of Galicia-Volhynia, with its capital of Lviv in far western Ukraine, carried on Rus' political and cultural traditions as an independent state until the mid-fourteenth century. Thereafter, the territory

MAP 6
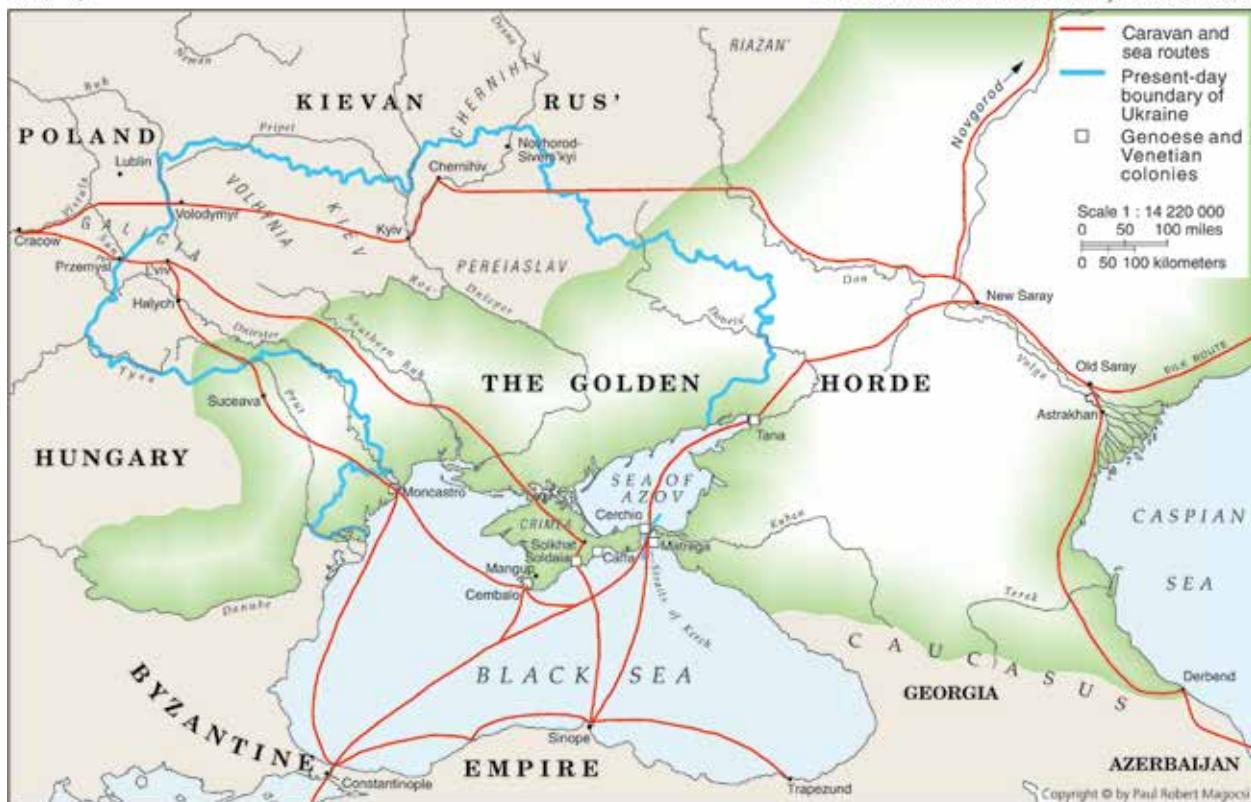
of modern-day Ukraine came under the control of three powers: (1) the Mongol-Tatar-ruled Golden Horde and its successor state, the Crimean Khanate; (2) the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; and (3) the Kingdom of Poland. Two other smaller areas remained under entirely different rule: Transcarpathia within Hungary; and Bukovina within Moldavia.

The Golden Horde was formed in the 1240s as the far western component (*ulus*) of the Mongol Empire. It was based, like the earlier Khazar Kaganate, on the lower Volga River, and it encompassed all of southern steppe Ukraine and Crimea as far west as the Carpathian Mountains. Also, like the Khazars before them, the Mongol-Tatar Golden Horde derived its wealth from the duties it levied on international trade along the famed Silk Route that ran from China through Central Asia and the Golden Horde before reaching the route's terminus in Crimea. The Mongols allowed trading companies from Genoa and Venice to set up bases in Crimea's Black Sea ports, in particular Italianate Caffa (modern-day Feodosiya), where they processed goods (spices, silks, slaves) that were sent on to the Mediterranean Islamic world and southern Europe.

Jews

Jews came to Kievan Rus' from central Europe, most likely from the lands of Bohemia and Moravia (present-day Czech Republic). These were the Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazim, whose ethnic denominator comes from the biblical word *Ashkenaz*, the name by which medieval Jews called the German lands. While we do not know when exactly these Jews arrived in Kievan Rus', it is certain that by the thirteenth century there were already small organized communities of Ashkenazim in what is today the central and northern Ukrainian towns of Ostroh, Volodymyr, and Chernihiv. The earliest Ashkenazic settlements are poorly documented and known only through oblique references found in rabbinic *responsa* (legal correspondence). There are references to Jews in the chronicles of Kievan Rus': for example, the story of monks in Kyiv's Monastery of the Caves (Pecherska Lavra) going at night to debate theological issues with local Jews. It turns out that such alleged encounters between Slavs and Jews were imaginary and simply reflected the polemical interests of later Orthodox religious writers.

9. "The Kievan Letter" (ca. 930), document from the Cairo Geniza, now at the University of Cambridge Library, Manuscript Collection.

Some Slavic written sources refer to groups of vagrant Jews who, already in the early tenth century, were living in the lower part of Kyiv, the Podil district. There they founded a community, although its exact location is unknown. The community's leaders included Jews from central Europe and Khazaria, as well as local Jews so well integrated into Kievan Rus' society that they adopted Slavic names. The complex origin of Kyiv's tenth-century Jewish community derives from a document found in the Cairo *genizah* (repository of discarded manuscripts) known as "the Kievan Letter." This is a document that communal leaders prepared for a Jew in Kyiv, who at the time had borrowed money but then was robbed and was looking for ways to repay his debt.

The Jews of Kievan Rus' were intellectually and religiously closely related to European (Ashkenazic) Jews. For example, a thirteenth-century Jew from Chernihiv went as far as London, where he taught a local Christian scholar how to write the Slavonic

alphabet, read Slavonic letters, and even pronounce Slavic obscenities that are to this day recognizable. Another Jew from Volhynia went to study traditional Jewish texts with rabbinic scholars in Toledo, Spain; while a third went to a *yeshivah* (Talmudic academy) in the Germanic lands. Whenever Jews from eastern Europe needed to solve difficult religious and communal issues that they could not settle locally, they sent their legal inquiries to the disciples of the *Hasidei Ashkenaz*, pious and elitist Jews residing in the borderlands between Poland and Germany whom they considered their spiritual masters.

While Jews in Kievan Rus' knew the Slavic vernacular, Ashkenazic Jews brought with them the Yiddish language, pietistic customs, and magical beliefs popular in Germanic central Europe. Whatever the mixed origins of the early Jewish settlers in Kievan Rus', by the fifteenth century Yiddish-speaking newcomers had assimilated local Slavic-speaking Jews, so that Yiddish became the predominant language among Ukraine's and other eastern European Jews. It was the Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazic Jews who were to lead the religious, institutional, communal, educational, and cultural developments of the Jewish community in Ukraine for centuries to come.

Lithuanian-Polish-Crimean era

Not long after the Golden Horde came into being, a new power in the north arose, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In the course of the fourteenth century, Lithuania expanded steadily and took under its rule most of the southern principalities of former Kievan Rus', which in Ukrainian lands included Volhynia, Chernihiv, Kiev, Pereyaslav, and Podolia. The other Rus' principality in this area, Galicia, after nearly half a century of military conflict with neighboring states (Hungary and Lithuania), was annexed to Poland in 1387.

The next important political change came during the second half of the fifteenth century. Discontented elements among the ruling strata of the Golden Horde broke away to create a new state structure called the Crimean Khanate. Although based in the Crimean peninsula, the new khanate also included steppelands in southern Ukraine between the Dnieper River and the Sea of Azov. This part of the steppe
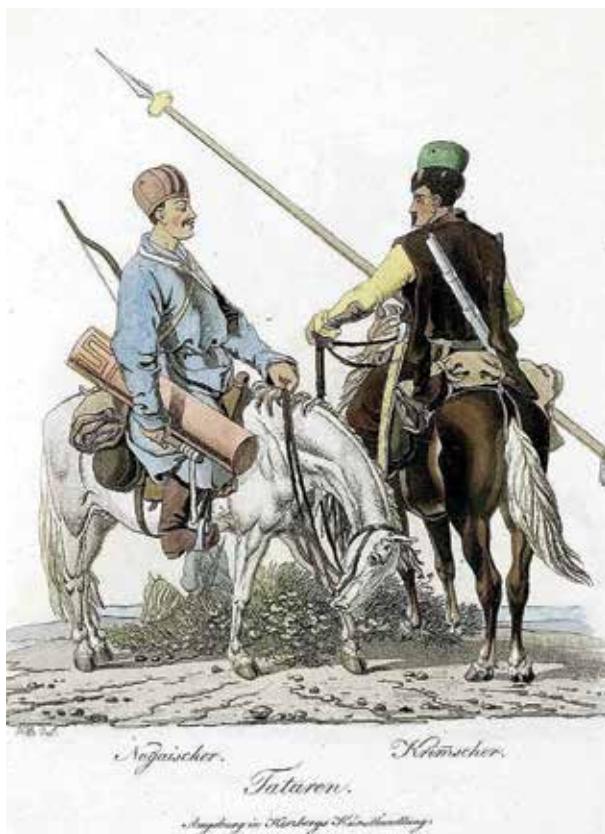
10. Nogay Tatar (left) and Crimean Tatar (right) slave raiders in 16th-century Ukraine, engraving by H.G.F. Geisler (1804).

was eventually controlled by Tatar tribes known as the Nogay, who were only nominally under the authority of the Crimean Khanate. In 1475 the powerful and expanding Ottoman Empire invaded Crimea, took the coastal cities under its direct control, and effectively incorporated the Crimean Khanate into its political sphere as a semi-independent vassal state.

It was not long before Crimea's economy came to be based to a significant degree on the slave trade. Expeditions of Crimean and Nogay Tatars set out several times a year to Lithuanian- and Polish-ruled Ukraine and Muscovite-ruled Russia, where they captured East Slavs who were sold to buyers in the Ottoman-controlled Crimea port of Kefe (former Caffa/Feodosiya). Between 1500 and 1664, an estimated one million people from Ukraine and southern Russia were captured and sold into Crimean and Ottoman slavery. One result of this massive demographic change was to transform much of Ukraine—especially the open steppe region south of the Ros River—into what came to be known as the uninhabited Wild Fields. In effect, Ukraine was what its very name means: a borderland (*ukraina*)

11. *A Cossack Wedding* (1893), painting by the Polish romantic artist, Józef Brandt.

or no-man's land between Poland and Lithuania to the north and the Crimean Khanate to the south.

Cossack phenomenon

The sixteenth century proved to be an important turning point during which three developments took place that were to have a lasting impact on Ukraine and all its inhabitants. By the very outset of the century, it had already become common practice for peasant farmers and others of a more adventurous bent to go on short expeditions into the no-man's land in order to exploit the seemingly boundless natural wealth in plant life and animals. Temporary visits eventually turned into permanent habitation, and to protect themselves from Nogay Tatar slave-raiders, the settlers quickly learned military skills. This phenomenon came to be known as the Cossack way of life. By the mid-1550s, the Cossacks set up their first permanent fortified camps, called the *sich*, on islands within the broad Dnieper River, just south of several impassable rapids (near the present-day city of Zaporizhzhya) in south-central Ukraine. Because their center was "beyond the rapids" (*za porohamy*), they came to be known as the Zaporozhian Cossacks.

12. *Reply of the Zaporozhian Cossacks to the Turkish Sultan* (1880) by the Russian painter of Ukrainian origin, Ilya Repin.

MAP 8

The *sich* and surrounding steppe land on both banks of the Dnieper River attracted an ever increasing number of peasants and other elements not wanting to live under what they considered oppressive rule. The arriving refugees were mostly males of various ethnic and religious backgrounds—Poles, Lithuanians, Romanians, Tatars, Jews, among others—although the vast majority were East Slavic Rus' people, the ancestors of modern-day Ukrainians.

The second sixteenth-century development, although political in nature, had very significant socio-economic implications. Ever since the late fourteenth century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was moving gradually but ever so steadily closer to its neighbor to the west, Poland. The culmination of this process was reached at the Union of Lublin in 1569, when both parties formed a state called the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Although Lithuania remained a distinct component of the joint commonwealth, in the very same year the entire southern part of the grand duchy was annexed to Poland. In effect, Ukrainian lands that had been in Lithuania—and this included, at least nominally, Cossack-inhabited Zaporozhia—were now administratively part of the Kingdom of Poland.

Socioeconomic and religious developments

Among the Polish laws introduced into Ukrainian-inhabited lands was a decree of 1573 attaching peasants to the manorial estates of their landlords. This meant that the vast majority of Ukraine's rural population became proprietary serfs owned by Polish landlords. Poland itself had by the sixteenth century become a major exporter of raw materials to western Europe, in particular lumber, hides, and valuable cash crops like wheat, shipped down the Buh and Vistula rivers to Poland's port of Danzig/Gdańsk on the Baltic Sea. As the demand for wheat in particular grew, Polish landlords developed estates farther and farther eastward into Ukraine on both sides of the Dnieper River. Proprietary serfs were brought in to work the land, and middlemen—mostly Jews but also German, Armenian, and Tatar migrants—were hired by the Polish landlords to manage their ever-growing manorial estates and subsidiary interests (mills, distilleries).

The third sixteenth-century development was cultural or, more precisely, religious in nature. In pre-modern times, most people identified themselves according to their religion, not their language or ethnicity. Many states, moreover, adopted an "offi-

13. Peasant-serfs laboring on a Polish manorial estate.

cial" religion, so that one could not be a full-fledged subject if one were not of the state religion. Of the states ruling Ukrainian territory in the sixteenth century, Poland and Lithuania were Roman Catholic, and the Crimean Khanate Muslim. Meanwhile, the majority of the population in the eastern lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Ukraine and Belarus) comprised Slavic Eastern-rite Orthodox Christians. They were the inheritors of a religious tradition that began with the official adoption of Christianity from the Byzantine Empire by Grand Prince Volodymyr/Vladimir of Kievan Rus' back in 988. But Kievan Rus' no longer existed, and in sixteenth-century Roman Catholic Poland-Lithuania the Orthodox Rus' (Ukrainians and Belarusans) were more often than not treated as second-class subjects.

In an effort to improve their status and at the same time to heal the theological rift between the Roman Catholic West and Orthodox East, clerical and secular Orthodox leaders in Poland-Lithuania considered the desirability of church union between the Orthodox and Roman Catholics in all countries. That ideal goal was never achieved, however. Instead, only a portion of the Orthodox in one country, Poland-Lithuania, accepted what came to be known as the Union of Brest (1596). The Uniates, as they came to be known, retained the Eastern rite but recognized the pope in Rome as the head of their church. The Orthodox who refused to accept the Union of Brest were branded as "schismatics", that is, those who were in schism, or separated from the universal Catholic Church. Instead, they remained under the ultimate authority of the ecumenical

patriarch of Constantinople, who by then was an unwilling subject of the Ottoman Empire. To make matters worse, the Polish authorities outlawed the Orthodox and recognized the Uniates as the only acceptable form of what was henceforth the Eastern-rite Catholic Church.

Thus, by the end of the sixteenth century, the Rus'-Ukrainian inhabitants of former Kievan Rus' had become subjects of the Polish king and were divided into several social strata. The vast majority comprised enserfed proprietary peasants tied to land owned by Polish manorial landlords; a smaller number were Orthodox Rus' landlords (also holding proprietary serfs), townspeople, Cossack militia in the service of Poland, and freebooting Cossacks far to the south in Zaporozhia. Finally, the Rus'-Ukrainian populace was divided along religious lines between what were now two antagonist Eastern-rite churches: the outlawed (though eventually tolerated) Orthodox Church; and the officially accepted Uniate Church.

14. Jewish couple from the Polish Kingdom in traditional dress, lithograph from Léon Hollaendrski's book, *Les Israélites de Pologne* (1846).

The socio-economic disparity and the religious tensions between the Rus' population of Ukraine and Poland-Lithuania's ruling elite (not all of whom were necessarily Roman Catholic ethnic Poles) resulted in periodic revolts and uprisings during the first half of the seventeenth century. This was a time when the Cossacks (some in the service in Poland, others living beyond direct governmental control in Zaporozhia) came to see themselves and were considered by church leaders as defenders of the Orthodox faith of the Rus' people of Poland-Lithuania. Several Cossack leaders (*hetmans*) from the period like Petro Sahaidachnyi are remembered to this day as heroes for their exploits against the Ottoman Turks and Crimean Tatars and as defenders of liberty against Polish oppression. This image of the freedom-loving patriotic Cossack was later immortalized through the medium of literature in the short story *Taras Bulba*, by the nineteenth-century Russian-language Ukrainian author, Nikolai Gogol.

Jewish communities

Jews, like the ethnic Rus' inhabitants in Ukrainian lands, found themselves after the dissolution of Kievan Rus' living under the rule of three states: Lithuania, Poland, and the Crimean Khanate. The Jews of Crimea, as everywhere else in the medieval Muslim world, enjoyed the status of *dhimmis*. This meant that they were a tolerated monotheistic minority whose members were allowed to practice freely their religion, to engage in commerce, and to serve as doctors and translators at the courts of the Muslim rulers in exchange for their acknowledgment of the primordial, triumphant, and higher status of Islam. They could not, however, ride horses, bear arms, or emphasize their visibility, importance, and prestige, but rather had to keep a low profile. Jewish and Karaite communities in Crimea prospered in high medieval and early modern times in towns such as Caffa (Feodosiya), Gözleve (Yevpatoriya), and Chufut-Kale (near Bakhchysarai).

Jews living in the Lithuanian and Polish-ruled lands of Ukraine (Volhynia, Galicia, and Podolia) enjoyed the legal status of *servi camerae*, servants of the royal chamber. As such, they were considered

15. *Janusz Radziwiłł* (1654), Polish-Lithuanian magnate and military commander opposed to the Zaporozhian Cossacks, as depicted by an unknown painter.

free subjects, although legally they were the property of the monarch. While they entirely depended upon the whim of the monarch, they also could rely on his power, since any attack against a Jew or Jewish property was considered an attack against the king or his property. Jewish life and settlement under Polish rule were governed by a complex system of *privilegias* (concessions) which defined the group's communal, religious, and economic activities. The first privileges granted to eastern Europe's Jews bear the signatures of Poland's rulers, including Bolesław ("the Pious," r. 1239–1279) and Kazimierz/Casimir III ("the Great," r. 1333–1370). Reconfirmed or reinforced by subsequent rulers, the Polish *privilegia* replicated similar documents granted to Jews in Bohemia and elsewhere in central Europe. The existence of these documents and the fact that the group's dominant language was Yiddish attests to the Ashkenazic origin of Poland's and Lithuania's Jews. They were allowed to engage in moneylending, currency exchange, and tax collecting, and they were given full religious freedom. The Polish model for Jewish communal life spread eastward

into Ukrainian lands, which at the time were in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Therefore, by the fifteenth century, there were communities with Jewish educational, legal, and religious institutions in Lviv, Lutsk, Ostroh, Volodymyr, and Kyiv.

The Jewish migration eastward intensified in the sixteenth century following the long-lasting rapprochement of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which after 1569 became one polity, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This was also a time when the Counter-Reformation reached Poland-Lithuania and when the heretofore relatively tolerant policies of Poland's Jagiellonian dynasty began to change. Under the pressure of competitive urban merchants and artisans, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, several major Polish cities under royal control received what for them was a privilege, namely a decree, *De non tolerand Judaeis*, which forbade Jews to settle or own real estate in urban areas. This restriction, which was religious in its language and economic in its underpinnings, eventually pushed Jews beyond the city walls and gave them good reason to move else-

where should conditions be more attractive. More attractive conditions were indeed made available by Poland's nobility (*szlachta*), in particular its most wealthy upper stratum, the magnates.

As payment for their services to the rapidly expanding commonwealth, Poland's magnates were granted vast, largely underpopulated territories especially in Ukraine, which as a result of the 1569 Union of Lublin was annexed from Lithuania to Poland. Since the magnates were more concerned with economic prosperity than with religious conformity, they invited Jews to take up managerial posts in their ever-expanding manorial landed estates (*latifundia*) and to reside in the dozens of noble-owned surrounding towns, among them Tulchyn, Polonne, Korets, and Sharhorod.

The magnates also obtained from the Polish crown the right to establish trade and annual fairs in their towns. There they granted Jews exclusive economic privileges as merchants and as leaseholders of various economic activities, including mills and customs, tax farming, liquor production, and tavern keeping. By the mid-seventeenth century, more

MAP 9   JEWISH COUNCILS IN UKRAINIAN LANDS, 18th CENTURY

16. Bohdan Khmelnytskyi (ca.1595-1657), commander (hetman) of the Zaporozhian Cossacks.

than forty magnate-owned towns became walled fortresses. Uman in Bratslav province, for example, had a magnate's palace, a small but permanent Polish garrison, and a complex urban infrastructure including trade, crafts, and guilds staffed predominantly by Jews. Uman and numerous other Ukrainian towns in Volhynia, Podolia, Bratslav, and Kiev provinces came into being as a result of the latifundia system established by the Polish magnates and mostly operated by Jews.

As in other parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Jews in Ukrainian lands enjoyed a high level of legal and communal autonomy. The Council of Four Lands (Heb.: *Vaad arba aratsot*), which functioned from the early sixteenth century to 1764, was an umbrella organization uniting all Jewish communities. Acting somewhat like the commonwealth's national parliament (Sejm), the Council assumed responsibility (including collection of taxes) for Jewish interests before the Polish crown, and it issued regulations of a religious and socio-cultural character that were binding for all Jewish congregations throughout Poland-Lithuania. Each Jewish community had its own *kahal*,

17. *The Battle of Maksym Kryvonos and Jeremiah Wiśnowiecki* (1934), painting by Mykola Samokysh depicting the Zaporozhian Cossack struggle against Poland.

a communal institution run by the local financial and commercial oligarchy. The *kahal* controlled the tax burden and distribution of charitable funds, supervised religious observance, reinforced cultural boundaries, hired and dismissed rabbinic leaders, and supported traditional philanthropic and educational confraternities.

As a result of the close economic association of the Jews with Poland's magnates—not to mention traditional attitudes among Christians throughout Europe at the time—the majority and predominantly rural Orthodox Rus' population of Ukraine viewed Jews as people of a different creed (Judaism), different economic status (functionaries of the magnates), different social entity (urban), and different language (Yiddish). They were, therefore, considered alien. Such a perception and other social tensions were the cause of frequent rebellions during which Jews were at times singled out and killed. Nevertheless, the Rus'-Ukrainian population and

the Jews of Ukraine lived in a symbiotic relationship for over four hundred years of Polish-Lithuanian rule that was based on mutually beneficial economic if not social co-existence of the two subjugated groups.

Cossack- and Crimean-ruled Ukraine

Khmelnytskyi uprising

The ongoing tensions and social discontent in the eastern borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth culminated in 1648 with the outbreak of a major uprising led by the Cossack hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi. In contrast to previous relatively short-lived revolts, Khmelnytskyi managed to unite the interests of the Cossacks of Zaporozhia, the Cossacks in the service of the Polish Kingdom, and the socially elite nobles of Orthodox Rus' origin, all of whom joined in what became a wide-ranging military conflict with Poland. The Cossack leader also

MAP 10　　　　COSSACK STATE, 1649

reached an agreement with Crimea's khan, promising him a share of the campaign booty (including captives to become slaves) in return for military support against Poland.

The Cossack-Tatar alliance was indeed successful, and in the wake of several military victories by Khmelnytskyi's forces against the commonwealth's armies, widespread peasant uprisings broke out throughout Ukraine. Some occurred spontaneously, others were led by Cossack chieftains (*otamany*) nominally linked to Khmelnytskyi. What united these diverse elements was deep discontent with the inequalities of Polish rule and a particular hatred for the main representatives of that rule: the Polish nobility (*szlachta*), the Roman Catholic and Uniate clergy, and the administrators (mostly Jews) of the noble-owned manorial estates on which the enserfed peasantry toiled.

Cossack state between Poland and Muscovy

In August 1649 Hetman Khmelnytskyi managed to reach an agreement whereby Poland recognized Cossack rule in three of the commonwealth's eastern provinces (the palatinates of Kiev, Bratslav, and Chernihiv). This became the core of a semi-independent Cossack state later known as the Hetmanate. In an effort to enhance the status of the Cossack Hetmanate, Khmelnytskyi sought alliances with neighboring Moldavia, Transylvania, Muscovy, the Crimean Khanate, and the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, he and the Zaporozhian Cossacks pledged an oath of allegiance to the tsar of Muscovy at what became known as the Agreement of Pereyaslav of 1654. From that moment the Muscovite tsar added to his royal title the land of Malaia Rus' (Ukraine).

Not unexpectedly, the 1654 alliance—some would say subordination—of the Polish subject Khmelnytskyi to the tsar resulted in war between Muscovy and Poland-Lithuania. For the next several decades, Ukraine was ravaged by invasions of foreign troops and clashes among Cossacks allied with one or more of the competing invaders. This period of ruin (*Ruina*) gradually ended after the agreements reached between Poland and Muscovy in 1667 and 1686.

18. Ivan Mazepa (1639-1709), ruler of the Cossack Hetmanate state, portrait by an unknown painter.

Thereafter, the northern half of Ukraine was divided more or less along the Dnieper River. Lands to the west of the Dnieper, on the so-called Right Bank, remained within Poland-Lithuania; lands to the east, the so-called Left Bank—Cossack Hetmanate (including the city of Kyiv on the Dnieper's Right Bank) and Zaporozhia on both banks—were recognized as part of Muscovy. Meanwhile, all of southern Ukraine remained within the Crimean Khanate and its ultimate sovereign, the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans, at the height of their expansionist phase, also annexed a large portion of Right Bank Ukraine from Poland, which they held on to until 1699.

In this divisive atmosphere, Cossack leaders, whether those in Zaporozhia, in the Polish-controlled Right Bank, or the Muscovite Left Bank, tried to maintain some form of political autonomy for their given region. The most successful in this regard was Ivan Mazepa, from 1687 the hetman in the Muscovite Left Bank. With the backing of Tsar Peter I ("the Great," r. 1682–1725), Mazepa was able to transform the Cossack Hetmanate into a viable self-governing entity within the framework of the Tsardom of Muscovy. After the outbreak of the Great Northern War in 1700, however, Cossack

Ukraine was drawn into Muscovy's monumental and exhaustive military struggle with Sweden for domination of the Baltic region, including Poland-Lithuania. Unexpectedly, in late 1708, Mazepa and a small number of Cossacks defected to the Swedes. They did so, most likely, seeking to enhance the independence of Cossack Ukraine from the Muscovite tsar. But this act, and Peter's resounding Muscovite victory over Sweden at the Battle of Poltava in July 1709, were to have disastrous consequences for the Cossack state in Left Bank Ukraine.

Jewish-Cossack relations

Developments in Jewish communal life during the seventeenth century occurred in response to the ongoing social and ethno-religious clashes between the Orthodox Rus' population and the commonwealth's ruling Polish nobility. Undoubtedly, the most important of these clashes was the Cossack uprising led by Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, which ever since has been recorded in Jewish cultural memory as the *gzeyres takh*

19. Title page of the first edition of Natan Note Hannover's book, *Yeven metsulah* (Abyss of Despair, 1653).

ve-tat—the Catastrophe of 1648–1649. More than any other event, this war between the Zaporozhian Cossacks and the Polish *szlachta* cast a heavy blow on eastern Europe's Jewish communities, although its impact was not the total destruction of Jewish life that the contemporary Jewish chronicler Natan Note Hannover portrayed in his widely read book, *Abyss of Despair* (*Yeven metsulah*, 1653).

Claiming to defend their own privileges and Eastern Orthodoxy, the Cossacks sought the destruction of their oppressors, in particular the Polish nobility and the Roman and Uniate Catholic churches. At the same time, urban Jews suffered enormously whenever major towns were attacked and ruined by the rebellious troops. Most (but not all) Jews saw the Cossacks as villains, in contrast to the Poles, who were regarded as representatives of civilized society and legitimate power. Hence, they armed themselves to defend the towns alongside Polish forces ranged against the Cossacks.

Some Jews had a more ambivalent attitude toward the Cossacks and perhaps even sympathy for the oppressed rebels. This seems to be confirmed by Jewish scholars such as Abram Harkavy, who has uncovered cases of Jews joining the Cossacks, and it explains why some Ukrainian writers such as Yurii Kosach make references in their works to brave Jews. According to chronicles from that time, the Poles besieged in walled towns traded their Jews for an armistice with the Cossacks, even though often the Cossacks disposed of the *szlachta* the moment there were no more Jews around to help the Polish defense of urban areas. Such was the rather complex environment in which several dozen Jewish communities, including those of Tulchyn, Nemyriv, and Polonne, were decimated. Of some 80,000 Jews residing at the time in the Ukrainian lands of eastern Poland, an estimated 14,000 to 18,000 perished and about 1,000 converted to Orthodoxy under duress. Several thousand more became refugees, including about a thousand taken prisoner by Crimean Tatar troops (as recompense for their military support of the Cossacks) to be sold in the slave markets of Crimea and Istanbul.

The impact of these upheavals on the cultural and religious imagination of eastern Europe's Jews

MAP 11   JEWISH COMMUNITIES, 1648-1649

was long lasting. It is understandable that the Jewish chroniclers, evoking the biblical Lamentation of Jeremiah, exaggerated the devastation. Ever since, Jews have marked the Catastrophe of 1648–1649 with a public fast on the 20 of Sivan (May or June), during which they recite liturgical dirges commemorating the victims of the massacres. Popular memory portrayed the destroyed communities as those of pious martyrs who perished committing acts of *kiddush ha-shem*, the sanctification of the divine name. Individual victims of the 1648 Catastrophe, such as the top expert in Kabbalah Jewish mysticism, Shimshon ben Pesah of Ostropolye (Ostropil in Volhynia), acquired fame comparable to that of the great rabbinic scholars massacred by the Romans in the aftermath of the Bar Kochba revolt in the second century CE.

20. *Cossack Mamai*, a traditional bard of Ukraine, monument in Kyiv (2009) by the sculptor Ihor Turzh.

Jewish popular memory subsequently associated the Cossacks with merciless barbarians and perpetrators of anti-Jewish violence, while Ukrainian heroic songs (*dumy*) from the eighteenth century portrayed the Jews as bloodsucking Polish lackeys ingratiating themselves with the oppressive landlords.

Despite the subsequent rhetoric on both sides, the devastating impact of the 1648–1649 Catastrophe proved to be temporary. As early as the mid-1650s, many Jewish refugees had returned and rebuilt their homesteads and businesses, reclaimed their looted property (if they could identify it), restored the synagogues, and even paid the ransoms demanded for family members held in Crimean bondage. So successful were the reconstruction efforts that by 1655 the Council of Four Lands stopped extending social relief to the damaged communities, claiming that they had managed to revive and re-establish themselves. As the result of several agreements between the Cossacks and Poles, the Jews were allowed to reside in Right-Bank Ukraine (west of the Dnieper River). They were not allowed to reside in Left-Bank Ukraine (east of the Dnieper River), which included the Cossack Hetmanate state and other lands under Muscovite rule.

Muscovite-, Polish-, and Crimean-ruled Ukraine

The eighteenth century witnessed a major realignment between the states that ruled Ukrainian territory as well as a change in the political status of the Cossack state. Heralding this development was the formal transformation in 1721 of the Tsardom of Muscovy into the Russian Empire. Thereafter, the power and territorial extent of tsarist Russia grew at the expense of Poland-Lithuania, the Crimean Khanate, and the Ottoman Empire.

Cossack autonomy and division of Ukraine

In the Russian-ruled Left Bank Ukraine, its three regions—the Hetmanate, Zaporozhia, and Sloboda Ukraine—each lost its self-governing status until all were integrated fully into the administrative structure of the rest of the empire. The process was gradual, beginning first with Sloboda Ukraine in the 1760s, continuing with Zaporozhia in the 1770s, and culminating with the abolition of the Hetmanate in the 1780s. These developments took place during the long reign of Empress Catherine II ("the

21. Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovskyi's palace, Baturyn, 1799-1803.

22. Ukrainian peasants as depicted in an 18th-century Polish publication.

In Polish-ruled Right Bank Ukraine, the eighteenth century began with Poland-Lithuania's re-acquisition of lands in south-central Ukraine that it had lost to the Ottoman Empire: the provinces (palatinates) of Bratslav, Podolia, and southern Kiev. There the Polish socio-economic system was restored with the return of nobles, whose extensive manorial estates worked by proprietary peasant serfs (mostly Ukrainians) were again managed by Jewish middlemen. The returning Polish nobles not only built on their lands monumental-sized manorial palaces, they also owned several towns and had their own military units (made up of Cossack-like formations) to protect their property from foreign invasion and internal revolts.

Haidamak revolts and partitions of Poland

Great," r. 1762–1796), whose policies also had a profound impact on Ukraine's social structure. Persons of noble status from the era of Polish rule as well as a portion of the Cossack elite were recognized as members of the Russian nobility; the remaining Cossacks were basically removed from Ukraine and resettled to peripheral areas of the empire; and the peasants on manorial estates lost their freedom of movement and became proprietary serfs owned by their aristocratic landlords.

Social instability, not uncommon among peasants, Cossacks, and townspeople who were discontent with the inequalities of Polish rule, did indeed result in armed revolt. This might take the form of small-scale brigandage carried out by *opryshky* (Robin Hood-like bandits) in the mountainous areas of far western Galicia, or large-scale uprisings against the manorial estates in Right Bank Ukraine. The latter were often

23. *The Haidamaks Entering Uman* (ca. 1936), painting by Ivan Izhakevych.

24. Silver coin to commemorate the annexation of Crimea in 1783 by the Russian Empire under Catherine II.

led by Cossacks who, together with their peasant followers, were known as *haidamaks*. The greatest—and last—of the *haidamak* revolts occurred in 1768. Motivated by both Orthodox religious as well as social discontent, it spread throughout the southern Kiev and Bratslav palatinates and brought in its wake widespread destruction of several Polish manorial estates before being crushed by outside intervention, specifically Russian armies sent by Empress Catherine II. It was the 1768 massacre of 2,000 Jews (and at least as many Poles) by Cossack-led *haidamaks* in the town of Uman that has ever since remained embedded in the collective memory of Hasidic Jews. This was largely because the influential Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav later chose to reside and be buried in Uman in order to attract his followers to pray for the souls of the victims.

The presence of Russian troops in Poland-Lithuania was indicative of how, by the second half of the eighteenth century, the commonwealth had become so weak that it was easy prey to the expansionist desires of its more powerful neighbors. Between 1772 and 1795, Russia, in cooperation with Prussia and Austria, carried out three territorial partitions as a result of which Poland-Lithuania was wiped off the map of Europe. The Russian Empire acquired the lion's share of territory, the equivalent of what today are the countries of Latvia, Lithuania, and Belarus along with central Ukraine west of the Dnieper River. In cooperation with Russia and Prussia, the other power that acquired Ukrainian-inhabited territory from Poland was the Habsburg-ruled Austrian Empire. At the First Partition in 1772 it acquired the old Polish palatinate of Galicia/Red Rus'. Since the Habsburgs were kings of Hungary, Transcarpathia was

already part of their realm; two years later, in 1774, Austria annexed from the Ottoman Empire the Carpathian mountainous region known as Bukovina.

While Poland-Lithuania was in decline, the Russian Empire could turn its full attention to its long-time rival to the south, the Ottoman Empire. Under Catherine II, the Ottoman vassal state, the Crimean Khanate, was annexed to the Russian Empire in 1783, as were about the same time other Ottoman territories along the northern shores of the Black Sea. Hence, by the last decade of the eighteenth century, virtually all territory within the present-day boundaries of Ukraine was under the rule of only two states: the Russian Empire and the Austrian Empire.

Jewish community and socio-cultural life

During the eighteenth century, Jews continued to play an increasingly important role in the economic life of Polish-Lithuanian-ruled Ukrainian lands. They assumed responsibility for the revitalization of the noble-owned private towns, principally in the Bratslav, Podolia, and Volhynia palatinates as well as farther west in Galicia. In all these towns, later known in Yiddish as the *shtetlakh*, Jews de-

25. *Jewish Leaseholder with a Tenant Farmer* (1864), lithograph by the Polish engraver Feliks Zabłocki.

26. Tombstone (*matsevah*) of the Baal Shem Tov, legendary founder of Hasidism, in Medzhybizh.

veloped and dominated marketplace commerce, local arts and crafts, alcohol production, the sale and transport of wood, and international trade including grain. Although the Jews and Polish magnates formed a kind of "marriage of convenience," the nobles nonetheless exploited their Jews through an exorbitant taxation system that became particularly burdensome by the end of the eighteenth century. The magnates taxed or leased whatever they could to the Jews in exchange for cash, including customs offices, marketplace weights and measures, fishponds, certain crafts, and even rabbinic posts (more on that in Chapter 3).

The revitalization of the economy also intensified contacts between Jews and non-Jews, and this led to the blurring of cultural and even religious boundaries between people of different religious beliefs. It was not long before groups of religious enthusiasts emerged among the Jews in Ukraine parallel to the rise of religious reformers in other parts of Europe, such as the Moravian Brethren, Puritans, and Quakers.

During the last decades of the seventeenth century, a Jewish sectarian movement known as Sabbatian-ism made its appearance in eastern Europe. The Sabbatians believed that the long-awaited messiah had arrived in the person of Shabetai Tsevi, a Jewish native of the Ottoman Empire and eventual convert (1666) to Islam. Despite his apostasy and the consequent end of Sabbatianism as a mass movement, some followers (excommunicated elsewhere in Europe) persisted in their belief in him as the messiah. Among them were several hundred living in and around the Galician town of Zhovkva, where they remained until emigrating to the Land of Israel in 1704.

Although Sabbatianism disappeared from Ukraine's Jewish religious scene, the very presence of believers in pseudo- or false messiahs frightened the Jewish elites and helped to trigger the rapid spread of Kabbalah, a form of Judaic mysticism. Elitist Kabbalists gathered in a sort of a club/study group called a *kloyz*, a prayer house usually separate from the rest of the community where they studied mystical sources and indulged in certain mystically inspired prayers. Such elitist prayer houses dotted the territory of Ukraine, the most important among them in Kuty (Bukovina) and Brody (Galicia).

Toward the middle of the eighteenth century, yet another sect of religious enthusiasts led by Jacob Frank emerged in Podolia. Although small in number, the Frankists, as they were known, deviated radically from traditional Judaism and were viewed as a threat to Jewish religious authorities. Members of the group drew their ideas not only from the earlier sectarian Sabbatians but also from the ideology of the Moravian Brethren, one of the contemporary trends among Christian religious reformers. Frank, who saw himself as a reincarnation of the seventeenth-century pseudo-messiah Shabetai Tsevi, preached a fusion form of Judeo-Christianity and even encouraged his followers to seek salvation through orgiastic promiscuity. The Frankists boldly challenged the authority of the community's rabbis and denied the Talmud. In an effort to justify their beliefs and attract new followers, they arranged in 1757 for a public debate in Kamyanets-Podilskyi between themselves and Jewish rabbinic leaders. Soon after, however, the few remaining Frankists converted to Catholicism.

Alarmed by fusion forms of Judaism such as Frankism, which threatened to split Jewish communities,

rabbinic leaders became highly cautious of any religious innovations. Therefore, it is not surprising that they did everything possible to nip in the bud any emerging heretical movements. The newest of these movements—innovative and therefore suspected of heresy—arose in Podolia during the 1760s and 1770s among informal groups of religious enthusiasts and followers of Yisrael ben Eliezer, better known as the Baal Shem Tov. Calling themselves Hasidim ("the pious ones"), they began popularizing the otherwise esoteric knowledge of Kabbalah among the masses. Despite the concerns of rabbinic leaders, the Hasidim made it clear that they were more concerned with emphasizing the spiritual life of the Jewish community, the revitalization of Jewish communal institutions, and the infusion of a sense of healing into traditional rituals than with introducing any radical change in Judaic tradition.

Nevertheless, until the end of eighteenth century, bans of excommunication were continually issued against the Hasidim by the *mitnagdim* (Yid.: *misnagdim*; literally, opponents of the Hasidic movement), who were predominantly Lithuanian Jews or *Litvaks*. Such opposition proved to be in vain, because Hasidism managed to capture the hearts and minds of Ukraine's Jews, moving from the periphery to a central position in the Jewish communities of Podolia, Volhynia, Kiev province, and Galicia. It was not long before Hasidism came to dominate the Jewish communities in what are today Belarus, Poland, and Romania.

In a word, Jewish communal life in the eighteenth century was entirely reconstituted. During the last partition period in the 1790s, the Polish authorities undertook several steps toward reforming the Jewish communities along the lines of the European Enlightenment, even discussing measures for Jewish reform in the commonwealth's parliament. But as Poland-Lithuania increasingly weakened and then disappeared entirely in 1795 as a distinct state, any reform proposals had to await the new governing administrations of Austria and Russia.

Russian- and Austro-Hungarian-ruled Ukraine

Ukrainian lands in the Russian Empire

During the "long" or "historic" nineteenth century, which lasted from the 1780s to the outbreak of World

MAP 12   UKRAINIAN LANDS, circa 1850

Ukrainian ethnolinguistic territory
Lands inhabited in part by Ukrainians
Present-day boundary of Ukraine
Province center

Scale 1 : 9 915 000

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War I in 1914, developments on Ukrainian lands differed significantly depending on whether they were under the rule of the Russian Empire or the Austrian Empire. The Russian Empire, which controlled about 85 percent of the territory and population within the boundaries of present-day Ukraine, was an autocratic state headed by a tsar resident in St Petersburg. Ukrainian territory, like the rest of the empire, was divided into nine provinces—Volhynia, Podolia, Kiev, Chernihiv, Poltava, Kharkiv, Katerynoslav, Kherson, Taurida, and small parts of Bessarabia—each of which was headed by a governor appointed by, and solely responsible to, the tsar.

The vast majority of the population comprised peasants, who lived and worked on lands owned by the state or as proprietary serfs on large private estates owned by landlords belonging to the noble social stratum (*dvorianstvo*). The nobility represented the most important social stratum in society; not only did they control socioeconomic developments, they also elected government officials in the local administration. Despite a period of reforms that took place in the 1860s and that provided for the emancipation of proprietary serfs from legal subordination to their landlords, the nobility continued its role as the dominant social stratum in Russia's imperial governmental and social system.

The long nineteenth century also witnessed three other phenomena: large-scale demographic growth; the opening up of large tracts of new agricultural lands, especially in steppe Ukraine; and the beginnings of industrialization, particularly in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine. In Ukraine's Right Bank (the Pale), economic development was linked to agriculture, notably the export of wheat and sugar-beet refining, while in the Donbas the exploitation of local coal mines made possible metallurgical and related heavy industries. Most of the capital for these new enterprises came from western European investors, while the labor force, often subjected to very poor working conditions, was made up primarily of in-migrants from the Russian north. Together with industrialization was a three to four-fold growth in the population of cities, the largest of which (ranging in size from 100,000 to 700,000 inhabitants) were, by 1914, Odessa, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Katerynoslav (today Dnipropetrovsk), and Mykolayiv.

27. Metallurgical factory under construction (1911) in Yuzivka (present-day Donetsk), the main industrial center of Donbas.

MAP 13

JEWISH POPULATION circa 1900

International boundaries, ca. 1900
Present-day boundary of Ukraine
Provincial boundaries
KHERSON Russian province in the Pale of
12.3   Settlement with percentage of Jews

Scale 1 : 8 300 000

Copyright © by Paul Robert Magocsi

Density of Jewish population
More than 15%   5-9%
10-14%   1-4%

Percent of Jews in towns and cities
■ More than 50%
□ 30-50%
⊙ 10-29%

The demographic growth was due to a rise in natural fertility rates as well as the in-migration of settlers from other parts of the Russian Empire and immigration from abroad. Among the in-migrants were Russians, who were especially widespread in industrial eastern Ukraine and Crimea, while immigrants from abroad included Czechs, who went to Volhynia, and Germans, Bulgarians, Mennonites, and Greeks, who settled in the steppelands of south-central Ukraine and the lowlands north of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Whereas ethnic Ukrainians (17 million in 1897) continued to make up the majority of the population in Russian-ruled Ukraine, nearly 30 percent of the inhabitants comprised other peoples, of which Russians (nearly 3 million), Jews (2 million), Germans (500,000), and Poles (400,000) were the most numerous.

Jews in the Pale of Settlement

The number of Jews in Ukrainian lands which came under Russian rule as a result of the Second (1793) and Third (1795) Partitions of Poland was somewhere between 400,000 and 500,000. They were part of former Polish-Lithuanian territory, which in the Russian Empire came to be known as the Pale of Jewish Settlement. Initially, the imperial Russian regime sought ways to integrate the Jews by legalizing their residence (previously forbidden in Russia), although only in the fifteen new western provinces of the empire that composed the Pale. The enlightened yet authoritarian Empress Catherine II allowed Jews to become part of imperial Russia's social estates, in particular townspeople (*meshchane*) and merchants (*kuptsy*), thereby fulfilling the spirit of eighteenth-century utilitarianism in which Jews

were classified predominantly as an urban population. The imperial authorities encouraged, although with little success, Jewish agricultural colonies, and they attempted throughout the nineteenth century to outlaw the role of Jews as middlemen in rural areas. In an attempt to utilize Jews as entrepreneurial craftsmen and merchants, the tsarist government fostered Jewish resettlement to the underpopulated regions of the southern Ukraine (Kherson, Katerynoslav, and the newly founded Odessa), and it also allowed Jews to settle in the western fortress town of Kamyanets-Podilskyi, from which they had previously been banned by the Polish authorities.

The imperial regime planned to refashion Jewish communities into a sort of corporate entity along the lines of what was known as Russia's "barrack enlightenment," that is, extending equal duties without offering equal rights (which nobody had), which would eliminate the barriers that separated them from other groups of the population. To this end, Tsar Nicholas I (r. 1825–1855) included Jews in the military conscription pool, seeking through the army to transform them into loyal and useful subjects. Clumsily imitating similar reforms in western Europe, especially in Prussia, Nicholas also ordered state-sponsored secular elementary Jewish schools to train students to read and write in Russian, while at the same time encouraging the newly established rabbinic seminary in Zhytomyr to create a group of Jewish crown rabbis (*kazennye ravviny*) who would function as docile Jewish clerks responsible for maintaining vital communal records. These new structures

JEW HATRED—ANTISEMITISM OR ANTI-JUDAISM?

Modern Jew-hatred is a complex combination of racial antisemitism, religious anti-Judaism, and other types of prejudice and xenophobia based on economic and other factors. Antisemitism implies hatred toward Jews based on racial prejudice and is the product of the encounter of nineteenth-century positivism and post-Darwinian social science with ultra-conservative racial theories advanced by the French writer Count Joseph de Gobineau. Modern antisemites maintain that there is no way to integrate Jews into a given society because Jews belong to an inferior race and are essentially "irredeemable." As an inferior race, Jews allegedly pose a threat to a society, since they use acculturation and social integration to their benefit, allegedly seeking to undermine and destroy the host society. Therefore, say the antisemites, host societies should get rid of Jews through segregation, marginalization, and ultimately "disinfection."

Since the above racial theories derive from the mid-nineteenth century and the very term *antisemitism* was not coined until 1879 by the German conservative thinker Wilhelm Marr, it is inaccurate to apply the term to earlier periods.

The previous type of Jew-hatred was religiously based; therefore, it was anti-Judaism, not antisemitism. The hatred directed toward Jews in medieval and early modern Europe was based on the conviction, instilled by Christian churches, that Jews belong to an inferior religious tradition which had become obsolete with the coming of Jesus. Jews could, however, be redeemed—and improved—if they converted to Christianity. Therefore, baptism was believed to be a solution to the Jewish problem. By contrast, modern political and racial antisemitism does not foresee any means to "correct" or "improve" the Jews.

In order to understand the reasons behind the historical conflicts that resulted in anti-Jewish violence, it is important to distinguish between these two forms of Jew-hatred and to explain the differences in their reasoning and outcome. It is also important to distinguish between theoretical and practical antisemitism. Hence, not every murderer of a Jew is a stalwart racial antisemite, while not every antisemite is ready to turn ideology into action and kill. If we want to understand the historical past, we must soberly investigate the reasons behind as well as the outcomes of hatred, whether in the form of anti-Judaism or antisemitism. Of course, explanation does not mean justification.

28. America's President Theodore Roosevelt scolding Russia's Tsar Nicholas II: "Stop your cruel oppression of the Jews!" Chromolithograph, 1904.

drew heavily from a very limited but slowly growing number of enlightened Jews, the so-called *maskilim* (derivative of Heb. *Haskalah*— Enlightenment), who championed rapprochement with the rest of imperial Russia's inhabitants through a process of assimilation. At the time, all these measures were understood to be part of a positive legal, educational, and social phenomenon that would result in the integration of Jews into the broader society.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the enlighteners repeatedly called on the tsarist government to reform, radically if necessary, the Jewish community. They hoped that traditionally minded Jews would reject their obscurantist rituals and instead adopt the cultural values of the surrounding non-Jewish population, particularly in the realm of education. Some of the enlighteners joined the staff of the Zhytomyr rabbinic seminary, while others became so-called expert Jews (*uchenye evrei*) serving as advisers to regional tsarist governors or as censors of Jewish books.

From the ranks of enlightened Jews emerged the first eastern European Jewish journalists and writers, whose works began to appear in the 1860s during the era of Great Reforms under Tsar Alexander II (r. 1855–1881). This was also a time when the first Hebrew, Yiddish, and Russian-Jewish newspapers were published in the Russian Empire. The first generation of Jewish journalists, censors, crown rabbis, doctors, and lawyers who obtained their degrees at the rabbinic seminaries and Russian universities formed the core of what would become known as the eastern European Jewish intelligentsia. Most, although not all, of its representatives aspired for cultural empowerment and, therefore, chose integration into the state-based imperial culture. Consequently, they were usually called Russian Jews, even though many were from Ukraine and had a strong admiration for that land and its Ukrainian language and culture.

When, during the 1870s and 1880s, the Russian imperial regime embarked on a program of inten-

sive industrialization, this soon resulted in an exacerbation of socioeconomic tensions in the new urban centers, particularly in southeastern Ukraine. The assassination in March 1881 of Alexander II, remembered as the tsar-liberator who abolished serfdom, contributed to creating an atmosphere of political uncertainty and social tension throughout much of the Russian Empire. It was in this context that village peasants and mobs of first-generation urban dwellers took out their anger in a series of pogroms against Jewish residences and stores in three dozen towns and cities and over two hundred villages. The worst instances occurred in Yelyzavethrad, Katerynoslav, Berdyansk, Kyiv, Mykolayiv, and Kherson in central and southern Ukraine. The number of deaths as a result of the 1881–1882 pogroms was small, perhaps 50, of whom half were the pogromists themselves, killed by the troops sent to quell the riots. The material damage to Jewish-owned stores and trading-stalls that were looted

was enormous, however. Jewish losses amounted to hundreds of thousands of rubles, whereas the negative impact of the mob violence on the Russian economy in general was estimated to be about 15 million rubles.

Despite false assumptions at the time that the government had instigated the pogroms of 1881–1882, the imperial authorities did their best to check further outbursts of mass ethnic anti-Jewish violence. Rumors that a secret society of landlords, police, or some governmental body had prepared and carried out the pogrom activities proved to be false. Nonetheless, newly appointed Minister of Interior Nikolai Ignatiev, instead of looking into the growing unrest in the country's rural areas, chose to label the Jews as exploiters who were themselves allegedly responsible for the anti-Jewish violence. The Russian conservative press not only supported and disseminated this distorted viewpoint, it also circulated rumors of alleged anti-Christian hatred of the

Jews. All of this provided a new vocabulary of racial hatred and contributed to creating a new form of antisemitic discourse in tsarist Russia.

The pogroms of the 1880s have traditionally been viewed by historians as a so-called watershed in eastern European Jewish life. They are considered to be a major contributing factor to the massive emigration of Jews from the Russian Empire abroad, most especially to the northeast United States. The pogroms have also been seen as a galvanizing force for new political movements among Jews, whether those who hoped to transform Russian society (the socialist Bund) or those who wished to leave it entirely (the Zionists). Such views are not supported, however, by the results of recent scholarship, which instead tends to emphasize the idea of continuity in eastern European Jewish life up until and even through much of World War I.

While most Jews in Ukraine's pogrom-stricken territories remained in their places of residence, some Jews from tsarist-ruled Belarus and Lithuania who did not experience the anti-Jewish violence first-hand nonetheless found themselves in a much worse economic predicament. Hence, they decided to take to the road. In 1881 about three thousand tried to cross into Austria-Hungary at the Galician town of Brody, while the following year another twenty thousand sought to leave tsarist Russia. This was the beginning of what became a massive exodus of about two million Jews, who between the 1880s and 1914 left the Russian Empire in hopes of finding a better life whether in the United States, Canada, Argentina, South Africa, and Palestine (the land of Israel). Despite the pogroms in Ukrainian territories in the 1880s and the subsequent worsening economic situation throughout the Russian Empire, Ukrainian Jews began to leave en masse only in the late 1890s and were, therefore, among the last to join the mass migration abroad.

Emigration abroad intensified in the wake of the 1905 Russian Revolution, when the regime of Tsar Nicholas II (r. 1894–1917)—in stark contrast to the previous one during the relatively peaceful years of Alexander III (r. 1881–1894)—purposefully orchestrated and manipulated anti-Jewish violence as a means to check revolutionary activities in the country. Supported by the police and the army (including
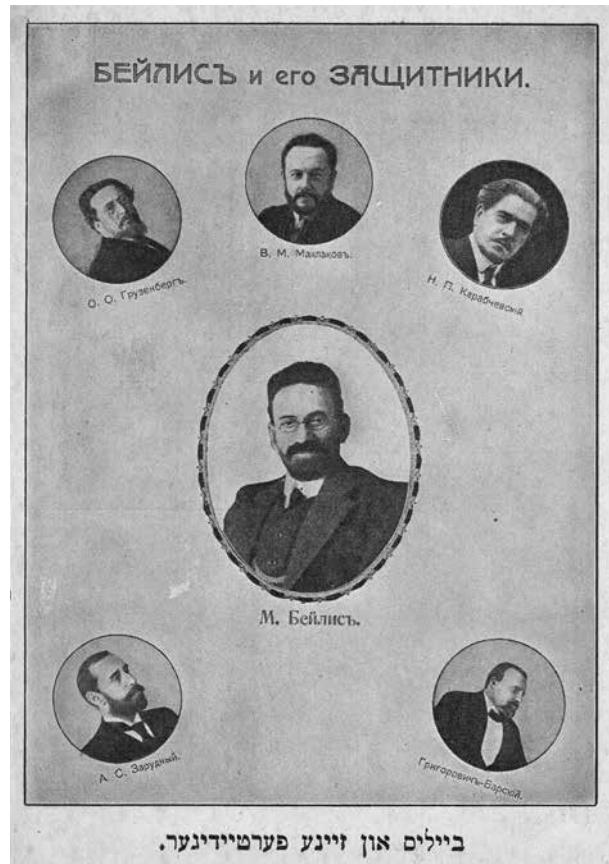
29. Menahem Mendel Beilis (center) and his defenders at his ritual murder trial: (top) Oskar Gruzenberg, Vasilii Maklakov, Nikolai Karabchevsky; (bottom) Aleksandr Zarudnyi and Dmitrii Grigorovich-Barskii. Postcard, 1912.

at times reservists), in 1905 alone pogroms against Jews broke out in more than five hundred towns throughout Russian-ruled Ukraine. They resulted in about a thousand casualties, particularly in Odessa, Katerynoslav, Kyiv, and Kishinev/Chişinău, and in more than 50 million rubles in property damage. The sinister role of the government of Nicholas II in instigating the mass violence did not go unnoticed in Europe and in the United States, where public opinion was highly critical of the Russian imperial regime and sympathetic to the plight of the oppressed Jews.

On the eve of World War I, Kyiv became a testing ground for Russia's far-rightist elements in their efforts to turn the local population and the tsarist government against the Jews and, thereby, to end once and for all further discussions of liberal reforms and projects of Jewish emancipation. The murder in 1911 of a twelve-year-old boy, Andrii Yushchynskyi, by a Kyiv criminal gang under the guidance of Vera

Cheberyak, the mother of one of the child's friends, served as a call to action for xenophobic groups. The most prominent of them was the Union of the Russian People, which launched a vociferous campaign based on a false blood-libel accusation against Menahem Mendel Beilis, a clerk at a brick plant situated near the cave where the tortured body of Yushchynskyi was found.

Although Beilis was a Russian army veteran who enjoyed excellent relations with Kyiv's Christian Orthodox community and even with some stalwart xenophobes, several far-right activists (in particular the militaristic Black Hundreds) managed to convince the government to reclassify the crime as a blood libel. They proposed that Beilis be tried as a religious fanatic and criminal who allegedly murdered a Christian boy in order to extract blood that was subsequently used to bake Passover *matzo*. When the trial began in 1913, Russian lawyers represented the defense, while the Russian writer from Ukraine, Vladimir Korolenko, who was sympathetic to Beilis, covered the case for the democratic press. Notwithstanding the seemingly biased court and the blatant antisemitic hysteria on the pages of the conservative press, the jury, selected mostly from local Ukrainian peasants, found Beilis innocent but nevertheless upheld the view that the killing was an act of ritual murder.

The growing economic tensions, curtailed reforms, and new anti-Jewish legislation dating from the 1880s prompted another kind of response. Many Jews joined various socialist circles and parties, ranging in political orientation from socialist-revolutionary and social-democratic to Zionist, Poalei Tsion (Marxist Zionist), Folkspartai (national autonomist), and Bundist (Jewish social-democratic). In Ukrainian lands, political radicalization had a much lesser impact than it did in the more industrialized regions of tsarist-ruled Lithuania and Poland. Nonetheless, Jews in Ukraine did participate in public life across the political spectrum, often supporting both Bundists and their staunch enemies, the Zionists. In actual practice, concrete political allegiances were less im-

MAP 15 — UKRAINIAN LANDS IN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY, circa 1875

portant than activism in and of itself, a sign of the coming of age of Jews as a political nation. In the end, however, the vast majority of the Jewish population in Russian-ruled Ukraine and elsewhere throughout the tsarist empire remained apolitical and much more concerned with daily economic needs. Hence, the Jews of the Russian Empire were caught by surprise when World War I and the revolutions of 1917 left them faced with multiple accusations of disloyalty originating from the country's radically differing political leaders and military commanders, each pursuing his own agenda.

Ukrainian lands in the Austro-Hungarian Empire

In the neighboring nineteenth-century Austrian Empire, which accounted for only about 15 percent of present-day Ukraine's territory, the administrative structure was quite different. The empire, which after 1868 was renamed the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, was divided into two territorially uneven "halves": the provinces of Austria (which eventually numbered seventeen) and the Kingdom of Hungary. The state was headed by a ruler of the House of Habsburg, who was simultaneously emperor of Austria and king of Hungary. Habsburg lands that are currently in Ukraine consisted of the eastern part of the province of Galicia and the northern part of the province of Bukovina, both of which were in the empire's Austrian half; and several counties in the northeastern corner of the Hungarian Kingdom, which today comprise the Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine.

The demographic composition of Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia was mixed. Even in those areas where ethnic Ukrainians (officially known as Ruthenians) formed the majority population, there were as well other peoples who lived among them, whether in the cities or in the rural countryside. These included Poles and Austro-Germans in eastern Galicia; Romanians and Austro-Germans in Bukovina; Magyars/Hungarians in Transcarpathia; and Jews, who formed a significant portion of the

30. Ukrainian peasants on their way to work in the late 19th-century countryside of Habsburg-ruled Austrian Galicia.
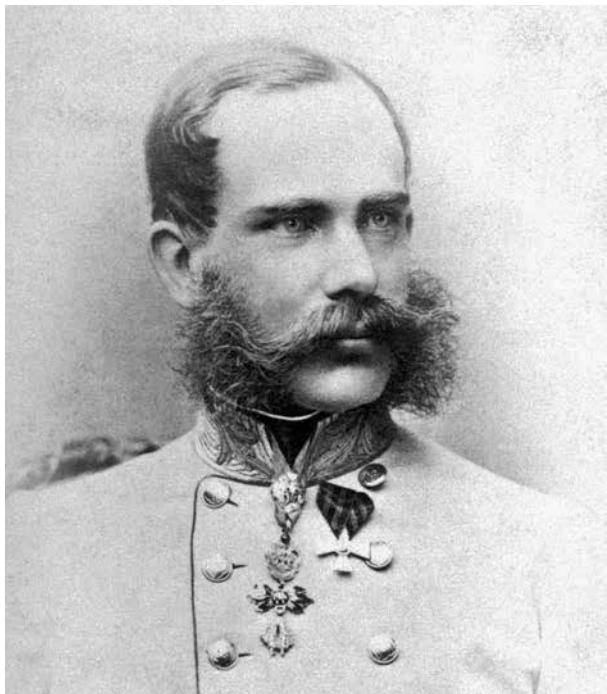
31. Emperor Franz Joseph, the Habsburg ruler of the relatively tolerant Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1848 to 1916. Photo, 1865.

population—especially in towns and cities—in all three regions (see map 13). All these peoples experienced a significant demographic growth in the course of the "long" nineteenth century; in the case of Ruthenians/Ukrainians, from about 1.3 million in the 1780s to 4.3 million in the 1910.

Initially, Austria-Hungary, like Russia, was an empire in which ultimate authority rested in the hands of a hereditary monarch. Habsburg rule gradually came to differ, however, most especially during the long reign of Emperor Franz Joseph (r. 1848–1916). In 1848, on the eve of his coming to the throne, Austria-Hungary was rocked by revolution, during which the largest proportion of Austria-Hungary's inhabitants, proprietary serfs, were legally emancipated. Thereafter, many were able to become economically independent of their former landlords and were even able—and did—participate in government. This is because, from the 1860s, the empire's Austrian "half" functioned as a constitutional monarchy with a national parliament and provincial diets whose members were elected by property owners (including former proprietary serfs). Therefore, the provincial diets and county administrations in both Galicia and Bukovina had ethnic Ukrainian and Jewish

deputies, as did the imperial parliament which came into being in Vienna after 1867.

Despite overall improvements in the political and legal status of Austria-Hungary's inhabitants, Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia remained regions comprised primarily of rural farms and forests, in which the vast majority of the inhabitants gained their livelihood from small-scale agriculture, dairy farming, animal husbandry, and forest-related work, especially in the Carpathian Mountains. With the exception of a small but vibrant oil industry in Galicia, industrial development was very limited. Such an underdeveloped agrarian-based economy was unable to provide an adequate livelihood for the rapidly growing numbers among Austria-Hungary's many peoples, including ethnic Ruthenians/Ukrainians. The result was large-scale emigration abroad during the decades between 1880 and 1914, especially to the industrial regions of the northeast United States and the prairie provinces of western Canada. Rural poverty in Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire also prompted migration, although very few of Russia's ethnic Ukrainians went to North America. Instead, they resettled in the far eastern regions of the Russian Empire.
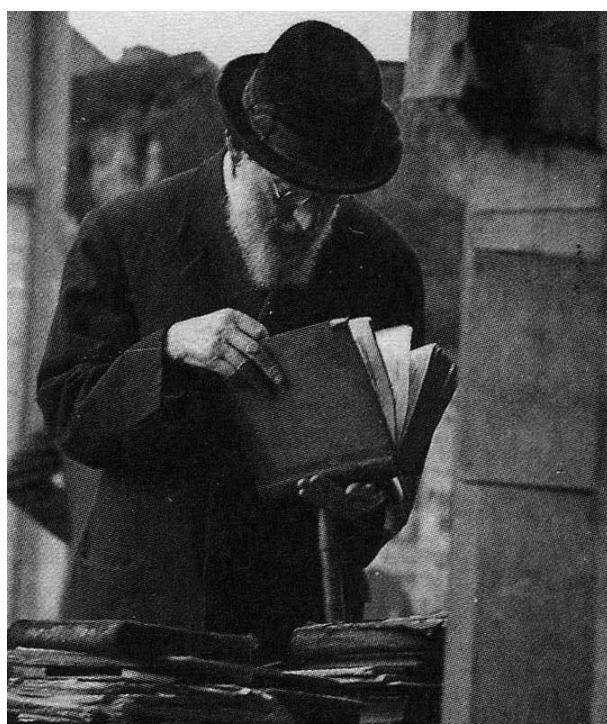
32. Traditionally dressed Jew browsing among books in the Jewish district of Lviv/ Lemberg. Photo, ca. 1910.

33. Hillel Zeitlin (left) and Nathan Birnbaum (right), leading diaspora nationalists in Galicia. Postcard, ca. 1910.

Jews of Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia

As in Russian Empire, Jews in the Habsburg Empire—specifically in the Austrian provinces of Galicia and Bukovina and in Hungarian Transcarpathia—experienced a dramatic demographic increase during the course of the long nineteenth century. If, for instance, in 1790 they numbered about 180,000 in Habsburg territories that are now part of Ukraine, in 1910 their numbers had increased nearly fivefold to 849,000. In Austrian Galicia east of the San River, that is, in the otherwise heavily inhabited Ukrainian part of the province, there were in 1910 over 660,000 Jews, which represented 13 percent of all the inhabitants and more than 30 percent of the urban population. Whereas half a dozen Galician towns had populations with a Jewish majority, about 40 percent of Galicia's Jews resided in the countryside where they were active as mediators in trade.

In contrast to Russia's imperial authorities, who dealt with the Jewish enlightened reformers (*maskilim*) and appointed them to various state-paid positions related to the community, the Habsburg rulers did not trust the *maskilim* and cooperated instead with the more conservative Hasidic leaders. The region's Jewish population was quite diverse, particularly in such East Galician cities as Lviv and Ternopil, where they constituted more than two-thirds of all those in the liberal professions (doctors, lawyers, teachers). In rural areas, where Jews from the late 1860s were allowed to own land, they constituted about 20 percent of all landowners. The majority, however, lived in relative poverty and in

the traditional Hasidic fashion. They were particularly devoted to their leaders, so that the masters of Hasidic communities (*tsadikim*) in Sadhora (Sadagora) in Bukovina, Mukachevo (Munkatsh) in Transcarpathia, and Belz, Rymanów (Rimenev), and Nowy Sącz (Sandz/Tsanz) in Galicia had a towering presence and performed a significant role in communal life.

Galician Jews saw themselves caught in the growing rivalry between, on the one hand, Ruthenian/Ukrainian and Polish peasants and urban workers; and, on the other, Poles, who held the province's leading position as landowners and heads of administration. The Poles were ever concerned with the rise of local Ukrainian nationalism and sought to contain its leaders' demands for political and cultural autonomy. These issues became particularly

34. Jews of Hungarian-ruled Transcarpathia. Postcard, early 1900s.

significant once Jews and ethnic Ukrainians gained emancipation from serfdom in 1848 and once universal male suffrage was introduced in 1906. Subsequently, the Jewish electorate often was a decisive factor in the struggle between Ruthenians/Ukrainians and Poles for seats in the Austrian imperial parliament. Resorting to intimidation and sometimes violence, the local Polish administration attempted, sometimes successfully, to convince Jews to vote for Polish candidates or to support those Jewish candidates who favored an assimilationist Polish agenda.

There were, however, times when Jews and Ukrainians came together in support of candidates with specific national minority claims and programs. For example, in 1906–1907, Galicia's Ukrainian National Democrats and the Jewish Na-

tional Party agreed to vote for one another's candidates in those electoral districts with either a majority Ukrainian or Jewish population. Although Jews and Ukrainians often found it difficult to support unanimously the decisions of their respective political leaders, and even more so to implement consistently whatever decision might be adopted, the result was the appearance—for the first time in history—of Jewish and Ukrainian political clubs in the Austrian imperial parliament. The presence of Benno Straucher, a pro-Ukrainian Jewish parliamentary deputy from Bukovina, reinforced the success of the Jewish-Ukrainian political coalition, which worked productively during the full parliamentary session of 1907–1911.

Parliamentary deputies of the Jewish National Party were, in fact, refurbished Zionists. In other words, they opposed local Jewish assimilationists who argued for Jewish integration into Polish culture, and they ridiculed the political efforts of the Jewish Austro-Germanophiles. Instead, they developed a distinct type of Zionism. It was Jewish diaspora nationalism, which worked toward attaining Jewish minority rights and improvement of the social conditions of the Jews in Austria-Hungary rather than emigration to the land of Israel. Taking their cue from Ukrainian nationalists, Galician Zionists attempted to transform the Jews in the diaspora from a religious-ethnic group into a modern nation by rallying them around national democratic slogans.

The situation of the Jews in neighboring Bukovina was similar to that in Galicia (of which it was a part until 1861). Bukovinian Jews increased in number during the nineteenth century even more dramatically than in Galicia: from about 3,000 people in 1776 to 102,000 in 1910. These figures represented not only a natural demographic increase but also an influx of Jewish migrants from the Russian Empire and from neighboring Galicia, which the Habsburg authorities tried but ultimately failed to control. Comprising nearly 13 percent of Bukovina's population in 1910, the Jews found themselves between two other competing minority groups—the Romanians (34 percent) and the Ukrainians (38 percent).

Jews lived in Bukovina's few urban areas, where they were particularly active in artisan manufacturing, trade, tavern-keeping, construction, and small-scale banking, all of which reflected their pivotal role in

35. The Jewish National Center (1908) in Chernivtsi, the administrative center of Habsburg-ruled Austrian Bukovina. Postcard, 1913.

the development of capitalism in this otherwise predominantly agricultural and underdeveloped province of Habsburg Austria. Jews from smaller towns who belonged to lower social estates were less active in capitalist pursuits and, instead, were part of the traditional agricultural-based economy, serving as middlemen between urban and rural areas. Bukovina's lower-estate Jews, less numerous than the lower-estate Jews of Galicia, lived in relative poverty while being devoted to the courts of their Hasidic masters in Boyany (Boyan), Sadhora (Sadagora), and Vyzhnytsya (Vizhnits).

Beginning in the 1770s, the Habsburg administration launched a campaign to integrate the various ethnic groups of the empire. This included a systematic process of germanization and adaptation to the rules and regulations of the growing Austrian imperial bureaucracy. Habsburg integration seemed to work well among the Jews of Bukovina, so that by the 1830s German had become their language of communication, serving as a lingua franca with the authorities and with the empire's other peoples. Urban Jews, in particular, enthusiastically enrolled their children in German-language public schools, thus furthering Jewish integration. Nevertheless, by the end of the nineteenth century, Yiddish was still the everyday language for 85 percent of Bukovina's Jews.

The Habsburgs empowered germanized Jews with higher-education degrees by giving them positions as state clerks, lawyers, and doctors, and by encouraging their election to town councils, provincial diets, and even the imperial parliament. With the rise of various forms of Jewish political involvement, two parties on opposite sides of the political spectrum competed for the support of Bukovina's Jewish voters: the Zionists and the socialist-Bundists. Acknowledging the important role of the Jewish community in Bukovina, the Habsburg administration endorsed the establishment of the Jewish National Center, erected in 1908 alongside the Romanian and German national centers in the very heart of the provincial capital of Chernivtsi.

In Habsburg-ruled Hungarian Transcarpathia, the demographic growth of the Jewish population was even more dramatic than in Austrian Galicia and Bukovina. Whereas in 1785 there were a mere 2,000 Jews in Transcarpathia, by 1910 their number had

36. Headquarters from 1895 of the Ruthenian/Ukrainian Prosvita Enlightenment and Cultural Society (est. 1868) in Lviv, Austrian Galicia.

risen to over 87,000. Most were concentrated in Hungary's counties of Maramorosh (51 percent) and Bereg (26 percent). Originating from Galicia to the north as well as from Slovakia in the west, the Jewish settlers quickly adapted to the rural environment dominated by the Carpathian Mountains and foothills.

In contrast to most other parts of central and eastern Europe, most Transcarpathian Jews lived in the rural countryside, where they owned and worked the land alongside their Rusyn/Ruthenian neighbors. They also shared socio-cultural characteristics with their Christian neighbors: most Jews were subsistence-level peasant agriculturalists or lumberjacks, an estimated 30 percent were illiterate, and they were fervently religious Hasidic traditionalists devoted to their so-called wonder-working rabbis (*tsadikim*), the most influential of which had their dynastic seats in Mukachevo (Munkatsh) and Sighet. Virtually all Transcarpathian Jews were Yiddish-speaking, although rural Jews also spoke Rusyn and urban Jews Hungarian.

It was the Jews' socioeconomic status, so similar to that of their Rusyn/Ruthenian neighbors, that encouraged tolerance and even mutual respect between the two peoples. The Hungarian authorities, however, became increasingly critical of Jews, especially in the 1890s, when a new wave of Jewish migrants fleeing pogroms in the Russian Empire—and joined by economically discontent Jews from Galicia (known in Yiddish as *Galitsiyaner*)—settled

37. Ruthenian/Ukrainian secular intelligentsia in Austrian Galicia, including seated: Mykhailo Pavlyk (1st from left), Olha Kobylyanska (4th from left); second row: Volodymyr Hnatyuk (2nd from left), Mykhailo Hrushevskyi (4th from left), Ivan Franko (5th from left); and third row: Filaret Kolessa (2nd from left), Ivan Trush (4th from left), and Mykola Ivasyuk (6th from left). Photograph, 1898.

in Transcarpathia's small towns and villages, where they established taverns, inns, and small shops while also lending money to local peasants (Jews as well as Christians) at exorbitant rates. Hungarian commentators were quick to draw distinctions between the older and socially reliable Jewish communities and the newcomers from Galicia, who were blamed in the press for the region's generally poverty-stricken economic status. In an effort to counteract such criticism, many of Transcarpathia's urban Jews welcomed the country's current policy of national assimilation (magyarization) and adopted the Hungarian language and even a Hungarian identity as their own.

In stark contrast to the Russian Empire, where on the eve of the World War I Jews were seen as aliens and increasingly marginalized elements of tsarist society, the Jews of Austria-Hungary were fully emancipated and largely integrated members of Habsburg society. As proud Habsburg subjects, the Jews of Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia certainly had much better feelings toward "their" emperor, Franz Joseph, than did the Jews of Russian-ruled Ukraine toward Tsar Nicholas II.

National awakening among Ukrainians

The long nineteenth century was also known as the era of nationalism in Europe, during which several peoples who did not have their own state embarked on what subsequently came to be described as national awakenings. The goal of these multifaceted awakenings was for a given people to acquire an awareness of a national identity expressed often through a distinct language, literary culture, and consciousness of a historic past that was associated with a specific territory and that was deserving of autonomy or, better still, independent statehood.

At various times in this period, the ideology of nationalism reached Ukrainian lands where, interestingly, national awakenings occurred simultaneously among several different peoples, such as the Poles of Galicia, the Romanians of Bukovina, the Jews in those areas and in the Russian-ruled Right Bank, and the Tatars of Crimea. Ukraine, therefore, witnessed simultaneously more than one national awakening, including one that involved the area's numerically dominant population, ethnic Ukrainians.
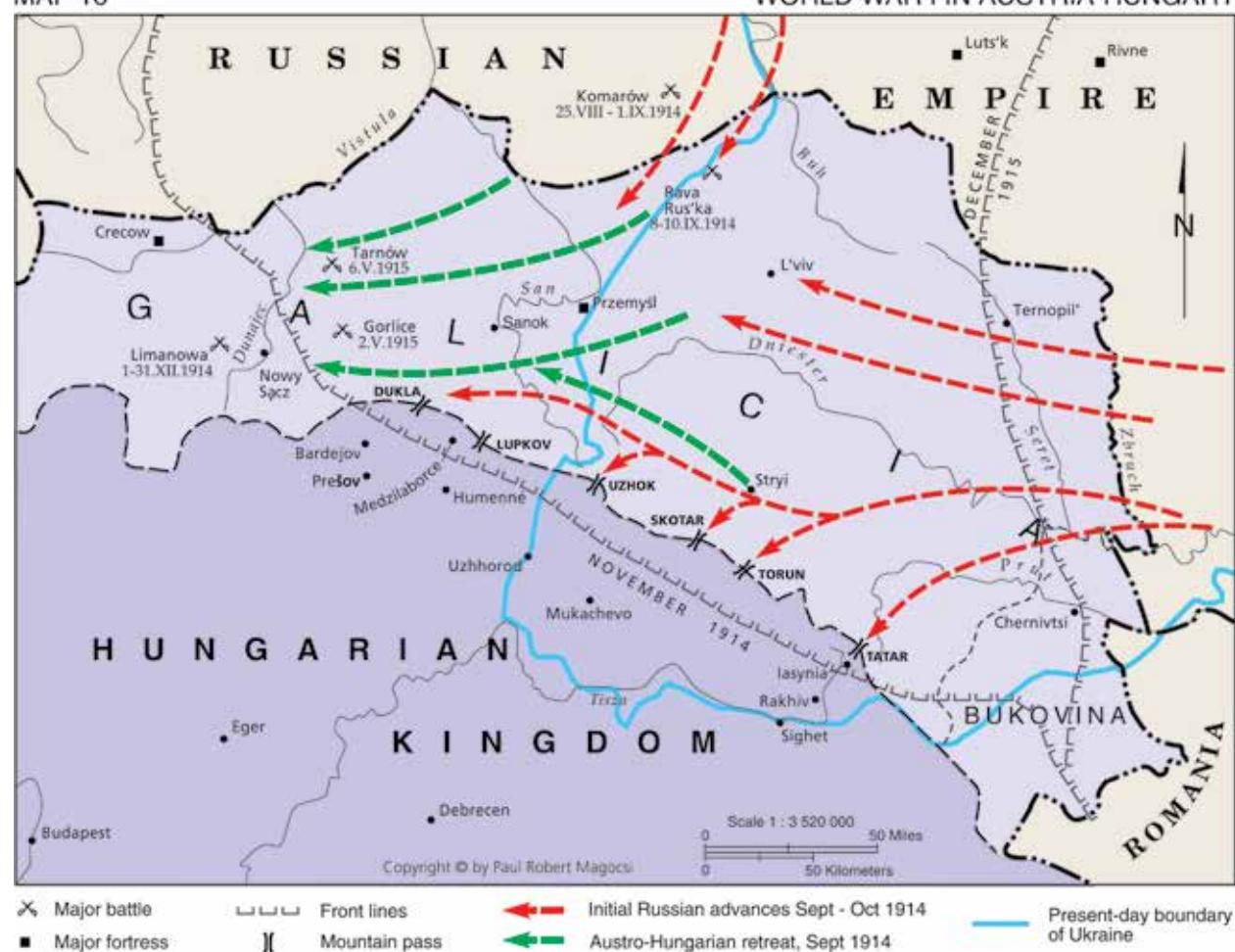
National awakenings among stateless peoples depended for the most part on each group's self-designated leaders known as the national intelligentsia. These individuals generally included teachers, clergymen, lawyers, doctors, writers, and scholars, in particular historians, linguists, and ethnographers. In the case of ethnic Ukrainians, the most prominent propagators of the national idea were the national bard Taras Shevchenko, the historian Mykola Kostomarov, and the novelist Panteleimon Kulish in the Russian Empire, and the belletrist and scholar Ivan Franko and the historian Mykhailo Hrushevskyi in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The success of any national movement depended not only on the effectiveness of the nationalist intelligentsia, but also on the policies of the state. In this regard, the differences between the situation faced by ethnic Ukrainians in the two empires could not have been greater. Whereas until the 1840s the Russian imperial government gave encouragement

to what they called Little Russian scholarly and cultural endeavors, subsequently it placed restrictions and tried to suppress the very idea of a distinct Ukrainian nationality. As a result, there were no Ukrainian-language schools and only a few cultural organizations, while publications in Ukrainian were banned by tsarist decrees issued in 1863 and 1871. This situation, with the exception of a brief period after 1905, basically did not change until the very end of tsarist rule in 1917.

In the Austrian Empire, by contrast, the Habsburg rulers gave encouragement to Ruthenian cultural, educational, and religious life in the 1770s and 1780s. But it was the Revolution of 1848 that brought about monumental changes. Not only were Ruthenians/Ukrainians recognized as a distinct nationality, after 1848 they were allowed to form their own civic, cultural, and political organizations, and their children could attend state-supported schools from the elementary through university level in

MAP 16   WORLD WAR I IN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

X Major battle   ⊔⊔⊔ Front lines   Initial Russian advances Sept - Oct 1914   Present-day boundary of Ukraine
■ Major fortress   )(Mountain pass   Austro-Hungarian retreat, Sept 1914

38. Ruthenian/Ukrainian internees from Austrian Galicia in Europe's first internment camp at Thalerhof (1914-1917) near Graz in present-day Austria.

which Ruthenian/Ukrainian was the language of instruction. There were numerous Ukrainian-language newspapers, journals, theaters, economic cooperatives, credit unions, and political parties which helped elect deputies representing Ukrainian national interests to legislative bodies at the county, provincial, and national levels. Finally, in contrast to the Russian Empire, where the Orthodox Church was an instrument of the state and was opposed to

any aspect of Ukrainian ideology, Habsburg Austria-Hungary gave its full support to the Uniate (renamed in the 1770s Greek Catholic) Church, which eventually developed into a stronghold of Ukrainian spirituality, language, and culture, in particular after 1900 when the primate of the church was Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi. Whereas the situation in Hungarian Transcarpathia was not favorable to a national awakening, Habsburg-ruled Austrian Galicia (and to a lesser extent Bukovina) provided a positive environment for developments which, by the second half of the long nineteenth century, made possible the very survival of the Ukrainian nationality.

World War I and the revolutionary era

The first decade of the twentieth century was marked by rising international tensions in Europe, which were subsequently played out in small-scale wars in the Balkans (1912–1913) and in ongoing political rivalries and an armament race between the Great Powers: Great Britain, France, and Russia on one

39. Mykhailo Hrushevskyi (1866-1934, bearded in the center), president of the Ukrainian National Republic at its proclamation in Kyiv, November 1917.

side; and Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy on the other. The tensions culminated in August 1914 with the outbreak of what came to be known as the Great War, or later World War I.

Ethnic Ukrainians now suddenly found themselves fighting against each other in armies that were on opposing sides in the conflict: Russia together with Great Britain, France, and eventually Italy and United States on the side of the Allies; and Austria-Hungary together with Germany and eventually the Ottoman Empire on the side of the Central Powers. This division also had an impact on ethnic Ukrainian immigrants in North America, who were suspected of being possible enemy agents of Austria-Hungary, with the result that several thousand in Canada were without any justification forcibly sent to internment camps for the duration of the war.

War and revolution in Ukrainian lands

Ukrainian-inhabited lands, especially in Galicia and Bukovina, were in the center of the Eastern Front and the scene of several major battles. The so-called

Carpathian Winter War of 1915 alone cost over a million casualties among the enemy combatants, not to mention the enormous material destruction of the rural countryside and urban areas. Ethnic Ukrainians and other East Slavs from Galicia were considered potential fifth-columnists and interned by the Austro-Hungarian authorities in what became Europe's first concentration camps.

The first political victim of the enormously costly and destructive Great War was the internally fragile Russian Empire. In 1917 two revolutions took place: the first in February/March toppled the tsar and brought an end to imperial rule; the second in October/November overthrew Russia's interim Provisional Government and brought to power a regime that aimed to create on the basis of Marxist socialist doctrines the world's first workers' state, Soviet Russia. The radically opposed political visions espoused by Russia's leaders—a western European-style parliamentary democracy versus a system of workers' and peasants' councils directed by one political party (Bolshevik and Menshevik factions of the Russian Social Democratic Labor party)—could not be reconciled. The result was armed conflict and civil

MAP 17   REVOLUTIONARY UKRAINE, 1917-1918

Ukrainian National Republic, Nov 1917

Ukrainian National Republic territory added after Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Feb 1918

Other territories claimed by the Hetmanate, Apr-Dec 1918

Present-day boundary of Ukraine

0   50   100 miles
0   50   100 kilometers   Scale 1 : 9 965 000

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war between the Bolshevik "Reds," their opponents dubbed the "Whites," and numerous other military and paramilitary formations. Added to that was the intervention of Austro-Hungarian, French, German, Polish, and other foreign troops. Hence, while World War I may have come to an end for the Russian Empire, brutal conflict in the form of a civil war was to last for another three years from early 1918 to late 1921. World War I may have come to an end for the Russian Empire, but Russia's Civil War was to last from 1918 to 1921. When World War I finally concluded with an armistice signed on 11 November 1918, Austria-Hungary ceased to exist. This led to a period of political uncertainty for the many lands and peoples of the former Habsburg Empire that was not fully clarified until 1920.

Ukrainian statehood east and west

During this era of rapid military and political change, ethnic Ukrainians and Ukrainian lands also experienced revolution and civil war. The leaders who had participated in the latter stages of the national awakening during the long nineteenth cen-

tury now saw an opportunity to realize the ultimate goal of nationalism: independent statehood. In March 1917 Ukrainian activists formed a political body, the Central Rada, which proclaimed the existence of a Ukrainian National Republic, first as an autonomous part of Russia and then, in January 1918, as an independent state. In no way, however, were all the residents of Ukrainian lands in the former Russian Empire desirous of living in an independent or, for that matter, any kind of Ukrainian state.

While the war was still raging, Germany realized the advantages in having an independent Ukraine as its ally. Hence, when Germany and Austria-Hungary reached an agreement with Bolshevik Russia to end the war in the east (Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 1918), all signatories to the peace treaty recognized Ukraine as an independent state. Separate economic and trade agreements were signed by Ukraine with Germany and its ally Austro-Hungary. But as soon as Germany felt that Ukraine was unable to fulfill its obligations as an ally, it deposed the Central Rada of the Ukrainian National Republic and, in April 1918, helped install what became known as the Ukrainian State headed by Hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi. The

MAP 18   UKRAINE, 1919-1920

Territory claimed by Ukrainian National Republic, January 1919
West Ukrainian National Republic
Temporary seats of the Directory
Bolshevik invasion, December 1918
Farthest northward advance of the White Armies, October 1919
Hryhoriïv uprisings, May 1919
Makhno uprisings 1919-1921
Polish-Ukrainian boundary, Apr 1920
Farthest eastward advance of Polish-Ukrainian forces, May 1920

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40. Symon Petlyura (1879-1926), supreme military commander of the Directory of the Ukrainian National Republic. Photo, 1919.

Skoropadskyi-led Hetmanate, as the state came to be known, depended on German and Austro-Hungarian support for its survival. When, however, those two states were defeated and World War I ended, Skoropadskyi's Hetmanate collapsed. In late November 1918 the Ukrainian National Republic was restored and administered by a body known as the Directory, in which the leading and dominant figure soon became Symon Petlyura.

Meanwhile, ethnic Ukrainian leaders in Austria-Hungary undertook their own efforts at state-building. As soon as Austria-Hungary collapsed, on 1 November 1918, Ukrainians took control of Habsburg governmental buildings in Galicia's provincial capital of Lviv and proclaimed the existence of a West Ukrainian National Republic that was to include what they declared were the solidly Ukrainian-inhabited lands of former Austrian Bukovina, Hungarian Transcarpathia, and most especially Galicia as far west and even beyond the San River. The West Ukrainian declaration of independence prompted an immediate reaction from Galicia's other dominant group, the Poles. On 1

November 1918 conflict broke out in Lviv between Polish and Ukrainian armed units that within a few weeks evolved into a full-scale war.

Galicia's Jews, who were otherwise neutral, now found themselves caught between Poles and Ukrainians and having to take sides. Bewildered by the support of some of Lviv's Jews for the Ukrainian cause, Polish troops entering the city (22 November) orchestrated a bloody pogrom that took lives of some seventy Jews and left about three hundred wounded. The victimization of the Jews at the hands of the Poles resulted in a new level of solidarity with Ukrainians as hundreds of young Jewish men joined the armed forces of the West Ukrainian National Republic. In the Ukrainian Galician Army several Jewish units were formed, including the Jewish Shock Battalion and the Jewish Mounted Machine Gun company, where soldiers such as platoon commander Salko Rotenberg and lieutenant Solomon Lyainberg played key roles in the defense of a hoped-for independent Ukraine.

In the midst of hostilities, the West Ukrainian National Republic formally united with the Ukrainian National Republic in January 1919. The result was the creation—at least on paper—of a United Ukraine (Soborna Ukraïna), a symbolic act hailed at the time and ever since by Ukrainian patriots as the ultimate achievement of the national awakening. The act, however, was little more than symbolic, because in June 1919, after nearly half a year of conflict, Poland's armies succeeded in driving out the West Ukrainian forces and government. All of Galicia was now under the control of Poland, which

41. Officers of the Jewish combat unit of the Ukrainian Galician Army with their commander Solomon Lyainberg (1st row, 3rd from the left). Photo, 1919.

itself had only just been restored as a state at the close of World War I. As for Ukraine's other former Austro-Hungarian lands, Bukovina was annexed to Romania in November 1918, while former Hungarian-ruled Transcarpathia became—as a result of a voluntary declaration in May 1919—part of the new state of Czechoslovakia.

At the same time that the Polish-Ukrainian war was raging in Galicia, eastern Ukrainian lands in the former Russian Empire entered into a period of chaos and anarchy that was to last throughout all of 1919 and most of 1920. The rivals in the east who claimed Ukraine as their own and fought for its control included: the Ukrainian National Republic under Petlyura; the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic in alliance with Bolshevik Russia; the anti-Bolshevik White armies of General Anton Denikin trying to restore some kind of non-Bolshevik Russian state; and in the far south the Crimean Tatar National Republic. Added to this complicated mix were foreign invaders, whether Poland from the west, French-led Allied forces from the south, or Bolshevik Russia's Red Army troops from the north, each of which tried to prop up one of the competing governments claiming Ukraine. And if that were not enough, virtually the entire country was being ravaged by peasant-based armed bands led by charismatic and often apolitical *otamany*/military chieftains (Zelenyi, Hryhoriyev, among others), who represented no particular government. The most famous—or infamous—of the *otamany* was Nestor Makhno, who did have a political program, although one that hoped to see a future Ukraine governed by the principle of anarchism.

In a word, during 1919 and most of 1920, no government had any long-lasting control over Ukraine, but at best only short-term control over a particular area or city. Not far from the truth was the ironic quip that Petlyura's Ukrainian National Republic existed on the short strip of railroad track on which the car carrying his government frequently moved in an effort to avoid capture by his enemies.

Out of the caldron that eastern Ukraine had become in 1919–1920, and after all the competing forces were exhausted, it was only the Bolshevik-led Communists who were able to emerge as the long-term victors. Backed by Soviet Russia's Red Army,

and after two previous failed attempts (February 1918 and February-August 1919), the Communist-led Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was finally, in late 1920, able to establish its authority over most Ukrainian-inhabited lands that had formerly been part of the Russian Empire. Meanwhile, in western Ukraine, that is, former Austria-Hungary, East Galicia was formally granted to Poland in March 1923, whereas even earlier the Paris Peace Conference (Treaty of St Germain, September 1919) recognized Transcarpathia to be a part of Czechoslovakia and Bukovina a part of Romania.

Jews during Ukraine's revolutionary era

The outbreak of World War I had a devastating impact on Jews in Ukrainian lands within both the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. Already in September 1914, the rapidly advancing tsarist troops and the Russian civil administration that was set up in Galicia accused Jews of spying in favor of

42. Nykyfor Hryhoryev (1885-1919), partisan commander, and Volodymyr Antonov-Ovsiyenko (1883-1938), Red Army commander-in-chief in Ukraine, 1919.

the Austrians. Taking their Yiddish language for German, the new Russian rulers unleashed horrible violence against Jews, which took the form of mass expulsions from Galicia's eastern frontier zone into Russia, expropriation of property, and executions for the most part of apolitical Jewish civilians purportedly considered enemies of Mother Russia. When tsarist troops began experiencing heavy losses, their inept commanders, on reporting to the tsar, blamed the Jews living in the Russian-Austrian frontier regions as the reason for their military failures. Thus, military incompetence combined with increasing antisemitism and chauvinism among high-ranking military commanders significantly enhanced the intensity of anti-Jewish atrocities unleashed by the retreating tsarist Russian troops.

Jews viewed without regret the collapse of the tsarist regime during the February 1917 revolution. They expected that the new Provisional Government which came into being would lift all remaining legal restrictions against them, suppress propagandistic racial hatred, establish the rule of law, and protect them from violence. Meanwhile, the nationalist government in Ukraine, with its liberal, democratic-minded, and philosemitic leaders such as Symon Petlyura, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, and Mykhailo Hrushevskyi—who had good intentions but lacked political will— managed to make these first two expectations a reality. Ukraine's Jews were, indeed, fully emancipated and received the status of national-cultural autonomy centered in their *kehillot*, or traditional communal institutions. Along with ethnic Ukrainians, otherwise largely unprepared for the unexpected political challenges that faced them, the Jews elected deputies to the Ukrainian Central Rada to represent their interests as a modern nationality. Subsequently, the Ukrainian National Republic created a Ministry for Jewish Affairs and promoted Jewish deputies to leading positions in various governmental ministries. For example, Moshe Zilberfarb and Pinkhas Krasny headed at different times the Ministry of Religion and assumed responsibility for all religious communities in Ukraine, while Arnold Margolin and Solomon Goldelman, respectively as representatives of the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Labor,

advanced the Ukrainianization of political life in Ukraine. It is not surprising that Goldelman and Margolin remained loyal to the Ukrainian National Republic government of Petlyura and Vynnychenko for decades after it was forced into exile.

The post-war revolutionary environment was, however, quite volatile. The government of the Ukrainian National Republic had little control over the territory it claimed, which was torn between forces loyal to Soviet Russia (the Reds), to the anti-Bolshevik Volunteer Army (the Whites), to foreign armies (German, Austro-Hungarian, French), or to military chieftains (Makhno, Hryhoriyev, and Zelenyi, among others) who at times allied with the Ukrainian National Republic but did not obey Petlyura's orders. All these forces crossed the breadth and width of the Ukrainian countryside, where they not only fought against each other but often attacked, pillaged, raped, and murdered at will unprotected villagers and townspeople regardless of their ethno-linguistic background: Germans, Greeks, Mennonites, Poles, ethnic Ukrainians, and Jews.

In the case of the Jews, the nadir was reached in 1919. In that year alone—according to estimates calculated by an official in the Ministry of Jewish Affairs in the Ukrainian government—some 1,300 anti-Jewish pogroms took place, resulting in from 50,000 to 60,000 Jews murdered, more than 100,000 orphaned, and about one million displaced. The bloodiest pogroms were orchestrated by Ukrainian National Republic troops in Berdychiv and Zhytomyr, by the

43. Members of the Demiyivka synagogue, Kyiv salvaging the remains of Torah scrolls after a pogrom. Photo, 1919.

MAP 19   POGROMS IN UKRAINE, 1919-1921

White Army under General Denikin in Cherkasy, Fastiv, and Katerynoslav, and by the warlords Ivan Semosenko in Proskuriv (today Khmelnytskyi) and Overko Kuravskyi in Tetiyiv. More than half of all pogroms were attributed to troops loosely connected to various Ukrainian governments, 17 percent to the White Army, 2 percent to the Red Army, and 11 percent to the warlord Hryhoriyev's troops.

Although Petlyura issued unequivocally strong anti-pogromist proclamations, he could control neither his own troops nor the units led by warlords loosely affiliated with the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic. Although the subsequent acquittal in a French court of Shmuel Schwartzbard (who assassinated Symon Petlyura in Paris in 1926) was widely regarded as an acknowledgment of justified political vengeance, it cannot serve as proof of Petlyura's personal responsibility for the mass violence against Jews perpetrated by undisciplined and uncontrolled troops under his nominal command. Consequently, as a commander-in-chief of

the Ukrainian National Republic's armed forces, Petlyura may be held *accountable* for the pogroms of 1919. But as the reputable historian of the period Henry Abramson has maintained, Petlyura was hardly *responsible* for the pogroms, regardless what subsequent Soviet propaganda and post-Soviet chauvinistic-minded historians have claimed.

The interwar years

Upon the ruins of the Russian Empire, the Bolshevik regime, led initially by Vladimir Lenin, created a one-party Communist state which ostensibly represented the interests of industrial and agricultural workers. In the ideal Soviet world, there were to be no private-owned businesses of any size, no market economy, and agricultural lands were to be transformed into collectivized and state farms. These goals were achieved at various times during the 1920s and 1930s.

As for the state's administrative structure, in December 1922 the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

44. Mykola Skrypnyk (1872-1933), Bolshevik proponent of Ukrainianization.

was formed. It initially consisted of four republics whose number rose to nine before the end of the decade. The republics, each with its own Communist party, were based on the national principle and were intended to serve the cultural needs of the titular nationality whose name each carried. Many of the republics also included within their borders autonomous nationality regions, districts, and villages in which a nationality other than the titular one of a given republic had the right to courts, schools, and cultural institutions which used and promoted their respective languages.

Soviet Ukraine included several levels of nationality subdivisions serving eleven different nationalities, including Russians, Germans, Jews, Poles, and even a small community of Swedes. Despite the existence of national republics, political power was increasingly concentrated in the All-Union Communist-led governmental apparatus based in Moscow, which in effect determined the political, socio-economic, and cultural evolution of the entire country.

Ethnic Ukrainians and Jews in Soviet Ukraine

In an effort to attract more members into the Communist party, Soviet policy makers adopted during the early 1920s a policy called indigenization (*korenizatsiya*, or rooting), which in the case of non-Russian nationalities was to be carried out through the medium of their own native language. In Soviet Ukraine, one aspect of indigenization, known as Ukrainianization, was implemented fully after 1923 within the framework of what came to known as national communism. Spearheaded by nationally conscious Bolsheviks (Mykola Skrypnyk) and their political allies (Oleksandr Shumskyi), as well as by leftist intellectuals (Mykola Khvylovyi) and the patriotic exiles who returned from central and western Europe, the Ukrainianization program called for all forms of Ukrainian culture—language, history, the performing arts, education—to be promoted with the help of extensive state funding. Other peoples living in Soviet Ukraine also benefited from state funding for analogous "rooting" processes known as Yiddishization, Moldovanization, Hellenization, etc.

The experimental and dynamically productive phase of Soviet rule, which in the 1920s also included a revival of small-scale market trade under a program known as the New Economic Policy (NEP), came to an abrupt end in 1928. In that year, the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin launched the first stage of a centrally planned command economy. Henceforth, decisions about the economy and all other aspects of society were to be made by the All-Union authorities in Moscow, which, if necessary, would overrule or bypass the governments in the national republics. The main goal of the command economy was rapid industrialization as well as full collectivization—by force if necessary—of all land in the agricultural sector. As a result, Ukraine substantially increased its manufacturing output and raw-material processing from the ever-expanding industrial and mineral extraction sites based in the lower Dnieper valley (the Dnipropetrovsk-Kryvyi Rih-Zaporizhzhya triangle) and the Donbas-Donets basin farther east (Stalino/Donetsk, Luhansk, Shakhty).

State-directed industrialization, carried out in

45. A family declared to be kulaks evicted from their home in the Stalino (present-day Donetsk) region of Soviet Ukraine. Photo, 1930.

so-called Five-Year Plans, changed the face of Soviet Ukraine's landscape. Hundreds of thousands of rural farmers were drawn to work in cities, so that between 1920 and 1939 the size of the Soviet Ukraine's urban population more than doubled and came to represent 36 percent of all the republic's inhabitants.

The agricultural sector proved to be more problematic. The policy of forced collectivization begun in early 1929 resulted in the following: the central planners in Moscow increased production quotas to unrealistic levels; grain and seed was confiscated by soldiers and other security services; well-to-do farmers (*kurkuli/kulaks*) and anyone who protested were deported to Siberia; and no assistance was forthcoming when a drought in 1932 exacerbated conditions and led to widespread famine. In what became a government-inspired "war" against the rural countryside, an estimated four to five million people starved to death during the Great Famine (*Holodomor*) of 1932–1933. In response to this human tragedy, not only did the Soviet government refuse to supply or allow from outside any assistance, it simply denied that a famine even happened. Peoples of all nationalities in Soviet Ukraine and neighboring areas to the east were victims of the famine, although by far the largest number was among ethnic Ukrainians who resided in highest concentration in the central, most fertile areas of the country.

Aside from the devastation of the Great Famine, Soviet Ukraine during the remainder of the 1930s was, like the rest of the Soviet Union, transformed into a police state, in which tens of thousands of often innocent individuals, including those who

MAP 20 — THE GREAT FAMINE AND JEWISH AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS

46. Victims of the Great Famine (Holodomor), town of Hulyaipole in southern Ukraine. Photo, 1933.

supported or participated in the construction of national communism, were subjected to arrest and persecution. At the same time, cultural developments were hampered by Communist party ideological restrictions, while everyday life for virtually all individuals was characterized by the imposition of government rules and regulations, fear of arrest, and periodic hunger due to food shortages. In these new circumstances, it is perhaps not surprising that all state programs supporting Soviet Ukraine's various peoples—Ukrainianization, Yiddishization, Polonization, etc.—were abolished in the course of the 1930s.

Initially, the new Bolshevik rulers in Ukraine treated the Jews as a previously victimized minority that under tsarist rule was forced to engage in peddling, trading, and artisan work. In short, Jews were viewed as primarily a petty bourgeoisie in need of social engineering and transformation into productive classes of a socialist society that was promised by the Bolshevik Revolution. Toward that end, the Soviet policy of *korenizatsiya* (indigenization) sought to create among Jews manageable elites who would be loyal to Communist ideology and then channel that ideology to the Jewish masses in their native language, Yiddish. Socialist-minded Jewish writers, scholars, and journalists arrived in Ukraine from Europe, the United States, and Palestine to participate in this fascinatingly optimistic process of constructing a utopian society which they thought would be free of any ethnic antagonism.

The Soviet Ukrainian government sponsored the

establishment of local councils (soviets) and courts with documentation in Yiddish; publishing houses that issued thousands of books in Yiddish; Yiddish theaters; and finally the Jewish Archaeographic Commission at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture, both in Kyiv. Wooed by influential Ukrainian writers such as Mykola Khvylovyi and politicians such as Mykola Skrypnyk, Jewish elites became active supporters and promoters of the Soviet state and national communism as practiced in Ukraine.

Beginning already during the last years of tsarist rule, many Jews moved from small towns (*shtetls*) to big cities where they became part of the industrial working proletariat. Many others, however, were still engaged in shopkeeping, artisan crafts, and petty trade, which they were allowed to continue during the New Economic Policy (NEP) era of the 1920s. Bolshevik ideologists saw these Jews in a particularly negative light, as part of the petty bourgeoisie which had no place in the new Soviet society. Therefore, they were classified as *lishentsy* (disenfranchised), who if necessary should be forced by authorities into the productive labor sector. Ideally, this might be newly organized collective farms, twenty-seven of which were established in southern Ukraine and Crimea. The success of the Jewish colonization project proved to the Soviets—who otherwise ignored the differences between destitute Jews and economically robust Ukrainian peasants unwilling to part with their land—that massive rapid collectivization was feasible.

47. A Jewish village soviet, Kadlubyntsi, Kyiv oblast. Photo, early 1930s.

48. Solomon Boim's title page for Grigorii Ryklin's book *Evreiskii kolkhoz* (A Jewish Collective Farm, 1931).

The Soviets also encouraged upward mobility for the Jews to a degree that was previously unseen in state and government positions in tsarist Russia. More urbanized and therefore better educated than the ethnic Ukrainians, Jews came to occupy leading positions in the industrial, state, and local administration by the end of the 1920s, as well as in the ruling Bolshevik party, the military, and state security services (secret police). Since at the very same time neighboring Poland did not offer its Jews (including those in Galicia) Soviet-style social mobility and government-supported institutional and cultural initiatives, Galician Ukrainians and Poles came to associate the Jews of Soviet Ukraine with Communist power and referred to them derogatorily as the *zhydokomuna*—understood as the Communist-Jewish conspiracy.

49. Presidium of the Institute of the Jewish Proletarian Culture, Kyiv. Photo, late 1920s.

The Great Famine, or *Holodomor*, that swept Ukraine in 1932–1933 was a severe blow for the hundreds of Jews holding administrative positions in the country's agricultural sector. Recently declassified secret police documents demonstrate that dozens of local administrators of Jewish descent had been sending alarming reports to the central administration about the horrible situation, but with no result. Many of these regional directors and local party committee secretaries who raised their voice were purged later in the 1930s as enemies of the people.

As part of Stalin's centralist and dictatorial policies of the 1930s, Soviet authorities launched an offensive against leftist Marxists and supporters of national communism among Jews, ethnic Ukrainians, and other national minorities. Thus, the director of the Institute of the Jewish Proletarian Culture, Yoysef Liberberg, was dismissed and sent to Birobidzhan (then later executed), while the institute itself was shut down and replaced by a much more modest Research Center (Kabinet) of Jewish Culture at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. Hundreds of Jews occupying leading positions in the Communist party, in socialist industrial enterprises, and in the state administration, in particular those suspected of leftist ideology or who had non-Bolshevik party affiliations before 1917, were also purged. Consequently, the number of Jews in leading party, state, and administrative positions rapidly diminished by the end of the 1930s.

Ukrainians and Jews in Polish-ruled Galicia

Western Ukrainian lands followed an entirely different evolutionary path during the interwar decades. The Ukrainians in Poland, especially those in Galicia, fared worse than when they had lived in the pre-war Austro-Hungarian Habsburg Empire. In the wake of the defeat of the West Ukrainian National Republic in 1919, Galicia's Ukrainians adopted three differing approaches to the reality they faced of living in Poland.

The first approach was representative of the majority of Galicia's Ukrainians. These were the rural dwellers, whose leaders emphasized building a

MAP 21   JEWISH POPULATION IN INTERWAR WESTERN UKRAINE

strong economic base in Ukrainian communities through the expansion of agricultural cooperatives and credit unions that dated from the pre-war Habsburg days. Certain agricultural sectors were able to thrive, even during the world economic depression of the 1930s.

The second approach was adopted by civic leaders who participated in Poland's political system and, through legal parliamentary means, tried to improve the status of their people. The most influential body in Galician-Ukrainian society at the time, the Greek Catholic Church still led by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi, was a strong supporter of the cooperative movement of civic and cultural improvements for Ukrainians through legal participation in Poland's political institutions.

The third approach, which at the time represented a minority of Galicia's Ukrainians (demobilized World War I soldiers and later unemployed university students and other discontented youth), took the form of underground paramilitary groups. The two most important were the Ukrainian Military Organization in the 1920s and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) in the 1930s. Both groups carried out sporadic campaigns of sabotage against Polish state property and the assassination of political leaders (both Poles and Ukrainians who worked within the Polish state system). The Polish authorities responded with pacification campaigns against Ukrainian villagers suspected of helping the underground organizations and even set up an internment camp in the 1930s to imprison arrested

Ukrainian paramilitary rebels whom they deemed terrorists. Whereas the activity of the Ukrainian underground (actively denounced by most Galician-Ukrainian leaders, especially Metropolitan Sheptytskyi) provoked Polish repressive measures and loss of life, the situation of Ukrainians in Poland was not even remotely as bad as it was for ethnic Ukrainians in the Soviet Union.

The number of Jews living in Ukrainian lands of interwar Poland (eastern Galicia, western Volhynia, and western Polissia) decreased in comparison with the pre-World War I figure. Nevertheless, there were still by 1930 about 705,000 living in Ukrainian-inhabited regions of eastern Poland. Over two-thirds resided in eastern Galicia, the vast majority in cities and towns, with Lviv having the largest number (102,000).

The fate of Jews living in interwar Poland differed from that of their brethren on the other side of the border in Soviet Ukraine. In contrast to Soviet practice, the Polish authorities left the Jewish communal institutions intact and did not infringe on

51. Main offices of the leading interwar Galician-Ukrainian cooperative society, the Dairy Union (Maslosoiuz); it still exists in Toronto, Canada under the pseudo-Scots name Mc Dairy (Mc standing for the Cyrillic acronym Ms).

Jewish religious life. On the other hand, they deeply mistrusted the Jews (as they did Ukrainians) as a hindrance to their goal of reconstituting Poland along the lines of a nation-state with only one titular nationality at its center, the Poles. Therefore, the very presence of numerically large and politically active minority groups, particularly Jews and Ukrainians, was perceived as jeopardizing such nation-state-building goals. Moreover, the Polish authorities knew that the Jews as a previously segregated minority were, at least during the 1920s, the objects of affirmative action in the neighboring Soviet Union. This reality only sharpened Poland's mistrust of its Jews. Mistrust did not, however, lead to open forms of animosity, since for the time being the local administration included many socialist-oriented officials who were relatively tolerant of peoples other than ethnic Poles.

Some Ukrainians, especially youth, in the 1930s were attracted to the underground Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and came under the sway of that group's most influential ideologist, Dmytro Dontsov. Dontsov's numerous xenophobic propagandistic tracts, while directed primarily against Poles and Russians, also caught Jews in his rhetorical web. The OUN may not have targeted Jews as the primary enemy. Nevertheless, its anti-Jewish statements fell on receptive ears among Galicia's Ukrainian youth at a time when they were marginalized and subject to the assimilationist policies of the Polish state.

50. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi (1865-1944) head of the Greek Catholic Church and revered "patriarch" of Ukrainians in interwar Polish-ruled Galicia.

52. Galician Jew reading the latest news (in Yiddish) on a street in Lviv, 1930s.

Ukrainians and Jews in Romanian-ruled Bukovina

Somewhat similar to the situation in Poland was that of Ukrainians living in Romania. Those residing in the former Russian province of Bessarabia, annexed by Romania in 1918, continued their agriculturally based rural existence and were allowed Ukrainian-language schools and cultural organizations. Much different was the state of affairs in Bukovina, which was taken by Romanian troops in late 1918 and then formally recognized as part of Romania by the Treaty of St Germain-en-Laye concluded in September 1919. The status of Ukrainians in Bukovina was significantly worse, especially in comparison to the favorable political, educational, and cultural status they enjoyed when the region was part of the Habsburg-ruled Austro-Hungarian Empire. Under post-war Romania, the region for most of the 1920s

was placed under martial law, Ukrainian university programs and cultural institutions were closed, and elementary school education in Ukrainian severely curtailed. All this was justified by a state that after 1924 classified Ukrainians as "Romanians who had lost the native tongue of their ancestors."

The situation of Jews in interwar Bukovina under Romanian rule was somewhat different, since relations between the region's two major ethnic groups—Romanians and Ukrainians—were difficult but by no means as strained as those between Poles and Ukrainians in Polish-ruled Galicia. At the time Bukovina was incorporated into Romania, it included more than 92,000 Jews, over 80 percent of whom lived in the northern part of the region which is now part of Ukraine. Initially, the Romanian authorities granted Jews full citizenship and recognized them as a national minority. They were allowed to establish national minority educational institutions, such as the secular Hebrew Tarbut schools, and to engage in political activity. Several parties represented Bukovina's Jews: the National party, with its claims for national-cultural autonomy attracting a middle-class constituency; the Bund, with its socialist slogans and working-class constituency; and the Agudas Yisroel, representing the interests of religious Jews (Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox).

These various cultural and political groups were still debating the merits of Romanian cultural integration when, in the second half of the 1930s, the situation for Jews rapidly deteriorated. In 1937 the Romanian authorities co-opted and empowered

53. Bukovinian Jews depicted in the semiweekly magazine, *Berliner Tageblatt* (1915).

far-right ideologists who began the legal process of segregating Jews, including the revocation of citizenship of those who acquired it only after 1924. Then, in 1939, thousands of Jews faced the possibility of losing their businesses unless they hired ethnic Romanians, representatives of the country's titular nation, as co-managers. The practical result was the removal of hundreds of Jews from management positions in industry and banking enterprises, policies that paralleled the introduction of racial laws in Nazi Germany. In short, the increasingly racist Romanian authorities began treating the Jews as agents of an alleged international Communist conspiracy and eventually blaming them for the Soviet annexation of northern Bukovina (including Chernivtsi) during the initial stages of World War II.

Carpatho-Rusyns and Jews in Czechoslovakia

In stark contrast to the situation among Ukrainians in Romania and Poland, the fate of the Rusyn/Ruthenian population annexed in 1919 to the new state of Czechoslovakia was decidedly much more favorable. The democratic and generally liberal environment created by the Czechoslovak regime allowed the local Carpatho-Rusyn populace to foster its own cultural and religious interests in the absence of state-inspired assimilationist policies that were characteristic of the pre-war Hungarian regime. For example, the historically dominant Greek Catholic Church was challenged by a widespread return-to-Orthodoxy movement, with the result that by the end of 1920s it had attracted to its ranks nearly one-quarter (100,000) Carpatho-Rusyns. Another challenge that faced civic and cultural leaders was to define the national identity of the region's East Slavic inhabitants: Were they part of the Russian nationality, the Ukrainian nationality, or a distinct Carpatho-Rusyn/Ruthenian nationality? This question was never definitively resolved during the two decades of interwar Czechoslovak rule.

Czechoslovakia was obliged by international treaty to create an autonomous province called Subcarpathian Rus'/Ruthenia (the present-day Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine), in which Carpatho-Rusyns functioned alongside Czechs and Slo-

54. A Jewish merchant speaking with a local Ruthenian (Hutsul) in far eastern Subcarpathian Rus'/Transcarpathia. Photo, early 1920s.

vaks as one of the country's founding nationalities. Therefore, they enjoyed parliamentary representation determined by democratic elections, education in their native language, and a wide range of civic, cultural, and religious organizations basically unhampered by interference and in many cases financially supported by the Czechoslovak authorities. The numerically dominant Carpatho-Rusyns continued to live in harmony with local Magyars, Jews, and other peoples who comprised 35 percent of the province's inhabitants.

Czechoslovak rule also proved to be advantageous for the Jews of Subcarpathian Rus'/ Transcarpathia. The new state's liberal secular-oriented ideals posed certain challenges, however, most especially to the traditionally minded Orthodox Hasidim in rural villages, where more than two-thirds of the region's 102,000 Jews lived. As for the other third, they inhabited several small towns and cities, where in many cases they made up a plurality of the inhabitants: Solotvyno (44 percent), Bushtyno

55. Jewish loggers in a mountain village in Subcarpathian Rus'/Transcarpathia. Photo, 1930s.

(36 percent), and Irshava (36 percent). The largest single community, however, was in the city of Mukachevo/Munkatsch (43 percent Jewish) with its suburb Rosvygovo (38 percent) which functioned as the premier cultural and spiritual center of the region's Jewry.

With regard to that portion of Transcarpathia's urban Jews who spoke Hungarian and who before the war had adopted a Hungarian identity, they were initially skeptical of the Czechoslovak regime. Nevertheless, within a few years they, like their rural brethren, adapted to the new political environment and actively enrolled their children in Czech-language and, to a lesser degree, Rusyn-language schools. Although the state formally recognized Jews as a nationality with a wide range of minority rights, no more than 10 percent sent their children to the Hebrew-language elementary and senior high (*gymnasia*) schools made available to them. One reason for their reluctance on this matter was the conservative attitude of the region's all-powerful Hasidic rebbes, who were different from ordinary rabbis in that they were also spiritual leaders (*tsadikim*). The most influential of interwar Transcarpathia's rebbes was Hayim Elazar Shapira of Mukachevo/Munkatsh. He and some his rabbinic

colleagues were opposed to the Hebrew-language schools, because they were usually established and run by secular Zionists. In fact, Jewish life in interwar Czechoslovak-ruled Transcarpathia was characterized, on the one hand, by favorable relations with their Carpatho-Rusyn neighbors, and, on the other, by fierce internal struggles among various Hasidic dynastic leaders as well as between all the Hasidim and what from their perspective were the irreligious Zionists.

56. Rabbi Hayim Elazar Shapira (1872-1937, third from right) of Mukachevo/Munkatsch taking the waters at Marianbad/Mariánské-Lázně, Czechoslovakia, 1930s.

World War II and the Holocaust

Former Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Romania

The prelude to what some have called twenti-eth-century Europe's second civil war occurred in the year 1938, when Nazi Germany under the dictatorial leadership of Adolf Hitler initiated the first stage of the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. As a result of the Munich Pact (29–30 September 1938), Germany annexed a significant portion of western Czechoslovakia (the so-called Sudetenland), while that state's eastern provinces, Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus', gained their long-sought autonomy. Within a month of the Munich Pact, Subcarpathia's autonomous government came to be led by a local pro-Ukrainian civic and cultural activist, the Greek Catholic priest Avhustyn Voloshyn, under whose rule as premier Subcarpathian Rus' was renamed Carpatho-Ukraine.

Like Nazi Germany, Hungary had its own territorial designs on Czechoslovakia. Already in November 1938 it succeeded in annexing southern Slovakia and southwestern Carpatho-Ukraine, including the latter's largest cities, Uzhhorod and Mukachevo. What was left of Carpatho-Ukraine survived for only a few months, until in March 1939 Hitler destroyed the rest of Czechoslovakia and at the same time gave his approval for Hungary's annexation of Carpatho-Ukraine. Military units in the service of Carpatho-Ukraine (mostly Ukrainian volunteers from Polish-ruled Galicia) resisted the Hungarian invasion, with the result that the first casualties of

58. Hungarian forces take Khust, the short-lived capital of Carpatho-Ukraine, March 1939.

World War II in Europe could be said to have occurred in Subcarpathian Rus'/Carpatho-Ukraine. Hungary was to rule what it renamed Subcarpathia throughout most of the war years. Whereas the new regime supported the view that Carpatho-Rusyns were a distinct East Slavic nationality traditionally loyal to Hungary, it persecuted Ukrainian-oriented local activists and banned their organizations.

After Czechoslovakia, Hitler turned to Poland but this move produced much different results. In late August 1939 the heretofore profound political antagonists, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, approved the conclusion of a non-aggression treaty known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. A secret clause of the pact provided for a German-Soviet demarcation line between the two allies should, by chance, war break out with Poland. On 1 September 1939 Nazi Germany did, indeed, provoke the outbreak of what became World War II with an invasion into Poland. Two weeks later, the Soviet Union followed suit, taking much of eastern Poland up to the demarcation line which ran more or less along the present-day boundary of Poland with Ukraine.

In the midst of such enormous social disruption, those elements in western Ukraine that supported the interwar underground Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists were themselves rent by profound internal conflict. Following the assassination in exile of the OUN leader (Yevhen Konovalets) by a Soviet agent in 1938, his successor, Andrii Melnyk, was challenged by a younger leader, Stepan

57. Leaders of the two factions of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists: Andrii Melnyk (1890-1964) of the Melnykites; and Stepan Bandera (1909-1959) of the Banderites.

MAP 22

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○○○○ International boundary, 1938
— · · International boundary, 1940
⊙ Oblast center
Present-day boundary of Ukraine

0   50   100 miles
0   50   100 kilometers
Scale 1 : 6 600 000

Bandera. Supporters of both figures were divided over political ideology, namely, to what degree Italian fascism (Melnyk) or German nazism (Bandera) should be the model in the struggle to liberate Ukrainian lands from foreign rule. The German authorities tolerated and at times even encouraged some of the activities of the OUN, which henceforth was divided into two rival and warring factions known as the Melnykites (OUN-M) and Banderites (OUN-B). While both factions continued to exist, after 1941 the Bandera faction, which initially was more German-oriented, steadily came to dominate the activities of the OUN.

On their side of the demarcation line, Soviet ideologists argued that the local inhabitants had re-quested what was officially termed the reunification of western Ukrainian territories (eastern Galicia and western Volhynia)—during the interwar years purportedly occupied by Poland—with the "Soviet Ukrainian motherland." The "people's request" was formally accepted on 1 November 1939 by the All-Union government in Moscow. The following summer (June 1940), the Soviet Union annexed from Romania Ukrainian-inhabited northern Bukovina and the old tsarist province of Bessarabia, which contained a compact ethnic Ukrainian population at both its southern and northern ends. It was the political alliance with Hitler that allowed the Soviet Union to expand its borders westward and, in the case of Ukraine, to annex virtually all western ter-

ritories within the present-day country with the exception of Transcarpathia/Carpatho-Ukraine, which remained within Hungary throughout the war.

The impact of Soviet rule on western Ukraine's population was mixed. Small-scale tradespeople (largely but not exclusively Jews) lost their shops, which were nationalized by the state, while over half a million people—Poles in the service of the previous regime, Ukrainian political and civic activists (who had not already fled westward to the German zone beyond the demarcation line), and anyone suspected of real or alleged anti-Soviet attitudes—were deported to Siberia and the Soviet Far East, with many perishing en route or after arriving. The remaining Jews considered themselves lucky not to be under Nazi German rule as in the other parts of former Poland, while most ethnic Ukrainians (including influential interwar politicians and other leaders like the Greek Catholic Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi), aware of the Great Famine and political repression in the Soviet Ukraine during the 1930s, were wary that their fate would worsen.

Jews in western Ukraine under Soviet rule

In practice, Soviet policy toward the Jews in its newly acquired territories varied considerably. On the one hand, the regime arrested and exiled non-Communist political activists and outlawed all traditional communal institutions; on the other, it engaged the services of many urban Jews.

The Soviets quickly realized that in the newly acquired territories, such as former Polish-ruled Galicia, Jews still resided in non-urbanized *shtetls* and were engaged in traditional occupations. Living in poverty and comprised of a significant percentage of traditional Orthodox Hasidim, Galicia's Jews represented one of the most economically disadvantaged national minority groups. As in Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s, the Bolsheviks now banned Galicia's Zionist and Bundist political organizations, which in the interwar years were very active in Poland. The Soviet authorities dismantled traditional religious and educational institutions; outlawed Hebrew as a bourgeois, nationalistic, and religious language of class enemies; established secular schools; and promoted local secularized Jews conversant in Pol-

59. A dead mother and her grieving son near Zhytomyr, one of estimated 4.1 million civilian casualties in Ukraine resulting from the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. Photo, June 1941.

ish and Ukrainian to administrative positions. The presence of new obedient and diligent local Soviet administrators in particular exacerbated inter-ethnic tensions among Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians.

By 1940, the Jews of East Galicia had once again become a marginalized ethnic group subjected to enforced assimilation: all the umbrella communal organizations such as the *kehillot* were dismantled, Yiddish schools were replaced by Russian ones, and the last vestiges of private trade were wiped out. Moreover, one's ethnic background once more became the key factor determining social mobility.

By 1939, there were only two Jews in the Ukraine's Supreme Soviet in Kyiv, while their number in state and local administrations was rapidly diminishing; for example, no more than 4 percent of Jews were serving in the Soviet secret police (NKVD) by the time Germany invaded the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the myth of the Communist Jewish conspiracy, the *zhydokomuna*, persisted. It was used not only against the Jews of Galicia, but also against Jews in Romanian-controlled southern Bukovina, where Jews were persecuted, arrested, and segregated for allegedly supporting the Soviets and causing Romania to lose the northern half of the region and its main center, Chernivtsi, in the summer of 1940. At the same time, the Soviets segregated and marginalized the Jews of northern Bukovina on a class basis, treating them as representatives of the bourgeoisie, nationalizing their businesses and property, and exiling thousands to Siberia.

Nazi German invasion of the Soviet Union

As it turned out, Soviet rule in western Ukraine was temporary, because less than two years after the August 1939 non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany, Hitler authorized a full-scale invasion of the Soviet Union under the code name Operation Barbarossa. The invasion, which began on 22 June 1941, was so successful that by November virtually all of Soviet Ukraine was under Nazi German control. In the face of the German invasion, the Soviets desperately tried to dismantle or destroy their large-scale heavy industrial infrastructure, and they managed to evacuate 3.8 million people (ethnic Ukrainians,

60. Text of the AKT by which the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists led by Stepan Bandera proclaimed a "free united independent Ukrainian state," 30 June 1941.

Russians, and an estimated 900,000 Jews among others) eastward to safety. On the other hand, entire Soviet armies capitulated, their soldiers forced into crude German prisoner-of-war camps where millions perished. Hitler did have allies (Hungary, Slovakia, Romania) whose troops—albeit relatively small in number—joined in the invasion of the Soviet Union. The military and political alliance with Nazi Germany was particularly profitable for Romania. Not only was it able to get back northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, it pushed farther beyond the Dniester River into southwestern Ukraine, so that the area known as Transnistria (including the major port city of Odessa) was placed under a Romanian administration. Hence, as the war raged in the east, Ukraine according to its present-day borders was divided between Nazi Germany and its two allies, Romania and Hungary.

The lion's share of Ukrainian territory was in the sphere of Nazi Germany. East Galicia, part of interwar Poland and most recently Soviet Ukraine, was made a district (Distrikt Galizien) of the General-gouvernement Polen, a territorial entity that was a protectorate of Greater Germany and therefore subject to its Nazi-dominated legal and social order. On the other hand, the bulk of Soviet Ukraine, including former Polish-ruled western Volhynia and Crimea (until then part of Soviet Russia), was administered as a Nazi-German colony called the
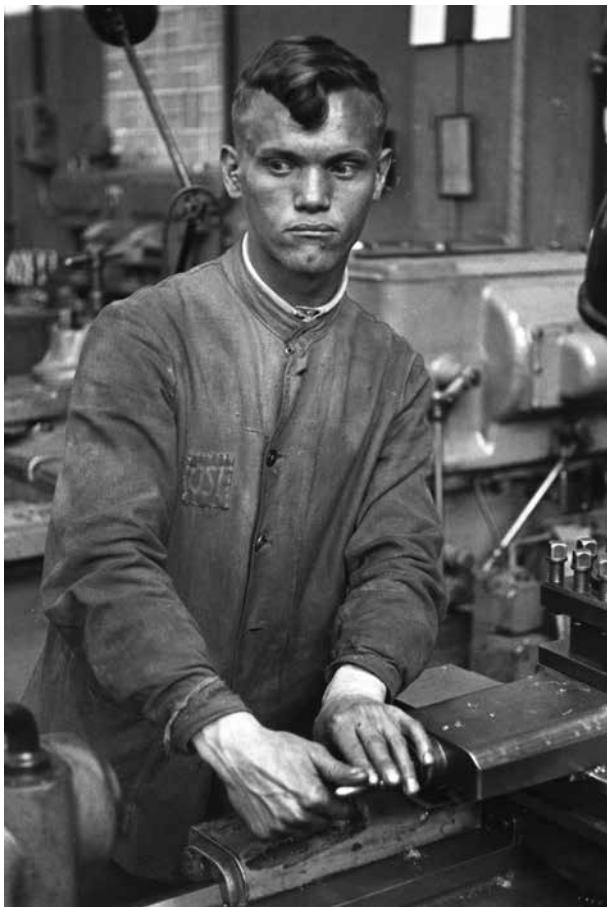
61. Conscripted laborer from the east (*Ostarbeiter*) in the German town of Wernigerode. Photo, 1943.

Reichskommissariat Ukraine. The difference between Greater Germany's protectorate of the Generalgouvernement and its colony, Reichskommissariat Ukraine, was evident in the way the local inhabitants were treated.

Since its establishment in 1933, Nazi Germany was governed by the principle of racial differentiation. Ethnic Ukrainians, pariahs like all Slavic peoples, were classified as inferior subjects (*Untermenschen*) useful to the degree that they could serve the superior races (*Herrenvölker*), of which "Aryan" Germans were the ultimate example. On the lowest end of the racial scale were the Jews, the Gypsies/ Roma, the physically disabled, and other "social misfits," all of whom were eventually subject to extermination by various forms of murder.

When, in the last week of June 1941, German troops crossed the demarcation line and drove the Soviets out of East Galicia, they were accompanied by small units connected with the interwar under-

ground Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (both its Melnykite and Banderite factions), who were allowed to operate in Nazi German- controlled parts of central and eastern Europe. In cooperation with established Galician-Ukrainian leaders, many of whom had until then opposed what they considered the violent extremism of the OUN, activists of the Banderite faction led by Yaroslav Stetsko proclaimed in Lviv the "restoration" of a Ukrainian state on 30 June 1941. This unauthorized *AKT*, as it was known, resulted in several unintended consequences: the arrest of nationalist leaders (including Stetsko and Stepan Bandera) who then spent the rest of the war in German prisons; the suppression of OUN activists of both factions; and the eventual alienation of Galician-Ukrainian moderate political leaders from what they came to realize was the brutality of Nazi rule.

As the war grinded on, that brutality took different forms: forced deportation of 2.3 million young ethnic Ukrainians to work in Greater Germany (*Ostarbeiter*); the slow starvation to death of Soviet prisoners-of-war; military reprisals against the civilian population suspected of aiding anti-German partisans; and the wholesale persecution and murder of Jews, whether they lived in territories ruled by Nazi Germany (Generalgouvernement and Reichskommissariat Ukraine), Romania (Bukovina, Bessarabia, and Transnistria), or Hungary (Subcarpathian Rus'/Transcarpathia).

The Holocaust in occupied Ukrainian lands

From the very outset, the Nazis pointed to Jews as enemies of the German regime. Manipulating the *zhydokomuna* myth that linked Jews and Communists, and at the same time appealing to the racial, religious, and ethnic prejudice of local population, the Nazis branded Jews as agents of the Bolsheviks and therefore as traitors. The Nazi authorities forbade the local population under penalty of death to hide or extend any help to Jews, thus creating a legal and social barrier between them and the rest of the country's inhabitants. Hence, it is not surprising that the Nazis turned a blind eye when spontaneous pogroms against Jews broke out, such as those in

Lviv (June and July 1941), the second of which came to be called the "Petlyura Days."

The Nazis engaged four elements in their murderous policy toward the Jewish population in Ukraine. The first of these were local police (SIPO) and secret/security police (ORPO) units, which performed a pivotal role in the extermination process. Special Operation Units (Einsatzgruppe) were the second most effective instrument of extermination, while regular German Army (Wehrmacht) troops took third place in this murderous hierarchy. Finally, there were the Ukrainian auxiliary police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), who were called upon to assist the German police and army units.

In dozens of localities in western and central Ukraine, the Wehrmacht selected and shot male Jews within the first days of occupation in July and August 1941. Once Jews were rounded up and physically exhausted, the Nazis—taking their cue from Stalin's dictum that the hungry neither rebel nor resist – shot them. The Nazis justified their actions as reprisals for Jewish support of the Bolsheviks or for pragmatic military reasons. The remaining Jews, predominantly

62. German officers of the Special Operation Units (*Einsatzgruppen*) executing a Jew before a mass grave near Vinnytsya in the Reichskommissariat Ukraine. Photo, 1942.

the elderly, women, and children, were transferred to the newly established ghettos, usually several blocks of a town separated by barbed wire and guarded by armed police. From the very start of the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Nazi propaganda at the front was effective in convincing German soldiers and local collaborators that, regardless of age and gender, all Jewish civilians were, because of their strong association with Bolshevism, potential rebels and hence should be exterminated.

No Jew knew what was in store for him or her, since at first the Nazis introduced a sort of repressive normality in the ghettos. They ordered the establishment of Judenrats (Jewish councils), imposed taxes and contributions to extort whatever valuables from the population they could, and created the Jewish ghetto police, formally known as the Jewish Organization for the Maintenance of Public Order. Although given very little power, these Jewish bodies expedited the extortion of contributions, helped organize forced-labor battalions, supervised the liquidation of the ghettos, and guarded the remaining workers and artisans. In the end, those who staffed these bodies shared the plight of those whom they had been supervising. They were killed.

It took the Nazis more than half a year to move from killing urban Jews to the idea of the total extermination of all European Jewry. This was to include even those Jews who until then were considered crucial in providing technical support for the German Army. The police battalions moved Jews to specially allocated urban districts, from which they were soon taken to nearby woods and ravines and shot in the head one by one, or machine-gunned en masse. Among the first such cases of the Holocaust by bullets was in Kamyanets-Podilskyi, where in August 1941 German Army troops and police murdered 23,600 Jews, among whom were locals from the Podolia region as well as exiles who a few weeks before had fled to Transcarpathia but were then forcibly returned by the Hungarian authorities.

During the rest of 1941 and into January 1942, the Germans, often with the help of local police units, concentrated their murderous mission on the Jews of western and central Ukraine. Jewish residents of the largest cities in Volhynia and Podolia, together

MAP 23

with those from the immediately surrounding rural villages, were rounded up and shot, as in Vinnytsya (15,000), Ostroh (5,500), Rivne (17,000), Proskuriv/ Khmelnytskyi (7,000), and Khmilnyk (8,000). The experience in Berdychiv provided a new variant in Nazi killing procedures. Some 15,000 Jews were first moved to the Yatki ghetto. There they were left to starve, in order to suppress any thoughts of resistance. Then, during a Nazi-sponsored musical festival in the city, they were moved to a nearby airfield, machine-gunned, and thrown into a freshly dug pit.

Farther to the east, despite the large-scale Soviet evacuation from major cities, the remaining Jews were left to the fate that the German occupying regime had in store for them. The most infamous case of extermination took place in Ukraine's capital, Kyiv. The Nazi authorities issued unequivocal orders for Jews of any age or sex to gather near the old Jewish cemetery on the outskirts of the city. Cut off from any source of information and absolutely unaware of their predicament, the Jews obeyed. On the last two days of September 1941, they moved with their documents and suitcases to the assembly posts in the Lukyanivka district, ex-

pecting to be deported to Germany. Instead, they were stripped of their belongings, undressed, placed at the edge of the Babyn Yar ravine, and machine-gunned point blank. Sources record that nearly 34,000 Jews were killed in what became the first phase at the Babyn Yar killing site. Perhaps twice that number was murdered during the subsequent duration of the German occupation. The remaining Jews in other cities were also eliminated, including those in Stalino/Donetsk (20,000) and Kharkiv (12,000 at yet another infamous ravine, Drobytskyi Yar).

What took place between July 1941 and January 1942 on Soviet territory was absolutely crucial for the subsequent discussions undertaken by the Nazi leadership at the Wannsee Conference concerning the Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe. During the first six months after the 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union, the Nazis came to realize that they could not create the *Judenfrei* (free-of-Jews) territory that they had dreamed of until then. The new territories they captured had simply too many Jews to deport. Consequently, the Wehrmacht command and the Nazi authorities in Berlin decided it

63. Supervised by the Nazis, Soviet POWs destroy the evidence of the massacre of Kyiv's Jews at Babyn Yar. Photo, October 1941.

was preferable to exterminate the Jews on the spot. The local population was intimidated into neutrality, if not complicity, with the expectation no one would report the atrocities afterward.

Indeed, there was certain tension between the German Army and various German police battalions, although by and large the Nazis encountered few if any obstacles in implementing the executions. They quickly intimidated any local Ukrainians who tried to feed or to provide Jews with shelter. They managed to secure the complicity of the population by instigating hatred against the Jews as their immediate enemies. That the Nazis allowed local Ukrainians to plunder the liquidated ghettos made the latter personally interested in having the Jews removed. The cleansing continued throughout 1942, with 2,200 Jews murdered in Zlatopil, 6,000 in Olyka, and 14,700 in Lutsk. The last to be eliminated were Jewish forced laborers working on a strategic road connecting Germany with Ukraine: 4,000 were shot in November near Kamyanets-Podilskyi and the same number near Vinnytsya in December.

As a result, an estimated 350,000 Jews from central and eastern Ukraine alone were murdered in 1942. The accompanying Map 23 shows only a few of the estimated 1,500 murder sites in Nazi-ruled Ukraine.

Once the Nazis realized that they could exterminate eastern Europe's Jews with only a minimum number of troops and the simplest of logistical arrangements, their murderous machine was put into full gear. The proximity of the Polish-based concentration and extermination camps to western Ukraine allowed deportation from various regions of Galicia of some 530,000 Jews, who were murdered at Auschwitz, Bełżec, and Treblinka.

The fate of the Jews under the Romanian occupation was much more complex and varied depending on the territory in which they lived—Bukovina, Bessarabia, or Transnistria. Wartime Romania, under the dictatorial leadership of General Ion Antonescu, was ideologically committed to "ethnic purification." The Jews of Bukovina and Bessarabia were, in particular, slated for elimination. The Romanian government initially accepted, but then refused, Nazi Germany's

plan to send the country's Jews to the death camps in Poland. Instead, Romania opted to deport its Bukovinian and Bessarabian Jews eastward to Ukraine proper. There, in Romania's newly acquired territory of Transnistria (between the Dniester and Southern Buh rivers), they would be left to die through disease and starvation. This tactic, combined with mass executions, proved to be quite successful.

Anti-Jewish persecution began in full force after Nazi Germany, in cooperation with Romanian troops, invaded the Soviet Union. During the first few weeks after the June 1941 invasion, Jews in territories taken by Romania were massacred outright (15,000 in northern Bukovina and perhaps the same number in Bessarabia). The remainder were forced into ghettos, the most prominent of which was set up in Chernivtsi in October 1941 as a transit point for Bukovina's Jews. For the next six months, they were deported, whether on foot or in railway cattle cars, to the east. By the summer of 1942, over 90,000 from Bukovina (and another 75,000 from Bessarabia) had reached Romania's newest territory, Transnistria. Ironically, perhaps as many as 20,000 Jews, mostly from Chernivtsi, were not deported, because the city's Romanian mayor (Traian Popovici) declared them "indispensable" to the urban area under his jurisdiction. This status was not, however, granted to Jews in the Bukovinian countryside, where at least 4,000 were murdered by German and Romanian troops or by Melnykite units of the OUN, which in early July 1941 provoked pogroms in an attempt to persuade the Nazi invaders to support their national cause.

As for the local Jews in Transnistria itself, an estimated 130,000 to 170,000 were killed by the new Romanian rulers, or left to die after being interned in makeshift camps. There seemed no limit to the manner of brutality, as in the case of 19,000 Jews who were burned to death in a square in Odessa within a few weeks of the city being taken by Romanian and German troops in October 1941. General Antonescu's ultimate goal was to purify Transnistria, since it was now part of "Greater Romania," by driving out all Jews, including the recently arrived deportees from Bukovina and Bessarabia who were forced northward across the Dniester River into

64. Jews from Dorohoi, Romania, transported over the Dniester River to Transnistria. Photo, June 10, 1942.

what was then the German-controlled Reichskommissariat Ukraine. But the Germans sent them back, forcing the Romanians to set up transit camps at various places throughout Transnistria.

In effect, all of Transnistria became a zone of death for Jews. Either they were massacred (43,000–48,000 in the Bohdanivka district alone), or died from exhaustion during frequent deportations to camps, or succumbed to disease (usually typhus) and starvation in the camps. In the end, an estimated 220,000 to 260,000 Jews perished in Transnistria between 1941 and 1944. Nevertheless, about 51,000 of the deportees from Bukovina and Bessarabia managed to survive until March 1944, when the Soviet Army arrived and drove out the Romanian authorities.

During the Holocaust, the Jews of what is today Ukraine's Transcarpathian region were subjected to their new rulers, Hungary, whom many initially welcomed when the region, Subcarpathian Rus'/

65. Hungarian gendarme checks a woman entering the Mukachevo ghetto. Photo, April 1944.

Carpatho-Ukraine, was annexed to Hungary in late 1938 and early 1939. They were shocked, therefore, when the Hungarian government under Regent Miklós Horthy followed the lead of his Nazi German ally and implemented anti-Jewish laws. After 1942, this meant the confiscation of lands, forests, and shops owned by Jews. As early as August 1941, an estimated 20,000 "alien" Jews who had recently fled from war-torn Poland were deported back to what was by then German-ruled territory, where most were killed at Kamyanets-Podilskyi. As for Subcarpathia's indigenous Jews, they were left in place until German forces occupied Hungary in the spring of 1944. Then, over a period of three weeks (15 May-17 June), the Hungarian authorities carried out Nazi Germany's demand and organized the deportation of virtually the entire Jewish population of Subcarpathia (116,000 as of 1944). The vast majority were killed in the gas chambers in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Despite Nazi-inspired racist views toward ethnic Ukrainians and the suppression of Ukrainian underground forces who dared to act independently, the German authorities nevertheless engaged the collaboration of certain elements among the local population. Beginning in late 1941, ethnic Ukrainians served in the lowest levels of the local administration. They also made up a significant proportion of members in the Ukrainian auxiliary police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei), a body which despite its name also included persons of other ethnic origin (Poles, Russians, Romanians, and Hungarians, among others).

66. Nazi German Hauptwachtmeister (head of local police) and his auxiliary policeman, Zarih district, Poltava region. Photo 1942.
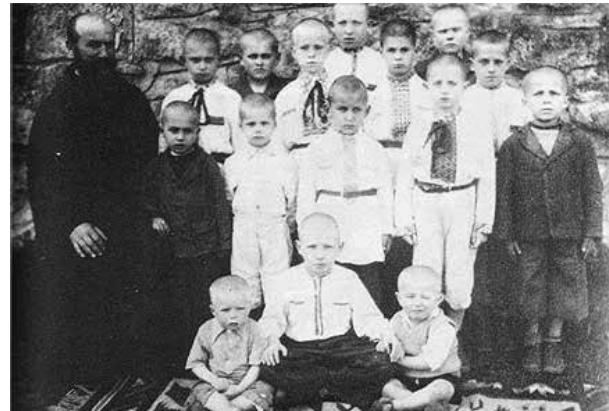
67. Children under the care of Studite monks, Monastery of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary at Univ. Three are Jewish, saved by Metropolitan Sheptyts'kyi, including Levko Chaminski (Dr. Leon Chameides of Connecticut), 3rd row, 3rd from the left. Photo, fall 1943.

The auxiliary police did indeed assist the Nazi German authorities in carrying out the Final Solution: rounding up Jews, bringing them to ghettos and to mass-execution sites, and providing logistical services to the Special Operations Units (Einsatzgruppe) that were assigned by the Nazi authorities to carry out the murders. From the perspective of the Jewish victims and the few survivors, such activity was inevitably associated with the Ukrainian auxiliary police and ethnic Ukrainians, regardless of the actual composition of the units and perpetrators.

As the war raged on and German forces were in retreat from eastern Ukraine, the Nazi authorities allowed for the formation of a volunteer military unit, the SS Galicia Division. Created in April 1943, the Dyviziya, as it was popularly known, was under the command of German officers and made up primarily of ethnic Ukrainians, whose primary motivation for joining was to fight alongside the German military against the Soviets on the eastern front. Victory in the east, they hoped, would result in the establishment of an independent Ukraine. While some former members of the Ukrainian auxiliary police did make their way into the ranks of the Dyviziya, for most of the unit's troops anti-Jewish feelings played a minor role, especially since they were driven more by anti-Soviet and anti-Polish attitudes that were central to the Ukrainian nationalist agenda they espoused.

COLLABORATION

On territories captured by Nazi Germany, thousands of ethnic Ukrainians collaborated with the new regime, but this happened in many different ways and for a wide variety of reasons. Collaboration is a well-documented fact, yet its reasons, scope, motivation, dynamics, chronology, and magnitude remain the focus of fierce public and scholarly debate, both in Ukraine and in North America.

Scholars and public figures must grapple with extremely challenging questions. Central to the debates is the role played by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists—the OUN. On the one hand, Ukrainians who live in, or whose forebears derive from, western Ukraine, consider OUN members as noble and freedom-loving harbingers of Ukraine's struggle for liberation from Soviet rule and ultimately for the creation of an independent state. On the other hand, there is the question of how the OUN treated other peoples living in Ukrainian lands, most particularly Jews and Poles. Did Ukrainian military units, whose soldiers were members of the OUN, participate in the mass execution of Jews? Did they initiate the executions, or were they simply following Nazi orders? Were their actions racially and ideologically motivated? These and other questions have made the debates around the issue of collaboration particularly charged and painful.

Most scholars, whether from the United States, Ukraine, Canada, or Germany, agree that the radical ideology of the OUN relied heavily on two elements: the idea of an ethnically pure Ukraine, and inspirational motivation based on anti-Russian, anti-Polish, and anti-Jewish sentiment. In his analysis of the ideological stance and military efforts of the Ukrainian nationalists, Timothy Snyder notes that the "OUN-Bandera nationalist organization…

that led the partisan army had long pledged to rid Ukraine of its national minorities."[a] Taras Kurylo, who carefully studied the Ukrainian nationalist press, unequivocally points to the vicious antisemitic bias of the OUN, which he claims was central to the organization's raison d'être. In short, there is "overwhelming evidence that the OUN-organized Ukrainian militia had become involved in anti-Jewish pogroms and executions before being disbanded by the Nazis in August 1941."[b]

There seems to be a general consensus among scholars that the German military campaign in eastern Europe sealed the fate of the Jews precisely because the Nazi invaders initially enjoyed the wide support of the local population. Wendy Lower claims that "in this part of Europe, the Germans could rely on most Ukrainians, Poles, Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians to remain indifferent to anti-Jewish violence, to serve as police auxiliaries in the actions, and to carry out pogroms."[c]

Cooperative service on the part of locals was not necessarily ideologically motivated. For example, many Ukrainians joined Nazi-controlled Ukrainian auxiliary police units because they had served in the police under the Soviets and, therefore, were trained to do such work. Some joined because they hoped by doing so they could avoid being deported, yet others because they saw the establishment of the Ukrainian police as an important step toward achieving independent statehood, the dream of thousands of Ukrainians who had only recently been victimized by the Bolsheviks. Reflecting on the collaboration of Ukrainians in Nazi extermination plans, Doris L. Bergen maintains that in 1941–1942 "local nationalists proved willing to make common cause with the Germans, so long as they could harbor the illusion that cooperation might win them autonomy."[d]

Whatever their motivation, Ukrainian police and military units did participate in the persecution and murder of Jews in Ukraine during World War II. Frank Golczewski explains that the Ukrainian police "enforced the ghettoization process, provided cordons during ghetto clearance operations and mass shootings, escorted Jews to local killing sites, or to the trains headed for the death camp Bełżec, carried out house-to-house searches, and combed the forests for hidden Jews."[e]

The matter becomes much more complex, however, when one tries to identify the membership of the Ukrainian police units. Recent scholarship has shown that some policemen belonged to the OUN but others did not. While the OUN did try to penetrate local police forces, it turns out that in many cases they failed in their efforts. Moreover, while they may have been "Ukrainian" in name, the units were comprised not only of ethnic Ukrainians but also of individuals of other ethnicity. Finally, some scholars stress that the OUN targeted first and foremost ethnic Poles and Russians, and that despite antisemitic rhetoric Jews were never the primary target of forces loyal to the OUN.

It seems clear that the question of collaboration and the role of the OUN in ethnic cleansing on Ukrainian lands during Word War II requires further thorough and sober analysis. As Alexander Motyl rightly suggests, aside from apologetics and polemical tracts, one should be able to "write a good history of Ukrainian-Jewish relations that appreciates the complexity, context, and change and—*mirabile dictu*!—still eschew primordialist stereotypes about evil/good Jews or good/evil Ukrainians."[f]

SOURCES

a   Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), p. 326.

b   Taras Kurylo, "The 'Jewish Question' in Ukrainian Nationalist Discourse," in Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern and Antony Polonsky, eds., *POLIN*, vol. 26, *Jews and Ukrainians* (2014), p. 234.

c   Wendy Lower, "Living Space," in Peter Hayes and John Roth, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 318.

d   Dorris L. Bergen, "World Wars," in ibid., p. 102.

e   Frank Golczewski, "Shades of Grey: Reflections on Jewish-Ukrainian and German-Ukrainian Relations in Galicia," in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower, eds., *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony, Memorialization* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), p. 139.

f   Alexander Motyl, "The Ukrainian Nationalist Movement and the Jews: Theoretical Reflections on Nationalism, Fascism, Rationality, Primordialism, and History," in Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern and Antony Polonsky, eds., *POLIN*, vol. 26, *Jews and Ukrainians* (2014), p. 293.

With regard to the populace as a whole, there is also no question that many inhabitants in occupied lands, caught up in the wartime devastation, assisted the Ukrainian auxiliary police and benefited from the acquisition of Jewish property. On the other hand, there were numerous recorded and unrecorded cases of individuals from Ukraine of different ethnic backgrounds who tried in various ways to help save their Jewish neighbors and friends, providing them with food and shelter, warning them about the date of a ghetto liquidation, or bringing them to Soviet partisans. Aiding Jews in any way was an extremely risky enterprise, and anyone caught faced immediate arrest and deportation to a death camp.

Of the many examples that could be cited was that of the Ukrainian-American historian Taras Hunczak, who, as a young boy residing in a Galician village, served as a liaison between the Jews in the local ghetto and those who were in hiding. Then there was the Polish Broczek family in Volhynia that hid about twenty-five Jews; or Traian Popovici, the Romanian mayor of Chernivtsi, who saved upward of twenty thousand Jews from deportation; or the Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest Omelyan Kovch, who sheltered and ultimately saved six hundred Jews in Galicia. The most prominent figure engaged in such rescue efforts was the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi, who was responsible for saving one hundred and fifty Jewish children, including

68. Ukrainian Insurgent Army unit commanders questioning a local resident in the Carpathian mountain borderland between the Soviet Ukraine, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Photo, 1947.

the future Israeli armed forces rabbi, David Kahane. A number of Greek Catholic priests under Sheptytskyi's jurisdiction tried to save Jews by baptizing them in secret—and paid for the effort with their lives. Even some Ukrainian policemen rescued individual Jews whom they were assigned to find and execute.

With regard to the question of collaboration—massive or otherwise—on the part of the inhabitants of Ukraine with the Nazi German occupiers, it might be useful to note some comparative data. Specialists writing about the Holocaust suggest that between 1 and 2 percent of the ethnic Ukrainian population (about 28.5 million in the Soviet Ukraine and Poland on the eve of World War II) collaborated in some way with the Nazi authorities during the war. Those percentages are not much different from the situation regarding collaboration in the Netherlands, France, and other European countries, some of which were not subject to the same level of wartime destruction and brutality as Ukraine. At the same time, about 4.5 million Ukrainians fought within the ranks of the Soviet military against Nazi Germany, that is, eight to nine times more than had collaborated. Thus, one needs to use the term *collaboration* with great care when speaking of World War II Ukraine and ethnic Ukrainians.

The Soviet military advance into Ukraine

Most of Ukraine's inhabitants considered the Germans, Romanians, and Hungarians as foreign occupiers who should be driven out of the homeland. By 1942, partisan units were being formed in the forests of northwestern Ukraine (Polissia and Volhynia) that fought first against the retreating Soviet troops and then against the Germans. The most prominent of these groups was the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). By the end of the war, it was dominated by the Banderite faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and it supported the political goals—a non-Soviet independent Ukraine—adopted by the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council formed in July 1944. Also active on Ukrainian lands were Soviet partisan units which attracted to their ranks peoples of all nationalities who supported the restoration of Soviet Ukraine within the Soviet Union.

Finally, the forces of the Red Army (renamed the Soviet Army in 1944) were able to turn the tide of war following the three-month-long Battle of Stalingrad, which ended in February 1943. Thereafter, the Red Army pushed steadily across Ukraine, en-

MAP 24   SOVIET UKRAINE, 1945

abling the restoration of Soviet rule. By the end of December 1943, Ukraine east of the Dnieper River was in Soviet hands, and so was the rest of the country (including Transcarpathia) by October 1944. During those two years, whatever was left of Ukraine's industrial and agricultural infrastructure after the Soviet retreat of 1941 was largely destroyed. At the same time, millions of civilians were killed, whether the indirect result of battles between Soviet and retreating German armies, or the direct result of attacks by partisans loyal to one or another combatant: the Soviets, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, or the nationalist Polish underground. The struggle between the UPA and Polish underground forces (the Home Army) was particularly brutal in western Ukraine, where in 1943 and 1944 both sides carried out ethnic-cleansing campaigns in the expectation that at the close of the war the historic lands of Volhynia and Galicia would be part of either a non-Soviet Ukrainian or a restored Polish state. The role that the OUN is assumed to have played in the persecution of Poles, Russians, and Jews, and the manner in which its leaders sought to balance pol-

itical goals and activities on the ground in time of war, remains a source of controversy and at times friction among scholars and social commentators in Poland, Ukraine, Germany, and North America.

The post-war Soviet era, 1945–1991

By the time World War II ended in Europe on 9 May 1945 with the formal surrender of Nazi Germany, all of Ukraine was within the Soviet sphere. Territories like western Volhynia, eastern Galicia, and northern Bukovina, which were annexed by the Soviet Union in 1939–1940, were "returned" to Soviet Ukraine. Historic Subcarpathian Rus', which the victorious allies—including Stalin— promised to return to a restored pre-1938 Czechoslovakia, was instead annexed to the Soviet Union in June 1945 and allowed to be "reunified" with the Soviet Ukrainian motherland (of which it was never a part). Finally, although in entirely different circumstances, Crimea, which before and after World War II was part of Soviet Russia, was in 1954 given by Moscow allegedly as a gift to Soviet Ukraine.

Soviet Ukraine and its ethnic Ukrainians

With the return of Soviet rule and the expansion of Soviet Ukraine to the territorial extent that it has today, the centralized command economy under the direction of Communist functionaries was established throughout the country. The economic recovery was quite impressive, so that by 1955 Soviet Ukraine's industrial sector was producing 2.2 times more than it had produced in 1940, that is, before the destruction caused by World War II. The country's agricultural sector did not fare as well. The inherent inefficiency of collectivized and state-owned farms in which agricultural workers had low motivation, combined with erratic weather conditions, resulted in harvests that were below the 1940 pre-war level. At times, conditions were so bad that widespread food shortages and even famine occurred, as in 1946.

Post-war Soviet Ukraine also underwent a considerable demographic change. Aside from an overall increase in population, from 31.7 million in 1939 to 41.8 million in 1959, the settlement patterns and the relative size of the country's various nationalities changed considerably. Nearly two million mostly ethnic Ukrainians were repatriated (often forcibly) from various parts of German-controlled central Europe, while the 200,000 who were spared the return to Stalinist rule in their homeland became Displaced Persons. Most eventually emigrated to North America, while others remained in western Europe. Also, 3.8 million or so evacuees (including over 900,000 Jews), who in the face of the 1941 rapid German military advance were resettled in the east, returned home where many took up leading posts in the government and economic sector. On the other hand, certain peoples (Poles, Czechs), who in some cases had lived for centuries on Ukrainian lands, were removed as part of population exchanges with neighboring countries; others (Crimean Tatars living in what was still Russian-administered Crimea) were forcibly resettled in Soviet Central Asia; while still others had already been killed (the Jews of western and central Ukraine) or deported (Germans in steppe Ukraine) during the World War II years.

The restored Soviet regime was especially concerned with regions like Galicia, known for the deep-

69. Beginning the reconstruction of Kyiv's main thoroughfare, the Khreshchatyk. Photo, summer 1944.

ly felt Ukrainian national sentiment of its inhabitants that dated back to pre-World War I Austrian Habsburg rule. In an effort to integrate the recently acquired western regions (Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia) with the rest of the Soviet sphere, the authorities initially concentrated their efforts in three areas. First, all businesses were nationalized and private landholdings replaced by collective farms. Second, a concerted effort was undertaken to eliminate, whether through political amnesty or armed force, the underground Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which until the early 1950s remained active in far western Ukraine. And third, the regime organized the abolition of the traditional stronghold of Ukrainian national sentiment (especially in Galicia), the Greek Catholic Church: its entire hierarchy and several hundred priests were arrested, while all remaining adherents were forced to become part of the Russian Orthodox Church. All these developments were accompanied by the resettlement of tens of thousands of Galician Ukrainians—suspected of excessive nationalist feelings—to various parts of eastern Ukraine. Finally, there was a general trend

encouraged by government planners to increase the number of industrial workers. The result was a phenomenal growth of cities in Soviet Ukraine, so that by the 1970s there were five in that region, each with over a million inhabitants. About the same time another milestone was reached: Ukraine was no longer a primarily agriculturally based society, since more than half of the republic's entire population now lived in urban areas.

The most important result of these massive and relatively rapid demographic changes was a social environment in which a large portion of the country's inhabitants lost—or never really had—a first-hand sense of ancestral place. Displaced urban dwellers gave birth to a new generation of rootless offspring born and acculturated in often faceless Soviet-style modern regimented apartment blocks. Traditional cultural values, if they continued to exist at all in a Soviet system which did its best to destroy religious practices and other allegedly old-fashioned customs, survived at best in the less developed—some would say backward—rural countryside. Such develop-

ments were welcomed by the authorities, who in any case hoped to eliminate any remaining cultural remnants from the feudal and bourgeois past, riddled as they were with antiquated and superfluous religious beliefs. It certainly seemed that the time was ripe to create what came to be called the new Soviet man and woman. State ideologists even predicted—somewhat similar to Western thinkers enamoured at the very same time with theories of modernization—that nationalism was passé, and that eventually the country's various nationalities and national cultures would merge into a single new progressive and revolutionary Soviet national identity and culture.

In actual practice, *Soviet* became a code-word for Russian, which in turn became the dominant means of communication, most especially in the Soviet Union's Slavic republics, including Ukraine. Building on tsarist russocentric traditions, the Soviet Union was quite successful in diminishing national distinctions. This was certainly the perception in the outside world, whether in Europe (Communist or non-Communist), North America, or elsewhere, where the popular as-

70. Displaced Persons (DP) camp near Munster in the American Zone of postwar Germany. Photo, 1946.

71. *Russian-Ukrainian Friendship* (1954), mosaic at the Kyiv subway station in Moscow, epitomizing the Soviet view of the country's two largest Slavic nations.

sumption—reinforced by the media—was that everyone in the Soviet Union was "Russian." Many ethnic Ukrainians, especially in the east and south of the country, as well as most of the country's Jews bought into the Soviet/Russian identity and adopted Russian as their own—and in some cases their only—language.

Soviet policy toward Jews

The predicament of the Jews who survived the Holocaust and those who returned from the eastern evacuation to Ukraine during the initial post-war years was grim. Much of the reason for this was the increased Russian chauvinism and rampant antisemitism that had already begun during the last year of the war. The Moscow-based Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, which had done a formidable job mobilizing the U.S.-sponsored Lend-Lease program during World War II and winning world support for the Soviet Union, now proposed that the Soviet government acknowledge the exceptional suffering and losses of the Jewish people during the war, that it recognize that Jews had lost their homes, and that it establish an autonomous district for them in Crimea.

The Kremlin leadership and the security organs considered these requests as nothing less than an affront. It responded that the Soviet people had all suffered as one entity, so that acknowledging a unique Jewish plight would be tantamount to a claim based on national specificity. Consequently, Jews returning from the eastern evacuation or from the Nazi German camps were left to deal one-on-one with the Soviet bureaucracy and with peoples who had taken over their homes. In an atmosphere characterized by mounting Cold War tensions, members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee were suspected by state security organs as being spies for the new enemy—the capitalist West. It is in such a context that the regime forbade the publication of *The Black Book*, the first collection of documents about the Nazi atrocities that was prepared for publication by the Berdychiv-born Vasilii Grossman and the Kyiv-born Ilya Ehrenburg. Any mention of the exceptional status of the Jews as the foremost targets of the Nazis had to be obliterated.

The Soviet censors moved to cross out any mention of Jews in their reports of Nazi atrocities. Instead, they were referred to by a vague formulation—"peaceful
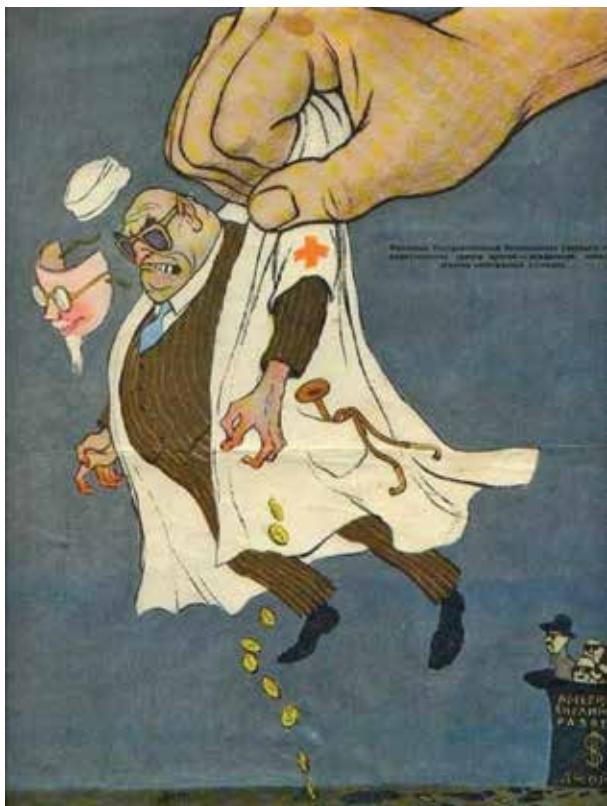
72. Soviet state security organs expose Jewish doctors, alleged spies of American and British intelligence. Cover of the Moscow satirical journal, *Krokodil*, 1953.

Soviet citizens." In response to the rising pride of the Jews, who were third in number of awardees among wartime Heroes of the Soviet Union in the defeat of the Nazis, the Kremlin unleashed vicious antisemitic campaigns against Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee members (many of whom were Yiddish-speaking writers and poets from Ukraine), against Jewish cultural elites, and finally against Jewish doctors. In 1948–1953 dozens of Jewish authors, scholars, and public figures found themselves behind bars. The Yiddish-language literati Nosn Zabara, Moyshe Pinchevskyi, and Gershl Poliakner, all members of the Union of Writers of Ukraine, were imprisoned. The Research Center of Jewish Culture at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences was closed and its director, the renowned literary critic and linguist Elye Spivak, tortured to death by the state security.

In the wake of the creation of the state of Israel and the enthusiastic popular support it garnered among ordinary Jews throughout the Soviet Union, the Jews could no longer be considered a loyal minority. They now became in the eyes of the regime a diaspora nationality of bourgeois nationalist traitors, a kind of Cold War fifth column. On 12 August 1952, after a four-year unsuccessful trial during which members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee refused to incriminate themselves, several Yiddish celebrities, including some from Ukraine—Itsik Fefer, Dovid Bergelson, Perets Markish, and Leyb Kvitko—were secretly executed. This was a tragedy of such significance that Workmen's Circle Unions throughout the United States continue to commemorate it annually to this day. In effect, between 1948 and 1953, the Soviet regime used all means of propaganda possible to vilify Jews as bourgeois nationalists. Stalin's death in March 1953 put an end to a five-year long campaign of state-orchestrated antisemitism, even though its ramifications were still palpable decades later.

During the immediate post-war years and through the 1950s, observant Jews made several attempts to revive religious life and re-establish traditional communities. Following Soviet guidelines, they organized so-called *dvatsyadky*, groups of minimally twenty people each that allegedly would be allowed to establish prayer groups. In fact, Soviet security organs allowed such groups only if they included one or more informants (moles) who could supervise membership, attendance, and the spirit and tenor of the conversations. The authorities did allow a maximum of one synagogue or prayer group per town, while at the same time doggedly persecuting any attempts to organize non-sanctioned prayer groups (*minyonim*). Despite the close surveillance and regular denunciations by secret police informants, the synagogues, beginning in the 1950s and

73. Members of the Soviet Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee meet with Benzion Goldberg, Sholem Aleichem's son-in-law. From left to right: Leyb Kvitko, Veniamin Zuskin, Goldberg, Lina Shtern, Aron Kats, Itsik Fefer. Photo, 1946.

continuing until the early 1980s, went from being the semi-legal foci of traditional Jewish life to information centers on Jewish genealogy and emigration. Nevertheless, the regime prohibited members of the older generation from engaging youth, penalized those who disobeyed, and arrested anyone trying to take prayer books out of the synagogue for teaching purposes. In particular, clandestine teachers of Hebrew were incarcerated, since they were considered to be guilty of promoting a bourgeois, nationalist language couched in religious propaganda.

Ukrainian dissidents and Jewish intellectuals

The so-called Thaw of the late 1950s and early 1960s, a period when the Soviet leadership reduced to a degree the strict government controls and censorship that characterized Stalinist rule, also witnessed an unprecedented rapprochement between the country's leading Ukrainian and Jewish intellectuals. They were united in their rejection of state-orchestrated policies of enforced assimilation, de-Ukrainianzation, and antisemitism. For example, Vasilii Grossman finished an epic novel, *Life and Fate*, and a historical short novel, *Forever Flowing*, works in which he not only equated Stalinism and Nazism but also traced parallels between Ukraine's Great Famine (*Holodomor*) and the Holocaust and the victimization of Ukrainians and Jews. In 1966 Ukrainian writers and civic activists Ivan Dzyuba, Viktor Nekrasov, and Borys Antonenko-Davydovych joined Kyiv's Jews in commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the massacre at Babyn Yar. It was Dzyuba's speech at this event that marked a turning point in Ukrainian-Jewish relations.

Close relations between Jewish and Ukrainian intellectuals continued even after the Soviet regime under Leonid Brezhnev ended the short-lived liberal atmosphere of the Thaw and, beginning in the mid-1960s, reinstituted repressive measures against critics of the regime who came to be known as dissidents. It was on behalf of one of the Soviet Union's leading dissidents at the time, the ethnic Ukrainian and decorated World War II veteran Petro Hryhorenko (Petr Grigorenko), that a Jewish psychiatrist from Ukraine, Semen Gluzman, submitted an
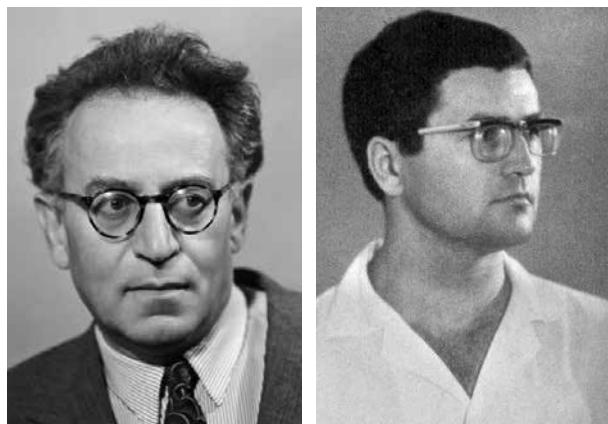
74. Leading Jewish and Ukrainian intellectuals from Ukraine in the 1960s: Vasilii Grossman (1905-1964) and Ivan Dzyuba (b. 1931).

expert report attesting to the mental health of the former Soviet army general whom the regime was trying to portray as insane. Many of the encounters between ethnic Ukrainian and Jewish liberal and national-minded individuals actually took place in Soviet correction colonies during the Brezhnev era—an environment that ironically fostered a new and positive understanding of Ukrainian-Jewish relations. It was precisely these intellectuals who in the late 1980s united in the Popular Movement of Ukraine for Restructuring. Best known by its Ukrainian name, Rukh (the Movement), it was instrumental in creating a new atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect among ethnic Ukrainians and Jews on the eve of and after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev era and the road to Ukraine's independence

The stagnant economic and repressive political policies of the Soviet system prompted the need for change—and such change finally began in 1985. In that year, a relatively young party functionary, Mikhail Gorbachev, became head of the All-Union Communist party and, eventually, the most influential figure behind a program of reform known as *perestroika* (restructuring of society) and *glasnost* (openness to change dependent upon civic participation). Reform came much more slowly to many peripheral regions of the Soviet Union, including Soviet Ukraine. When, however, it did finally begin

75. Ukraine's blue-and-yellow flag brought ceremoniously into the national parliament which just declared the country's independence. Photo, 24 August 1991.

there in 1989, national patriots who had remained silent before (or who had been part of the Communist system) joined a series of organizations that were determined to raise the prestige of Ukrainian culture and language and to transform the Soviet Union into a true federation of equal republics.

The leading force for national and democratic change was Rukh. Because of a change in the electoral law, which allowed parties other than the Communists to field electoral candidates, Rukh managed in early 1990 to enter Soviet Ukraine's parliament (Verkhovna Rada) as part of a Democratic Bloc. The Rukh activists were joined by a number of Communist deputies who hoped to remain in power by adapting to the current nationalist fervor. Together they were able to push through parliament the declaration of Ukraine as a sovereign state in July 1990.

After almost a year of debate and negotiations regarding the future relationship of the now sovereign Soviet Ukraine to the rest of the Soviet Union, the situation came to a head in the late summer of 1991. In August, Communist political conservatives attempted to carry out a coup in Moscow; their failure after just three days prompted the parliament in Kyiv to declare, on 24 August 1991, Ukraine an independent democratic state. To gauge and, it was hoped, gain the support of the population at large, a state-wide referendum was held on 1 December 1991. A remarkable 92 percent of Ukraine's population—people of all ethno-national backgrounds— voted for independence. Almost as an afterthought, at the end of month, on 31 December 1991, the Soviet Union ceased to exist. Ukraine had now entered the community of Europe's independent states.

SILVA P.
11

CHAPTER 3

Economic Life

There is a popular assumption that ethnic Ukrainians have throughout history been primarily rural-dwelling agriculturalists. To a large extent that assumption is borne out by reality, at least until the twentieth century. It is certainly true that a favorable climate and rich soils covering most of Ukraine have made the country an ideal setting for growing a wide variety of crops, whether for human consumption, for livestock feed, or for industrial use. Not unexpectedly, the vast majority of inhabitants on the territory of present-day Ukraine have been farmers, beginning with the first sedentary peoples connected with the Trypillian culture of the Neolithic period and lasting several millennia (4500–2000) before the Common Era, then with the various Slavic tribes during the centuries before Kievan Rus' and continuing with the direct ancestors of today's ethnic Ukrainians during the era of Lithuanian, Polish, Muscovite, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian rule.

Agriculture

Ethnic Ukrainians

Aside from planting and harvesting crops, almost without exception each homestead had at least one cow from which dairy products were derived in order to sustain life. In that sense, the family cow was essential for one's existence and equally as important as the amount of arable land that one tilled. Only in far western Ukraine, in the foothills and up-

76. *Opposite*: Oil drilling shaft in the town of Boryslav, Austrian Galicia.

77. *A Village Hut in Potoky* (1845), central Ukraine, watercolor by the Ukrainian artist Taras Shevchenko.

per slopes of the Carpathian Mountains, did some rural dwellers gain their livelihood from animal husbandry (mainly sheep) or from forest-related work (as wood-cutters and haulers).

The legal status of ethnic Ukrainian agriculturalists evolved over the centuries—and mostly for the worse. In Kievan times, most were "free persons," but during Polish-Lithuanian rule they became increasingly dependent on noble landowners to whom they paid dues (in labor and kind) until in the late sixteenth century they became proprietary serfs attached to the land.

Most ethnic Ukrainians remained agriculturalists, as proprietary serfs or state peasants, regardless of the state that succeeded Polish-Lithuanian rule in Ukraine: the Tsardom of Muscovy, the Russian Empire, or the Austrian Empire. Even after the emancipation from serfdom (1848 in the Austrian Empire

78. Ruthenian/Ukrainian villagers collecting the harvest near Stryi, Austrian Galicia. Photo, ca. 1910.

and 1861 in the Russian Empire), many of Ukraine's peasant agriculturalists became what might be called "economic serfs," that is, "free" persons indebted to their former landlords or moneylenders—and often on a permanent basis. There were, however, some enterprising peasant farmers in both the Austrian and Russian empires who were able to break the cycle of debt, expand their landholdings, and turn a profit from the crops they harvested (often by employing fellow indebted peasants).

In the first half of the twentieth century, the status of Ukraine's agriculturalists changed radically. In western Ukrainian lands ruled by Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia, farmers survived (some even flourished) by joining voluntarily agricultural cooperatives in which they had some say over how the fruit of their labor was marketed and sold. In eastern Ukraine under the Soviet Communist rule, collectivization—at first voluntary but after 1929 forced—brought an end to private land ownership. Consequently, farmers in many ways became similar to industrial workers, their "industrial sites" being village-based collective farms (*kolhospy*) or huge state-owned farms (*radhospy*). The socialist agricultural worker was no longer a farmer, whose generations of experience helped decide what crops to grow and how, but rather an employee working for the village collective or the state, which paid its employees a wage or more often in kind. The payment in kind, determined by labor units (number of hours worked or the amount of harvest), was hardly enough to allow a family to survive.

Despite the changing and often unenviable legal status of agriculturalists over the centuries, at the same time ethnic Ukrainians developed a profound love for the land and the crops that it could produce, if properly managed. Sheaves of wheat, for example, became—and remain to this day—a graphic symbol or branding for Ukraine as a country. And, as a corollary, many ethnic Ukrainians came to believe in a kind of moral superiority of those who worked the land, in contrast to others in society who "exploited" it for their own personal gain, whether the exploiter be a noble landlord, a "foreign" urban dweller, or a dictatorial state.

THE JEWISH *KORCHMA*/TAVERN

The tavern/*korchma* occupied a key place in Ukrainian culture and was an exceedingly important component in the economic life of Ukraine's Jews. In Jewish-owned taverns, customers were not only able to eat, smoke, dance, and drink, they also discussed business, looked for jobs, cut deals, traded in commodities, engaged in match-making, changed and fed horses, repaired wagons, borrowed money, relaxed on their way to a fair, and shared news. In essence, taverns functioned as social clubs where people could rest and enjoy cognac, rum, absinthe, local and imported fruit and grape wines, coffees and chocolate, quality tea, root beer, brandy, beer, and mead.

A Ukrainian joke hints at why the magnates positioned Jews as privileged dealers in liquor: *zhydy durni, mayut horilku i prodayut yiyi*—Jews are fools, they have vodka but they sell it. Still, even those economic theorists who had little sympathy for Jewish liquor-trading confirmed that alcoholism was at a much lower level in the imperial Russian-ruled Pale of Settlement, with its dozens of inns in each town, than elsewhere in the empire where taverns and inns were much more rare.

Jews

For centuries, Jews were the major mediators between rural and the urban areas in their role as traders in agricultural products. Until the late eighteenth century, most Jews were engaged in various kinds of trade, particularly in grain, cattle, and lumber. The Russian authorities at the time, however, deemed trade a non-productive occupation and, therefore, made several efforts to resettle Jews on the land.

Although Jews were promised tax exemptions (for long periods of time), only a few thousand took up the offer and became farmers. Their reluctance was in part due to the inefficient and corrupt administration of the state-sponsored agricultural colonies. Despite such impediments, in the 1850s and 1860s Jewish agricultural settlements gradually increased, especially in southeastern Ukraine, so that in Kherson province by the end of tsarist rule in 1917 about 42,000 Jews lived and worked as farmers in thirty-eight agricultural colonies. The last decades of the nineteenth century were also a time when groups of Kharkiv and Odessa university students known as BILU (acronym of the biblical verse "Come, sons of Jacob, let us go," Isaiah 2: 5) left the empire to establish agricultural settlements in the land of Israel. These eventually became known as *kibbutzim* (communal agricultural colonies similar to Russia's agricultural communes), which later attracted thousands of eastern European Jews and became the economic beacon for Israeli agriculture.

Unlike the Jews in the Russian Empire, those living under Austrian Habsburg rule were, from the 1770s, not only allowed to be farmers but also (after 1867) to own land. More than 13 percent of Galicia's Jews worked in some aspects of the agricultural sector, whether as farmers working the land, as dealers in agricultural products, or in property management. Actually, 50 percent of all Galician farm and estate leaseholders were Jews. And, of the province's forty-five large landowners who possessed more than 15,000 acres of land, six were Jews. Jews were especially successful in the cattle and poultry trade. In Austrian Bukovina, Jews were also active in agriculture, whether in trading or in transporting agricultural produce, much of which came from

79. *Peasants and Jews of Galicia*, drawing from the French writer Elisée Reclus's book, *The Earth and Its Inhabitants*, 1886.

the province's largest estates which happened to be owned by Jews as well.

Ever since the beginning of the Zionist movement in the last decades of the nineteenth century, its ideologists tried to convince Jews in both the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires to take up "productive labor," that is, to work the land as farmers and preferably to do so after emigrating to the historic land of their forefathers—Israel. Zionist goals were never achieved before World War I. Following the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917 and its eventual replacement by a state under Bolshevik rule, the new Soviet authorities adopted their own policy toward Jews. Like the Zionists, the Soviets also set out to engage Jews in productive labor and, therefore, launched a colonization experiment in the 1920s. It was sponsored not only by the central government-controlled Committee for the Settlement of Jewish Laborers on the Land (KOMZET) but also by the Agricultural Corporation (Agro-Joint) of the American Joint Distribution Committee (the Joint). On the plains of southern Ukraine between Zaporizhzhya and Kherson as well as in northern Crimea, about thirty highly successful Jewish agricultural

80. Lottery ticket (1927) to benefit OZET, the Moscow-based Society for the Settlement of Jewish Toilers [Soviet collective farmers] on the Land.

cooperatives were established (see map 20). There, more than one hundred thousand Jews worked as farmers between 1924 and 1938. These collective farms, in stark contrast to the failed colonizing project in Birobidzhan Autonomous District near the far eastern Soviet-Chinese border, embodied the success of Soviet Ukraine's agricultural initiative. Ukraine's Jewish collective farms, built around the renewal of the Yiddish language and proletarian ideology, were given ideologically inspired names, such as Fraidorf, Kalinindorf, Lenindorf, and Yudendorf—literally: The Free Village, Kalinin Village, Lenin Village, and Jewish Village. The joy felt by Jews who left the traditional and moribund *shtetl* to work the land like a Ukrainian peasant was best depicted in plays by Peretz Markish (*Nit gedaiget!/Don't Worry*) and Leonid Pervomaiskyi (*Mistechko Ladenyu/The Shtetl Ladeniu*), which were performed in many Ukrainian theatres during the 1930s.

Urban merchants, artisans, and laborers

Medieval Kievan Rus', described in contemporary Scandinavian sources as "the land of fortified towns" (*Gardariki*), was known for the high proportion of urban dwellers in comparison to the rest of Europe. The Rus' ancestors of modern-day ethnic Ukrainians most likely accounted for the largest proportion of townspeople (*lyudy hradski*), who made their living as merchants, artisans, and unskilled laborers and servants. No less than sixty different handicrafts in the building, transport, clothing, food preparation, and arms trades were known to have existed among

medieval Rus' urban artisans. In subsequent centuries, the proportion of Ukraine's urban dwellers who were ethnic Ukrainians declined, largely because of the influx of foreign immigrants (Germans, Jews, Armenians, Greeks) reputed for certain skills and because of legal restrictions and discrimination. For example, in Ukrainian lands ruled by Poland-Lithuania, non-Catholic townspeople (Orthodox Ukrainians, Jews, Armenians) were deprived of membership in professional guilds and city councils.

Despite the various forms of legal and social discrimination, Orthodox Rus'-Ukrainian townspeople managed to maintain their economic status and even organized pre-modern businessmen's associations, the so-called confraternities or brotherhoods, which funded hospices, cultural activity (especially schools and book printing), and the building and functioning of Orthodox churches—all in an effort to defend the language and religious culture of their people. The philanthropic and cultural nature of the brotherhoods confidently disguised their other purpose: trade and business pursuits, which allowed Orthodox Rus'-Ukrainians to compete with the privileged guilds reserved for Catholic urban artisans. In eastern Ukraine, during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, ethnic Ukrainians remained the dominant element in towns and cities and, as such, contributed heavily to the economic well-being, cultural achievements, and military ventures of the Cossack state within the framework of the Tsardom of Muscovy and later Russian Empire.

In contrast to the restrictions on Orthodox Rus'-Ukrainian urban dwellers in Poland-Lithuania, Jews were welcomed by the authorities as the perfect agents of urbanization. In order to transform a low-income village into an economically advantageous town, the Polish landlord needed to obtain a *privilegia* (concession) from the king or the government. Such concessions allowed for the establishment of regular trade, annual fairs, and a monopoly on liquor production (*propinacja*) in a particular locality. As a result, in Poland-Lithuania trade and liquor production were economic activities that relied entirely on the Jews and required their permanent residence. Polish landlords by and large did not want to engage in what they considered

81. *Fair in Ukraine* (1838), painting by the Russian artist Vasilii Shternberg.

a dirty business; hence, they leased these two key functions—trade and the production of alcohol—to the Jews. Thus, the evolution of small rural settlements into important early modern market towns in the Volhynia (Berdychiv, Dubno, Korets, Ostroh), Podolia (Medzhybizh, Tulchyn), and Kiev provinces (Bila Tserkva, Skvyra, Uman) depended to a great extent on the economic role played by Jews.

Not surprisingly, Jews dominated the marketplace, where they represented on average over 90 percent of all traders. Later, in the 1790s, when the Russian Empire annexed Poland's Ukrainian-inhabited lands, the tsarist regime permitted Jews membership in trade guilds and in the elitist social estate of merchants. It was not long before they came to represent from 85 to 90 percent of all third- and second-guild merchants. First-guild merchants, meanwhile, were usually Christian wholesale monopolists.

Already during Polish rule, Jews settled near the marketplace in urban quarters known as *shtetls* (Yid.: *shtetlekh*), where they built dwellings that usually included a shop and an inn as well as their personal residence. Most, if not all, trading stalls (*torhovi ryady*) in the marketplace of Ukrainian towns before the mid-nineteenth century belonged to Jews. As a rule, Jews competed among themselves and not with the Christian first-guild monopolists, who relied on governmental commissions and saw little competition. In practice, Jewish success in trade depended on low revenues and rapid turnover, not on their relations with the regime in power.

The Jews were multi-taskers. Male and female Jewish merchants dealt simultaneously in textiles (various fabrics as well as yarn and thread), finished haberdashery items (kerchiefs, gloves, stockings, socks), delicacies (caviar, sugar, coffee, tea, chocolate, dates, figs, etc.), leather goods (boots and belts), accessories (earrings and hairpins), luxury items (snuff boxes and smoking pipes), and—most important of all—basic food staples (salt and fish). As a result of Polish concessions (*privilegia*) and the possibility to travel, combined with their knowledge of the market and their all-important family connections, Jews came to dominate international trade during the period of Polish rule in Ukraine. Their trade networks brought goods from the Ottoman Empire to the

THE *SHTETL*

Jews in Ukraine lived for the most part in privately-owned market towns, each of which had its own sub-community, known in Yiddish as the *shtetl* or *shtetele*. The *shtetl* had an atmosphere of its own that was governed by two basic values: (1) humaneness (Yiddish: *menshlikhkeyt*), which made it an environment in which economic and psychological support could be found in times of crisis as well as on an everyday basis; and (2) Jewishness (Yiddish: *yidishkeyt*), a religious environment, both at home and on the streets, that provided spiritual sustenance in the midst of an otherwise alien Christian world. Daily life in the *shtetl* revolved around the synagogue, the home, and the market, which was also the place where Jews interacted with their non-Jewish neighbors (*goyim*).

The attractiveness of market-town life in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *shtetl* has been immortalized by numerous writers and artists, among the most famous of whom was the Ukrainian-born Sholem Aleichem (Shalom Rabinovitz), whose stories were later used as the basis for the popular American musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. In fact, it was the psychological comfort afforded by *shtetl* life that made many Jews reluctant to leave their centuries-old homes in Ukraine and other parts of eastern Europe even in times of economic hardship and physical danger.[a]

SOURCE

a   Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), p. 360.

when tsarist authorities decided to impose rigorous customs tariffs for political and economic reasons, Jewish merchants (often with help of Polish, Muscovite, and Ukrainian Cossack officials) transformed legal trade into cross-border contraband.

Because in Muscovy and the later Russian Empire Jews were not allowed to own land, whatever economic activity they engaged in took the form of leases from private landlords or the government. They usually paid up-front, after which they were allowed to lease mills, taverns, distilleries, fish ponds, forests and the lumber trade, customs, postal services, weights and measures, marketplace trading stalls, tax collecting, and all sorts of arts and crafts. Jews as leaseholders (*orendari*) were responsible for the entire economic infrastructure of Ukraine's urban centers from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. Regardless of pre-partition Polish-Lithuanian or subsequent imperial Russian rule, the economic situation changed little, since most towns remained under private ownership at least until 1830 and even until the 1860s. Although they were privileged leaseholders, Jews had to pay a high price for this dubious privilege. Their landlords imposed exorbitant taxes and duties, so that Jewish leaseholders themselves could
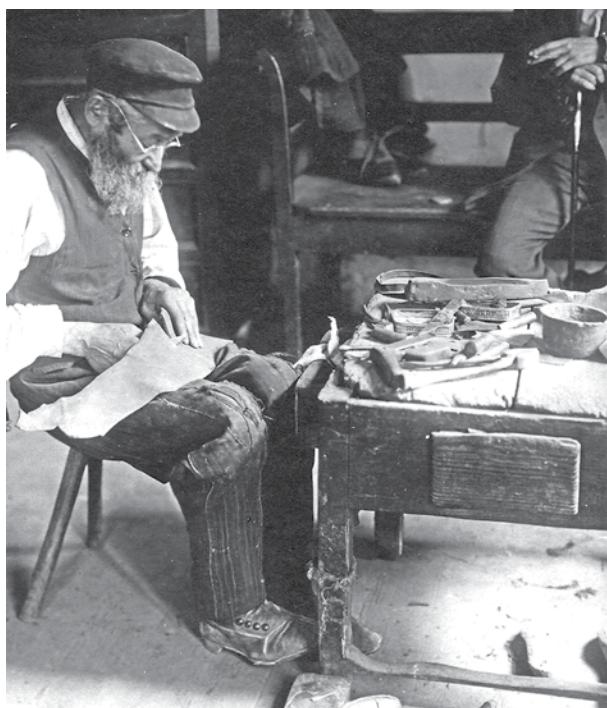
82. Jewish tailor from Podolia, photographed in the early 1910s during S. An-sky's ethnographic expedition to the Pale of Jewish Settlement.

south, from Muscovy/Russia to the east, and from European lands (Swabia, Prussia, Provence) to the west. After the disappearance of Poland-Lithuania in 1795, trade from Russian-ruled Volhynia and other tsarist provinces in Ukraine reached neighboring Austrian-ruled Galicia through Jewish hands. Even

83. The *pinkas* (record book) of the Mishnah Study Society in Medzhybizh, which functioned from 1880 to 1910.

hardly make both ends meet. At the same time, the ethnic Ukrainian peasants and other Christian inhabitants considered all *orendars* to be bloodsuckers. Some of the richest Jews, the heads of the mercantile elite, were responsible for collecting duties and taxes and were often serving as the leaseholders of the towns or villages. Their economic self-interest triggered multiple social and moral conflicts within the much more frugal Christian and even Jewish communities.

After the merchants, leaseholders, and tavern-keepers, the fourth most important group of economically active Jews were the artisans. Although disliked by merchants at all levels, including poor peddlers, Jewish artisans became a respected and very visible part of society by the end of the nineteenth century. In fact, Jews comprised in many towns the overwhelming majority of artisans—millers, blacksmiths, silversmiths, watchmakers, tailors, shoemakers, milliners, closet-makers, wagon-makers,

wheel-makers, tanners, saddlers, carpenters, masons, bakers, and butchers—and accounted by the end of the nineteenth century for 60 percent of all working Jews. Jewish artisanal pride became proverbial. In a famous joke, one Jew asks another: Where did you have your *lapserdak* (jacket) tailored? In Paris. Is that far from Berdychiv? Yes, very far. Incredible! Such a faraway province yet so well-tailored!

Although Jews were not allowed to enroll in Christian craft guilds, they often created their own professional societies called *havurot,* which were disguised as voluntary religious confraternities. These professional confraternities performed functions characteristic of Orthodox Christian confraternities (brotherhoods): they brought together skillful professionals of a certain craft; restricted access to those able to pay the entry fee; established fixed prices on services and products; extended social relief to needy members; provided free start-up loans; and sent their members to visit the sick and bury the dead. Towns such as Lutsk in Volhynia had several major *havurot* of tailors and shoemakers by the mid-eighteenth century, while Berdychiv and Baranivka in Podolia had dozens of *havurot* a century later that brought together artisans of various professions, including bricklayers, carpenters, and even coffin-carriers. Some of the artisan confraternities grew to be so influential that they preferred to split off from the elitist communal oligarchy, the
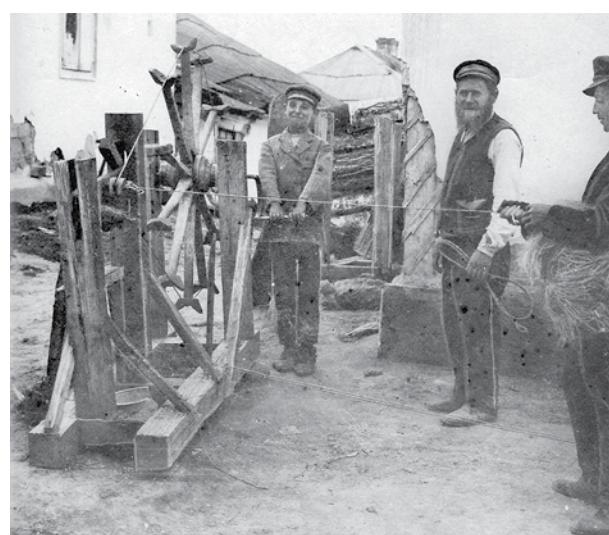
84. *Kustari,* or self-employed artisans, part of the "Dopomoha" (Assistance) unit producing wicker furniture, Kamyanets-Podilskyi. Photo, 1931.
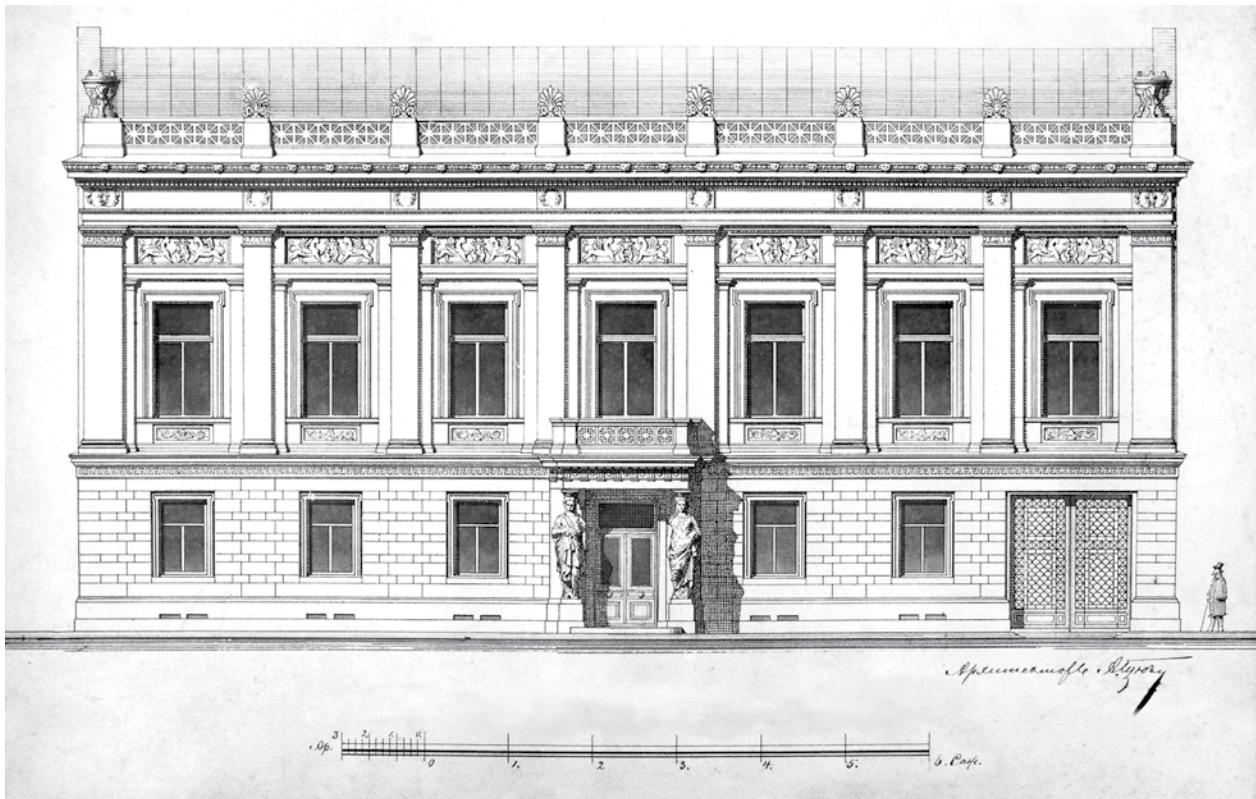
85. Residence in Kyiv of the Tereshchenko family of industrialists and art collectors, today the Museum of Russian Art. Original design by A.L. Gun, 1881.

kahal. On their own, they raised funds, commissioned Torah scrolls, and established synagogues (Yiddish: *shul*).

Industrialization

In the course of the nineteenth century, eastern Ukraine experienced the beginnings of industrial development. The trend continued steadily, so that by 1900 the region accounted for one-fifth of all factory manufacturing output in the Russian Empire. It is true that the most of the workers in these new industries were not ethnic Ukrainians, who, if they wanted to improve their economic status, tended to migrate eastward to farmlands in southern Siberia.

Industrialists in Russia and Austria-Hungary

On the other hand, some ethnic Ukrainians (known at the time as *malorosy*/Little Russians) were among the country's leading business people. As early as 1832, 29 percent of all factory proprietors were ethnic Ukrainians/Little Russians (compared to 17

percent owned by Jews), while among townspeople who owned industrial firms, 31 percent were ethnic Ukrainians (compared to 12 percent owned by Jews). Among the most prominent ethnic Ukrainian industrialists in the Russian Empire were three family dynasties, the Tereshchenkos, Yakhnenkos, and Symyrenkos, who made their enormous fortunes in the sugar-refining industry. While most of these and other industrialists and townspeople adapted to the Russian or Austrian imperial environment in which they functioned, often taking on a Russian or Polish (in the case of Austrian-ruled Galicia) identity, there were some who contributed to the Ukrainian national movement, whether through financial support or civic work. Among such figures were Platon Symyrenko, who funded the most famous work in Ukrainian literature (Taras Shevchenko's *Kobzar*), and the descendant of burghers from Poltava, Symon Petlyura, who later played a leading role in the post-World War I Ukrainian revolutionary era.

On a much larger scale were the Jews, who were pivotal in the early stages of Ukraine's industrializ-

ation. Although initially most of the factories producing brick, copper, and saltpeter were owned by Polish magnates, such as the Czartoryskis, Potockis, and Sanguszkos, it was the Jews who leased, operated, and further developed these enterprises. At the very outset of the nineteenth century, these included a whole host of Jewish-operated enterprises throughout Volhynia and Podolia.

Jews were no less visible in industry and trade in nineteenth-century Austrian-ruled Galicia and Bukovina. There, too, they engaged in artisan occupations organized around confraternities and they owned breweries and tanneries and leased taverns and sawmills. They were particularly active in cement and petroleum production in Galicia, while in Bukovina they were widespread as clerks in banks and credit firms. By the late nineteenth century, however, the Austrian authorities, supported by Galician-Polish landowners and wholesale merchants, introduced a number of regulations that made Jews redundant in several of the economic sectors which they had controlled for centuries. For example, Jews

were forbidden to trade in alcoholic beverages, and merchants were forbidden to trade on Sundays. Since most Jewish merchants were observant and did not do business on the Sabbath (Saturday), this regulation created an additional obligatory day off which had a seriously negative impact on profits.

Such drawbacks were nonetheless mild in comparison with the rapid deterioration and financial ruin of the lower classes of the Jewish population, for example, the working proletariat involved in Galicia's petroleum industry. Crude oil had been found in the Drohobych region of East Galicia, especially around Boryslav, in the early 1800s. Several Jewish amateur experimenters and pharmacists attempted to distill oil and use it for lighting and to produce wax (a by-product for lubrication), but only in the last third of the nineteenth century were industrial-size refineries established. Blue-collar Jews worked alongside ethnic Ukrainians and other Christian peasants. By 1900, there were more than fifty refineries producing 4 percent of the world's refined oil. The international cartels aggressively

86. Boryslav, the oil capital of late 19th-century Austrian Galicia. Photo, 1930s.

87. The sugar tycoon Brodsky family mansion. Lypky district, Kyiv.

moved in to exploit these resources, with the result that the new managers laid off the Jews and hired much cheaper and less class-conscious Christian peasant laborers instead. The terrible sanitary conditions, the exploitation of workers, the general impoverishment of the local population, some of whom where of Jewish descent, were portrayed by the Ukrainian writer Ivan Franko in his famous novel, *Boryslav smiyetsya* (Boryslav Is Laughing, 1881).

While most Jews on the both sides of the Austrian-Russian border lived in relative poverty, there were also some very rich individuals, particularly in the Russian Empire. By the second half of the nineteenth century, a new generation of Jewish entrepreneurs (liquor-trade monopolists, bankers, factory owners) played a major role in the development of the Russian Empire's industrial sector in Ukraine. Lazar and Lev Brodsky continued the work of their father and invested in the creation of Ukrainian beet-sugar refineries, which produced more than 25 percent of all sugar in pre-1917 Russia. The Brodskys also sponsored major philanthropic projects in Kyiv, including the Bessarabian Market and the Polytechnic Institute, as well as the choral synagogues in Kyiv and Odessa. Another millionaire and contractor in Kyiv, Lev Gintsburg, built famous city edifices which today function as the Philharmonic Society, the Teachers' Club, the National Central Bank, the National Ukrainian Museum, and the first twelve-storey skyscraper in the Russian Empire on Khreshchatyk Street (the Gintsburg House destroyed in 1941). The Karaite Solomon Kogan

invested in the development of successful tobacco businesses throughout Ukraine, while the Poliakov brothers established the Industrial Bank in Kyiv and the Society of South-Russian Coal Mining Industry.

The rapid industrialization of imperial Russia in the late nineteenth century also had a downside for Jews. Many traditional Jewish craftsmen became unemployed, since they could not compete with the production of the modern textile or footwear industries, let alone the agricultural tools produced by newly established machine-building factories. Increasingly impoverished, Jewish craftsmen became part of Ukraine's proletariat in big cities such as Kharkiv, Katerynoslav, Zhytomyr, Odessa, and Kyiv, where many eventually sought social justice by joining various revolutionary cells.

Entrepreneurs in Soviet and independent Ukraine

The establishment of Soviet rule in the twentieth century, first in eastern Ukraine (ca. 1920) and then in western Ukraine (after 1945), profoundly changed the status of all peoples living in the country. As for ethnic Ukrainians, they increasingly moved to urban areas, so that, whereas in 1920 they comprised 32 percent of the inhabitants in towns and cities, by 1989 that figure had increased to 60 percent. There they were employed as factory workers, miners, and managerial staff in the Soviet state-directed command economy. Concentrated in regions around cities like Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhya, Donetsk, and Kyiv, many of the large state-owned industrial complexes were directed by local ethnic Ukrainians, who had risen through the managerial ranks. For example, independent Ukraine's second president, Leonid Kuchma, was already a figure of enormous power and influence as director of one of the world's largest industrial complexes based in Dnipropetrovsk for the manufacture of rockets, satellites, and conventional arms.

The tradition of ethnic Ukrainians as large-scale industrialists has continued in post-Soviet independent Ukraine, where changing economic and political conditions have allowed some businesspersons to amass enormous wealth, such as

Dmytro Firtash (gas and electricity distribution), Oleh Bakhmatyuk (agricultural commodities), Serhii Taruta (metallurgy and coal extraction), Yuliya Tymoshenko (gas and oil distribution), and Petro Poroshenko (confectionary production). Meanwhile, by the outset of the twenty-first century, employment patterns were radically different from what they had been a century before. The country's overall work force (52 percent) now earned its livelihood in jobs related to the urban-based industrial sector (manufacturing, mining, construction, transport, various commercial and retail services), while only 17 percent were engaged in agriculture and forestry work. Ukraine as a whole—and its ethnic Ukrainian inhabitants in particular—no longer fits the stereotype of a country of rural peasant farmers. That is an image from the far distant past.

In the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution in late 1917, the new Soviet authorities frowned on traditional Jewish occupations such as trade, and they were in particular opposed to independent artisan work. Such work was conducive, so they thought, to the religious and bourgeois ideological worldview, something that the Soviets wanted at all costs to eradicate. Nonetheless, during the New Economic Policy (NEP) which characterized much of the 1920s, the regime allowed a degree of private ownership. As a result, Jews managed to re-establish a network of restaurants and cafeterias, bars and taverns, confectionaries and bakeries, and a wide range of artisan shops throughout the larger cities of Soviet Ukraine. Many Jews even organized groups of *kustari*, manufacturers who had their own independent small-scale factories producing everything from hats and coats to furniture. After 1928, however, the introduction of the state-directed command economy led to a ban on private businesses, with the result that many Jewish NEP-men became *lishentsy*, socially redundant petty bourgeois who were declared enemies of socialism and the future Communist order.

Nevertheless, many enterprising Jews were able to adapt to the ideological demands of Stalin's command economy and, by 1930s, to take up positions as directors and managers in state-owned industrial factories both large and small. Following World War

88. Petro Poroshenko in front of his Roshen Chocolate Factory in Kyiv. Photo, 2005.

II, and with the rise of antisemitic tendencies in Soviet society, many Jews were removed from leading positions in Soviet Ukraine's industry and commerce, a trend that continued through the 1950s and 1960s. Some responded by "moving underground"; they engaged in clandestine production and traded in goods otherwise absent from stores owing to the cumbersome, inefficient, and customer-unfriendly socialist economy. Since the regime deemed private economic initiative a threat to the state-directed command economy and to socialist ideology in general, many of these economically underground Jewish business people were arrested, tried, and sentenced to extremely harsh punishments, in some cases the death penalty. While in other Soviet republics (Estonia, Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia) clandestine light-industry manufacturing blossomed and its products were available on the black market and even in state-owned stores, in Soviet Ukraine and the Russian Federation such economic initiative was severely penalized. For example, in the early 1960s, the number of Jews sentenced to the death penalty for so-called economic crimes grew fivefold (from 35 to 145), representing 90 percent of all those sentenced to death for economic crimes in Soviet Ukraine.

Only with the ascent to leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 and, in particular, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, did a new generation of business entrepreneurs of Jewish background emerge on Ukraine's economic scene. Among the leading figures are Efim Zvegilsky (mining industry), Ihor Kolomoisky (ferroalloys and banking),

Vadym Rabinovych (imported furniture, oil, and the media), Viktor Pinchuk (oil and the metallurgical business), and Mykhailo Brodsky (light industry and hard-currency exchange). Although most Ukrainian oligarchs of Jewish descent support Ukraine's closer integration with Europe, some depend on previous economic ties and, therefore, acknowledge the importance of maintaining strong economic links with the Russian Federation and other former Soviet republics.

Those enterpreneurs who since Ukraine's independence continued economic relations with the post-Soviet east have most recently been forced to reassess their situation. In the wake of the events on Kyiv's Maidan that brought about Ukraine's 2014 Revolution of Dignity, and in response to Russia's aggression and territorial designs on eastern and southern Ukraine, several business oligarchs, whether of Jewish or non-Jewish background, have had to forego potential financial benefits from the east and accommodate themselves to the decidedly pro-European orientation of post-Maidan Ukraine.

CHAPTER 4
Traditional Culture

Traditional culture refers to the mode of life of a given people as determined by their occupations and economic livelihood. That mode of life may be looked at from two perspectives: material culture (work, cuisine, dwellings, clothing); and spiritual culture (folk customs, religious beliefs, rites, and celebrations). Considering the vast extent of Ukrainian territory, it is not surprising that, while the material and spiritual culture of ethnic Ukrainians may have many common features, there are also regional differences. These are especially noticeable in the geographically less accessible "wooded" areas in the northwest of the country (Polissia and parts of Volhynia) and in the Carpathian far west (Bukovina, southern Galicia, and Transcarpathia).

The following descriptions are for the most part based on the largest territorial portion of Ukraine

89. Interior of a traditional Ukrainian village dwelling (*khata*), Museum of Folk Architecture and Everyday Life in Kyiv—Pyrohiv district.

and reflect the mode of life before the onset of widespread industrialization and urbanization in the twentieth century. Whereas many aspects of the traditional mode of life have disappeared, some are still remembered in modern-day Ukraine and practiced by patriotic intellectuals and other city folk in a kind of ritualistic fashion (especially during holidays and other family and public celebratory events).

Material culture

Dwellings

The predominant type of dwelling among ethnic Ukrainians was the *khata*, or cottage, found not only in villages but also in towns and even the outskirts of cities. The basic form of the *khata*, intended for one family, was quite uniform throughout Ukraine. It continues to be widespread, most especially in villages and some small towns, even if the interiors have been modernized with the addition of running water, indoor toilets, electricity, and cooking and heating appliances operated by external sources, usually natural gas.

The typical *khata* was a three-room structure built out of clay bricks or, in forested areas, out of wooden horizontal logs which might be covered externally with plaster. The structure was generally covered by a hip roof with sloping edges and sides that extended slightly beyond the walls. The three-room interior with clay or wooden (among better-off families) floors

90. Exterior of a traditional Ukrainian village dwelling (*khata*), Museum of Folk Architecture and Everyday Life in Kyiv—Pyrohiv district.

followed a basic ground-plan: an entrance hallway in the middle; on the left side the living quarters ("kitchen" and sleeping quarters together); and on the right side a storeroom/*komora*, which might be converted into a second room. In the living-quarters room, the main elements were a large stove and chimney, plank beds along the wall, and one corner reserved for devotional icons. Outside were farm buildings (grain storehouses, barns for threshing, stables, and henhouses), which with the *khata* comprised the entire homestead surrounded by wattled fences.

The traditional Jewish dwelling in Ukraine looked different both from the surrounding peasant houses on the outskirts of the town and from town dwellings inhabited mostly by Poles. Jewish dwellings were, like those of their ethnic Ukrainian neighbors, built on a stone foundation with walls made of wood, coated with plaster or clay, and then painted. The roof most often was covered by wooden shingles with an internal plastered ceiling and wood floor.

Very often Jews, like Ukrainians, had carved wooden ornaments around the windows and porch.

Yet, unlike the Ukrainian hut which was built for habitation, the Jewish house served a dual function as residence and business, whether in the form of a grocery store, storage for haberdashery and agricultural goods, a tavern, or billiard-hall. The residents included the house's owners or leaseholders and their assistants, and sometimes it may even have included a small prayer house. The houses of artisans had their

91. *Bet-midrash* (house of study), photographed in the early 1910s during S. An-sky ethnographic expedition.

PEASANT IN PRACTICE, YET URBAN IN ASPIRATION

The authorized biography of the late-twentieth-century member of the British House of Commons and influential media magnate Robert Maxwell begins by telling what the hero of the story really wanted from life. As a young Jewish boy (born Ludvik Hoch) growing up in interwar Czechoslovakia's province of Subcarpathian Rus', Maxwell's "dream was to own a field and a cow."[a] It turns own that Maxwell never got what many of his fellow Jews in eastern Europe did achieve. Yet even those urban and rural Jews of Ukraine who had the proverbial cow and who tended it and other domestic animals at home, nevertheless designed for themselves a living space that would make them feel like a city dweller. In the words of one social historian:

> A shabby dwelling was the most characteristic living situation of at least one-third of all *shtetl* Jews, but it did not mean that Jews actually lived like peasants. While the peasants preferred household items that were longlasting, the Jews liked theirs to be nice-looking. Very much unlike peasants, Jews dreamed of a good piece of furniture that would make their house seem urban. They would milk a goat in the wing of the house that served as a barn but would sit on a chair, not a bench, at the dinner table. … The poorest Jewish homeowners lived with an urban ethos and went to all lengths to pass for townsfolk, even though their deep poverty, their houses resembling huts, and their cattle made them unquestionably rural."[b]

SOURCES

a   Joe Haines, *Maxwell* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), p. 1.

b   Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Golden Age of the Shtetl: A New History of Jewish Life in Eastern Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2014), p. 253.

shops and stores facing the street, while the living quarters were hidden in the back. Poor Jews lived in houses identical to those of ethnic Ukrainian peasants with one or two connected rooms and unpaved floors.

The houses of Jewish merchants were large with as many as seven to ten rooms of different sizes. The rooms might be used to accommodate families of relatives involved in the wine-brewing, grain-trade, or tavern-keeping businesses. Merchant houses had all sorts of addenda and dens built along the sides, an external gallery lining the second floor, several stone basements, and a stable for animals in the back.

Since there were no restrictions against residing in the market towns of Ukraine, Jewish merchants preferred to build their houses, which also functioned as stores, along roads that led to and around the marketplace. Each house had a massive windowsill which served as a sales counter. Huge gates opened directly into the building, and through them a wagon could be driven inside and goods unpacked without damage from rain or snow. Very often urban Jews also kept cows, goats, hens, and geese, all of which contributed to the semi-rural character of most Ukrainian towns. Therefore, Tevye the milkman, so well known from the Hollywood film *Fiddler on the Roof*, was hardly unique. There were hundreds of Tevyes in Ukraine's Jewish *shtetls*.

Clothing and handicrafts

As in many parts of Europe, clothing styles among ethnic Ukrainians were determined by the social estate to which the wearer belonged: the nobility, townspeople, or peasants. In Ukraine, yet one other social stratum with distinct dress was added to this mix: the Cossacks. By the seventeenth century, the Cossacks had developed a special style of dress: the upper-level military officers and government administrators copied the nobility and wore a caftan (*zhupan*), although because of military requirements it was shorter and held in with a long silken belt. The rank-and-file Cossack soldiers, otherwise more modestly dressed, were particularly characterized by wide trousers (*sharovary*), which were later adopted and worn until the nineteenth century by peasants.

Head coverings were an especially important feature of female dress because this element determined an individual's status. Married women (symbolically beginning with a specific act during the marriage ceremony) would, upon rising from sleep, cover their heads and remain so both indoors and outdoors. The most common headdress took the form of a kerchief tied under the neck. The kerchief itself would be decorated with various floral elements through which its wearer was consciously or unconsciously making a statement about her aesthetic values.

Ethnic and Ukrainian and Jewish girls and unmarried women did not cover their heads and could therefore show off their beauty through their hair—the longer, it was presumed, the more attractive. The coiffure might be enhanced by a headband (*opaska*) around the forehead tied at the back of the head, by braids, or by a garland of flowers. This kind of fancy headband was a shared cultural element among married Jewish and Ukrainian women. The classic look

92. *Kateryna* (1842), painting by Taras Shevchenko depicting the traditional headband of an unmarried woman.

of a Ukrainian female is to this day presumed by some to be based on traditional models, used most recently as a kind of patriotic political branding in the form of a garlanded golden braid surrounding the visage of Ukraine's former prime minister and presidential contender Yuliya Tymoshenko.

93. Yuliya Tymoshenko sporting a traditional look. Photo, ca. 2010.

Among the most distinctive elements in the traditional dress of ethnic Ukrainians was the homespun linen shirt (*sorochka*) worn by both males and females. As a decorative touch to the hemstitching of her hand-made shirt, a woman would add ornamentation in bright colors, which gradually developed into elaborate patterns based on geometric design. The sleeves were partially or fully ornamented, as was the collar and bosom. Gradually, male shirts were also decorated with ornamental embroidery (especially those intended as a gift from one's betrothed), although only at the collar, sleeve ends, and the bosom.

Whereas rural villagers, with the exception of a few isolated regions, no longer wear such decorative dress in their daily lives, the embroidered shirt (*vyshyvana sorochka*) has become in the twentieth century a visual symbol of Ukrainianness and, as such, is often donned by males and females from all walks of life to express pride in their ancestral culture. This includes, as well, politicians and civic leaders who wish to demonstrate their commitment to ethnic Ukrainian cultural values, in particular language, and to the ongoing defense of Ukraine's status as an independent state.

Embroidery, which has become best known through its appearance in shirts and blouses, is only one of the many handicrafts that developed in Ukraine's rural countryside. Among other widespread products were home-made wood carvings, woven rugs (*kylyms*), and porcelain and faience in the form of pottery, dishes, and painted tiles often

94. *Galician Jews* (1817), lithograph by Jean-Pierre Norblin.

added sophisticated brocaded ornaments. Usually made of semi-precious stones and pearls, the ornaments were a distinct feature of the Jewish female dress code that fascinated western European and Russian travelers. The preferred colors were red and blue. In larger cities like Lviv, local Jewish communal authorities (*kahal*) often issued laws to prevent Jewish women from displaying their jewelry and finery on the Sabbath and holidays so as to instill communal modesty at least on those days.

Men wore ornamented leather boots, long white stockings, trousers to the knee, a silk or cotton shirt with four *tsitsis* (Heb.: *tsitsit*—traditional corner fringes symbolizing the 613 commandments) left hanging out, a dark green or blue brocaded vest, and a velvet yarmulke. Their preferred colors were blue and green. Wealthier Jews often imitated the fashion of Polish landlords and ordered their brocaded garments from the same artisans who served the aristocracy. In winter, male Jews wore long fur coats and fur hats, the latter serving as the ritual Sabbath headgear among the Hasidim. The more pious Hasidim also retained the fashion of a traditional Jewish black-silk Sabbath kaftan, which they wore on a daily basis to emphasize the sanctity, purity, and modesty of everyday life.

Economic livelihood and diet

Of all the branches of economic activity, agriculture was historically the most significant for ethnic Ukrainians. Animal husbandry was an important

intended as decorative coverings for stoves.

Aside from domestic consumption of such practical items, some enterprising individuals developed cottage industries, the sales of whose products brought in needed supplemental income to peasant farmers. Consequently, wood carvers produced candle holders, iconostases, and other implements for churches; weavers sold their *kylyms* (rugs) at local markets, as did potters and tilemakers their wares. Other village-based handicraft activity that from the outset was geared to production for sale included carpentry for various tools and household implements, cooperage for barrels, and furriery and tanning for clothing and shoes.

While ordinary Jews, both male and female, dressed more modestly, this did not mean the absence of style or fashion. Women wore long skirts of cotton or satin, long-sleeved blouses of calico or demi-cotton covering the chest and collarbone, and velvet aprons. In winter, they donned a short half-length fur coat (*zhupan*) just like their ethnic Ukrainian neighbors. According to Judaic tradition, women covered their hair with headbands and often

95. A 2009 caricature of Ukraine's former president, Viktor Yushchenko, at his favorite hobby—bee-keeping.

source of livelihood in the Carpathians (sheep and goats) and until the 1860s in southern Ukraine (cattle), while throughout the country agriculturalists depended on the family cow for milk and derivative dairy products, on oxen for transport, and on both for manure. Cattle and oxen were both highly

prized, and as such they became an integral part of many folk customs and rituals: the cattle were believed "to talk" at sacred times, as on Christmas Eve; while oxen were given the honor of drawing hearses at funerals. Another special animal species was the bee—the source of honey for human consumption and wax for church candles. Bee-keeping, widespread in Ukrainian lands since pre-historic times, remains a respected and popular "art" among ethnic Ukrainians to this day, the third president of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko being among the most well-known active bee-keepers.

The traditional diet among ethnic Ukrainians was based on products grown from the land; consumption of meat was limited, and if so mostly pork and its products. In a land dubbed "the breadbasket" of whichever state controlled Ukraine, it is not surprising that the most staple component of the ethnic Ukrainian diet was bread, most frequently dark rye. The wide range of grains (wheat, rye, barley,

buckwheat) and vegetables became the basis for the most widespread dishes: *kasha* (a gruel made of buckwheat or barley); *borshch* (soup made from red beets and perhaps meat and/or vegetable additives); *holubtsi* (cabbage rolls stuffed with buckwheat gruel and ground meat); and *varenyky* (ravioli-like boiled dough triangles filled with potatoes, cheese, or cabbage).

Ethnic Ukrainian homesteads ideally had orchards, whose fruit trees were a source of great pride and the mark of a successful agricultural family. The various fruits were eaten fresh or preserved for the winter months, and certain ones (plums in particular) were used to distill brandies of generally high alcohol content (50 to 70 percent). Such homemade brandies (*samohon/horilka*) not only became a staple at meals of a festive and celebratory nature but also were offered as a greeting of hospitality whenever anyone would enter the house. Like many of the traditional dishes, alcohol consumption (to-

96. *Flax Blooms and a Cossack Goes to Meet a Girl* (1982), as depicted by the Ukrainian folk artist Mariya Prymachenko.

97. Sabbath challahs freshly baked in the Mea Shearim quarter of Jerusalem. Photo, 2010.

day usually in the form of store-bought vodka) remains an important component of present-day life among ethnic Ukrainians.

Daily Jewish cuisine followed the strict and highly sophisticated dietary laws of *kashrus* (Yiddish for "befitting"), which forbade the mixing of dairy and meat products as well as the consumption of non-Jewish wines and bread, and required that meat and fowl be specially slaughtered and salted so that all the blood is drained. While daily meals were modest, Sabbath was a real feast. For that day (Friday night/Saturday), Jews traditionally baked fresh challah-bread and cooked *gefilte fish* (stuffed carp or pike), *cholent* (hot stew with barley and potatoes), *kishke* (stuffed derma), and *tsimes* (stewed carrots with honey and cinnamon). Perhaps the best-known dish, used as food and medicine, was chicken soup, known even today as the "Jewish penicillin." Each holiday had its special dishes: for example, a boiled fish head for the New Year, *latkes* (potato pancakes) for Hanukah, and *hamantashen* (triangular "ears of Haman") cookies filled with poppy seeds or jam for Purim. The Passover dietary laws were particularly strict, since any leavened bread or products thereof were forbidden for eight days. Jews had to make do with unleavened bread (*matzo*), indulge in vegetables, eggs, and meat, and warm themselves with vodka made not from grain but from potatoes (*peisakhuvka*).

Jewish women who worked as bartenders or salespersons often hired ethnic Ukrainian female peasants to help them with cooking. This in large part explains the abundance of Ukrainian dishes in Jewish cuisine and of Yiddish forms of Ukrainian words in Jewish kitchen vocabulary: *borscht* (Ukr.: *borshch*), *kashe* (*kasha*), *ogirkes* (*ohirky*), *blintses* (*mlyntsi*), *varenikes* (*varenyky*), *pireg* (*pyrih*), and *rogalekh* (*rohalyky*). Jews call their dinner *véchere* (in Yiddish) from *vecherya* (in Ukrainian). In reverse, the Jewish word *challah* entered Ukrainian to the extent that any white braided bread came to be called *khala*, even in Soviet times. The very warmth of mother's kitchen is remembered by both Jews and ethnic Ukrainians through the same phrase, "mother's apron," whether in Yiddish (*mamen fartek*) or in Ukrainian (*mamyn fartukh*).

Spiritual culture

Folk customs among ethnic Ukrainians

Folk rites and customs among ethnic Ukrainians evolved over several centuries, and during that long process they were influenced by the various peoples (Slavic and non-Slavic) and religious traditions that existed in Ukrainian lands: paganism, ancient Greek and Roman rites, and Christianity. In many ways, the success of the "new" religion, Christianity, depended on its ability to accommodate—or reinterpret—the customs and rites of previous belief systems, in order that they would be tolerated by the church. At times, certain pre-Christian practices were suppressed, such as what priests and elders considered to be the erotic excesses accompanying the summer solstice agricultural festival known as the Rite of Kupalo. More often, however, pagan practices were retained after being transformed, that is, Christianized.

Among the pre-Christian beliefs that were proscribed by the church, but that nonetheless survived among ethnic Ukrainians especially (but not only) in rural areas, are those connected with demonological figures. These include goblins (*domovyky*)—in the form of a cat, dog, dove, sometimes grass snake—who guard the household, help in work, and bring good luck or, if offended, bad luck. There are also a whole host of more dangerous goblins who inhabit the forests (*lisovyky*), fields (*polovyky*), and water bodies (*vodianyky*). The latter control the water-

98. Mavka, a water-nymth, and her beloved Lukash, a human boy, in a park statue near Truskavets in western Ukraine.

nymphs (*rusalky*). Water-nymphs are the "unclean" dead, that is, unbaptized children as well as girls and women who died prematurely and/or violently. They often appear in the form of beautiful girls who entice unsuspecting prey (commonly young males) into the water and drown them. Among other ritualistically unclean dead are persons who died in an unnatural manner and who became vampires (*upyri*), and witches and sorcerers (*vidmy-charivnytsi*), who can bring about bad weather and cast evil spells that do harm to humans and their domestic animals. Humans are able to protect themselves, or be alleviated of harm already done to them, by consulting mediators, whether charmers (*charivnyky*), sorcerers (*znakhari*), or seers (*vorozhbyty*). Belief in the power of such mediators is present to this very day among ethnic Ukrainians—both rural and urban—especially among young barren women who seek magical help in an effort to have children.

Belief in demons does not imply that pre-modern rural agriculturalists were helpless before the forces of nature. Ethnic Ukrainian peasant farmers acquired over centuries of practical experience a re-markable knowledge of the stars, the sun, and meteorological phenomena, all of which allowed them to predict weather patterns and adjust their agricultural and animal-husbandry work accordingly. Similar extensive experience with plants resulted in the development of remedies for a variety of ailments, some of which are still used because they have proven to be more effective than solutions proposed by modern medical practices.

Aside from popular—some would say superstitious—ethnic beliefs, Ukrainian society is characterized by a wide range of traditional folk rites and customs. Those associated with the family are connected with the three basic phases of the life cycle: birth, marriage, and death. Of the three, marriage customs are perhaps the most elaborate; certain aspects of the traditional three- to four-day, even week-long, wedding celebration are still practiced today, although in a much abbreviated form.

The other kind of folk rites and customs are those that are celebrated in the public as well as private sphere, often as holidays that are officially recognized by the state as a day (or days) of rest. While these rites were originally connected with the four seasons—winter, spring, summer, autumn—and with the agricultural activity that went with each of them, in many cases they have been Christianized and made an integral part of the church calendar.

The most elaborate of these are within the winter cycle and are specifically connected with Christmas. The Christmas season begins with a feast day that nicely encapsulates pre-Christian and Christian belief systems. Celebrated on 21 November/4 December, it formally closes the autumn season of agricultural work, after which it is not proper for the next nine weeks to till the earth or to disturb it in any way. The tradition of stopping outdoor work was transformed by the church into the beginning, or advent, of the Christmas season marked by the Feast of the Presentation of the Mother of God (*Vvedennya*), who was chosen to give birth to the Messiah four weeks later.

The focal point of the winter cycle is Christmas itself, beginning on Christmas Eve (*Svyat-Vechir*), 6 January, and ending on Epiphany (*Vodokhryshchi* or *Yordan*), 19 January. Christmas Eve begins with an

elaborate meal (usually twelve dishes) with members of the immediate family, a custom that combines respect for the earth's agricultural bounty and commemoration of ancestors. The homestead's animals are accorded particular respect (they are given food from the table and sometimes are fed first), while sheaves of grain are placed on the table and hay and straw strewn underneath. Such symbolic acts accord respect to the sources of sustenance for humans and animals, as well as recalling the biblical story of the Christ child having been born in a stable among the animals, specifically in a manger (a feeding trough for livestock) filled with straw. The family meal is followed by going to church at compline, the last liturgical prayer of the day, said after nightfall or before retiring. The following Christmas Day, 7 January, is one of visitation by members of the extended family, friends, and neighbors from household to household. Among the visitors may be carollers who are hosted with food and drink in gratitude for the Christmas ritual songs (*kolyadky*) they sing or the Christmas-story skits (*vifleyimtsi*: Bethlehem plays) they perform.

Of all the traditional rites and customs handed down from the past, those connected with Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are still preserved by
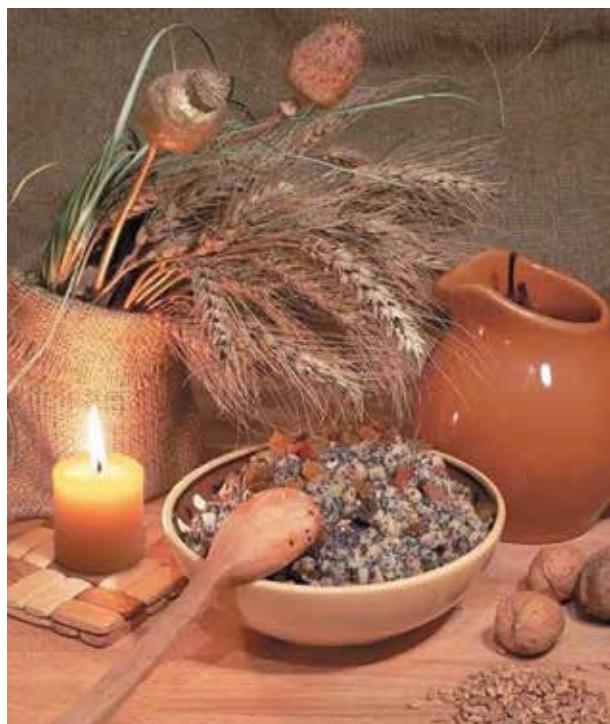
99. Traditional Ukrainian Christmas *kutya* made of boiled wheat, honey, and poppy-seed.

many ethnic Ukrainians whether they are faithful or only nominal Christians. Diaspora communities, in particular, are committed to observing Christmas ceremonial rites and customs as an expression of their Ukrainianness. The larger societies in which Ukrainians live sometimes reinforce the ethnic-identity aspect of the Christmas holiday. Since Ukrainian churches of the Eastern rite follow the old, or Julian, calendar (two weeks later than the Gregorian, or Western "norm"), Christmas falls on 6–7 January, not 24–25 December. In countries like Canada, the mainline media often speak of the 6–7 January holiday as "Ukrainian" Christmas, even though technically it is the holiday of Eastern-rite Christians of other ethnic backgrounds as well.

The other major holiday among ethnic Ukrainians, Easter, comes during the spring cycle. It, too, combines ancient rites related to the rebirth of nature and plant life with the ultimate Christian message—the death by crucifixion of the Messiah and presumed son of God, Jesus Christ, on Good or Passion Friday (*Velyka/Strasna pyatnytsya*) and his resurrection from the dead three days later on the early morn of Easter Sunday (*Paska/Velykden*—The Great Day).

The spring cycle of customs and rites actually begins on 25 March/7 April, when cattle are first brought outdoors for pasturing. This "coming-out" has become the Christian holiday called Annunciation, the day on which the angel Gabriel announced to Mary, the mother of the Messiah, that she was with child. Other Easter customs that reflect the celebration of the gifts of nature include: (1) rites around the early spring plant whose name is given to the first day of Easter week, known as Flower, or Willow Sunday (*Kvitna/Verbna nedilya*, and in the West as Palm Sunday), the day Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem; (2) the exchange of elaborately painted eggs (*krashanky, pysanky*) as a symbol or nature's rebirth coincident with Christ's resurrection; and (3) further celebrations on Easter Monday and Easter Tuesday, which are accompanied by spring songs (*vesnyanky*) addressed to the birds who have returned and by "water-fights" (sprinkling or even dousing) initiated in turn by males and females in recognition of the life-giving properties of water for plant life and, if blessed by the church, for one's soul.

100. Ukrainian Easter eggs (*pysanky*), painted by Luba Petrusha.

Despite the pagan and secular origins of many customs and rites, Easter, like Christmas, remains a Christian holiday. Attendance at church, therefore, is considered essential. In ethnic-Ukrainian communities whether in the homeland or in the diaspora, the holy liturgy on Easter, which traditionally begins at midnight, is not only a profound religious experience for believers but also a major public spectacle in which Eastern-Christian Ukrainians, whether or not they are believers, like to take part. It is not uncommon today to see thousands of attendees at the Easter (holy liturgy) packed into a church or, more likely, standing in the streets and squares outside listening on loudspeakers to the religious service and eagerly awaiting the moment when the priest emerges to bless with holy water their baskets filled with home-made foods surrounding the *paska* (Easter bread) that will be consumed at the festive Easter-day family meal.

Folk customs among Jews

Jews in Ukraine shared certain beliefs and practices with their Slavic neighbors, particularly with respect to the netherworld. Jews believed that the realms around the town or village were populated by evil spirits such as Lilith (a bisexual spirit specializing in kidnapping), the *ruakh* (bad spirit) or *mazik* (evildoer), and, in the case of the soul of an improperly buried person, a *dybbuk* (literally "cleaving spirit"). These spirits were aggressive: they attacked traveling Jews; they entered Jewish houses through latrines, attics, or backdoors; and they caused spiritual and physical maladies, particularly to grown girls before marriage, to newborn boys before circumcision, and to women in labor. Sometimes these evil spirits took possession of the body of an individual, women mainly, in which case the communal authorities might decide to call upon a practicing Kabbalist (an expert in magic and folk healing) to perform an exorcism.

In order to protect themselves from evil spirits, Jews purchased amulets and charms from Kabbalists (see below, Chapter 5) and from itinerant paramedics who acted as shamans, popular healers, and psychiatrists. Many of these figures drew from Slavic folk beliefs, such as an itinerant Kabbalist active in Podolia and Volhynia in the 1730s who recited incantations in Ukrainian or in Polish and prescribed magical charms based on the healing attributes of herbs.

Practicing Kabbalists as well as their clientele—who ranged from Ukrainian peasants to wealthy Jews to Polish nobles—believed that a piece of rope from the scaffold of a hanged man, dried animal bones, or a rabbit's or raven's brain could be used as a charm for healing or protective purposes. While some Jews mistrusted and ridiculed the Kabbalists, the Jews who revered them placed Kabbalistic amulets on the walls of their homes or carried them on their person when traveling to a distant marketplace. Jews and Gentiles in Ukraine not only shared an interest in magic, they both sought the help of the same Jewish religious figure—the Kabbalist before the 1780s and after that time the Hasidic master (*tsadik*)—in an effort to ensure the well-being of themselves and their loved ones.

Many, but not all, Jews believed in the afterlife, the transmigration of souls, and the *zkhus avos* (Heb.: *zkhut avot*; merits of the forefathers). In case of an approaching calamity—termed a *gzeyre* (Heb.: *gzerah*), or "divine decree"—Jews beseeched God to cancel the decree by putting a note into the hand of a recently deceased person. They expected the note to reach the Almighty soon after. They also imposed a communal fast, as the biblical Esther had done during the Persian exile, so that perhaps such an act of piety would prevent the disaster. Jews also went to cemeteries to blow the ram's horn and ask their forefathers to intercede on their behalf before the Almighty.

From the seventeenth century, Kabbalistic beliefs found their way into folk traditions, and the early Hasidic mystics who led an ascetic way of life were instrumental in canonizing those ideas. Jews came to believe that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet were invented even before creation. Hence, the alphabet itself contained a unique residue of the creative divine power, something that no other matter possessed and that could be used to help repair the world. If someone was in agony on his or her deathbed, those gathered around read aloud certain lines from the Babylonian Talmud (*Mishnah Mikvaot*), the first letters of which formed the Hebrew word *neshamah*, the soul. Both readers and listeners believed that this reading could help the soul of the suffering person to leave the body peacefully.

The Hasidic masters (*tsadikim*) capitalized on these beliefs, suggesting that Jews should come to *them* in quest of miracles, learning, and mystical insight. Hasidic folklore from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is filled with hundreds of cases of *tsadikim* curing the sick, the mad, and the barren; creating opportunities for their needy followers; influencing powerful bureaucrats among Russian state officials; and, sometimes, even cancelling evil decrees such as blood libel accusations.

The tsarist regime often labeled Hasidic beliefs and practices as irrational, backward, and harmful, and then used rationalistic arguments of the Enlightenment as a justification to suppress them. For

101. *Jews Praying in the Synagogue on Yom Kippur* (1878), painting by the Polish-Jewish artist Maurycy Gottlieb.

102. Tomb of the father of Rabbi Naftali Tsevi of Ropshits, forefather of several western Ukrainian Hasidic dynasties, a place of pilgrimage by Hasidic Jews who leave notes with personal requests (*kvitlekh*). Jewish cemetery in Lesko, Poland.

their part, Jewish enlightened reformers (*maskilim*) praised the anti-mystical and rationalistic approach of the tsarist authorities, viewing it positively as part of their own struggle against the influence of the Hasidic *tsadikim* upon the gullible and uneducated Jewish masses. The regime did not realize that Hasidic practices reflected the deeply embedded beliefs of hundreds of thousands of Jews (and non-Jews alike), who, far from being mystics, simply shared these beliefs as part of their cultural universe.

Because of the deeply embedded nature of mystical ideas among Jews in Russian-ruled Ukraine, the persecution of Hasidic masters had the opposite of its intended effect. Jews considered the masters as intercessors before the Almighty, as healers, as spiritual leaders, and as the living embodiment of the Jerusalem Temple. Now the Hasidic masters also came to be seen as martyrs suffering at the hands of an evil Russian imperial regime, thus gaining for

themselves an enormous popular following. As for government-imposed restrictions on travel, these prompted the evolution of another phenomenon: pompous and luxurious Hasidic courts not only in Ukrainian towns of the Russian Empire, such as Chornobyl, Ruzhyn, Skvyra, Talno, and Makariv in Kiev province, but also in the relatively more tolerant Austrian Empire, such as Chortkiv in Galicia and Sadhora in Bukovina. The Hasidic courts in these and other places became centers of popular spirituality and mass pilgrimage.

Hence, the beliefs and practices that the tsarist Russian regime attempted to suppress moved from the periphery to the epicenter of Jewish traditional life. Hasidic piety became an inseparable part of the rising Orthodoxy and mystical spirituality that permeated the minds of traditional Jews, even if they were not Hasidim. For example, the anniversary of the death of someone's parents,

known as the *yartzayt*, had traditionally been a day of fasting, sadness, and introspection. The Hasidim, on the other hand, argued that the human soul joined and created a new level of unity with the Soul of the Almighty. Clearly, there was no place for sadness and affliction of one's soul. Hence, the Hasidim turned fasting into feasting: a person with a *yartzayt* would now bring something tasty for his fellow congregants to eat and drink after prayers.

When, early in the twentieth century, the German philosopher Martin Buber sought to prove that Jews were regular European people with their own rich folklore, he turned precisely to the beliefs, customs, and practices of eastern European Jews that were marvelously captured by and preserved in Hasidic folklore. Many of the beliefs and customs that he collected in a two-volume compilation, *Ohr ha-ganuz* (The Hidden Light), found their way into the famous Jewish drama *The Dybbuk*, written in Ukraine by the Yiddish- and Russian-language writer S. An-sky (Shloyme Zanvl Rapoport).

As among ethnic Ukrainians, traditional Jewish culture was built around sacred time, although for Jews the separation between secular and holy time was more pronounced. The most obvious example is the Sabbath (Heb.: *shabbat*; Yid.: *shabes*). It starts on Friday with the lighting and blessing of the candles before sunset, a ritual that signals the arrival of the sanctified time of Sabbath. The Sabbath ends on Saturday night roughly an hour after sunset, the moment when three stars can be seen in the night sky

103. *Lighting Shabbat Candles* (1990s), painting by Jacob Rothman.

and when the ritual *havdalah* (separating) blessing is recited over a multi-wick candle, a container of spices, and a cup of wine. From then on, sacred time ends and the secular begins.

For observant Jews, the approximately twenty-five hours of the Sabbath is a utopian island of peace, rest, joy, and harmony in the otherwise rough and stormy ocean of secular time with its everyday vicissitudes and daily turmoil. In essence, the Sabbath is an opportunity to look at and evaluate one's deeds from the perspective of eternity. It is like a period at the end of a sentence, without which the sentence would not make sense. In sixteenth- to nineteenth-century Ukraine, traditional Ashkenazi Jews ate three meals (with *challah* bread) during the Sabbath which were known as the *seudos*. A Jew said the blessing over grape juice or wine, a ritual known as the wine sanctification, pronounced twice on the Sabbath. It was this ritual that inspired the act of communion among Christians and the idea of transubstantiation of bread and wine into the salvific body and the blood of Jesus.

On Saturday morning Jews hear a reading of one of the fifty-four portions of the Torah (Pentateuch) parchment scroll in the synagogue, listen to a sermon by a preacher or a rabbi, engage in group study of commentaries to Judaic sacred texts and legal and ethical works, and then spend time with family and children. Since the Sabbath is sacred time, traditional Judaism prohibits all work-related and secular activities—driving a car, switching lights off and on, watching television, using a computer or a telephone, shopping and preparing food (which has to be fully ready before Friday night), and even talking about money and future plans. Talking about mundane things and making plans does not really help one to participate, as one should think one is doing, in fostering the coming of Messiah! If, however, there is a threat to human life, all prohibitions are lifted, because saving a life is more important than observing the Sabbath.

As the Sabbath creates a rhythm for the week, so do holidays shape the year. Judaic holidays re-enact the most important moments in Jewish history. Combining solar and lunar cycles, the Judaic calendar starts on the first day of the month of Tishrei,

104. Placing a coin into the *tzedakah* (philanthropy) box.

usually in September, with the *rosh ha-shanah* (New Year). During this two-day holiday, Jews acknowledge God as their absolute monarch and supreme judge, hoping that in recompense He will mercifully evaluate their doings. The short and then prolonged sounds of the *shofar*, the ram's horn, remind Jews of the binding of Isaac, the revelation of God on Mount Sinai, and the necessity to repent before the judge to achieve redemption. As God had mercy on Isaac, may He also be merciful toward a praying Jew!

This intense holiday of introspection is followed by ten days of repentance culminating in Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), a twenty-six-hour-long dry fast. The tradition allows the congregation to pray with the most wanton sinners who attend services, purifying themselves as a community and asking for forgiveness for all sins, misdeeds, and violations of the divine law committed over the past year. The tradition also requires that in case of a sin committed against another person, forgiveness should be sought directly from that person. Jews believe that "prayer, philanthropy, and repentance" properly performed can cancel the divine decree and guarantee forgiveness, hence life.

Once Yom Kippur is over and one's fate for the coming year is sealed, one should not think that one is entirely forgiven and metaphysically protected. Four days later, Sukkot (*kushchi* in Eastern Christian tradition) begins. This is a seven-day-long celebration (eight among diasporan Jews), during which male Jews are required to eat, study, and sleep in a hand-made booth with shaky walls and a straw roof symbolizing that only the Almighty protects the Jews, not a tiled roof and brick walls.

On these days, Jews go to the synagogue with four species of plant in hand, including a palm branch. They wave the plants and sing solemn hymns (among them *Hoshanah*—save us!), as they did, the Gospels claim, on that celebratory day when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem. This celebration emphasizes not only (one hopes) the successful results of the agricultural year, but also the volatile situation of the Jews in the desert where they lived in booth-like shacks on their way from Egypt to the Holy Land. Sukkot ends with the *Simchat Torah* (Yid.: *Simkhes toyre*) festivities, a joyous celebration concluding the annual cycle of the Torah scroll reading. Jews dance with the Torah scrolls in the synagogues as if they, the Jewish people, represent a groom and the Torah is the bride to which they are now again happily wedded. Once the reading is finished, the congregation immediately opens the Torah to the beginning and starts reading again. Learning and reading are ultimately an uninterrupted process.

There are several holidays during which work is permitted. On Kislev 25 (in late November or December), Jews celebrate Hanukah. This is the holiday of lights, which commemorates the military victory of the Maccabees over the assimilationist Hellenizers in 164 BCE. The victory resulted in the purification and rededication of the Second Temple. On this day the eight-branch candelabra (*hanukiyah*) with its olive oil and wicks or candles is placed in one's window to show to the world the miracle that happened to the Jews on that day. In the synagogue, Jews read an excerpt from the Torah about the Temple's seven-branch candelabra. At home, families eat deep-fried donuts, play with a four-sided spinning top called a *dreidl*, and give sweets and money (Yid.: *Hanukah gelt*) to children, who re-enact in theatric-

al-like performances the battles of the Maccabees for the preservation of Judaic tradition.

While Hanukah commemorates spiritual redemption, the next holiday, Purim (in late February or in March), signifies physical redemption. Purim is built around the reading of the biblical Book of Esther, which relates the story of persecution of Jews in the Persian diaspora, the concealed presence of God in the unfolding events, and the leading role played by Queen Esther in saving the Jewish people from total destruction. On that day, Jews hold a festive dinner, send food and gifts to friends, and distribute food among the poor. Jews also engage in comical plays usually performed by children about the events related in the Book of Esther that also include references to the current-day political situation.

One month later, on Nissan 14, is Passover (Easter among Christians), a holiday of national redemption marking the time when God brought the Jews out of Egypt. This holiday requires cleaning the entire house of all leavened bread and products, which are forbidden for the next seven (in diaspora, eight)

days of the holiday. Instead, Jews consume *matzo* made of unleavened flour, symbolizing the bread of affliction and redemption. The focus on Passover is reading portions of the Book of Exodus in the synagogue and the *Haggadah* (literally: story), a compilation of rabbinic origin. Telling the story of national redemption is part of a family-based ritual that happens around a lavishly set table. A special Passover plate lies at the center of the table with various types of food that symbolize Jewish suffering in Egypt and the redemptive Passover offering through which the Jews freed themselves from bondage. Family members participate in singing Passover songs and telling stories derived from the *Haggadah*, underscoring the collective nature of the redemptive process.

Fifty days after Passover, that is, after coming out of Egypt (1314 BCE, according to some rabbinical calculations), Jews celebrate Shavuot (Pentecost among Christians). This is the day when God gave Jews the Tablets with the Ten Commandments (Heb.: *lukhot*; Yid.: *lukhos*), traditionally considered the basis for the entire Oral and Written Law, or the Torah broadly

105. East European Jewish children in Purim costumes. Photo, 1939.
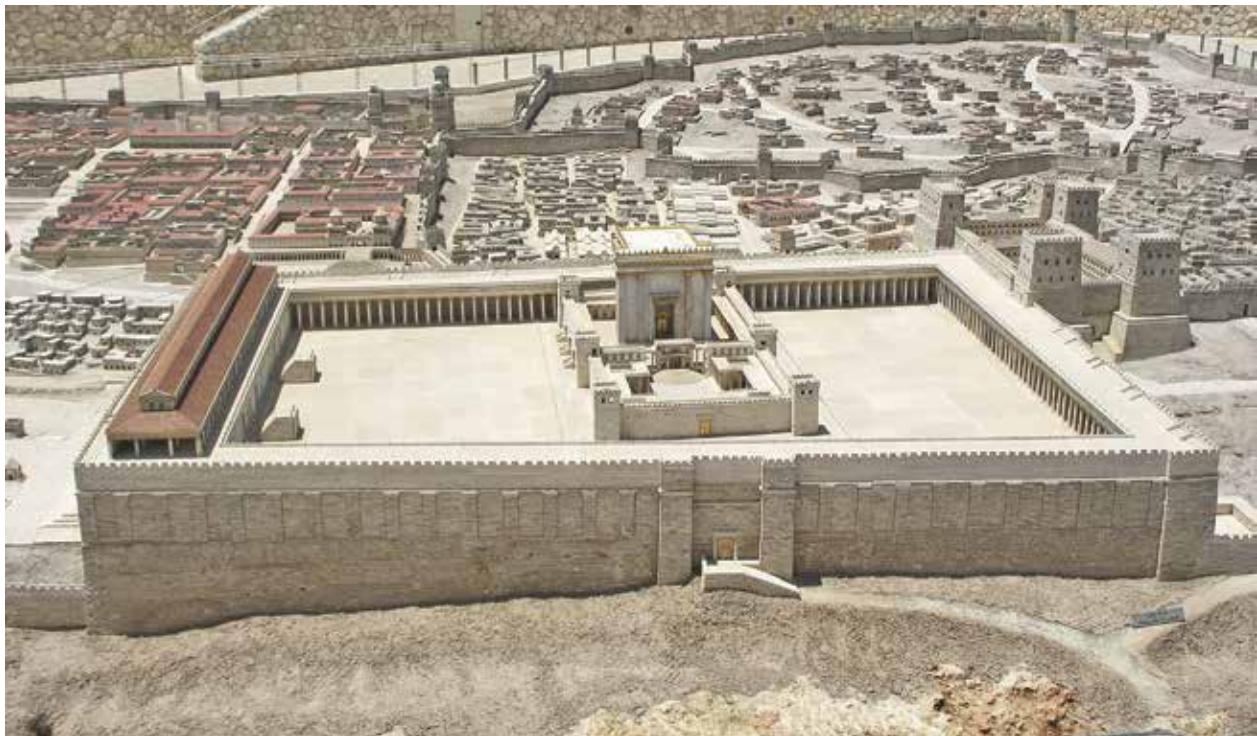
106. Replica of the Second Temple. Israeli Museum, Jerusalem. Photo, 2008.

conceived. On the eve of Shavuot, some Jewish men begin by studying Judaic texts and continue through the night. In the morning during synagogue services they read excerpts of the Torah relating God's revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai. On that day (two days in the diaspora), Jews eat dairy products, which symbolize the nurturing relations between the Torah and the Jewish people. Together with Sukkot and Pesakh, Shavuot was in antiquity one of the three holidays of pilgrimage, when male Jews were obligated to travel to Jerusalem and go to the Temple where, they believed, God dwelled.

In addition to the holidays with dramatic meanings, there are also very tragic days marked by fasts. For example, full dry fasts of the Seventeenth of Tammuz and the Ninth of Av commemorate respectively the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Second Temple by the Roman armies in 69–70 CE. The second fast is the most tragic day of the Jewish calendar, marked by a reading of the biblical Lamentation of Jeremiah (*Megilat Eikha*) and the recitation of lengthy medieval dirges (*kinnot*).

Jewish traditional culture, like that of ethnic Ukrainians, also contains life-cycle celebrations.

The most important of these are: (1) circumcision or *brit milah* (replaced by Jesus' Epiphany among Christians), usually performed in the synagogue on the eighth day after the birth of a baby boy and followed by a festive meal; and (2) the *bar mitzvah,* when a Jewish boy becomes an adult and has to recite a portion of the Torah scroll. In the twentieth century, with the rise of liberal movements in Judaism, the celebration of the *bat mitzvah* (girl's confirmation) is performed in a similar fashion in non-Orthodox Jewish communities.

The wedding (Heb.: *hatunah*, Yid.: *hasene*) is the pinnacle of joyous celebration in Judaism. A new Jewish couple is considered a self-contained "house," a vessel of a tradition in which the wife is the pillar. The wedding ritual proves that for Jews there can never be excessive or unrestricted joy. In the midst of this communal and family celebration, the groom breaks a glass under the wedding canopy in commemoration of the destroyed Temple which the new family, through its good deeds and performance of the commandments, will attempt to rebuild.

Death and funerals (*levayah*) are the most tragic moments in the life cycle. Jews make a considerable effort to bury their dead by the beginning of the next

day. Funerals are followed by seven days of morning or *shivah*, during which the closest relatives spend time together in the house of the deceased. They do not attend synagogue but instead participate in communal home-based prayer. Most important, the son of the deceased starts reciting daily, for several months, the Aramaic mourners' prayer or *kaddish*, which sanctifies God's name and helps the next generation connect to the memory of the deceased.

The celebration of traditional holidays differs among different Jewish religious orientations. For example, Orthodox Jews of all denominations—Mizrahi, Modern Orthodox, Sephardim, Litvak (Heb.: *Mitnagdim*; Yid.: *Misnagdim*), and Hasidim—are particularly strict regarding the Sabbath and holiday observance. In rather stark contrast, Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Egalitarian, and Progressive Jews follow a wide range of innovative patterns of observance. Some drive to synagogue on the Sabbath; recite prayers on the Day of Atonement to the accompaniment of an electronic organ; abandon the dietary laws; and celebrate only one day of the main holidays. Others may observe some dietary laws but do not follow the rabbinic authorities as far as holiday restrictions are concerned. This multiplicity of seemingly incompatible Judaisms generated a joke in which a Jew who found himself on a desert island prays to God asking for only one thing to be built for him there: two synagogues. But why do you need two synagogues on an uninhabited island, wonders the Almighty. You do not understand, responds the Jew: I will pray in one, but the other I won't set foot in!

Politics and traditional culture

In most societies, the so-called modernization processes of industrialization and urbanization have resulted in the gradual undermining and eventual disappearance of cottage-industry handicrafts, home-made products for individual consumption, and many rites, customs, and beliefs associated primarily with rural life. In the case of Ukraine, these natural evolutionary changes were at times accelerated by the intervention of the state. Such intervention could be passive or active.

For example, in those countries where ethnic Ukrainians lived but which functioned according to the Western calendar, traditional old-calendar religious and secular rites and traditions were under pressure to adapt to the norms of the larger society. This applied, for instance, to the western Ukrainian province of Galicia, ruled during the interwar years by Roman Catholic Poland, and to ethnic-Ukrainian diaspora communities in North America, South America, and most European countries. Whereas ethnic Ukrainian rural dwellers in those countries were "left to do things the way they always did," it became increasingly difficult for urban dwellers to get off work, for example, on Eastern Christmas (6 and 7 January), which are otherwise normal work

107. "The Struggle Against Religion is a Struggle For Socialism," Soviet anti-religion propaganda poster, 1930s.

days for the rest of society which already finished its Christmas holiday two weeks earlier. At the very least, the length of traditional holidays in diaspora communities would have to be curtailed to one day. This new reality applied not only to diaspora Ukrainians but to Jews as well. For instance, some Eastern-rite churches resolved for practical reasons to adopt the Western calendar, while all Reform synagogues reduced Jewish holidays to a one-day celebration.

More active intervention—one might say assault—on traditional culture was carried out by the authorities in Soviet Ukraine. The Soviet state was governed by the materialistic ideology of atheism; its basic goal was to build a new society inhabited by Soviet men and women who, the authorities and

their ideologues argued, would be liberated from the allegedly backward world outlook and spiritual heritage of the past. In keeping with these principles and goals, the state was opposed to religion and all other superstitions, whether or not they had any relationship with Christianity or Judaism.

Christian religious holidays were simply banned and turned into workdays, like any others. Processions and religious manifestations in public—all of which had become an integral element in ethnic Ukrainian traditional culture—were also banned. In their stead, new holidays commemorating events in recent Soviet history or the birthdays of important leaders, in particular Lenin and Stalin, were instituted. Other existing holidays were enhanced, and given a purely secular look, in particular 1 January, with its New Year's tree in place of a Christmas tree and honour given to Father Frost (*Did Moroz*) instead of to baby Jesus. In the end, Soviet holidays were not all that new, since traditional forms of celebration—veneration of iconic images of Communist leaders, excessive eating and drinking parties, collective singing—remained firmly in place although bereft of Christian symbolism.

Customs and rites surrounding the three basic phases of the life cycle were also undermined. Baptism was considered undesirable, especially for children of Communist party members and for anyone who hoped to function and rise through the ranks of the Soviet administration and of state-owned workplaces. It was not uncommon for the traditionally minded to baptize their newborn offspring in secret, usually in a neighboring village or town where no one knew them, and certainly without the elaborate celebratory and festive events that were typical of pre-Soviet times. The Soviet regime tried to reduce the lure of church marriage ceremonies by enhancing the settings of state-sponsored civil-marriage registry offices. These efforts proved unsatisfactory, so that eventually traditional folk wedding customs were revived and performed either before or after the civil ceremony, although without any noticeable religious elements. Finally, funerals were celebrated in communal halls, often without any religious figure present, while frequently the bodies of former Communists and other functionaries of the system were cremated, a practice generally frowned upon by the church as pagan and atavistic.
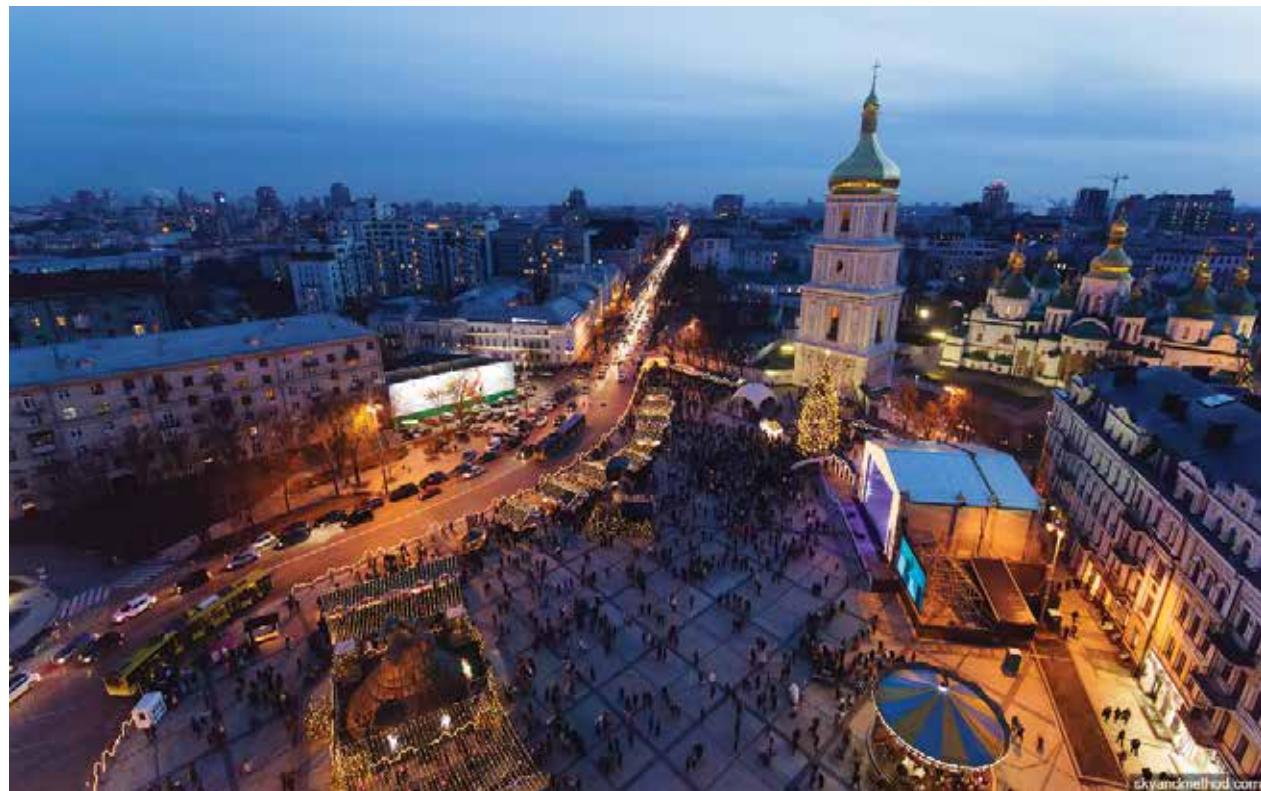
108. The Sofiivska Square, Kyiv, decorated for the Christmas season. Photo, 2010.

The Soviet regime was particularly set on destroying entrenched traditional cultural values in the western lands it annexed to Ukraine at the close of World War II. Aside from implementing the changes noted above, it abolished entirely the Greek Catholic Church in Galicia (1946) and Transcarpathia (1949). This proved to be an important step in eliminating an institution that not only was a carrier of religious values but also had come to be associated with traditional Ukrainian cultural and national ideals that needed to be purged before the new Soviet man and woman could come into being.

During the late 1980s, and certainly since the establishment of a post-Communist independent Ukrainian state, many aspects of traditional ethnic Ukrainian culture, both Christian and non-Christian, have been revived. The main Christian celebrations—Christmas and Easter—have been restored as state holidays, each lasting more than one day. As paid holidays, Ukraine's citizens at the very least welcome the return of Christmas (with New Year's soon after) and Easter as mid-winter and spring mini-vacations.

Another reason for the successful revival of traditional rites and customs is the fact that they are considered to be a mark of ethnic Ukrainian patriotism and pride on the part of those who partake in them. Since, however, the majority of ethnic Ukrainians now live in urban areas, the rites and customs are divorced from their function in the original rural agricultural setting. Instead, they take on aspects of a somewhat superficial performance exercise linked to a nostalgic longing for a no longer existing, but imagined as genuine, Ukrainian past.

Jewish traditional culture also underwent a significant transformation once Ukrainian lands came under Soviet rule. By the end of the 1920s, the authorities had shut down hundreds of synagogues, then reopened them as socialist Yiddish youth clubs or sports centers, and eventually shut those secular Jewish centers as well. For example, the synagogue in Sharhorod was used as a warehouse for wine and juice containers, while the synagogues in Uman, Hulyaipole, and Kyiv (the Brodsky synagogue) became, respectively, a mechanical shop for a tractor garage, a local hospital, and a puppet-theater. Many others were either levelled

109. Large-scale industrial crane being used to light Hanukah candles in Kyiv's city center. Photo, December 2012.

or entirely rebuilt for more mundane purposes. All synagogue property was confiscated and the proceeds (like the silver and gold from Christian churches) were sent to the West in exchange for hard currency to fund Soviet collectivization and industrialization programs. Hundreds of Torah scrolls were also confiscated, although not destroyed, and placed under lock and key at various archival depositories.

Those Jewish religious communities that remained were forced to operate under the strict supervision of Soviet state security. Religious communities not authorized by the state were abolished, since they were viewed as attempts to spread religious propaganda, conserve bourgeois-nationalist ideology, and therefore undermine the socialist ideals of Soviet society. Judaism survived underground only in the form of some rudimentary family traditions, such as fasting on Yom Kippur, eating *matzo* on Passover, giving money to children on Hanukah, and, most important of all, cooking traditional Jewish foods—although with non-kosher ingredients. By the second half of the twentieth century, there was only one official *matzo* bakery for all 500,000 Jews of Ukraine. Moreover, the local authorities in Kyiv made sure they had copies of the lists of Jews who requested *matzo*. When, out of curiosity, two Kyiv-based journalists decided to purchase some *matzo* early in the 1960s, both of them (one an ethnic Ukrainian, the other a Jew) lost their jobs. Despite such restrictions, there were still several butchers (*shokhtim*) preparing kosher meat

as late as the 1970s, well before the religious revival of the post-1985 Gorbachev period.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Jews of Ukraine experienced a revival of traditional culture. In a sense, the revival was really more of a reinvention, since most rituals during seventy years of the Soviet regime had been suppressed and the meaning of the rituals lost. Until then, only the most dedicated Jews—quite often, women—went to a synagogue for Yom Kippur prayers. They did so while being well aware that their attendance was under secret police surveillance and could have negative ramifications on their careers. Nowadays, in post-Communist Ukraine, several dozen newly established communities help young and old to rediscover the meaning of Jewish traditions and collectively participate in and learn about observing religious rituals. Public celebrations of Hanukah, Purim, and Passover in cultural centers outside of synagogues attract media, professional actors, and pop-culture performers. As a result, Jewish tradition has become much more visible on Ukraine's cultural scene and is now an essential element in the formation of a new generation of Ukrainian Jews.

CHAPTER 5
Religion

Ethnic Ukrainians, like most peoples in Europe, were originally pagans. Their early belief system was similar to that of other Slavs and reflected the concerns of people who depended on agricultural crops and domestic livestock (especially cattle) for their survival. In response to their fear before the mysteries of nature, Slavs believed in divinities found in the clouds and on earth, whether in forests and rivers or closer to home in their own fields and stables. Among the major gods were those, it was believed, who represented and controlled the forces of nature, in particular storms and thunder (*Perun*), the sun (*Dazhboh*), fire (*Svarih*), and cattle (*Veles*). There were, as well, minor gods or demonological figures, believed to guard the household and inhabit forests, fields, or bodies of water and whose potential anger needed to be assuaged.

Although a few statues and sacrificial sites to the major pagan gods were erected (especially in Kyiv), for the most part the early Slavic religion was of a more personal nature. This allowed the individual to have what was believed to be direct communication with the sacred deities and not have to depend on diviners, priest-like figures, or any other intercessors.

Christianity

All this began to change in the late tenth century, when the ruler of Kievan Rus', Grand Prince Volodymyr/Vladimir ("the Great," r. 980–1015), decided to adopt for his realm a more advanced reli-

gion. As later medieval chronicles report, Volodymyr allegedly researched the religions which were dominant at the time in neighboring states: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity according to both its Western (Roman Catholic) and Eastern (Orthodox) variants.

110. Monument to grand prince Volodymyr I ("the Great," r. 980-1015) in Kyiv, designed by Petro Klodt and Vasyl Demut-Malynovskyi, 1853.

As legend has it, Orthodox Eastern-rite Christianity, as practiced in the Byzantine Empire, won the day. Actually, Christianity had reached Ukrainian lands even earlier, with adherents and churches in Crimea dating from the sixth century and in far western Transcarpathia and Galicia from the ninth and early tenth centuries. Volodymyr's conversion, however, is the act that has been hailed ever since as the definitive Christianization of Rus', even though it took several more centuries before that religion took firm root among all the inhabitants of Kievan Rus'.

Given that Christianity was imposed from above by the secular ruling authorities, the ancestors of modern-day ethnic Ukrainians and other East Slavs were expected to forget their multifarious pagan gods and adopt the idea of one omnipotent God who created the earth and everything upon it. Christianity derived from the monotheistic world of Judaism, with its belief in one God and the expectation of a Messiah whom God would send to save humankind from its sins. Christians not only revered the Jewish prophets, who predicted the coming of the Messiah, they believed that the Messiah had actually come in the person of Jesus Christ, a Jewish prophet from Palestine born sometime around the year one of the Common Era (ca. 3758–60 according to the Jewish calendar).

Christians parted company with the Jews. Or, put another way, some Jews who believed that Jesus was the Messiah became followers of Christ (Christians) after his death by crucifixion about 30 CE. These early Judeo-Christians, who initially retained their Jewish identity and maintained Judaic rituals, formulated the basic precepts of Christian belief: that Christ was raised from the dead and that he resides for eternity with God in heaven until the Day of Judgment, when he will return to resurrect from the dead all those who truly believed in Him during their earthly lives. While pagan gods might protect a person from the dangers of daily existence on earth, the Christian message promised salvation and everlasting life after one's death. By the fifth century, the established Christian church forbade its adherents from following Judaic rites such as circumcision and observance of the Sabbath (moving the holy day to Sunday), and it proclaimed that only

a belief in Jesus as the Christ (Savior) secured one's final salvation.

Volodymyr's act of personal conversion and proclamation of Eastern Christianity as the official religion of his realm sometime around 988 has been celebrated in subsequent centuries by all peoples who claim cultural descent from Kievan Rus', namely, modern-day Russians and Belarusans as well as Ukrainians. Already during medieval Kievan Rus', there developed a gradual fusion of identities, whereby an inhabitant of the Rus' land and Orthodox Christianity came to mean the same thing. In more modern times, a popular assumption arose that one could not be of Ukrainian, or Belarusan, or Russian nationality unless one were an Eastern-rite Christian. Because of his seminal role in bringing Christianity to the East Slavs and initiating the merger of religious and national identities, Kiev's late tenth-century grand prince was canonized (raised tenth to sainthood) by the Orthodox Church and is venerated to this day by Ukrainians, Belarusans, and Russians as "their own" St Volodymyr/Vladimir.

Judaism

The Jews emerged as a monotheistic people whose religion, Judaism, was based on the belief in a one, absolutely sovereign God—an invisible and incor-

111. Rabbi Shlomo Wilhelm of Zhytomyr prepares the damaged fragments of Torah scrolls for burial. Photo, 2009.

poreal divine being that created the world, revealed Himself through Abraham to the Jews, redeemed them from Egyptian bondage, and singled them out among other nations as His chosen people. The mutual agreement and dependence of the Jews on their God was reflected in the first five books (Pentateuch) of the Bible, known as the Torah. These, together with two other books, the Prophets (*Neviim*) and Writings (*Ktuvim*), formed the Hebrew Bible. The Torah lies at the center of the Jewish tradition, a complex system of prescribed beliefs and established practices derived as much from texts (the "written" Torah) as from customs and rites (the "oral" Torah). In a word, the "oral" Torah can be seen as an extended commentary on the written Torah, in which the commentator is either an individual Jew or a Jewish community whose way of life is itself a form of a commentary. Subsequently, the "oral" Torah, that is, the ways of doing things in a Jewish manner, was also written down. It took the form of the Mishnah (2nd –3rd century CE) and a commentary on it known as the Gemarah (3rd–7th century CE). The Mishnah and Gemarah together form the Talmud, which by the eighth century CE became a canonical (sealed and classical) book.

Rooted in Abrahamic rituals and beliefs, the Oral Torah has changed with the evolution of the Jewish people, manifesting itself in rabbinic writings, commentaries on the sacred texts, Midrash liturgical compositions (rabbinic narratives or tales), legal sources, rabbinic responsa, and many other written forms. While the written Torah is a reflection of only one part of the vast Oral Torah tradition, the latter is a way of life and thinking for which the written Torah serves a blueprint. Jews can be seen as the People of the Book in the sense that they view and interpret their holy writ through the prism of customs and beliefs of the Oral Torah, a fluid and heterogeneous commentary on the key written text of the Judaic tradition.

Jewish beliefs may have been drawn from various heterogeneous customs, but they had one aspect in common: the conviction that redemption could be achieved communally if the Jews follow the 613 divine commandments of the Oral Torah. In other words, redemption is achieved through practice, through what the Jews do. Belief, therefore, is rath-

112. Babylonian Talmud. Tractate *Zevahim* (Offerings, Slavuta 1821).

er secondary. Since the commandments protected everyday Jewish life, the entire spectrum of Jewish beliefs focused primarily on this world, not on the afterlife. While Jews did make references to the world to come, to utopian messianic times, and to the sufferings of sinners and joyous life of the righteous in the other world, these beliefs were neither canonized nor obligatory.

The Talmud invoked a famous verse from the Psalms, "the dead ones will not praise You," in order to underscore that it was up to the living to perform acts of loving kindness and elevate the glory of the Divine Name. Thus, Jews had no elaborate vision of the afterlife, no sophisticated tripartite conceptualization of paradise, purgatory, and hell like the Catholics, and no dual netherworld of paradise and hell like the Eastern Orthodox. The Jews knew that *gehinnom* (a place where the wicked are punished after death) existed, and some also believed that they had to wait about twenty years to get there after they died, but what it was and how rewards and punishments were distributed remained unclear. For centuries,

rabbinic scholars reiterated the view that knowledge of what happened in *gehinnom* was unnecessary. In short, Jews should be concerned about what they did in this life. The rest was commentary.

The European version of traditional Judaism, called Ashkenazic Judaism, reflected the above principles based on practice rather than on an all-encompassing theological system. The beliefs of eastern and central European Jews were rooted in everyday life, with religious practices stemming from the 613 commandments of the Oral Torah tradition. Some of these commandments became obsolete following the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE, while others made sense only in the land of Israel or during the messianic era. As for the rest, about two hundred, they remained a requirement for every Jew.

These obligatory two hundred or so commandments regulate the theological relationship of the individual with God, as well as the social relations between humans. They include the Decalogue (Ten Commandments); the laws of the Sabbath and festivals; ritual observance and worship at home and in the synagogue; family law (including regulations of marriage and divorce); the dietary regulations concerning the preparation and consumption of food (including the requirement to use only ritually slaughtered kosher animals); ritual purity in sexual relations (including a prohibition against intimacy during a female's menstruation); civil law (property and transactions, including Jewish-Christian relations in business and the responsibility of a keeper of someone else's property); criminal law; and the general requirement not only to live according to the laws of Judaism but also to study them to prepare oneself for the coming of the Messiah (who, for Jews, has not yet come).

Organizational structures

Following the Byzantine model, the Orthodox Church was closely associated with, and in many ways subordinate to, the state. Hence, Volodymyr/Vladimir and his successors, especially Grand Prince Yaroslav ("the Wise," r. 1036–54), took the lead in creating a highly structured church organization. Eventually, all of Kievan Rus' was divided

113. Filaret (Denysenko b. 1929), Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus' Ukraine, promoter of Ukrainianism among Orthodox Christians in present-day Ukraine.

into eparchies (the Eastern equivalent of dioceses), administrative units each headed by a bishop.

The entire eparchial structure was headed by a metropolitan (the Eastern equivalent of archbishop), who was considered the highest religious authority in Kievan Rus'. The seat of the metropolitan carried great symbolic value, which initially was the city of Kyiv, the political, economic, and cultural center of Kievan Rus'. Within each eparchy, religious communities (parishes) were served by priests (males only), who were responsible to the bishop of the eparchy in which the community was located. The Eastern Church also developed religious communities comprised of either males (monks) or females (nuns), who resided in monasteries or convents. In contrast to priests who served individual communities, members of monastic orders lived in closed communities whose main goal was a life of prayer (contemplation) and service on behalf of the church (production of church garments and other ritual items, copying and later printing religious texts, etc.).

Priests as spiritual and civic figures

The clergy, whether priests, monks, or nuns, were generally held in high esteem by both believing and nominal Eastern Christians. The reason for this was twofold: not only were they doing "God's work," they were the only instrument through which an individual could commune with God through His Son and humankind's savior, Jesus Christ. Access to that divine world was through a religious rite known as the holy liturgy, whose supreme moment was communion—the partaking of bread and wine which not only symbolized but that was believed to be miraculously transformed into the body and blood of the crucified savior. Only a sanctified Orthodox Eastern-rite clergyman had the authority to grant a believer communion during the holy liturgy, as well as to conduct other sacred rituals connected with the human life cycle: baptism after the birth of a child;

marriage; and the last rites at a funeral after death.

Aside from their monopoly in sacred matters, Ukraine's Eastern Christian clergy often influenced their flock's relationship to the secular world in which they lived. At times that influence had negative repercussions, especially with regard to non-Christian neighbors such as Jews. For example, the widespread view throughout Christian Europe that Jews were responsible for the murder of Christ was a message that often entered the homilies and sermons of Ukraine's clergy. Such allusions may have encouraged spontaneous acts of violence against Jews, especially during the Easter season.

Somewhat more positive was the Eastern Christian clergy's position regarding the national language and identity of their flock. Here, however, the role of the Church was mixed, even contradictory. Some clergy, especially among the Orthodox in the Russian Empire, were very prominent in promot-

114. Ukrainian-language school chorus with their teacher; three of the girls (not in embroidered dress) are Jewish. Village of Mshanets, former Polish-ruled Galicia. Photo, 1930s.

ing the idea that Ukrainians (in their terminology "Little Russians") were part of the Russian nationality and should be educated in the Russian language. In fact, some of the leading proponents of the view that a Ukrainian language and nationality did not even exist came from the ranks of the Orthodox clergy, in particular several bishops who, while natives of Ukraine, were among the Russian Empire's leading Ukrainophobes.

On the other hand, in Habsburg-ruled Austria-Hungary, the Greek Catholic clergy in Galicia and to a lesser degree in Transcarpathia were known for their work in defense of a Ruthenian/Ukrainian identity. Some priests were among the group's leading national poets, writers, and scholars, while at the grass-roots level village priests and their wives often functioned as elementary school teachers who imbued in their students at an early age a lasting sense of Ukrainian patriotism. Perhaps the ultimate symbol of the intimate relationship between nationality and religion was Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi, who, as head of the Greek Catholic Church in Galicia during virtually the entire first half of the twentieth century, came to be considered a Moses-like patriarch of his Ukrainian flock. The dichotomy between pro-Ukrainian Greek Catholic and

116. Hasidic court (palace and residence) of the Chortkover Rebbe in Chortkiv, Austrian-ruled Galicia. Postcard, 1910s.

pro-Russian Orthodox (especially under the Moscow Patriarchate) clergy has continued at least until the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Rabbis as spiritual and social figures

Jewish tradition manifested itself in and was impossible beyond the Jewish community. That community took various forms depending on time, place, and other factors (economic, political, and demographic). From the fourteenth to early twentieth centuries in Ukrainian lands as well as throughout central and eastern Europe, the standard Jewish community called itself the *kehillah kedoshah*, or holy community.

Rabbis were among the most important communal figures. They acted as legal (*halakhic*) authorities, helping Jews decide everyday issues related to rites and rituals. Twice a year, on the eve of Passover and before the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the rabbi in a traditional pre-modern community gave a long sermon in the synagogue. The rabbi also officiated at wedding and funeral ceremonies, issued divorce documents, and acted as the local judge, who together with two assistants for civil and criminal law formed the rabbinic court (Heb.: *bet din*; Yid.: *bezdn*). In many cases, the rabbi also acted as a teaching authority for several students in his *yeshivah*, or Talmudic academy. Many famous rabbis studied in Ukraine's small Talmudic academies—before the 1800s with at most a half-dozen students each—in Ostroh, Brody, and Volodymyr-Volynskyi, among other places.

115. Rabbi Yehezkel Landau (1713-1793), prominent religious authority and chief rabbi of Prague who started his career in western Ukraine.

The rabbi was usually surrounded by other Jews, well educated but lacking rabbinic ordination, who belonged to the so-called secondary intelligentsia. While a community could function without a rabbi, it could not do so without this group of people. Within this group were: the *shoykhet* (butcher, responsible for the ritual slaughter of fowl and cattle); the *mohel* (in charge of circumcision); the *maggid* (preacher who gave weekly sermons in a synagogue); the *mokhiakh* (the so-called rebuker, a type of a preacher especially popular in eastern Europe, who chastised the community about its transgressions); the *soyfer* (scribe, responsible for the Torah and other sacred texts, and also for marriage [*ketubah*] and divorce [*get*] documents); and, finally, the least educated among them, the *melamed* (elementary school teacher). Because of their ongoing daily interaction with ordinary Jews, these representatives of the communal infrastructure had a much greater impact on the hearts and minds of the local Jews than did the rabbi.

Although the rabbi was an authority in Judaic law, he was not the head of the community. That role was played by the *kahal*, an umbrella organization comprised of the local mercantile elite comparable to a modern board of synagogue trustees, which hired a rabbi either for a certain term or permanently. The rabbi served on the board of the *kahal* and approved its decisions. Because the *kahal* was a secular institution modeled along the lines of a town council, the authoritative signature of a rabbi on a *kahal* document made it a binding communal regulation. Local *kahals* reported to the Council of Four Lands, the central organ of Jewish communal autonomy in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Many rabbis served as members, and because of their presence the Council attained the right to issue regulations that were binding for eastern European Jews at large. The abolition of the Council of Four Lands in 1764 created a power vacuum in Jewish life, which in Ukraine came to be filled by the religious revival movement—Hasidism.

The organizational structure of the Jewish community was permeated by the communal understanding of Judaic law. In their everyday behavior, Jews were not governed directly by the Torah or the

117. Reconstruction of a meeting of leaders of the Vaad Arba Aratsot (Council of Four Lands) in Lublin. Diaspora Museum, Tel Aviv.

Talmud. Rather, the laws in those texts were interpreted, explained, canonized, and brought together in the *halakhic* codices (from the word *halakhah*—"walking" according to the precepts of the law) by rabbinic scholars, who made them known to the community through sermons, communal practices, and published codices. Among the best-known of the *halakhic* codices, which first appeared under the influence of Muslim rationalism among Sephardic Jews, are the *Mishne Torah* authored by Maimonedes (Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, or the Rambam) and the sixteenth-century *Shulkhan Arukh* (A Set Table) compiled by Yosef Karo.

Interpreting the law and adapting it to specific cases was the rabbi's task. For example, what should a village tavern-keeper do to attend to his customers, when on the Sabbath he and his family were not allowed to work according to the precepts of Judaism? What were Jews to do when living in villages where there was no ritual bath? What should be done to a transgressor whose immoral behavior jeopardized the reputation of the entire Jewish community? Could a married Jewess (*agunah*), whose husband had gone to a distant marketplace and disappeared, remarry?

Rabbis in Ukraine treated these and other questions in the so-called responsa literature, or *SHU"T* (acronym of the Hebrew: *sheelot u-teshuvot*, questions and answers). Responding to questions from individuals and entire communities, the rabbis sent back answers that people would consider as binding as the laws of the Torah. Among rabbis who came to enjoy renown and influence both during and after their service to Jewish communities in Ukraine were Joel Syrkes of Medzhybizh (Mezhbizh), Yehezkel Landau of Yampol, and Josef Shaul Natanson of Lviv.

Jewish communities also had multiple *havurot*, grass-roots volunteer institutions responsible for the communal performance and reinforcement of certain commandments. The wealthiest and most influential among them was the Burial Society (*Hevrah kadishah*), responsible not only for proper burial according to Judaic ritual but also for the establishment of other voluntary societies in the community. Many societies, such as that of the Lutsk Tailors (*Hevrat hayatim*), brought together representatives

118. Title page of the *pinkas* (record book) at the Great Synagogue of Starokostyantyniv, Volhynia, early 19th century.

of a certain professional group, who would then care for their own needy, supervise a balanced distribution of commissions, and oust unwelcome competitors. In addition to professional societies, there were also philanthropic ones concerned with specific needs (Bread for Travelers, Dowries for Poor Girls, and Clothes for the Needy), economic development (Free Loan Society), education (Mishnah and Talmud Study Society), or liturgical functions (Psalms Readers). There were also groups of Jews who helped other communal organizations function properly: for example, book restorers (*Tikun sfarim*) and coffin-carriers (*Nosei ha-mitah*). Each society had its own statutes and a record book (*pinkas*) containing the proceedings minutes of the organization, the names of members, and other details. The *pinkas* was not only an important record of the internal structure of the society; its very existence as a book was believed to have a protective magic power.

Religious diversity among Ukrainians

As in other parts of Europe, the evolution of Christianity in Ukraine was characterized by internal dissension, which led to the formation of several different strains of belief, jurisdictional authority, and church bodies that often were antagonistically opposed to one another. Initially, there was one Christian Church that followed different rites and that had different supreme hierarchs: the Latin-language Roman-rite Catholic Church based in Rome under the pope; and the Greek-language Byzantine-rite Orthodox Church based in Constantinople under the ecumenical patriarch. Beginning in 1054 and culminating at the outset of the thirteenth century, these two branches of one Christian Church split into the Western Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. Ukrainian lands were—and remained within—the sphere of the Byzantine-rite Eastern Orthodox Church.

Orthodox and Uniate/Greek Catholics

When, in the second half of the sixteenth century, Ukrainian lands were part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth—an officially Roman Catholic state—active consideration was given to uniting the two major components of the Christian world. As it turned out, a church union encompassing the entire Orthodox and Catholic worlds was not achieved. Instead, only some Orthodox accepted the idea of union and, after 1596, became part of what was called the Uniate Church. Uniates did not consider themselves converts to Roman Catholicism. Rather, they thought they had returned from schism to the fold of the one universal Catholic Church in which they were allowed to maintain the basic beliefs and rituals they had as Orthodox: a liturgy that used Church Slavonic (instead of Latin as among Roman-rite Catholics); the possibility of married men being ordained as priests; maintenance of the "old" Julian

119. Cathedral Church of St. George (1744-1759) in Lviv, historic seat of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.
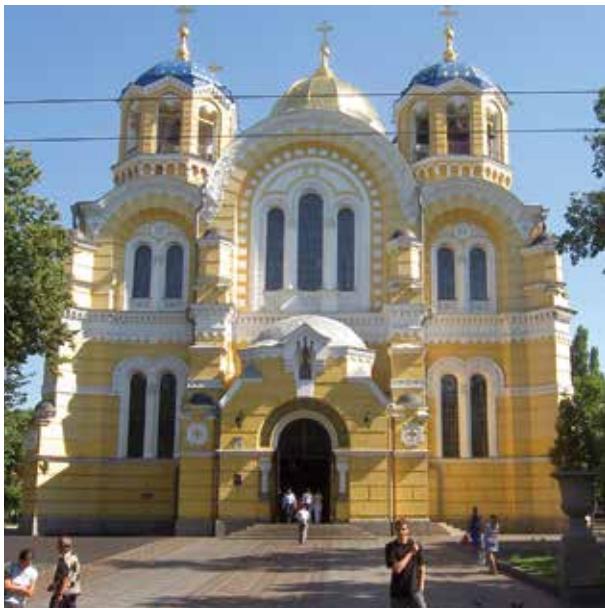
120. Cathedral Church of St. Volodymyr (1862-1882) in Kyiv, historic seat of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—Kyiv Patriarchate.

calendar (in which certain fixed feasts like Christmas were celebrated two weeks later than the new Western Gregorian standard); and several points of dogma and ritual that differed from the Roman-rite. In effect, Uniates were no different from the Orthodox except for one important point. The Uniates, like Roman Catholics, recognized the pope in Rome as head of the Church, while the Orthodox continued to recognize the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople as the head of their church, albeit a symbolic one.

The split between Uniates and Orthodox among ethnic Ukrainian Christians remains in place to this day both in the homeland and in the diaspora. The Uniates, who date from the late sixteenth century, were subsequently renamed Greek Catholics (1774), then in the twentieth century Ukrainian Greek Catholics, or simply Ukrainian Catholics. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian Orthodox have experienced an even more complicated evolution. Unlike in the Roman Catholic Church, with its universalist jurisdiction regardless of the ethnic and national (state) composition of its adherents, the Orthodox world adopted the practice of forming national churches. Hence, there evolved jurisdictionally distinct bodies, such as the Russian Orthodox Church, the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Greek Ortho-

dox Church, and so on. Having one's own jurisdictionally independent (or autocephalous) Orthodox Church and ruling hierarch (patriarch or metropolitan) became a goal that, if achieved, was a source of pride for any new nation-state.

As part of the expansion of the Tsardom of Muscovy and Russian Empire into Ukrainian lands, the local Orthodox Church in Ukraine was forced after 1686 to switch its jurisdiction from the ecumenical patriarchate in Constantinople to the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow. Later, in the early twentieth century, when Ukrainians strove to create an independent state, some Orthodox adherents wanted their own church jurisdiction. The result was the creation in 1920 of a Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

The autocephalous movement for a jurisdictionally distinct Orthodox church in Ukraine was suppressed by the Soviet regime; however, on the eve of Ukraine's independence in 1991, the movement was revived. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was legally reconstituted, and before long yet another body came into being: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—Kyiv Patriarchate. Hence, today there are three Orthodox jurisdictions in Ukraine, each of which is trying to gain adherents at the expense of the others: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—Moscow Patriarchate; the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—Kyiv Patriarchate; and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. Each has its own full-fledged hierarchical structure headed by either a patriarch or metropolitan archbishop.

The attitude of these various church jurisdictions toward the Ukrainian nationality and toward the national orientation of the state differs. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has maintained its tradition of emphasizing the use of the Ukrainian language and association with patriotic events and figures from the past. Among the Orthodox, the Autocephalous Church adopts a similar position, as does to a certain degree the Kyiv Patriarchate. Each of these three churches sees itself as a patriotic alternative to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church within the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. The latter body since Ukraine's independence in 1991 has adopted a rather mixed attitude. Whereas this church con-

tinues to include hierarchs, priests, and lay parishioners who are not sympathetic and in some cases openly opposed to Ukrainian national values (the use of Church Slavonic instead of Ukrainian in church services is symbolic of such attitudes), there are nevertheless clerics and lay adherents who consider their church a distinctly Ukrainian body deserving of greater jurisdictional autonomy (perhaps the status of an exarchate) while remaining in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate.

Protestants and sects

At the outset of the sixteenth century, the same time the Ukrainians of Poland-Lithuania first became divided into Orthodox and Uniates, Christian Europe faced another serious challenge, the breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church of reformers known as Protestants. Initially, Protestantism did not make any serious inroads into Ukrainian-inhabited lands, but in the nineteenth century a small number of ethnic Ukrainians converted to various Baptist and Evangelical churches. Those churches slowly grew in size, although it was not until the end of the twentieth century, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, that the largest number of conversions took place. Today the most numerous Protestant communities in Ukraine are the Baptists and Pentecostals, followed by an increasing number of communities classified as "sects": Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses, and others.

Whether or not the adherents of the various Christian groups are, or have been, ethnic Ukrainians, the churches themselves have often been in

121. Annual conference of Christians of the Evangelical Faith (Pyatydesyatnyky) at Pushcha Vodytsya near Kyiv. Photo, 2011.

an antagonistic relationship with each other. This applies to both past and present relations between Orthodox and Uniate/Greek Catholics, between the various Orthodox jurisdictions, and on the part of Orthodox and Greek Catholics toward Protestants, most of whom are derisively dismissed as "sects."

Religious diversity among Jews

Jewish communities in Europe traditionally followed various practices while at the same time observing one set of religious values. This changed in the early nineteenth century, when the Reform movement arose and Orthodoxy emerged to check its advance. The Reform and the less radical Conservative movement, both of German origin, made only a limited impact on the Jewish community in Ukrainian lands.

Hasidim and their opponents

A split of a different character, however, did occur within Ukraine's traditional Jewish community. Late in the eighteenth century, the followers of a new movement known as Hasidism, along with their opponents, the Litvaks, came onto the scene. In contrast to central Europe, the basic division among Jews in Ukraine was not between Orthodoxy and Reform, but rather among the Orthodox who follow different forms of traditional Judaism: the Hasidim, and their opponents, the Litvaks (*mitnagdim*).

Hasidism arose in the second half of the eighteenth century among isolated groups of pious Jews in west-central Ukraine (Podolia and Volhynia). It derived from a branch of Jewish mysticism known as Kabbalah, which in the late seventeenth century had galvanized rabbinic elites and the secondary intelligentsia among Jews in Ukraine. The spread of Kabbalah was in large part a result of the arrival of a small number of Sephardic (formerly Iberian) Jews from the Ottoman Empire, who had come to Ukraine after the Ottomans had captured most of Podolia in the 1670s.

The Kabbalistic ideas and practices brought to Ukraine were based on the following precepts: the immanence of the divine; the hidden spirit-

122. *Farbrengen* (1966), traditional gathering of the Habad Hasidim, painting by the New York-based Hasidic artist Zalman Kleinman.

ual meaning of everything in the world around; the possibility of each human being reaching God through mystical contemplation; and the practice of ascetic piety as a means to change the world (*tikkun*). The early Kabbalists in Ukraine called themselves *hassidim*. They practiced regular ritual ablutions; fasted from Sabbath to Sabbath, eating just a morsel of bread with water after sunset; left their homes for voluntary exile; suppressed their physical urges; and engaged in group study of major books of Jewish mysticism, such as the *Sefer ha-Zohar* (Book of Splendor, ca. 1290).

Hasidism as a full-fledged social movement traces its origins to a Kabbalist from the Podolian town of Medzhybizh (Mezhbizh). He was Israel ben Eliezer, better known as the Baal Shem Tov or the Besht, which is the acronym for "Master of the Divine Name". Although he and many of his earlier followers had studied in a Kabbalist *kloyz* (a kind of elitist club of mystics), they rejected the ascetic form of piety of the previous *hassidim*. Instead, they practiced enthusiastic religiosity, fusing eastern European piety and new forms of Kabbalah. Calling themselves Hasidim (scholars use a capital letter for them to differentiate them from the ascetically pious *hassidim*), they organized their own prayer groups, endorsed the study of esoteric sources among ordinary Jews, and published books explaining the secret meaning of the basic Jewish written sources. They also insisted

on stricter laws of ritual slaughter and argued that everyone, even the most illiterate Jew, could speak to the Almighty through mystically inspired prayer.

The *mitnagdim*, those rabbinic scholars and ordinary Jews who were in opposition to Hasidism, rejected what they considered the excessive emotionalism of Hasidic prayer, the replacement by the Hasidim of the Ashkenazic liturgy with Sephardic prayer rites, and the popularization of sublime and elitist Kabbalistic wisdom. The center of the *mitnagdim* was not in Ukraine but in Lithuania (Vilnius), and this was one of the reasons why the enemies of the Hasidim came to be associated with the Litvaks, or Lithuanian-rite Jews. There were rabbis also in Ukraine who opposed the Hasidim, but they were unable to undermine the enormous popularity of the new movement and its mass appeal. In practice, the relations between the Hasidim and the *mitnagdim* in the Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire were not strained. This was in stark contrast to Belarus and Lithuania in the northern part of the Pale of Settlement, where clashes were not uncommon. Therefore, a Jew in Ukraine might use a traditional Ashkenazi prayer-book and avoid the noisy gatherings of the Hasidim, but, urged by his wife, he might still go to a Hasidic master for a blessing or counsel.

Although initially the Jewish authorities considered the Hasidim dangerous to traditional Judaism and sought to outlaw them, they could not stop the movement. On the contrary, the initially marginalized Hasidim soon moved to the forefront of

123. The 18th-century Great Synagogue in Brody, Austrian-ruled Galicia. Postcard, early 1900s.

MAP 25   JEWISH RELIGIOUS CENTERS IN UKRAINE, 18th-19th CENTURIES

Jewish communal life throughout eastern Europe. Among the Hasidim arose masters (the *tsadikim*), who became a new communal and spiritual authority through whose mediation the requests and prayers of ordinary Jews could reach heaven. After the partitions of Poland (1772–1795), most *tsadikim* mimicked the dynastic form of power of their new tsarist Russian rulers and established their own dynasties. With their loyal entourage they settled in Podolia (Bar, Bratslav, Savran), Volhynia (Berdychiv, Korets, Shepetivka, Slavuta), and Kiev province (Chornobyl, Makariv, Ruzhyn, Shpola, Skvyra, Uman), where generally they favored smaller Jewish communities (*shtetls*) to bigger towns for their base. This allowed for better control of the population and for a more profound impact of their ideas on everyday Jewish religious life.

Reform movement and reaction to liberal trends

Despite their differences, by the outset of the nineteenth century, Hasidic leaders had come to form a kind of a united front with their fellow opponents, the Litvak *mitnagdim*. As Orthodox traditionalists, both were concerned with the challenge posed by the Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) and the Reform movement. Originating in the Germanic lands of Westphalia and Prussia, then rapidly spreading into the Habsburg Empire, Britain, and the United States, the Reform movement rejected the rabbinic tradition as terribly outdated, almost medieval, and not befitting the era of emancipation. In a sense, the Reform leaders reimagined Judaism as a religion only, something like Protestantism, rather than as an all-encompassing way of life. Also, they changed

124. Reform Tempel—Synagogue in Chernivtsi, 1878; converted into a movie theater dubbed the "kinogoga" during Soviet times.

the language of the liturgy from biblical Hebrew to secular German; they eliminated as unpatriotic all prayers addressed to Jerusalem, the coming of the Messiah, and the return to the Holy Land; and they introduced other radical innovations in an effort to adapt Judaism to liberalized, emancipated, and modernized western European society.

Also originating in Germanic lands were liberal-minded Jews who felt the need to adapt Judaism to Europe's new socio-political challenges but who rejected the radicalism of the Judaic Reform movement. They were followers of Rabbi Zecharias Frankel, the father of Conservative Judaism. Frankel was a leading historian in a scholarly movement known as *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Science of Judaism), which called for the evolution of a progressive form of Judaism that would be based on innovation and continuity, and not on revolutionary ruptures as argued by the Reformists. He subsequently became a professor at the Jewish Seminary in Breslau/Wrocław, which is considered the cradle of Conservative Judaism. The label *conservative* may at first glance seem confusing. When initially adopted, it was appropriate in relation to the Reform movement, although it might seem to be a misnomer in relation to Orthodoxy, which by its very nature is conservative in orientation. A century later, in the United States, something called the Reconstructionist movement emerged from within the Conservatives. It was masterminded by the disciples of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, who argued for the need to create an all-embracing Judaic theology and practice.

While thousands of descendants of Jewish immigrants from Ukraine living in Canada, Great Britain, and the United States have embraced one or another liberal trend in Judaism—Reform, Conservative, or Reconstructionist—back in the home country these movements have had very limited impact. New-style temples, sometimes called Progressive synagogues, with various elements of a Reform liturgy were established in Ternopil (1820s), Lviv (1846), Chernivtsi (1863), and Odessa (1863). Some of these synagogues imitated contemporary reconstructions of the Jerusalem Temple, while others were in the neo-Moorish style similar to that used for German Reform temples.

Most of the Progressive congregants were upper-middle-class Jews who had successfully integrated into the higher social strata of Austro-Hungarian, Polish (within the Russian Empire), and Russian society. The changes in liturgy were celebrated as a manifestation of their imperial loyalty. Nevertheless, the innovations, lavish style, and increasing non-observance of the Progressives went against the worldview of the majority of Jews in Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire and Austria-Hungary. They remained traditionally Orthodox. Not only did they eschew contact with Jews of various liberal orientations, they actually considered them spiritually "unkosher" (*treyf* in Yiddish). Eventually, the reality of diversification created several large groups of practicing Jews who might attend services at either an Orthodox or a Liberal (Reform, or Conservative, or Reconstructionist) synagogue. Should,

125. Delegates at the Warsaw convention of the Agudas Yisroel, first political party of the Orthodox Jews. Photo, 1930.

however, an individual switch from an Orthodox synagogue to a Liberal one, or vice versa, that would be considered a betrayal.

The representatives of the Haskalah in eastern Europe, known as *maskilim*, did not go quite so far as the Reform Jews. Instead, they remained traditional Jews although with broader secular interests. First and foremost, the *maskilim* sought to eliminate educational and social barriers between Jews and the surrounding Christian society by reforming Jewish education. They neither proposed a new theology nor formed a separate movement. Nevertheless, their desire to enlist the secular authorities as a major supporter and the help they offered the government in its attempt to control Jewish publications, education, dress, leadership posts, and other traditional communal pursuits made them quite dangerous in the eyes of the Orthodox.

Consequently, the Orthodox Hasidim and *mitnagdim* came together in an effort to convince the Russian and Austrian imperial governments that they, and not the reformist *maskilim*, represented the community as a whole. In the face of the reformist challenge, the Hasidim and *mitnagdim* came to embody an Orthodox Jewish community that op-posed all changes, whether in the religious, educational, or communal sphere, seeing in novelty of any kind a potential breach through which the Reform movement could infiltrate its secular ways. Before long, Orthodoxy developed not only as a religious trend within Judaism but also as a political force, so that leaders of Jewish Orthodoxy in Austrian Galicia and Bukovina joined the Agudas Yisroel political party, which in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries defended its Jewish constituencies in the secular world. By the outbreak of World War I in 1914, most observant Jews in Ukrainian lands were Orthodox, either Litvak *mitnagdim* or Hasidim, although the very term *Orthodox* was avoided by them, since even it sounded too modern.

Liberal trends in Judaism, such as the nineteenth-century Reform and Conservative movements and the twentieth-century Reconstructionist, Egalitarian, Progressive, and Trans-denominational movements, ultimately played a negligible role among the Jews of Ukraine. This was not the case, however, in the diaspora. Many of the descendants of Jews from Ukrainian lands who emigrated abroad integrated successfully in the United States, Canada, and Britain, where they joined liberal, modern, and post-modern
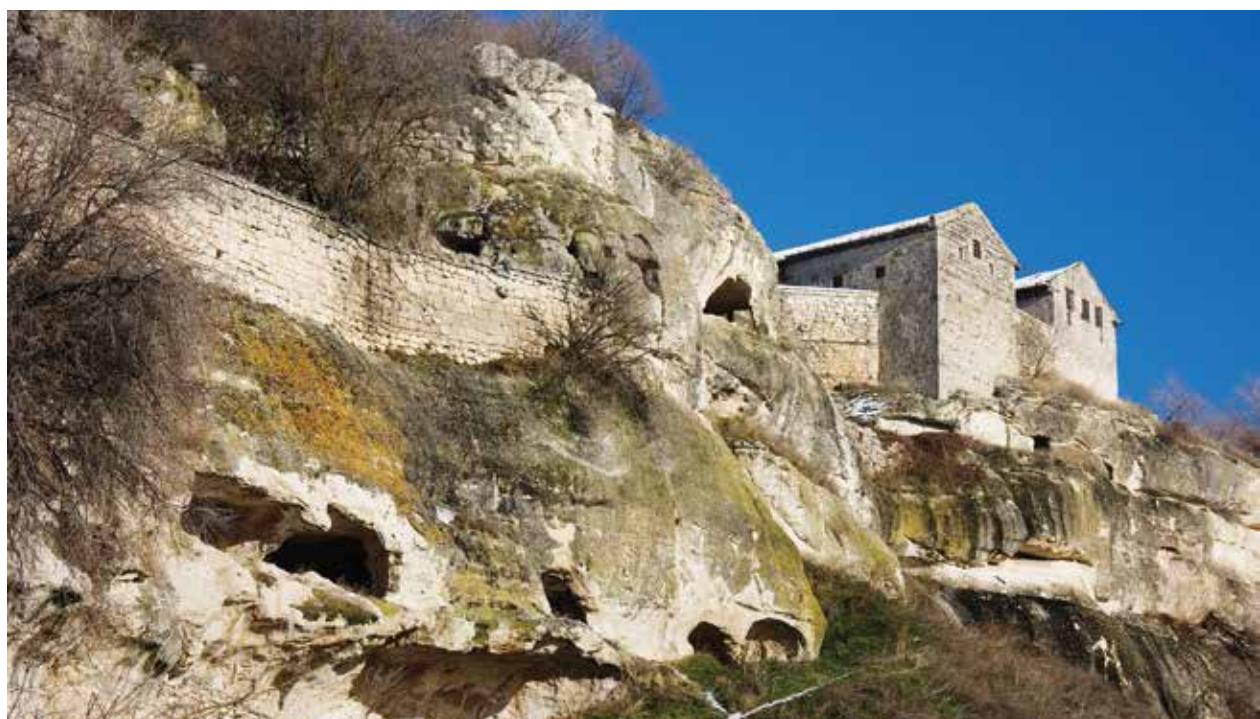
126. A view of two Karaite *kenassas* (prayer houses) in Chufut Kale, Crimea, Photo, 2009.

trends of Judaism. Some of these liberal trends, as well as the more Orthodox versions of Judaism, have taken root in post-Communist Ukraine as a result of enlightenment work carried out by diasporan Jewish religious leaders and organizations. These various trends are often at odds with one another, since each competes in Ukraine as well as in the diaspora for funding and new members.

127. Avraam Firkovich, Karaite scholar. Photo, 1870s.

Karaites

Living for a thousand years alongside Jews in some parts of eastern Europe is a religious group linked to Judaism. This group, which came to be known as the Karaites (Karaim), declared itself the real chosen people, the *Bnei Mikra* (Sons of the Bible), while at the same time claiming that other Jews were not. The Karaites rejected rabbinic Judaism based on the authority of the Talmud and claimed that only the written text of the Hebrew Bible, and not the oral traditions attached to it, should be the basis for their new religiosity. Their religious practice was expressed through a particular liturgy and ritual laws established around a specific calendar. Although Karaites themselves denied their Jewishness, their rites and customs relied on and represented a close parallel to Judaism. By the eighteenth century, Karaites had established communities in Crimea (Chufut-Kale, Mangup, Gözleve/Yevpatoriya, Caffa/Feodosiya), in Volhynia (Lutsk), in Galicia (Lviv), and in Podolia (Derazhnya).

Since they considered Judaism irredeemably corrupted by the Talmud and rabbinic interpretations, the Karaites sought to create a purely biblical religion. To that end, they believe in a literal reading and often rigid interpretation of the Bible, one that allegedly is not mediated by any oral tradition. For example, they argue that, if the Torah forbids having a fire on Shab-bat, this implies that they should dine in darkness and not have any lights prepared beforehand.

The Karaites reject the rabbinic prayer book and use the Book of Psalms instead. The Karaite's own legal regulations (*ha-atakah*) are in effect an alternative version, or reading, of the rabbinic laws that were also based on a distinct commentary or interpretation, albeit a different one. Once they needed to transfer their teachings to a new generation, they did so according to the laws of the Oral Torah, which they otherwise deny. Although small in number

THE KARAITE IDEOLOGUE AND INVENTIVE SCHOLAR

Avraam Firkovich (1787–1875) was a leading Karaite scholar, traveler, and collector of antiquities. While working in Ukraine, whether in his native town of Lutsk or in Crimea (at Yevpatoriya and Chufut-Kale), he amassed a significant collection of unique medieval Judaic and Karaite manuscripts. His goal was to prove to the Russian authorities that the Karaites were the real ancient *sons of the Bible* who had settled in tsarist lands long before the Jews and long before Russia had even come into being. Consequently, the Karaites deserved certain state privileges and exemptions from civil duties.

In order to achieve his goal, Firkovich had no qualms about forging dates on manuscripts as well as the dates on Crimean Judaic tombstones. His "discoveries" of Karaite antiquities sparked a half-century-long debate among leading scholars in Semitic studies. Paradoxically, it was Firkovich's forgeries that prompted scholars to study the language and culture of the Jews in Crimea and in Kievan Rus'. Some of Firkovich's manuscripts, after two centuries of travels and travails, ended up among the holdings of the Orientalia Division of the Vernadsky Library of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Kyiv.

(about 13,000 in the entire Russian Empire and about 9,000 in Ukraine in the early twentieth century), the Karaites managed to convince the tsarist administration that they were not socially corrupt like traditional Jews and that therefore they were worthy of special privileges and exemptions. The success of their cause was in large measure due to the writings of the Karaite adventurer and scholar Avraam Firkovich, a native of Ukraine who spent many years working in Crimea until his death there in 1875 in the remote mountain-top cave town of Chufut-Kale.

Judaism in present-day Ukraine

In the early 1990s, Orthodox (Litvak or *mitnagdim*) rabbis and Hasidic rabbis of different trends (Bratslav, Habad, Karlin-Stolin, Skvira) from the United States, Canada, and Israel started rebuilding Jewish religious life in dozens of Ukrainian cities and towns. Because of the extraordinary efforts of these leaders, not to mention the deep roots of Judaic Orthodoxy in Ukraine, most observant Ukrainian Jews belong today to Orthodox religious communities. The Reform movement also arrived from abroad, although it managed to form only a few congregations (sometimes called Progressive Judaism) of modest size in larger cities in Ukraine. There is only one synagogue of Conservative Judaism, and it came into being only in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The rebirth of Judaic religious life under the auspices of new rabbinic leaders does not imply that Jews in Ukraine have become strictly Orthodox, whether Hasidic or Litvak *mitnagdim*. While some young Jews do strongly identify with a specific trend, most of the others who are part of the revived religious life in Ukraine (at most 4 percent of the 90,000-strong Jewish population) see the mere association with a synagogue of any kind as a sufficient marker of their religiosity. This is also true for the approximately 1,200 Karaites, among whom less than 3 percent are observant. In other words, despite the revival and normalization of religious life in present-day Ukraine, the vast majority of Jews may have a cultural interest in Judaism, but they remain secular.

The above observation is perhaps true regarding Jews from Ukraine who have recently settled in diasporan countries abroad, since they, too, have largely remained secular. For those with religious tendencies, the first-generation immigrants usually join one of the various Orthodox congregations, whereas the second and third generation born and acculturated in the diaspora lean toward various liberal-oriented Reform or Conservative congregations. Only in Israel do immigrants from Ukraine, if not secular, join in albeit small numbers the plethora of traditional Orthodox communities in that country.

CHAPTER 6
Language and Publications

Ethnic Ukrainians today speak either Ukrainian, Russian, sometimes both, or a mixed Ukrainian-Russian fusion language called *surzhyk*. With regard to Ukrainian, the state language of independent Ukraine, it has a long history.

Spoken language

Ukrainian

The Ukrainian spoken language was formed as the result of long-lasting and complex interactions between three phenomena: (1) a number of dialects spoken by various tribal and ethnic groups inhabiting Ukraine in the past; (2) the written language of religious, secular, and legal literature—in particular Church Slavonic; and (3) the official languages of the states in which Ukrainians have lived: in the center and east of the country, Polish and Russian; in the west of the country, Polish and German in Galicia, Romanian in Bukovina, and Hungarian and Slovak in the Transcarpathian region.

Ukrainian is an Indo-European language of the Slavic-Baltic group, and within that context it is most closely related to other East Slavic languages: Belarusan and Russian. Ukrainian is spoken not only throughout much of present-day Ukraine but also beyond its current political boundaries, in particular in the immediately adjacent border areas of eastern Poland, southern Belarus, and the Voronezh and Kuban regions of southwestern Russia.

Because of the geographic homogeneity of the central and eastern parts of Ukraine, the various versions of Ukrainian spoken there have only minimal differences in vocabulary and pronunciation. Farther west, Polish influences are prominent in the Ukrainian language of Volhynia, Podolia, and Galicia, while Romanian influences are noticeable in the spoken language of Bukovina.

A real dialectal boundary separates southern Galicia and Transcarpathia from the rest of Ukraine. There, the chains of mountains, forests, and rivers created a variety of isolated linguistic enclaves. These geographic conditions, combined with the significant influence of Polish, Slovak, and Hungarian, prompted heated debates among linguists and ethnographers throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries about whether Galician is a distinct Ukrainian language and whether the Rusyn spoken in Transcarpathia is a distinct East Slavic language. The urbanization of Galicia as well as in-migration from other parts of Ukraine in the second half of the twentieth century brought Galician Ukrainian much closer to that spoken in the rest of the country. Nevertheless, the local spoken language, particularly in rural districts, has preserved its peculiarities and is generally referred to as the Western Ukrainian dialect.

Neighboring territories with inhabitants of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds have had a crucial impact on the formation of the Ukrainian language and its dialects. For example, spoken Ukrainian came into being through interaction with non-Slavic languages, such as Turkic in the south and Romanian

128. *Opposite*: The late 16th-century printer Ivan Fedorov stands proudly in present-day Lviv.

MAP 26   UKRAINIAN AND YIDDISH LANGUAGES

and Hungarian in the southwest; with West Slavic languages, such as Polish and Slovak in the west; and with East Slavic languages, such as Belarusan and Russian in the north and in the east. Although spoken Ukrainian developed in parallel with Belarusan and Russian, its formation has some distinct features.

Scholars distinguish five basic stages in the development of the Ukrainian spoken language. These include the earliest stage (to the eleventh century), when it was used by various tribal groups inhabiting the Dnieper River basin of central Ukraine; Old Ukrainian, used by a variety of social groups in the southern principalities of Kievan Rus' (until the fourteenth century); Early Middle Ukrainian, predominantly the language of peasants under Lithuanian and Polish rule (until the sixteenth century); Middle Ukrainian, spoken by Cossacks, peasants, and some Eastern Orthodox clergy and landlords (until the late eighteenth century); and Modern Ukrainian, dating from the early nineteenth century, when standard literary Ukrainian was gradually formed mostly on the basis of the southeastern dialect of the Poltava region.

During the period between the tenth and eighteenth centuries, the Ukrainian spoken language developed several features that made it different from two other East Slavic languages, Belarusan and Russian. For example, Ukrainian came to eliminate the reduction of vowels, so much characteristic of the Russian language, and therefore transforming itself, as some linguists argue, into a very "vocal" language. Spoken Ukrainian also developed various forms of softening sharp aspirate consonants; in contrast to Russian, it has the phoneme *h*, which replaced a hard *g*, and it eliminated double and triple consonants in favor of vowel-consonant combinations, making the words easier to pronounce and the speech much more melodic. All these characteristics have led some to claim that Ukrainian, together with Italian, is the best European language for singing. Most important, oral Ukrainian has retained the rich morphology and phraseology of the rural population, which became the basis of various Ukrainian literary styles.

The process of urbanization in late-nineteenth and twentieth-century Ukrainian lands stimulated the formation of a new linguistic phenomenon—the so-called *surzhyk*. This is a fusion Russian-Ukrain-

ian language of urban dwellers of the first generation, that is, the language of former Ukrainian-speaking village dwellers who came to cities and began speaking Russian. On the one hand, *surzhyk* showed the linguistic resilience of the former peasants who had resettled in big cities, but on the other it revealed the degree to which Russian was imposed as the obligatory language of everyday usage in Ukraine. Since the majority of the population resides in urban areas, some argue that *surzhyk* is the most widely used "language" in present-day Ukraine. Nevertheless, it is frowned upon by users of standard Ukrainian and is the frequent butt of jokes that poke fun at linguistic assimilation and russification.

Nowadays the Ukrainian spoken language is used unevenly throughout the country, a phenomenon that reflects the country's colonial past. While most
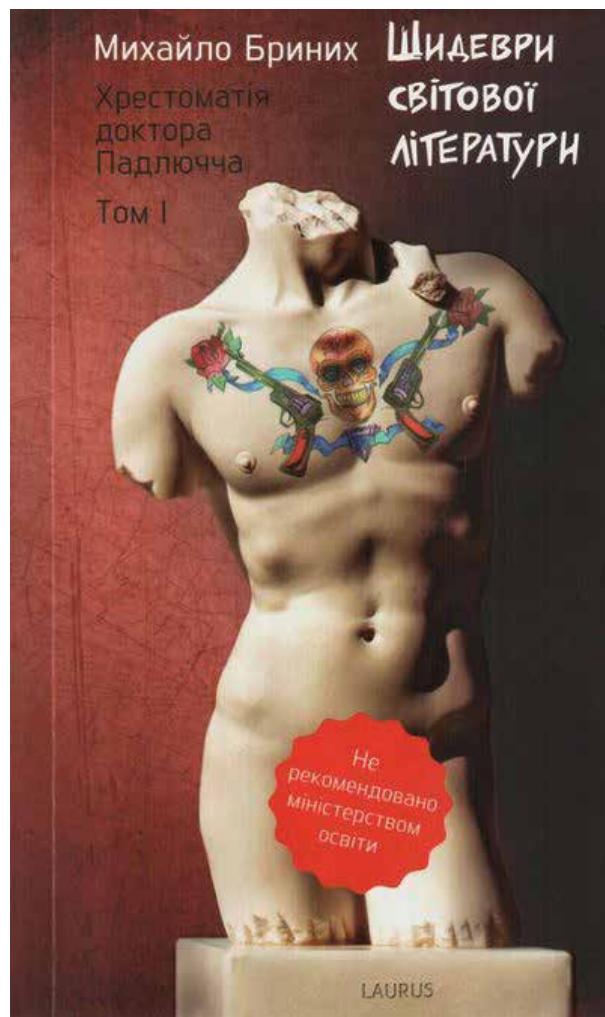
130. A storefront in Kharkiv with bilingual advertisements in Russian and Ukrainian. Photo, 2008.

industrialized cities in central, southern, and eastern Ukraine (Dnipropetrovsk, Odessa, Donetsk, Kryvyi Rih, Zaporizhzhya, and Kyiv) remain predominantly Russian-speaking areas, Ukrainian retains a firm presence in western Ukraine (Volhynia and Galicia) and in rural areas throughout the country. According to 2001 data, while only 10 percent of the population in Crimea and 23–30 percent of the population in the southeast (Donbas) speak Ukrainian, the figure is as high as 80 percent in central Ukraine and 89–97 percent in Volhynia, Galicia, and Bukovina.

Yiddish, Hebrew, and Crimean Jewish languages

Traditionally, Jews in Ukraine had at their disposal two languages for internal usage: Yiddish, as the *mameloshn* (mother tongue); and Hebrew, as the *loshn koydesh* (holy tongue). Hebrew was predominantly a written language, although it was always used for reading prayers aloud. Moreover, the rabbinic elite sometimes used it for sporadic oral communication. Jews were also multilingual: the elite Jews who had to deal with non-Jewish authorities and the Jewish women trading in the marketplace could speak sufficient, although not necessarily correct, Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian in order to communicate with the Polish nobility, the tsarist Russian administration, and their ethnic Ukrainian peasant neighbors and customers. In Galicia and Bukovina, Jewish merchants and traders could also speak German and sometimes Romanian or Hungarian. Yet the mother tongue for most of these Jews

129. *Masterpieces of World Literature*: *A Reader by Dr. Padlyuchcho* (2013), Mykhailo Brynykh's collection of essays mocking the Russian-Ukrainian fusion language *surzhyk*.

131. The award-winning *Yiddish-Ukrainian Dictionary* (2014) compiled by Dmytro Tyshchenko.

remained Yiddish. Even at the height of modernization in tsarist Russia in the late 1890s, 97 percent of all Jews there indicated Yiddish as their first language and as much as 60 percent knew only Yiddish.

What is Yiddish exactly? Initially, it emerged from the northern Rhine dialect of medieval German. Written in Hebrew characters, Yiddish subsequently became a fusion language, a kind of trans-European traveler that absorbed, digested, adapted, and refashioned elements of various other languages. Among these elements were those from traditional Jewish languages such as Semitic Hebrew and Aramaic, as well as from the Germanic, Romance, and Slavic languages with which Ashkenazic Jews came in contact in Europe. Yiddish enriched these borrowed elements with vocabulary and phraseology from Hebrew that was used in education, business correspondence, and liturgy, and also from Aramaic used in Talmud study. One leading scholar (Benjamin Harshav) referred to Yiddish as a Germanic language based on Slavic vocabulary living in a Hebrew library. The point is that none of these variegated linguistic elements could be separated from Yiddish without undermining the very texture of the language.

There is much controversy about where and when Yiddish emerged. Most scholars agree that Yiddish sprang up as a contact language when Jewish migrants from Palestine came through the Italian peninsula and settled in the Rhineland, where they were exposed to medieval Germanic dialects. For example, the famous eleventh-century commentator on the Bible and the Talmud, Rashi (acronym of Rabbi Shlomo Itshaki), used words from medieval French as well as from German (in Hebrew transliteration) in a form very close to what we call Yiddish. When, in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, Jewish migrants who spoke a northern Rhine dialect of medieval German moved through central to eastern Europe, they absorbed elements from Slavic languages, especially Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian, so that their Yiddish became a fusion language par excellence. Eventually, Yiddish became the common tongue—and key cultural marker—for all Ashkenazic Jews in Europe.

Because of its complex fusion character, special linguistic skills are required to dissect the multilingual parts of a Yiddish word. For example, in the title of the famous Sholem Aleichem story, "Der farkishefter shneider" (The Bewitched Tailor), the word *farkishefter* has a Germanic prefix and suffix (*ver-* and *-ter* in modern German), a Hebrew root (*k.sh.f.*, meaning magic or witchery), and a strong presence of vowels reflecting the significant impact of a Slavic-speaking environment.

The use of borrowed words reflects the particularly flexible nature of Yiddish. Hence, words with similar meaning yet of different origin co-exist but convey different nuances. Hebrew words taken directly from Hebrew books or Aramaic texts were considered high style, those of German origin conveyed a neutral style, and those of Slavic origin reflected a popular and more intimate manner of speech. For example, there are three Yiddish words for "question." Leaning over a Talmud, the Yiddish-speaking rabbi would mock his student: *Iz dos take a shayle*? (Is this really a question?). The emancipated Jew, as in an 1887 book by Shimon Bikerman, might, when discussing issues of feminism, be referring to *der zhensker vopros* (the woman's question). The Yiddish-speaking Marxist would speak of *di natzionale frage* (the national question). Although the three Yiddish words for "question"—reflecting Hebrew (*shayle*), Russian (*vopros*), and German (*frage*) origins—all mean the same thing, the word choice depends on the different contexts.

Spoken Yiddish is generally classified into two broad categories: Western, used by Jews in Germanic lands (including Bohemia and Moravia); and Eastern, used by Jews in Slavic lands as well as in historic Hungary and Romania. The Eastern linguistic sphere is divided into three dialects: Northeastern (Lithuanian) Yiddish, Southeastern (Ukrainian) Yiddish, and Mideastern (Polish) Yid-

YIDDISH AND UKRAINIAN MUTUAL LINGUISTIC INFLUENCES

As a result of the many centuries of Jewish interaction with ethnic Ukrainians—peasants, wet-nurses, musicians, servants, Cossacks, criminals—Yiddish, most especially its southeastern (Ukrainian) dialectal variant, absorbed a great deal of Ukrainian phraseology and vocabulary. For example, in Yiddish, if someone looks happy, you can "put that person's face in a museum exhibit," *in* **vistave** *arayntzushteln*, using the Ukrainian word (*vystava*) for exhibit. If someone is stingy, he is *a baltzedaka af yedens* **keshene**, "a philanthropist out of everyone else's pocket," with the last word being the easily recognizable Ukrainian equivalent for pocket (*kyshenya*).

Dozens of Yiddish words designating objects of material culture are of Ukrainian origin: *holoveshke* (from *holoveshka*, a piece of burnt wood); *hodeven* (from *hoduvaty*, to feed); *holoble* (from *holoblya*, yoke), *holote* (from *holota*, mob), *halme* (from *halma*, brake), *kachke* (from *kachka*, duck), *tachke* (from *tachka*, wheelbarrow), *smetnik* (from *smitnyk*, garbage), *skrynie* (from *skrynya*, trunk), *chahcke* (from *tsyatska*, toy). In particular, Yiddish colloquialisms depend greatly on a Ukrainian element, with such words as *nudnik* (from *nudnyi*, a boor), *khlop* (from *kholop*, a serf or peasant), and—certainly one of the most oft-used Yiddish and Ukrainian words—*Nu?* (And so?).

In turn, spoken Yiddish enriched Ukrainian, including a wide range of vocabulary used by construction workers, criminals, and artisans. Yiddish influence, particularly in Ukrainian literary works from regions of intense Jewish-Ukrainian contact, awaits further research. For example, a recent novel by Yurii Vynnychuk, *Tango smerti* (The Tango of Death, 2012), reconstructs everyday life in Lviv during the 1930s and makes good use of dozens of Galician-Yiddish colloquialisms.

Many Yiddish words have so deeply penetrated the Ukrainian language that they no longer require translation. Thus, one of Ukraine's leading post-modernist writers, Yurko Pozayak (pseudonym of Yurii Lysenko), made extensive use of Yiddish words and expressions that would be easily understood by his Ukrainian-reading audience. In his ballad-parody of the Red Cavalry march under the command of the Civil War hero Semyon Budyonny, Pozayak writes:

> Strimkyi budyonivskyi bekitser
> Gevult! Veiz mir! Azokhn vey!
> Tremtyt' denikins'kyi ofitser
> V ataku krasnyi ide evrei.
> .....
> Sholem, sholem, Hulyaipolem
> Kozaky idut, …

The following translation of the above highlights the Yiddish words in bold.

> There's a rapid Red Cavalry **advance**
> **Horror! Woe to us! Catastrophe!**
> The White Guard officer is trembling,
> As the red Jew is going to attack.
> .....
> **Peacefully, peacefully** through Hulyaipole
> The Cossacks are moving.

After the twentieth-century destruction of eastern European Jewish life, there has been very little, if any, Jewish linguistic or cultural influence in modern Ukrainian literary discourse. In part, to fill this void, Ukrainian culture has turned to its multi-ethnic legacy. It has absorbed Yiddish words and expressions from urban folklore and literary sources, and it thereby has recompensed itself for the lack of direct Jewish influences.

132. One of the lithographs (1955) prepared by Anatolii Kaplan for the Yiddish-language novel by Sholem Aleichem, *From the Marketplace.*

dish, each of which was found in parts of present-day Ukraine.

Northeastern (Lithuanian) Yiddish extends into Ukraine's northern and eastern regions: Polissia and the former tsarist provinces of Kharkiv and Katerynoslav. This is largely the result of the migration of Jews from Lithuania and Belarus into southeastern Ukraine from the 1860s through 1880s. Southeastern (Ukrainian) Yiddish covers the bulk of central and southern Ukraine, encompassing the historic regions of Volhynia, Kiev, Poltava, Podolia, Bukovina, Bessarabia, and Crimea. The variants of Yiddish spoken in Volhynia and Podolia are especially and heavily influenced by the local Ukrainian dialects of those regions. Finally, Mideastern (Polish) Yiddish covers western Ukraine, that is, Galicia and Transcarpathia, as well as all of present-day Slovakia, Hungary, western Romania, and much of Poland. Not surprisingly, the Mideastern Yiddish dialects have been strongly influenced by either Polish, Hungarian, or Romanian.

Following World War II and the Holocaust, Yiddish was rarely heard as a spoken language in Soviet Ukraine's cities. It was, however, still used in towns, particularly former *shtetls*, where, in the absence of strict governmental control, Yiddish remained the spoken language of observant Jews and the few remaining Jewish artisans (*kustari*). In several towns, particularly in Galicia and Bukovina, the one remaining synagogue became a place where Soviet Jews could speak Yiddish outside the home. Despite the attempts of the Soviet authorities to russify Jews, at least 7 percent of Ukraine's population declared Yiddish as a first language in 1989. This was the height of the Gorbachev era, when four times more people turned to the study of Yiddish than to Hebrew.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the trend toward Yiddish was undermined in the wake of the massive emigration to Israel. As a result of imminent departure, there was a high demand for Hebrew, leading to the establishment of dozens of Jewish Agency (Sokhnut)-sponsored intensive Hebrew-language programs (*ulpans*). The claims of some government-supported and anti-Zionist-minded Jewish leaders that Yiddish, not Hebrew, should serve as the language of identification for the Jews of Ukraine turned out to be mere wishful thinking.

Very little is known about the way the rabbinic elites and members of proto-Zionist circles (who called themselves Palestinophiles) used Hebrew as a spoken language. Most likely, the spoken Hebrew of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Ukrainian lands was based on formulaic statements from rabbinic literature, Talmudic phraseology, and

133. Hebrew *ulpan* (language school) students celebrate Purim at the Israel Cultural Center, Kharkiv. Photo, 2014.

134. Title page of a Karaite prayer book published in Hebrew (Vilna, 1895).

flowery phrases from secular, mostly *maskilic* (Jewish Enlightenment) writings. Pronunciation was typically Ashkenazic, evident from the manner in which the Hebrew-language Torah texts were read during synagogue services. This is in contrast to the Sephardic pronunciation adopted later in the modern State of Israel.

In contrast to most Ukrainian territories, the Jews/Krymchaks and the Karaites of Crimea did not use Yiddish. The Jews of Crimea initially spoke a local Byzantine dialect of Greek, but after the Ottoman conquest of the coastal regions in 1475, they began to use a Turkic-Kipchak language, specifically a variant of Crimean Tatar which was called Krymchak. As for the Karaites, they too spoke a form of Turkic Kipchak that was close to Crimean Tatar. The language was called Karaite and evolved into three dialectal forms determined by the geographical location of the speakers: Crimea, Galicia (Halych-Lutsk), and Lithuania (Trakai). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Karaite functioned as a Turkic-Kipchak literary language written first in the Hebrew alphabet, then in the Cyrillic alphabet for the Karaites in the Russian Empire (Crimea and Lithuania) and the Latin alphabet in its Polish form for those living in Galicia. The language

of the Jews/Krymchaks and Karaites of Crimea also acquired many Italian words (from the Genoese in Caffa and other Black Sea ports) as well as Yiddish words brought by Ashkenazic Jews who began to settle in the peninsula, albeit in small numbers, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Written language

The written language (or languages) used by any given people have often differed from spoken language. For example, the French, Germans, Italians, and other peoples in western Europe had for centuries used Latin as their written language. Analogously, many peoples in southeastern and eastern Europe, most particularly those within the religious and cultural sphere of Eastern Orthodoxy (Serbs, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Russians, among others), used a liturgical language called Church Slavonic for written texts.

Church Slavonic

The origins of Church Slavonic are commonly associated with the imperial Byzantine envoys, later declared saints, Constantine/Cyril and Methodius, who in the second half of the ninth century brought Christianity to the Slavs and created for them an alphabet. Their mission was actually directed toward the West Slavs (modern-day Slovaks and Moravian Czechs), although neither the Eastern-rite Christianity they introduced nor the alphabet they devised (Glagolitic) survived for very long in those regions. Rather, it was among some of the South Slavs and in particular East Slavs that the work of Cyril and Methodius not only survived but flourished. Their Christian disciples in the Bulgarian Empire devised a new alphabet based on Greek, which they named—in honor of St Cyril—the Cyrillic alphabet. It is this writing system that was used for Church Slavonic texts, and in a modernized form it continues to be used by Ukrainians, other East Slavs, and some South Slavic peoples.

Church Slavonic was a language that no one spoke as a "natural," living mode of communication. Nevertheless, Church Slavonic texts could not help but be

135. Page from the *Radziwiłł Chronicle*, medieval Rus' history text in the Church Slavonic language. Copy from late 15th century.

influenced by the environment in which they were produced. Those influences took different forms, including vocabulary from the spoken dialect of a given author/compiler or from the official language of the state. Hence, Church Slavonic texts produced between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, when Ukrainian lands were in Poland-Lithuania, are likely to be filled with Polish words used at the time in urban settings, as well as with Latin words because of the educational training of the author. Analogously, when after the mid-seventeenth century Ukrainian lands were gradually incorporated into Muscovy and later the Russian Empire, Russian influences were increasingly found in Church Slavonic texts by authors from Ukraine.

Although there were some early efforts at producing texts that were based on the local spoken vernacular, Church Slavonic and to a lesser extent Polish and Latin remained the main written languages used in Ukraine until the late eighteenth century. From that time on, there was a slow but steady increase in the number of texts that were based on spoken Ukrainian vernacular, the first landmark in this development being a literary work called *Eneyida* (1798) by an author from central Ukraine, Ivan Kotlyarevskyi.

Ukrainian language and government policy

The vernacular trend was given particular encouragement during the first decades of the nineteenth century. This was a time when two phenomena reached Ukrainian lands from western and central Europe: the Romantic movement (with its emphasis on the unique value of each language and culture worldwide); and the ideology of nationalism, which argued that spoken language conveyed the very essence of a people and its national identity. Armed with the conviction that language was the ultimate defining characteristic of an individual's ethnic identity, the proponents of nationalism—the so-called nationalist intelligentsia—began to speculate about which particular language might best serve as the written word for the people they presumed to represent. This was the birth of the language question.

On Ukrainian lands within the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires during the long nineteenth century (1780s–1914), the language question took the form of debates between supporters of either Church Slavonic, Russian, or the Ukrainian vernacular. Supporters of Church Slavonic and of Russian argued that both those languages had the proper *dignitas* (dignity): Church Slavonic, because it was the language of sacred religious texts used in church; Russian, because it was the language of a powerful empire and *lingua franca* (common mode of communication) of its urban environment—in short, the source of "higher" forms of culture and knowledge. On the other hand, in the spirit of Romanticism, proponents of Ukrainian argued that the spoken vernacular should be the basis of the group's written language, because, as the language of the people, it was considered the very heart and soul of what constituted the Ukrainian nationality.

136. Taras Shevchenko, *Bukvar iuzhnorusskii* (South Russian Primer, 1861), one of the earliest Ukrainian-language school books used briefly in the Russian Empire.

137. Stepan Smal-Stotskyi, *Ruthenische Grammatik* (Ruthenian Grammar, 1913), description of the Ukrainian language used in Austrian Galicia.

In the Russian Empire, these two contrasting views were symbolized by the choice of language used by Ukraine's two greatest writers in the first half of the nineteenth century: Taras Shevchenko, who chose vernacular Ukrainian; and Mykola Hohol/Nikolai Gogol, who chose Russian. In the end, intellectual debates about which written language to use were brought to an end through intervention by the state authorities. By mid-century, Russian intellectual circles and then the imperial government began to view the language question through the prism of politics, that is, to equate the idea of a distinct Ukrainian (officially called Little Russian) language with territorial and national separatism. Therefore, the tsarist authorities undertook draconian measures to avert any possible danger to the state: in 1863 and 1876 government decrees banned all publications, school instruction, and theatrical performances in the Little Russian "dialect" (Ukrainian language). Even in Orthodox churches the Church Slavonic liturgy was to be chanted using the Russian instead of the more natural Ukrainian pronunciation. Despite the gener-

ally lax enforcement of the decrees by the local authorities, the restrictions against the Ukrainian language remained formally in place until the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917.

In the Habsburg-ruled Austro-Hungarian Empire, the intelligentsia was also divided, in this case between supporters of using either Church Slavonic, Russian, or vernacular *Ruthenian* (the official Austrian term for the Ukrainian language and for ethnic Ukrainians). And, here again, language became intimately interrelated with national identity. The Ruthenians in Austrian Galicia and Bukovina and the Carpatho-Rusyns in Hungarian Transcarpathia who favored using the Russian language (Russophiles) did so because they believed they were of the Russian nationality. Analogously, those Galician and Bukovinian Ruthenians (Ukrainophiles) who favored using the Ukrainian language believed they were members of a distinct Ukrainian nationality. Each orientation, together with the pro-Habsburg Old Ruthenians (Starorusyny), rejected the alleged nationality and language choice of the other.

Since there were no restrictions on language use, at least in the Austrian "half" of the Habsburg Empire, the Ruthenian press flourished in the province of Galicia and, to a lesser degree, in Bukovina. The group's first newspaper *Zorya halytska* (The Galician Dawn), which began in the context of the Revolution of 1848, continued to appear for a decade. Before the end of the century, a whole host of newspapers, magazines, and journals of various national and linguistic orientations bore witness to the vibrancy of Galician-Ruthenian civic and cultural life, including *Slovo* (The Word) and *Halychanyn* (The Galician) representing the Old Ruthenians; *Dilo* (Action), *Bukovyna*, and *Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk* (The Literary and Scholarly Herald) for the Ukrainophiles; and *Golos naroda* (The Voice of the People) and *Prikarpatskaia Rus'* (Carpathian Rus') for the Russophiles. Despite their tolerance toward local languages, the Habsburg authorities nevertheless did take a stance on the language question, issuing in 1892 a decree regarding which form of the Ruthenian language would be acceptable for use in state schools. The decision was in favor of the ver-

nacular-based language supported by those of the Ukrainian orientation.

In stark contrast was the situation of the Ukrainian press in the Russian Empire, which was stifled because of tsarist restrictions (1863 and 1875) against all publications in "Little Russian" (Ukrainian). After the Revolution of 1905, imperial Russia's authorities relaxed censorship enforcement for a while, allowing for the appearance of the first Ukrainian-language newspapers (*Hromadska dumka*/Civic Thought and *Rada*/The Council, among the first of several) during the few years on the eve of World War I.

In the twentieth century, the language question was less a debate about which one of several different languages was the most appropriate than a struggle to determine which variant of the Ukrainian literary language should be adopted as the standard. What, for instance, should be done with the pre-World War I literary language developed by the Ruthenians/Ukrainians of Austrian Galicia, which included local dialectal forms and vocabulary as well as borrowings from Polish, and to a lesser de-

138. Title page of *Zorya halytska*, the first Ruthenian/Ukrainian-language newspaper (Lviv, 1848-57).

139. Title page of *Rada*, one of the first Ukrainian-language newspapers in the Russian Empire (Kyiv, 1906-14).

gree German, especially administrative and legal terminology?

When Soviet Ukraine came into existence and the new regime (at least in the 1920s) supported efforts to codify the widespread public use of a Ukrainian literary language, the Galician variant was for the most part rejected in favor of the eastern variant, popularly assumed to be the language of Shevchenko. Then, in the 1930s, when the Soviet Union entered a period of increasing regimentation and ideological control over scholarly and cultural activity, the language-standardization efforts of the previous decade were scrapped; gradually the Ukrainian literary standard incorporated many russianisms as part of an ideologically inspired state policy to bring the three East Slavic languages closer together.

In the end, by the second half of the twentieth century, there were two variants of the Ukrainian literary language: the "eastern," increasingly russified variant that became the standard for most urban areas in Soviet Ukraine; and the "western" (with some elements from the pre-war Galician standard and showing a degree of acceptance of the Soviet reforms of the 1920s), which was used in interwar Polish-ruled Galicia and among Ukrainians in the diaspora. The differences between the "eastern" and "western" variants can sometimes be substantial, as in the Ukrainian word for Jew (see text insert, p.7).
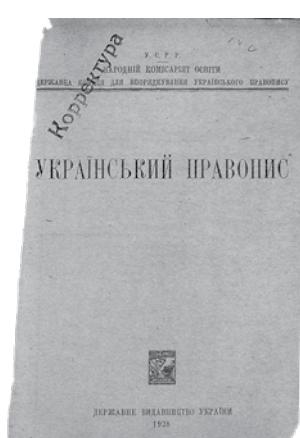
140. *Ukrainskyi pravopys* (Ukrainian Orthography, 1928), rule-book of the newly adopted standard language banned as "too nationalist" by the Soviet authorities.

After Ukraine became independent in 1991, the question immediately arose as to which of the country's two most commonly used languages—Ukrainian and Russian—should become the "official" medium. In 1996 Ukraine's new constitution proclaimed Ukrainian the state language, while at the same time providing guarantees that other languages (Russian,

141. Rally in Kyiv in support of designating Ukrainian as the state language of Soviet Ukraine. Photo, 1989.

Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, etc.) could be used in the local administration and schools in areas where speakers of those languages live in large concentrations.

Despite the provisions of the 1996 constitution, the language question has not gone away. Currently, the debates center on what might be called internal linguistic and external socio-political matters. On the one hand, the efforts to create a new literary standard inevitably provoke debates about linguistic issues (alphabet, spelling system, etc.), including the degree to which Soviet-era russianisms, especially in vocabulary, need to be removed. On the other hand, language has become a bone of contention between those who support affirmative-action measures to enhance the overall status and use of Ukrainian, versus those who believe that Ukraine should have two equal state languages: Russian and Ukrainian. It is interesting to note that many ethnic Ukrainians themselves as well as Ukrainian citizens of other national backgrounds are divided on this issue: some favor speaking Ukrainian and sending their children to Ukrainian-language schools; others favor using Russian for the same purpose.

Hebrew-Yiddish language question

The Hebrew language was mostly written and used for rabbinic correspondence, court decisions, and community regulations, as well as for works dealing with theological and philosophical questions. In printed form, such Hebrew texts were called *sifrei kodesh* (holy books). With the rise of the Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah) in the early nineteenth century, secular books in Hebrew began to appear, including original works in the sciences and philosophy, translations of secular literary works, newspapers, and modern poetry and prose. Even though Hebrew was a written language, literacy in that medium was limited. In other words, many Jews might be able to read and understand the texts, but they could not write in Hebrew. The latter skill was for the most part limited to the rabbinic elite. Although biblical Hebrew was the basis for traditional Jewish education, it was not taught according to grammatical rules. Instead, a *melamed*, elementary school teacher, provided biblical word combinations and sentences with Yiddish explanations, in order that students would memorize each biblical verse together with a canonical interpretation (*pshat*—plain meaning). Thus, children absorbed Hebrew words with an entire set of connotations and semantic field stemming from the rabbinic tradition, but with the corresponding interpretations in Yiddish.

One of the leaders of the Jewish Enlightenment in eastern Europe, Yitshak Ber Levinzon from Kremenets, sharply criticized this practice. He argued that Hebrew was a language suitable for any kind of discourse. Moreover, as a language of prestige, Hebrew should be the vehicle for creating an enlightened Jewish culture based on general education. Levinzon's major work on this subject, *Teudah be-Yisrael* (Testimony for the Jews, 1827), was published with the support of the tsarist Russian government. This is because Jewish printers at the time resisted publishing the works of Enlightenment/Haskalah scholars, which they labeled with the derogatory diminutive Yiddish word *bikhelekh* (little books).

Despite skepticism and even opposition from traditionalist circles, Hebrew slowly moved to the forefront of secular Jewish life, beginning with some tentative efforts in the 1860s, when Alexander Zederbaum launched in Odessa *Ha-Melits* (The Advocate, 1860–1904), the first Hebrew newspaper in the Russian Empire. It was not until 1880s, however, that the new Hebrew revival really took off. At that time, two decades before Zionism came into being, various groups of Odessa-based intellectuals had already begun speaking Hebrew on a regular basis, writing essays in Hebrew on various modern issues, and presenting Hebrew studies as an integral part of the Jewish diasporan spiritual revival. These groups, called Bnei Moshe (Sons of Moses), Hibbat Zion, and Ahavat Zion (the latter both meaning Love of Zion), had as their most influential figures the critical thinker Ahad ha-Am (pseudonym of Asher Ginzberg) and the poet Hayim Nahman Bialik. Together with the Odessa-based publishing house Moriah, they championed the revival of Hebrew as the desired secular language not only for the Jews of Europe but also for their future homeland—the Land of Israel. It is in this context that the Ukrainian-born Ahad ha-Am subsequently became somewhat of a cult figure in the pantheon of the founding fathers of modern Israeli culture.

142. Masthead of *Ha-Melits*, the first Hebrew-language newspaper in the Russian Empire (Odessa, 1860-1904).

143. Masthead of *Kol Mevaser*, the first periodical ever published in Yiddish (Odessa, 1862-72).

144. Heder (elementary Jewish school) boys in Kamyanets-Podilskyi. Photo, early 1900s.

The secular promoters of Hebrew as well as the tsarist authorities looked down on Yiddish as a ghettoized mishmash and obstacle on the road to Jewish assimilation into the great and prestigious Russian culture. Therefore, both the Jewish Enlighteners and imperial Russian government, although for different reasons, denied Yiddish the status of a language, dubbing it officially a jargon. Yet even the opponents of Yiddish realized that they needed to resort to that very language if they hoped to push Jews toward cultural reforms. It was with this in mind that Alexander Zederbaum issued in Odessa the first Yiddish newspaper, *Kol Mevaser* (The Herald, 1862–1872). Written mostly in Ukrainian Yiddish, Zederbaum's newspaper opposed russification, which at the time the tsarist regime was actively promoting. Hence, the authorities discouraged the use of Yiddish, as they did Ukrainian, and outlawed Yiddish-language theatrical performances.

With the rise of various Jewish political parties in the Russian Empire, party leaders ranging from Bundists to Folkists to Zionists were forced by practical reality to address their followers in Yiddish, the mother tongue of 97 percent of the empire's Jews. Yiddish-language newspapers published in Russian-ruled Poland and Lithuania, with a circulation in the hundreds of thousands, found avid readers among Ukrainian Jews. For the socialist-oriented Bundists, Yiddish as the language of the uneducated and poor Jewish proletarian masses was not only the medium of propaganda but also the cornerstone of their Marxist ideology. The Bundists considered

Hebrew the language of the oppressors, whether the Jewish bourgeoisie, religious bigots, or Jewish nationalists, all of whom were seen as class enemies of the Jewish proletariat. Hence, while the Zionists modernized Hebrew, transforming it into the language of a renewed Jewish people and adapting it for the new circumstances after emigration to the Holy Land, the Bundists proclaimed Yiddish as the respectable "language of the people" in the diaspora.

The politicization of this new, secular Yiddish was manifest in the work of the Czernowitz (Chernivtsi) Language Conference of 1908, the first of its type, which brought together writers and educators, Bundists and Zionists, and prominent cultural figures—all of whom noted the growing popularity of Hebrew among Jewish youth while at the same time being concerned about the deprecation of Yiddish within the ruling circles of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. The Czernowitz conference did call for support of Yiddish literary, educational, and cultural endeavors, but in the end decided to proclaim Yiddish as *a* Jewish, not *the* Jewish national language.

The various forms of acculturation that characterized Jewish life in Ukrainian lands throughout the nineteenth century contributed to the politicization of language. In essence, language become an instrument to manifest, shape, and modify new forms of loyalty, whether it be primarily to the state or to one's own people. For Jews in Austria-Hungary, the choice, depending on region, could be Polish, German, Hungarian, Hebrew, Yiddish, or some combination of these rather distinct languages.

The Jews in Austrian Bukovina preferred the Habsburg imperial language, German, and therefore remained on the margins of the Hebrew and Yiddish revival of the second half of the nineteenth century. While a Hebrew printing press was established in Chernivtsi as early as 1835, it produced mostly traditional Judaic classical texts for religious study. Only after the 1870s did it begin to publish secular works in Yiddish and Hebrew. The Israelite German-language Jewish schools in Suceava (today in Romania) and Chernivtsi may have offered Hebrew classes as an obligatory part of the curriculum, but most publications across the political spectrum—Zionist,

Marxist-socialist, national-assimilationist—were in German, as were the wide range of local Jewish newspapers, among which were the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* (General Jewish Newspaper), the *Jüdische Volksrat* (Jewish People's Council), and the *Czernowitzer Tagblatt* (Chernivtsi Daily Paper).

The situation was more complex in Austrian Galicia. There many Jews felt themselves part of the Polish nationality and chose to read the Polish-language newspapers *Ojczyzna* (Fatherland) and *Przyszłość* (The Future). Those Galician Jews who wished to emphasize loyalty to the Habsburg rulers used German, as in the newspaper *Der Israelit* (The Israelite), first published in Hebrew transliteration and later in German Gothic script. On the other hand, publications that were aimed at a wider strata of the Jewish population and that promoted national-democratic ideas used Yiddish, examples being the early-twentieth-century daily newspapers *Togblat* (Daily Pa-

per) and *Der tog* (The Day) and the Marxist-oriented *Der sotsial-demokrat* (The Social-Democrat). There were also Hebrew-language newspapers, but these were mostly for a male audience of well-educated elites, including three weeklies: *Ha-Ivri* (The Jew), in Brody; *Ha-Mevaser* (The Herald), in Lviv; and the Hasidic *Mahazikei ha-dat* (Guardians of Faith), in Belz. In addition, dozens of Galician and Bukovinian Jewish writers regularly contributed to the Yiddish-language press published in Warsaw in the Russian Empire.

Enthusiasts behind the idea of a secular national language established Yiddish-language schools already during tsarist times. The first such school on record was established in 1911 in Demiyivka, a suburb of Kyiv. Kyiv itself soon became a center where the first editions of Yiddish-language classic authors (Der Nister, Dovid Bergelson, Yekhezkel Dobrushin, and Nahman Mayzel) appeared before World War I.

ה.ד. נאָמבערג, ד״ר זשיטלאָווסקי, ש.אַש, י.ל.פרץ, אברהם רייזען.

אין טשערנאָוויץ.

628.

145. Delegates at the First 1908 Congress of the Yiddish Language in Czernowitz/Chernivtsi: (from right to left) Hersh Dovid Nomberg, Chaim Zhitlovsky, Sholem Ash, Yehuda Leyb Peretz, and Avrom Reyzen. Postcard, early 1910s.

146. *Reading a* [Yiddish] *Newspaper* (ca. 1910), painting by the Belarusan-Jewish painter Yehuda Pen.

Later, under Soviet rule, the indigenization campaign of the 1920s declared Yiddish to be the appropriate language of the Jewish masses. This campaign led to the establishment of village councils (soviets), based on the nationality principle, where local administration, courts, and education were conducted in the language of the socialist Jewish people—Yiddish. At the same time, the campaign tried to get rid of Hebrew, since the regime considered it a symbol of the bourgeois, religious, and nationalistic class enemy. The Soviet regime also encouraged the further reform and standardization of Yiddish, now considered as the genuine language of the proletarian Jewish masses. Ukrainian-based Soviet linguists (Nokhem Shtif and Elye Spivak) continued the work of the Berdychiv-born folklorist Noah Pryłucki/ Noyekh Prilutski, who already before World War I had laid the linguistic foundations for the study of the Volhynia variant of Ukrainian Yiddish.

The Soviet regime transformed language into a political matter. Almost all the basic words of Hebrew origin were declared linguistic "class enemies" and banished from Yiddish, to be replaced by words with German or Russian roots. A new phonetic spelling was introduced following the principle: write as people speak. Consequently, in those cases where a word proved impossible to banish, it was retained but spelled in such a way that its biblical or Talmudic origin would not be recognizable. Finally, hundreds of neologisms were introduced into Yiddish in order to convey the new Soviet reality, such as *oporosn sikh* (to farrow) or *kolvirt* (collective farm). Soviet Yiddish became the language for newspapers, schools and textbooks, translations, and the theater. Soviet enthusiasm for the Yiddish language began to waver during the crackdown on bourgeois-nationalism in the early 1930s.

After World War II and the destruction of the Holocaust, Jews were faced with the closure of practically all Yiddish venues in the Soviet Union. That development, combined with the rampant antisemitic campaigns of the 1950s and increased russification in various spheres of life, left Ukraine's Jews without a single Yiddish-language publication for cultural expression. All that remained was the Moscow-based literary journal *Sovetish Heymland*

(1961–91), where some Ukrainian Yiddish writers who survived the Holocaust and the anti-cosmopolitan campaign of the late 1940s and early 1950s began to publish.

At present, the language situation among Jews in Ukraine is very similar to that in Israel, the United States, and Canada. The rabbinic leaders of Orthodox (Litvak) and ultra-Orthodox (Hasidic) orientation who live in Ukraine permanently use Yiddish for oral communication at home and only sporadically for teaching. On the other hand, Yiddish has entered the secular classroom at a number of higher educational establishments, including the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy National University in Kyiv and the Center for Urban History in Lviv, where it has become part of the Jewish studies curriculum.

Most Ukrainian Jews know several Yiddish words and some remember colloquial phraseological expressions or even recall a Yiddish song, but they do not speak the language. Recent ethnographic expeditions to Podolia discovered that there were still some people who, if asked, could speak Yiddish, the language of their parents, who were part of the pre-World War II Jewish community of Ukraine.

148. *Mameloshn* (Odessa, 1990s), present-day Ukraine's only Yiddish-language periodical.

147. Title page of Leyb Kvitko's Yiddish collection of poems, *Oh, when I grow up!*, depicting the heroic dreams of a Soviet child.

The rarity of such examples simply proves that, as a spoken language, Yiddish has almost completely disappeared from public life in Ukraine, even if some elements are retained in popular culture and memory. We have seen how the attempts to revive Yiddish during the last years of the Soviet Union lasted in Ukraine only until the early 1990s. Since then, those efforts have been replaced by much more consistent programs to revive Hebrew, a language of particular importance for those who decided to emigrate to Israel.

It is therefore no surprise that today Hebrew has became the most popular language of instruction for adult Jewish education in Ukraine. Hebrew-language dictionaries, textbooks, and teaching aids published predominantly in Israel are available and often distributed for free. Also, in post-Soviet independent Ukraine, Hebrew holy books containing traditional texts (*sifrei kodesh*) produced abroad were brought in by the thousands by newly arrived rabbinic leaders and missionary organizations. A

few new Jewish newspapers in Russian and Ukrainian have also included Hebrew texts from time to time for educational purposes. The only periodical with a significant portion of its material in Yiddish is the Odessa-based quarterly journal *Mameloshn* (Mother Tongue), which since its founding in 1995 has had a limited yet dedicated audience. In the second half of the 1990s, publishers in Chernivtsi issued two Yiddish collections of prose works by the Bukovina Yiddish writer Yoysef Burg, considered "one of the last Yiddish writers of Eastern Europe." It was, however, in the realm of Ukraine's pop culture that Jewish themes have found a particularly receptive audience. This has occurred through performers of klezmer music, who include in their repertoire songs in Yiddish that provide at least some insight into the vanished world of Ukraine's Jewish culture.

Manuscripts and book printing

Slavonic and Cyrillic

As in other parts of Europe, the earliest centers for the production of the written word in Ukraine were Eastern Christian monasteries, one of whose main goals was to prepare handwritten religious texts for the church. The first important site for manuscript production in Ukraine was initiated by the state through the person of the grand prince of Kievan Rus', Yaroslav I ("the Wise"). Known as "a lover of

149. First page fragment from the *Ostromir Gospel* (1056-57), the oldest surviving Slavonic book.

books," Yaroslav assured that a part of the cathedral church complex at the St Sophia in Kyiv (built in the 1040s) would have a scriptorium (copying center) for the creation of books. Other monasteries throughout Ukraine, the Monastery of the Caves (Pecherska Lavra) in Kyiv being the most prominent, functioned as centers of manuscript production throughout the medieval period. It was at such monasteries that monks created the oldest surviving dated Slavonic book, the elegantly illustrated *Ostromir Gospel* (1056–57), and the oldest East Slavic historical account, the Rus' *Primary Chronicle* (begun in the 1040s).

About a half-century after printing with movable type was introduced in Europe (1450s) by Johann Gutenberg, the first religious books intended for the Eastern Orthodox in Ukrainian and Belarusan lands were produced with the new technology. Initially, they were printed outside Ukraine by the founders of Slavonic printing, Schweipoldt Fiol in the 1480s in Cracow and Francis Skoryna in the second decade of the sixteenth century in Prague. It was not until the 1570s that the first printing shop for books in the Cyrillic alphabet was established in Ukraine, by Ivan Fedorov in Lviv. A decade later, Fedorov moved to the estate of Prince Kostyantyn Ostrozkyi, where he and his successors printed numerous books in Ukraine's first center of printing, the small town of Ostroh in Volhynia. Later, in the eighteenth century, the same small building in Ostroh that had housed the Slavonic printing shop was used by the Jewish printer Kliorfain.

The earliest printers faced a problem that remained a challenge for many of their successors as well: how to secure Cyrillic typefaces for printing shops in Ukrainian lands which at the time were ruled by a state, Poland-Lithuania, where the Roman, or Latin, alphabet was the norm. The situation became more complex at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Tsar Peter I of Muscovy/Russia, which by then ruled at least half of Ukraine, introduced a revised Cyrillic alphabet called the civil script (*hrazhdanka*), whose letters were rendered in a simpler, more easy-to-read form than the more elaborate and stylized letters of the traditional Cyrillic alphabet. This meant that, from then until

150. Ivan Fedorov (d. 1583), statue in Lviv (1977), where he printed the first Cyrillic Slavonic book (*Apostol*, 1574) on the territory of present-day Ukraine.

well into the twentieth century, printers had to be equipped to produce books for Ukrainian readers in the "old" Cyrillic script (mostly Church Slavonic religious texts) and the "new" Cyrillic civil script, which eventually became the standard for all publications other than church books.

It is perhaps not surprising that monasteries, which were already earning a good portion of their income by producing handwritten manuscripts, quickly adopted the new technology of printing with movable type. Among the most noted printing centers was the older Monastery of Caves in Kyiv from the early seventeenth century, and the newer Dormition Monastery at Pochayiv in Volhynia, whose printing tradition has stretched unbroken from its sixteenth-century beginnings in the homeland until the present in the United States, that is, after the monks were exiled by the Soviets in 1944 and re-established printing operations in their new home at Jordanville in upstate New York.

Influential books in Ukrainian

Printed books have always had first and foremost a functional purpose—to convey information to the reader. But they may also have aesthetic value as examples in the art of printing and design; or, because of their content, as symbols of pride and patriotism, especially among stateless peoples like Ukrainians who for centuries were engaged in a struggle to prove their very existence as distinct nationalities.

Among the first influential printed books destined for a Ukrainian reading public were those that were religious in character, such as the first complete edition of the Bible in Church Slavonic, known as the *Ostroh Bible* (1581) after the town in which it was printed; and the *Gospel of Peresopnytsya* (1555–61), noted for its extensive use of Ukrainian vernacular speech, something quite rare before the nineteenth century. It is a first edition of the latter that is used during presidential swearing-in ceremonies in post-1991 independent Ukraine. Another book of a special significance during this early period was secular in nature, the *Sinopsis* (1674), attributed to an Orthodox cleric Inokentii Gizel. Originally printed in Kyiv and subsequently reprinted thirty times until the early nineteenth century, it became a kind of basic history textbook in schools throughout the Russian Empire. The reason for its popularity and acceptance among

151. Petro Poroshenko, current president of Ukraine, swearing the presidential oath (June 2014) on the 16th-century *Gospel of Peresopnytsya*.

152. Title pages of the earliest literary works in the Ukrainian language: Ivan Kotlyarevskyi's *Eneyida* (St. Petersburg, 1798), Taras Shevchenko's *Kobzar* (St. Petersburg, 1840), and *Rusalka dnistrovaya* (Buda [pest], 1837).

the ruling secular and religious authorities was because it was the first work to present in a systematic manner the view that Muscovy and later the Russian Empire were the successor states to Kievan Rus', and that, therefore, they had a rightful claim to all lands (Belarus, Ukraine, as well as European Russia) which once were part of that medieval entity.

Books were especially important to the national awakenings of the nineteenth century. Among those that since their first appearance became signposts in the evolution of Ukrainian literature as well as the embodiment of ethnic Ukrainian identity were: *Eneyida* (Aneida, 1798) by Ivan Kotlyarevskyi, the first work of modern Ukrainian literature written in the vernacular Ukrainian; *Kobzar* (The Minstrel, 1840) and *Haidamaky* (The Haidamaks, 1841), both works of poetry which created the reputation of Taras Shevchenko as the national bard of Ukraine; and *Rusalka dnistrovaya* (The Nymph of the Dniester, 1837), considered the first book intended for the Ruthenians/Ukrainians of Galicia that was written in the vernacular language—and in the "modern" Cyrillic script, *hrazhdanka*.

Much more practical, but no less important for the role that they played in educating the populace in a standard form of the Ukrainian literary language, were dictionaries. The most heavily used dictionaries representing different variants of the literary language were: for Austrian Galicia, the two-volume *Malorusko-nimetskyi slovar* (Ukrainian-German Dictionary, 1882–86) of Yevhen Zhelekhivskyi; for

eastern Ukrainian lands in the Russian Empire, the four-volume *Slovar ukrayinskoyi movy* (Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language, 1909) published by Borys Hrinchenko during the brief period when the tsarist authorities relaxed their ban on the Ukrainian language; for the diaspora, the one-volume *Complete Ukrainian-English Dictionary* (1955) by the Canadian scholars Constantin Andrusyshyn and J.N. Krett; and for Soviet Ukraine, the twelve-volume *Slovnyk ukrayinskoyi movy* (Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language, 1970–80) under the editorship of Leonid Bilodid, which presented a heavily Russian-influenced version of the language that present-day linguists in independent Ukraine are trying to change.

Publishing and Ukrainian culture

The number of copies of first editions and reprintings of Ukrainian-language books has had important social and national implications. At least until the age of the Internet, books (and newspapers) were the main instruments through which the Ukrainian language and national identity was preserved and promoted. For example, in the relatively tolerant political atmosphere of late-nineteenth-century Habsburg-ruled Austrian Galicia, community-based and privately funded Ruthenian cultural and civic organizations made every effort to produce their titles with the largest printings possible, with some books having print-runs up to 100,000 copies.

In Soviet Ukraine, where the publishing industry was exclusively in the hands of the state, the number of copies of any given title reflected as much political as economic criteria. In other words, when the Soviet government was favorably inclined toward Ukrainian cultural aspirations, as during the 1920s, the print-runs of Ukrainian titles were large enough (sometimes in the millions) to fulfill the needs of the country's reading public, whether or not they were ethnic Ukrainians. Some titles, such as the collected writings of the classics of Soviet Marxist thought—Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin—were published in Ukrainian translation in print-runs of several hundred thousand, even though they usually sat unread collecting dust on the shelves of libraries, large and small, in every city, town, village, school, factory, and agricultural cooperative recreational center. To this day, scholars writing about the nationality policy of the former Soviet Ukraine make use of statistics on print-runs of books in an effort to gauge state policy toward its various nationalities.

Print-runs of books are no less an issue of concern to policy-makers and nationality-builders in present-day independent Ukraine. For the most part, book publishing today is driven by economic factors. Hence, even though Ukrainian is the state language, the vast majority of books available in any bookstore are in Russian. This is because publishers in Russia are able to finance large printings of popular literature (crime and love stories, technical how-to-do literature, translations from other languages) and dump a portion of their production in Ukraine, where local publishers are simply unable to compete in producing comparable Ukrainian-language editions. Book production, then, remains an important factor in the ongoing struggle to enhance and promote Ukrainian culture and identity.

Jewish manuscripts and early printed books

The earliest Hebrew manuscripts used in Ukraine were the Torah scrolls and communal prayer books on parchment or vellum that were brought between the ninth and fourteenth centuries to Crimea by the Jews of Byzantium and to central Ukraine by Ashkenazic Jews from central Europe. Although none

153. Press conference of the organizing committee of the 19th annual Publishers' Forum in Lviv. Photo, 2012.

of these manuscripts has survived, scholars surmise that Jewish scribes in Crimea used the Aleppo style to write the text of the Pentateuch, while those in Poland-Lithuania used the Ashkenazic style.

Later, in the eighteenth century, there emerged a new style of writing used first and foremost by the Habad Hasidic community. The founding father of the Habad movement (Rabbi Schneur Zalman) linked the shape of letters of the Torah scroll to, and understood them through the prism of, Kabbalah traditions of sanctified letters of the Hebrew

154. Habad-writing-style *mezuzah*, a parchment-inscribed prayer placed in a special case on the door-post for sanctification and protection of a Jewish dwelling.

alphabet. The so-called scribal style (*otiot ha-rav*, "letters of the Rabbi") was widely used for Torah-scroll writing in Hasidic communities throughout Ukrainian lands.

Rabbinic books, among the best known being the fifteenth-century commentary of Moshe ben Yaakov of Kyiv on the early medieval mystical work *Sefer yetsirah* (Book of Creation), were predominantly in Hebrew. Although most Jewish manuscripts composed in Ukraine in late-medieval and early-modern times have not survived, an exception are the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Hebrew-language record books (*pinkasim*) of Jewish communities and brotherhoods.

The first European manuscripts written in Yiddish date back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In Ukrainian lands, especially popular were late-eighteenth-century Yiddish-language collections of individual women's prayers (*tekhines*) and moral tales (*maysyos*), which quickly made their way into print. Yiddish also appeared sporadically in the record books of the Jewish brotherhoods, although it was rarely used for communal records. The most popular Yiddish composition, *Tsene rene,* created somewhere near Lublin, was published perhaps as early as 1613 and became the foremost best-seller among the Jews of eastern Europe. Because it was written in Yiddish and emphasized gender roles, the book was particularly appealing to Jewish women and became known as the "women's Bible." The book was therefore issued in more than a hundred editions, adaptations, and reprints produced in various Jewish presses in Ukraine between the early seventeenth and late nineteenth centuries.

Printed books in Hebrew and Yiddish began to appear in Ukraine in 1691, following the establishment of a printing press in Zhovkva in Galicia. This printing shop, founded by the Dutch-Jewish printer Uri Fayvesh ben ha-Levi, was one of only three with Hebrew typefaces throughout the entire Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Fayvesh managed very quickly to outdo his competitors, so that by the early eighteenth century his printing press came to dominate the eastern European Jewish book-printing market, producing separate tractates of the Talmud, homiletics, prayer books, and books on Jewish

155. Title page of *Tania: Likute Amarim* (Zhovkva, 1799), key book of the Habad-Lubavitch Hasidism by Schneur Zalman of Lyady, founder of the Habad movement.

mysticism. Fayvesh's descendants, the Madpis and the Letteris families, founded a number of printing presses throughout Ukraine (Lviv and Sudylkiv) and Poland late in the eighteenth century.

The real explosion of Jewish printing followed the partitions of Poland, when the empress of Russia Catherine II encouraged the establishment of free printing in all new lands that came under her rule. This was a time when the Hasidim in Ukraine were under multiple excommunication bans issued by the Russian Empire's Lithuanian-based Jewish *kahal*. To prove that they were not a marginal group of sectarians but rather at the core of Judaism, the Hasidim responded by establishing several mobile printing presses throughout Ukrainian lands: in Kiev province (Bila Tserkva, Bohuslav), Podolia (Bratslav, Medzhybizh, Mynkivtsi), and Volhynia

156. Title page of *Meor Einaim* (The Light of the Eyes, Slavuta, 1802), foundational book of the Chernobil Hasidic dynasty by Menahem Nahum, the preacher of Chernobil.

Publishing industry and Jewish society

Printers were esteemed in traditional Jewish society. In fact, purchasing books in and of itself was broadly conceived as part of a commandment to spread the Torah to the whole world. It is difficult, therefore, to imagine a Jewish household, even a poor one, without a Hebrew book. Hence, it was not uncommon in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ukraine for a poor artisan to have three to four Hebrew holy books (*sforim*), for a petty merchant or a leaseholder to have from twenty to thirty, a wealthy wholesaler about one hundred, and a rabbi several hundreds. Books were sold unbound, purchased in bulk, and then given to a skillful book-binder, a profession whose widespread nature is reflected in the common Jewish last name, *Bukhbinder*.

The work of Jewish printing presses in the Russian Empire was disrupted in 1836. As a result of false denunciations, the Slavuta-based Shapiro family of printers was exiled from the Pale of Settlement and all other Jewish printing presses in Ukraine

(Berdychiv, Dubno, Korets, Mezhyrich, Ostroh, Polonne, Slavuta, Sudilkov, Zaslav). These presses published traditional Jewish books endorsed by Hasidic masters (*tsadikim*). Such activity showed that Hasidism did not dissuade ordinary Jews from the traditional learning of classical Jewish books but, on the contrary, encouraged them to study such books. Aside from works on ethics (*musar*), the legal aspects of Judaism (*halakhah*), everyday pietistic behavior (*hanhagot*), commentaries on the Torah, and Kabbalistic prayer books, they published a hagiography of the founder of Hasidism, the Baal Shem Tov, which appeared in both Hebrew and Yiddish versions.

Among the most influential of the Jewish presses was that of the Shapira brothers in the small Volhynian town of Slavuta. It issued several full editions of the Talmud that encouraged innovative approaches to teaching in nineteenth-century Talmudic academies, as well as prayer books and key Kabbalistic and Hasidic commentaries on various classical books of Judaism.

157. Title page of *Disgusting In-Laws*, a popular Yiddish *shund* (kitsch) novel by Shomer (b. Nokhem Meyer Shaykevitch, ca. 1849–1905).

were shut down. Early in the 1840s, however, Tsar Nicholas I allowed a Jewish press to be established in Kyiv, and the Shapira brothers were allowed to return from exile. Instead of Kyiv, they opened a printing shop in Zhytomyr where they employed hundreds of Jewish and non-Jewish workers and published annually between twenty and fifty titles with an average circulation of 2,000 copies per title. The Shapiro printing shop in Zhytomyr had its own paper factory and dominated the Jewish book-printing market in Ukraine until the early 1860s, when Tsar Alexander II issued new regulations that liberalized the press.

By the last third of the nineteenth century, Jewish liberal-minded intellectuals in the Russian Empire realized that the Jewish masses whom they were trying to reach rarely read Hebrew periodicals. They were, however, avid readers of the Yiddish-language Odessa newspaper *Kol Mevaser* and of publications otherwise dismissively described as *shund* (trash). *Shund* was an early example of modern mass culture: cheap soap-opera-style works imitating Russian theatrical dramas and western European, particularly French, "boulevard novels." In an effort to challenge the hegemony of *shund* (with its hundreds of novels) and to bring their new vision of Jewish culture into Russia's Jewish book market, writers such as Mendele Moykher Sforim and Sholem Aleichem abandoned attempts to write in Hebrew or Russian and instead turned to Yiddish. In fact, the vast majority of writers associated with the origins of modern Yiddish literature and theater were either born or worked in small cities of Ukraine: Starokonstyantyniv, Berdychiv, Zhytomyr, and Vinnytsia.

It was as a result of their efforts that Yiddish secular novels, plays, short stories, and periodicals, all of a high literary standard, slowly but steadily filled the market and changed the standards among Jewish readers in the Russian Empire. The change was most evident in the press. Whereas, for instance, in the 1860s the number of subscribers to the only eastern European Yiddish periodical (Odessa's *Kol Mevaser*) did not exceed 300, by the first decade of the twentieth century the circulation of daily Yiddish newspapers in Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire alone exceeded 300,000 copies.

158. Title page of the Yiddish translation of Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (Kyiv, 1925), issued by the Kultur-Lige Publishing House.

Following the Bolshevik Revolution and the creation of the Soviet Union in what was formerly the Russian Empire, Soviet Ukraine became one of the main centers of the sovietization of Jewish culture. This included reform of the Yiddish language, whose status was enhanced through a wide range of publications. Yiddish printing presses published thousands of copies of world classics—translations from Shakespeare and Cervantes to Dickens and Zola—and throughout the interwar years of Soviet rule dozens of Yiddish books, journals, and newspapers, each with a circulation that often exceeded hundreds of thousands. These publications targeted a broad audience—from lovers of literature and professional teachers to artisans, peasants, and proletarian workers—for whom Yiddish became a vehicle of integration into socialist society. Soviet Ukraine's leading Yiddish periodicals appeared in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odessa.

At the very same time, across the border in former Habsburg-ruled lands by then in interwar Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia, there was a Yid-

dish-language press, although in Polish-ruled Galicia the most popular Jewish periodicals appeared in Polish. Of particular importance for Ukrainian culture in general and for Ukrainian-Jewish relations in particular was Yakov Orenstein (1875-1944), whose prodigiously active publishing house in the Galician town of Kolomyia, and after World War I in Berlin, issued thousands of Ukrainian-language books on a wide range of topics. Orenstein, who called himself "a Ukrainian of Jewish origin," contributed as no one else to Ukrainian book publishing in Austrian- and later Polish-ruled Galicia during the first three decades of the twentieth century.

In Romanian-ruled Bukovina, many Jews, as in Habsburg times, continued to use German, the dominant language of Jewish book publishers as well as the influential *Ostjüdische Zeitung* (Eastern Jewish Newspaper, 1919–38). There were, however, Bukovinian Jewish publishing houses which produced Yiddish- and Hebrew-language books and newspapers, such as the Yiddish *Frayhayt* (Freedom) and *Tshernovitzer bleter* (Chernivtsi Pages), and the Hebrew *Ha-Herut* (Freedom).

In interwar Czechoslovak-ruled Subcarpathian Rus'/Transcarpathia, Yiddish remained the most popular medium for all socio-political groups, used by, among other publications, the Orthodox weekly *Di yidishe tzaytung* (The Jewish Newspaper) and the populist *Dos yidishe folksblat* (The Jewish People's Paper). Even the small Zionist movement in Subcarpathia published its main periodical *Di yidishe shtime* (The Jewish Voice) in Yiddish, although it supported the idea of Hebrew as the most appropriate language for Jews.

CHAPTER 7
Literature and theater

Evolution of Ukrainian and Jewish-Ukrainian literature

Linguistic complexity

In the popular mind, literature is usually defined by the language in which it is written. Hence, English literature is in English, French literature is in French, and so on. It is more reasonable, however, to view a literature as something determined not necessarily by its language but rather by the values, experiences, and traditions of the people it reflects or for whom it is written. In fact, for many peoples in Europe, the works that encompass the corpus, or canon, of their respective literatures have often been written in a language that differs from their present-day national language. For example, *Beowulf*, written in Anglo-Saxon, is considered the earliest work of English literature, works in Persian are part of Turkish literature, and those in Latin dominate the early periods of literary production among Europe's various Romance peoples (French, Spanish, Italians, Catalans) and, for that matter, among Germans, Hungarians, and Poles as well.

It is within this larger European context that the literary traditions of ethnic Ukrainians and of Jews in Ukraine have also been multilingual. Ukrainian literature in the medieval period of Kievan Rus' was written in Church Slavonic. That language in its various local variants continued to be used after Kievan Rus' no longer existed, although during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when most

Ukrainian lands were ruled by Poland-Lithuania, many writers used Latin, Polish, and on occasion Greek for literary expression. By the late eighteenth century, Russian became increasingly widespread until it was challenged by the Romantic movement in the early nineteenth century, which gave encouragement to a small group of writers to use a language based on the spoken vernacular of the people, known under its tsarist Russian bureaucratic name, Little Russian, or Ukrainian.

It is from the Romantic period, with its emphasis on language as the defining characteristic of a people, or nationality, that Ukrainian literature came to be associated only with works written in the Ukrainian language. Nevertheless, some Ukrainian authors—understood as those whose works embody the experiences, values, and traditions of ethnic Ukrainians—continued in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to write in Russian as well as in Ukrainian.

Jewish literature in Ukraine is no less multilingual. Like Ukrainians, Jews wrote in a sacred language as well as in the official language of the state where they lived, before eventually adding to the mix a literary form based on the spoken vernacular. Specifically, the sacred language was Hebrew, while the state languages most popular among Jewish writers were Polish and Russian, as well as others in specific historic regions of Ukraine: German, Polish, Hungarian, or Romanian in western Ukraine; and Turkic (written in Hebrew letters) among the

159. Galician-born Austrian writer Joseph Roth (1894-1939). Photo, 1930.

Krymchaks and Karaites of Crimea. With the increase of secular literature in the second half of the nineteenth century and the general interest in Jewish national culture, Hebrew became the language of choice for many writers. It was not long, however, before many Jewish authors decided on the vernacular option, that is, to write in Yiddish, the mother tongue of virtually all of Ukraine's Ashkenazic Jewry. While Yiddish was increasingly used in literary works during the first half of the twentieth century, Ukraine's Jewish writers nevertheless continued to use Hebrew, Russian, Polish, German, and in some cases Ukrainian as a means of expression.

The choice of language depended on a number of circumstances, such as geography, family milieu, educational background, personal preference, and specific historical context. Most Jews of Ukraine opted for the language of the state or the empire. Hence, Zeev Jabotinsky and Isaac Babel of Odessa, Ilya Ehrenburg of Kyiv, and Vassilii Grossman of Berdychiv, all residents of deeply russified towns and cities, chose Russian as a means of expression. On the other hand, natives of Habsburg Austrian towns and cities—Karl Emil Franzos of Chortkiv

in Galicia, and Rosa Ausländer and Paul Celan of Chernivtsi in Bukovina—preferred German, while Bruno Schulz of Drohobych and Stanisław Jerzy Lec of Lviv, who lived and worked in their native towns when Galicia was under Poland, wrote in Polish. Among the best known of these writers—largely because several of his works have been translated into English—is Joseph Roth, the German-language writer from the far eastern Galician border town of Brody. His several novels and short stories depicted not only the dilemma of traditional *shtetl*-based Galician Jews caught between the violence of World War I and the challenges of adaptation to the political changes of the interwar years, but also the longing that Jews continued to have for the lost world of Austro-Hungarian peace and social order.

Ukrainian literary production

The emergence in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century of literature in the Ukrainian language was in large part the result of the interface between pan-European aesthetic trends and Ukrainian ethno-cultural and national-democratic strivings. Owing to the various stages of colonization, re-colonization, and decolonization that Ukraine went through in modern times, Ukrainian literature often transcended the purely literary boundaries of belles-lettres and instead took on the role of a national revivalist and social-liberation manifesto. At the same time, Ukrainian literature developed in close relation to European literature, using its multiple narrative patterns and genres to convey specifically Ukrainian messages. Often scorned and marginalized as creators of third-rate, peasant-based, backward, and provincial literary works, Ukrainian authors continually sought to prove that they were part of the European literary discourse, that is, that they were a legitimate relative in the family of great European literary traditions and not an abandoned orphan. It is, therefore, not surprising that Ukrainian literati creatively borrowed patterns that opened the European legacy to Ukraine and, in turn, Ukrainian readers to the European literary legacy.

In the ninth century, the Byzantine missionaries Constantine/Cyril and Methodius produced the earli-

est literary texts that were later used in Ukrainian lands to assist in the conversion of various East Slavic tribes to Christianity. Toward that end, they translated from medieval Greek into Old Bulgarian certain parts of the Gospels that were used in the Christian liturgy between Easter (April or May) and the medieval religious New Year (September) as well for weekly Sunday services. These early texts, now lost to us, are considered the beginnings of Old Slavonic literature in Ukrainian lands and, therefore, the advent of Ukrainian literature. Because those texts were intended predominantly for church services, the language was subsequently called Church Slavonic.

Later translators expanded this core body of texts to include the entire books of the Gospels and other parts of the New Testament. Some of these survived in the form of the eleventh-century Ostromir, the twelfth-century Mstislav and Halych, and the fourteenth-century Reims Gospels. These Church Slavonic translations fostered other kinds of literary development, first and foremost didactic literature, such as the *Sermon on Law and Grace* (ca. 1050) by Metropolitan Ilarion of Kyiv. The purpose of these was to instill Christian piety, to celebrate the quest for spiritual truth (as opposed to the corrupt mores of the secular rulers of Kievan Rus') and to promote devotional monastic life in the form of hagiographies (lives of saints). Many of these works were subsequently gathered together in an anthology compiled in the thirteenth century and known as the *Kievo-Pecherskii paterik* (Patericon of the Kyivan Caves Monastery).

Medieval Ukrainian literature actively absorbed Byzantine Greek cultural patterns. This meant that, from the tenth through fourteenth centuries, dozens of translations of earlier Aramaic, Hebrew, Syriac, and medieval Greek versions of biblical and post-biblical texts (Apocalypse of Abraham, 2nd Enoch, 3rd Baruch, Jacob's Ladder, and others) appeared in Church Slavonic translations. These texts evinced powerful mystical and apocalyptical motifs, and since the earlier versions in other languages have in many cases not survived, the Church Slavonic versions can help us not only to understand the early stages of Ukrainian literature but also to answer questions surrounding the earliest Judeo-Christian

160. *Isaac Dancing to Music Played by Devils*, late 15th-century illuminated folio from the *Radziwiłł Chronicle*.

mystical traditions.

Monks at the Monastery of the Caves in Kyiv also created historical narratives in an attempt to justify the new Rus' Eastern Christian polity and inscribe it into the holy history of Christianity. The monk Nestor ("the Chronicler") brought together several earlier chronicles to create a single narrative known as the *Povest vremennykh let* (The Tale of Bygone Years, or Primary Chronicle, ca. 1100). The tale began by describing the consequences of the biblical flood, along with other key moments of ancient Jewish history, and it explained how with the advent of Jesus the role of the chosen people passed from the Israelites/Jews to the Christians. Most of the chronicle dealt with the "invitation" of the Varangians to what became known as the land of Rus', the story of the "Apostles to the Slavs" Saints Constantine/Cyril and Methodius, the late-tenth-century Christianization of Rus', and the rule of the polity's often warring princes.

The original manuscripts of the *Primary Chron-*
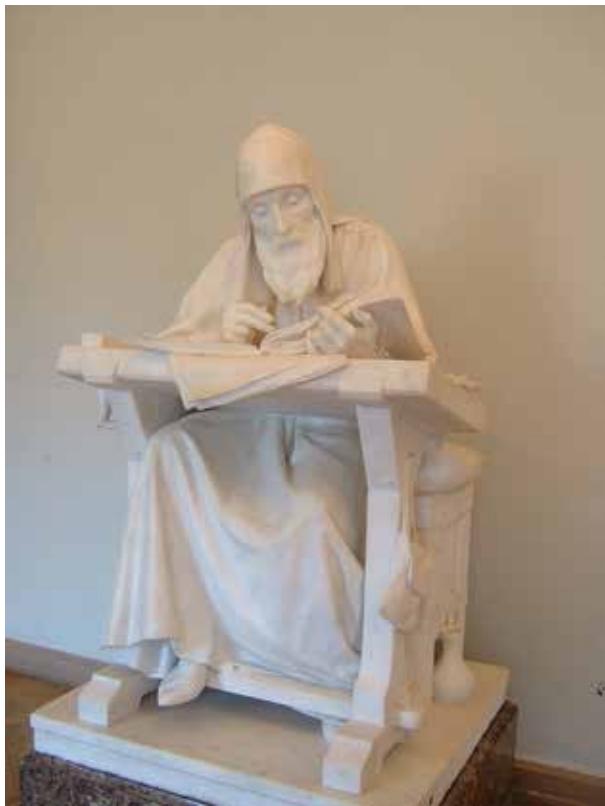
161. The monk Nestor (d. ca. 1112), compiler of the medieval *Rus' Primary Chronicle*, sculpture (1890) by the Russian Jewish artist Mark Antokolskii.

icle did not survive, so that what we have is a later more extensive and reworked text. The so-called Hypatian Codex (fifteenth century) created a kind of mega-story (grand historical narrative), which subsequently lent itself to the idea of political continuity between Kievan Rus' and the thirteenth-century principality of Galicia-Volhynia, later viewed by some as a proto-Ukrainian state. Another version of the *Primary Chronicle*, known as the Laurentian Codex (fourteenth century), aimed to prove that the great city-state of Novgorod in the Russian north, and not the principality of Galicia-Volhynia in the Ukrainian southwest, continued the traditions of Kievan Rus'. Thus, the ongoing heated dispute over who "owns" the past of Kievan Rus', whether modern-day Ukraine or modern-day Russia, was inspired by a literary chronicle from the late-medieval period that is at least five hundred years old.

Perhaps the most influential literary text created in the times of Kievan Rus' was the *Slovo o polku Igoreve* (Lay of Igor's Campaign) from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. This anonymous

epic poem tells the story of the 1185 raid of Prince Igor, ruler of one of the southern Rus' principalities, against a nomadic steppe people called the Polovtsians. The anonymous author transformed Igor's defeat into a call to unite the scattered Rus' principalities into a single polity, which would help them to withstand future threats from the east. Reading the *Lay of Igor's Campaign* allows one to reconstruct the complex gamut of medieval Rus' social, religious, and family contexts, which include relations between the prince and his troops, between the Christian Rus' and pagan nomads, between the people and the forces of nature, and between Prince Igor and his beloved wife waiting at home. The Igor story has inspired dozens of later literary versions, including the Ukrainian national bard Taras Shevchenko's "Lament of Yaroslavna" ("Plach Yaroslavny," 1860); several English translations, including one by the renowned Russian émigré author Vladimir Nabokov; and a romantic opera by the Russian composer Aleksander Borodin, *Prince Igor* (1890). Even the Jewish activist from Ukraine Zeev Jabotinsky was inspired to use *The Lay of the Host* as the title of his memoir
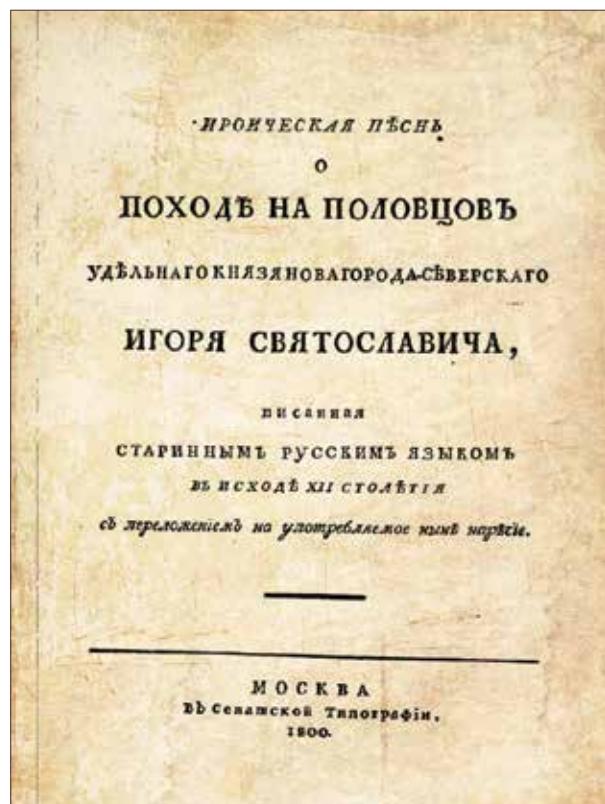
162. Title page of the first edition of the *Slovo o polku Igoreve* (The Lay of Igor's Campaign, Moscow, 1800).

(1928) about the heroic Jewish Legion that fought within the British Army during World War I.

Early-modern authors in Ukrainian lands under Poland-Lithuania wrote their works not only in the official languages of the commonwealth, Polish and Latin, but also in a language called Ruthenian (*ruskyi*, also referred to as Middle Ukrainian). For example, Metropolitan Ipatii (Adam) Potii composed in Ruthenian and Polish a polemical work called the *Antyryzys* (1599–1600), a kind of apologia for the newly established Uniate (later Greek Catholic) Church of which he was the first head. About the same time, an anonymous Galician clerical author wrote a complex historical chronicle, *Perestroha* (Exhortation, ca. 1600), in which he retold tales from many earlier chronicles and sympathetically portrayed sixteenth-century political and religious events such as the emergence of the Uniate Church.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Orthodox members of the Polish nobility feared that Roman Catholicism (and its Uniate allies) would suppress what they considered genuinely Eastern-rite traditions. To prevent this from happening, they established nearly a thousand schools and seminaries, of which the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was the most renowned. Out of this scholastic tradition came new literary genres and trends epitomized by the writings of the polylingual Teofan Prokopovych. When, in 1716, the tsar of Muscovy Peter I invited Prokopovych to St Petersburg to oversee the reform of the Russsian Orthodox Church and its newly created council of bishops (synod), the prelate from Kyiv felt he needed to justify himself in the eyes of the Muscovite church hierarchs who considered him a parvenu. To this end, Prokopovych conceptualized the tripartite brotherly unity of the Slavic peoples (Ukrainians, Belarusans, Russians), invented the concept of the Russian Empire (to replace Muscovy), and advanced the idea of Russia as the only legitimate heir to Kievan Rus'. Hence, the key Russian imperial concepts were actually advanced by a Ukrainian educator and thinker!

Also trained at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and at several central European universities was the philosopher and poet Hryhorii Skovoroda. In stark contrast to Prokopovych, Skovoroda shunned lucrative

163. Teofan Prokopovych (1681-1736), Christian Orthodox churchman and writer from Ukraine, portrayed among other key political and religious figures on the monument, "Millennium of Russia," in Velikii Novgorod. Photo, 2010.

positions whether in the church or in secular society. Instead, he moved from place to place with his flute and manuscripts, teaching in eastern and central Ukraine and writing philosophical treatises, parables, and prose in a fusion language of Middle Ukrainian and Church Slavonic intermixed with elements from Latin and Russian. He also composed music and wrote songs that were collected in his *Sad bozhestvennykh pisnei* (Garden of Divine Songs, ca. 1757). Skovoroda's highly innovative compositions advanced what one might call a "philosophy of life" that included elements of Renaissance neo-Platonism and seventeenth-century mysticism. His thought was based on the centrality of human self-knowledge,

164. Hryhorii Skovoroda (1722-1794), poet and writer from Ukraine, considered the first Ukrainian philosopher.

which he viewed as the key manifestation of spiritual freedom, and was expounded in works such as "Narcissus, or a Conversation about Knowing Thyself"; "Conversation of Five Co-travelers about Genuine Happiness in Life"; and "A Talk about How Easy It Is to Be Gracious." Owing to highly problematic relations between Skovoroda and the official Orthodox Church in what was then the Russian Empire, almost none of his works were published during his lifetime. Hundreds were circulated in manuscript, however, and after Skovoroda's death some appeared in published form. Drawing on dozens of contemporary philosophers and religious thinkers, Skovoroda's writings had an enormous influence on the subsequent development of Ukrainian literature, in particular on its leading nineteenth-century representatives, Ivan Kotlyarevskyi and Taras Shevchenko.

Modern Ukrainian literature can be said to begin with Ivan Kotlyarevskyi, who wrote the heroic-comic epic poem *Eneyida* (Aeneid, 1798). In this work, Kotlyarevskyi presented the epic post-Trojan War events described by the Roman poet Virgil, in which Ukrainian Cossacks became the protagonists rather than the ancient Trojans and Romans. Relying heav-

165. Ivan Kotlyarevskyi (1769-1838), writer from the Russian Empire, considered the father of modern Ukrainian literature.

ily on the tradition of French heroic-comic poems, Kotlyarevskyi wrote his parody in a colloquial Ukrainian language peppered with peasant idioms, Cossack verbiage, and the profane speech of contemporary seminary students. Not only did he satirize the various strata of the Russian imperial society to which he belonged, he also lifted Ukrainian to the level of Virgil's Latin epic poem and, in a mocking, tongue-in-cheek manner, presented Ukrainians as an ancient people. This manner of delivering politically provocative messages in mocking form came to be associated in Ukrainian literature with his name (*kotlyarevshchyna*).

Romanticism presented new opportunities for Ukrainian writers. The Romantic poets of Germany preached that the *Volk*, ordinary rural people, embodied the absolute truth, that their folklore (tales, epic narratives, songs) represented the highest literary value, and that the poet's mission was to reveal the *Volksseele*, the soul of the people, by using folklore as a conduit. Under the impact of these ideas, three Galician writers—Markiyan Shashkevych, Yakiv Holovatskyi, and Ivan Vahylevych—turned to

166. Markiyan Shashkevych (1811-1843), Ivan Vahylevych (1811-1866), and Yakiv Holovatskyi (1814-1888), the earliest Ruthenian/Ukrainian writers from the Austrian Empire.

167. Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861), painter, poet—the national bard of Ukraine. Self-portrait, 1840.

collecting Ukrainian folklore in Austrian Galicia. In their collection *Rusalka dnistrovaya* (The Nymph of the Dniester, 1837), they included folkloric texts, translations from European literature, and philological studies. The fact that they used the Ukrainian vernacular and a simplified form of the Cyrillic alphabet for the first time in Austrian Galicia frightened the Habsburg authorities, who, at a time of conservative reaction to revolutionary ideas, saw any kind of change and innovation as a threat to the established social order. Most important, it was the Galician Ukrainian writers' discovery of the beauty of Ukrainian folklore that made their collection an epoch-making event.

On the other side of the border in the Russian Empire, Taras Shevchenko placed Ukrainian literature firmly on the European literary map as nobody before or after him was able to do. A peasant-serf who eventually became an outstanding painter, Shevchenko arrived in the imperial capital of St Petersburg to discover European and Russian Romanticism and imbue it with new meaning. In his *Kobzar* (The Minstrel, 1840), *Haidamaky* (The Haidamaks, 1841), and *Try lita* (Three Summers, 1845), Shevchenko employed Romantic patterns to reveal what he defined as the rebellious and freedom-loving soul of the Ukrainian people, to celebrate its violent yet justified resistance to social oppression, to mock the ruling elites (whether Russian, Ukrainian, or Polish), and to bemoan the fate of Ukrainians, a widowed and orphaned people suppressed for centuries both socially and culturally. Shevchenko emerged as a poet-messiah who, like Byron fighting for the Greeks or Mickiewicz advocating for the Poles, came to redeem his people through poetry, using the rhythms and meters of Ukrainian folklore to convey the subversive, anti-imperial message of Ukrainian revival and liberation. Shevchenko's life experience — he was per-

168. Marko Vovchok (b. Mariya Vilinska, 1834-1907), Ukrainian prose writer from the Russian Empire.

secuted, exiled, and for a decade confined to army barracks — allowed him to take on the image of a national bard, a Christ-like martyr sacrificed for the sake of his own people.

Shevchenko's friend Panteleimon Kulish, who wrote, like Shevchenko, in Ukrainian and in Russian, realized that his message would be much stronger if evidence could be marshaled to prove the distinct ethnic and cultural character of the Little Russians (as ethnic Ukrainians were known at the time), who had no choice but to live under Moscovite and Russian rule. An ambitious though contradictory public figure, Kulish published newspapers, journals, and almanacs to convey his message. He also wrote historical studies and novels glorifying—and thus creating in literary discourse—the notion of the troublesome Ukrainian past. Most important, he published several studies on Ukrainian ethnography and folklore, and co-authored the first Ukrainian translation of the Bible.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, two trends informed Ukrainian literary endeavors: political populism and literary naturalism. Writers like Ivan Nechui-Levytskyi, Marko Vovchok (pseudonym of Mariya Vilinska), and Panas Myrnyi crafted realistic images of contemporary ethnic Ukrainians: former serfs liberated but with insufficient land, who then became impoverished and often had to move to large urban areas, where they were forced into the role of poorly paid blue-collar hired workers, seamstresses, and prostitutes. These writers adhered to the aesthetic principles of Émile Zola, with his emphasis on the social milieu as the major force shaping an individual's character. Although focused on the enslaving impact of their social milieu at a time of urbanization and industrialization, they also captured the unique process of ripening national self-awareness embodied by their protagonists in

169. Ivan Franko (1856-1916), Austrian Galicia's most prominent intellectual.

late imperial Russia.

In Ukrainian lands within the Austrian Empire, the dominant literary figure was Ivan Franko. He moved from populist-realism to a social-democratic vision of the Ukrainian future with pronounced nationalist underpinnings. The phenomenally prolific Franko worked in virtually every genre—journalism, literary criticism, translation, philology, and the study of history and folklore—although it was as a novelist and a poet that he acquired national renown. His novels, such as *Boryslav smiyetsya* (Boryslav Is Laughing, 1881), stylistically combine French naturalism with elements of Marxist class analysis in their depiction of the rising oil industry in East Galicia, the pauperization of the Ukrainian masses, and the emerging class struggle among the new Ukrainian proletariat. In his poetry, however, Franko reveals himself as more a revolutionary romantic than a social realist. His poetic verses courageously called for the Ukrainian people to demolish what he saw as the overwhelming burden of social oppression, regardless which power, imperial Austria or Russia, was the cause.

Meanwhile, in the Russian Empire Lesya Ukrayinka was also caught up in revolutionary romantic fervor. A poetess of unsurpassed lyricism and masterful artistic sensitivity, she drew heavily from her prodigious knowledge of European literature, particularly Greek mythology and European modernist drama. She created plays in which her non-conformist and highly idealistic male and female characters defied the corrupt reality of contemporary society, challenged social conformism, and, if necessary (like Mavka in "The Forest Song," 1912), paid with their lives for their courageous and lonely choices.

But what was the price of such defiance and how could it be translated into action within real social
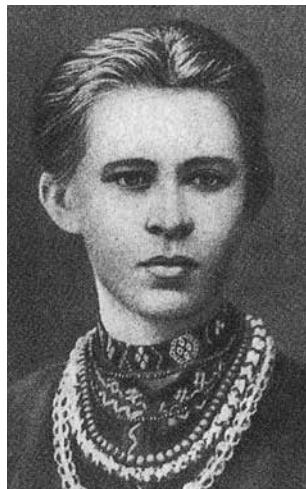
170. Lesya Ukrayinka (b. Larysa Kosach, 1871-1913), lyric poet and playwright from the Russian Empire.

circumstances? The answer is found in the writings of perhaps the most important Ukrainian playwright of the early twentieth century, Volodymyr Vynnychenko. He placed uneasy ethical dilemmas before his characters not in some folkloric or historically distant past, but in most unusual contemporary situations: the criminal underworld, a prison cell, a Ukrainian village caught in revolutionary upheaval, and encounters among revolutionaries of differing political orientation. Yet how could one's ethical integrity be preserved when circumstances required immediate action? The negotiation of values was far from being just a literary question for Vynnychenko. As one of the three top leaders of the short-lived Ukrainian People's Republic, he tried to work in the political world but failed. Thereafter, he settled as an émigré writer in France. While he spoke out against the Soviet regime, he disappeared from the Ukrainian literary horizon for more than half a century.

171. Mykola Khvylovyi (b. Nikolai Fitilev, 1893-1933), leading figure of the 1920s cultural renaissance in Soviet Ukraine.

The period of Ukrainianization and national communism that characterized Soviet Ukraine during the 1920s created exceptional opportunities that resulted in a period of literary renaissance. Among the leading writers during the renaissance was Mykola Khvylovyi (pseudonym of Nikolai Fitilev). He exemplified the very essence of utopian national communism, which he saw

172. Memorial plaque on the House of Writers (Slovo) in Kharkiv, home to the most prominent Ukrainian and Yiddish writers and poets in the late 1920s-early 1930s.

as offering an opportunity to abandon old Ukrainian folklore-based patterns and open Ukrainian literature wide to European modernistic influences. Mykhailo Semenko and Mykola Bazhan framed their poetry in the form of a productive conversation with Russian and European futurism, while Ivan Kulyk, sympathetic to the proletarian masses, introduced the rhythms of Afro-American musical folklore into Ukrainian poetry. No less proletarian-minded was Yurii Smolych, who, following British examples, employed the narrative techniques of science fiction. At the same time, Maksym Rylskyi, Mykola Zerov, and Yurii Klen (pseudonym of Oswald Burghardt) explored the legacy of French symbolism and transformed it into their own style of Ukrainian Neo-Classicism, while Valerian Polishchuk experimented with Austrian modernistic story-telling techniques. The literary renaissance connected with the period of Ukrainianization was a particularly fascinating time when writers of different ethnic origins—Russian, German, or Jewish—made a home for themselves in Ukrainian cultural circles.

When, in the 1930s, the Soviet regime under the increasingly powerful Stalin decided that socialism could be built in one state and that leftist internationalist ideas were superfluous, these wonderful literary developments came to a halt. Dozens of Ukrainian literati were arrested, accused on the bogus pretext of being enemies of the people and subversive nationalists, sentenced to long terms in prison, and in some cases executed. Most of those who avoided arrest, poets such as Maksym Rylskyi and Pavlo Tychyna, were intimidated to such a degree that they never again lived up to their own previous achievements. The subsequent generation of writers, such as Mykhailo Stelmakh, Natan Rybak, Oleksandr Korniichuk, and Oles Honchar, who came into their own in the 1940s and 1950s, worked within the parameters of the only endorsed stylistic trend: socialist realism. They, like all writers, were obliged to glorify the class struggle of the pre-revolutionary proletariat and create positive examples for present-day socialist workers who should feel optimism for a bright Communist future. Their stylistically quite sophisticated, yet artistically non-engaging, works avoided any dialogue with contemporaneous European literary trends.

It is, therefore, no surprise that the most important and innovative Ukrainian literary texts of the 1940s and 1950s appeared not in Soviet Ukraine but in the diaspora. Writers such as Ihor Kostetskyi (pen-name of Ihor Merzlyakov), Ulas Samchuk, Yurii Kosach, and Ivan Bahryanyi (pseudonym of Ivan Lazovyagin) chose as their subject matter the

173. Pavlo Tychyna (1891-1967), Ukrainian poet acclaimed by the Soviet authorities.

reconstruction of the recent past of which they were witnesses and victims. Drawing on elements of European (German and French) existentialism, Samchuk created the epic novel *Mariya* (1934) about the Great Famine/*Holodomor* in Ukraine; Bahryanyi explored in novels the Great Terror of the 1930s; and Yurii Kosach looked to the dis-

174. Lina Kostenko (b. 1930), one of the 1960s poets who broke from Soviet restrictions on literary style.

tant past in a series of stylistically innovative historical novels on the seventeenth-century Cossack revolts. Kostetskyi, perhaps the most talented among these diaspora literary figures, established himself as the founding father of the Ukrainian absurdist style, which preceded and foreshadowed the writings of Samuel Beckett.

During the short period of the so-called political Thaw in the Soviet Union, the generation of the 1960s boldly challenged established ideological restrictions and revived the artistic experiments of the 1920s with an emphasis on Ukrainian symbolism, the historical past, and folklore. Hryhir Tyutyunnyk drew upon the tradition of Ukrainian Baroque in his rural short stories, while Yurii Shcherbak in his urban novels explored ethical aspects of existentialist literature. The most important breakthroughs, however, came in the poetry of Vasyl Symonenko, Lina Kostenko, Ivan Drach, Mykola Vinhranovskyi, Leonid Kiselev, and Moisei Fishbein, among others. Breaking with the canons of socialist realism, these poets placed the suffering thinker concerned about his land and culture at the epicenter of their imaginary realm, thereby openly rejecting what they considered the colonialist conditions of their contemporary Ukrainian homeland. Ivan Dzyuba, the prolific literary critic and philologist of philo-Semitic convictions, was among the key thinkers of this informal 1960s group.

Once the period of the Thaw ended with arrests and other forms of government repression, some of the representatives of the 1960s generation, such as the poet Dmytro Pavlychko, adapted to the new political situation. Others refused to capitulate, the most profound and rebellious among them being Vasyl Stus (nominated in 1985 for the Nobel prize). Aside from his literary work, Stus was active in the dissident movement and publicly protested the Soviet govern-

175. Yurii Andrukhovych (b. 1960), present-day Ukrainian post-modernist writer.

ment's persecution of the nationalist-minded Ukrainian intelligentsia. Unsurprisingly, these poets (with the exceptions of Symonenko, beaten to death by the security organs in 1963, and Stus, who died in prison in 1985) were at the forefront of the new political strivings on the eve of and immediately after the declaration of Ukraine's independence in 1991.

In independent Ukraine, censorship was lifted and the now antiquated socialist-realist writers lost their readership. Moreover, the state no longer promoted their works. Instead, the works of dozens of writers from the 1920s and 1930s who had been exiled or executed were returned to readers through extensive posthumous publications. Numerous diaspora writers and poets also made their way for the first time to readers in Ukraine, and even into the curricula of secondary schools and colleges. Although in recent years book-market sales have dropped precipitously (Ukraine's population ranks among the lowest in Europe in terms of reading), new Ukrainian writers can nonetheless incorporate western European literary trends into their works. The result has been a new generation of writers who can be classified as post-modernists (Yurii Andrukhovych, Serhii Zhadan, Oleksandr Irvanets); feminists (Oksana Zabuzhko); national chroniclers (Mariya Matios, Valerii Shevchuk, Yurii Vynnychuk); satirists and humorists using the fusion language *surzhyk* (Bohdan Zholdak, Mykhailo Brynykh); and fantasists, often writing in Russian (Andrii Kurkov). Also, by the outset of the twenty-first century, the previous barrier between the diaspora and the literary world in Ukraine has disappeared. For example, the poet Vasyl Makhno freely travels between Chortkiv in Galicia and New York in the United States, allowing him to create urban verse that explores different cultures, countries, urban profiles, and human types.

Jewish literary production

Before the era of liberalism and the secularization that characterized the second half of the long nineteenth century, the most widespread genres of literary creativity in traditional Jewish communities of Ukraine were books for individual and group study, liturgy, and religious education. These included rabbinic responsa, commentaries on the classical Judaic texts, legal codices, ethical treatises, theological compositions, tractates on Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism, and, of course, prayer books. They were predominantly written in Hebrew, the major mode of written communication among Jews. The earliest such works by authors in Ukrainian lands date from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Some of these books became so influential that Jews used their titles as the equivalent of the names of the authors, while the authors themselves were referred to by the names of their books. For example, Joel Syrkes, who served in the early seventeenth century as a rabbi in Medzhybizh, published what became a famous collection of responsa titled *Bayt hadash* (New House). In this work Syrkes proposed many adjustments to religious law, including permission to read secular books on the Sabbath, allowing women to wear men's clothing in severe weather conditions, and the idea that Jewish doctors would not be violating the sanctity of the Sabbath if they needed to attend to their Christian clients. Later generations referred to Syrkes as *B"H* (pronounced *bakh*) after the abbreviated name of his book; thus, the *Bakh* wrote, the *Bakh* said, the *Bakh* maintained, etc. This manner of referring to an author by emphasizing his work and de-emphasizing his person was quite common in traditional Jewish culture.

Among the most famous of rabbinic responsa was the *Noda bi-Yehudah* (Known in Juda) by Yehezkel Landau, an influential eighteenth-century rabbinic scholar who studied in Brody and eventually moved to Prague. Landau endorsed the study of secular subjects, argued for allowing autopsies in certain cases (otherwise forbidden in Judaism), introduced regulations to protect women in divorce cases, and vehemently fought against sectarian trends in Judaism, in particular the Sabbatean and Frankist move-

ments (see chapter 2). In the nineteenth century, the most significant responsa was the six-volume *Shoel u-meshiv* (Answer and Reply) by Joseph Nathanson, the chief rabbi of Lviv. Its decisions endorsed a new technology for making Passover *matzo* and allowed the use of foods and clothing mechanically produced at newly established factories owned by Gentiles, which the rabbi himself went to oversee.

Ukraine was the birthplace of a number of mystical texts of primary importance. Among these were the early-sixteenth-century *Shoshan sodot* (The Rose of Secrets), a commentary by Moshe of Kyiv on the medieval *Sefer yetsirah* (Book of Creation); the mid-seventeenth-century *Sefer karnayim* (Book of Beams), by a prominent Kabbalist from Volhynia, Shimshon of Ostropolye; and the enormously popular Kabbalistic prayer book *Shaarei Tsion* (Gates of Zion, ca. 1650s), composed by the famous chronicler Natan Hannover. It was in the early eighteenth century that the most important books on Kabbalah were published for the first time at the Zhovkva (Polish: Żółkiew) printing press in Galicia.

The rise of Hasidism brought about a wide variety of new books and genres, particularly since Hasid-
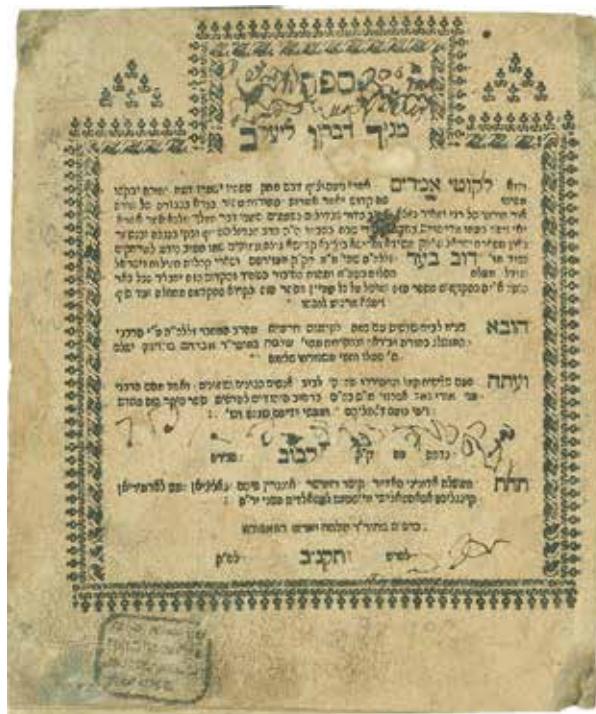
176. Title page of *Magid devarav le-Yaakov* (Lviv/Lemberg, 1792), a book of homilies composed by Dov Ber of Mezhyrich, the closest colleague and disciple of the Baal Shem Tov.

177. Joseph Perl (1773-1839), Galician enlightener/*maskil.*

ic masters were striving to undermine the criticism of their opponents (*mitnagdim*); they aimed to show that Hasidism significantly enriched Judaism, that it enhanced Judaic values, and that the Hasidim were not sectarians. Among the best-known works that resulted from these polemics were commentaries on the oral and written Torah, such as the *Toldot Yakov Yosef* (History of Yakov Yosef, 1780), the *Magid devarav le-Yaakov* (A Preacher's Words to Jacob, 1781), and the *Kedushat Levy* (Sanctity of Levy, 1798). These books introduced the esoteric and secret meaning of Judaic books and rituals; they showed how personal piety might produce miracles and how Kabbalistic meanings made complex aspects of Judaic ritual transparent and understandable; and they were instrumental in bringing new followers to the Hasidic masters (*tsadikim*), now seen as the pillars of Jewish traditional life. About the same time, new genres of Hasidic writings appeared, including *sipurey maysiyos* (stories of wondrous deeds), popular tales, and at times rather sophisticated allegories usually in Yiddish, either about or by wonder-working Hasidic *tsadikim*. These works, many of which were published by the newly established printing presses in Ukraine's *shtetls*, had a significant impact at the time not only on the Hasidic masses but also later on twentieth-century Jewish thinkers of whom Martin Buber, Solomon Schechter, and Abraham Joshua Heschel were the most prominent.

The enlightened *maskilim* of eastern Europe who did not like the Hasidic masters sought to disrupt their impact by disseminating ideas of the Jewish Enlightenment, or *Haskalah*. They called for innovative secularized education and were particularly critical of the Hasidic masters. For example, *Heshbon ha-nefesh* (Moral Accounting, 1808), a treatise by an author from the small border town of Sataniv

in Russian-ruled Podolia, Mendel Lefin, took the view that reliance on a Hasidic master was a corrupt practice and simply reflected the gullibility of the Jewish masses, a shortcoming that he proposed to overcome through individual self-perfection. Another enlightened educator, Joseph Perl from Ternopil in Austrian-ruled Galicia, went even further in a work, *Megaleh temirin* (Revealer of Secrets, 1819), which is considered the first Hebrew-language novel. In this satirical composition, Perl "collected" fake correspondence between Hasidic followers obsessed with finding and destroying an anti-Hasidic composition. Other challenges to Hasidism came from the pen of Yitshak Ber Levinzon, one of the most important enlighteners active in Ukrainian lands under the Russian Empire. His *Teudah be-Yisrael* (Testimony for the Jews, 1827), which insisted on the necessity of a secular approach to teaching Hebrew, was followed by an anti-Hasidic satire, *Divrei tsadikim* (Words of the Righteous, 1830).
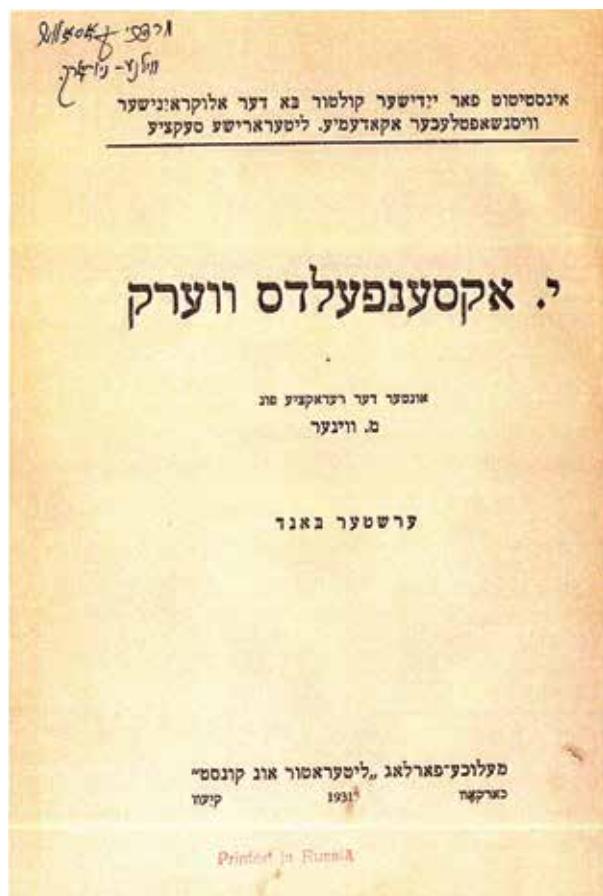
178. Title page of an anthology of Yisroel Aksenfeld's Yiddish literary works published by the Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture (Kyiv and Kharkiv, 1931).

Two unparalleled compositions by Jewish enlighteners (written in the 1820s–1830s but published much later) paved the way for a new way of thinking. One was the Hebrew treatise *More nevukhei ha-zman* (A Guide for the Perplexed of Our Time, 1851) by Nahman Krochmal from the Austria's Galician border town of Brody, who used key concepts of German philosophy (Herder and Hegel) in order to prove that the Jews were a nation, not a religious tribe, and that they possessed a unique *Volksgeist* (national spirit). In other words, they belonged to that group of historical peoples who had a future. Such a reassessment triggered a Jewish national revival which, in turn, had a major impact on Heinrich Graetz, the founding father of Jewish historiography, and on Theodor Herzl, the founding father of the Zionist movement.

The second of Ukraine's influential Jewish enlighteners and a harbinger of a major literary change was Yisroel Aksenfeld from Nemyriv. In works such as the novel *Dos Shterntikhl* (The Headband, 1861) and the play *Der ershter yiddisher rekrut* (The First Jewish Conscript, 1862), Aksenfeld drew a poignant portrayal of the traditional nineteenth-century Jewish *shtetl*, permeated with scintillating humor and characterized by precise ethnographic detail expressed in rich Yiddish language. Aksenfeld's stylistic and linguistic innovations preceded the more famous Mendele Moykher Sforim and Sholem Aleichem by more than a quarter of a century.

The Reform Era launched in the Russian Empire by Tsar Alexander II in the 1860s and at the same time the emancipation of the Jews in the Habsburg Empire under Emperor Franz Joseph created socio-cultural conditions that encouraged literary genres best expressed in the newly emerging Jewish press. The appearance of Russian-, Yiddish-, Hebrew-, Polish-, and German-language newspapers provided dozens of new avenues for enlightenment-minded individuals who sought to reform contemporary society, whether Russian and Austro-Hungarian societies as a whole or their specific Jewish component. Since the Jewish reading public in both empires was primarily Yiddish-speaking, authors who turned to Hebrew (Mendele Moykher Sforim) or to Russian (Sholem Aleichem) were soon
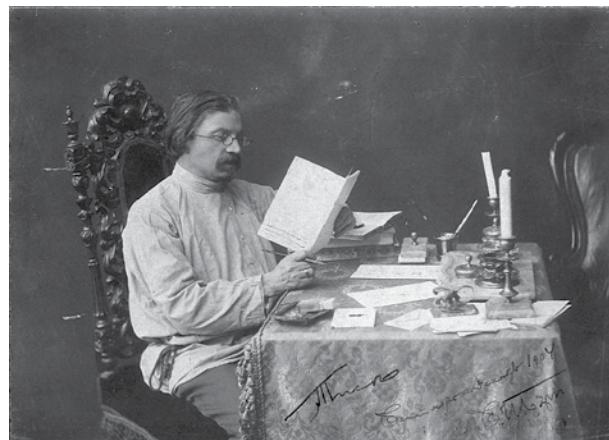
179. Sholem Aleichem (1859-1916), Ukraine-born Yiddish writer at his writing desk in St. Petersburg, 1904.

forced to face reality. If they wanted to have an impact on their readers, they would have to use Yiddish. This was a time, the mid-nineteenth century, when Jewish secular literary culture (journalism and belle-lettres) was expressed in all eastern European languages as well as in Hebrew and Yiddish.

The choice of language signified newly manifested cultural loyalties and represented the literary culture in which a writer would invest his or her talent. Because of the various linguistic choices, *several* Jewish literatures emerged in Ukrainian lands of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires during the second half of the nineteenth century. Hundreds of publications in different languages and in practically every genre of literary creativity appeared.

Some writers introduced Jewish motifs when writing in languages other than Hebrew and Yiddish, while others immersed themselves entirely in the larger Russian, Polish, German, or Ukrainian literary tradition. Still others created what could be considered works of Jewish literature written in the non-Jewish languages of central and eastern Europe. For example, those who sought integration into the imperial Russian milieu, like the Odessa writer and publisher of the newspaper *Razsvet* (Dawn) Osip Rabinovich, chose Russian as his medium. His example was followed by dozens of writers, among whom the most notable were Isaac Babel and Zeev Jabotinsky from Odessa, Ilya Ehrenburg from Kyiv, Vasilii Grossman from Berdychiv, Boris Yampolsky from Bila Tserkva, and the entire Odessa school of Russian-Jewish satirists ranging from Ilya Ilf to Mikhail Zhvanetskii.

180. Recent Israeli 50-shekel banknote with the image of Shaul Tshernichowsky (1875-1943), Hebrew-language Israeli poet, born in Ukraine.

The multilingual reality of nineteenth-century Ukrainian lands raises several questions. How should the writers who chose to express themselves in Polish, Russian, and German be classified? And how does one measure the meaningful presence of Jewish themes in their works? While critics have conflicting views on this issue, there is a consensus that literature in Yiddish and Hebrew, the languages used most often if not exclusively by Jews, should be considered Jewish literature.

The period known as the *fin de siècle* (the three or four decades before the outbreak of World War I in 1914) witnessed a blossoming of Yiddish-language and the beginnings of Hebrew-language literature. The towering figure during these decades was Sholem Aleichem (b. Shalom Rabinovitz), who used popular spoken Yiddish filled with idioms and colloquialisms to create tragicomic images of the quintessential (though imaginary) *shtetl* that he called Kasrilevke. In his many prose works, Sholem Aleichem also crafted the prototype of a self-reflecting, entrepreneurial, comical, and poignantly unlucky Jew trying to make both ends meet and provide for his family. He not only portrayed the encounter of the vulnerable "little Jew" with the outside world—ranging from London to Odessa and marked by an environment of antisemitism, assimilation, revolutionary

politics, radicalism, and violence—he also celebrated the warm humor and Jewish wisdom with which his characters reacted to that outside world. This combination of humor and wisdom also characterized the works of two writers, both connected to Bukovina: the Yiddish poetical fables of Eliezer Shteynbarg (*Durkh di briln*/Through Eyeglasses, 1928) and the grotesque fantasy of Itsik Manger (*Di vunderlekhe lebns-bashraybung fun Shmuel-Abe Abervo*/The Wonderful Autobiography of Shmuel-Abe Abervo, 1929).

181. Israeli postal stamp (1981) depicting of the Galician-born modern Hebrew writer and Nobel laureate Shmuel Yosef Agnon (1888-1970).

While Yiddish-language Jewish writers grappled with the relations between the traditional *shtetl* and the rise of ever larger cities, Hebrew-language writers boldly placed their characters at the threshold of modern

urbanized life. Hayim Nahman Bialik from Zhyto-myr and Shaul Tshernichowsky from a village in the southern Ukrainian steppe region both sought to recreate in their Hebrew-language poetry Slavic and European literary legacies ranging from neo-Ro-mantic imagery to a syllabic tonic metrical system. Influenced by the rise of Zionism, they pondered the uneasy relation between the old European Jew-ish centers and the rejuvenated realm of Jewish im-migrants to the land of Israel. In addition, Tcherni-chowsky penned unparalleled Hebrew translations of Finnish (*Kalevala*), Old Rus' (*The Lay of Igor's Campaign*), and American (*Hiawatha*) literature, thereby actively absorbing their imagery and meter into the growing secular Hebrew literature.

Other Hebrew writers in Ukrainian lands, such as Mikhah Yosef Berdyczewski from Medzhybizh and Yosef Hayim Brenner from Novi Mlyny near Chernihiv, were particularly sensitive to European influences. Under the impact of the *fin-de-siècle* fix-ation on human disease, the criminal underground, and the instability of the individual psyche and li-bido, Berdyczewski explored marginal characters and situations among Jews, whereas Brenner inves-tigated the clash, reflected in graphic language, be-tween people's expectations and the brutal reality in World War I Ottoman-ruled Palestine. The Nobel Prize laureate Shemuel Yosef Agnon (b. Czaczkes) from the eastern Galician town of Buchach, who later lived in Germany and Israel, combined an in-terest in the Galician *shtetl* with concern about the hopes and fantasies of Jewish settlers in Palestine. In novels such as *Oreah natah lalun* (A Guest for the Night, 1939) and *Edo and Enam* (1950), Agnon portrayed the imminent disappearance of eastern European Jewry and soberly assessed the unreal-ized messianic expectations of Zionism for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

The fate of Hebrew-language literature took a de-cided turn for the worse in the Soviet Union. This is because the ideologists of the new revolutionary worker's state considered the Hebrew language a medium of the wrong ideology (nationalism), the wrong worldview (religion), and the wrong class (bourgeoisie). On the other hand, they saw Yiddish as a genuine folk language that was appropriately

182. Yiddish literati Osher Warszawski, Peretz Markish, and Hayim Leyvik at work in Paris on the first issue of the avant-garde periodical *Khalyastre*. Photo, 1924.

proletarian and atheist. Therefore, in the 1920s, the Soviet authorities created incomparably favorable conditions for the development of Yiddish culture, literature, and the press. Yiddish writers and poets who had left the country during the political and social turmoil following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolu-tion now returned and established themselves first in Kharkiv and later in Kyiv.

In both those capital cities of Ukraine, Yiddish-lan-guage Jewish poets and writers who were natives of small towns and villages across Soviet Ukraine—Leyb Kvitko from Holoskovo near Odessa, Perets Markish from Polonne, Itsik Fefer from Shpola, Dovid Hof-steyn from Korostyshiv, Dovid Bergelson from Sar-ny—enjoyed enormous prestige and a mass follow-ing. Many, however, were forced to abandon their ex-perimental innovations with style and imagery, and instead work within the artistic guidelines of socialist realism and its overwhelming concern with the class struggle and Communist ideology. In the end, while these writers may have achieved literary success, they often did so at the expense of artistic integrity. For

example, Dovid Bergelson had earlier produced several outstanding prose works (such as *Nokh alemen / When All Is Said and Done*, 1913), which explored the alienation and existential crisis facing the individual. During the Soviet period, by contrast, he adopted the socialist-realist approach, as in the epic novel *Bam Dnyepr* (On the Dnieper, 1932), in which the main character, a Jewish youth and most likely a future urban proletarian, is portrayed as at odds with his corrupt *shtetl* environment.

After World War II, the world of Jewish literature changed dramatically. The only remaining significant Hebrew-language poet in the Soviet Union, Hayim Lenski from Soviet Belorussia, died in the gulag. Almost all the other distinguished Jewish writers and poets, such as those active in the Soviet Union's Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, were arrested in 1952, accused of espionage and "rootless cosmopolitanism," tortured, and executed. As the Kyiv-based literary critic Myron Petrovsky put it: Hitler murdered Jewish readers, while Stalin murdered Jewish writers. Nevertheless, by the second half of the twentieth century, the very few survivors of the late-Stalinist era anti-cosmopolitan campaign were able to publish some works in Yiddish. Among them were gulag survivors from Soviet Ukraine, Nosn Zabara from Rohachiv in Volhynia and Gershl Poliakner from Uman, who in novels such as *Galgal hakhoyzer* (The Revolving Wheel, 1979) and *Geven amol a shtetl* (There Once Was a Shtetl, 1990) connected the world of Sephardic Jews from Spain with that of Ashkenazic Jews from eastern Europe. By the last decade of the twentieth century, the most prolific Yiddish writer in Ukraine was the Bukovinian Jew Yoysef Burg. He began his literary career before World War II and continued to publish after the war, producing numerous novels, short stories, and sketches, such as *Dos lebn geyt vayter* (Life Is Going On, 1980).

Jewish-Ukrainian literary cross-fertilization

Regardless of their language of expression, Jewish writers in Ukraine remained loyal to Ukrainian and Jewish themes. The German-language Emil Franzos, for example, was perhaps the first writer to portray Jews and Ukrainians in Galicia and Bukovina. Men-

183. Piotr Rawicz (1919-1982), Galician-born Jewish author of *Blood from the Sky* (1961), the first novel on the Holocaust published in French.

dele Moykher Sforim and Sholem Aleichem poked fun at the mutual cultural stereotypes of the Other among Jews and Eastern Orthodox. Mendele, in particular, used long quotes in Ukrainian (transliterated with Hebrew letters) to create a hilarious imaginative Yiddish-Ukrainian linguistic environment for his characters. The Russian-language Vasilii Grossman portrayed the precarious fate of the two Soviet peoples, Ukrainians and Jews, by creating direct parallels between the *Holodomor* and the Holocaust. One of the most powerful examples of literary multilingualism was Piotr Rawicz, a Lviv-born Jewish writer, who spent two years in Auschwitz as a "Ukrainian" prisoner. In his French-language novel *Blood from the Sky* (1961), he created an image of a Galician Jew who is trying to escape deportation to the death camps by using forged papers and presenting himself as a Ukrainian intellectual. He manages to escape precisely because of his profound knowledge of the Ukrainian language and literature, which he uses to dupe the Nazis.

Several works of Ukraine's Jewish writers not only proved to be of the highest European caliber, they at the same time enriched Polish, German, Russian, Hebrew, Yiddish, and Ukrainian literatures. Despite their language preference and choice of association with either the imperial or stateless colonial culture, many authors were attached to Ukraine. Thus, the Zionist Zeev Jabotinsky argued repeatedly in his numerous feuilletons against Russian chauvinists while underscoring the greatness and beauty of the distinctly Ukrainian literature and language. The Hebrew writer and Nobel Prize winner S.Y. Agnon consistently returned in his imagination to his native Buchach, which reappears under various names in novels and short stories. Sholem Aleichem immortalized in his Yiddish narratives the inhabit-

184. Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880-1951), Ukrainian political leader, writer, and playwright, and his wife Rozalia (née Lifshits).

ants of Anatevka, filling his prose with dialogues in Ukrainian transcribed in Yiddish. Ultimately, the Russian-language Vasilii Grossman was the first among Soviet writers to equate the *Holodomor* and the Holocaust and to portray Ukraine's tragedy as a state-orchestrated famine, doing so long before anyone in the Soviet Union even dared think about any similarity between those tragedies in the lives of the two peoples. The loyalty of Jewish writers to Ukrainian themes went far beyond the requirements of *couleur locale* or of images from a nostalgic childhood and represented instead a high level of solidarity and empathy toward things Ukrainian.

The few multilingual Jews who turned to the Ukrainian language and sought integration within the country's intelligentsia and culture did so precisely at a time, the 1920s, when ethnic Ukrainians were experiencing a national revival. As they were rejecting previous romantic and positivistic aspects of nationalism, they were forced to reassess stereotypes and, in the process, reimagine the Jew.

To be sure, ethnic Ukrainian writers had to grapple with a formidable set of anti-Jewish stereotypes expressed in existing literary works that were inspired by the early-nineteenth-century historic work, *Istoriya Rusov*, with its powerful xenophobic invectives, as well as ballads carefully edited by romantic-minded poets and presented as genuine folklore. In the most controversial of his works, *Haidamaky* (The Haidamaks), the national bard Taras Shevchenko went far beyond the romantic stereotypes, showing

sympathy to an individual Jew and bemoaning the tragedy of a Ukrainian rebel dragged into a bloody whirl of violence. Later, realistic writers such as Panas Myrnyi may not have been sympathetic to what they called Jewish exploitation; nevertheless, they too portrayed individual Jews, particularly women, as sharing values and culture with rural ethnic Ukrainians. Two of the country's most prolific and widely read authors, Lesya Ukrayinka and Ivan Franko, sought to mobilize the Ukrainian people under anti-imperial mottos, all the while drawing parallels between the historical fate of modern-day Ukrainians and the Jews escaping Egyptian bondage. By the early twentieth century, dozens of Ukrainian writers across the political spectrum, from the left-wing nationalist Volodymyr Vynnychenko to the Soviet anti-nationalist Yurii Smolych, presented Jews in a nuanced, often contradictory, yet humane fashion. For them, Jews like ethnic Ukrainians were victims of history.

This rediscovery of Jews and the affinities between the two peoples were far from merely literary. Ukrainians and Jews also discovered each other through intense literary and personal relations. Late in the nineteenth century, several Jews, mostly from Yiddish- and Russian-speaking families, joined the narrow circles of Ukrainian intelligentsia in Lviv, Khar-kiv, and Kyiv, where they found themselves among avid supporters of the Ukrainian socialist- and national-democratic movements. Ethnic Ukrainians reciprocated. Panteleimon Kulish, for ex-

185. Hrytsko Kernerenko (b. Hryhorii Kerner, 1863-unknown), one of the first Jews to publish in the Ukrainian language.

ample, supported Kesar Bilylovskyi, who was of Jewish descent, and thought highly of his lyrics, some of which became popular Ukrainian songs. Likewise, Ivan Franko supported Grigorii Borisovich Kerner, who wrote under the pseudonym Hrytsko Kernerenko. Bilylovskyi sought to integrate Oriental and Jewish motifs within his Ukrainian

LITERARY CROSS-FERTILIZATION

The mutual influence of Jewish and Ukrainian cultural phenomena is graphically evident in the work of a few Jewish belletrists who chose to write in Ukrainian. In a poem titled "Ne ridnyi syn" (The Stepson), Hrytsko Kernerenko (Grigorii Kerner) expresses his own intimate relations with Ukraine, juxtaposing references to Heinrich Heine's love/hate relations with Germany, Taras Shevchenko's image of a lonely poet-orphan, and a folk image of Ukraine as a nursing mother. Although scorned, mocked, and humiliated by his unwelcoming brothers, Kernerenko is far from adopting the tone of an accuser. Instead, he claims that whatever mistreatment and misunderstanding he has experienced will never prevent him from eternally loving his stepmother—Ukraine.

Прощай, Украйно моя –	Fare thee well, my Ukraine,
Тебе я кинуть мушу;	I need to leave you.
Хоча за тебе я б оддав	Albeit for you I have sacrificed
Життя і волю й душу!	My life and freedom and soul!
Але я пасинок тобі,	Still, I am only your stepson,
На жаль, це добре знаю.	And know that well.
Й проміж других дітей твоїх	Among your other children
Я не живу--страждаю.	I live not but I suffer.
Не сила знести вже мені	I cannot tolerate any longer
Глумлінь тих понад міру	The excessive mockery
За те, що я й твої сини	That your sons and I
Не одну маєм віру.	Are of different faiths.
Тебе ж, Украйно моя,	Yet you, my Ukraine,
Я буду вік кохати:	I will love forever:
Бо ти хоч мачуха мені,	Albeit you treat me as a step-son,
А все ж ти мені—мати!	Still you are my mother!

Leonid Pervomaiskyi (Illya Gurevich) seeks to give voice to murdered poets of the past and present, to the ordinary victims of the twentieth-century "bloodlands," and to ordinary words of ordinary language, as in the following untitled poem:

Вірш починається не з звучання,	A poem starts not with a sound,
Хоч і не може він не звучати.	Although it must sound.
Вірш починається з твого мовчання,	A poem starts with your silence,
Коли ти вже не можеш більше мовчати.	When you can no more keep silent.
Вірш починається не з великої літери,	It starts not with a capital letter,
А з великого болю, якого не зміриш.	But with enormous grief.
Тільки тоді йому можна вірити,	Then one can believe in it,
І тільки тоді ти йому віриш.	And only then you believe it.

While other Jewish authors have emphasized the social and cultural oppression of Ukrainians and sought to liberate them from their plight, in his imaginary poetic world Moisei Fishbein stresses the centrality of the Ukrainian language and describes it as a source of strength:

Неторкані й ґвалтовані, зужиті	Untouched and raped, abused
Й недоторканні, наче польова	And unblemished like the countryside–
Невловна і незаймана у житі	Imperceptible and untouched in rye–
Мелодія,—наснилися слова,	Melody, the words came into my dream.
І темрява клубочеться зимове,	The winter darkness rolls
І душі ним просотує сльота.	And their souls are drenched with mist.
Горнись до мене, мовенятко, Мово,	Lean to me my petty tongue, My speech,
Неторкана, ґвалтована, свята.	Unblemished, raped, and sacred.

prose and poetry. Kernerenko wrote several poems about Taras Shevchenko and essays on the Ukrainian national bard's poetic legacy, which, however, the tsarist censors found too suggestive and banned from publication. Nevertheless, Kernerenko persisted and is now remembered as the first to consider the fate of Ukrainian philo-Semitism and to coin images of Ukrainian-Jewish rapprochement in poetic form.

In post-revolutionary Soviet times, many more Jewish writers, scholars, and cultural activists chose Ukrainian as their language of literary expression. Particularly salient among them were the poets Ivan Kulyk, Leonid Pervomaiskyi, and Naum Tykhyi; the playwright Leonid Yukhvid; the prose writers Natan Rybak and Yukhym Martych; the historian and philologist Osyp Hermaize; the literary historians Ieremia Aizenshtok and Oleksander Leites; and the musicologists Abram Gozenpud and Moisei Beregovskii.

The 1920s, in particular, were years of highly fruitful cooperation between Ukrainian literary figures of different ethnicities. The head of the Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture, Yoysef Liberberg, lectured at Kyiv University in what one of his students described as a "fine Ukrainian language." The critic and scholar of comparative literature Oleksandr Leites and the Yiddish writer David Feldman were instrumental in establishing an innovative literary group which brought together writers of Ukrainian and Jewish origin committed to a new vision of socially engaged proletarian art, a trend that they called *vitayism*—active romanticism. Many of these literati and scholars not only shared their enthusiasm for the policy of Ukrainianization, they also took to the same stage at the Blakytnyi House of Writers in Kharkiv, which was used for literary

186. Memorial plaque in Kyiv commemorating Ivan Kulyk (b. Yisrael Kulik, 1897-1937), Ukrainian-language writer and political leader.

recitals and "cold readings." Many even lived in the same residences, the best known of which was the Kharkiv House of Writers (*Slovo*), where more than sixty poets and novelists shared accommodations under the same roof in a large apartment building (for example, Pervomaiskyi, Sosyura, Kvitko, Fininberg, and Tychyna).

One of the most influential Ukrainian poets of Jewish descent during this period was Ivan Kulyk (b. Yisrael Iudovych Kulik). At a young age before World War I, he had fallen in love with all things Ukrainian. He eventually wrote in Ukrainian four books of poetry, two volumes of narrative prose, and innumerable journalistic essays in socialist-oriented American, Canadian, and Soviet Ukrainian newspapers, and he compiled the first Ukrainian anthology of American poetry (1927). For the Bolshevik utopian Kulyk, the very existence of post-revolutionary Soviet Ukraine, in whose government he served, symbolized his country's liberation from colonial oppression. In that con-
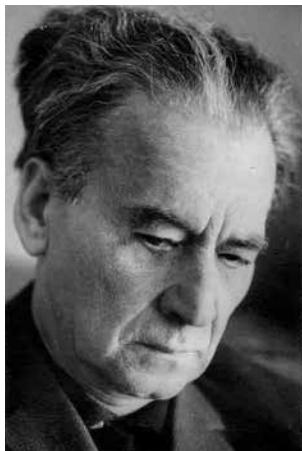
187. Leonid Pervomaiskyi (b. Illya Gurevich, 1908-1973), Ukrainian poet, playwright, and writer. Photo, 1972.

text Ukrainian represented the language of national revivalism and proletarian emancipation. Kulyk's Ukrainocentric (and eccentric) Communist utopianism could not survive the right-wing turn of Stalin's Soviet Union, however. In the 1930s, he was arrested, accused of Ukrainian nationalism, and shot. But before this happened, he encouraged and supported several young poets and writers, among them two of Jewish descent, Savva Holovanivskyi and Leonid Pervomaiskyi.

Leonid Pervomaiskyi (born Illya Shliomovich Gurevich) started his career as a Ukrainian writer aspiring to the fame of Isaac Babel. In a collection of short stories (*Den novyi*/The New Day, 1927), a novel (*Zemlya obitovana*/The Promised Land, 1927), and a play (*Mistechko Ladenyu*/The Ladeniu Shtetl, 1931–34), Pervomaiskyi portrayed the encounter of traditional Jews from a godforsaken *shtetl* in the middle of nowhere with ethnic Ukrainians and their culture. His ordinary Ukrainians and Jews become victims of the historical calamity that underscored their common tragic fate and shared suffering. Subsequently, the Holocaust became an important theme in Pervomaiskyi's writings, although he had to give it a universalistic spin in order to get through Soviet censorship and into publication. He is perhaps best known for having created unparalleled images of a poet, poetic books, and poetic language, all of which he presented as victimized and neglected living beings. In short, he saw his mission as a writer to give each of these elements a voice and thereby redeem them from oblivion. Pervomaiskyi's last three collections of poetry (*Drevo Piznannya*/Tree of Knowledge, 1971; *Uroky poezii*/Lessons of Poetry, 1968; and the posthumous *Vchora i zavtra*/Yesterday and Today, 1974) fascinated readers both in and beyond Ukraine, revealing

that, in contrast to his more renowned contemporaries, he was growing qualitatively to such a degree that he was named by diaspora critics as one of the best Ukrainian lyricists ever.

Jewish literary figures whose careers began after the 1960s Thaw shared with their Ukrainian counterparts sympathy toward the idea of a national revival. Among them were young poets of Jewish descent who first wrote in Russian but who then switched to Ukrainian, such as Leonid Kiselev, Moisei Fishbein, and Hryhorii Falkovych. Yet another, Mar Pinchevsky, also chose Ukrainian, eventually becoming a brilliant translator into Ukrainian of European and American literature. Perhaps the most interesting among these figures is Moisei Fishbein from Chernivtsi in far western Ukraine. In 1974 he published a book of poetry (*Yambrove kolo*/The Iambic Circle) that combined the Ukrainian lyricist tradition with Austrian philosophical poetry. So dedicated was the poet to his mission that he proclaimed himself the redeemer of the Ukrainian language. Aside from several other collections of Ukrainian-language poetry and translations of German literature (notably Rilke) into Ukrainian, Fishbein is, despite his eccentricities, someone who has in public and private consistently fought against the russification of Ukrainian culture, doing so in a manner that borders on messianic self-abnegation.

In the late Soviet period, Jewish-Ukrainian cross-fertilization moved beyond the realm of literature. While Jewish intellectuals chose Ukrainian as their literary means of expression, Ukrainian intellectuals began to defend Jews and, at the same time, learn from the Jewish experience. Ukrainian philologist Svyatoslav Karavanskyi publicly spoke out for the right of Ukraine's Jews to have national minority schools, while Jewish dissidents imprisoned in the gulag (such as Semen Gluzman) learned "how to be Jewish" from interaction with fellow inmates of ethnic Ukrainian background, especially those (Zynovii Antonyuk, Myroslav Marynovych, Yevhen Sverstyuk, among others) of strong Ukrainian national convictions. There were also Jewish dissidents such as Mikhail Heifets who helped preserve the poetry of Vasyl Stus and have it smuggled out of a correction colony for eventual publication abroad.

188. The Brizhan family from the town of Khmelnytskyi with a replica of a traditional Ukrainian *vertep*, portable amateur puppet theater used in the 18th and 19th centuries to satirize social mores. Photo, 2012.

Theater

Ukrainian theatrical life

The origins of formal theatrical performance in Ukraine date back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and are connected with theological seminaries and colleges. Students, often seminarians studying for the priesthood, performed school plays whose content was both religious and secular in nature. Among the most popular were nativity plays telling the Christmas story and the birth of Jesus Christ. This genre was performed not only on school stages but also in a more spontaneous manner among villagers each mid-winter season. Secular plays included historical tragicomedies, the most memorable of which depicted the exploits of the tenth-century Rus' grand prince Volodymyr (published in 1705), by Teofan Prokopovych, and the seventeenth-century Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi (1728), by Teofan Trofymovych. As representative of the Baroque era in Ukrainian literary development, the school plays were often produced with elaborate stage decorations, costumes, and special effects, and in a formal language that was a variant of liturgical Church Slavonic, not the spoken vernacular.

At the end of the eighteenth century, school plays had gone out of fashion, and after 1780 they were even banned at the influential Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. About the same time, wealthy nobles in Ukraine formed theatrical troupes made up of serfs on their landed estates. Several palatial manor houses even had their own theaters, where it was not uncommon for the landowner himself to direct the performances. These were usually drama, opera, or ballet by foreign authors and composers. The tradition of the serf theater, which was a kind of diversion for the country's wealthy social stratum, continued well into the nineteenth century, even after the abolition of serfdom in 1861.

The staging of theatrical productions for a paying public in urban settings also had its beginnings in 1780s, first in Kharkiv and by the 1820s in Poltava and several other towns in eastern Ukraine. The repertoire consisted of plays in Russian, whether original

189. The ever-popular operetta by Ivan Kotlyarevskyi, *Natalka Poltavka*, in a performance (1890s) featuring Mariya Sadovska-Barilotti and Denys Mova.

190. Scene from the National Opera of Ukraine's 2015 performance of Semen Hulak-Artemovskyi's 19th-century comic opera, *Zaporozhets za Dunayem*.

works or translations of foreign authors. It was in reaction to the predominance of Russian that the author of the first modern literary work in the Ukrainian vernacular, Ivan Kotlyarevskyi, wrote two original plays in Ukrainian, *Natalka Poltavka* (The Maiden Natalka from Poltava) and *Moskal-Charivnyk* (The Muscovite Wizard). Both were staged in 1819, the first as an operetta, the second as a vaudeville show.

Kotlyarevskyi's *Natalka Poltavka* set a precedent for a whole host of subsequent original stage productions which, because they draw heavily on romanticized peasant folk traditions, could be characterized as ethnographic populist theater. In contrast to the Church Slavonic school-play tradition and the largely Russian-language repertoire of foreign works that dominated the stages of the early urban-based theaters, playwrights writing in the so-called ethnographic style found their subject matter in Ukraine. The most popular subjects were stories about village life in the present or historic tales from the past, in which the dialogue was in vernacular Ukrainian and accompanied by folksongs and dances.

Comedies about daily village life, especially the tribulations of young lovers intent on marriage, or about Christmas Eve celebrations, or about the fate of the region's remaining Cossacks soon became the staple repertoire of Ukrainian-language theater. The most famous work in this genre, which is repeatedly performed to this day as a kind of quintessential representation of traditional ethnic Ukrainian life, is the play with music *Zaporozhets za Dunayem* (The Zaporozhian Cossack Beyond the Danube, 1863), by Semen Hulak-Artemovskyi. This work was the first to portray the longing of diaspora Ukrainians for their homeland, and its use of folkloric themes became a staple component of the Ukrainian operatic repertoire for years to come.

The era of ethnographic theater reached its apogee in the second half of the nineteenth century. Paradoxically, this was the very time in the Russian Empire when tsarist decrees (1863 and 1876) banned publications and performances in Ukrainian, the language that the tsarist regime condescendingly dubbed the Little Russian dialect. In the

191. The Municipal Theater in Yelysavethrad (today Kirovohrad), from 1882 home to first professional Ukrainian-language theater company in the Russian Empire

192. The National Center in Lviv, from 1864 the home of the Ruthenian *Besida* Society Theater.

1880s, when the authorities rescinded some of the restrictions, performances in Ukrainian were again possible, as long as the theatrical bill at any one time included a work in Russian that was equal in length to the one in Ukrainian. Moreover, tsarist censors also limited the kinds of themes that could be treated, allowing comic and innocent tales of village life but banning any discussion of urban life, social conflicts, or the glories of Ukraine's historical past.

By the 1890s, there were thirty troupes performing Ukrainian-language plays on a consistent basis not only throughout Ukrainian lands in the Russian Empire but also in the imperial capital of St Petersburg, where Ukrainian-language productions were viewed by the imperial elite as a somewhat exotic and certainly quaint rural antidote to life in the big city. The success of Ukrainian-language theater in the Russian Empire was due largely to a group of highly talented individuals, each of whom could be, at one and the same time, a playwright, director, manager, and actor. The most prominent of them, whose names grace several present-day theatrical institutions in Ukraine, were Marko Kropyvnytskyi, Mykhailo Starytskyi, Mariya Zankovetska, Mariya Sadovska-Barliotti, and the three Tobilevych brothers, each of whom used a different stage name: Ivan Karpenko-Karyi, Mykola Sadovskyi, and Panas Saksahanskyi.

In effect, at a time when Ukrainian-language publications were legally banned in the Russian Empire, it was only on the stage that Ukrainian could function in the public sphere. Such theatrical performances were undoubtedly popular, because ethnic Ukrainians could at least feel that their other-wise often scorned "kitchen dialect" could still have a place of respect on the stage, if nowhere else.

In the more tolerant nineteenth-century Habsburg-ruled Austro-Hungarian Empire, theater was one of several means whereby the Ruthenian (Ukrainian) language and national identity could be propagated. Beginning already in 1864, Galicia was home to a professional theater, that of the Ruthenian Speech Society/Ruska Besida, which focused exclusively on performing works in the local Galician-Ukrainian vernacular, whether its actors may have been Ukrainians from the Russian Empire or even Poles from Galicia. The repertoire consisted of plays by regional authors, the most prominent being Ivan Franko, as well as adaptations to local Galician conditions of Ukrainian-language works by authors from the Russian Empire. It was through such theatrical performances that Galicians and Bukovinians learned about and gained a greater cultural affinity toward their co-nationals in the east.

The collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917 and the end of restrictions against the Ukrainian language gave the Ukrainian theater a new lease on life. With the establishment of Soviet rule in 1920, the state took over the direction of cultural institutions, which were henceforth subject to the needs of Communist party ideologists. When, beginning in 1925, the policy of Ukrainianization was implemented with vigor, major theaters in urban centers, where Russian-language performances had been the norm, were now ukrainianized. Within a few years (1931), the number of Ukrainian theater companies stood at sixty-six in comparison with only nine Russian companies, which was even less than the number of

193. Les Kurbas (1887-1937), film and theater director, with his wife Valentina Chistiakova (center) and actors of his avant-garde Berezil troupe in Kharkiv. Photo, mid-1920s.

Yiddish companies (twelve) in Soviet Ukraine at the time. When, however, government attitudes toward Ukrainianization changed, many Ukrainian theaters were closed at the same time that the number of Russian theaters increased threefold (to thirty by 1935).

Soviet government policy also had an impact on the repertoire. During the relatively more liberal atmosphere of the 1920s, the heritage of the Ukrainian ethnographic theater with its emphasis on village life and Cossack themes was rejected by avant-garde playwrights and producers who instead were interested in modern experimental theater, in particular contemporary Expressionist works from western Europe and North America. Among the more influential modernist dramatists were Volodymyr Vynnychenko and Mykola Kulish, whose plays satirized the glaring contradictions between Ukrainian national aspirations and the new Soviet reality. The production of plays by these and other authors was made possible by innovative artistic directors, of whom the most successful was Les Kurbas of the Berezil Theater in Kyiv and Kharkiv (during the decade from 1922 to 1933). Aside from its modernist orientation, the Berezil was committed to performing in Ukrainian.

Another trend, particularly characteristic of the 1930s, was one that fulfilled the practical needs of the state's cultural ideologists. It consisted of plays, also in Ukrainian, which lavished praise on the new Communist social order. Heroes and heroines were now class-conscious and confident proletarian workers, not downtrodden peasants—so prominent in the ethno-

graphic theater—who seemed always powerless to defend themselves against the whims of feudal landlords and the repressive measures of the old tsarist empire.

When, in the 1930s, the Soviet system itself had become even more repressive than its Russian imperial predecessor, and when artistic productions were expected to fulfill government guidelines under the general rubric known as socialist realism, the Ukrainian ethnographic repertoire was revived. These were the creative principles that characterized Soviet Ukrainian theatrical life for the next half-century until well into the 1980s. Traditional rural life and select events from the historic past, especially those that could be reinterpreted or revised to depict social uprisings among the masses, were considered by the regime acceptable and even desirable themes. And it was not long before serious new dramatic works as well as foreign plays from the classic repertoire—so-called high culture—became the domain of Russian-language productions. Meanwhile, the ethnographic "low culture" repertoire from the nineteenth century, together with optimistic socialist-realist dramas inspired by contemporary Soviet life by authors like Oleksandr Korniichuk, were deemed most appropriate for Ukrainian-language productions.

Thus, while Ukrainian-language theater continued to exist until the very end of Soviet rule, it never attained the prestige accorded its Russian-language counterpart. In post-1991 independent Ukraine, theatrical life is still characterized by the same kind of high-culture/low-culture dichotomy that underlies the often uneasy relationship between supporters of the Ukrainian versus the Russian language as the most appropriate instrument to represent the country's cultural and intellectual life.

Jewish theatrical life

The beginnings of Jewish theater in Ukraine can be traced back to early modern times and to the folk play genre called the *Purimshpil*. This was the only type of theatrical performance endorsed by the community's influential rabbinic authorities. The *Purimshpil* was based on events recorded in the biblical Book of Esther but modernized to include references to contemporary socio-political life and

performed—usually in Yiddish—during the holiday of Purim in late winter or early spring.

With the subsequent secularization of eastern European culture, new types of Jewish theater came into being. Traveling amateur troupes staged the so-called *shund* (trash), soap-opera-like melodramas albeit with palpable social criticism. The performers traversed the breadth and width of Ukrainian lands in the Russian Empire and, in particular, Habsburg-ruled Galicia. The pioneer of this new type of the Jewish theater, Avrom Goldfadn, was a native of Russian-ruled Ukraine who worked in both empires until he left the tsarist realm permanently. One of the reasons for his departure was the Russian imperial ban on Yiddish-language theatrical performance that was put in place in the 1880s. By contrast, in Austria-Hungary, Jewish theatrical troupes functioned without restriction and performed widely throughout Galicia and Bukovyna, staging the popular melodramas by Shomer (pseudonym of Nokhem Shaykevitch) and the more serious plays with social and historical underpinnings by Sholem Ash and Jacob Gordin.

Although the vast majority of theatrical performances were for internal Jewish consumption, there were cases of interaction between Jews and the larger Ukrainian public. In the 1880s, Hrytsko Kernerenko penned a Ukrainian vaudevillian drama of the *shund* style for a theater in Kharkiv, while at the outset of the twentieth century the Ukrainian novelist Yurii Smolych mastered Yiddish and performed with itinerant Yiddish theatrical troupes across Ukraine.

194. Purim party in a *shtetl*, as portrayed by the Polish-born Canadian folk artist Mayer Kirshenblatt.
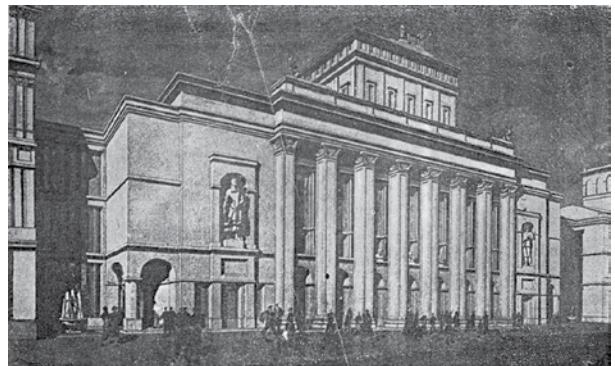
195. Architectural project (late 1920s) by Iosif Karakis of a new building for the Ukrainian State Yiddish Theater on the main thoroughfare, Khreshchatyk, in Kyiv, never realized.

This era of innovative exchange and artistic cross-fertilization in various spheres between Ukrainian and Jewish theater continued with the establishment on the eve of World War I of the Kultur-Lige (Yiddish Culture Society). This Kyiv-based Jewish organization had its own experimental theater troupe, staging short plays with strong messianic ideas whose goal was to replace a narrowly Jewish ethnic message with a more broadly appealing cultural one. The troupe's director, Efraim Loyter, considered pure and unrestricted artistic transnational experiment to be the most powerful expression of the revolutionary Yiddish identity.

In Soviet Ukraine during the 1920s, the authorities planned to create a new proletarian Jewish theater capable of bringing socialist ideas to the masses. Toward that end, the government sponsored the creation of a system of state Yiddish theaters throughout the country. Mainstream Jewish theater began at the moment the ruling Communist party moved the Soviet republic's capital to Kharkiv and created there in 1925 the Ukrainian State Yiddish Theater. Drawing on traditional Yiddish culture, the theater used visual symbolism and expressive body language to make its performances truly international and all-encompassing. Whatever the literary value of Yiddish theatrical repertoire may have been, the overall artistic quality of Jewish theater in Soviet Ukraine was quite high. The illustrious actor Solomon Mikhoels, the director of the Ukrainian State Yiddish Theater, Efraim Loyter, and the founder of the Ukrainian-language Berezil Theater, Les Kurbas, collaborated and shared their modernistic

196. Scene from Karl Gutzkow's play, *Uriel Akosta*, on stage of the Ukrainian State Yiddish Theater in Kyiv. Photo, early 1930s.

innovations during their highly productive Kharkiv period. Several other ethnic Ukrainian actors either started their careers or worked through the 1920s and 1930s at Yiddish theaters in Vinnytsia, Odessa, Kyiv, and Zhytomyr. Aside from the stylistic experiments and the professionalism of actors, Yiddish theaters had their own orchestras, with music and songs composed by a new generation of Ukrainian Jewish composers. The career of someone like Yakov Vynokur was not atypical. He first worked as a bandleader (*Kapellmeister*) in the Russian imperial army, then headed the Red Army Orchestra before becoming music director of the Ukrainian State Yiddish Theater.

The repertoire in the 1920s and 1930s included plays by the outstanding Yiddish writers Perets Markish and Dovid Bergelson. And while their and other works reflected a largely Marxist worldview, they nonetheless remained sensitive to the classical Yiddish legacy embodied in the popular pre-revolutionary melodramas of Avrom Goldfadn and Jacob Gordin. Theater directors and actors believed that they were contributing to the creation of a genuinely international revolutionary art—and to emancipated Ukrainian culture in general. While their new theatrical art was in Yiddish, it used the imagery and artistic vocabulary of the revolutionary avant-garde, enabling it to reach everyone.

This high-spirited utopianism received its first blow in the early 1930s, when Kharkiv's State Yiddish Theater was moved to Kyiv. Under politically motivated ideological pressure, the company was forced to change its artistic approach from a leftist and experimental orientation to one that was more traditional and realistic. The theater also had to drop its Maccabee-like celebration of Jewish heroism (such as Kushnirov's "Hirsch Lekert," about a Jewish terrorist who attempted to kill a repressive tsarist provincial governor), since attacks against state authorities were no longer considered praiseworthy. Plays of the new repertoire, whether by younger Soviet Jewish writers (Ezra Fininberg, Itsik Fefer, Avrom Vevyorke, Moyshe Kulbak, Moyshe Pinchevsky) or by more established ones (Perets Markish), were filled with tales about former *shtetl* Jews who went to rural areas to build collective farms as new Soviet peasants or descended below the land to learn the métier of miners and hence become Soviet proletarians.

In the late 1930s, Yiddish theater in Ukraine got, so to speak, a second wind as new personnel joined various troupes. These were graduates of the Jewish Department of the Kyiv Theatrical Institute that was established in 1928. They had come from

197. Promotional poster for the movie, *Ladies' Tailor* (1990), based on Aleksander Borshchagovskiy's play that portrays a Kyiv-based Jewish family on the eve of the 1941 Babyn Yar massacre.

198. Scene from the play, *Tevye the Milkman*, based on a series of short stories by Sholem Aleichem and starring the renowned Ukrainian actor Bohdan Stupka on stage of the Franko Ukrainian Drama Theater. Photo, mid-1990s.

various places throughout Soviet Ukraine and after their professional formation joined Ukraine's State Yiddish Theater or Kyiv's newly established Jewish Puppet Theater, as well as other Yiddish troupes in Soviet Ukraine.

Yiddish theaters always performed to a full house. To be sure, in the class-conscious environment of early Soviet society, actors always poked fun at worn-out Judaic beliefs, mocked the representatives of the rabbinic elite, and satirized all aspects of the traditional way of life. Nevertheless, people came to the theater to celebrate the very fact that a Jew was not only onstage but on the stage of a *national* theater. This was an artistically fascinating and socially uplifting achievement of the new regime that was unheard before the Revolution of 1917. Consequently, spectators dismissed the sometimes very painful anti-Judaic invective and instead identified with the Yiddish language, with Jewish names, and with familiar visual metaphors and symbols—in general, with any mani-

festation of Jewishness. At a time in the 1930s when the Soviet regime launched its aggressive campaign to sweep away many of the cultural and political achievements of the previous decade, for Ukrainian Jews theater remained a unique medium where they could reconfirm and rejoice in the celebration of their own Jewish identity.

The Ukrainian State Yiddish Theater, which suffered heavy losses during World War II, was allowed to re-establish itself at the end of the conflict. By then, when the Cold War was in its initial stages, the Soviet authorities preferred to reopen the theater not in Kyiv but in the far western provincial center of Chernivtsi, where it put on several plays from the classical repertoire, including adaptations of Sholem Aleichem and Shakespeare.

Yiddish theatrical life could not survive the postwar repressive atmosphere directed against the Jewish elite. In Soviet Ukraine the repressions began with attacks on theatrical critics (Eugene Adelgeim,

Abram Gozenpud, Aleksander Borshchagovskiy), who were accused of "rootless cosmopolitanism." The government-inspired antisemitic campaign soon involved Jewish writers, in particular those who published in Yiddish. The campaign culminated in 1948 with the closure of virtually all Yiddish theaters in the Soviet Union, the very last one being the Yiddish Theater in Chernivtsi, which was permanently dismantled two years later. Despite the closures, the various theaters that functioned during the early decades of Soviet rule did provide a springboard for dozens of Jewish artists who, in the post-World War II era, were to play a significant role in Soviet Ukraine's cultural life: the composer Yulii Meitus, the actress Lia Bugova, and the conductor Natan Rakhlin, among others.

On the other hand, Jews as Jews almost entirely disappeared from the Soviet stage. While the few who did remain tried to function in the larger Soviet theatrical world, even there they encountered obstacles. For example, Alexander Galich, a converted Jew from Katerynoslav, wrote a play in Russian, *Matrosskaya tishina* (The Sailors' Silence Street, 1950), about the tragic fate of a Jewish violinist from Tulchyn and his strained relations with his father. The play was immediately banned and not performed until the relaxed years of Gorbachev's rule in 1988. Similarly, in the late 1970s, Aleksander Borshchagovskiy wrote a drama, *The Ladies' Tailor*, about a Kyivan Jewish family on the eve of the Babyn Yar massacre. It, too, was banned from performance by Soviet censorship.

Despite the cultural persecution and closure of Yiddish theaters, by the 1950s actors from the State Yiddish Theater in Chernivtsi managed to regroup as a popular *Ukrainian* amateur theater and stage performances of the Jewish classics, although in the Ukrainian language. Another kind of Jewish theatrical presence in the period from the 1950s through 1980s, and one that embodied interaction between Jews and Ukrainians, took the form a popular comedy act featuring Yurii Tymoshenko and Yefim Berezin, better known under their aliases, Tarapun-

ka and Shtepsel. The success of their performances was largely due to the comic material of their Jewish-Ukrainian scriptwriters and satirists, Robert Vikkers and Alexander Kanevsky.

In the waning years of the Soviet Union and especially in post-1991 independent Ukraine, there have been several, albeit short-lived, attempts to revive Jewish theatrical life, although it has been through the medium of the Russian or Ukrainian languages, not Yiddish. Among such attempts have been amateur troupes in Kyiv (Mazl Tov), Zhytomyr (The Jewish Street), Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi (The Jester's House), and Chernihiv (The Spiegel Jewish Children's Theater). There is even a small-scale professional troupe, the Sholem-Aleichem Music Drama Theater in Kyiv, which has been performing from the mid-1990s. In a sense, the history of Jewish theatre has come full circle and has returned to its folkloric roots, so that the only mass theatrical event is now the annual *Purimshpil* performance during the festival of Purim. Staged at Ukraine's massive Palace of Culture in Kyiv, it attracts several thousand people every year.

Nor does the dearth of formal Jewish theatrical structures in independent Ukraine signify the absence of Jewish performances. Today productions based on Jewish themes are put on by Kyiv's Variety and Operetta Theater (the musical performance *Jewish Luck*), and several Ukrainian theaters have staged Neda Nezhdana's drama, *Million Little Parachutes*, which deals with the Holocaust period and Ukrainian attitudes to the Jewish plight. But perhaps the most important Jewish performance to grace Ukrainian stages is Sholem-Aleichem's *Tevye the Milkman*. Performed to great acclaim at the Ivan Franko State Drama Theater in Kyiv, the play starred Ukraine's most famous actor, Bohdan Stupka. The ethnic Ukrainian Stupka managed to capture brilliantly the character of Tevye, a *shtetl*-based Jewish philosopher who reads life as a book and tries to make universal ethical sense out of the incredibly humanly rich and at times tragic plight of Ukraine's Jews.

CHAPTER 8
Architecture and Art

Ukraine's cultural landscape is dotted with a wide range of structures that reflect the entire gamut of European architectural styles. The architects who came from abroad used building techniques and styles familiar to them in their home country, while local architects created their own versions of those styles and at times tried to devise an indigenous style unique to Ukraine. It is therefore not surprising that the stylistic vocabulary used in other parts of Europe is applicable as well to Ukraine, where there exist remnants or full-standing (often restored) structures that are described as belonging to the period of classical Greco-Roman antiquity, medieval Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic, early modern Renaissance and Baroque, Revivalism and Art Nouveau of the long nineteenth century, and modernism of the functionalist International Style in the twentieth century.

Pre-historic architectural remnants

The earliest architectural remnants in Ukraine are connected with an agricultural and cattle-raising civilization known as the Trypilian culture, which flourished between 4500 and 2200 BCE in central and southwestern Ukraine. By the latter stages of Trypilian culture, some of its settlements had up to three thousand buildings, most of which were pit or semi-pit dwellings and houses raised on wooden poles. In recent years numerous Trypilian settlement sites have been uncovered and developed into sites for cultural tourism, with the goal of revealing the high level of sedentary civilization on Ukrainian lands that dates back between four to six thousand years ago.

Much better known are the architectural remnants associated with classical Greek settlements that began to appear from the seventh century BCE and that were to survive into Hellenistic and Byzantine times at least until the seventh century CE. These settlements were concentrated in far southern Ukraine along the shores of the Black Sea near the mouths of major rivers (Tiras near the Dniester and Olbia near the Southern Buh) and on the Crimean peninsula (Chersonesus/Sevastopol and Panticapeum/Kerch). Still-standing remnants in marble and stone include columns from palaces and basilica-like churches as well as foundations of domestic dwellings usually laid out in square geometric street patterns. Rather unique is another architectural phenomenon from those early times: the cave towns in Crimea built in the sixth century CE by Byzantine engineers for that region's Alan and Goth settlers. Because those structures were carved out of durable stone on flat mountain-top promontories, they still today provide a graphic example of how inhabitants in the mountainous regions of Crimea lived and worshipped nearly fifteen hundred years ago.

199. Architectural remnants from the Greek city-state of Olbia, near the mouth of the Southern Buh River, 4th century BCE.

Eastern and Western church architecture

Among the structures that are still most prominent in Ukraine's cities, towns, and villages were those built for religious purposes, whether Christian churches, Jewish synagogues, and, especially in one region, Crimea, Islamic mosques. Most of Ukraine's church architecture, however, was built for adherents of the two major branches of Christianity—Western Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. Each branch developed a distinct church architecture based on models, which, in the hands of a given builder, might be altered and enhanced by stylistic variations.

The predominant architectural form in Ukrainian lands is that used for churches belonging to the Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity derived from the East Roman, or Byzantine, Empire. The typical ground-plans of Byzantine churches are based on a Greek-style cross with two equidistant arms; sometimes the cross ground-plan is within a square, the so-called cross-in-square church. The exterior is notable for domes or cupolas atop cylindrical drums placed over the four ends of the Greek cross with a fifth large dome or cupola over the central point of the cross. Ideally, the domes or cupolas are sheathed in gilded metal, and in more recent centuries have been topped with three-bar crosses.

Eastern church interiors have only limited external light, since the walls are usually pierced by small windows. The extensive indoor wall surfaces are covered with fresco paintings and/or gilded glass mosaics depicting the founding fathers of Eastern Christianity and other Orthodox saints, with the image of Christ given pride of place either above the altar or in the central dome. The dominant interior element located below the central dome is the iconostasis, a tall screen with several rows of painted images (icons) depicting major church figures. At the ground level of the iconostasis, on each side

200. Iconostasis, Orthodox Church of the Holy Mother of God, Pochayiv Monastery, Volhynia, 1864.

of its royal doors (*tsarski vrata*) in the center, are the icons of Mary, the Mother of God, Christ, John the Baptist, and the saint—often connected with a local religious cult—to which the church is dedicated. The three or four rows above contain smaller icons that depict the apostles, saints and martyrs, prophets, and, at the top, Hebrew patriarchs of the Old Testament.

The exterior and interior look of Western churches differs considerably from that of Eastern churches. The basic Western church structure evolved from the classic Roman basilica, an oblong structure at one end of which is a transept ending in semi-circular apse. The ground plan is reminiscent of a stylized Western cross. The interior consists of four basic components: at the western end—an entry hall, or narthex; then the main sanctuary for the congregation, consisting of a long nave with one or more flanking aisles on each side; the transept, in the middle of which is the altar; and at the eastern end the apse, usually reversed for high church figures (hierarchy) and the choir. The nave is filled with movable or stationary seating (in contrast to Eastern churches where worshippers stand), flanked by side aisles that may have individual chapels, prayer areas, and booths for individual confession along the outside walls. The walls themselves may be adorned with paintings or statues and pierced by large windows, ideally with colored stained glass.

The exterior usually has a pitched roof, with perhaps a narrow spire over the center of the transept, that is, at the point where the altar is located inside. The main entrance at the western end may be topped by one bell tower or be flanked on each side to form a two-tower façade. The exterior walls and the portal surrounding the main west entrance may be adorned with statuary.

This standard architectural model for the Western church was epitomized in the Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals of medieval France with their complex stone-carved rounded or pointed arches, high-ceiling interiors, and, in the case of Gothic churches, flamboyant exterior "flying" arches whose functional purpose was to support the walls of the nave while also illuminating the interior with natural light filtering through large expanses of stained-glass windows. The Gothic was also used for churches in central and some parts of eastern Europe, although in Ukraine the few examples that exist were built much later in a Neo-Gothic style, including large cath-
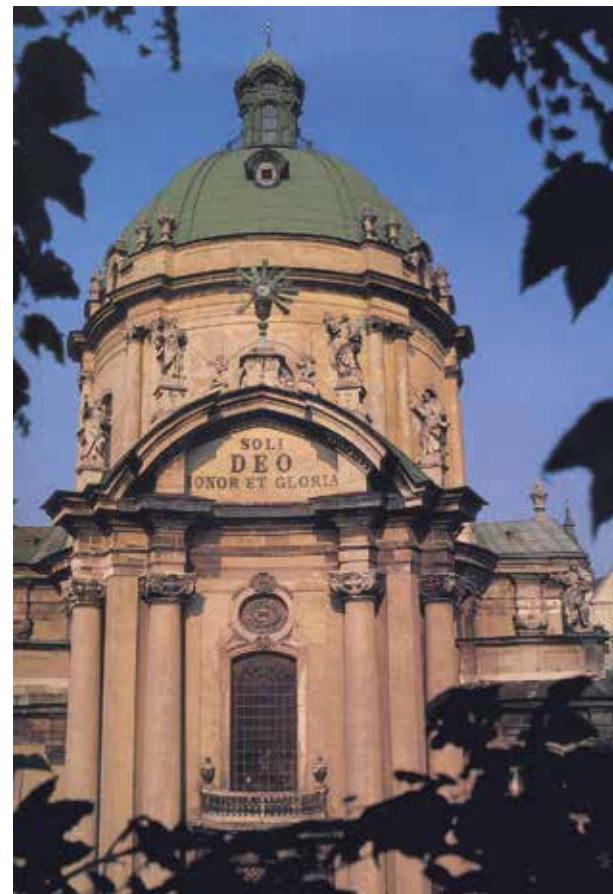
201. Neo-baroque Roman Catholic Church, designed by Marcin Urbanik, Lviv, 1749-1764.

202. Replica of the St. Sophia Cathedral, Kyiv, as it looked in the 11th century.

edral-sized churches for Roman Catholic Poles living in Kyiv (1899–1909) and Lviv (1903–11).

Eastern church architecture derived from Byzantium is connected with the period of medieval Kievan Rus'. The most important examples in Ukraine include St Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv (1017–1050s) and the Cathedral of Saints Borys and Hlib in Chernihiv (late twelfth century). The St Sophia Cathedral was architecturally unique for its number of domes (thirteen), although it, like many other churches from the Kievan period, underwent sig-

nificant restoration after the seventeenth century as a result of which the oval domes characteristic of the Byzantine style were reshaped into pear-form Baroque cupolas. St Sophia's interior, on the other hand, does retain the original magnificent gilded mosaics and fresco wall paintings. The architectural value of the Saints Borys and Hlib Cathedral in Chernihiv is that, despite subsequent restorations, the external form is basically the same as it was when completed in the late twelfth century.

Ukraine's architectural monuments

The architecture of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, a time when Ukrainian lands were for the most part within the Polish-Lithuanian and Crimean political spheres, reflects two trends: (1) influences from western Europe via Poland into Galicia and Volhynia and via Italianate Genoa and Venice into Crimea and the Black Sea coastal region; and (2) efforts by local architects to adapt or superimpose on to western prototypes features that are indigenous to Ukraine.

203. Castle at Kamyanets-Podilskyi, built in the mid-16th century.

The first trend is particularly evident in western and Black Sea Ukraine's many surviving castles (Khotyn, Lutsk, Mezhybizh, Kremenets, Kamyanets-Podilskyi, Mukachevo, Stare Selo near Lviv, Bilhorod near the mouth of the Dniester River, Sudak in Crimea), fortified churches (Sukhivtsi, Ostroh, Rohatyn), and defensive walled monasteries (Mezhyrichchya, Zymno). These were usually based on models from western and central Europe and included Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque elements in their design. Such influences were even more evident in urban architecture, especially in what was at the time Polish-ruled Lviv, with its Renaissance-style Black House (1577) and Korniakt Palace (1580) facing the main square, the nearby Eastern-rite Church of the Assumption (1598–1631) with its adjacent belfry "tower of Korniakt" (1573–78), the Roman-rite Catholic Church of the Bernadine monastic Order (1600–30), and the late Renaissance/Mannerist Boim Family Chapel (1607–17).

The Baroque architectural style, originally connected with the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation, began to appear in Ukrainian lands in the second half of the seventeenth century. It was largely based on the Baroque architecture of Poland that was welcomed by urban-based Orthodox lay brotherhoods and, in particular, by the leaders in the Cossack Hetmanate state based in central Ukraine. Cossack officials, in particular Hetman Ivan Mazepa, were attracted to the grandeur and sumptuousness of Baroque façades and interiors. Local architects also made use of indigenous design elements, especially in buildings intended for the administrators of the Cossack state. Among the few surviving examples of this architecture is the early-eighteenth-century Lyzohub Regiment Office in Chernihiv. Architects also added Baroque elements to the exteriors of Eastern-rite Orthodox churches, in particular faux pedimental façades, decorative columns, and sculptured wall designs surrounding the windows and entranceways (Dormition Church at the Caves Monastery in Kyiv, rebuilt 1720; Mhar Monastery Cathedral in Lubny, 1684).

The Cossack Baroque style, as it came to be known, reached its apogee during the rule of Hetman Mazepa (r. 1687–1709), who alone is credited with
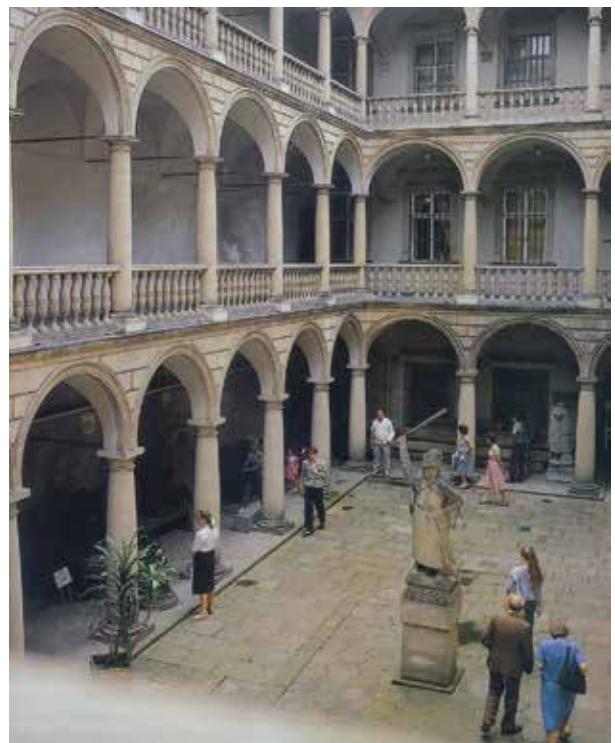
204. Renaissance interior courtyard of the Korniakt Palace built by Pietro di Barbone, Lviv, 1580.

funding the restoration or constructions of twenty churches, mostly in Kyiv, including the Church of Epiphany of the Brotherhood Monastery (1690) and St Nicholas Cathedral (1696). The most impressive reconstruction project was that undertaken for the eleventh-century Church of St Sophia, whose exterior was entirely transformed (1691–1705) into the Baroque-looking cupoled edifice that remains today a hallmark of Kyiv's old city center. The post-Mazepan era's search to build in a style unique to Ukraine was dominated by the architect Ivan Barskyi, whose works, mainly in Kyiv, combined the traditions of the Cossack Baroque with stylistic influences from the later Rococo, whether in Eastern-rite churches (St Cyril Monastery Church, rebuilt 1760; Church of the Holy Protectress in the Podil district, 1766) or in municipal public works (the pavilion-like *Felitsiial*—Samson's Fountain, 1748–49).

Notably imposing are western Ukraine's Roman Catholic churches in the Baroque style, with their undulating façades, half pediments, expansive open interiors, lavish external and internal statuary, and ceiling paintings illuminated with an ingenious use of redirected external natural light. These features
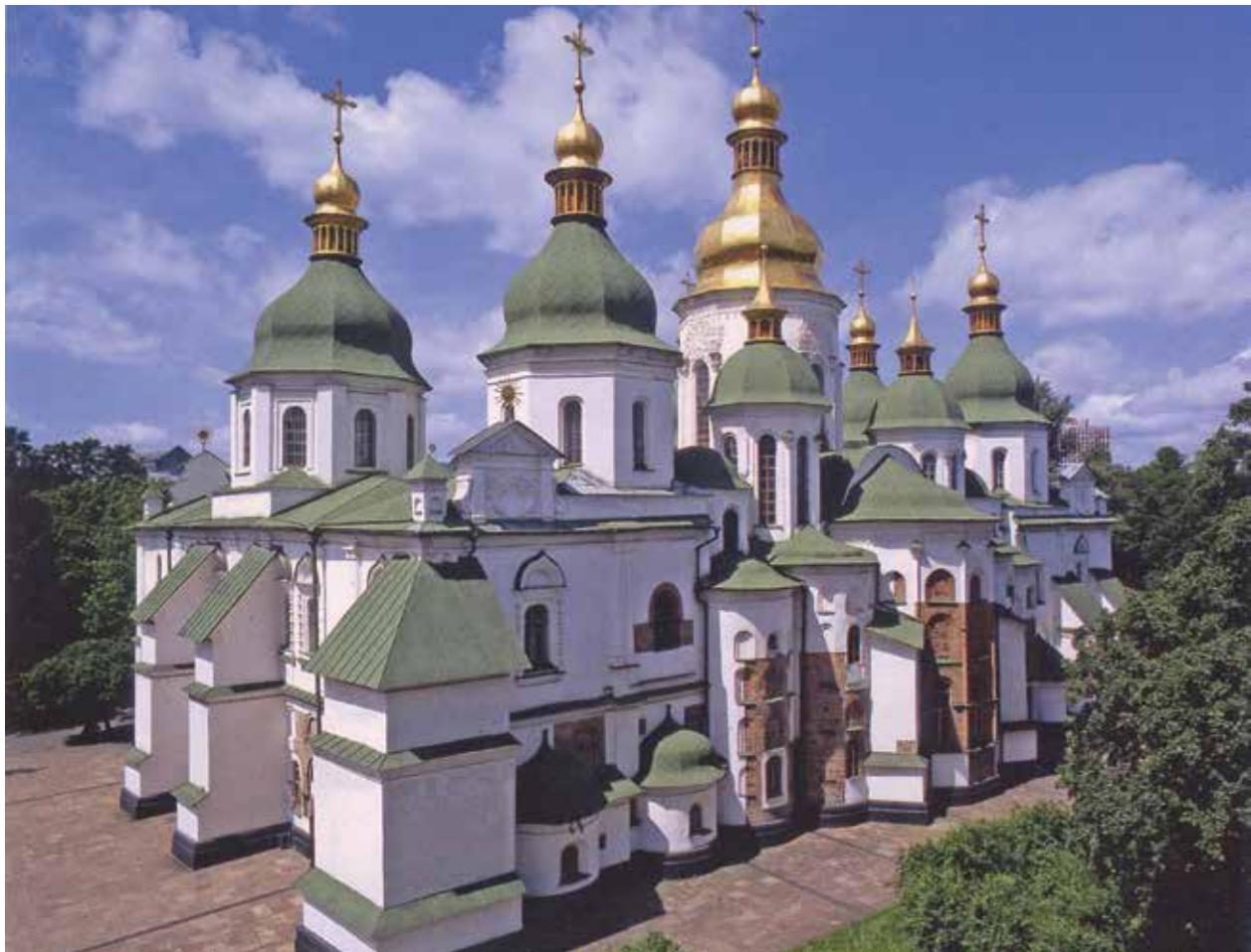
205. Reconstructed Baroque exterior of the St. Sophia Cathedral, Kyiv, as it looked at the very outset of the 18th century.

are evident not only in Lviv's churches for the Roman Catholic Dominican monastic order (1745–49) and St George's Church (1745–60), which were refashioned with Rococo influence to serve Eastern-rite Catholics (see illus. 119 and 120), but also in other centers of Roman Catholic Polish culture, such as the Collegial Church in Kremenets (1730s–1740s) and the Eastern-rite church at the monastery in Pochayiv (1771–83), redesigned at a time when it had become Uniate Catholic.

Some late-eighteenth-century buildings incorporated elements of the Rococo style, with its fanciful curved spatial forms and shellwork ornamentation that provide an overall sense of lightness that is in stark contrast to the heaviness of the Baroque. The best examples of Rococo in Ukraine were all constructed by foreign architects: the City Hall in Buchach (1751) by Bernard Merderer-Meretini; and, in Kyiv, St Andrew's Church (1747–53) and the imperial palatial residence (1747–55), by Barto-

lomeo-Francesco Rastrelli. The latter, known as the Mariynskyi Palace, functions today as the official residence of Ukraine's presidents.

Another type of structure, one especially reflective of indigenous Ukrainian architecture, was the wooden church with its separately constructed
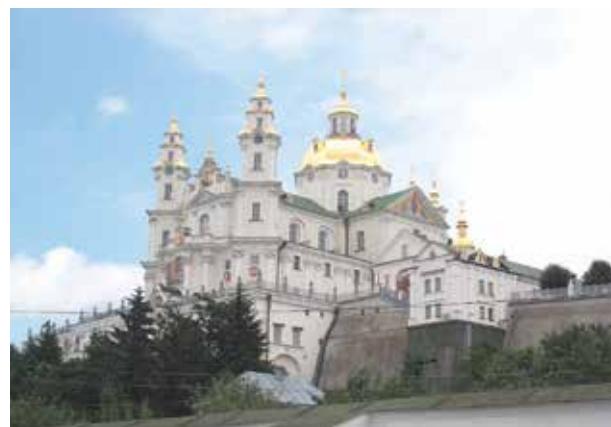
206. Dormitian Cathedral of the Pochayiv Monastery in Volhynia, built in a late Baroque-Rococo style by Gottfried Hoffman, 1771-1783.

207. Rococo exterior of the St. Andrew's Church, designed by Bartolomeo Rastrelli, Kyiv, 1747-1753.

belfries nearby. Although wooden churches are usually associated with the forested Carpathian region in far western Ukraine (southern Galicia, northern Bukovina, and Transcarpathia), they were also built throughout central and northeastern Ukraine. While in the Carpathian region the standard format was a single-frame low structure with three component parts each covered by sloping or bulbous cupolas, those farther east were multi-framed structures much taller in size, with each of the five or more frames in the form of barrel vaults topped with domed cupolas in the Cossack Baroque style. The largest of these wooden structures had seven frames (Church of the Ascension in Berezna, Chernihiv region, 1761) and even nine frames (Holy Trinity Church in Novoselytsya/Novomoskovsk, Dnipropetrovsk region, 1755–78) averaging 37–38 meters/103–125 feet in height.

The architecture of the long nineteenth century (1780s–1914) was characterized throughout Europe by Revivalism, that is, choosing a past style to copy or to adapt, when necessary, to contemporary needs. The first of the revivalist styles to make its way to Ukraine

was Neo-classicism, with its emphasis on clean vertical lines defined by the use of columns reminiscent of Greek and Roman temples of antiquity. An early harbinger of Neo-classicism was the main bell tower of the Kyivan Caves Monastery (1731–45), whose architect, Johann Gottfried Schaedel, still included Baroque elements in his structures. Full-fledged examples of Neo-classical structures were the St Vladimir University of Kyiv (1837–43), designed by the local architect Vincent Beretti, and the Ossolineum Polish National Foundation, today the Stefanyk Library in Lviv (1826–44), designed by the Viennese architect of Swiss origin, Peter Nobile.

Perhaps the most impressive examples of Neo-classicism were to be found not in cities but rather in the palatial architecture of the rural countryside. These include several projects for the last hetman of the Cossack state, Kyrylo Rozumovskyi. The grandest of these is at Baturyn (1799), designed by the British architect Charles Cameron (see illus. 21). As impressive were the monumental-sized palaces on the manorial estates of Polish landlords, especially in the Right Bank provinces of Volhynia and Podolia: the family palaces of the Potockis at Tulchyn (1781–82); the Ksawerys at

208. Church of John the Apostle in the village of Skoryky near Ternopil, 1744. Photo, 2011.

209. Neo-Classic portico of the Ossolineum (now Stefanyk) Library, designed and built by Pietro Nobile and Jozef Bem, Lviv, 1817-1830.

210. Neo-classical colonnaded entryway into the Oleksandriya Park, Bila Tserkva, late 18th century.

Voronevytsya (1780–90); and the Sanguszkos at Slavuta (1782–86). The places of Polish aristocrats were more often than not surrounded by elegant parks, whose layouts were inspired by Romanticism and filled with Neo-classicist sculpture and structures (pseudo-Greco-Roman temples, colonnades, grottos). Parks from this period that today continue to attract thousands of visitors include the Sofiyivka in Uman and the Oleksandriya near Bila Tserkva. Another palace from this period, but one in a non-European revivalist style, is the reconstructed residence of the khans (1740s) at Bakhchysarai in Crimea.

Virtually every revivalist style in nineteenth-century Europe is represented in Ukraine. These include Neo-Byzantine Eastern-rite churches; Neo-Gothic Roman Catholic churches for urban Poles or simplified versions for rural ethnic Germans; and Viennese Neo-Renaissance opera houses in Lviv, Chernivtsi, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, and Kherson. There were as well a wide array of Revivalist-style government buildings, schools, museums, residential apartment blocks, banks, private company office headquarters, and railroad stations in major cities and even at some provincial rail junctions (Zhmerynka). Although making use of the latest technological advances in design and construction materials, these elements were structurally integrated and hidden behind walls and façades that combine the full gamut of Revivalist styles, from Neo-Gothic and Neo-Renaissance to Neo-Baroque and Neo-classicism.

As the long nineteenth century drew to a close, architects on the eve of World War I set out to devise a style that would not be dependent on a revivalist aping of the past but rather embody what they considered a genuine Ukrainian style that incorporated features characteristic of folk architecture into modern buildings. The leading figure in this movement, Vasyl Krychevskyi, created a series of unique structures including the Land Administration/Zemstvo Building, now the city museum in Poltava (1903–06), as well as a series of residential and civic buildings throughout Ukraine's cities. The first decade of the twentieth century brought Art Nouveau to Ukraine, which resulted in a whole series of stunning residential and civic structures, especially in Kyiv, of which the truly extraordinary are by the Ukrainian-born Pole from Podolia, Leszek Dezidery Gorodecki/Vladyslav Horodetskyi (the Karaite Kenasa, 1898–1902; and the House with Chimeras Building on Bankova Street, 1901–03).

211. The Provincial Zemstvo Building (now city museum), designed in the Ukrainian style by Vasyl Krychevskyi, Poltava, 1905-1909.

212. The House of Chimeras, designed in the Art Nouveau style by Leszek Dezidery Gorodecki/Horodetskyi, Kyiv, 1901-1903. Photo, 2005.

Architecture in Ukraine continued to remain in step with trends in the rest of Europe during the first decade of Soviet rule in the 1920s. Functional constructivism, which was the hallmark of the International Style pioneered in Germany, was eagerly welcomed by architects in Soviet Ukraine. "Form follows function" was the clarion call of the International Style. Therefore, the newest building materials (especially steel and high-resistant glass) were used, but without any decorative elements which were considered superfluous to the structure, not to mention ideologically old-fashioned and symbolic of the feudal-bourgeois-capitalist world that the Soviet regime set out to bury forever.

Buildings in the International Style were usually part of large-scale urban-renewal projects intended to modernize Soviet cities. The best-known examples of the new revolutionary architecture were the State Industry Building Complex (1925–29) and Main Post Office (1927–29) in Kharkiv, which at the time was Soviet Ukraine's capital; the Main Railway Station (1927–33) and the House of Doctors (1928–30) in Kyiv; and the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station (1927–32) near Zaporizhzhya.

213. The State Industry Building Complex (Derzhprom) built in the Soviet Constructivist variant of the International Style by Sergei Serafimov, Mark Felger, and Samuil Kravets, Kharkiv, 1925-1929. Photo, 2005.

214. Opera and Ballet Theater, built by Lyudvih Kotovskyi, Donetsk, 1935-1940.

In the early 1930s, when the Soviet authorities imposed socialist realism as the guiding principle for state-controlled and censored artistic endeavor, the functionalist International Style was banned. In its stead, architects were expected to design in an officially accepted style. This was an eclectic revivalist hodgepodge of Classicism, Renaissance, Baroque, and some elements of Constructivism, which were combined in varying proportions to achieve an ideological purpose: to convey through the grandeur and monumental look of buildings the power and authority of the Soviet state.

Throughout Ukraine there are examples of officially approved architecture from the late 1930s in structures intended for a wide variety of purposes, such as the Opera and Ballet Theater (1933–40) and the Shevchenko Movie Theater (1933–38) in Donetsk, the Theater in Dnipropetrovsk (1941), and the Dynamo (1934–35) and Central (1937–41) sports stadiums in Kyiv. The pretentiousness of these and other buildings was sometimes dubbed the Stalinist wedding-cake style, after the main building of Moscow State University (1949–53), which was later copied in major Soviet cities (Kyiv's version is the old Moscow, now Ukraine, Hotel) and in many of the former Communist satellite capitals in central Europe.

After 1936, when Kyiv again became Ukraine's capital city, historic churches (in particular St Michael's Church of the Golden Domes) and other buildings were razed to make way for grandiose projects, such as the partially completed new seat of Soviet Ukraine's government (1938), the seat of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR (1936–39, present-day Ukraine's Parliament), and the Building of the Council of Ministers (1935–37). This decidedly sterile style associated with the country's dictatorial leader at the time, Joseph Stalin, became from the 1930s the approved architectural standard throughout the Soviet Union. Attempting to imitate the early-twentieth-century skyscrapers of New York City and Chicago, it was ironically dubbed Socialist Gothic.

From the end of World War II until the demise of the Soviet Union nearly half a century later, large-scale public buildings throughout Soviet Ukraine were built either in some variant of functional constructivism or in the pompous official style with its eclectic borrowings from the past. The latter was at its best—or worst—typified by the post-war reconstruction of Kyiv's main thoroughfare, Khreshchatyk, with its Druzhba (Friendship) movie theater as the quintessential example of Socialist Gothic architecture. Most widespread, however, were the rows upon rows of undifferentiated apartment blocks in the suburbs of Ukraine's ever expanding cities. These were often built using cheap materials, with absolutely no decorative elements or even color (other than weather-stained concrete or mortar covering), which to this day define the non-descript and impersonal nature of much of Ukraine's cityscapes, most particularly in the central and eastern parts of the country.

215. Apartment complex in the Soviet functional Constructivist style, Obolon District, Kyiv, 1980s.

Jewish architectural monuments in Ukraine

Jewish architectural monuments in Ukraine are primarily synagogues. The oldest of these are the so-called fortress synagogues which date back to the sixteenth century. It is likely that they replaced older synagogues at the same locations from centuries before. Designed by professional Christian architects, the sixteenth-century synagogues generally are built in the form of a square with an elaborate Mannerist-style upper level adorned with stone-carved ornament and loopholes, engaged columns on all four sides, formidable U-shaped windows high above ground level, and unusually massive counterforces supporting thick structural walls. Since Jewish communities in towns at that time could afford only one synagogue, these structures were used not only as a place of worship but also

216. Ukrainian National Bank commemorative coin featuring the 17th-century Renaissance-style synagogue in Zhovkva.

as a safe haven in case of a sudden attack by enemies within or during a fire. Most synagogues were large enough to hold the entire urban Jewish community. In addition to the synagogues at Sharhorod, Sataniv, and Zhovkva, one of the earliest urban synagogues in Ukraine was the Golden Rose in Lviv, commissioned by the Jewish financier of the Polish king, Isaac Nachmanowicz, and built by the architect of Swiss origin known as Paolo the Italian in 1582.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, new synagogues were built in the major centers of Ukraine's Jewry both in the Russian Empire (Kyiv,

Kharkiv, Odessa) and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Chernivtsi and Uzhhorod). These structures were unusually large, often quite pompous, and modeled after German and Austro-Hungarian Reform temples with quite visible Oriental ornamentation known as the Moorish style.

Like the Reform Jews of central Europe, the urban and modernized well-to-do Jewish elites in Ukraine sought to disassociate themselves culturally from what they considered the ramshackle *shul* (prayer house) that characterized the traditional *shtetl* and city suburb. They also did not want to be associated with the Orthodox, particularly the Askenazic Hasidim, who epitomized the secluded and allegedly backward life of small towns in the Russian Pale of Settlement. They instead took their architectural models from the Jews of medieval Spain, who easily interacted with the surrounding Muslim culture and were not afraid of its rationalist impulses. This explains the use of the medieval Moorish style in Ukraine's new synagogues, whose architecture made a point of comparing the enlightened, urbanized Jews of nineteenth-century Europe to the well-integrated Spanish Jewry who centuries before had lived "under the crescent." Proud of belonging to an increasingly modern Russian and Austro-Hungarian society, Jewish synagogues expressed this pride through urban centrality and visibility. The synagogues in Kyiv and Odessa, funded by the business magnates of the wealthy Brodsky family, were literally a monument to this new sensibility.

The sixteenth-century stone synagogues and the Moorish-style synagogues built after the 1860s were somewhat exceptional. Most seventeenth- and eight-

217. The former Brodsky Synagogue, built by Joseph Kolovich, Odessa, 1840; today the Odessa Regional Archives.

218. Orthodox Synagogue, built by Gyula Papp and Ferenc Szabolcs, Uzhhorod, 1904; today a concert hall for the Transcarpathian Oblast Philharmonic Society.

eenth-century synagogues built in the towns Ukraine were constructed of wood and often designed by Christian architects. Synagogues such as those in the *shtetls* of Hvizdets, Yarmolyntsi, Kytaihorod, Minkivsti, Porytsk, and Pohrebyshche were stylistically similar to wooden Roman Catholic churches while differing from the surrounding Eastern Christian churches. The synagogues did not, however, have a central dome crowning the main hall of worship (or if they did, it was triangle-shaped); they did have an internal upper gallery or galleries around the main hall for female worshippers separated in the traditional Jewish communities from men; and they included several smaller wings which likely included a library (Heb.: *bet midrash*; Yid.: *besmedresh*) and "warm" prayer rooms for use between the High Holidays and Passover.

Many Jewish synagogues and communal buildings were expropriated by the Soviets and transformed into sports centers or local museums. As for those that survived the early decades of Soviet rule, they were blown up by the Nazi German rulers during World War II. Some of the earlier stone synagogues survived in various states of ruin in Husyatyn, Sataniv, Sharhorod, Sokal, and Zhovkva. Uman's seventeenth-century Great Synagogue was—and still is—part of a tractor garage, Berdychiv's eighteenth-century Choral Synagogue became a glove factory, the Brodsky synagogue in Odessa a state archive, and the Uzhhorod synagogue a home to the local Philharmonic Society.

Painting and sculpture

Painting in Ukrainian lands can be dated to the seventh century BCE, when Greek colonies were established along the northern shores of the Black Sea and when the Scythian nomadic-pastoralists came to control the steppe hinterland. At the time, paintings served a decorative function on vases and pottery, which was either imported from classical and Hellenistic Greece or produced by artisans working in Chersonesus and other Greco-Roman northern Black Sea cities, including those within the sphere of the Bosporan Kingdom along the eastern shores of Crimea. Floor mosaics and mural paintings depicting ancient Greek gods and scenes of plant and animal life adorned domestic and public dwellings as well as the underground chambers of tombs unearthed in Crimea and the adjacent southern Ukrainian steppelands.

Mosaics, frescoes, and icons

The introduction of Eastern Christianity to Kievan Rus' in the late tenth century provided a new stimulus to painting, which became a major component of art in service to religion. The interior walls of the masonry churches were covered with mosaics and frescoes depicting Christ, the Apostles, the Virgin Mary, Old Testament prophets, and Christian saints. On occasion, as in Kyiv's monumental St Sophia Cathedral, some frescoes depicted secular subjects, such as hunting scenes, court entertainers (musicians, acrobats, and dancers), and church benefactors (in St Sophia's case, Grand Prince Yaroslav the Wise and his family).

By far the most widespread form of painting in the service of religion was the icon. These "written" images, most commonly of Mary "the Mother of God" and of Christ, became in and of themselves objects of veneration. An Eastern-rite Christian, when entering a church, is expected to approach the center, bow, cross him/herself, and pay homage by kissing the icon on the stand (tetrapod) before the iconostasis as the very first act of worship. The veneration of icons also takes place in family homes, where the eastern, "sacred" corners of the
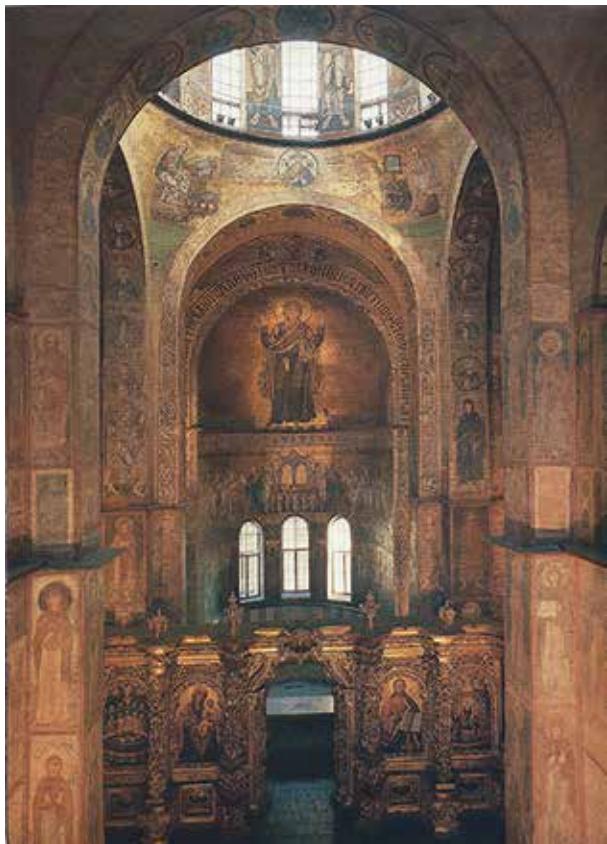
219. Mosaic, central nave of the St. Sophia Cathedral, Kyiv, 11th century.

living room traditionally have one or more icons arrayed. In the past, guests who visited a home were expected to cross themselves and bow before the family icon, even before greeting the host.

The images "written" on icons seem initially strange to non-Eastern Christians because of their two-dimensional "flat" rendering of the human face and figure surrounded by an unadorned gold background. Creative artistic imagination, characteristic of Western religious art, is shunned by iconographers, who are expected to reproduce a standardized image of the sacred figure and to do so anonymously. Since the image is believed to represent a heavenly archetype, the icon itself becomes a kind of window between the earthly and temporal worlds. Eastern Christian theology teaches that icons reproduce archetypes of sacred figures from the celestial world, who manifest themselves to humans on the "window" surface of the icon. Three-dimensional images are expressly prohibited, while the golden background is symbolic of the holy aura that permanently surrounds saints. It is also believed that icons, especially those of Christ,

are archetypes "not made by hands." In other words, icon writers, whether individuals or groups who work in teams on different elements of the image, become merely the instruments through which the heavenly spirit makes possible, as if by some miracle, the appearance of the image.

In consideration of the theologically inspired rules that govern iconography, one might assume that all icons produced for Eastern-rite Christian churches from Greece and Serbia to Ukraine and Russia look very much the same. And to the uninitiated this might certainly seem to be the case. Since, however, icon makers have been producing works over a long period of time—from the early medieval period to the present—and throughout an extensive geographic area, it is inevitable that stylistic variations exist. Therefore, while it is difficult to speak of a typically Ukrainian style in icon painting, except in the sense of the geographic place of production, it is possible to discern different iconographic traditions, usually determined by the monastic workshops where they were made.

The earliest icons associated with medieval Kievan Rus' were either imported from Byzantium or produced in Kievan monastic workshops following Byzantine prototypes. In later centuries, iconographers in Ukraine, as elsewhere, diverged from the Byzantine model; the most distinctive of these artists were the Galician school of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Features from the Galician-Ukrainian environment are clearly evident in the Mother of God and Christ child from Krasiv, rendered as a type of ethnic Ukrainian peasant, or a sixteenth-century icon from Yabloniv, in which

220. *Mother of God and Christ Child*, Galician-style icon from Krasiv, 15th century.

Christ is wearing a robe with folk embroidery.

Another variation has come to be described as the Carpathian icon, which refers to a body of work done for local churches not only in Ukraine (in particular southern Galicia and Transcarpathia) but also in

neighboring regions within present-day Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland. The Carpathian icon from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is characterized by an increasingly realistic depiction of personages from contemporary life. This is especially the case in icons that depict the Last Judgment, in which the damned from various social strata or ethnic origin, among them Jews, are easily recognizable.

In central and eastern Ukraine, icons painted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries took a more realistic turn. This most likely occurred under Renaissance and Baroque influences from western Europe that reached Ukraine through the prism of Poland. Whereas icons retained some traditional elements like the obligatory gilded background, facial features were likely to be depicted in a more realistic manner. Moreover, alongside the holy im-
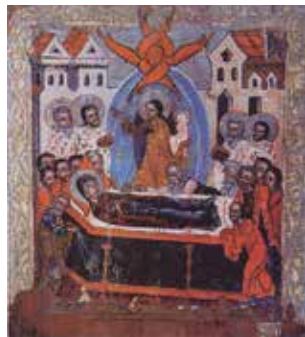
222. *The Dormition*, Galician-style icon from Kalush, late 16th century.

age in the center there may be contemporary public figures, in particular officers connected with the administration of the Cossack state. Examples of such realism include a seventeenth-century Crucifixion with a portrait of the icon's donor (Cossack colonel Leontii Svichka) or the eighteenth-century St Mary the Protectress, who is flanked by Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi.

Secular painting

This same period, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, marks the appearance of an increasing number of paintings that were meant not for religious purposes (icons and frescoes) but rather for secular enjoyment. Taking their cue from Flemish and Dutch models, which were well known at the time in Poland-Lithuania and other parts of central Europe, painters in Ukraine responded to the wishes of their own Cossack state administrators and other civic figures to be immortalized through portraiture. The same Caves Monastery in Kyiv, which for centuries had served as the main center of icon production, now became home to several portrait painters.

The dominant style was Baroque, which in the hands of Ukraine's artists often resulted in portraits that were dark and somber. The only color might be in the embroidery of the clothing and in the family coats-of-arms in the top right corner, whose purpose was both to identify and enhance the social prestige of the subject. At a more popular level, and in a somewhat more rustic and naive style, was the tradition of folk painting, among whose most popular subjects were a legendary Cossack named Mamai as the figure of a Cossack minstrel, who sits cross-legged in a Buddha-like pose holding a musical instrument (*kobza* or bandura) played by plucking the strings. These secular figures were rendered over and over by numerous folk artists in a

221. *The Last Judgment*, Carpathian icon from Mshanets, 15th century.

223. *The Cossack Mamai*, tempted to drink by a Western-looking Satan, early 19th-century folk painting.

somewhat stylized manner that reminds one of the repetitiveness of icons.

As in previous periods, Ukraine's painters during the long nineteenth century were influenced by intellectual currents and artistic styles prevalent throughout the rest of Europe. The Romantic movement was a particularly important trend, with its recognition of the power of natural forces, including the irrationality of human nature, its fascination with remote places and events from the legendary past, and its emphasis on the creative genius of the individual artist. These characteristics were all present in the works of Taras Shevchenko (better known as the literary bard of Ukraine), whether in introspectively brooding self-portraits, in etchings depicting historic buildings and traditional life in a Ukrainian village, or in realistic images of suffering in the Russian imperial army which he experienced directly during ten years of punitive conscription.

224. *The Ascension Cathedral* (1845), watercolor by Taras Shevchenko.

Like religious art from earlier times, the secular art of the nineteenth century took on a functional purpose. This time the purpose was to elevate, even glorify, the Ukrainian nationality, with realistic scenes of present-day, rural life and depictions of real or imagined events from the historic past. Among the most notable painters, whose works still dominate the permanent collections in Ukraine's museums, are Serhii Vasylkivskyi, with his memorable scenes of Cossacks on the steppe, and Mykola Pymonenko, with his idyllic renderings of everyday village life. Rural landscapes, genre scenes, and portraiture remained a staple subject matter when, at the turn of the twentieth century, the Impressionist style from France reached Ukrainian lands, where it found expression in the works of Mykola Burachek, Oleksander Murashko, and Petro Levchenko.

These and a whole host of other painters are best remembered for genre scenes, landscapes, and depictions of historic personages and events, which consciously or unconsciously were intended to inspire pride and self-respect among ethnic Ukrainians, who, at least in the Russian Empire, were not even recognized as a distinct nationality. It is from this period that derive the iconic portraits of the two greatest Ukrainian writers of the late nineteenth century, Lesya Ukrayinka (1900) and Ivan Franko (1903), both by Ivan Trush. Among the more blatant examples of paintings that glorify Ukraine's past are the large-scale realistic historicist canvases of Mykola Ivasyuk, the most memorable of which is the "Entrance of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi into Kyiv, 1649" (1912).

This same period is also known for the work of painters who, despite their Ukrainian roots and attention to Ukrainian themes, are generally classified as Russian artists. The most renowned of them is the Ukrainian-born Ilya Repin, whose joyful depiction of "Cossacks Writing a Letter to the Turkish Sultan" (1880–91) has become a kind of iconic symbol of Ukrainianness to the outside world. Others include two painters from Crimea: Ivan Aivazovsky of Armenian background, famous for his seascapes as well as ethnic Ukrainian rural genre scenes; and Arkhip Kuindzhi of Greek background, noted for

225. *Harvest in Ukraine* (1896), painting by Mykola Pymonenko.

his dark night-time landscape scenes of the Crimean coast and Ukrainian steppe.

Modernism in Ukrainian art was, as in other parts of Europe, expressed in diverse ways. It could be a rejection of "ethnographic" Realism and refined Impressionism, with a preference for a more powerful and dynamic use of color and form, as in the Expressionistic portraits of Oleksa Novakivskyi. It could be a new school of fresco painting that rendered human forms in a neo-Byzantine or pre-Renaissance style, with figures often monumental in size and statuesque in pose, as in the work of Mykh-

ailo Boichuk and his followers, the Boichukisty, who were later described as the School of Monumentalists. It could be the dynamic use of color in the style of French Fauvism as practiced by painters in Odessa's Society of Independent Artists (many of whom were Jews). Or it could be a complete rejection of figurative art in favor of a play with abstract forms and color. There was certainly nothing recognizably Ukrainian in such abstract works, other than that their creators may have worked in Ukraine and been inspired by its landscapes or, more often, cityscapes.

Influenced by the Cubist and Futurist movements in pre-World War I western Europe, painters in the waning years of the Russian Empire developed their own variant of abstract art known as Cubo-Futurism (a combination of French Cubism and Italian Futurism), with the creators of Suprematism (Kazimir Malevich) and Constructivism (Vladimir Tatlin) coming from Ukraine. These and other artists (David and Vladimir Burlyuk, Alexandra Exter, Mikhail Larionov, Oleksandr Bohomazov, Anatolii Petrytskyi), who are often described as leading Russian modernists, helped to transform Kyiv into a major center of the European avant-garde during World War I and the early 1920s.

226. *Entrance of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi into Kyiv* (1912), painting by Mykola Ivasyuk.

During the interwar years, modernist trends were continued by artists in western Ukrainian lands that were not part of the Soviet Union. These artists included Oleksa Novakivskyi, Ivan Trush, and Modest Sosenko in interwar Polish-ruled Galicia, especially Lviv, and the so-called School of Subcarpathian Painting (Adalbert Erdeli, Yosyp Bokshai, Fedir Manailo) in Czechoslovak-ruled Transcarpathia, all of whom continued to have free reign to create in the styles that most fitted their personal tastes.

Meanwhile, in Soviet Ukraine, the state was about to impose restrictions on artistic creativity. Several modernists, now considered ideologically unacceptable, were imprisoned in the Soviet gulag; some chose exile in central and western Europe; others remained but adapted to the official guidelines known as socialist realism. Formally introduced in 1933, the ideology of socialist realism condemned abstract forms and expected painters to create figurative art, preferably in the nineteenth-century realistic style. In particular, artists were expected to choose subject matter that would inspire the working classes to even greater achievements in industrial and agricultural production under the leadership of wise Communist statesmen inevitably depicted in statuesque

and often saccharine emotional poses as benevolent heroes of the new Soviet society.

The very titles of such paintings, all unveiled in the late 1940s and early 1950s, revealed their ideological purpose: praise for productive work ("The Queen of Socialist Labor Yevheniya Dolynyuk" or "Bread"); deification of Communist party leaders ("Stalin" or "Chairman Khrushchev Salutes a Cosmonaut"); political indoctrination among workers and youth ("Lenin Speaking with the Donbas Miners" or "Enrollment into the Communist Youth Movement—Komsomol"); and tributes to Russia, Ukraine's "elder" brother ("Forever with Moscow"). History, too, could be a source of inspiration, although in paintings intended for the Soviet Ukrainian public "bourgeois nationalist" heroes and events were now replaced by scenes that gave prominence to the masses in their alleged age-old struggle against feudal oppressors. Subjects were drawn from the far distant and more recent past, the best examples of which were large-scale canvases inspired with Baroque-like dynamism and force, such as Mykola Samokysh's "The Battle of [the Cossack] Maksym Kryvonos against [the Polish Aristocrat] Jeremy Wiśniowecki" (1934) and "The Red Army Crosses the Sivash Sea [to Liberate Cri-
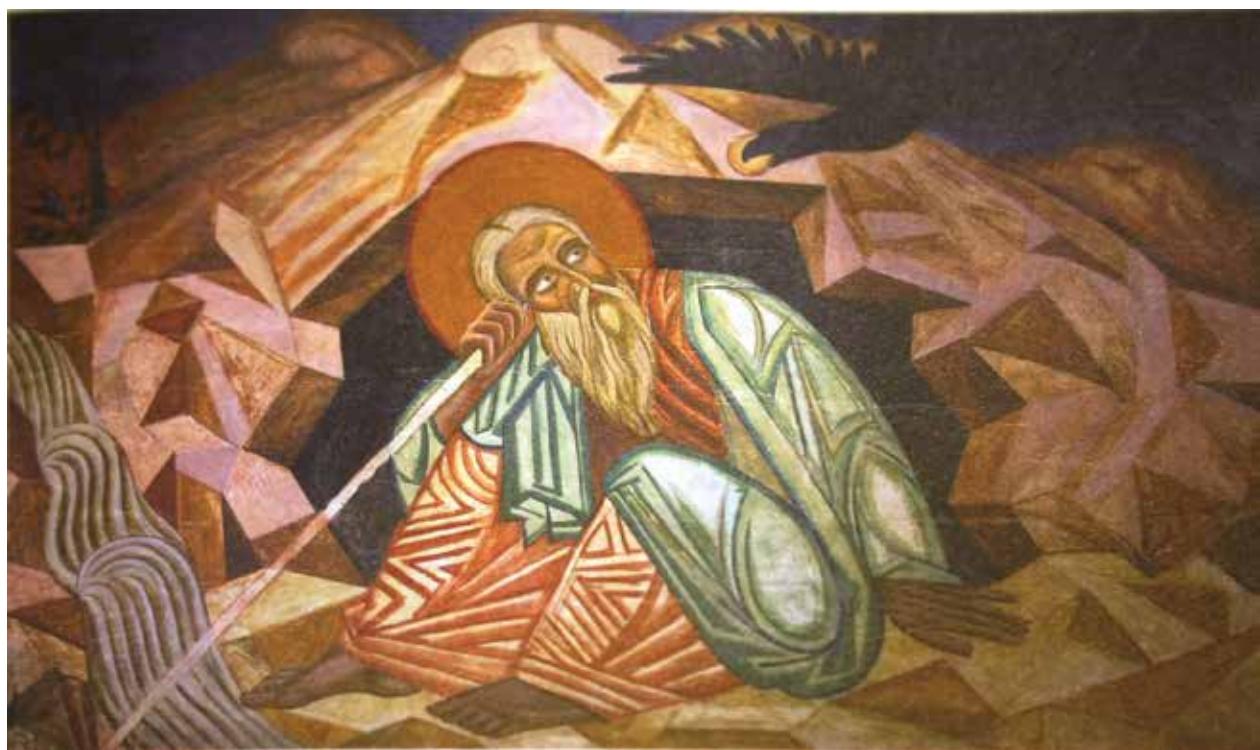
227. *The Prophet Elijah* (1912-13), painting by the Ukrainian avant-garde artist Mykhailo Boichuk.

228. *Bread* (1949), painting by Tetyana Yablonska.

mea]" (1935) or Fedir Krychevskyi's "Victors over [the White Army General] Wrangel" (1930).

Alongside officially sanctioned socialist-realist painters were non-conformists who, due to the modernist style they employed, did not receive approval from the Soviet authorities. The non-conformists may have been marginalized and restricted from exhibiting their works in public, but they nonetheless continued from the 1970s to create in a wide body of work in avant-garde styles (Feodosii Humenyuk, Volodymyr Makarenko, Ivan Marchuk, among others), some of which made use of colorful folk-inspired decorative designs (Mariya Prymachenko, Hanna Sobachka-Shostak, and Kateryna Bilokur). Their works were to have an impact on subsequent generations of creative artists who were able to work in a more politically relaxed environment. In the waning years of the Soviet Union and in post-Communist independent Ukraine, when the restrictive guidelines of socialist realism have been lifted, Ukraine's painters have worked in a wide range of styles that may be figurative, abstract, or a combination of both.

Sculpture

Sculpture has an extremely long tradition in Ukrainian lands, with artifacts uncovered by archeologists that date back to pre-historic times. The most widespread finds are small-scale terra-cotta stylized figures of humans and animals produced during the period of Trypillian culture throughout much of central and southwestern Ukraine between 4500 and 2200 BCE. Subsequently, the high level of culture that existed in southern Ukraine, in particular along the Black Sea and in Crimea, is reflected in

remnants of free-standing and relief figures of ancient Greek gods (from the third to second centuries BCE) and exquisite small-scale ritual objects and jewelry carvings in gold connected with the Scythians (fourth century BCE).

After the Christianization of Kievan Rus' in the late tenth century, the Eastern-rite Church was generally opposed to free-standing human sculpted figures, since they were reminiscent of the pagan idols that the new Christian religion set out to destroy. Consequently, "religious" sculpture was limited to stone-carving reliefs on church portals, column capitals, and sarcophagi and to carved embellishments, usually in wood, on icon screens (iconostases) that dominated Eastern-rite church interiors. This meant that, for much of the medieval and early modern periods, sculptural depictions of the human

229. Vessel, Trypillian culture, 3rd millenium BCE.

form developed mainly among those peoples and cultures in Ukraine that were not connected with Eastern Christianity. These included Polovtsian and other nomadic Turkic tribal groups who left behind in the steppelands that they dominated between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries so-called stone *babas*. The *babas* are bulky, mostly female figures (three to twelve feet, or one to four meters, high) in either standing or sitting positions, which were commonly used as grave markers.

Even more evident in Ukraine's public space were the sophisticated renderings of human forms (usually saints and other religious figures) carried out by sculptors in the Italianate Renaissance and Baroque styles for Roman Catholic churches and cemeter-

230. Scythian golden pectoral, from the Krasnokutskyi/Tovsta Mohyla burial mound (*kurhan*) in southern Ukraine, ca 300 BCE.

ies that were built in large numbers, especially in western and central Ukraine, during the sixteenth-to eighteenth-century period of Polish-Lithuanian rule. The most accomplished of these sculptors was Johann Pinzel, who in mid-eighteenth-century Galicia created full-length statues of saints for the Rococo façade of the Eastern-rite St George Greek Catholic Cathedral Church in Lviv and side-altar wooden figures for the Roman Catholic church in Monastyryska.

Aside from sculptural work connected with Catholic churches in western Ukraine, rural carvers continued to produce throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries — for both Western- and Eastern-Rite Christian communities — wayside crosses that can still be seen at the two ends of most villages, especially in the western part of the country. At the same time, professional urban-based sculptors created in wood and bronze small-scale works for financially well-to-do patrons who wished to enrich through art their personal residences or, in some cases, their art galleries. It was, therefore, not in a vacuum that arose two of the twentieth century's most innovative sculptors, Alexander Archipenko and Vladimir Tatlin, even though both worked primarily abroad and left little of their creative work in their native Ukraine.

It is large-scale sculptural works that are best known to the public-at-large, and it is these kind of monuments that often define Ukraine's cultural landscape, especially in squares, parks, and government building complexes in the country's urban areas. Most of what one sees today are works that date from the nineteenth, twentieth, and first decade of the twenty-first century. In almost all cases, the public sculptural projects were commissioned by some level of the ruling government or by a local civic body: in other words, sculpture in the service of the state and/or of the nation.

Not unexpectedly, the subjects of such commemorative sculpture have invariably been figures of historical significance (rulers, statesmen, military figures, cultural and religious leaders) or symbolic depictions connected with a specific event. Of course, what one calls historical significance is determined by the ruling regime at the time a given work is commissioned. Since heroes and glorious events for one regime may be enemies and traged-

231. *St. Elizabeth* (1755), wood sculpture by Johann Georg Pinzel.

232. Village wayside cross.

ies for the regime that follows, it is not uncommon in Ukraine—as elsewhere—for monumental sculptures to outlive their usefulness and be dismantled and replaced by something that is acceptable to the political ideology of the moment.

What remains in Ukraine from the long nineteenth century are works that represent political or religious phenomena common to all East Slavs, in particular Russians and Ukrainians. Two monumental statues in Kyiv, of St Volodymyr/Vladimir (1850–53) overlooking the Dnieper River and Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi (1888) ostensibly pointing in loyalty toward Moscow, are the best examples from this period. On the other hand, the numerous statues of tsars and their officials (with the exception of military figures) from the former Russian Empire, and of Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, and Czechoslovak kings and statesmen from previous regimes in western Ukraine, were politically unacceptable to the new Soviet authorities and, therefore, dismantled and destroyed. Among the few exceptions is the monument to the Polish national bard, Adam Mickiewicz, which was left alone and remains in the main square of Lviv where it was erected in 1904.

During the period of Soviet rule—after 1920 in eastern Ukraine and after 1945 in western Ukraine—thousands of statues were erected (sometimes in the same places where once stood figures from the "feudal" past) to the heroes of the new regime: Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx, Joseph Stalin, and the modern revolutionary class-conscious Russian writer, Maksim Gorky. These and other statues of revolutionary figures (Bolshevik activists, Red Army generals and soldiers, outstanding industrial and agricultural workers) and a select pantheon of ideologically "progressive" cultural figures from the past (most especially the Ukrainian national bard Taras Shevchenko) were rendered according to state-approved socialist-realist guidelines. In practice, this most often resulted in pompous, larger-than-life figures that were remarkably similar in style to the "totalitarian" sculpture produced in fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and later Communist China. The striving for grandiosity reached its peak with the 102-meter-high monument to World War II, called simply "Motherland" (1981), set in the hills of Kyiv overlooking the Dnieper River.

233. "*The One and Indivisible Russia*" *Greets the Ukrainian Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi*, inscription on a monument by Mikhail Mikeshin, Kyiv, 1888.

234. *Motherland* (1981), monumental sculpture by Vasyl Borodai.

The last two decades since Ukraine became an independent state have witnessed an ongoing cultural battle among conflicting forces intent on appropriating public space for their respective ideological needs. Monuments featuring sculpture are in the forefront of these struggles; many (but not all) statues of Lenin have been dismantled (Stalin statues had already for political reasons disappeared in the late 1950s and 1960s), while statues of some figures from the pre-revolutionary tsarist past have been restored (most notably Empress Catherine II in Odessa, 2007, and her favorite minister, Gregory Potemkin, in Kherson, 2003).

Very often the places that had been allotted to Lenin are filled with new statues to Taras Shevchenko, while figures who were ignored or banned outright by the Soviet regime are now the subjects of statues that have redefined a whole host of squares and parks. These include rulers from medieval Kievan Rus'—St Olga in Kyiv (1996), Yaroslav the Wise in Bila Tserkva (1983), and Danylo of Galicia in Halych (1998) and Lviv (2001); the sixteenth-century slave turned first lady of the Ottoman Empire, Roksolana, in Rohatyn (1999); the seventeenth-century

Cossack defender of Ukraine, Petro Sahaidachnyi, in Kyiv (2001); the favorably remembered (in western Ukraine) nineteenth-century Austrian Habsburg emperor, Franz Joseph, in Chernivtsi (2006); and several figures from the twentieth century––the historian and Ukraine's first president, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, in Kyiv (1998); the respected Greek Catholic archbishop, Andrei Sheptytskyi, and his brother Klymetii, in Prylbychi (2011); the "national Communist" Mykola Skrypnyk in Kharkiv (1969); and the controversial anti-Soviet nationalist leader Stepan Bandera in Drohobych (2004). Ukrainians of Jewish descent have also become part of the country's public urban space with recent statues of the poet Paul Celan in Chernivtsi (1992); the popular jazz singer Leonid Utesov/Lazar Vaisbein and writer Isaac Babel in Odessa (2000 and 2008 respectively); and the writer Sholem Aleichem and actor Zinovii Gerdt in Kyiv (1997 and 1998 respectively).

The question about who is deserving of a statuary monument, whether in the form of an individual figure or group of figures, has at times prompted heated public debate, which, for example, surrounded the rededication of the Odessa monument to Empress Catherine II (opposed by Ukrainian patriotic elements) and the construction of several new monuments in western Ukraine in honor of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and its exiled leader, Stepan Bandera, in Lviv (2008), and its military head, Roman

235. Monument to Taras Shevchenko, where until 2014 Lenin had stood, Andrushivka near Zhytomyr.

236. Leonid Utesov (b. Lazar Vaisbein, 1895-1982), jazz musician, orchestra director, and singer, park sculpture (2000) by Alexander Tokarev in the city center of Odessa.

Shukhevych, in Tyshkivtsi (2012) (opposed by war veterans and others sympathetic to the Soviet past). Controversy has also surrounded and delayed the construction of monuments associated with some of Ukraine's minority peoples, such as one commemorating the late-ninth-century crossing of the Carpathians by Magyars/Hungarians (opposed by Ukrainian nationalists from Galicia) and several non-figurative memorials commemorating the forced deportation of the Crimean Tatars in May 1944 (opposed by Russian nationalists in Crimea). Less controversial, except perhaps on aesthetic grounds, are several monuments, some with figurative statues, memorializing the Great Famine (*Holodomor*) of 1933, the destruction of Jewish communities during the Holocaust, and the victims of Communist rule.

Jewish traditional art

Jewish tradition from antiquity forbids creating images that can be used as objects of worship, but it endorses images used as the references to, or the attributes of, the divine. Therefore, most of the wooden synagogues in Ukraine—good examples of which are at Hvizdets, Khodoriv, Mikhalpol, and Smotrych—were exuberantly painted inside and out by Jewish folk artists. Only a few names of these Jewish synagogue painters are known; one is Mordekhai Lisnitsky. The paintings consisted of floral ornaments with redemptive messages often associated with the *tsemakh*, alluding to the biblical *tsemakh*

David (the offspring of King David), the long-awaited redeemer-to-come. Synagogue ceilings displayed the signs of the Zodiac, endorsed for two millennia as a legitimate symbol in places of Jewish worship, and quite often there were ornamental fauna as elements of traditional Jewish symbolism on menorahs and columns.

All elements of traditional Jewish art found in synagogues, including the carved wooden or stone sculptures adorning the Holy Ark (Heb.: *aron ha-kodesh*; Yid.: *oren ha-koydesh*), the curtain covering it (*parokhet*), and the fauna and flora ornaments on the ceiling and walls, were intended to be read, understood, explained, and interpreted. They formed a visual continuation of the traditional commentary on classical texts and parts of the liturgy. In a real sense, they were a graphic extension of Jewish oral culture. The *bimah*, or elevated podium with a table on which the Torah scroll was read on the Sabbath and on festival days, was covered by a bridal canopy, suggesting at the moment of the Torah reading the loving union between the Jewish people as the bride and God Almighty as the groom.

There were some common decorative elements that appeared with only stylistic variation in the interiors of most synagogues. The two pillars of the Holy Ark symbolized the two pillars of Jerusalem's Second Temple destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.
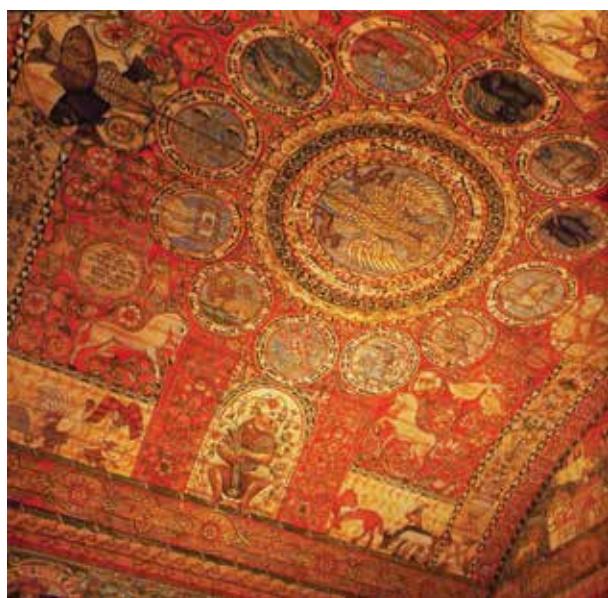
237. Painted ceiling of the seventeenth-century wooden synagogue in Khodoriv displaying mystical motifs and messianic allegories.

The two lions represented the tribe of Judah, which supported the pillars of the imaginary Jerusalem Temple; consequently, synagogues were called in Judaic tradition *mikdash meat*, the little temple. A unicorn associated with Joseph and a lion associated with Judah, when depicted together, referred to the final redemption when these two messianic figures in Judaism (one, the son of Joseph, the other, the son of Judah) would meet. Flowers growing out of one another were another symbol of redemption, which was—and is—as imminent as the growth of creeping plants. A deer (*tsvi* in Hebrew) stood for the land of the deer (*erets tsvi*), a biblical metaphor for the Holy Land, while eagles referred to the biblical verse "[I will carry you] on the wings of eagles." The meaning of all these direct and oblique references was clear to every traditional Jew. Hence, when entering the synagogue, one went on an imaginary pilgrimage to the Almighty's dwelling-place in the Holy City of Jerusalem. From a synagogue somewhere in Ukraine, communal worship transferred a Jew on the wings of eagles to the Holy Land, known in Yiddish as *eretz Yisroel*.

Folk paintings typically adorned Jewish homes. Known as *Mizrakh* and *Shiviti,* they depicted, along with other symbols, Psalm 67 (known as the *Menorah* psalm) in the form of a seven-branch candelabra. They were placed on the eastern wall of the home to mark the direction of daily prayer toward the east, that is, toward Jerusalem. These popular folk paintings were usually of painted paper cutouts which symbolized the Holy Land, the restored Temple, and the final redemption.

Symbolism was also present in a unique form of Jewish traditional art: tombstones (Heb.: *matsevot*; Yid.: *matseves*). Usually hewn from limestone by professional Jewish carvers, the tombstones contained not only epitaphs but also sophisticated ornaments, such as the hands of the priests (*kohanim*) spread in blessing, the hands of Levites with a jar washing the hands of priests, a lion (if the person was named Leyb) or a wolf (if the person's name was Zeev), and exuberant floral ornaments as well as deer and eagles symbolizing the Land of Israel. If a person was unable to get to the Holy Land, in the Jewish popular imagination he or she would be transferred there af-

238. Paper-cut *mizrakh* placed on the eastern wall of the Jewish house to point the direction of the prayers.

ter death by the symbols at the gravesite. Great rabbis and Torah scholars merited a crown on their graves, symbolic of their status as teachers of Judaism, which exemplified the highest level of human knowledge. Tombstones dating from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries became a significant part of the Ukrainian cultural landscape. Among the more

239. Tombstone with floral ornaments in Sataniv, one of the oldest Jewish cemeteries in Ukraine.

unique examples are in Jewish cemeteries in Belz, Berdychiv, Kosiv, Medzhybizh, Sadhora, Shepetivka, and Zhynkiv, many of which have appeared as part of the scenery in Jewish films and plays, as the subject of Jewish poetry and prose, or in the works of leading eastern European avant-garde painters.

Jewish secular painting

The first modern artists of Jewish descent in Ukraine appeared in the wake of the Reform Era (1860s) in the Russian Empire. As a result of the reforms initiated during the reign of Tsar Alexander II (1855–81), Jews were given access to higher education and the promise of greater social mobility and cultural integration. Many gifted Jews found their way to art schools in St Petersburg, Moscow, Kyiv, and Odessa. Among the first was Abraham Manievych (Abram Manevich), a native of Belarus who studied and taught in Kyiv. Influenced by French Impressionism, Manievych created dozens of Ukrainian landscapes, some of which ("Spring in Kurenivka," 1913), had recognizably Jewish overtones. Another painter influenced by late-nineteenth-century modernist trends from western Europe was Natan Altman, a native of Odessa and graduate of the Odessa School of the Arts, who subsequently became renown as a designer of theatrical and stage sets.

In the decade before the outbreak of World War I, Ukraine, in particular Kyiv, became one of the major centers of twentieth-century artistic trends, including Futurism, Cubism, Art Nouveau, and an amalgam of the avant-garde. Among the artists who established studios and salons in Kyiv and had a significant impact on the city's cultural life was Alexandra Exter (née Grigorovich) from the Polish-Belarusan border town of Białystok. This was also a time when several European painters started careers in their native Ukraine before leaving permanently for Germany, France, the United States, or Israel. Because of Ukraine's stateless and little-known status, these figures came to be known as "Russian-Jewish" or "Russian-French" artists. Among them was Sonia Delaunay (b. Sara Stern) from the Katerynoslav region, who settled in France; Borys Aronson, who began with the Kyiv-based Kultur-Lige and ended up as an extremely productive American

240. Alexandra Exter (1882-1949), avant-garde painter and art salon-keeper in Kyiv. Photo, 1912.

theatrical artist (most famous for the scenery in the movie *Fiddler on the Roof*), and Joseph Zaritsky, who continued the innovative coloristic endeavours of Matisse and Cézanne while still in Ukraine, until he moved to the British Mandate of Palestine where he became one of Israel's most important painters.

Aside from its role in theatrical life, the pre-World War I Kultur-Lige (or Yiddish Culture Society) included among its ranks an artistic group that continued to function during the period of Ukraine's independence (1917–1920). The Kultur-Lige avant-garde artists identified with the anonymous Jewish folk painters of the distant past who carved tombstones and decorated synagogues. Like their predecessors who created folk items for ritual use, the new revolutionary artists also felt committed to serve their people—but with a different goal. That new goal was best displayed in Iosif Chaikov's cover design for the journal *Baginen* (Dawn), which cast traditional Judaic symbolism in a revolutionary mold. Chaikov portrayed a naked newborn Adam, a person of the new age without any ethnic features, an everyman who lifts the ram's horn to trumpet the birth of the new world as in the synagogue during the Jewish New Year (*rosh ha-shanah*). This creative usage of old Jewish symbols was done in the service of a revolutionary, boundary-crossing, avant-garde art.

Among the plethora of outstanding artists who helped launch the Kultur-Lige program of cultural revolution through art and education were Alexander Tyshler, Iosif Chaikov, Mark Epstein, and Issakhar Ber Rybak. Experiments with form did not

prevent them from creating ethnographically precise and historically relevant images based on their native Ukrainian environment. Rybak, for example, produced several albums of etchings inspired by Ukraine's Jewish world: "The Shtetl" (1923), "The Pogrom" (1918), and "Jewish Images in Ukraine" (1924). Another painter, Mane-Kats (Emmanuel Katz) from Kremenchuk, drawing heavily on the artistic experiments of his Ukrainian and Jewish contemporaries, was perhaps the first avant-garde painter to create artistic images of the *shtetl*. All these Jewish artists worked side by side with the creators of revolutionary trends in Ukrainian art, such as Alexander Archipenko, Mykhailo Boychuk, and David Burlyuk. In addition to teaching art to the Yiddish-speaking masses and designing dozens of posters and book jackets, Ukraine's Jewish artists connected with the Kultur-Lige painted workers' dormitories, designed logos for military armoured trains, and created scenery for Yiddish theatrical stages.

242. *Jewish Wedding* (1920) by Issakhar Ber Rybak, avant-garde artist from Ukraine.

241. Cover design by Iosif Chaikov for the Yiddish avant-garde magazine *Baginen* (Kyiv, 1919).

By the early 1930s, following the Soviet government's implementation of socialist realism as the guiding principle for artistic creativity, avant-garde techniques were scorned and traditional imagery considered obsolete. Some Jewish artists from Ukraine did, however, create in a realist style that soon became the norm in the Soviet art world. Aron Futerman, from a village near Korosten, designed dozens of monuments to revolutionary leaders, while Isaac Brodsky from Sofiyivka created a highly romanticized version of socialist realism, with portraits of Lenin and other Soviet leaders as well as epic paintings, such as "Execution of the 26 Baku Commissars" (1925). It was works such as these that laid the foundation of visual Soviet propaganda and official mass culture, although in the case of Brodsky the results were at least of high artistic quality.

Jewish artists and scholars from other parts of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union were also drawn to Ukraine. In the 1920s the Leningrad painter Solomon Iudovin was creating poignant and apocalyptic images of the *shtetl*. They were based on impressions of Ukraine's Jews that he acquired during a trip taken earlier in the century with the ethnog-

rapher S. An-sky through the central provinces of the Pale (mostly Volhynia and Podolia). Iudovin's trip inspired his later etchings, which today are considered a quintessential portrayal of the traditional Ukrainian *shtetl* and its synagogues.

By the late 1930s, however, Jewish themes in Soviet art had almost disappeared unless they were connected to the celebration of Jewish proletarians and peasants. Following the closure of Yiddish-language schools and theaters in the 1940s, Jewish artists transformed themselves into innocuous illustrators of children's books for the Soviet public at large. Together with dozens of Jews who became children's writers and poets, they helped create a popular corpus of twentieth-century children's literature that was untouched by ideological concerns. Nonetheless, these artists did not escape the anti-Jewish persecutions that characterized the period after World War II. Zinovii Tolkatchev became the object of attack for his albums of Holocaust-based illustrations such as "Maidanek" and "The Flowers of Oswięncym." Why? The Soviet authorities accused him of bourgeois nationalism for emphasizing the exclusiveness of Jewish suffering during World War II.

In the 1960s, during the short-lived political Thaw, several artists of Jewish descent enriched Soviet Ukrainian artistic circles. David Miretsky was inspired by the country's leading socialist-realist painter, Tetyana Yablonska, to create colorful representations of the *homo sovieticus*. This idealized Soviet person, with characteristics of the unsophisticated lumpenproletariat, seemed to be a figure with recognizable Jewish features. With his deep empathy toward ordinary people, Miretsky crafted – in the style of Breughel – tragicomic Soviet people going about their daily lives, whether shopping at a butcher shop or bakery, playing dominoes in a courtyard, or taking a walk on city streets. Mikhail Turovsky, like Miretsky from Kyiv and also a disciple of Tetyana Yablonska, became a productive book illustrator and portraitist. His often bright Matisse-inspired nudes defied Communist party officials who otherwise had forbade him from exhibiting most of his best works. Borys Lekar from Kharkiv, whose his career as an architect is best remembered for the design of the boulevard near Kyiv's St Sophia Cathedral, later became

243. Soviet-era butcher store, imagined by the Kyiv-born painter David Miretsky.

a watercolorist and painter. His portraits of famous composers and writers sought to transcend human materiality and physicality by rendering the human face as a stream of emanating light. Although a native of Soviet Central Asia, the prolific Akim Levich created series of works depicting traditional towns and *shtetls* in Ukraine as seen through fading memories and creative nostalgia. Not being able to exhibit their best work and often left without the means of existence, all these artists (except Levich) emigrated to the West in the 1970s and 1980s.

After Ukraine's independence, new painters of Jewish background openly declared their desire to reconnect with the artistic and religious tradition from which they and their predecessors had been forcefully separated. Thus, the painter Alexander Roitbrud turned to post-modern themes, creating images that depict the collapse of the Soviet universe. Matvei Vaisberg practiced what he called the "artistic rearguard," that is, figurative and thematically based art that combined eastern European iconography with elements of folk art and of biblical and modern-day Israeli themes (as in the series titled "Judea Desert" and "Seven Days"). Vaisberg's monotypes and canvases often display shades of gold as a reminder of the lost grandeur of traditional Jewish imagery and sacred art.

CHAPTER 9
Music

Folk music

Ukrainian folk music

Musical folklore is part of a people's collective memory manifested in singing, instrumental music, and dance that is associated with oral traditions transferred from generation to generation. Ukrainian musical folklore is very old: there are references to song performers in medieval eastern European chronicles, while sixteenth-century diplomats mention them as ubiquitous and respected figures at ruling courts.

Songs with a plethora of subgenres were—and still are—the most characteristic feature of Ukrainian culture and tradition. It is no coincidence that many Jewish enthusiasts of Ukrainian culture fell in love with Ukraine and its language because of the songs they heard in their childhood. For an ethnic Ukrainian child, knowledge of language, customs, music, verse, and rhythm begins with *kolyskovi* (lullabies) and *zabavlyanky* (fun songs). The child's early exposure to folklore includes music with a predominance of minor scales and with lyrics that are sad and at times filled with frightening images. Such music had a ritualistic protective function, keeping evil away from the child.

Ethnic Ukrainians created a wide range of songs to accompany practically every national, communal, family, and intimate event in their lives. Among such ritual songs are *vesnyanky* (to greet the beginning of spring), *hayivky* (to welcome the blossoming

244. Christmas carolers in Ukraine, 2014.

of forest vegetation), *kolyadky* (Christmas carols), *shchedrivky* (New Year's Eve carols), and *ryndzivky* (greeting songs for married and unmarried women at the beginning of the New Year, usually performed in Galicia). Humorous songs, such as the older *kolomyiky* in western Ukraine or, from Soviet times, *chastivky* in eastern Ukraine, are intended to mock selfishness, greed, gluttony, lust, drunkenness, and other human foibles.

Ukrainian musical folklore combines folk and Christian elements, with the result that it retains ancient pre-Christian pagan references, images, and beliefs. For example, *vesnyanky* (spring songs), *kupalski* (Ivan Kupala fortune-telling, erotic, and lyric songs), and *zaklychky* (invoking songs) hark back to pagan beliefs connected to the sacral meaning of seasonal change, the choice of a life partner, and the animistic

245. Blind Ukrainian minstrel as depicted in a water-color, *Kobzar by the Road* (1854), by the Russian artist Lev Zhemchuzhnikov.

nature (possessing a soul) of plants, trees, and crops. Similarly, *tsarynni* songs, which are associated with fence-building to protect arable lands, emphasize the pre-Christian prejudice that crows bring bad luck. All these songs were subsequently adapted to various holidays of the Christian calendar.

Songs came to play such a crucial role in national self-identification that ethnic Ukrainians created a humoristic and inoffensive image of a Cossack who reacts by singing an extemporaneously composed song about anything that happens to him. In a well-known eighteenth-century Ukrainian joke, a Cossack riding with his brethren on a wagon catches his foot between the spokes of the wheel: "Oy, my foot…," he exclaims, prompting the entire group immediately to burst into a refrain on the words: "Oy, my foot…"

Ukrainian musical folklore includes a wide variety of genres centered primarily around males. Aside from Cossacks are the *chumaky* (ox-cart drivers known for transporting salt from Crimea), recruits conscripted for service in the tsarist army, and peasants, whose songs accompanied planting,

sowing, shepherding, and harvesting. Genres of musical folklore that emerged from life-cycle events include *vesilni* (wedding songs) and *zhurni* (mourning dirges), both of which are usually performed by groups of females. The music is generally characterized by minor/major alternation-built polyphony around the fifth, third, and octave intervals.

Because of their association with the early modern Ukrainian state and nationhood, Cossack songs are by far the most beloved and popular among ethnic Ukrainians. Although narrating earlier events, most extant Cossack songs reflect eighteenth-century sensibilities. They glorify the seventeenth-century Cossack uprisings and eighteenth-century *haidamaky* (peasant rebels), all the while bemoaning the sufferings of Cossack leaders captured and tortured by enemies and lamenting their waning military might. The various genres among these songs include *dumy* (lyrical epic songs) and *psalmy* (biblical and quasi-biblical glorifications). Quite sophisticated in form, Cossack songs used both cantilena (singing) and recitative narration song to diatonic melodies in alternating major/minor scales.

Cossack songs were traditionally performed by vagabond *kobzari* and *lirnyky*, named for the instruments they played, on the *kobza* (a stringed instrument in the lute family) and the *lira* (a hurdy-gurdy). Hundreds of listeners would gather around them during annual fairs or on market days in order to listen to performances that in a sense continued the oral epic tradition from medieval times. The *kobzari* and *lirnyky* appealed to the imagination of listeners, helping them identify with and rejoice in their common glorious historical past. The importance of these kinds of public performances in ethnic Ukrainian cultural life manifested itself not only in the title of Taras Shevchenko's most famous literary work (*Kobzar*), but also in visual folk art epitomized in the exceedingly widespread image of the Cossack Mamai, performing on his *kobza* and surrounded by attributes of Cossack military life.

Ethnic Ukrainian folklore developed through intensive interaction with the traditions of surrounding peoples. In the northwestern part of Ukraine (Polissia), one finds musical scales similar to those of Belarusans and Russians, while the Cossack folklore of southeastern Ukraine has absorbed a fair amount of Crimean Tatar and Turkish elements. On the other hand, in far western Galicia (including the Lemko region) and Bukovina, vocal as well as dance music is influenced by Slovak, Hungarian, Romanian, and Romany/Gypsy motifs and rhythmic patterns.

Throughout Ukraine major life-cycle events, in particular weddings, are celebrated with singing and dancing accompanied by musical instruments. Ukrainian folk bands traditionally consisted of three musicians who, depending on the situation, geographical area, and purpose, used a variety of instruments, including the *sopilka* or *floyara* (a type of flute), the *tsymbaly* or dulcimer (a wire-stringed instrument played with light hammers), the *bandura* (a plucked-stringed instrument) and its predecessor,

246. Dancing at a Hutsul village wedding in Galicia as depicted in a painting, *Kolomyika* (1895), by the Polish artist Teodor Axentowicz.

the *kobza*, the *drymba* (a small reverberating metallic piece), the *tambor* and *tulumbas* (drums of different sizes), the *basolya* (a kind of folk cello), and the *serbyn* (a type of fiddle). Some of these instruments were foreign in origin (Balkan, Turkish, Italian, Polish) but adapted for local purposes; others were indigenous to Ukraine's vast territory from the Carpathians to the Kuban steppes, reflecting local lifestyles and traditions deeply rooted in rural life. Dance as a folkloric tradition also had both local and foreign roots. Aside from dances indigeneous to Ukraine—the *arkan*, *hopak*, *kolomyika*, *kozachok*, and *metelytsya*—others that were widespread included the polka and *krakovyak* of Moravian and Polish origin and the quadrille of western European aristocratic provenance.

Aside from instrumental music and dancing at social occasions, baptisms, weddings, funerals, and other life-cycle celebrations included vocal music by groups of singers, usually female. The popularity of group singing was reinforced by Christian church tradition (that of all denominations common to Ukraine), which encouraged participation in the liturgy in the form of an exchange between the cantor and the congregation. By the nineteenth century, choral performance of folk songs became a central part of the Ukrainian musical scene and an important component of cultural continuity for pre-revolutionary, Soviet, and post-Soviet Ukraine. Choral tradition also found its way into highbrow literature (Vynnychenko wrote a play about "collective singing") and into urban folklore, which includes numerous jokes about ethnic Ukrainians who, despite being faced with life-threatening circumstances, somehow found time and energy to establish a choir.

Although during Soviet times public manifestations of traditional Ukrainian national pride were considered bourgeois-nationalist and subversive dangers, the authorities still encouraged a wide range of politically benign amateur and professional song ensembles at both the national (Virsky Ensemble, Ikonnyk Choir) and oblast levels. Nevertheless, several genres of Ukrainian songs were suppressed by the Soviet regime, in particular military songs and marches connected with the Ukrainian National Republic's troops (*striletski* songs) and songs of the nationalist guerilla units fighting during World War II (*povstanski* songs).

247. The Cossack-inspired Ukrainian *hopak* dance, performed by the Virsky Dance Ensemble.

Under the impact of the *bel canto* singing tradition introduced through opera performances and new romantic attitudes toward folklore, nineteenth-century Ukrainian-language authors composed lyric verses, which at times became so popular they were believed to be actual folklore. Among the best known of these "literary folk songs" are Viktor Zabila's "Ne shchebechy, soloveiku" (Do Not Sing, My Nightingale), Mykhailo Petrenko's "Dyvlyus ya na nebo" (I Am Looking at the Sky), Kostyantyn Dumitrashko's "Chorni brovy, kari ochi" (Black Eyebrows, Hazel Eyes), and, the most famous of all, Mykhailo Starytskyi's "Nich taka misyachna" (The Night Is Full of Moonlight). Several of Shevchenko's poems, originally inspired by Ukrainian musical folklore, returned to their popular realm after being turned into songs. Other Ukrainian poems that became popular songs include Andrii Malyshko's "Ridna maty moya" (My Dear Mother) and Volodymyr Ivasyuk's "Chervona ruta" (Red Rue).

Ukrainian musical folklore has attracted arduous admirers among composers both within and beyond Ukraine, including Petr Tchaikovsky, Mykola Lysenko, Mykola Leontovych, and Béla Bartók, all of whom recorded and immortalized folk melodies in classical musical forms. Folk elements were also used liberally in the stage works (*The Wedding in Malynivka*, 1938, and *Sorochyntsi Fair*, 1936, among others) of Oleksii Ryabov, the Franz Lehár of Ukrainian operetta, a genre that was especially popular in Soviet Ukraine both before and after World War II. By the second half of the twentieth century, over forty popular

musical groups and bands utilized folk music in their repertoire. A new generation of composers (Yevhen Stankovych, Leonid Hrabovskyi, Ivan Karabits, and others) continued the tradition of using elements of folk music of both rural and urban origin in their operas, cantatas, and symphonies. These traditions remain alive in Ukraine's contemporary musical scene, whether in "high" classical genres (Lesya Dychko and Oleksandr Shchetynskyi) or in popular rock music as dozens of groups garner mass support through their reliance on Ukrainian folk music. It was a galvanizing performance of the pop-singer Ruslana (Ruslana Lyzhychko) based on Carpathian Hutsul folk motifs that won her first prize at the prestigious Eurovision—European Song Contest in 2004.

Jewish folk music

Music permeated the everyday life of ordinary Jews as much as it did the everyday life of ordinary ethnic Ukrainians. To begin with, Jewish men and women always chanted their daily prayers. The chants combined melodies and recitative lyrics in a form that was both canonized and individual. Children in elementary school and young boys in Talmudic academies also chanted the texts they studied, using what was called *gemore-nign* (Talmudic spiritual melody). It had easily memorizable emphatic rising tones, question-tunes built on five-degree intervals, and a concluding cadence.

At the festive table on the Sabbath and holidays, Jews always sang songs, whether *nigunim* (spiritual melodies) or *zmiros* (religious songs), which were known and chanted by all. It is true that the Talmud contains strict prohibitions against adult men listening to a woman's voice (*kol isha*), which is believed to arouse uncontrollable sexual emotions. Nevertheless, until the rise of ultra-Orthodoxy, women did sing at the family table and in the synagogue together with men. The Talmudic prohibition did not apply to the mother-child relationship. Lullabies that Jewish mothers sang to their children were often the same ones sung by the peoples among whom the Jews lived. It is, therefore, not surprising that Ukrainian and Jewish lullabies used similar minor-key melodies, soft modulations, and sorrowful imagery.
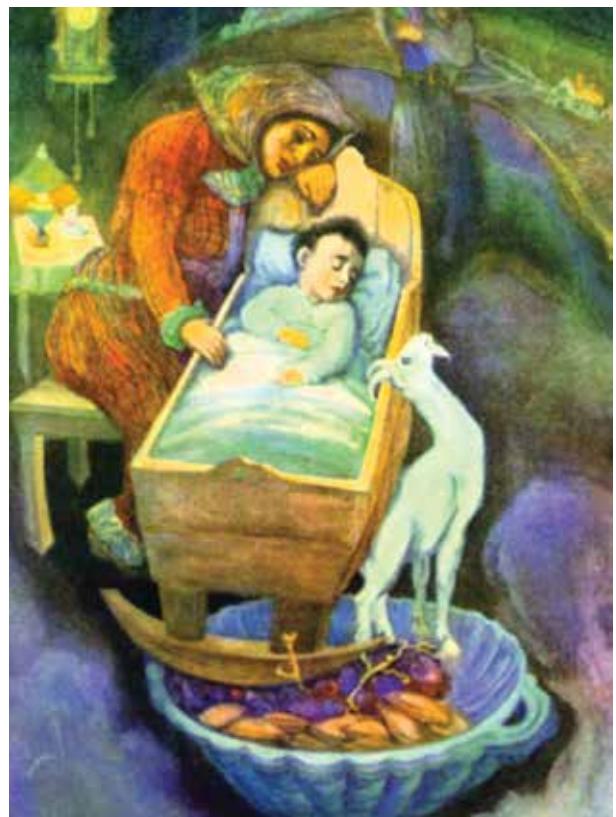
248. Jewish mother singing a lullaby as depicted by Saul Raskin, Ukrainian-born American book illustrator and cartoonist.

Although the synagogue had its own cantor (Heb.: *hazan*; Yid.: *hazn*), who was a vocal master in great demand, practically every educated male Jew could, if necessary, lead prayers. This happened because, first of all, praying aloud was a communal practice and, second, because some basic prayers—such as those recited during the major holidays, new month celebrations, and the Sabbath—had more than one established melody from which any congregant could freely choose and reproduce.

The melodies varied from community to community and from *shtetl* to *shtetl*. It was also not uncommon for professional cantors to borrow from non-Jewish music, whether from folk songs in the early modern times, from the operatic and operetta repertoire in the nineteenth century, or from popular urban tunes in the twentieth century. Looking for solid income, many great cantors from Ukraine moved westward and accepted lucrative positions with larger congregations in Europe (Warsaw, Vienna, Berlin) and North America (New York City). For example, Gershon Sirota from Odessa performed in Vilnius and Warsaw, toured throughout Europe, and made high-quality vinyl-

249. *Jewish Wedding* (1893) accompanied by a klezmer band, painting by the Belarusan-born artist Isaak Askenazii.

disk recordings, while Yossele Rosenblatt from Bila Tserkva, sometimes called the Jewish Caruso, toured Austria-Hungary and Germany before completing his hugely popular career in the United States as the star in a Hollywood movie about a jazz singer.

Traditional Orthodox Jewish liturgy—unlike the modernized Reform one—had (and has) no musical instruments, since Judaism like Eastern Christianity proscribes playing instruments on holy days. Instead, Jews sang. After all, the synagogue was a replica of the Temple in Jerusalem, where Levites sang hymns, Psalms, and religious songs. In the diaspora, a synagogue's entire congregation assumed the role of the singing Levites. Weekly Torah portions were also chanted, in which the reader (*bal koyre*) used special musical tropes (*taamim*) developed as early as the eighth and ninth centuries and since then employed, although with some variations, by both Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews. Chanting the Torah and the Haftarah portion from the Prophets constituted the central part of the *bar mitzvah* ceremony. Hence, mastery of Torah-chanting tunes and tropes became an integral component of a young Jewish boy's entry into adulthood.

Despite the absence of instrumental music in traditionalist synagogues, some multi-talented nineteenth-century cantors and even rabbis did play the violin to accompany recitation of the opening Sabbath prayers until the last three stanzas of the *Lekha dodi*, a Kabbalistic Sabbath introductory hymn. At that point, the moment the Sabbath had "arrived," they would put the instrument down. On the other hand, during festivities such as weddings and on holidays which had no Sabbath prohibitions (Hanukkah and Purim) as well as during the intermediary days of the spring Passover and autumn Sukkot, instrumental music was widely used.

Instrumental music was essential, because such festivities were a time for dancing. Jews danced in lines, in a circle, and in couple formations. In most cases for couple dancing, handkerchiefs were used to avoid touching the partner of the other sex. While Jewish and Ukrainian dances shared dozens of genuinely folkloric melodies, each people also had its own dances. Among ethnic Ukrainians, the best known were the *kozachok*, *hopak*, and *kolomyika*. For Jews there were several: the *khosidl*—a Hasidic spiritualized dance that transforms *yihud*

WHAT IS KLEZMER MUSIC?

The word *klezmer* originated from the Yiddish version of two Hebrew words, *klei* (instruments) and *zemer* (song). In the early nineteenth century, *klezmorim* (klezmer musicians) used the *tsymbaly* (dulcimer), tambourine or drums, violin, bass or cello, and a wooden flute (later replaced by the clarinet). The dulcimer was an instrument that Jews shared with ethnic Ukrainians, whose own itinerant musicians and singers (*lirnyky*) often used it as well.

Klezmer bands quite often comprised Jewish and non-Jewish performers, particularly in Bukovina and Galicia. There were even cases when Christian performers ignored the bans of excommunication of their priests and performed at Jewish festivities, in Jewish taverns, and onstage in Yiddish plays. To enrich and diversify their repertoire, klezmer musicians inserted Hutsul, Cossack, Tatar, Romanian, and Hungarian peasant-folk melodies into their compositions, thus crossing cultural, geographic, and ethnic boundaries. The compositions of klezmer bands were built on fiery dance rhythms, solo improvisations combined with ensemble performing, rubato melodies, and rhythmic variations switching from slow and sad to vertiginous and fast, rapid shifts of rhythm and modulation, which are almost always syncopated to emphasize the dynamics of body language.

Among the most famous nineteenth-century klezmer musicians (*klezmorim*) were Avraam Kholodenko of Berdychiv, Marder the Great of Vinnytsya, Khone Wolfstahl of Ternopil, and Yossele Drucker of Berdychiv. All were virtuoso dulcimer and violin performers of astounding technical skill. For example, Drucker, who was known during his lifetime as Stempenyu, was to reappear after death with all his musical talent as the main character in Sholem Aleichem's Yiddish novel *Stempenyu* (1888).

(unity with the divine) and *dveykus* (cleaving to the mystical source) into a theatrical show; the *freylekh*—vivacious wedding dances alternating between doleful and joyous melodies; and the *sher*—a couple's dance with elements of well-expressed yet moderated eroticism. Jews, and for that matter ethnic Ukrainians as well, hired itinerant musicians, the *klezmorim*, to play at their festivities.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, Hasidic religious leaders encouraged the use of popular music, although they sought to transform its erotic and secular overtones into the spiritual and the mystical. Like the Kabbalist mystics in the Land of Israel and the Sabbatian sectarians in the Balkans before them, the Hasidim in Ukraine argued that music helped uplift routine religious practices and streamline the words of the prayers, allowing liturgical requests to reach their ultimate addressee more directly and easily. Because the Hasidim believed that everything in the material and spiritual world contained a divine spark and was pregnant with spirituality, this view applied as well to music. They had no problem borrowing Ukrainian (and other non-Jewish) melodies, which they quickly adapted for Jewish usage. Also like ethnic Ukrainians, when Jews wished to make a joyful melody into a sad one, they changed the key to minor by lowering the third tone in the scale. More often, they augmented the second in between the third and fourth degree of the scale, imitating the Phrygian (*freygish*) mode, which is popularly known as the Gypsy scale.

The sweetness of the melodies of the Hasidic *tsadik* were compared to the sweetness of the Land of Israel; in other words, by singing a melody one could transport oneself to the Holy Land. When gathered around the *tsadik*'s table (*tisch*), those present adapted a plethora of folkloric melodies to mark through singing the sad departure of Shabbat on Saturday night as if it were the parting of a groom and bride. The highly influential eighteenth-century Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav preached that only a combination of singing a *nign*, teaching the Torah, and dancing can bring genuine joy. The very act of dancing and singing might soften the impact of the harsh (and quite often anti-Jewish) decrees of the government, or perhaps even annul divine verdicts.

250. *Hasidim Dancing* (1980s), painting by the Russian-born New-York-based Hasidic painter Zalman Kleinman.

Many songs ascribed to Rabbi Nachman incorporate melodies characteristic of the organ grinders and dulcimers (*tsymbaly*) of itinerant Ukrainian musicians. The religious leaders of the Belz, Boyan, Makarov, Ruzhin, and Vizhnitz Hasidic courts emphasized the importance of melodies, arguing that they helped individuals focus on the internal meaning of religious songs (*zmiros*) and thereby achieve the ecstatic moment of cleaving to the divine. It is also through the Hasidim that the Jewish music of Ukraine reached the Holy Land. A nineteenth-century emissary to the Jewish communities in Palestine reported that he had been invited to meet the *tsadik* of the Hasidim in Tzfat (Safed). The Hasidic master, who had come from the Ukrainian town of Ovruch, sang moving Shabbat songs at his table to ignite *hitlahavut* (inspiration) among his followers.

Hasidic and Jewish folk melodies have also inspired some of Europe's best-known composers. In the nineteenth century, Mikhail Glinka included a Jewish song in his orchestral music for the tragedy *Prince Kholmsky*; Mussorgsky used a Jewish tune in his *Pictures at an Exhibition* and a Hasidic spiritual melody (*nign*) for his cantata "Joshua, son of Jesus"; and Gustav Mahler built the entire third movement of his *First Symphony* around an eastern European wedding dance tune (*freylekhs*). In the twentieth century, Ernest Bloch used Jewish liturgical and Hasidic music in several works: *Solomon: A Hebrew Rhapsody*, for cello and orchestra; *Trois Poèmes Juifs*, for orchestra; and *Baal Shem*, a suite for piano and violin.

Art ("classical") music

Since the introduction of Christianity into Kievan Rus' in the late tenth century, music has been an integral part of religious worship in Ukraine. The liturgy is sung or chanted, whether by a single voice (that of a priest or cantor) or by a choir and sometimes the entire congregation. As in other aspects of Ukraine's

early church life, Byzantium provided models for sacred music and as the Rus' church was organized in the eleventh century it dispatched Byzantine Greek singers to train their counterparts in Kyiv.

The Eastern-rite church proscribed the use of musical instruments, based on the view that the Lord may be praised only with what He created—the human voice. In order to assure a steady supply of singers for the country's innumerable churches, centers for voice training were established in medieval Kievan Rus' and gradually were raised to high standards in subsequent centuries.

Church (vocal) music

As in Byzantium, church music in Kievan Rus' was mainly monodic; that is, it was characterized by a single melodic line chanted by three voices (one singing the melody and two drones) without musical accompaniment. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, under the impact of Polish composers, polyphonic singing was introduced in the Eastern-rite churches, in which the harmonic music may have had between four to twelve distinct voice parts with two or more melodies sung simultaneously.

251. Patron of the arts, Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovskyi, as depicted in a painting by the French artist Louis Tocqué, 1758.

This complex Baroque-like style was described in a "grammar of musical song" by the Ukrainian composer and theorist of the time, Mykola Dyletskyi (*Grammatika musikiyskago peniya*, 1677), who also propagated the idea of large choruses performing a cappella (without instrumental accompaniment).

Choral music composition and performance reached its apogee in the eighteenth century. This was a time when the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy had its own orchestra of one hundred musicians and three hundred singers, and when a School of Singing was established (1738) in Hlukhiv, a small town in northern Ukraine. Hlukhiv, which at the time was the capital of the autonomous Cossack state, soon was to be headed by a generous patron of music and art, Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovskyi. It is from these institutions that Ukraine's first well-known composers (Maksym Berezovskyi, Dmytro Bortnyanskyi, and Artem Vedel) derive, although in the West they are commonly considered part of the first stage of modern Russian musical development. They invented the unaccompanied vocal concerto and produced a large body of polyphonic choral works for the church. Bortnyanskyi and Berezovskyi also composed orchestral works (mostly concertos) and Italianate operas based on themes from Greek mythology.

Orchestral and operatic music

The impact of Romanticism and the subsequent national awakening, with its interest in the common people and their creative capabilities expressed in folk music, had a great impact on Ukrainian composers. At a time during the nineteenth century when composers throughout Europe were trying to create a national school of music for their respective peoples (Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, Finns, Russians, among others), so did Ukrainians create musical works that drew on folk music and on themes that were presumed to be characteristic of Ukraine's past and present. Among the most popular works in this genre were the comic opera *Zaporozhets za Dunayem* (The Zaporozhian Cossack Beyond the Danube, 1863), by Semen Hulak-Artemovskyi, and an opera based on a poem by Ukraine's national bard Taras Shevchenko, *Kateryna* (1908), by Mykola Arkas.

252. Mykola Lysenko (1842-1912), sculpture by Oleksandr Kovalov, Kyiv, 1965.

The most successful composer of this period, whose music was consciously intended to inspire Ukrainian national pride, was Mykola Lysenko. He collected and published thousands of folk songs, some of which were used in his several stage works. The most popular of these was his operetta about young lovers in a rural village, *Natalka Poltavka* (The Maiden Natalka from Poltava, 1889), and an opera about the leader of an early-seventeenth-century re-volt of Zaporozhian Cossacks against Poland, *Taras Bulba* (1890). In keeping with Ukraine's strong tra-dition of vocal music, composers from pre-World War I Austrian-ruled Galicia created in the Roman-tic mode the region's first Ukrainian operas—Anatol Vakhnyanyn's *Kupalo* (1892) and Denys Sichynskyi's *Roksolyana* (1909). At the same time, Stanislav Lyud-kevych produced a series of choral compositions, the best known of which was a symphonic cantata, *The Caucasus* (1902–13), inspired by the poem of the same name by Taras Shevchenko. Art songs for vocal solo or duet with piano accompaniment based on poetic texts by Ukrainian as well as foreign authors were a particularly popular genre for the influential Mykola Lysenko and composers who followed in his footsteps during the first two decades of the twentieth century—Mykola Leontovych (best known in North

America for his "Carol of the Bells"), Lev Revutskyi, Kyrylo Stetsenko, and Yakiv Stepovyi.

By the 1920s, Ukrainian composers were experi-menting with the various avant-garde musical styles and techniques that had just begun to appear in west-ern Europe on the eve of and during World War I. The relatively tolerant cultural atmosphere during the first decade of Soviet Ukraine's existence allowed for artis-tic experimentation, as in the expressionistic style and atonal technique of Borys Lyatoshynskyi; the unusual modal structures in the works of Mykhailo Verykiv-skyi; the Neo-classical orchestral suites of Viktor Kosenko; and the continuation of nineteenth-century Impressionism with a modern twist: rhythmic and melodic influences of Ukrainian folk songs and even American jazz, an example being the orchestral and choral works of Lev Revutskyi and Mykola Kolyada.

The new Soviet state's commitment to creating a modern industrialized society fit in well with the general European interest at the time in urbanism, that is, the transformation of cities so that they would have all the attributes of modernity: factories, sky-scrapers, automobiles, sleek trains, airplanes, and a generally accelerated, even frantic, lifestyle. In keep-ing with modernity, Ukraine's composers revealed their fascination with urban themes in compositions

253. Mykola Leontovych (1877-1921), Ukrainian choral composer from the Russian Empire.

254. Scene from Mykhailo Skorulskyi's ballet, *Lisova pisnya* (The Forest Song, 1946), based on the 1911 drama by Lesya Ukrayinka.

with titles like *Three Hymns of the Industrial Epoch*, *Opera about Steel*, and *Automobile*, whose scores incorporated the sounds and noises of machinery, planes, and cars, as well as syncopated rhythms from popular café, circus, and cabaret songs.

As was the case for other art forms, the relative freedom accorded musical life during the 1920s in Soviet Ukraine was curtailed in the following decade. From then on, composers were expected to abide by socialist-realist guidelines and to create orchestral works and music for stage (opera) productions that glorified Communist leaders and institutions, heroic workers, and ideologically sanctioned events, whether from the historic past or, preferably, more recent events from the Bolshevik revolutionary era. The goal was to produce music that was accessible to the masses. In effect, this meant the use of simple melodic material—whenever possible based on familiar folk songs—and banal subject matter emphasizing Soviet patriotism, class equality, and the struggle for worldwide peace. Virtually all Ukrainian composers who were recognized by the state authorities through their membership in the official Union of Soviet Composers (est. 1932) wrote,

as a kind of self-imposed requirement for survival, songs about Stalin and scores for patriotic films.

But the ideal musical medium for conveying ideological messages—whether to the Communist party elite, local intelligentsia, or workers (who were frequently given free tickets for cultural excursions from their factory workplace)—was opera. Among the themes particularly encouraged by Communist party ideologists were those that dealt with the recent revolutionary era, as in Borys Lyatoshynskyi's operas about the Red Army's campaign to oust the counter-revolutionary Whites from Ukraine (*Perekop*, 1938) or about a Bolshevik military leader who died fighting the hated Ukrainian bourgeois-nationalists (*Shchors*, 1937–38). Historical themes from earlier times could also be refashioned to send an appropriate political message to contemporary audiences, especially if the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century uprisings against Poland were depicted as early examples of the masses in revolt against feudal oppression, as in the operas *Bohdan Khmelnytskyi* (1951–53) by Kostyantyn Dankevych, and *The Haidamaky* (1941), a joint effort of three composers.

Patriotic feelings were also expected to be the result of listening to oratorios composed by Mykhailo Verykivskyi, with texts about the Bolshevik Revolution (*Oktyabrskaya*/October, 1936) and resistance to foreign invaders (*Hniv Slovyan*/Anger of the Slavs, 1941), not to mention numerous other operatic and vocal works based on texts by Ukraine's leading nineteenth-century authors (Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko, Lesya Ukrayinka) as well as several ballets, the most frequently performed of which is to this day *Lisova pisnya*/The Forest Song (1941) by Mykhailo Skorulskyi. And since the Romantic folk-inspired repertoire from the nineteenth century could easily be understood by the "masses," the stage works of Hulak-Artemovskyi (*The Zaporozhian Cossack beyond the Danube*) and Lysenko (*The Maiden Natalka from Poltava* and *Taras Bulba*) were entered into the socialist-realist canon and given performances year after year in opera houses and conservatory stages throughout Ukraine until—and even after—the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Contemporary composers are fond of using traditional Ukrainian themes and folk music in symphonies, operas, and film scores in which otherwise familiar melodic songs are at times rendered in dissonant harmonic tones and experimental rhythmic patterns. In contrast to the past, modern-day Ukrainian composers like Myroslav Skoryk, Yevhen Stankovych, and Valentyn Silvestrov work as much abroad in the international musical world as they do at home. They have, however, not lost their interest in Ukrainian-inspired themes, including tragic ones of the twentieth century, such as Stankovych's large-scale orchestral oratorio, *Kaddish-Requiem for Babyn Yar* (1991).

Ukraine as a theme in classical music

Ukrainian subject matter and folk songs have also entered the music of composers from other countries, whose works are generally considered to be a major part of the repertoire of Western music. As early as the late-eighteenth-century classic period, Franz Jozef Haydn made use of a folk melody (*kolomyika*) from Transcarpathia in the "Hungarian Rondo" of his *Piano Trio in G Major* (1795), while just over a century later the modern Hungarian composer, Béla Bartók, who lived in that region on the eve of World War I, employed numerous Ruthenian folk melodies in his compositions.

It is perhaps not surprising that nineteenth-century Russian composers were especially drawn to Ukraine or, as they would say, Little Russia. Little Russian (that is, Ukrainian) folk songs were fre-

255. Scene from Mykola Lysenko's opera, *Taras Bulba* (1890), from a performance in Kharkiv, 2014.

quently used in either direct or stylized form by imperial Russia's most popular composer, Petr Ilich Tchaikovsky (himself a direct descendant of the Ukrainian Cossack Chaika family), as in his *Second,* or *"Little Russian" Symphony* (1872/80) and his opera *Cherevichki* (The Shoes, 1887). Other Russian composers were inspired by subjects connected with Ukraine, such as the "Great Gate of Kyiv," which is the title of the stirring finale of Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874); or the "Polovtsian Dances," the exotic music from Aleksander Borodin's opera *Prince Igor* (1890)—the story of a Kievan Rus' prince and his battle against Turkic nomads on the steppes of twelfth-century Ukraine. Music from Borodin's operatic score and other works was later reused in the Broadway musical *Kismet* (1950). But the most popular Ukrainian theme was connected with the exploits (real, or more likely imagined) of the late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century head (*hetman*) of the autonomous Cossack state, Ivan Mazepa. He became the subject of an opera (1883) by Tchaikovsky, a choral cantata (1862) by the Irish composer Michael Balfe, and an orchestral tone poem (1851) by the Hungarian Franz Liszt.

For other composers, their very presence in Ukraine was in and of itself enough to inspire musical creativity. Tchaikovsky recalled the weeks during several summers that he spent at the estate of his patroness (Madame von Meck) at Brayiliv in the Podolia region as the "happiest days of my life," which he subsequently immortalized in three pieces for violin and piano, *Souvenir d'un lieu cher* (Remembrance of a Dear Place, 1878). A few decades later, it was in Ukraine where two of the most seminal works in the history of modern music were conceived: *L'oiseau du feu* (The Fire Bird, 1910) and *Le Sacre du printemps* (The Rite of Spring, 1913), ballet scores by Igor Stravinsky written at his beloved family estate at Ustyluh in the Volhynia region of far northwestern Ukraine.

Jewish orchestral and operatic music

In the Russian Empire, Jews responded enthusiastically to the educational opportunities of the second half of the nineteenth century to integrate modernity not only through the liberal professions
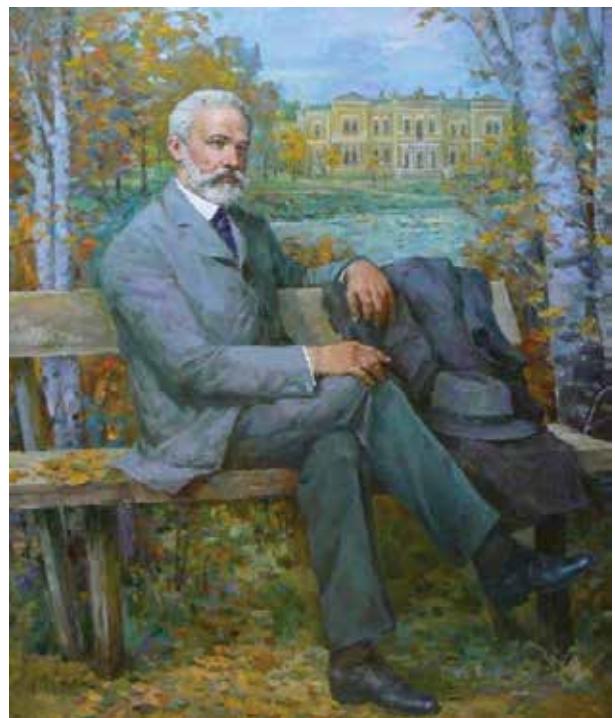
256. The composer Petr Tchaikovsky as imagined in the late 1870s at the estate of Madame von Meck, Brayiliv/Brailovo in central Ukraine.

but also through the arts and, first and foremost, music. For example, whereas earlier in the century someone like Anton Rubinstein, born near Berdychiv, had to convert to Christianity in order to pursue the musical career that led to his founding the St Petersburg Conservatory, later in the century Jews did not need to conceal their Jewishness. Moreover, once the Romantic idea of folk art as a genuine national art won over the hearts and minds of the Jewish intelligentsia, Jewish musicians also became collectors (*zamlers*), in a sense ethnographic archaeologists who uncovered layers of previously neglected Jewish musical genres which they arranged for performance. Some also took an active part in the Society for Jewish Folk Music (the Kyiv branch of this body was established in 1913), which was dedicated to recording and publishing Jewish folk music.

The ethnographic study of Jewish folklore in the early twentieth century served as an intermediary between the folk music of the *shtetl* and modern Jewish music for the concert hall. Several musicologists devoted their careers to the study of the Jewish folklore of Ukraine. Yoel Engel from Berdyansk, who collected Jewish Yiddish

257. S. An-sky (b. Shloyme Zanvl Rapoport, 1863-1920), renowned Russian-Jewish ethnographer (on the left), recording Jewish folk legends and songs in one of the *shtetls* in Podolia. Photo, early 1910s.

songs, was instrumental in organizing the musical part of S. An-sky's 1911 ethnographic expedition to three Ukrainian provinces in the Pale of Jewish Settlement and later composed a chamber music suite for An-sky's *The Dybbuk*. An actual participant in An-sky's expedition, Zusman Kiselgof (Zinovii/Sussman Kisselhof), toured some sixty communities in Volhynia and Podolia, where he collected more than fifteen hundred folk songs and one thousand liturgical and orchestral melodies. The phenomenal trove of Jewish melodies (particularly *nigunim*) he uncovered eventually found their way into the operatic, symphonic, and choral works of several Jewish composers, including Lazar Saminsky from Odessa. In 1920 Saminsky moved to the United States, where he composed liturgical music and dozens of stylized Jewish folk dances and songs. Moisei/Moyshe Beregovskii, a musicologist at the Kyiv Conservatory who continued the work of earlier Jewish ethnographers, organized about two thousand expeditions across Ukraine in the 1920s to 1940s. These included both the devastated post-World War II communities and ghetto regions. Aside from cataloguing and transcribing the earlier collections of An-sky and Kiselgof, Beregovskii amassed a huge number of scores of musical pieces which had been used for performances of traditional Purim plays (*Purimshpils*).

The impact of secularization in the late nineteenth century created a rift between urbanized Jews and their tradition-minded brethren in the *shtetls* of the Russian-ruled Pale of Settlement. An attempt to bridge this gap led to the composition of quasi-*shtetl* songs which today are considered folkloric. These

songs drew heavily on *shtetl* musical traditions, although they were created from the perspective of a purely urban environment like Kyiv. The most successful composer in this genre was a native of Odessa, Mark Varshavski, who wrote melodies and lyrics that resembled and were believed to be Yiddish folk songs. He performed these throughout the Pale at cultural and political (Zionist) gatherings together with the writer Sholem Aleichem who read his stories. Perhaps the most popular song among the Jews not only of Ukraine but all of eastern Europe was Varshavski's "Afn pripetshik" (On the Hearth). This and his many other songs, while actually conceived in an urban environment, were imbued with nostalgic longing for the world of traditional Jews.

Like S. An-sky, bilingual Yiddish-Russian writers from the Russian Empire, such as the Ukrainian-born Shimon Frug, considered the Ukrainian central provinces to be the cradle of genuine Jewish folkloric traditions. It was these traditions that inspired them to write the lines for what became the anthems of the two

258. Participants in a research expedition to the Ukrainian provinces of the Russian Empire's Pale of Jewish Settlement: photographer Solomon Iudovin, ethnomusicologist Zusman Kiselgof, and ethnographer S. An-sky. Photo, early 1910s.

most important Jewish political movements in the decades before World War I: Frug did this for the Zionists, and An-sky for the social-democratic Bundists. Their anthems and other songs were used to rally the masses for political action. In neighboring Austria-Hungary, anthems came to symbolize political cooperation between Jews and Ukrainians. For example, in the Austrian imperial parliament, following the introduction of universal suffrage in 1907, it was not uncommon for Jewish and Ukrainian deputies from Galicia to rise and sing the Ukrainian national anthem together in response to the chauvinistic anti-Ukrainian statements of their political opponents, Galicia's Poles.

Composers of Jewish descent who made careers in Soviet Ukraine sought to become fully integrated into the country's musical circles; therefore, they only randomly resorted to using Jewish musical folklore in their work. There were both cultural and political reasons for such a decision, particularly since they were working under the restrictive government guidelines of socialist realism in literature and the arts. Nevertheless, they did not entirely ignore Jewish themes. For example, Solomon Faintukh, the author of several operettas and the director of a Ukrainian klezmer orchestra in the 1930s, wrote an oratorio, "Morys Vinchevskyi," dedicated to one of the leading American Jewish socialists, while Yakiv Tsehliar/Ziegler composed an oratorio titled "The Jewish Tragedy." These works remained, however, largely unknown to the general public.

Even more evident for its Jewish-related content and, at the same time, its inaccessubility is the *Symphony No.1* by a composer from Kharkiv of Jewish ancestry, Dmitrii Klebanov. Inspired by the September 1941 tragedy at the Babyn Yar ravine outside Kyiv, Klebanov depicted through musical themes the destruction of Jews at that killing site. For the Soviet regime, such an approach amounted to a serious ideological shortcoming, so that, after the symphony's two premieres (1947 and 1948), it was banned from public performance until the very last year of Soviet rule.

More successful in reaching audiences was Yulii Meitus, considered the father of Soviet Ukrainian opera. He used elements of Jewish folk music, although merging them—to avoid possible censorship—with Carpathian (Hutsul) musical motifs. This same approach to Jewish folklore was adopted by Ihor Shamo,

the much-acclaimed author of Kyiv's anthem, "Yak tebe ne lyubyty, Kyyeve mii" (How Can One Not Love You, My Kyiv). Shamo also incorporated elements of Jewish klezmer music in his symphonic compositions on Hutsul, Moldavian, and Carpathian themes. Paradoxically, it was one of the Soviet Union's leading composers, Dmitrii Shostakovich, who widely used Jewish folk motifs and songs collected by the renowned Ukrainian-Jewish ethnomusicologist, Moisei Beregovskii. As a result of his participation on Beregovskii's dissertation committee and access to the entire corpus of material collected by the Kyiv-based ethnomusicologist, Shostakovich was able to make use of Jewish traditional music in some of his own works: the song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry* (1948), the *Piano Trio no. 2* (1944), and the *String Quartet no. 8* (1960), not to mention his monumental *Symphony No.13* (1962) for orchestra and chorus, which incorporated the words of Yevgeny Yevtushenko's politically radical (in the Soviet context) 1961 poem, "Babi Yar."

Renowned teachers and performers

Jews

The Jews in the Russian Empire and later Soviet Union absorbed the best elements of high urban culture. Many entered conservatories where they mastered a variety of musical instruments, in particular those suitable for virtuoso performance. By the early twentieth century, Jews were particularly well represented among teachers of piano, the instrument that—after the *shtetl* violin—became a marker of a civilized Jewish household. From Ukrainian lands came in the course of the twentieth century several Jewish pianists of world fame. Vladimir Horowitz from Kyiv and Emil Gilels from Odessa were both known for their unbridled romanticism, bold interpretations, and rich dynamic contrasts. Among renowned players of string instruments of Jewish background from Ukraine were Gregor Piatigorsky from Katerynoslav/Dnipropetrovsk, one of the most celebrated cellists of the twentieth century, and Misha Elman, the grandson of a klezmer violinist from Talno who made a dazzling career in Europe and America. The two best schools for studying the violin in Ukraine were linked to the names of Pyotr Stolyarsky in Odessa and Yakov Magaziner and

259. Opera composer Yulii Meitus (1903-1997) and master violin teacher Pyotr Stolyarsky (1871-1944).

260. Violin virtuoso David Oistrakh (1908-1974) and opera diva Solomiya Krushelnytska (1872-1952).

David Bertie in Kyiv, who taught several generations of outstanding eastern European musicians, including Mikhail Fikhtengolts, Elizaveta Gilels, Nathan Milstein, David Oistrakh, and Abram Shtern.

Several of the Soviet Union's most popular songwriters of the mid-twentieth century were of Ukrainian Jewish descent. Already in childhood, they were exposed to Ukrainian, Jewish, and Gypsy folklore, as well as to urban street songs. In many cases, before they became celebrated composers, they sang in synagogues, danced in the streets, and performed at cabarets. Among the best known to Soviet audiences were Matvei Blatner from Chernihiv province, Isaac Dunaevsky from Lokhvytsya, Leonid Utesov from Odessa, and the four Pokrass brothers from Kyiv, particularly Daniil and Dmitrii. All infused Soviet music with an outward frankness of expression and melodrama drawn from Ukrainian musical folklore, the soft irony of Jewish themes, and the characteristic Odessa-style articulation of lyrics. In addition, they were the first to introduce jazz into the Soviet Union's music repertoire.

Jews are still remembered for their influential role in Soviet musical life. Hence, in the 1970s, Israelis liked to joke that if a new immigrant (*ole*) arriving at the Tel Aviv airport did not have a violin case under his or her arm, then that person must be a pianist. The contribution of Jewish artists to Soviet musical culture is celebrated in present-day independent Ukraine. In 1991 the Vladimir Horowitz Piano Competition was established in Kyiv, and, most recently, the Odessa city council approved a decision to establish a monument to David Oistrakh in the center of the city, which will join the monument to the singer, musician, movie star and jazz-band director of Jewish descent, Leonid Utesov (Lazar Vaisbein).

Ethnic Ukrainians

Coming as they did from a long tradition of church choral singing, it is perhaps not surprising that ethnic Ukrainians have excelled as vocalists. Ukraine's century-long Italian *bel canto* tradition and training produced a wide range of prodigiously talented singers, who since the late nineteenth century have performed on the leading operatic stages of Europe and North America. The most renowned are Solomiya Krushelnytska, Borys Hmyrya, Ivan Kozlovskyi, Yevheniya Miroshnychenko, Anatolii Solovyanenko, Anna Netrebko, and the émigré-born Paul Plishka and Pavlo Hunka. Aside from their stage appearances, these artists have performed chamber recitals and most have left a wide body of recordings. Some have even "crossed-over" and recorded soundtracks for movies.

Among violinists trained under Stolyarsky, Magaziner, and Bertie in Odessa and Kyiv are the ethnic Ukrainian performers and teachers Olha Parkhomenko and Oleksii Horokhov. The Kyiv Conservatory has trained a highly acclaimed group of pianists going back to the nineteenth century (Volodymyr Pukhalsky, Vsevolod Topilin, Tatyana Kravchenko, and Vitalii Syechkin), and it has also produced a new school of musicians from western Ukraine, including Bohodar Kotorovych and Oleh Krysa, known for their performances in Ukraine and abroad.

CHAPTER 10
Diaspora

Since Ukraine is, and has been, a country of many nationalities, it follows that there is not a single Ukrainian diaspora, but rather Ukrainian diasporas, or diasporas from Ukraine. Among those diasporas, some of whose ancestors left the present-day territory of Ukraine, are groups such as the Mennonites in Canada, Crimean Tatars in Turkey, Carpatho-Rusyns in the United States, Russians in Israel, and the main subjects of this book, ethnic Ukrainians and Jews.

At present, there are an estimated 6.1 million ethnic Ukrainians (hereafter: Ukrainians) living in virtually every habitable continent, except Africa. The largest numbers are in Asia, specifically in Russia and in several Central Asian republics. In North America, Ukrainians are somewhat smaller in numerical size, with the most organized diasporan/immigrant communities located in Canada (1.1 million) and the United States (893,000). It is the immigration to North America and Israel that will be the focus of attention in this chapter.

Main centers of Ukrainian immigration

Ethnic Ukrainians began immigrating in large numbers to the United States (from the 1880s) and to Canada (from the 1890s) in a relatively steady flow which lasted until the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Subsequent immigration was interrupted, either by external events (two world wars, 1914–

DIASPORA OR IMMIGRATION?

The term *diaspora* was originally used to describe scattered colonies of Jews living outside the land of Israel following the Babylonian exile of the sixth century BCE; subsequently, it was used to describe Jewish communities anywhere in the world. More recently, diaspora has been applied to any people who have been dispersed from their country of origin and who reside in one or more other countries worldwide. Hence, there are Jewish diasporas in the United States, Canada, Ukraine, and numerous other countries.

Ethnic Ukrainians who left their country of origin traditionally described themselves, and were described by others, as exiles and émigrés but most often as immigrants. Hence, it is quite common to encounter formulations such as: the Ukrainian immigration, or Ukrainian immigrants (and their descendants) in Canada, the United States, and in other countries. The term *Ukrainian diaspora* has recently gained currency and, therefore, it is used in this book as a synonym for what previously was known as the Ukrainian immigration.

1918 and 1939–1945) or by restrictions imposed by the countries of origin (the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and its Communist satellite countries) and by the receiving countries (in particular the United States after 1924). Hence, it is common to speak of various waves of Ukrainian immigration to North America.

Settlement patterns

The first wave, lasting from the 1880s to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, was numerically the largest, bringing 250,000 people to the United States and 170,000 to Canada. This wave also set the pattern of settlement, which to this day includes areas with the highest concentration of Ukrainian Americans and Ukrainian Canadians: the former industrial belt of the northeast and north-central United States (New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois) and the prairie provinces of Canada (Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan). Because of restrictions imposed by the Russian Empire against emigration, the vast majority of immigrants during the first wave from Ukraine came from what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in particu-

lar the Austrian provinces of Galicia and Bukovina, where they were known as Ruthenians. The Hungarian part of the empire, especially several counties in the northeastern part of the kingdom, were also a source of large-scale Ruthenian immigration, most especially to the United States. These people, however, quickly evolved into a Carpatho-Rusyn immigrant community that was quite distinct from the Ruthenians of Galicia and Bukovina who formed the core of what became known as Ukrainians.

The first wave of Ruthenian/Ukrainian immigrants who went to the United States settled primarily in urban areas, where most found employment in coal mines, factories, and various service industries. By contrast, those who went to Canada were encouraged by that country's authorities to settle on the land, in the hope (which was realized) that they would help transform the prairies into arable farmland. Well-defined colonies, or so-called bloc settlements, were established in rural areas of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. There Ukrainians gradually became the numerically dominant population, so that in rural villages it was not uncommon for their language to serve as the medium of public discourse (*lingua franca*) even for the non-Ukrainians living in their midst.

261. Coal-mining town in eastern Pennsylvania before World War I.

After the interruption of World War I, Ukrainian immigration resumed in the 1920s, but because of U.S. restrictive quotas (1921 and 1924) most newcomers (68,000) went to Canada. As before the war, the vast majority of immigrants during the interwar years were from western Ukrainian lands, in particular from what was by then Polish-ruled Galicia, and most headed for the bloc settlements that already existed in the prairie provinces.

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 brought Ukrainian immigration to a virtual halt. When it finally resumed toward the end of the war, the characteristics of what constituted the third wave as well as the attitudes of the receiving countries differed substantially from the two earlier periods. The immigrants themselves were refugees either from the war or from the advance of Soviet rule, which, after 1945, extended directly into Soviet-ruled east Galicia, northern Bukovina, and Transcarpathia, as well as indirectly through pro-Soviet Communist regimes into neighboring post-war Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, each of which still included Ukrainian minority populations within its borders.

The post-World War II newcomers to the United States (85,000) and Canada (34,000) differed from their predecessors in two ways. Unlike the previous waves of immigrants, who for the most part came because of the economic hardships they faced at home, the third wave consisted largely of educated professionals from urban areas of all parts of Ukraine—Soviet Ukraine as well as former Polish-ruled Galicia—who either had been brought to Nazi Ger-

many (and Austria) as forced laborers from the east (*Ostarbeiter*) during the war or who had fled before the advance of the Soviet Army. Many were former political and civic activists of anti-Soviet persuasion, religious figures, or police personnel, soldiers, and partisans who were engaged by the wartime Nazi German regime or who had fought against it. Stranded in refugee camps in the western zones of post-war Germany, they were declared Displaced Persons (DPs), on the basis of which they were allowed entry into the United States and Canada in the late 1940s and early 1950s. This third wave of refugee immigrants settled mostly in the already existing Ukrainian communities in the northeastern United States. Those who went to Canada did not, as before, settle in the western prairies, but rather in urban centers in southern Ontario, most especially Toronto.

Stringent restrictions against emigration to the "capitalist West" put in place by the Soviet Union and its central European satellites virtually cut off all Ukrainian immigration for the next nearly four decades. Finally, a fourth wave began to make its way to North America, initially in small numbers from Poland during the 1980s, then in greater numbers from independent Ukraine from the 1990s to the present.

Fourth-wave Ukrainian immigrants have gravitated primarily to urban areas in the northeastern United States and to the province of Ontario in Canada. They are for the most part highly educated professionals, although before coming to North

262. Recent Ukrainian immigrant delivering milk in a rural village, Manitoba, Canada, 1909.

America they had almost all lived and been acculturated in authoritarian states, where until 1989–91 a person's socio-economic status was determined less by individual initiative than by the dictates of Communist-ruled governments. The Soviet experience and cultural values have not only made it difficult for the fourth wave to integrate into existing Ukrainian diaspora organizations, they have also made adjustment to individualistic-oriented American and Canadian societies quite challenging.

A little known phenomenon is the presence of ethnic Ukrainians in Israel. They are part of the large wave of citizens of Ukraine—over 350,000—who since the early 1990s have emigrated to Israel. The vast majority are of Jewish ancestry, although about 35,000 are ethnic Ukrainians married to (or the children of) a Jewish partner who decided to emigrate and to live permanently in Israel. There are as well perhaps as many 50,000 of mixed Jewish and non-Jewish Slavic parentage.

Those who are of mixed background are likely to define the Slavic component of their identity as Russian rather than Ukrainian. As for the ethnic Ukrainian immigrants, most have found jobs in factories and in the service industry, and they tend to reside in Israel's smaller cities and towns: Rishon Le-Zion, Ashdod, Haifa, and Beer Sheva, among others.

Civic and cultural life

The Ukrainian diaspora in North America may be viewed from the perspective of an evolutionary process consisting of two basic stages. The initial stage, which coincided with the first wave of immigration (1880s–1914), was characterized by a struggle to define one's national identity. In a sense, Ukrainians were "made in America" and Canada. This is because when the immigrants first arrived from western Ukrainian lands, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, they called themselves Rusyns, or in English, Ruthenians, with little or no sense of being Ukrainian. They had to learn this from some of their more nationally conscious secular and religious leaders through participation in secular and religious community functions.

During this identity-formation process, Ruthenian immigrants from the same homeland region,

263. The role of the Ukrainian National Association's newspaper *Svoboda* in the ukrainianization process in the United States. Cartoon by Rosol (John Rosolowicz), 1936.

from the same village, and at times even from the same family may have adopted a Ukrainian identity, while others did not. It is for this reason that still today in the United States and to a lesser degree in Canada one may encounter descendants of pre-World War I Ruthenian immigrants from western Ukraine who consider themselves either Russians or Carpatho-Rusyns, but not Ukrainians.

Just how did a portion of Ruthenian immigrants become nationally conscious Ukrainians? This was largely the result of the educational and cultural work carried out by a wide range of organizations founded—and funded—by the immigrants themselves. Initially, the most important of these were mutual-benefit fraternal societies, such as the Ruthenian, later Ukrainian, National Association in the United States (est. 1894) and hundreds of reading halls (*chytalni*) and enlightenment (*Prosvita*) circles scattered throughout the bloc settlements in western Canada. These and other organizations founded before and after World War I—including the numerous leftist-oriented workers' halls in Canada—sponsored a wide range of cultural events, set up language class-

264. The former Stuyvesant mansion, since 1955 the Ukrainian Institute of America on Fifth Avenue, New York City.

es, and published newspapers, magazines, and books, all with the purpose of raising awareness of Ukrainian national identity and knowledge of the Ukrainian language. In Canada's prairie provinces these tasks were enhanced among young people through the educational system, which provided bilingual Ukrainian and English classes in some provincially

265. Seat since 1918 of the pro-Communist Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Association, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

run schools before the 1920s and in Catholic parochial schools (during the week or on Saturdays) both before and after that date.

The next phase in Ukrainian community life began in the 1920s, and in many ways it continues to the present. Aware of their Ukrainian identity, community organizations and leaders set out to make their ancestral homeland known to the larger host society, whether the United States or Canada. The events of the Ukrainian revolutionary era (1917–20) and efforts to create an independent Ukraine had a twofold impact on the North American immigration. On the one hand, the political struggle in the homeland helped to cement awareness of and galvanize pride in one's identity as a Ukrainian. On the other hand, the North American communities became divided between different political orientations derived from the homeland, with nationalists, socialists, communists, and monarchists competing for the loyalty and support of Ukrainian immigrants and their descendants.

266. Original location (1973-2007) of the Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

With the arrival of highly nationally conscious scholars and other professionals after World War II, North American community life was given a new infusion of intellectual energy. A whole host of scholarly institutions that were ideologically transformed or banned outright by the Soviets in the homeland were revived in North America, such as the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences in Canada (est. 1949), the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the United States (est. 1950), and the Shevchenko Scientific Society in both countries (est. 1947). The recently arrived scholars formed a pool of qualified specialists, some of whom were engaged by North American universities to teach courses in Ukrainian language and literature, most especially in Canada (universities of Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Toronto), or to staff the many university and public libraries that were increasing their holdings on subjects dealing with the West's Cold War rival, the Soviet Union. Then, in the 1970s, research institutes and professorships in Ukrainian subjects were established at Harvard University in the United States and at the University of Alberta and University of Toronto in Canada.

All these institutions helped to raise awareness in the larger American and Canadian societies that Ukrainians were a distinct people with a culture worthy of study. Among the best-known achievements was making the larger public aware of the Great Famine/*Holodomor* of 1933. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of that tragic event (at the time not recognized by the Soviet authorities even to

have happened), the Ukrainian program at Harvard University launched a series of publications and scholarly conferences that were repeated, in part, at other North American universities with Ukrainian programs. As a result, the *Holodomor* was eventually accepted as a fact by most scholars, and by the outset of the twenty-first century it was being commemorated annually by many cities, states, provinces, and even the federal government as a historic act of genocide against the Ukrainian people.

Religious life

Despite the role of secular institutions, it is religion and the church that have played the major role in sustaining a sense of Ukrainian community cohesiveness in North America. This was certainly the case during the first wave of Ukrainian immigration before World War I. At that time the church was the only institution where, in an otherwise alien North American environment, an individual could find spiritual comfort as well as a sense of familiarity and psychological solace through interaction with other people who spoke the same language and had similar cultural values. Church buildings, therefore, not only had sanctuaries for worship, they also provided access to "basement halls" for social and cultural activities, which might include banquets, theatrical performances, elementary school classes, and meeting rooms for a wide variety of adult and youth activity.

As the immigrant communities grew in size and as their members improved their overall social and economic status, so too did larger church buildings appear. Sometimes former Protestant churches were acquired and restored fully on the inside and partially on the outside; more often new churches were constructed based on models from Europe. The "Ukrainian" church in any North American town or city (which may have been described by outsiders as "Russian") was clearly visible because of its distinct domes and cupolas topped by three-barred crosses and sometimes glittering gilded mosaics on parts of the façade. Consequently, going to church was for the immigrants and their descendants like "going to Ukraine," since the church building, if only vicariously, recreated their ancestral home in North America.

267. St. Nicholas Greek Catholic Church, 1908-1980, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, the oldest parish for Ukrainians and other Eastern-rite Christians in the United States, est. 1884.

Even for the passive believer or non-believer, the church has been—and remains to this day—the place where most individuals are able to feel that their Ukrainianness is expressed and reinforced. And, while it is certainly true that for many Ukrainians going to church on a weekly basis is rare, Christmas and Easter are quite another matter. Attendance at services on those holidays is considered an important means to assert publicly one's Ukrainian identity in North America.

The church as an institution has not always fared well in North America. In many ways, it has been an institution under siege. This was the result of conditions in both North America and the homeland. In effect, the denominational distinctions that exist in North America today reflect the situation in the homeland, where the vast majority of ethnic Ukrainians are Eastern-rite Christians (either Orthodox or Greek Catholic), with smaller numbers belonging to various Protestant groups. When the first wave of Ruthenian immigrants arrived before World War I from western Ukrainian lands within the Aus-

tro-Hungarian Empire, by far the largest number were Greek Catholics from that empire's regions of Galicia and Transcarpathia; the smaller numbers who came from Austrian Bukovina were Orthodox.

Ruthenian Greek Catholics were not welcomed, however, by the larger Catholic Church structure of which they were a part. Bishops and priests who comprised the Roman Catholic hierarchy in North America almost without exception knew nothing about the Eastern-rite faithful within their "own" universal church. Therefore, when Roman Catholics encountered in their midst these ostensibly strange people, who followed a different Catholic rite and used an unfamiliar language (Church Slavonic, not Latin) written in an unreadable alphabet and whose priests were married with wives and children, they were aghast. Catholic Church rules not only required priests to be celibate, they also required that every priest in a given diocese be subordinate to the ruling bishop of the given diocese. Initially, Roman Catholic bishops in both the United States and Canada refused to recognize Ruthenian Greek Catholic priests, who were banned from administering the sacraments (baptism, communion) and even from burying their community's dead in Catholic cemeteries. In short, Ruthenian Greek Catholics in North America were outcasts in their own Catholic Church.

Priests and lay parishioners who refused to abide by the demands of the Roman Catholic authorities expressed their displeasure by joining the only other Eastern-rite church in their midst—the Orthodox. In North America, this meant the Russian Orthodox Church, which soon grew rapidly because of an influx of Ruthenian Greek Catholics from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Some Greek Catholics simply remained in local Roman Catholic parishes that they may have been attending (in particular those with large numbers of Poles and Slovaks). Yet others, as in the case of those living in the Canadian prairie bloc settlements, were convinced by missionaries to join Protestant churches, or even a unique Protestant form of Eastern-rite Christianity "made-in-Canada"—the Independent Greek Church.

Although the status of Greek Catholics gradually improved (they received their own bishop in 1908 in the United States and in 1912 in Canada), the siege

268. St. Andrew's Memorial Church of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, South Bound Brook, New Jersey, built 1965.

mentality was to continue. This time the reason was the political upheavals in the homeland, where, following the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, churches that were specifically Ukrainian in orientation were discriminated against and eventually outlawed in Soviet Ukraine. These included the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in 1930 in eastern Ukraine and the Greek Catholic Church in 1946/1949 in western Ukraine.

As a result of Soviet repression, Ukrainian-oriented churches could survive only in the diaspora. The largest parishes among diaspora Ukrainian Catholics (the new post-World War II name for Greek Catholics) and Orthodox were in North America, with the seat of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and its hierarchy actually located in the United States (Bound Brook, New Jersey). Both churches received an influx of members as a result of the post-World War II third-wave immigrants and their descendants. In former Austrian and Polish-ruled Galicia, the Greek Catholic Church had become a bulwark of Ukrainian national sentiment; now, in post-World War II North America, both the Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic and Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox churches became

institutions through which Ukrainian Americans and Ukrainian Canadians could feel that they were defending ancestral religious traditions which were imperilled in the Soviet-ruled homeland. In essence, one's Catholic or Orthodox faith or one's nominal association with the church became—and remains—a central component of Ukrainian ethnic identity in North America.

Economic life and interaction with Jews

Since Jews and Ukrainians in the diaspora tended to live in the same geographical locations, in particular with regard to the northeast United States, it is not surprising that both peoples interacted in the economic sphere. This was especially the case during the first two periods of immigrant life (from the 1880s to the outbreak of World War II), when in downtown areas of many northeastern American towns and cities it was not uncommon to find Jewish-owned small retail shops and later department stores patronized by Ukrainian customers, if for no other reason than because this had been normal practice in the old country.

269. Ukrainian storefront for income-tax services on Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, ca. 1990.

The highly articulate and nationally conscious third wave of DP (Displaced Persons) Ukrainian immigrants who arrived after World War II brought with them the organizational skills they had learned in Austrian- and Polish-ruled Galicia. This meant that, instead of having to depend on financial institutions owned by Jews or by any other American or Canadian body, Galician-Ukrainian immigrants, in particular, set up an extensive network of cred-

270. Pre-World War I street in Lower East-side Manhattan, New York City, home to Jewish, Ukrainian, and other eastern European immigrants.

it associations and mutual-benefit societies (some of which had already existed in North America) to help provide loans to start up or expand urban-based businesses, to purchase farm equipment, or to assure a mortgage on a family home. Many of these cooperative-like organizations still exist in North American towns and cities, where they are easily visible by their Cyrillic-alphabet signs (alongside English) and in some cases a blue and yellow Ukrainian flag fluttering above the storefront.

Main centers of Jewish emigration

The earliest seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Jewish emigration to pre-revolutionary America was Sephardic from Holland and the Dutch colonies, but by the nineteenth century it had become predominantly Ashkenazic. Until the 1880s most Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants came from Germanic lands, but thereafter the majority originated in central and eastern European Slavic territories. Between 1882 and 1924, no less than 2.3 million Jews entered the United States. More than 75 percent of them were from the Russian Empire and about 20 percent from Austrian Galicia. In contrast to other European immigrants headed for North America, 44 percent of the Jewish newcomers were female, which implies that Jewish migrants came to settle, not to make quick money and return home. In fact, about 3 to 4 percent returned to Europe, mainly to England; some were either sent back because of illness (trachoma or tuberculosis) or unacceptable political activity, while others went back on their own accord for personal reasons.

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed massive Jewish emigration from Europe, first among Holocaust survivors just after World War II, then, beginning in the 1970s, increasing numbers from the Soviet Union because of political and social discontent. Among the major destinations were Israel (over a million), the United States (500,000), and Germany (200,000), with smaller numbers to Canada (30,000) and elsewhere. The most recent wave is connected with the Revolutions of 1989 that toppled Communist regimes in central Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, prompting the departure of about 1.5 million Jews. Among these emigrants, about

271. Jewish workers in a Ludlow Street tenement sweatshop, New York City. Photo, 1889.

60 percent went to Israel and 30 percent to the United States and Canada. Since Jews from Ukraine made up roughly one-third of the central and eastern European Jewish emigration, an estimated 330,000 Israeli Jews, 150,000 American Jews, and more than 60,000 German Jews came from Ukraine between 1989 and 2010.

Jewish immigrants to the United States and Canada were from the outset religiously and culturally diverse, speaking a wide variety of languages ranging from Ladino and Yiddish to Russian and Hungarian. Most were skilled workers with transferable professions, and throughout the twentieth century in both North American countries they had similar labor patterns: working at first in the sweatshops of the garment, tobacco, and construction industry; later becoming small-scale merchants and shop owners (particularly bakers and butchers); then owning manufacturing enterprises. Many such working-class Jews were attracted to leftist political ideologies and workers' and union movements. Their struggle against exploitation and attachment to socialist views was reflected in the widely read New York City-based Yiddish daily newspaper, *Forverts*, which by the 1930s had a circulation of 175,000. With the lifting after World War II of the racial and antisemitic restrictions and anti-Jewish quotas at higher educational establishments in the United States and Canada, Jews became doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, dentists, engineers, administrators, and college educators. It was not long before they were disproportionately overrepresented in professions such as these from which they had previously been banned.

Settlement patterns

The destination for Jewish emigrants from Ukraine varied, depending on immigration policies of the receiving countries. For example, in the 1990s Israel put pressure on the United States in an effort to redirect the flow of emigrants. It wanted that their destination be Israel, not the United States, which in any case sought ways to curtail its intake of Jews from eastern Europe. Therefore, whereas in the 1980s, 72 percent of all Jews emigrating from the Soviet Union preferred the United States and only 26 percent Israel, after the collapse of the Soviet state in 1991 the situation radically changed. From then on, those who chose Israel as their destination significantly grew, eventually reaching 70 percent of all emigrants. As for the rest, the percentage of those headed for the United States diminished, while the percentage that chose Germany remained stable.

Traditionally Jews went to Israel for ideological reasons, but the post-1989 emigrants were driven predominantly by economic concerns and the search for countries with better and more stable

272. Issue of the New-York-based Yiddish daily *Forverts* (16 April 1912), reporting the "horrible *Titanic* ship-wreck."
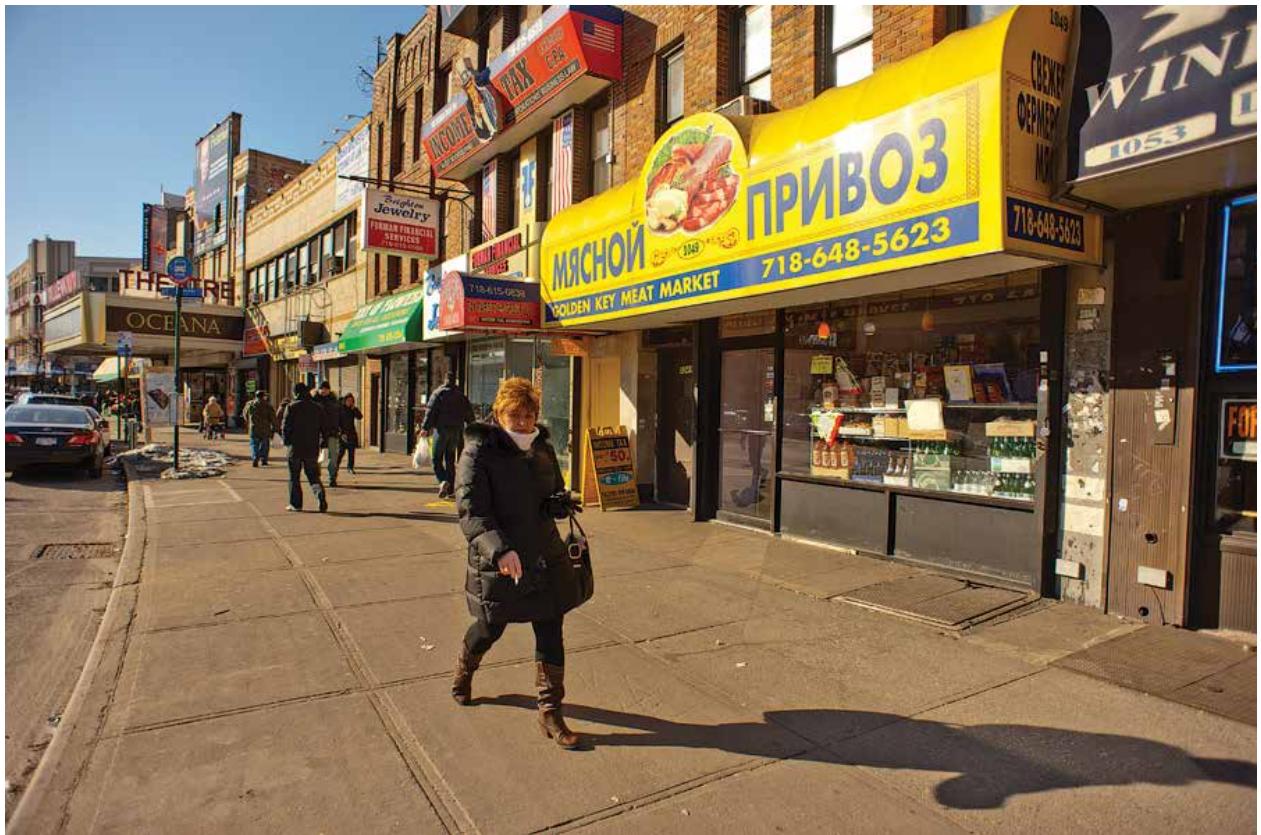
273. "Soviet Jewish" street in the Brighton Beach section of Brooklyn, New York City. Photo, 2010.

socio-economic conditions. Therefore, if they had an option, Jews with higher education and in a younger age bracket preferred the United States, whereas older migrants chose Israel and even Germany, particularly if they could not expect to find a relatively similar job or if they planned to rely on social welfare. Take Israel, for example. Between 2000 and 2012, one-third of the 27,000 new Jewish immigrants (*olim*) from Ukraine were thirty years or older, and 70 percent of them were of mixed origin (one parent being non-Jewish). Only one-third came from major cities (Kyiv, Odessa, Kharkiv, and Dnipropetrovsk), whereas two-thirds came from small towns and were therefore much less urbanized than their predecessors who had left for Israel in the 1990s. At the same time, the ratio of Israel's new Jewish immigrants from Ukraine with higher education has dropped from 75 to 30 percent. This lessened the chances for newcomers to obtain high-paying jobs in the Israeli economic or state sector. It is for such economic reasons that Jews from Ukraine preferred less expensive places to live (Ashdod, Ashkelon, Bat Yam, Haifa,

Netanya, Rehovot, Rishon Le-Zion), which they have transformed into an Israeli diaspora version of multilingual and secular Odessa, very much as they had done earlier in the Brighton Beach section of Brooklyn, New York.

Starting with the first great wave of Jewish emigration in the 1880s, Jews preferred to settle in ghetto-like urban enclaves of large cities in the United States and Canada. By the 1920s, for example, one-quarter of all American Jews lived in New York City, with an average 10 percent each in six other cities (Cleveland, Newark, Philadelphia, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Chicago). At the same time in Canada, most Jews settled in urban Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg, although some settled already before World War I in organized farm colonies in the Canadian Praires, or later in rural areas of Quebec and Ontario where they turned to farming.

These early settlement patterns were in large measure dictated by the desire to stay close to urban-based Jewish communal and religious centers. At the end of twentieth century, however, Soviet Jewish

MAP 28

Major centers of Jews, 1980s

▲ 10,000 - 20,000

■ 20,000 - 50,000

◉ 50,000 or more

NORTH DAKOTA

MINNESOTA

SOUTH DAKOTA

Minneapolis ■

WISCONSIN

MICHIGAN

ONTARIO

QUÉBEC

Montreal ◉

MAINE

VERMONT

NEW
HAMPSHIRE

NEW YORK

Rochester ▲

Toronto ◉

Buffalo ▲

New York ◉

Milwaukee ■

Detroit ◉

Chicago ◉

Cleveland ◉

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia ◉

NJ

IOWA

NEBRASKA

ILLINOIS

INDIANA

OHIO

Columbus ▲

Pittsburgh ■

Baltimore ◉

Washington
D.C. ◉

For detail of
NORTHEASTERN
STATES
see inset map below.

KANSAS

Kansas City ■

St. Louis ◉

MISSOURI

Indianapolis ▲

Cincinnati ■

WEST
VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA

Norfolk ▲

KENTUCKY

NORTH CAROLINA

OKLAHOMA

ARKANSAS

TENNESSEE

Memphis ▲

SOUTH
CAROLINA

Atlanta ◉

ALABAMA

GEORGIA

MISSISSIPPI

Dallas ■

LOUISIANA

TEXAS

New Orleans ▲

GULF OF
MEXICO

FLORIDA

Tampa ▲

Palm Beach County ◉

Boca Raton-Delray ◉

Ft. Lauderdale ◉

Hollywood ◉

Miami ◉

Houston ■

NEW
VERMONT HAMPSHIRE

Albany ▲

Framingham
Worcester ▲

Lynn ▲

Boston ◉

NEW
YORK

Springfield ▲ MASSACHUSETTS

Hartford ▲

Providence ▲

Rockland County

PENNSYLVANIA

Bridgeport ▲

CONNECTICUT

New
Haven ▲

RHODE
ISLAND

Bergen County ◉

Essex County ◉

Stamford/New Canaan ▲

Union County ◉

Greater New York ◉

Lower Bucks County ■

Middlesex County ■

Monmouth County ▲

Greater
Philadelphia ◉

NEW JERSEY

Wilmington ▲

Cherry
Hill ▲

Baltimore ◉

Atlantic City ▲

ATLANTIC

MARY-
LAND

DELAWARE

Montgomery and Prince George's Counties ◉

Greater Washington ■

OCEAN

Alexandria ▲

VIRGINIA

Scale 1 : 16 650 000

0   200 miles

0   200 kilometers

NORTHEASTERN STATES

Scale 1 : 9 700 000

0   200 miles

0   200 kilometers

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MAP 29

immigrants, who were much more secularized than their brethren a hundred years before, were driven by economic rather than religious interests. Hence, the recent wave of Jewish immigrants to the United States is geographically distributed more evenly: about 40 percent in the northeast United States (New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania), 10 percent in the mid-west (Ohio, Illinois), 26 percent in the south (Florida, Texas), and 24 percent in the far west (California). With the exception of Brooklyn, New York, where at least 100,000 Jews from Ukraine have settled, most Jewish newcomers prefer the suburbs of large cities.

Civic, cultural life, and economic life

In North America, Jews organized so-called *landsmanshaftn*. These were voluntary self-governing societies whose members came from the same town or same region in Europe. In the decades before World War I, dozens of such societies emerged, bringing together former residents from places in Russian-ruled Ukraine and Austrian-ruled Galicia. The *landsmanshaftn* were registered as non-profit organizations responsible for philanthropic activity and social relief, which included sponsorship of nursing homes and the establishment of elementary religious

274. *Meah Shearim* (One Hundred Gates), the ultra-Orthodox, predominantly Hasidic Jewish quarter of Jerusalem.

schools (*hadarim*), hospitals, orphanages, and cemeteries. Eventually, these bodies turned into influential institutions in their own right, serving Jews not only from central and eastern Europe but from the North-American Jewish community as a whole.

Jews from the former Russian Empire and Soviet Union transformed the cultural space in which they settled as immigrants. This first happened in New York City on the Lower East Side, the Bronx, and, by the last decades of the twentieth century, in Brooklyn, where Yiddish and then Russian came to dominate the public sphere. Most recently this pattern has been repeated along Israel's Mediterranean coast. Russian seems to be everywhere: in the streets, on the boardwalks, in cafeterias, in supermarkets, bookshops, and in hair salons. Israel's new immigrants (*olim*) from Ukraine read Russian newspapers, watch Russian and Ukrainian TV channels, and purchase food in stores that have only Russian-language labels.

275. "Soviet Jewish" storefronts in Haifa, Israel.

Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union represent about 45 percent of Israel's secular population. At the height of community activity in the late 1990s, they had at their disposal more than a hundred Russian-language newspapers, including the daily *Vesti* (with a circulation of over 50,000), and several Russian-language radio and television stations, including *Israel Plus* with an audience of one million. The result has been the formation in Israel of a Russian-Jewish fusion culture that is different both from Israeli culture and from that which the immigrants brought from Ukraine. This new reality was perhaps best summed up during the winter of 2014, when Israel experienced an exceptionally heavy snowfall. The government was forced to bring in military vehicles in order to clear the streets, to which an Israeli of non-Soviet background waiting at Jerusalem's Central Bus Station exclaimed: "Tanks. Snow. Russians. Where am I?"

While first-generation Jewish immigrant parents have held on to the secular values of Soviet high culture and identified their Jewishness only through memories of antisemitism and victimization in the old country, their North American-born or acculturated children have swiftly assimilated into globalized American pop culture. Young Jews are simply reluctant to identify with the sufferings of their parents. Sociologists use a special "index of dissimilarity" to mark the level of difference of an immigrant group within a given society. Among former Soviet

276. Young American activists at a Jewish Community Center preparing banners protesting the mistreatment of Soviet Jews. Photo, 1973.

277. *Dancing at the Cabaret* (2001), pencil drawing by the Kyiv-born and New York-based artist David Miretsky.

Jews the dissimilarity is lower than that of other immigrant groups, despite the constant influx of new immigrants. For example, in the United States the index of dissimilarity among Jews dropped at the end of the twentieth century from level 40 to 30.

Considering the modest level of integration of Soviet Jews into diasporan Jewish community life, it becomes clear that immigrants have replaced the enforced assimilation that had shaped their lives in the Soviet Union with assimilation by choice. In 1990 many U.S.-based Jewish organizations celebrated victory in their twenty-five-year-long struggle to allow Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, characterized at the time by the abridged biblical verse "Let my people go!" And yet, by the outset of the twenty-first century, these same organizations realized that they had almost completely lost the struggle to incorporate former Soviet Jews into North American diasporan community life.

For example, the new immigrants, who were accustomed to free education in the Soviet Union, were not prepared to send their children to (quite expensive) Jewish day schools in North America. They were also unable or unwilling to pay (quite high) synagogue membership fees. Hence, they remained a community, or rather an assortment of individuals, whose values and traditions had very little in common with North American Jews who were committed to their Judaic national, ethnic, and religious traditions, whatever the financial costs. While some former Soviet Jews have joined one or another religious congregation (Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Orthodox, and Hasidic—especially Habad), the overwhelming majority of Jews from Ukraine (and Russia) have remained outside North American community and synagogue life. It turns out that the second half of the biblical verse "Let my people go," which reads: "so that they would

278. Underground Talmud lesson in former Soviet Leningrad. The group of young Russian Jews includes Haim Burshtein, far left, future chief rabbi of Lithuania. Photo, early 1980s.

serve Me, says God the Lord," has effectively not come about. In short, a religious, in contrast to an ethno-cultural, Jewish identity was reclaimed only by a very few of former Soviet Jews in the present-day North America diaspora and Israel.

This lack of Judaism among new immigrants is especially evident in New York City, with its 250,000 former Soviet Jews. They have formed a new identity, a kind of Jewish-American version of *homo sovieticus*. In Brooklyn, where they live in highest concentration, the recent immigrants go to stores, cafeterias, and restaurants with Slavic names, eat delicatessen food (precisely that which was practically unavailable in the Soviet Union), read Russian-language newspapers and books, listen to Russian CDs, watch Russian-language television, flock to concerts of former Soviet sphere pop-singers, and, aside from speaking Russian mixed with English, dress in clothing styles that were considered fashionable in the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s. The cultural distinctiveness of these Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union is at once charming and alarming to those who arrived before. Able to live their lives without any contact with multicultural American life and not speaking English, they like to joke: "Why do I need English? I don't go out in America (*v Ameriku ne khozhu*)." This self-contained culture is the focus of many tragicomic texts by Vladimir Matlin, Serguei Dovlatov, and Dina Rubina.

The situation among former Soviet immigrants in Israel is significantly different. Israel's efficient secondary and high school education system, the country's relatively efficient bureaucracy, and in particular the Israeli army with its compulsory system of service has helped to absorb swiftly and successfully the younger generation. Required from an early age to learn Hebrew, young people easily join various civic and social groups in Israeli society, take up residence in various parts of the country, and become active in the military, the business world, university life, and the hi-tech industry.

Religious life

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Jewish immigrants in their new countries discovered things that were unavailable or restricted to them when they lived in Soviet Ukraine. Among such things were various forms of organized and institutionalized religion—in a word, Judaism. Some younger-generation Jews in diaspora countries explored their Jewish roots, becoming involved in Jewish Sunday schools, synagogues, youth movements, Orthodox *yeshiva* and study groups, and communal life in general. The Orthodox Hasidic Habad-Lubavitch movement was particularly successful in engaging many younger Jews. Hasidic Orthodoxy, with its internal rigidity and personal obligations that many considered burdensome, did not have broad appeal, however.

Many more Soviet Jewish youth, especially in North America, were unaware of the age-old struggle of the Orthodox against the Reform in their European countries of origin. Oblivious to the past, they chose to become associated with a variety of liberal movements ranging from Conservative to Reform to Egalitarian. But even these less rigid forms of Judaism turned out to be burdensome. Unable to pay communal/synagogal dues and unfamiliar with the concept of tuition for a secondary education, most recent immigrant Jewish families have opted not to send their children to religious Jewish schools, whether in Israel or North America.

279. Cover of the Soviet Ukrainian satirical magazine *Perets* (Kyiv, 1981) depicting a harnessed Ukrainian nationalist and a Zionist Jew driven by a female image representing the Cold War.

Interaction with ethnic Ukrainians

Why have most Jews from Ukraine become part of Russian-speaking Jewish communities in the new countries to which they immigrated? Why have so few chosen to identify with the Ukrainian language and culture? Of those who arrived in Israel or North America in the last decades of the twentieth century, most came from highly urbanized and culturally russified territories of Ukraine. It was, therefore, logical for these immigrants to continue using the language they had used in Soviet or independent Ukraine. Moreover, Russian was also the language widely used by immigrant organizations and cultural institutions that had come into being in the 1970s and 1980s. Because of an often simplistic bureaucratic mindset, officials in the receiving countries identified all Jewish newcomers from the Soviet Union—whether from Ukraine or any other Soviet republic—as "Russian Jews." This should not come as a surprise, since, for most Americans, Canadians, and Israelis, the entire former Soviet Union was "Russia."

On the other hand, the established ethnic Ukrainian communities already existing in the United States, Canada, or Germany were, in general, not particularly welcoming nor willing to consider Jewish immigrants from Soviet Ukraine as "their own." As typical of many diasporas, the Ukrainian community was not only introverted but filled with all sorts of misconceptions regarding Jews and for a long time even a degree of latent antisemitism. Despite years of persecution of Jews in the Soviet Union, many in the Ukrainian diaspora still entertained the conviction that Jews had always been staunch supporters of communism and therefore an integral part of the Soviet system which, in turn, persecuted ethnic Ukrainians. One must also take into consideration that diaspora Ukrainian communities were relatively more religiously cohesive than the predominantly secular Jews who emigrated from Soviet Ukraine in the decades after World War II. Neither Jews from Ukraine nor ethnic Ukrainians were ready to embrace one another, to recognize their common pasts, or to view the other as a people whose culture had been suppressed and persecuted throughout the Soviet empire. This situation has only begun to change—albeit very slowly—since the 1990s.

280. Coat of arms, with Ukrainian trident symbol on the right, of Ray Hnatyshyn, governor-general of Canada (1990-1995).

The barrier between ethnic Ukrainians and Jews from Ukraine in the diaspora is the result not only of internal factors but also of important external ones. Policy-makers in present-day Russia have manipulated the pro-Russian linguistic and cultural attachment of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. The goal of these policy-makers is to advance the concept of a cohesive Russian-centered imperial entity and, in the process, to denigrate the former Soviet but now independent republics, first and foremost Ukraine, which is often considered little more than a bogus state. Soviet and now Russian policy-makers have long sought to keep apart ethnic Ukrainians and Jews in the diaspora and in Ukraine, to denigrate Ukraine and ethnic Ukrainians in Jewish eyes, and to make the spurious claim that every time Ukraine strove to be independent it became viciously antisemitic.

Documents from recently declassified KGB archives in Ukraine reveal that Soviet state security services had at least since the Cold War initiated campaigns aimed at provoking animosity between diasporan Jews and Ukrainians, particularly in the United States. Present-day language policies seem to be a logical continuation of trends from the previous half-century. Consequently, the Russian-language media in the diaspora quite often reprints Russian publications which simply toe Moscow's standard anti-Ukraine line when reporting on events in independent Ukraine. This kind of aggressive, anti-Ukrainian propaganda is still very much part of the Russian Federation's international media campaigns, particularly when it comes to sensitive issues related to the Jewish-Ukrainian historical past.

Ukrainian diasporan impact

Canada and the United States

The status of Ukrainians in the United States and Canada has differed substantially with regard to their respective impact on the host society. The basic reason for the difference is the group's relative size. Today the number of persons officially recorded as Ukrainian in each country is about one million; this means that in Canada one out of every 35

inhabitants is of Ukrainian background, whereas in the United States the figure is one out of every 350.

Aside from their numerical disadvantage, Ukrainians in the United States have never formed a critical mass in any one area and therefore have been unable to form an effective bloc whose vote might be courted by American political parties, even at the municipal level. In Canada, on the other hand, Ukrainians have at least since the 1920s become a force to be reckoned with not only in the rural bloc communities but also at the provincial level. It was and still is common to

281. Anti-Soviet demonstration by Ukrainian Americans at the United Nations, New York City, 1967.

find politicians of Ukrainian background—and who openly identify as such for political reasons—in positions as premiers, lieutenant governors, government officials, and provincial legislature deputies (MPPs) in Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, as well as federal parliamentary members (MPs) and life-long appointed senators in Ottawa. In the 1990s the highest office in the land, the queen's representative as governor general, was held by the Ukrainian-Canadian politician Ray Hnatyshyn. In effect, for nearly the past century Ukrainians have been a factor in Canadian political life.

The contrast between Canada and the United States could not be greater. Aside from the miniscule numerical size of Ukrainians in relation to the total population of the United States and their limited presence in the political arena, American society, whether in the media or in other aspects of public discourse, has traditionally not even recognized the existence of Ukrainians. The following scenario was until very recently quite common. A fellow American

282. Canada's Ambassador for Religious Freedom addresses the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Toronto, Ontario, 2013.

might ask, "What is your background?" and receive the response "Ukrainian"; the retort of the questionnaire would likely be: "Oh, so you're Russian"! The situation has changed somewhat since 1991: independent Ukraine has its own Olympic teams, the 2004 Orange Revolution was covered widely by the American media, and mainline television programs sometimes refer to Ukrainians and even a "Ukrainian mafia." Nevertheless, the misleading assumption that Ukrainian and Russian are the same thing has not yet disappeared in the United States.

Considering such demographic and perceptual realities, it is not surprising that the Ukrainian-American community has had limited or no real influence either on the political life of the United States or on that country's foreign policy toward the Ukrainian ancestral homeland. Not that Ukrainian-American activists have not tried to exert some kind of influence. They did lobby in Washington at the close of World War I in an effort to elicit support for an independent Ukraine, or for a favorable solution to the Ukrainian-Polish war over Galicia. But their anti-Polish and anti-Soviet views were not met with sympathy among American politicians, especially during World War II, when the United States was an ally of the Soviet Union.

The only time Ukrainian-American political activists seemed to gain a hearing and achieve some of their goals was during the early stage of the Cold War. The lobbying efforts undertaken in Washington, D.C., by the then recently founded umbrella group, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (est. 1944), seemed to bear fruit in the early 1950s, when the U.S. government allowed anti-Soviet Displaced Persons (about 50,000 of whom were Ukrainians) into the United States. It was not long, however, before the Ukrainian Congress Committee and the subsequently founded World Congress of Free Ukrainians (est. 1967) became somewhat of an embarrassment for American foreign policy-makers. Government officials and their advisers (including America's new generation of Russia specialists) looked with increasing suspicion at what was considered the extreme anti-Soviet views and unnecessarily provocative public protests by Ukrainian-American activists outside Soviet diplomatic missions in Washington, D.C., and New York City, especially in the 1970s and 1980s when détente with the Soviet Union was the American foreign-policy order of the day. As late as the waning months of the Soviet Union, Ukrainian-Americans were faced with the reality of their president (George H.W. Bush) visiting Soviet Ukraine for a few hours in August 1991 and delivering his so-called Chicken-Kyiv speech, in which he called on Ukrainians to avoid extremist measures and instead
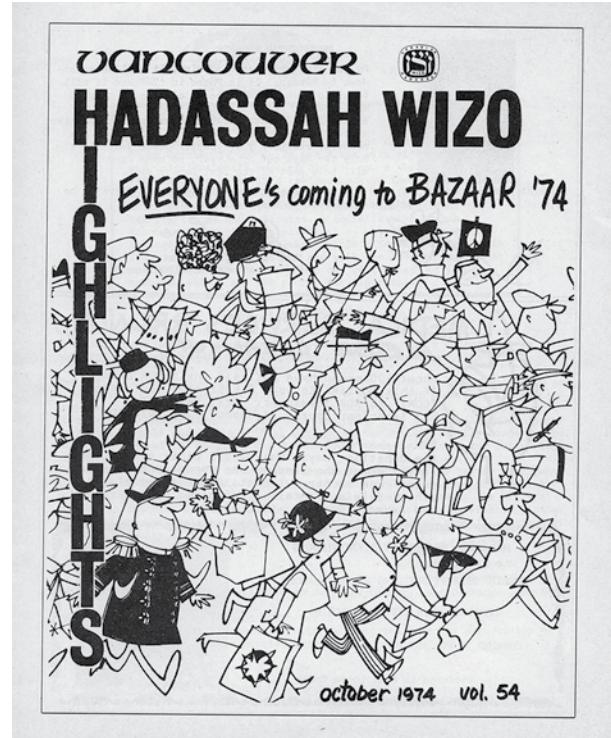
283. Issue of the Canadian Zionist Federation Hadassah-WIZO newsletter, *Highlights* (Vancouver, 1974), calling for participation in a philanthropic campaign in support of Israel.

284. Salo Wittmayer Baron (1895-1989), holder of the first endowed university chair in Jewish Studies in the United States. Photo 1940s.

to remain within the already tottering Soviet state. It is only since Ukraine's independence that Ukrainian Americans have had some real impact on their government, whether through the work of the U.S. Congress Ukraine Caucus or through the advice solicited from Ukrainian-American civic activists and scholars who have appeared before various congressional committees and governmental bodies in Washington, D.C.

By contrast, Ukrainian Canadians have had greater success in having their voice heard and their needs responded to by various levels of Canadian society. Activists in the Ukrainian Canadian Congress—an umbrella group of organizations established at the initiative of the Canadian federal government in 1945—were successful in convincing officials in Ottawa to allow entry and permanent residence for Ukrainian war refugees. Included among them were certain groups and individuals who may have served on the side of Nazi Germany. Even more influential was the role played by Ukrainian Canadians in formulating the policy of multiculturalism. Implemented in the 1970s, that policy encouraged the federal and provincial governments to provide state funding for Ukrainian-language educational programs and cultural activity designed to preserve and enhance Ukrainian identity in Canada. Considering all these developments, it is perhaps not surprising that when Ukraine declared its independence in August 1991, Canada was the first country (after Poland) to recognize formally the new state.

Jewish diasporan impact

North America and Israel

Not long after eastern European Jews in North America established *landsmanshaftn* made up of former residents of a specific town or region in Europe, umbrella organizations emerged that were primarily concerned with relations between Jews and non-Jews. Among the oldest of these was the American Jewish Committee, established in 1906 to lobby on behalf of the domestic concerns of Jews in the United States, including issues such as anti-Jewish legislation, immigration restrictions, educational quotas, and antisemitism. In the wake of World War I, the newly founded American Jewish Distribution Committee provided social relief to help overseas Jewish communities re-establish themselves. Then, during World War II, the Jewish Welfare Board was created to help Holocaust refugees.

In the 1960s, several organizations ranging from the radical Jewish Defense League to the moderate American Committee for Soviet Jewry came into being with the goal of improving the status of Soviet Jews and assisting them in their struggle for the right to emigrate abroad. In Canada, too, similar organizations appeared, including the influential Canadian Jewish Congress, established in 1919. It initially focused on combatting antisemitism but later became a major lobbying organization. The Congress was later reinforced by perhaps one of the most effective pro-Israeli groups in the world, the Canadian Zionist Federation Hadassah—WIZO (est. 1967). It was responsible for extensive fund-raising cam-

285. New York State Senator David Storobin in front of his District Office, Brooklyn, New York. Photo, 2012.

286. Zeev Elkin (b. 1971), prominent Israeli politician, born in Ukraine.

287. Natan Sharansky (b. 1948), former Soviet dissident from Ukraine, human rights activist, and founder of the Israel Ba-Aliyah party.

paigns, combatting anti-Israeli boycotts, and promoting a wide range of welfare projects.

Among the main concerns of Jewish umbrella organizations were education opportunities. Until well into the twentieth century, Jews were banned from holding professorial posts in many American colleges and universities. This situation began to change in the late 1930s, when a leading literary critic of Jewish descent, Lionel Trilling, was appointed professor in the English Department at Columbia University in New York City. During the same decade, the establishment of the Chair in Jewish Studies, also at Columbia University, first held by the distinguished historian Salo Baron (a native of Galicia), opened up further possibilities for the academic development of Jewish studies in America. Baron's seventeen-volume Jewish social history and three-volume history of the Jewish community became landmarks in Jewish historical studies.

By the late 1960s, Jewish studies professors became the norm at American and Canadian universities, and their subject matter an integral part of many institutions of higher learning. Other institutions associated specifically with major religious trends in Judaism appeared in various places: the Reform Judaism university, Hebrew Union College (1875); the Conservative Jewish Theological Seminary of America (1886); Yeshiva University (1886), associated with modern Orthodoxy; and the youngest among them, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

(1968). Aside from programs leading to rabbinic ordination, some award degrees in the liberal arts and in the social, applied, and natural sciences.

With regard to political preferences, the arrival of Soviet Jews in the last decades of the twentieth century has profoundly altered voting patterns in the eastern European Jewish diaspora. In Canada, 40 percent of middle-aged Jews vote for the Conservatives and 30 percent for the Liberals, while among younger Jews the percentages are reversed: 20 percent for the Conservatives and 40 percent for the Liberals. In the United States, most Jews had traditionally voted Democratic, particularly because of the favorable stance of that party toward Medicare and other social-welfare issues. But, by the outset of the twenty-first century, many more Soviet Jewish immigrants drifted to the Republican side, predominantly because of the sympathetic Republican position on Israel and because of Jewish dissatisfaction with the increasingly suspicious socialist and anti-Israel rhetoric of the American democratic left.

In Israel, Jewish and non-Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union constitute about 17 percent of the country's Jewish population. As such, they have become a crucial electoral constituency taken seriously in the often fractious world of Israeli politics. Initially, Jews from Ukraine and the former Soviet Union as a whole entered Israeli politics by forming parties with local community agendas. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however,

they had adopted a broader political vision concerned with issues that face Israeli citizens at large. Although some Soviet Jews have supported the Israeli democratic and socialist left, more tend to support the center-right parties such as Likud and Israel Beiteinu (Our Home Israel). It is therefore not surprising that leading politicians like Benjamin Netanyahu and Avigdor Lieberman have relied heavily on the political support of the recent immigrants (*olim*) from Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Russia, and the central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union.

Since the foundation of Israel in 1948, many Jews from Ukraine have become highly visible on the Israeli political stage. Three of them—Moshe Sharett, Levi Eshkol, and Golda Meir—became prime ministers and two—Yitshak Ben-Zvi and Ephraim Katzir (Katchalski)—held the office of president. In more recent times several others have held important positions in the Israeli government. Among the more charismatic of these is Natan (Anatolii) Sharansky from the Donetsk region, a dissident who served a full eight-year term in the Soviet gulag for human-rights activities. After moving to Israel, he founded in 1990s the Israel ba-Aliyah (Israel on the Rise) party, served as its parliamentary deputy, was appointed a cabinet minister, and headed the Jewish Agency for Israel (Sokhnut) organization. Others from Ukraine include Yuli Edelstein, a leading Zionist and Soviet refusenik from Chernivtsi who served as a parliamentary deputy and cabinet minister in several Israeli governments; Faina Kirshenbaum from Lviv, a leading Israel Beiteinu party activist and parliamentary deputy; and Zeev Elkin from Kharkiv, a historian who switched to politics, serving in more than one Israeli party before becoming chairman of a broad political coalition in the Israeli parliament (the Knesset).

Interaction with ethnic Ukrainians

In the immediate post-World War II decade, individual Jews in North America and Europe undertook multiple attempts to bridge the gap between ethnic Ukrainians and Jews in the diaspora and to oppose efforts to pit one people against the other. In 1953,

288. Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959), American lawyer of Galician-Jewish descent.

a Jewish-American lawyer, Raphael Lemkin (a Polish Jew who studied in Lviv), gave a speech at New York City's Manhattan Center to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Ukraine's *Holodomor*. A decade earlier, in 1943, Lemkin had coined the word *genocide* to convey the destruction of a people simply because of its specific ethnic origins. Now he classified Ukraine's *Holodomor* as an act of genocide.

By the 1960s, Ukrainian and Jewish intellectuals, mostly in Canada, Israel, and the United States, began to realize the extent to which the two peoples had become a crucial factor in the struggle for a future independent Ukraine. There were Ukrainian emigrés who still followed Dmytro Dontsov, the interwar integral nationalist thinker who, when living in Canada after World War II, continued to promote the idea of Ukraine as a country belonging exclusively to ethnic Ukrainians. By contrast, a newer generation of Ukrainian intellectuals adopted the ideas of another interwar diaspora political theorist, the liberal nationalist Vyacheslav Lypynskyi, who envisioned a future independent Ukraine as a multi-ethnic state.

Following Lypynskyi's vision, some Ukrainian activists in the American zone of Germany, starting in the 1960s, attempted to build bridges between ethnic Ukrainians and Jews. Particularly active in this regard were individuals associated with the Munich-based Ukrainian Free University, the Ukrainian Division of Radio Lib-
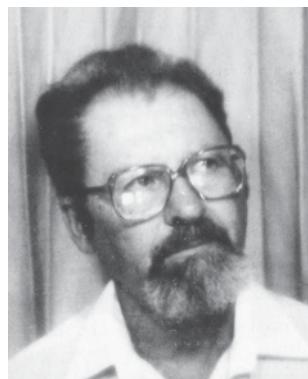
289. Yakiv Suslensky (1929-2009), Soviet human-rights activist, founder of the Israeli NGO that promoted Ukrainian-Jewish reconciliation.
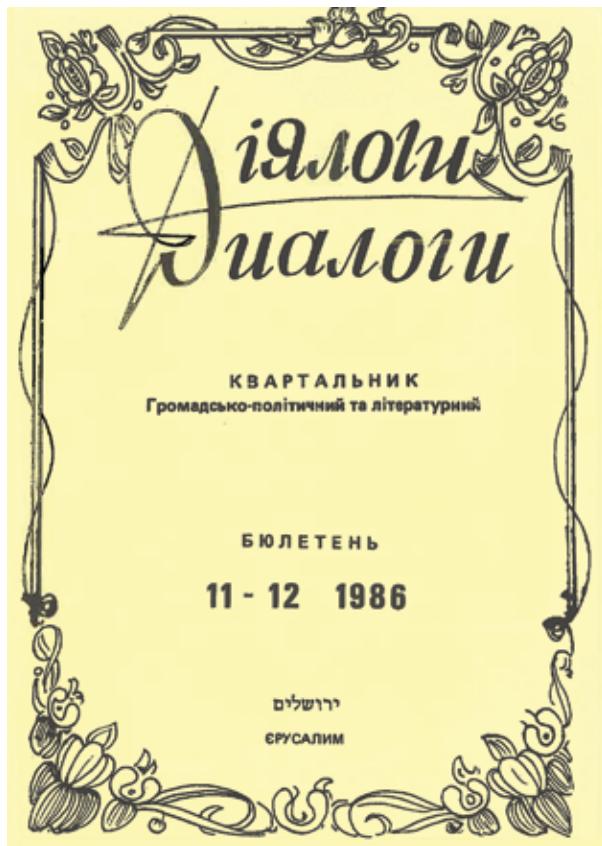
290. Issue of the Israeli quarterly *Diyalohy* (Jerusalem, 1986) dedicated to Ukrainian-Jewish issues.

erty/Free Europe, and the monthly journal *Suchasnist*. For example, *Suchasnist*—perhaps the most intellectually influential Ukrainian diaspora publication during the second half of the twentieth century—regularly published articles by Jews about the experience of former prisoners of conscience (Yosif Mendelevich, Israel Kleiner, Avraam Shifrin, Yakiv Suslenskyi); about Jewish literature (Joseph Roth, Isaac Babel), art, theater (Solomon Mikhoels), and scholarship (Moisei Beregovskii); and about Jewish-Ukrainian relations in general, including the most important past and present figures engaged in the dialogue between the two peoples (Solomon Goldelman, Arnold Margolin, Zynovii Antonyuk, and Yevhen Sverstyuk).

In Israel, this new trend was evident in the activities of a group of civic activists who in 1981 established the Society of Jewish-Ukrainian Relations and contributed to the journal *Diyalohy* (Dialogues), edited by the Ukrainophile Jew, Yakiv Suslenskyi. The group included former Soviet dissidents, underground Zionists, and prisoners who while incarcerated in the gulag "discovered" Ukraine and the Ukrainian language and culture through their friendship with fellow Ukrainian nationalist inmates. These activists sought to convince other members of the Soviet intelligentsia now living in Israel that there existed significant philosemitic trends in Ukrainian literature, politics, and culture, that the antisemitic excesses in Ukraine were not always and not necessarily perpetrated or orchestrated by ethnic Ukrainians, and that Ukrainians and Jews, who both were victims of imperial policies, shared a common cultural and historical experience.

From the mid-1980s to mid-1990s, this informal and unaffiliated group struggled with the Israeli authorities to gain recognition of the unique role of those Ukrainian nationalists who during World War II opposed both the Bolsheviks and the Nazis and who did not commit crimes against Jews in western Ukraine. Suslenskyi and his supporters also launched an international campaign to persuade Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust remembrance authority to acknowledge the Greek Catholic Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi as a Righteous Gentile. Although they did not succeed, their efforts nonetheless attracted international attention and encouraged scholars and thinkers in the diaspora and in post-Soviet Ukraine to re-evaluate the role of Ukrainian national leaders during World War II, whom Soviet historians continued to depict as assassins, Nazi-puppets, and Jew-haters. The journal *Diyalohy* even took the courageous step to publish an entire gamut of contradicting views on Ivan Demyanyuk's trial in Israel (see Chapter 12).

The large wave of ethnic Ukrainians who settled in Israel from the early 1990s have in recent years established a variety of diaspora organizations. These include the Union of Ukrainians in Israel, the Ukrainian Info Center, and most recently the Israeli Friends of Ukraine. Through various kinds of activity (concerts, lectures, festivals, Internet sites) these organizations strive to promote awareness of Ukraine and Ukrainian culture among the larger Israeli society.

Ashkenazic Israelis treat these relatively new Israeli Ukrainians with sympathy, recognizing in them the commonality of their European origin. On the other hand, Sefardi Israelis often refer to
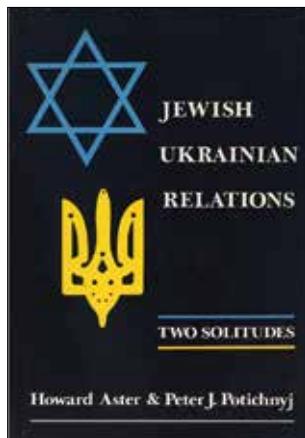
291. Cover of the 1983 book by two Canadian scholars that launched a new phase in the search for Jewish-Ukrainian reconciliation.

the ethnic Ukrainian newcomers as aliens, whom they consider (as they do Ashkenazic Jews) not a genuine component of the Land of Israel. Nevertheless, both the Ukrainian Embassy and the Israeli government support the country's ethnic Ukrainians through co-sponsorship of institutions such as the Association of Ukrainian Immigrants in Israel.

Ukrainian literary culture in Israel is expressed through the work of translators, who contribute to Ukrainian-Jewish reconciliation by publishing the works of leading Ukrainian and Jewish writers in Hebrew or in Ukrainian translations. There are also two Ukrainian-language journals—*Sobornist* (Unity) and *Vidlunnya* (Echo)—whose contributors form a small island of Ukrainian language and culture in Israel. For the most part, however, they are isolated from Israel's larger formerly Soviet Jewish community and continually must struggle to prove the validity of their Ukrainian-oriented cultural strivings in the face of the Israeli establishment, whose support is usually allocated to Russian literary and cultural institutions. Somewhat more engaged with Israeli society, although in the limited realm of academic life, are the various projects at universities that deal with Ukraine and Jews from that country. Israeli academics at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and at Tel Aviv University, among others, have in the last two decades published scholarly works that deal in particular with medieval and early modern (Slavonic) aspects of history and culture in Ukrainian lands, and in 1993 the Israeli Association of Ukrainian Studies was established for scholars interested in Ukrainian matters.

The tendency toward a sense of Jewish-Ukrainian awareness and cultural rapprochement has a longer tradition in North America. In the late 1960s, a spirited debate between Ukrainian and Jewish historians (Taras Hunczak and Zosa Szajkowski) about the fate of Jews in Ukraine at the close of World War I—the Petlyura problem—was launched on the pages of the American journal *Jewish Social Studies*. Then, in 1983, a landmark scholarly conference dealing with the whole gamut of historic relations between Jews and Ukrainians took place at McMaster University in Canada. Organized by the Ukrainian-Canadian and Jewish-Canadian historians Peter Potichnyj and Howard Aster, and with the participation of scholars and literary figures from Canada, the United States, and Israel, the discussions (later published) laid bare several irreconcilable issues on which the representatives of the two peoples of different generations could not agree. Despite the obstacles to reconciliation, the organizers Potichnyj and Aster remained convinced of similarities between the Ukrainian and Jewish historical experiences. It was that conviction tempered by reality that prompted Potichnyj and Aster to characterize the historical experience of Jews and Ukrainians as "two solitudes."

The concept of "two solitudes" defined the next quarter-century of Jewish-Ukrainian dialogue. Nevertheless, the published McMaster conference proceedings opened up a range of themes and topics that had been previously overlooked because of the generally russocentric approach of most North American and Israeli scholars who deal with the history of Russia and the Soviet Union. The dialogue initiated at the McMaster conference showed that diaspora thinkers could help reconcile the historical narratives of the two peoples by going beyond the existing ethnocentric stereotypes of the Jewish or Ukrainian Other. Particularly important in this regard was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, which afforded access to long-closed archival material housed in Ukraine and Russia. That practical reality, combined with the depoliticization of historical studies and the acceptance of new research methodologies (post-colonial theory), has provided a positive intellectual atmosphere for the current Ukrainian-Jewish dialogue.

292. Ukrainian-American women protesting Polish rule in their Galician homeland at the White House, Washington, D.C., 1922.

Ukrainian diasporan impact on Ukraine

The impact of the Ukrainian diaspora on Ukraine and the Jewish diaspora on Israel has played itself out in various spheres, whether in civic life, economic relations, religion, culture, or education. The intensity and effectiveness of the impact in any one of these spheres has depended on the political situation in the ancestral homelands and the degree to which they have been receptive to outside influences.

Civic and economic life

The first wave of pre-World War I immigrants in North America remained in close contact with their families and villages in western Ukrainian lands. That relationship was primarily economic in nature. Some immigrants returned home (in some cases more than once) in the years before World War I, bringing with them their savings in order to buy land; most, while remaining abroad, sent home a portion of their earnings to their parents or wives. These remittances increased the availability of capital in rural villages, helping to improve local economic conditions, although at the same time driving up the price of land.

While financial assistance to individual families in Ukraine continued during the interwar years, fraternal and civic organizations carried out community fund-raising campaigns to assist political and economic causes in the homeland. Examples of financial support included emergency funds sent in 1920 to maintain the offices of the West Ukrainian National Republic's Vienna-based government-in-exile; and aid sent in the 1930s by the American-based United Ukrainian Organizations to support Ukrainian charitable, educational, and political institutions in Polish-ruled Galicia. When, at the close of World War II, the Soviet regime closed off Ukrainian lands to outside assistance, diasporan organizations directed their attention elsewhere, whether assisting refugees from Displaced Persons camps in Europe to immigrate to the United States and Canada, or, as in the case of political émigrés based mainly in post-war Germany and Great Britain, cooperating with Western counter-intelligence services to revive the anti-Soviet insurgency movement in Ukraine.

Until the late 1980s, the only concrete relations with the ancestral homeland were limited to cultural ties implemented by leftist-oriented Ukrainian diasporan groups (most especially in Canada), which since the 1930s had been actively courted by the Soviet Union. Beginning in the 1960s, a select number of anti-nationalist Canadian and American leftists were allowed to visit Soviet Ukraine, and some were even critical of Soviet policies, whether toward the Ukrainian language or the decision to launch the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.
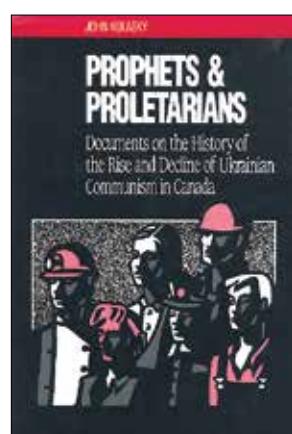
293. Cover of John Kolasky's 1988 book on the formerly influential Communist movement among Ukrainian Canadians.

In many ways, the Ukrainian diaspora's ability to have any significant impact on the ancestral homeland began only on the eve of and after Ukraine gained its independence. In the late 1980s diasporan Ukrainians began to visit in increasing numbers Soviet Ukraine, where they gave moral and financial support to democratic

294. Coverage of Austria-Hungary's 1913-1914 trial against Hungary's Orthodox Carpatho-Rusyns (Ugro-russy) in the Russian magazine *Iskry* (St. Petersburg, 1913).

Religion

Religion and church life have always been an important component of diasporan life, but their impact on the homeland has been limited. During the pre-World War I first wave of immigration, a "return-to-Orthodoxy" movement became widespread among North America's Ruthenian Greek Catholics. That development soon had an impact on the Ukrainian homeland. Some immigrant "converts" to Orthodoxy who returned home brought funds and publications to propagate their convictions among Greek Catholic relatives and friends. The result was another "return-to-Orthodoxy" movement, this time in the European homeland, and often precisely in those villages in southern Galicia and Transcarpathia to where the "Americans" had returned. Greek Catholic leaders and priests in these western Ukrainian lands were so alarmed that they called on the Austro-Hungarian authorities to intervene. The government's response was to hold several so-called treason trials (1905, 1913, 1917) of Orthodox believers, many of whom were found guilty and imprisoned for their faith. Yet the Orthodox movement was not destroyed and even grew after World War I, when these lands became part of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Because of war, political changes, and in particular repressive Soviet rule, any diasporan religious impact on the homeland was not really possible until the waning years of the Soviet Union. Finally, the outlawed Ukrainian/Greek Catholic and Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox churches were legally restored in the late 1980s, and within a few years the hierarchies of those churches (until then in Rome and in New Jersey) returned permanently to Ukraine.

Since the 1990s, both the Ukrainian Catholic and Autocephalous Orthodox diasporan communities have been particularly generous in raising funds to build new seminaries and churches in Ukraine, while many young priests—born and educated in the diaspora—have gone to Ukraine on a temporary or permanent basis to help train a new generation of priests and religious leaders. The most outstanding example of diasporan influence has been the reopening in western Ukraine of the pre-war Lviv Theological Academy, which in 2006 was transformed into the

movements like Rukh, which at the time were in the forefront of the drive for independent statehood. After independence was achieved, several diasporan Ukrainians "returned home" to lend their professional expertise as advisers to the new government and as founders or as leading participants in a wide range of non-governmental organizations trying to assist Ukraine in its transition to a market economy and a civic society based on democratic principles. A certain number of economically successful American and Canadian Ukrainians felt that they, too, might be able to help—combining their Ukrainian patriotic feelings with their business interests. Sooner or later, however, most diasporan investors pulled out of a country that was unable to provide a secure environment for Western-style business practices.

295. James Temerty (b. 1941), Canadian-Ukrainian businessman and founder of the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter.

Ukrainian Catholic University. Headed and largely staffed by Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians from the West, Lviv's Ukrainian Catholic University has successfully implemented standards similar to those in North American universities, including English as well as Ukrainian as the language of instruction, and programs in Jewish studies made possible by support from the Canadian philanthropist James Temerty.

Education and scholarship

Independent Ukraine has allowed and, at times, encouraged diasporan assistance and involvement in its educational and scholarly institutions. Since the 1990s, the administrators of two revived historic schools of higher learning, the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and the Ostroh Academy, solicited and received substantial funding from Ukrainian philanthropists in North America, which helped to make possible

296. Library of the Ostroh Academy National University, Ostroh, Ukraine, 2007, built with funding from the Ukrainian diaspora in North America.

their transformation into universities. Both employ professors from North America and use English, alongside Ukrainian, as a language of instruction.

North American centers of Ukrainian studies, especially those at the University of Alberta, the University of Toronto, and Harvard University, have since the 1990s established a variety of exchange fellowships, publication projects, and joint institutions together with Ukrainian universities and several institutes at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Kyiv. In an effort to raise the overall intellectual climate in Ukraine, one enterprising diasporan scholar from Harvard (George G. Grabowicz) established a publishing house in Kyiv, which, among other things, produces a Ukrainian-language journal (*Krytyka*) modelled on the *New York Review of Books*. Although not associated with a university, other diaspora activists have created with assistance from the Canadian government the Canadian-Ukrainian Parliamentary Program whose goal is to expose annually about thirty to forty young Ukrainians to democratic governing practices in the West.

Jewish diasporan impact on Ukraine

Civic and economic life

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Jewish immigrants in the United States and Canada sent a part of their small savings to relatives in Russian- and later Polish- and Soviet-ruled Ukraine. The remittances significantly helped Jewish families (and Ukraine's economy in general), especially in the 1920s after the human and material destruction of World War I, civil war, pogroms, and the famine of 1921. All these events resulted in the devastation of community life and Jewish economic well-being in former Russian-ruled Ukraine.

In response to these events, dozens of leftist organizations in the United States, Canada, and Argentina provided assistance to Jewish orphanages and schools, while religious organizations sent flour and goods as Passover gifts. Starting in 1924, the American Joint Distribution Committee (the Joint) established its Agro-Joint subdivision, which directly sponsored a program to resettle Jews on newly es-

297. Apprentices in an Agro-Joint-sponsored workshop for training metal workers in Soviet Ukraine. Photo, late 1920s.

tablished collective farms in southern Ukraine and northern Crimea (see map 20). The Joint shipped hundreds of agricultural machines and tractors to these farming communities. By the early 1930s, the Joint had ceased its activities, and in the following decade the Soviet authorities designated the organization an agent of foreign espionage. To be associated with such an organization was tantamount to involvement in anti-Soviet state treason.

After 1941, however, when the United States and the Soviet Union became allies, Jewish-American organizations lobbied effectively for the establishment of the U.S. government Lend-Lease program, which allowed military equipment, food, and clothing to be shipped to the Soviet Union. This short-lived wartime period of American-Soviet rapprochement came to a halt after 1945, in large part because of Soviet expansionist ambitions in central Europe and the growing xenophobia and chauvinism that characterized the last years of Stalinist rule.

Throughout the subsequent Cold War period, direct involvement of any diasporan Jewish organization was considered by the Soviet Communist party leadership and security organs as an intrusion into the country's domestic affairs. Beginning in the 1960s, there were sporadic encounters between Jewish tourists coming to visit a local synagogue in the few open Soviet cities, although these were closely monitored by undercover security agents who were aware that some of these visitors represented diaspora Jewish organizations. The Soviet authorities went to great lengths to create a Potemkin village for its few foreign visitors from the West, often introducing them to Jewish community activists who claimed that religious-oriented Jews were "not persecuted," that Soviet Jews in general "lack nothing," and that they did not need any foreign help or support.

With the ascent to power of the reformer Michael Gorbachev in 1985, Soviet Cold War policies gradually came to a halt. Within a few years visitors and

298. Day-care center for Jewish senior citizens at the American Joint Distribution Committee-sponsored Hesed Shaare Tikva Center in Kharkiv. Photo, 2014.

representatives from major Israeli, European, and North American Jewish organizations could travel freely to Soviet Ukraine. Organizations such as the Joint were allowed to establish dozens of social-welfare centers called Hesed (Kindness), which distributed food parcels to the needy, provided free canteens for elderly Jews, assisted Jewish World War II veterans, and funded local community-building initiatives throughout Soviet Ukraine. The Joint was also instrumental in co-sponsoring various social-relief initiatives of the VAAD (Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Ukraine), which had its own wide network of social workers.

Jewish religious organizations of North America and Israel were particularly helpful in recreating community infrastructures and using them to extend social relief, first and foremost to the elderly who were caught unprepared during the initial stages of the transition to capitalism in the early 1990s, a transition marked by steep inflation and widespread corruption. Private American and Israeli sponsors assisted rabbinic leaders in establishing in Odessa the largest Jewish orphanage in Europe. Several diasporan organizations, such as the World Jewish Congress, Claims Conference, and the Joint, lobbied to help local Jewish communities reclaim community real estate confiscated by the Soviets. As a result, the governments of Soviet and later independent Ukraine returned more than a dozen synagogues to Jewish religious organizations.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, remittances from Jews living in Israel and North America were again allowed to be sent to relatives in Ukraine. Many Jewish entrepreneurs from New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and London set out for Ukraine, seeking to invest in newly privatized business enterprises, real-estate ventures, and other local economic initiatives. Most of these businessmen were former Soviet citizens from Ukraine, well aware of the legal vagaries and obstacles for conducting business in a post-Communist state. By the late 1990s, however, most diasporan entrepreneurs had become disappointed with the slow turnover of their investments, or they were squeezed from ownership and co-ownership by local competitors. As a result, many withdrew from Ukraine and from further participation in the country's economic life. Among the exceptions were diasporan Jews who invested in real estate (mostly Americans) and those (mostly Israelis) who established networks of small stores throughout Ukraine.

Religion

Jews from Ukraine have traditionally been concerned with the religious status of their brethren in the homeland. Beginning in the 1930s, sending religious literature from the West to the Soviet Union was tantamount to implicating the recipients in acts of religious propaganda, something that was penalized as a major offense against the atheist Communist regime. Gradually, however, Jewish religious works did again

299. Alexander Persman, left, Jewish entrepreneur and philanthropist, and Odessa regional administrator Nikolai Pondak unveil the Chesed She'B'Chesed Jewish Center, with its synagogue and orphanage in Odessa. Photo, 2012.

reach Soviet Ukraine. In the 1960s, tourists from the United States and Canada smuggled books in Russian that contained religious or political messages, including such novels as *Exodus*. Messengers of the Habad trend of Hasidism were appointed to serve as clandestine leaders among the observant Soviet Jews, helping to celebrate Jewish holidays, provide religious advice, and make available kosher food.

Once the Gorbachev reform era brought the Cold War to an end, dozens of rabbinic leaders from North America and Israel arrived in Ukraine, first as temporary messengers (*shlikhim*) and then as permanent residents. Together with local Jewish religious societies, they reclaimed abandoned or confiscated synagogues, established community infrastructures, and helped Ukraine's Jews start a religious life from scratch. American- and Israeli-based organizations, such as those of the Habad, Skvira, Karlin-Stolin, Munkatsch, and Bratslav Hasidim, were particularly active in bringing the religious dimension of Jewish culture back to the Jews of Ukraine, especially to the places where the groups traced their origins: Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv, Uman, Berdychiv, and Mukachevo.

In general, the diasporan Hasidim were much more successful than the Litvaks (non-Hasidic) Jews. Hence, what some observers have called the rabbinic revolution in Ukraine was in fact a Hasidic revolution. Despite their ultra-Orthodox approach and various restrictions against the secular sphere, Hasidic groups were more open to what Judaism calls *kiruv*: attracting non-observant Jews to tradition. This is in sharp contrast to the non-Hasidic Litvaks, who were more interested in *hizuk*: strengthening knowledge and beliefs among those who are already within the tradition.

Several wealthy American and Canadian Jews as well as the Israeli-based Mizrachi (national-religious) movement sponsored the arrival in Ukraine of non-Hasidic emissaries, who established themselves as rabbinic leaders in several large cities such as Kyiv and Odessa. In a real sense, their presence reflected the "diasporization" of Ukraine's Jewish cultural, religious, and political life. The impact of these new rabbinic leaders on the survival of the post-1991 Ukrainian-Jewish community cannot be overestimated.

300. Restored grave of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, a holy site in Uman that attracts to Ukraine each year thousands of Hasidim from throughout the world.

Education and scholarship

The Jewish diaspora has also had an impact on education and scholarly activity in the homeland. In the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution and the implementation of Communist-inspired and atheistic ideology, after 1920 Jewish studies almost entirely disappeared from Soviet research and higher educational curricula. Hence, diasporan organizations could not contribute to the development of Jewish educational institutions or scholarship in Soviet Ukraine.

This situation changed for a while during the period of national communism that took place in earnest after 1925. In particular, leftist Jewish organizations in Buenos Aires, Paris, Johannesburg, New York, and Montreal sent publications and newspapers to the newly established Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture in Kyiv. With the change in Soviet policy after 1928, foreign cultural exchanges were soon forced to cease. Subsequently, Jewish organizations abroad still tried to help Soviet scholars and cultural activists, although this entailed great risks for the recipients. For example, it was suspected ties with the West that led to the arrest in 1948–1950 of several Yiddish poets and scholars, who were accused of spying against the Soviet Union through contacts with organizations such as the American Joint Distribution Committee. In effect, during the Cold War contacts between Ukrainian scholars in

301. Students and faculty of the Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture in Kyiv on the eve of its closure by the Soviet authorities. Photo, 1934.

Soviet Ukraine of Jewish descent with diaspora organizations were practically impossible.

The situation changed again in the late 1980s during the Gorbachev era. At that time, the Israeli-based Liaison Bureau (Lishkat ha-Kesher), which promoted emigration, acted as a foil for a diplomatic mission, while the Jewish Agency for Israel (Sokhnut) sent emissaries even before the Israeli ambassador was accredited to Ukraine. Lishkat ha-kesher helped establish the so-called *ulpans*, which provided intensive Hebrew-language courses for adults interested in emigrating (making *aliyah*) to Israel. In effect, the *ulpans* and their instructors became a window into Israel, providing a basic introduction to Israeli culture, politics, and society.

In the 1990s, after half a century, the American Joint Distribution Committee (the Joint) re-established itself in Ukraine. Since then it has invested heavily in the development of local educational and scholarly institutions. For example, it has generous-

ly supported the efforts of the Ukrainian Center for Jewish Education to promote Sunday schools and day schools, the short-lived Jewish Studies program at the private International Solomon University in Kyiv, several Holocaust Studies centers, and dozens of libraries that make available diaspora-published books (mostly in Russian) to public and Jewish libraries. Finally, the Joint has funded travel of Ukraine's Jewish leaders to seminars in Israel, Europe, and the United States. For some time, there existed rivalry over goals between the Joint, which supports the rebirth of local community life, and Sokhnut, which is opposed to the idea of helping the diaspora at the expense of emigration to Israel. Eventually, however, Sokhnut modified its views when the importance of the new educational and cultural programs for preserving Jewish life in Ukraine became clear.

After Ukraine became independent, Israeli and North American foundations and educational institutions became major sponsors of new educational

302. Teaching the basics of Judaism on the Day of Jewish Knowledge at a Jewish school in Chernivtsi. Photo, 2013.

and research projects, including funding for North American Jewish professors to teach or give lectures at various Ukrainian educational establishments. Analogously, Israeli based teacher-training institutions invite Jewish teachers and university lecturers from Ukraine to spend up to two years in Israel for specialized training on the premise that they will return home and work in Jewish educational establishments. Among other diaspora organizations that have recently established centers in Ukraine are the Conservative Movement teaching institution Midreshet Yerushalaim, with its own school in

Chernivtsi (one of Ukraine's best Jewish day schools in the 1990s), and the Hasidic Habad organization, with its Jewish schools operating in many cities throughout Ukraine, the largest of which (with nearly 900 students) is in Dnipropetrovsk.

Of particular importance to Jewish scholarship is the Oriental Studies Institute at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, re-established in 1991 at the initiative of a Ukrainian-American professor from Harvard, Omeljan Pritsak. This body has had several scholars and graduate students whose main focus is Hebrew manuscripts. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, a whole host of diasporan- and Israeli-based bodies (the Rothschild Foundation in Europe and Israel, the Nevzlin Center at Hebrew University, Project Judaica sponsored by Conservative Jewish organizations in the United States, and the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter in Canada) have assisted newly emerging programs at leading Ukrainian universities, such as Mohyla Academy in Kyiv and the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv. Still other diaspora institutions have lent support to specific programs, whether archival research (sponsored by Project Judaica and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.) or the Claims Conference, which finances the preparation of inventories to help in the restitution of former Jewish community property confiscated by the Soviets.

CHAPTER 11
Contemporary Ukraine

Following the declaration of independence in August 1991 and its confirmation by a popular referendum vote in December of that same year, Ukraine entered a period of transition. The transition in question was from former Soviet authoritarian rule with its command economy to a democratic republic with a free-market economy. The transition has not always been easy, and the previous Soviet political, legal, and social system—including cultural values—remains embedded in Ukrainian society even after a quarter-century of independence.

Politics and society

Among the first challenges of the new state was to determine its political structure. The country's legislature, the Supreme Soviet (Verkhovna Rada), formerly made up almost exclusively of Communist party deputies, remained a one-chamber national parliament but was now comprised of deputies from several political parties. The leader of the strongest party with the most deputies generally becomes the country's prime minister.

When after several years of debate independent Ukraine finally adopted its first constitution in 1996, the country became a unitary state. The republic's head of state is a president elected by popular vote for a seven-year term. The relative powers of the president and prime minister have been altered several times through constitutional amendments.

The old Soviet administrative structure according to oblasts (regions) was retained, with their governmental heads (governors) appointed by Ukraine's president. The one exception to the country's unitary structure is Crimea, which has the status of an autonomous republic with its own parliament.

Although Ukraine is comprised of over a hundred different nationalities, the so-called titular nationality, ethnic Ukrainians (77.8 percent of the population in 2001), was given pride of place. The 1996 constitution specifically calls on "the state to promote the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, and of its historical consciousness, traditions, and culture." Among the most important of the cultural elements is the Ukrainian language. Despite its status as the state language, large segments of the population—ethnic Ukrainians as well as ethnic Russians—use Russian (or more likely the Ukrainian-Russian mixed language mockingly called *surzhyk*) as their common mode of speech. The struggle to enhance the Ukrainian language has frequently become a source of political conflict between nationally conscious activists and Russian speakers, who are often reluctant to give up their native speech in favor of the state language.

Aside from the Russian language, Ukraine has had to redefine its relationship with its largest neighbor, Russia. Those relations became particularly complex after the ascent to power of Vladimir Putin (from 2000 as president or prime minister), who has tried to draw independent Ukraine into Russia's larger geo-political

303. Presidents of Ukraine and of Russia, Leonid Kuchma and Vladimir Putin, co-patrons of the St. Vladimir Russian Orthodox Cathedral, at the site of its reconstruction in Chersonesus near Sevastopol, Crimea. Photo, 2001.

sphere. Among the issues that proved to be a source of disagreement and conflict between the two countries were Ukraine's reluctance to join the Commonwealth of Independent [former Soviet] States and the Russian-inspired Eurasian Customs Union; Russia's demands to maintain its Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine's Crimean port of Sevastopol; the price of natural gas from Russia and its transport through Ukrainian territory to central and western Europe; and periodic Russian interference in Ukraine's political and economic affairs, whether in industrial eastern Ukraine, Crimea, or even Transcarpathia in the far west.

Relations with Russia have also had an impact on Ukraine's relations with the rest of Europe. Should Ukraine be Western-oriented and draw closer to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), or should it be Eastern-oriented and seek closer ties with Russia and its Eurasian sphere? These options, or some combination thereof, remained high on the agenda of all Ukrainian political figures from presidents and cabinet ministers to parliamentary deputies.

As a nominal democratic society, Ukraine has as its ideal the rule of law, although it has had great difficulty in matching ideals with often corrupt realities. For example, inadequate or complicated tax and property laws have discouraged investment by foreign companies in the country's economic sector. And, while there are constitutional guarantees for national minorities (including Jews) and some schools do provide instruction in languages other

than Ukrainian and Russian, there are little or no state funds allocated for cultural institutions, publications, and other national group activity. It is for this reason that certain minorities receive funds for cultural and educational work from their "mother" country—from Hungary for the Magyars, from Turkey for the Crimean Tatars, from Israel and international Jewish organizations for the Jews, and so on.

Perhaps the most successful changes in Ukrainian society since independence are connected with the revival in religious life. Churches barred or heavily restricted by the Soviet regime (Ukrainian Greek Catholic, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and several Protestant, Muslim, and Jewish orientations) as well as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Russian Moscow Patriarchate now operate freely and openly. All have increased the number of their adherents and, most visibly, have contributed to an architectural boom through the reconstruction of existing and the building of new churches, synagogues, and mosques. Along with growth has come controversy and conflict, usually over property and jurisdiction, most particularly between the Greek Catholics, the Moscow Patriarchal Orthodox, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox, and the Kievan Patriarchal Ukrainian Orthodox.

But, in the end, the most serious problems facing Ukraine in the twenty-first century remain the unbalanced economy, the slow pace of legal reform, and the ongoing corruption throughout all levels of society and government. During the decade-long

304. St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery Cathedral Kyiv, destroyed 1934-1937, rebuilt 1996-1999.

305. Renat Akhmetov (b. 1966), Ukraine's wealthiest oligarch at the Shakhtar Soccer Stadium he had built, Donetsk, 2009.

presidency of Leonid Kuchma (1994–2004), Ukraine's currency was stabilized and economic productivity gradually increased. The country's new-found wealth was anything but evenly distributed, however, and instead was in the hands of a few dozen businesspeople who, following the collapse of Soviet rule, managed to take over former state-owned enterprises and create monopolies to increase their personal income. Several of these enormously wealthy individuals, known to the public as oligarchs, courted favor with President Kuchma in order to protect and enhance their business interests. Government cooperation with some oligarchs and the alienation of others out of favor with the president led to increasing corruption that filtered down throughout all levels of society. All the while the vast majority of the population lived in poverty-like conditions and was subject to increasing psychological insecurity caused in large part by the breakdown of health and other social programs that had functioned to some degree under Soviet rule.

One visible result of these conditions is a marked decline in Ukraine's population, from 51.4 million in 1989 to 48.4 million in 2001 and an estimated 45.5 million in 2013. Many factors have contributed to the demographic decline: a drop in the birthrate (helped by high levels of abortion), emigration abroad in search of work, and an overall lower life expectancy. Consequently, the demographic pattern among ethnic Ukrainians is basically stagnant. On the other hand, most other ethno-national groups, with the exception of the Crimean Tatars, have declined in numbers since Ukraine's independence, whether as a result of assimilation (Russians who now identify as ethnic Ukrainians) or return to the "home" country (Poles to Poland, Magyars to Hungary, Jews to Israel and North America).

Ukraine's post-independence revolutions

With regard to political corruption and the increasing tendency toward authoritarian rule, the worst example took place in late 2004, when the government of President Kuchma tried to assure the election of a hand-picked successor, Viktor Yanukovych. The efforts to rig the October-November 2004 presidential elections failed, however. In what came to be known as the Orange Revolution, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens throughout the country protested peacefully and managed to overturn the election results in favor of the opposition candidate, Viktor Yushchenko. As the candidate calling for strong civic institutions as the basis of democracy, for a market economy under the rule of law, and for greater integration with the rest of Europe, Yushchenko was installed as Ukraine's third president in early 2005.

Both international observers and Yushchenko supporters were convinced that the Orange Revolution would bring about the kind of political, economic, and social change that was earlier heralded in central Europe by the anti-Communist revolutions of 1989.

307. Demonstration at the Monument to the Founders of Kyiv during the riot police's attack against anti-government protesters on the Maidan, February 2014.

Those expectations were not fulfilled, however, because of the relatively quick collapse of the Orange coalition caused by the growing friction and eventually open antagonism between its leading figures, President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko. This provided an opening for the challenger in the 2004 election, Viktor Yanukovych, to win a closely contested election in 2010 and be installed as independent Ukraine's fourth president.

At first glance, one might assume that Ukraine experienced no radical change as a result of the Orange Revolution. At best, it might be considered just another—albeit dramatic—phase in Ukraine's painfully slow evolution from Soviet-style authoritarian rule to a parliamentary and free-market European-style democracy. On the other hand, the Orange Revolution did instill in large segments of Ukraine's citizenry (especially of the younger generation) the conviction that civic participation and protests are not only possible but necessary as the best means of securing change. In effect, there was a revolution of the mind—to paraphrase the Czechoslovak statesman Václav Havel—whereby Ukrainians, regardless of ethnic background,

came to believe that they could take to the streets, express their will, and bring about political change.

Certainly, most Ukrainians felt deceived by the failure of the Orange political coalition to deliver on its political promises. Would, therefore, the populace slip again into civic lethargy and accept the burden of their country's centuries-long authoritarian past and the apparent impossibility of lasting political and social change? If so, how could one legitimately say that there was a revolution of the mind in 2004?

The test came in late 2013, when, after half a year of discussions about signing an association agreement with the European Union, President Yanukovych suddenly reneged on his promise to sign the accord and instead announced plans to enter the Russian-inspired and dominated Eurasian Customs Union. Immediately, on 22 November, Ukrainians took to the streets, converging on Kyiv's Independence Square—the Maidan. As happened a decade before, hundreds of thousands of protesters braved the winter cold with ongoing peaceful demonstrations that caught the attention of the international press and the world's social media.

In contrast to the 2004 Orange Revolution, however, this time Ukraine's authorities under Yanukovych reacted with lethal force, resulting in several weeks of clashes and deaths on both sides. At the same time, Russia under President Putin tried to help his beleaguered ally, Yanukovych, by unleashing a vociferous international media campaign that depicted the Maidan protesters as fascists and antisemites, and their leaders as part of an illegal junta whose goals were not only to wipe out the Russian language in Ukraine but to cleanse the country of its ethnically Russian inhabitants.

In fact, the protesters on Kyiv's Maidan and throughout much of the country included citizens of all ages, professions, and ethnic backgrounds. Jews were especially prominent not only as speakers at protest rallies but also as civilians who armed themselves in the face of attack by government-backed forces. Those who died defending the Revolution of Dignity (as it came to be called), and who were subsequently immortalized as the Sacred Hundred (*Nebesna Sotnya*), included an ethnically representative cross-section of Ukraine's population, including Jews.

In the end, the government's use of force against the protesters failed. On 22 February 2014 President Yanukovych fled the country and was replaced by an interim government. During the next several months, national elections held in May and October gave Ukraine a new president (Petro Poroshenko), parliament, and prime minister (Arsenii Yatsenyuk). The post-Maidan government set out to implement a series of long-overdue reforms; it garnered the support of major western powers, in par-

309. Ukraine's war in the east, Donetsk airport, summer 2014.

ticular the United States; and it signed an association agreement with the European Union, thereby firmly adopting a pro-European rather than pro-Eurasian (i.e., Russian) political and economic orientation.

Whereas Putin's propaganda campaign failed to undermine the revolution unfolding on the Maidan, his goal to destabilize Ukraine was more successful in other parts of the country. At the end of February, local militia groups, with clandestine assistance from Russia, took over Crimea's parliament. Within a week, Crimea's government leaders proclaimed their intention to join the Russian Federation. After a mock referendum, on 21 March Crimea was formally annexed by Russia, allowing Putin to announce to the world the return of this "historic Russian land" to its rightful motherland. Russian propaganda and promises of military support also encouraged self-styled paramilitary rebels to take over parts of eastern Ukraine, where by October they had declared independence in the form of a Donetsk and a Luhansk "people's republic." Commentators have aptly described the resulting conflict as a frozen war between Ukraine and Russia, which, in turn, has seemingly reignited the last century's Cold War between the West (the United States) and the East (Russia).

Understanding the Jewish experience

In the first years of Ukrainian independence, the Ukrainian ruling elites sought and found ways to disassociate Ukrainian national strivings from Soviet state-sponsored antisemitism and anti-Zionism. At the same time, they attempted to introduce normality into Ukrainian-Jewish relations in the country and in the diaspora. Although these attempts sometimes had far-reaching pragmatic goals and had little

308. Jewish dissident activist Josef Zissels, flanked on the right by Ukraine's soon-to-be prime minister Arsenii Yatsenyuk, speaking in support of the Maidan protesters, Kyiv, December 2013.

to do with Ukrainian-Jewish reconciliation, in the long run they brought about new developments in the country's inter-ethnic relations. Many supporters of Ukrainian independence were sympathetic toward Jews, especially former dissidents and gulag "prisoners of conscience." Their presence in Rukh explains in large part why this leading non-Communist movement in the years of Soviet Ukraine promoted strong measures toward inter-ethnic reconciliation and outwardly rejected antisemitism. For example, in April 1991, responding to KGB-orchestrated rumors about anti-Jewish pogroms, Rukh organized mass demonstrations of solidarity with the Jews of Kyiv. Once Ukraine gained independence, Rukh's strong stance on Jewish issues became part of mainstream Ukrainian politics.

Holocaust remembrance

The government of independent Ukraine realized that for years Jews in Soviet Ukraine were forbidden to speak aloud about their wartime past. Therefore, the new Ukrainian authorities resolved once and for all to do away with the previous ban on Holocaust commemorations and introduce a more responsible attitude to Jewish suffering during World War II, even if it would be hurtful to Ukrainian national pride. In September 1991 Ukraine commemorated on a nation-wide scale the fiftieth anniversary of the Babyn Yar massacre, acknowledging that there were ethnic Ukrainians and others in the country who had participated in atrocities against Jews during World War II. Ukraine's first president, Leonid Kravchuk, did much

310. Ukraine's first president Leonid Kravchuk, praying at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. Photo, 1993.

311. Monument to the Holocaust victims at the Drobytskyi Yar near Kharkiv. Photo, 2012.

to set a new tone in Ukrainian-Jewish relations. Despite criticism from other high-ranking officials in his entourage, the president during a state visit to Israel in early 1993 boldly proclaimed Ukraine's responsibility for the wartime anti-Jewish violence on its territory and asked for forgiveness. In yet another high-profile setting, the International Conference on Antisemitism in Brussels, President Kravchuk reiterated the Ukrainian government's determination to promote the rebirth of Jewish life in Ukraine and to combat antsemitism. He was the *only* top-ranking political leader of a former Soviet republic at the Brussels conference, and his message was unequivocal: his government would continue to do its best to disassociate Ukraine from the moral burden of the Soviet past.

Holocaust commemorations did, indeed, became part of the official discourse in Ukraine at both the national and local levels. Holocaust commemorations did, indeed, become part of the official discourse in Ukraine, with officials at the national and local levels promoting the erection of monuments at sites of mass murder of Jews. Funding for such monuments has generally not come from the government but rather from Jewish sources, whether individuals or associations, mostly in North America. As a result, Holocaust monuments, appeared in several cities and towns (Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Lviv, Odessa, Rohatyn, Zolochiv, among others), becoming an inseparable part of Ukraine's cultural landscape. The visual imagery of the monuments and the inscriptions on memorial plaques underscored specifically Jewish victimization, in stark contrast to the vague, even hypocritical references to murdered "peaceful Soviet citizens" on monuments created during the Soviet era. All this, moreover, was done at a time when the eco-

312. Part of the Wall of Honor listing Righteous Gentiles from Ukraine at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

nomic crises in post-Soviet countries limited to a significant degree the funding available for cultural purposes. That these activities were not ubiquitous and that not every mass grave was marked with a corresponding monument should not be seen as reluctance to recognize the wartime Jewish tragedy, but rather as negligence on the part of the authorities toward commemoration of the Ukrainian past in general.

Certain practices started by President Kravchuk have been followed by other Ukrainian political leaders, in particular the custom of using Holocaust Remembrance Day (27 January) as an occasion to address the Ukrainian people with references to Nazi atrocities and calls for inter-ethnic tolerance. Ukraine's media followed suit. While the very word *Holocaust* had never appeared in Soviet public discourse, major television channels in independent Ukraine began to air feature films portraying or referring to the Holocaust in Ukraine, including *The Commissar* (made in 1967 and shelved, then re-released in 1988), *The Ladies' Tailor* (1990), *The Father* (2004), and the Hollywood-produced *Schindler's List* (1993). Lo-

cal Jewish historians published books on various aspects of the Holocaust in Ukraine, such as the Drobytskyi Yar killing site and the Yanovskyi labor camp, located in Kharkiv and Lviv respectively.

For its part, the Yad Vashem Institute in Israel has by now identified more than two thousand five hundred Ukrainians who helped save Jews during the Holocaust, and honored them with the title, Righteous Among the Gentiles (Heb.: *Hasidei umot ha-olam*). Such honorees include several Orthodox and Ukrainian Catholic (Uniate) priests and monks, among whom the best known is from western Ukraine, Archimandrite Klymentii Sheptytskyi, the brother of the head of the Greek Catholic Church at the time, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi. According to the number of individuals honored as Righteous Gentiles, Ukraine ranks fourth after Poland, France, and the Netherlands. Despite decade-long efforts on the part of Ukrainian diaspora organizations and individual Jews (in particular Holocaust survivors), the question of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi being recognized by Yad Vashem among Righteous Gentiles has not yet been resolved.

313. The Menora, Jewish community center sponsored by the philanthropically-minded Jewish-Ukrainian industrialists Gennadi Bogolyubov and Igor Kolomoisky, designed by Alexander Sorin. Dnipropetrovsk, 2012.

In order to assure a professional understanding of the World War II Jewish experience in Ukraine, centers for the study of the Holocaust were established with funds raised by Jews living abroad or from wealthy oligarchs in Ukraine of Jewsih descent such as Igor Kolomoisky and Viktor Pinchuk. The work of the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies in Kyiv and the Tkuma Ukrainian Institute for Holocaust Studies in Dnipropetrovsk has already helped to raise a greater awareness of the Holocaust in Ukrainian society through the dissemination of knowledge of the wartime Jewish plight among high school and university students. This has occurred through short-term intensive seminars, summer programs, conferences led by specialists from Israel and North America, and the publication of scholarly journals on the Holocaust. The centers in Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk have also been instrumental in helping extend to Ukraine the American-based Spielberg project (USC Shoah Foundation's Institute for Visual History and Education), whose goal is to record the recollections of Holocaust survivors and the Righteous Gentiles who saved them.

Crimes against humanity trials

Ukraine's new approach toward Holocaust commemoration was not immediately followed up by legal actions. For instance, no attempts were made to identify and prosecute those involved in crimes against humanity on Ukrainian territory, and there was almost no discussion of local collaborators. In effect, there was no broad social consensus on this complex issue. For example, in 1993, when the Israeli

314. Unveiling the monument to the UPA commander Roman Shukhevych (1907-1950) in Kalush, Ivano-Frankivsk region. Photo, 2012.

Supreme Court was reconsidering the case of Ivan Demyanyuk (most likely wrongly identified as "Ivan the Terrible," a guard at the Treblinka death camp), a number of Ukrainians gathered near the Israeli Embassy in Kyiv to protest on behalf of a person whom they considered innocent. For a variety of reasons that had little to do with scholarship, Ukraine's Jewish scholars could not make up their minds regarding the Demyanyuk case. The result was that for over a decade researchers in Ukraine simply avoided the theme of collaboration.

In the end, a distorted attitude toward the Holocaust came to replace the omission of the topic that was characteristic of the previous Soviet regime. The authorities in independent Ukraine sought to distance themselves from what they considered Nazi crimes against the Jews committed on Ukrainian soil. They rejected and/or dismissed any attempts to discuss the involvement of local Ukrainians, particularly the UPA-OUN fighters and Ukrainian volunteers in German police units, who were implicated in the mass executions of Jews.

The subsequent elevation to hero status of these entities, as well as the Galicia Division within the military forces of Germany, allowed for little if any nuanced discussion. In western Ukraine, in particular, the local authorities maintained the view that ethnic Ukrainians serving in the Nachtigall Battalion and Galicia Division were war heroes precisely because they fought against the Soviet Union, a regime deemed responsible for the mass murders of nationalist Ukrainians in 1939–1941. The implication is that the UPA-OUN, Ukrainian police, Nachtigall, and the Galicia Division had nothing to do with the Final Solution. It is only recently that some specialists who study Ukraine (whether of Ukrainian or non-Ukrainian ethnic background) have started to address this topic in a scholarly manner.

Israel and Ukraine—Jews and Ukrainians

The post-1991 authorities in independent Ukraine chose to rid themselves of yet another troubling aspect of the Communist past: the vicious Kremlin-orchestrated anti-Zionism campaign and public humiliation

315. Ukrainians in traditional attire sample matzos. Photo, 1992.

of Israel as a Cold War puppet of the United States. Already in the fall of 1991, Ukrainian government leaders held negotiations with various Jewish NGOs, including the World Zionist Organization. Then, on 25 December 1991, Israel became one of the first countries to recognize Ukraine as an independent country, with which it proceeded to establish diplomatic relations. Ukrainian government officials and high-ranking diplomats publicly and privately expressed genuine interest in establishing strong political links and economic ties with Israel, especially in the agricultural, high-tech, and military spheres. The prominent Ukrainian writer and liberal-minded journalist Yurii Shcherbak became Ukraine's first ambassador to Israel. At one of the first art shows at the Ukrainian Embassy in Tel Aviv (1993), a curious photograph on display epitomized the new atmosphere: Ukrainian Cossacks eating Passover *matzo* as a kind of cultural symbol of the elimination of inter-ethnic prejudice.

Less than a year after the establishment of diplomatic relations, Israel welcomed a Ukrainian parliamentary delegation, and since the state visit of President Kravchuk in January 1993, all four of his successors (Leonid Kuchma, Viktor Yushchenko, Viktor Yanukovych, and Petro Poroshenko), as well as several of the highest government leaders in Ukraine, have gone to Israel on official visits. As the result of growing cooperation in the political and business spheres, the trade between Ukraine and Israel in the period from 2006 to 2012 doubled, reaching $950 million (U.S.) annually.

Ukraine's understanding of its Jewish past
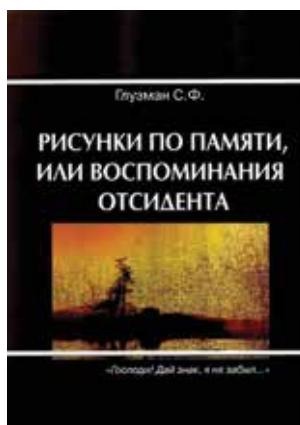
316. Title page of the memoirs of Semen Hluzman (b. 1946), Ukrainian psychiatrist, human rights activist, and dissident.

Since 1991, many cultural, artistic, and educational institutions in Ukraine have chosen to emphasize their sympathy for the Jews and respect for Jewish culture. In 1992 the Kyiv State Opera introduced Giuseppe Verdi's *Nabucco* into its repertoire and had the ancient Jews in Babylonian exile dressed as Ashkenazic Jews from the Pale of Settlement. That same year, the Ivan Franko State Ukrainian Dramatic Theater in Kyiv staged the play *Tevye-Tevel*, based on the writing of Sholem Aleichem and with Ukraine's leading actor, Bohdan Stupka, as Tevye the Milkman. In 2001 the Kyiv State Opera added to its repertoire *Moisei* (Moses), by Myroslav Skoryk, based on Ivan Franko's pro-Zionist epic poem that is built on a direct parallel between the biblical Jews and modern-day ethnic Ukrainians.

Discussion of the parallels between Ukrainians and Jews, previously avoided by both sides as inappropriate, now became part of the new inter-ethnic climate. Ivan Dzyuba, the former dissident and from 1992 the country's minister of culture, defined Jews and Ukrainians in post-colonial terms as "two victims of history and of regimes which suppressed freedom." Former Jewish and ethnic Ukrainian dissidents who became influential in post-Communist Ukraine's political life (Josef Zissels, Semen Gluzman, Myroslav Marynovych, Zynovii Antonyuk, and Yevhen Sverstyuk) published their memoirs as a joint book project. The new atmosphere encouraged writers of Ukrainian and Jewish background such as Dmytro Pavlychko, Ivan Drach, Naum Tykhyi, and Abram Katsnelson to publish works they had written (but not published) in Soviet times, emphasizing mutual sympathy between Jews and Ukrainians.

Israel and independent Ukraine

Following the political "rehabilitation" of Israel at Ukraine's government level, various Ukrainian intellectuals with strong nationalist leanings looked favorably on the Israeli nation-building experience, which they saw as a model for state-building in post-1991 Ukraine. In their attempts to revive Ukrainian culture and statehood, they could not overlook the fact that in the fifty years of its existence since 1948, Israel had managed to rejuvenate the Hebrew language and culture, build an efficient agricultural sector, and achieve a per capita GDP on a par with many European countries. In the words of Larysa Skoryk, president of the government-sponsored Ukraine-Israel Society: "The modern history of re-established Israel is for the young Ukrainian state an eloquent example of how to strive for, gain, build up, and preserve state independence—a prerequisite for the greatness, freedom, and indestructibility of the nation."

Hence, it was not long before the dialogue between ethnic Ukrainians and Jews was elevated to a dialogue between two state-based nations. Parallels between Ukraine and Israel changed the meaning of a famous line by the nineteenth-century Ukrainian poet Lesya Ukrayinka: *I ty borolas yak Izrayil, Ukrayino moya* (And you, my Ukraine, also fought like Israel). What had been a metaphor for landless ethnic Ukrainians and stateless Jews (*Izrayil*) had now become a symbolic parallel between independent Ukraine and the state of Israel.

Books that explored the differences and similarities in language policies, historical experiences,

317. The first Ukrainian-language edition (Kyiv, 1991) of Vladimir Jabotinsky's early 20th-century essays on nationalism.

public institutions, national self-identification, and forms of nation-building in Israel and Ukraine entered the mainstream scholarly discourse in Ukraine. For example, Orest Tkachenko of the Potebnya Institute of Linguistics at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine portrayed Hebrew as an example of the "linguistic firmness" (*movna stiikist*) which assured the preservation of the Jewish tradition. His point was that linguistic policy in Israel should serve as a model for the revival of the Ukrainian language and culture in Ukraine.

The figure of Zeev/Vladimir Jabotinsky, the Odessa-born Zionist, was at the epicenter of this new discourse. Both before and after his death in 1940, Jabotinsky had been a persona non-grata in the Soviet Union, where his very name was unmentionable. Through the efforts of his Ukrainian admirers, by the late 1990s Jabotinsky was appropriated by many Ukrainian politicians and intellectuals who admired his long-standing vociferous criticism of russification, his opposition to Jewish assimilation, his defense of the uniqueness of the Ukrainian language and culture, and his staunch support of Ukrainian national strivings. He was now hailed as a great friend of the Ukrainian people, some calling him an "Apostle of the Nation" comparable to Vyacheslav Lypynskyi.

Ukraine-Israeli interaction

Ukraine-Israeli relations underwent further transformation. Following an official visit to Jerusalem in mid-2000 by the mayor of Kyiv, other Israeli cities, including Haifa, Rishon Le-Zion, and Beer Sheva, signed agreements on cultural exchange and cooperation with Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Chernivtsi, and a number of other Ukrainian cities.

Because of the exceptionally rich Jewish past in Ukraine, tourism has become one of the key points of political and socio-cultural rapprochement between the two countries. In the period from 2007 to 2010, on average more than 60,000 Israelis visited Ukraine, while at the same time the figures for Ukrainians visiting Israel was between 130,000 and 150,000 annually. Since then the tourist flow to Israel has been given a further boost thanks to Israel's

318. Former Soviet Jews at a beach at Eilat, Israel.

decision to introduce in 2010 visa-free entry for citizens of Ukraine. For Ukrainian Christians, the most important sites in Israel are Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Ukraine, meanwhile, became one of the major places of pilgrimage for observant (above all Hasidic and other Orthodox) Jews worldwide. This is particularly the case since the founding fathers of several branches of Hasidism preached, established their courts, and were buried in what is today independent Ukraine.

Among the most important pilgrimage destinations are the burial sites of legendary Hasidic leaders, which include Hadyach (for Shneur Zalman of Lyady, the founder of the Habad Hasidim); Medzhybizh (for the legendary founder of Hasidism, Yisrael ben Eliezer [the Baal Shem Tov]); the Sadhora suburb of Chernivtsi (for Rabbi Friedman, known as Yisrael of Ruzhin); Berdychiv (for Levi Yitshak); Kyiv (for the Twersky dynasty of Hasidic masters); Shepetivka (for Rabbi Pinhas of Korets, the predecessor and father of the founders of the Shapira Hasidic dynasty of printers); Vyzhnytsya (for Menahem Mendel Hager, founder of the Vizhnitz dynasty of Hasidim); Bratslav (for the scribe of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav); Zhydachiv (for Rabbi Tsvi Hirsch); and Mukachevo (for Rabbi Hayim Elazar Shapira).

Despite the popularity of all these sites, none rivals Uman, with its burial place of the Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav (d. 1807). A person of great psychological insight with an aphoristic mind and a formidable imagination, Rabbi Nachman preached to his followers that it would be a special merit (*zkhus*) to pray during the High Holidays in his presence, and that it would be even more significant for them to pray at his grave once he was no

319. The gravesite (*ohel*) of the Baal Shem Tov, Medzhybyzh. Reconstructed 2008.

more in this world. Not without a dint of messianic sensibility, he maintained that his own grave would possess the power of a magical charm (*segulah*) – so much so that, when those who prayed at his grave went to the other world, he would emerge to pull them out from Gehenna. In this rather witty manner, Rabbi Nachman assured his posthumous fame: pilgrimages to his grave have been going on for two hundred years.

Whether or not religious Jews believe Rabbi Nachman's prediction, many (even from far beyond the circle of the Bratslav Hasidim, today based in Tzfat, Israel) visit his grave during the High Holidays of the Jewish New Year each autumn. The numbers are quite astounding: whereas in 1994 about three thousand pilgrims visited Uman, since 2012 on average between twenty to thirty thousand arrive from North America, Australia, Israel, several western European countries, and Russia. Although their main purpose is to pray at the gravesite, the pilgrims at the same time have contributed significantly to Uman's local insfrastructure. In order to accommodate their needs, a new synagogue for four thousand people was built, the gravesite was renovated, and canteens for kosher food and stores to sell Judaica artifacts and prayer books were set up. The pilgrims who arrive in Uman represent the entire spectrum of Judaism— from Bratslav and other Hasidim of European origin to Eastern-rite Jews from Morocco, Yemen, and central Asia, and Sephardic Jews from throughout the diaspora. Among them are modern and ultra-Orthodox Jews, observant and semi-observant Jewish hip-

320. Ukrainian border-control official at the Odessa airport checks the passports of Hasidic pilgrims heading to Uman. Photo, 2010s.

pies, and unaffiliated, curious younger Jews mostly from the other republics of the former Soviet Union.

Accommodating such numbers is a major feat for an otherwise out-of-the-way, provincial town like Uman. Ukrainian militia and at times policemen from Israel have provided security, while Hebrew-language signs are displayed in the center of town indicating major urban services and directions. Not surprisingly, Uman's economy revives significantly during the autumn days, reminding one of the bustling trading town that it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Now, however, ethnic Ukrainians are the sales persons and Jews the buyers. From time to time, there have been minor criminal offenses, including brawls between ethnic Ukrainians and some of the pilgrims. There have even been calls by a small local racist group to banish the Hasidim from Uman. But such problems have not deterred the pilgrims, most of whom rent apartments from local residents. In effect, none of the inevitable problems between tourists and locals anywhere in Europe are sufficient to disrupt the prolonged Jewish New Year festivities which each September reconfirm the mutually beneficial economic interests of Uman's Ukrainians and visiting Jews.

Visions of the past

Despite the sympathy for rapprochement with Jews on the part of Ukraine's political and intellectual elites, the integration of Jewish history and culture into Ukraine's educational system has been sorely wanting. For example, most college texts continue, as in Soviet times, to present a historical discourse in which Jews are completely absent. Therefore, random references to the 1919 pogroms or the Holocaust that do appear are puzzling to students who wonder: Why did so many Jews live on Ukrainian lands? Where did they come from and what did they do for centuries? Why is Ukraine historically and culturally still considered so important for Jews?

There are a few reputable intellectuals in Ukraine (Yaroslav Hrytsak, Taras Voznyak, Yurii Shapoval, and Nataliya Yakovenko) who do touch upon Jewish issues in their specialized monographs. Not so, however, for the authors of university textbooks. In the best-case

321. Yatki Ghetto memorial in Berdychiv, commemorating the 15,000 Jews massacred here by the Nazis in 1941.

scenario, the textbooks reflect an ethnocentric vision of Ukraine that allows little, if any, place for non-ethnic Ukrainians, whether Crimean Tatars, Poles, Jews, or others. In the worst-case scenario, they simply continue the tradition of Soviet textbooks, which sought to downplay ethnicity and to emphasize instead the role of the working classes while presenting Ukraine as a land inhabited by a homogeneous Slavic people friendly to their Russian "Elder Brother."

Important exceptions to the above scenario are local histories. Since these are not subject to bureaucratic pressure from the central authorities in Kyiv, historians in places that traditionally had large and influential Jewish communities (Drohobych, Hulyaipole, Medzhybizh, Volodymyr-Volynskyi, Zaporizhzhya, among others) have successfully incorporated into their narratives rich and reliable descriptions of Jewish economic, religious, and literary achievements as well as accounts of atrocities during the World War II period. Chernivtsi and Lviv both set a new standard for high-quality local history writing; several new histories adopt the multicultural approach, interweaving the Jewish, German, Romanian, and Ukrainian experiences into a single narrative about these main centers of historic Bukovina and Galicia.

New forms of antisemitism

The rapprochement between Jews and Ukrainians and between Ukraine and Israel since 1991 has occurred in a mostly benign atmosphere. Nevertheless, there remain challenges, and it was not long before

new forms of antisemitism and anti-Zionism took shape. For example, the Interregional Academy of Personnel Management (MAUP), a privately funded non-government college established in Kyiv in 1989, became the leading (perhaps the only) center of institutionalized antisemitism. Through its conferences and serial publications (*Personal* and *Personal plyus*), the MAUP leadership launched a series of vociferous and often vicious attacks on Jews and against Israel.

The new antisemites revived the entire arsenal of ignominious stereotypes. They continue to see Jews as supporters of Menahem Mendel Beilis in the alleged 1911 ritual murder of a Christian boy; Jews as organizers of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution; Jews as opponents of Ukrainian culture who helped orchestrate the Great Famine of 1933; and Jews as the main instruments of independent Ukraine's transformation into a puppet of international Zionist capital after 1991. The newspaper *Silski visti*, largely supported by MAUP and with a circulation of over half a million regularly published hate-mongering antisemitic diatribes. MAUP even awarded an honorary academic degree to a renowned antisemite and neo-Nazi sympathizer, the American Ku-Klux-Klan Knight David Duke. Despite these and other provocative activities, including the republication of classic antisemitic works (among others, the slanderous *Book of the Kahal*, 1869), MAUP's reputation was undermined following criticism by former students and a well-publicized denunciation in 2005 by the then president of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko.

Subsequently, antisemitic statements made their way, albeit slowly, into mainstream Ukrainian politics with the rise of the Svoboda (Freedom) and later Pravyi sektor (Right Sector) parties. Capitalizing on the dissatisfaction of many people with Ukraine's economic crisis, its unrealized reforms, and the ongoing corruption among the political elites, Svoboda's leader, Oleh Tyahnybok, responded by presenting a populist solution, that is, to create internal enemies, Russians and Jews, who could then be blamed for ruining the country. Among the targets to criticize were corrupt oligarchs of Jewish origin and pro-Russian-oriented politicians like as Dmytro Tabachnyk (of mixed Jewish-Russian des-

322. Title pages of antisemitic and xenophobic publications published by Kyiv's International Academy of Personal Management (MAUP).

cent), the controversial minister of education under ousted President Yanukovych.

The antisemitic political rhetoric of Tyahnybok and his supporters attracted the attention of the international media both in Russia and the West, most especially when the Svoboda party gained 7 percent of the vote (41 seats) in the 2012 parliamentary elections. Those elements, especially Putin's Russia, that were intent on undermining the protests on the Maidan in 2013–2014 hoped to achieve their goals by depicting the Svoboda and the Right Sector parties as the face of a post-Yanukovych "fascist" and "antisemitic" Ukraine. Regardless of the veracity of such claims, when new elections took place in October 2014 to Ukraine's 450-seat national parliament, the Svoboda party gained only six seats and the Right Sector a mere two—ironically one of which is held by a Jew.

While Ukraine's authorities have since independence made unprecedented efforts to create a positive atmosphere and foster inter-ethnic relations, the future of such rapprochement is not clear. Success will depend much more on internal political and socio-economic stability than on the continuing efforts of the parties involved to bring Ukrainians and Jews together, in order to help them understand one another beyond the distorted stereotypes that have traditionally viewed Jewish-Ukrainian relations only through the prism of mass violence and mutual animosity.

PUTIN'S FANTASY: ANTISEMITISM IN UKRAINE

As part of the propaganda war that accompanied Russia's annexation of Crimea in early 2014 and its support for separatists in eastern Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin authorized a campaign in the western media that painted Ukraine as a fascist state and its government leaders as antisemites who allegedly pose a mortal danger to the country's Jews. Putin's unfounded assertions were forcefully rebuked in an open letter signed by some of Ukraine's most prominent Jewish citizens as well as by representatives of the country's leading Jewish civic, religious, and scholarly institutions. The letter was printed in the 26–27 March 2014 issues of *The New York Times*, *The International New York Times* (Paris), *The National Post* (Toronto), and *Ha'aretz* (Jerusalem).

To the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin

Mr. President!

We are Jewish citizens of Ukraine: businessmen, managers, public figures, scientists and scholars, artists and musicians. We are addressing you on behalf of the multi-national people of Ukraine, Ukraine's national minorities, and on behalf of the Jewish community.

You have stated that Russia wants to protect the rights of the Russian-speaking citizens of Crimea and all of Ukraine and that these rights have been flouted by the current Ukrainian government. Historically, Ukrainian Jews are also mostly Russian-speaking. Thus, our opinion on what is happening carries no less weight than the opinion of those who advise and inform you.

We do not believe that you are easy to fool. You consciously pick and choose lies and slander from the massive amount of information about Ukraine. And you know very well that (former Ukrainian president) Viktor Yanukovych's

statement concerning the time after the latest treaty had been signed that "Kyiv is full of armed people who have begun to trash buildings, places of worship, churches. Innocent people have begun to suffer. People have simply been robbed and killed in the street …" are lies, from the first word to the very last.

The Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine are not being humiliated or discriminated against, their civil rights have not been limited. Meanderings about "forced Ukrainianization" and "bans on the Russian language" that have been so common in Russian media are on the heads of those who invented them. Your certainty of the growth of antisemitism in Ukraine also does not correspond to the actual facts. It seems you have confused Ukraine with Russia, where Jewish organizations have noticed growth in antisemitic tendencies last year.

Right now, after Ukraine has survived a difficult political crisis, many of us have wound up on different sides of the barricades. The Jews of Ukraine, as all ethnic groups, are not absolutely unified in their opinion towards what is happening in the country. But we live in a democratic country and can afford a difference of opinion.

They have tried to scare us (and are continuing their attempts) with "Bandera followers" and "Fascists" attempting to wrest away the helm of Ukrainian society, with imminent Jewish pogroms. Yes, we are well aware that the political opposition and the forces of social protests who have secured changes for the better are made up of different groups. They include nationalistic groups, but even the most marginal do not dare show antisemitism or other xenophobic behavior. And we certainly know that our very few nationalists are well-controlled by civil society and the new Ukrainian government — which is more than can be said for the Russian neo-Nazis, who are encouraged by your security services.

We have a great mutual understanding with

the new government, and a partnership is in the works. There are quite a few national minority representatives in the Cabinet of Ministers: the Minister of Internal Affairs is Armenian, the Vice Prime Minister is a Jew, and two ministers are Russian. The newly-appointed governors of Ukraine's region are also not exclusively Ukrainian.

Unfortunately, we must admit that in recent days stability in our country has been threatened. And this threat is coming from the Russian government, namely––from you personally. It is your policy of inciting separatism and crude pressure placed on Ukraine that threatens us and all Ukrainian people, including those who live in Crimea and the Ukrainian south-east. South-eastern Ukrainians will soon see that for themselves.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, we highly value your concern about the safety and rights of Ukrainian national minorities. But we do not wish to be "defended" by sundering Ukraine and annexing its territory. We decisively call for you not to intervene in internal Ukrainian affairs, to return the Russian armed forces to their normal fixed peacetime location, and to stop encouraging pro-Russian separatism.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, we are quite capable of protecting our rights in a constructive dialogue and in cooperation with the government and civil society of a sovereign, democratic, and united Ukraine. We strongly urge you not to destabilize the situation in our country and to stop your attempts of delegitimizing the new Ukrainian government.

[Signed:]
Josef Zissels, Chairman of the Association of Jewish Communities and Organizations of Ukraine (VAAD) Ukraine, Executive Vice President of the Congress of National Communities of Ukraine [followed by thirty signatures of leading Jewish communal leaders and activists from Ukraine and Israel]

CHAPTER 12

The Past as Present and Future

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the establishment of an independent Ukraine profoundly changed the relationship of ethnic Ukrainians to the state in which they lived. For the first time in their history, the country's inhabitants were themselves asked to legitimize the new state by voting for or against independence in a referendum on 1 December 1991. As high as 92 percent of Ukraine's inhabitants—and an even higher percentage of its ethnic Ukrainians—voted in favor of independence. Hence, in contrast to previous regimes that ruled Ukrainian lands, independent Ukraine began its very existence with the active civic participation of its citizens, since no less than 80 percent of eligible voters voluntarily took part in the referendum on independence.

Ukrainians in a post-Communist world

A significant proportion of Ukraine's citizens, ethnic Ukrainians and Jews among them, have continued to play an active role in civic life. Participation in multi-party democratic elections at the local, regional, and national levels is now the norm in post-Communist Ukraine. The best example of civic commitment was the Orange Revolution at the very end of 2004, when an estimated 20 percent of the entire population of Ukraine took to the streets over a period of three weeks to protest what was believed to be the fraudulent results of the presidential elections.

The power of participatory democracy has encouraged ethnic Ukrainians to express their views on a wide range of issues. One of these has to do with defining just what it means to be Ukrainian. Is a Ukrainian someone who speaks the Ukrainian language and identifies with the Ukrainian nationality, or is a Ukrainian every citizen of Ukraine regardless of his or her nationality, native language, or religion? Despite the stipulation in Ukraine's constitution (1996) that "the Ukrainian people" are the "citizens of Ukraine of all nationalities," many people were—and to a degree still are—unclear whether being Ukrainian should be defined in civic (all citizens) or ethnic terms.

Ethnic Ukrainian citizens of Ukraine are themselves divided between what one might call activists and passivists. The activists are those who speak

323. Protests on the Maidan, Kyiv's Main Square, during the Orange Revolution, 2004.

Ukrainian and who favor measures that can further enhance the Ukrainian language in schools, government, the media, and civic life in general. Those activists who consider language a significant social issue also tend to support Ukraine's integration into Europe and, therefore, oppose the pro-Russian policies of some Ukrainian politicians. The passivists are those who identify as Ukrainian (in the ethnic as well as civic sense) but who are likely to speak Russian and be less enthusiastic about affirmative-action measures on behalf of the Ukrainian language. Many passivists are uncomfortable with what they feel are the extreme nationalist views generally associated with the western regions of the country (especially historic Galicia). Instead, they try to adopt a more balanced approach that takes into account the reality of Ukraine's geo-strategic position between Europe and Russia. Some, however, reject outright the European Union orientation and support integration with the Russian Federation in the economic framework of that country's Eurasian Customs Union.

The events of 2013–2014 on Kyiv's Maidan have changed not only the political but also the socio-psychological landscape of Ukraine. The Revolution of Dignity and the aggressive actions and occupation by Russia of Ukrainian territory have seemingly transformed the majority of former passivists into activists. These new activists, whether of ethnic Ukrainian or other national/religious background, not only feel and act as citizens of what they now see as their country—Ukraine—they also support the new government's pro-European orien-

324. Protesters against joining the European Union behind a Russian-language banner: *"The National Council" is Against the "Values" of the European Sodomites*, Kyiv, September 2013.

325. Young women showing Ukrainian patriotism on Vyshyvanki (Embroidered Blouses) Day, 2015.

tation as the only viable option for the future of their common homeland.

The perceptual differences between ethnic Ukrainian activists and passivists have colored opinion and debates about a wide range of identity-related issues. Should, for example, every citizen of the country be required to use the Ukrainian language in all forms of public discourse (education, media, government), or should Russian be made the second state language and, therefore, equal to Ukrainian? Should nationalist heroes, especially dear to western Ukrainians, be praised (or even mentioned) in school textbooks, and should heroes from the Soviet era who are remembered favorably in much of eastern and southern Ukraine be expunged from the educational system's historic narrative as well as removed (in the case of monuments) from public spaces? Should Ukraine have only one "official" Orthodox Church that is not under the jurisdiction of Moscow, and should the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church become a state-wide body or be limited to western Ukraine? These are the kind of questions that have preoccupied citizen observers and active supporters of the civic, cultural, and religious revivals that have been unfolding in Ukraine since independence.

Diasporan reaction to the new Ukraine

The efforts to create a sovereign Ukraine that began in the late 1980s and culminated with the creation of an independent state were warmly greeted and

326. Diaspora protests against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, New York City, March 2014.

encouraged by diaspora Ukrainians. While their enthusiasm and commitment may have been genuine, it was inspired by an unrealistic image of the ancestral homeland—a homeland inhabited for centuries by allegedly freedom-loving ethnic Ukrainians who had been suppressed by Muscovite-Russian and Soviet rule, and who were eagerly awaiting the day when they could govern themselves in a manner that would guarantee democracy and economic prosperity. This was the image learned by generations of diasporan children, whether from parents at home or from teachers at Saturday Ukrainian-language schools.

It was almost inevitable, therefore, that such high expectations for independent Ukraine would turn to disillusionment once it became clear that several more generations would have to pass before the ingrained Soviet mentality and patriarchal nature of Ukrainian society could be replaced by the kind of European and North American cultural values familiar to the diaspora. In turn, people in Ukraine, both the governing elite and populace in general, gradually adjusted their own high expectations to a more modest view of what the diaspora can do—or not do—for them.

Despite disillusionment with the political and economic evolution of post-Soviet Ukraine, the very existence for over two decades of an independent state has transformed the basic mindset of the diaspora. Americans and Canadians of Ukrainian background now have a newly found sense of self-confidence. Aside from the fact that they are first and foremost Americans or Canadians, they no longer have to explain to others the status of the land of their ancestors. This is because Ukraine—with all its positive and negative features—exists. It is, in the end, a full-fledged country like any other in the world community.

It is with this sense of self-confidence, often backed by supportive statements and actions from the highest levels of the American and Canadian governments, that members of the Ukrainian diaspora were again galvanized to act during the 2013–2014 Maidan protests. They have persisted in calling on American and Canadian leaders to assist Ukraine, and they themselves have contributed financial support for the military struggle in eastern Ukraine as well as for the thousands of refugees and soldiers who have become victims of the ongoing "frozen war" with Russia.

Jews in a post-Communist world

According to the last Soviet census in 1989, there were 486,000 Jews in Ukraine. That number subsequently fluctuated—although generally in a marked downward trend—during the first two decades of Ukraine's independence. On the one hand, the number increased as a result of persons who during Soviet times had hidden their Jewish identity for practical reasons but who now reclaimed it. This was particularly important for those who had their sights set on emigration to Israel. According to that country's Law of Return, a person with at least one Jewish grandparent is eligible without restrictions to immigrate and settle permanently in Israel.

On the other hand, a negative birth rate (common to Ukraine's population as a whole), high levels of intermarriage in which children do not identify as Jews, and, most important, a high rate of emigration to Israel has resulted in a drastic demographic decline. By the time of independent Ukraine's first census in 2001, only 104,000 persons identified as Jews. It is true that various Western and Israeli-based agencies—and of course local Jewish leaders in Ukraine—tend to exaggerate the number of Jews residing in Ukraine, since the bigger the community, the more successful are their fund-raising campaigns. In fact, the number of Jews living in Ukraine continues to decline, so that on the eve of the next census (perhaps in 2016) there may be only 85,000 to 90,000 left in the country.

The Jewish revival

Since Ukraine became independent in 1991, Jews have experienced a remarkable cultural and religious revival. The revival has practically no class or political limitations and is not restricted to secular Jewish culture; therefore, it is quite different from the Yiddish revival of the 1920s. In any case, the vast majority of Jews in present-day Ukraine speak Russian or Ukrainian and very little, if any, Yiddish.

The rebirth of Jewish life has taken several forms. Beginning in the waning years of Soviet rule, Sholem Aleichem Societies of Jewish Culture sprang up in practically all the cities and towns of Ukraine that

327. Jewish high school students from Ukraine, participants in the Naaleh program of the Jewish Agency (Sokhnut) before their departure for Israel. Kyiv, 2013.

had a more or less significant Jewish population. The societies organized lectures, concerts, celebrations of traditional Jewish holidays, and above all they distributed humanitarian aid from the West. Other religious societies and communal institutions soon came into being, and by 1992 about three hundred of them were informally united under the umbrella organization called VAAD—the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Ukraine. At the same time, Ukraine's authorities created a kind of puppet Jewish government institution, the Jewish Council of Ukraine, with appointed functionaries of Jewish descent loyal to the ruling regime. Although unpopular among the Jewish population at large, the Jewish Council functioned as a quasi-representational body and ensured that the government of Ukraine would have influence in Jewish communal developments and, most important, control over aid from abroad directed to Jewish communities throughout the country.

To help coordinate assistance from abroad, several dozen international Jewish bodies established branches in Ukraine. Three came to play an especially pivotal role in Ukrainian Jewish communal development: (1) the American Joint Distribution Committee (the Joint), which supported the establishment and functioning of long-lasting communal educational and social-relief programs, such as Hesed; (2) the Israeli Embassy in Kyiv, which not only assisted those leaving for Israel but also sup-
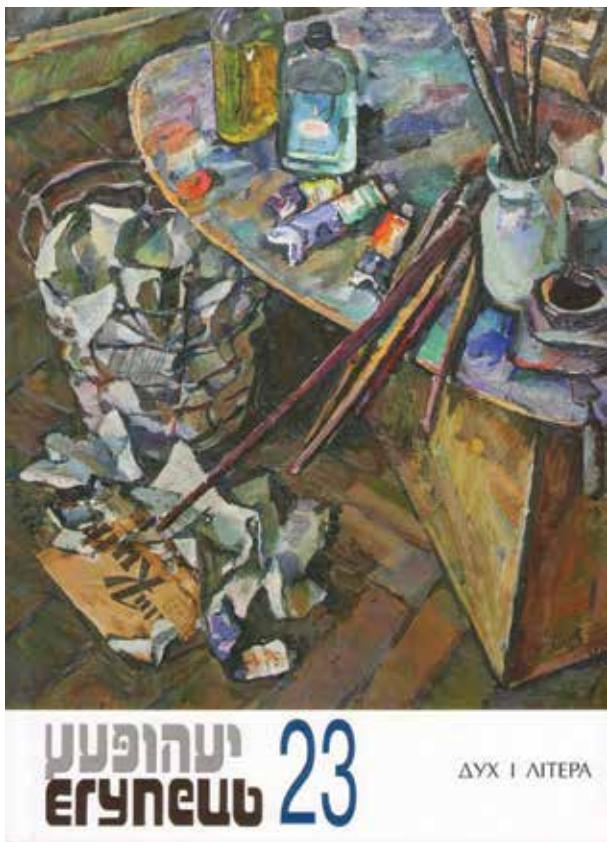
328. Front cover of the *Yehupets* (Kyiv, 2014), Ukrainian- and Russian-language biannual literary almanac.

ported a variety of Jewish educational and cultural programs; and (3) the Jewish Agency for Israel (Sokhnut), which organized various educational programs in Israel for Jewish youth from Ukraine (Naaleh-16 program), established multiple-level Hebrew-teaching *ulpans*, and sponsored several local communal-building initiatives throughout Ukraine. The enthusiasm that inspired such assistance to Jewish communities in Ukraine was tempered by at least a decade-long period of competition, marked by often fierce conflicts and tactical alliances between the VAAD, the Joint, Sokhnut, the Jewish Council, and several other umbrella organizations.

The revival of educational, cultural, and communal life prompted the secular Jewish leadership in Ukraine to bring understanding of the Jewish historical past to a new level of institutional development and toward this end to create scholarly societies and institutions. Outside Jewish community circles, the Institute of Political Science and National Minorities of the National Academy of Sciences

re-established the interwar Research Center (Kabinet) of Jewish Culture, but this rather inept institution has had little if any visibility. On the other hand, the VAAD established the Judaica Association of Ukraine, later transformed into the Judaica Institute of Ukraine and currently headed by Leonid Finberg. The Judaica Institute quickly became the epicenter of scholarly endeavours, sponsoring archival research, meetings with prominent Ukrainian scholars, round-table discussions between Christian and Jewish religious leaders and theologians, and art exhibitions in cooperation with leading galleries and museums in Kyiv. The Institute has also developed a prolific publishing program (Dukh i Litera), which includes a biannual almanac, *Yehupets,* perhaps the best Jewish literary and historical periodical published in any of the former Soviet republics.

The most stunning changes have taken place in Jewish education. Immediately following the proclamation of independence in August 1991, Jewish Sunday schools began to appear throughout Ukraine. Organized and staffed by professional teachers—only a few of whom had received any Jewish education in the interwar Yiddish elementary school system—the Sunday schools taught Jewish traditions, the Hebrew language, and Jewish history to people of all ages who were thirsty for knowledge denied them during seven decades of Soviet rule. Day schools were also established, as well as Jewish classes in state middle and high schools, which were supported either by secular institutions, such as the Israeli Embassy and the Joint, or by Hasidic religious organizations such as Habad.

Diasporan reaction to the new Ukrainian Jewry

In diasporan circles, the revival of Jewish religious life in Ukraine came to be called a "rabbinic revolution." A year before the declaration of independence and immediately following, dozens of rabbis and rabbinic scholars of all Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox denominations arrived from Israel, Europe, and North America to establish headquarters in dozens of Ukrainian towns where there were sizeable Jewish communities. A rabbi from the Bratslav movement went to Uman; several Habad rabbis to more

329. Habad-Lubavitch Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky addressing Jewish students and their parents on the first day of classes at the largest Jewish school in Europe. Dnipropetrovsk. Photo, 2012.

than thirty cities and towns throughout the country (in particular Dnipro, Donetsk, Kyiv, and Kharkiv); a Skvira Hasidic rabbi to Berdychiv; and Orthodox non-Hasidic rabbis to Donetsk, Odessa, and Kyiv.

These religious leaders and scholars managed within just a few years to create a full-fledged communal infrastructure consisting of burial societies (*hevrah kadishah*), which renewed traditional burial rites at specially allocated cemeteries; rabbinic courts to resolve divorce and conversion issues; kosher kitchens and canteens for the elderly and poor; and *matzo* bakeries and butcheries to prepare kosher products. They also organized—and taught how to organize—communal festivities during major holidays, brought *mohalim* (specialists in circumcision) to circumcise Jews of all ages, and renewed Jewish weddings and bar/bat mitzvah rituals. In many places they organized informal Jewish education centers for people of different ages;

330. A class at the National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv. Photo, 2005.

most important of these were Jewish day schools, the largest of which are in Dnipro, Kyiv, and Odessa. Rabbinic leaders from abroad also established strong links with local authorities, and in some places they managed to secure the restitution of formerly Jewish communal real estate confiscated by the Communist regime. Finally, they reached out to local nouveau riches of Jewish descent, whose financial support together with funds from abroad have been used to renovate synagogues throughout Ukraine.

Many of the rabbinic leaders brought with them teachers from Israel, the United States, and Canada to staff the newly established schools. While these teachers had proper qualifications, there was still a serious need to educate Jewish enthusiasts from Ukraine. The latter may have had teachers' diplomas, but they often lacked even the most basic Judaic knowledge. In an effort to correct this deficiency, the VAAD of Ukraine, in co-sponsorship with the Joint and Sokhnut, established in 1993 the Ukrainian Center for Jewish Education. The center helped to implement several teacher-training programs and provided teachers and staff for the Kyiv-based Reform/Conservative Institute of Modern Judaism, the Judaic Studies Department of the International Solomon University, and the certificate and master programs in Jewish Studies at the National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Aside from Jewish diaspora initiatives, the Canadian businessman of Ukrainian background, James Temerty, endowed in 2011 three professorial positions (chairs) in Jewish studies at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv.

Toward a shared narrative

At first glance, it may seem that Ukrainians and Jews, at least those who trace their ancestry to Ukrainian lands, have much in common. Their forebears lived for centuries alongside each other in territory now within the borders of Ukraine, and even in the diaspora a certain proportion of Ukrainians and Jews tended to settle in the same towns and cities.

Despite such physical proximity and interaction in the economic sphere that was particularly common among diasporan Jews and Ukrainians dur-

ing the decades before World War II, both groups since that time have generally functioned with little awareness or interest in how the other lives. When, on occasion, diasporan Jewish and Ukrainian organizations have interacted, or when their respective media have taken note of each other, the experience has often been marked by tension, acrimony, or simply deafening silence. Some informed observers have borrowed the Canadian metaphor of "two solitudes" to describe the gulf that exists between the two peoples.

History and memory

Undoubtedly, it is events in Ukraine during the twentieth century and the manner in which they are written about and remembered that have created ongoing estrangement between the two peoples. Diasporan Jews and Ukrainians in North America and elsewhere may share a common ancestral land and a common history, but it is a history that is often understood in radically different and even contradictory ways. In short, the heroes and glorious events for one group are the villains and disasters for the other. Was Symon Petlyura at the end of World War I a valiant statesman struggling at tremendous odds to create an independent Ukraine, or was he just another *pogromshchik* in the long line of Ukrainians who, at least since the seventeenth-century Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, have participated in killing Jews? Is it possible to equate as genocide the murder of millions of Ukrainian Jews during the World War II Holocaust with the millions of ethnic Ukrainians forcibly starved to death a decade earlier during the Great Famine/*Holodomor* of the 1930s? And if Ukrainian police and
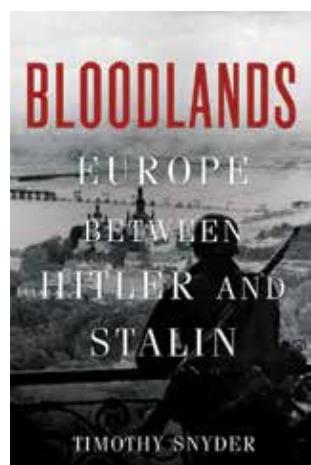
331. Cover of the 2010 book by the American historian Timothy Snyder, who presents the *Holodomor* and Holocaust as phases in the wars of Stalin and Hitler against Europe's undesirable peoples.
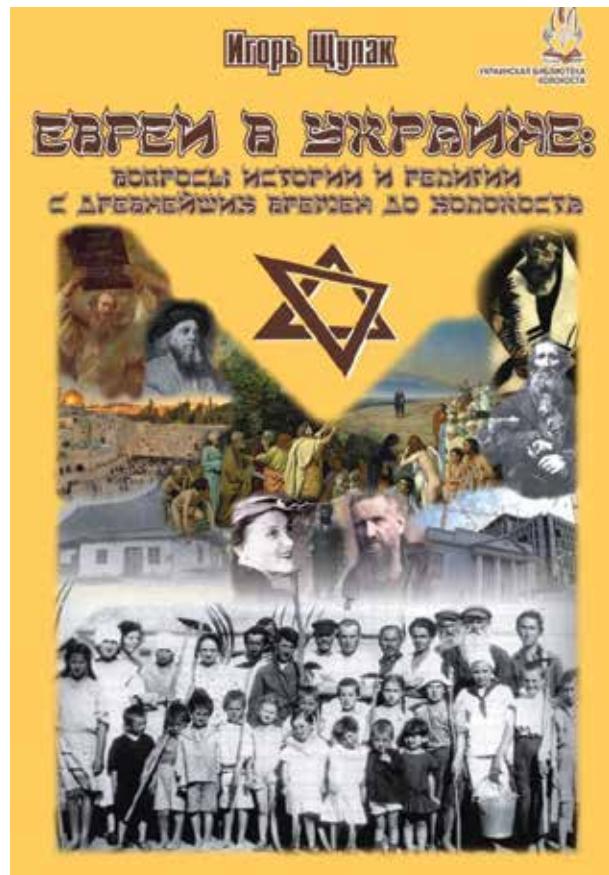
332. *Jews in Ukraine*, a high school textbook by Ihor Shchupak, director of the Tkuma All-Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine.

military units are to be held responsible for participating in the murder of Jews during the Holocaust, should not Jews who functioned at several levels of the Soviet system be accountable for engineering the 1933 artificial famine and death by starvation of Ukrainians? As simplistic, ethnocentric, and biased as these equations may seem, they are representative of the perceptions that many Jews and Ukrainians have of their common past.

It is certainly true that both in Ukraine and the diaspora many (perhaps most) Jews and Ukrainians, especially among the younger generations, know little or even care about the past. The past has been kept alive, however, through school texts, television programs, movies, and novels in which World War II and Holocaust have been—and continue to be—among the most acute, painful, and widely discussed subjects.

Politicization of the past

World War II and the Holocaust have been enhanced in yet another way, in what one might call the politicization of the past. In response to demands by Jewish and non-Jewish human-rights groups that alleged war criminals must be found and brought to justice, the United States and Canadian governments decided to act. In the 1970s, the U.S. Department of Justice established a Special Investigation Commission to locate and initiate through the courts the denaturalization (rescinding citizenship) and deportation of American citizens. For this to occur, it had to be proven that the person responded falsely on his or her entry documents by not mentioning membership in Nazi-related organizations and that there was persuasive evidence of direct involvement in commiting crimes against humanity during World War II. Beginning in 1977, several "denaturalization" trials took place, which were followed closely by Ukrainian diaspora organizations and media; of particular concern was the

333. A wooden cross at Babyn Yar commemorating 621 Ukrainian members of the OUN executed by the Nazis.

court's review of evidence provided by the Soviet Union as part of an agreement (1979) reached with U.S. authorities.

Although the investigatory commission was not specifically directed at Ukrainians, it turns out that the most infamous case involved the Ukrainian-American John Demyanyuk, a post-war refugee and naturalized U.S. citizen living in Cleveland, Ohio. He was alleged to be the concentration-camp guard remembered by Holocaust survivors as the notorious "Ivan the Terrible." Demyanyuk was stripped of his U.S. citizenship, extradited to Israel, put on trial, found guilty, and sentenced to life imprisonment. After several years of incarceration, his sentence was overturned on appeal by the Supreme Court of Israel, and he was allowed to return to the United States. But after a few years, he was extradited to Germany, put on trial, and again sentenced to life in prison where he died a few years later.

The bizarre saga of Demyanyuk—regardless of guilt or innocence—forced many diasporan Jews and Ukrainian of all ages to confront their shared past. The Demyanyuk and other U.S. denaturalization trials, as well as the Deschênes investigatory commission set up in Canada in 1985, were motivated by the legitimate goal to seek justice. In the end, and however inadvertently, these publically high-profile legal proceedings tended to reinforce the already existing reciprocal negative stereotypes that diasporan Jews and Ukrainians had of each other. Further, third- and fourth-generation diasporan Jews and Ukrainians came to feel directly (or more likely vicariously through tales from their parents and grandparents) that their forebears were victimized, whether by the Nazi or Soviet regimes in the past, and that they themselves were being victimized by their own American and Canadian governments in the present.

And what is the source of that victimization? All participants in the search for what they consider the ultimate historic truth—whether schoolteachers, movie producers, journalists, novelists, or courtroom prosecutors and defense lawyers—base their beliefs on facts gathered by scholars. Initially, it seemed that there was a simple dichotomy, with Ukrainian and Jewish scholars aligned against each

334. Menorah-shaped monument set up in 1991, commemorating the nearly 34,000 Jews murdered at the Babyn Yar killing site in Kyiv, September 1941.

other in defense of their respective versions of the past. For example, the scholarly journal *Jewish Social Studies* (1969) featured a debate by Ukrainian and Jewish diasporan scholars on the role of Petlyura in the 1919 pogroms, while the Jewish scholar Lucy Davidowicz initiated in the *New York Times Magazine* (1981) a polemic about whether the Babyn Yar ravine outside Kyiv was used as a World War II killing site of Jews alone or of Ukrainians and others as well.

More measured efforts by researchers in Jewish and Ukrainian studies to analyze these and other historical problems were undertaken at scholarly conferences, beginning with the ground-breaking effort at McMaster University in Canada (1983), as well as subsequent gatherings at the Bar-Ilan University in Israel (1998) and, most recently, in Austria, England, Israel, and Germany under the auspices of a Toronto-based NGO, the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter. The new political and intellec-

tual atmosphere in post-Communist independent Ukraine also made possible a revival of Jewish studies at several universities and research centers in Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Lviv, where scholars of Jewish, ethnic Ukrainian, and other backgrounds are engaged in historical research on the Jewish experience. These and other scholars from Europe (especially Germany and Poland) and North America are not reluctant to take on some of the most difficult questions, such as the allegations of Ukrainian collaboration with the Nazis in the Holocaust. In effect, the Jews of Ukraine and Jewish-Ukrainian relations are subjects that are no longer the preserve of researchers whose sympathies are expected to lie with the group of which they are a part.

Opposed viewpoints of the past

New developments in independent Ukraine have both liberalized and simultaneously politicized discussions about the past. Speaking history has come to signify speaking politics. Whether the Khazar domination of early East Slavic tribes, the Khmelnytskyi-era massacres and the Civil War pogroms, Jews in the service of Polish landlords and the Bolsheviks, or the role of ethnic Ukrainians in the Holocaust and the antisemitism of the post-World War II Soviet regime—all these and many more historical issues have become a source of charged debates, mutual accusations, and often vicious attacks between influential groups within Ukrainian society. Quite a number of intellectually limited yet vociferous and ambitious representatives of the Ukrainian and Jewish elites decided unilaterally that they should speak out on behalf of their own people—ethnic

335. Participants at the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter's second Shared Narrative Symposium, Ditchley Park, England, 2009.

Ukrainians or the Jews—and essentially accuse the other side of being the cause of past calamities. You, Ukrainians, facilitated the Holocaust, decimated the early modern Jewish communities, and organized the 1919 pogroms; you, Jews, locked up our churches, brought Bolshevik rule down on our heads, and facilitated the genocidal Great Famine/*Holodomor*.

The list goes on, but the idea is clear. The old myths are allowed to prevail, and behind the scenes there are powerful players who are interested in preserving and manipulating these myths for their own purposes. Hence, the Ukrainian media explodes when Dmytro Tabachnyk, of Jewish origin and Ukraine's former minister of education under President Yanukovych, releases yet another Ukrainophobic regulation; or when Ihor Myroshnychenko, a Ukrainian nationalist and xenophobic member of the Svoboda party, publicly insults a Holywood actress of Jewish origin (Mila Kunis). The scandal-thirsty media relishes these old myths: Ukrainians curse the Jews; Jews hate the Ukrainians. Recent events in Ukraine demonstrate with amazing clarity that this vicious cycle is far from ending.

But there is a way out. There are certain ideas that both sides should absorb in order to come to grips with their respective historical pasts. To a great extent, reconciliation between Ukrainians and Jews depends on making the following guidelines mandatory in any future debates, conversations, dialogues, exchanges, or other forums.

The first, perhaps, is the most obvious. There are no Ukrainians in general or Jews in general. Put another way, there is no quintessential Ukrainian or quintessential Jew. The very concept of a mass of people with a similar behavioral pattern, an essentially homogeneous mindset, and similar reactions is little more than a worthless myth. This myth, however, served the Soviet Communists and the Nazis quite well, since both were interested in manipulating peoples and states. The myth is useless as a tool for serious social analysis. This is because ethnic Ukrainians are as complex a people as are Jews, with thousands of viewpoints, patterns of behavior, and modes of thinking. Considering the plurality of political allegiances, cultural attachments, economic pursuits, and linguistic preferences, there can be

no typical Jew or typical Ukrainian. By their very nature, such generalizations result in convenient yet utterly false reductionism. Hence, to understand the past, we must leave this mode of thinking behind.

Secondly, in addition to many moments in the past shared by both peoples, there are other important characteristics that are common to ethnic Ukrainians and Jews. Both peoples include very few individuals who can talk to one another intelligently, while both include many more who do not want to speak or hear the other side. Soviet propaganda and its post-1991 reincarnations have done and continue to do their best to shape the minds of millions who prefer easy-to-absorb myths. Functioning as blinders, Soviet ideology had as decisive—and derisive—an impact on ethnic Ukrainians as it did on Jews in Ukraine. The commonality among both peoples is precisely this: many on both sides simply assume automatically that either Ukrainians are antisemites or that Jews are Ukrainophobes. In other words, the commonality in Ukrainian and Jewish circles, both in Ukraine and in the diaspora, is the predominance of their gullible and poorly informed media, their false myths, and their vociferous fools.

To address this problem, it would be helpful to approach the past with a critical eye. Documents and historical evidence should be examined from multiple perspectives. Of each document, one must ask: Who produced it? Also, when, why, by whom, for whom, and with what purpose in mind was it produced? One must question the circumstances shaping the role of this or that past political or cultural figure, but at the same time avoid imposing a present-day perspective on the situations of the past. Questions such as these point to the complexities and nuances of history, and it is the complex nuances that both sides, ethnic Ukrainians and Jews, need to keep in mind when trying to understand and learn about one another.

One might take, for example, Lazar Kaganovich, who some consider an odious Bolshevik minion of Stalin. It was Kaganovich who was instrumental in bringing about the cultural revival connected with Ukrainianization that was initiated 1924–1925 (people often forget about this episode), yet it was the same Kaganovich who in 1932, together with

other top-ranking Kremlin leaders, fostered the man-made famine in Ukraine. To claim that Kaganovich did what he did as a Ukraine-hating Jew is absurd. How can one, then, explain his positive role in the Ukrainianization program? And what was "Jewish" about his tireless efforts and success in overseeing the construction of the Moscow subway system, which he supervised in the 1930s? A more plausible approach would be to reject ethnicity as an explanatory solution to any historical or moral problem. Kaganovich's Jewishness as a point of reference to understand the 1932–1933 events in Ukraine explains as little as does the Georgian ethnicity of Stalin.

This is because there was no Jewish electoral body that voted for Kaganovich, who in any case did not represent any Jewish constituency. He was a Communist and a government functionary, and he should be judged for what he did as a leading representative of the Soviet regime. The Jewish ethnicity of his parents means as much or as little for our understanding of the Great Famine/*Holodomor* of 1933 as does the Polish roots of Stanislav Kosior, the Russian roots of Pavel Postyshev, the Ukrainian roots of Vlas Chubar, or the ethnic roots of any other party leader implicated in that event. Their loyalty was to the regime and its system of social engineering and not to the Polish, Georgian, Jewish, or Ukrainian nationality from which they derive. This logic should be taken as a basis for discussions of any contentious historical, political, or social issue concerning Jewish-Ukrainian matters.

It is context that allows for a proper understanding of historical processes. Scholars should seek to create a context for the historical record that properly reveals individual or group responsibility for specific events. Context, moreover, needs to be considered by both sides. Take, for example, the many writings of Ukrainian literati who use the word *zhyd*, which is offensive to any Russian-speaking Jew (see the text insert, page 2). Intolerant racists in Ukraine, such as those associated with MAUP, deliberately published materials that stress what they believe exemplifies the hostility of great Ukrainian intellectuals toward Jews. This purposefully non-contextualized approach obliterates an important

socio-cultural and geographic understanding of the nuances of the Ukrainian perception of Jews. The point is that only an accurate context can explain why cultural phenomena that such ideologues present as Ukrainian and antisemitic actually mean something very different, if not the opposite.

The past, present, and future

Despite all the research, publications, and efforts at coming to grips with the Jewish past in Ukraine, the gulf of two solitudes seems to remain firmly in place. Some scholars working on Jewish and Ukrainian topics themselves seem to be part of the problem, since, like most human beings, they are for the most part drawn to the tragic, destructive, and sensational aspects of the past, which, to be sure, are much more exciting than periods of normality.

Let us apply some simple arithmetic to the past. Jews have lived on Ukrainian lands for about a millennium, that is, the thousand years stretching from medieval Kievan Rus' to the present. As a significant proportion of the country's population, their presence is even shorter, dating from about 1550, in other words, about 450 years. During those five or ten centuries, the periods of conflict and destruction that Jews experienced were limited to six short time-frames: 1648–1649, 1768, 1881–1883, 1903–1906, 1919–1920, and 1941–1944. Together, the total number of years encompassed by those time frames is at most sixteen to twenty. Yet it is these periods that have received—and continue to receive—the most attention. What about the other 430 years (if we begin in 1550) or 880 years (if we begin in 1000)? Do they not count for something? Cannot these years of (perhaps boring) normality tell us something about Jewish life in Ukraine as being something other than unmitigated tragedy?

Granted, most individuals are likely to feel more comfortable with knowledge they already have, regardless whether or not it may be based on impressions, stereotypes, or simply what they call, self-servingly, feelings. Moreover, is not the relationship of diasporan Jews and Ukrainians similar to the relationship—or lack thereof—between other groups? As one American of Jewish background

(Michael Greenberg) raised on a street adjacent to a predominantly Irish neighborhood recently observed in a piece written for the *New York Review of Books*: "We mostly ignored each other, as the grown-ups had taught us to do. Between Us and Them there was a mutual air of condescension and hostility. We had little understanding of one another and made it our business that it stayed that way."

Some of the discussion in this book has been about the past and how that past is governed by individual perception, belief, and conviction. These phenomena, while related, differ by degree. The first stage, perception, is an awareness on the part of an individual of the elements of his or her environment through physical sensation or feelings. The second stage, belief, is the mental acceptance or agreement of something presented as true, with or without certainty. The third stage, conviction, is the act of convincing a person, or the state of being convinced, that something is absolutely true.

For those Jews and Ukrainians who, like the above-mentioned proverbial Irish American and Jewish American, have little understanding of one another and are determined to keep it that way, this book has not much relevance. It may, however, have some relevance for those who are willing to shed themselves of their existing convictions and beliefs, and to realize that what they know about the past is more than likely merely a perception—an awareness based on a physical sensation or feeling. Feelings, of course, are fine, but they should not be allowed to evolve into beliefs and convictions in the absence of knowledge.

This book alone is unlikely to change perceptions deeply embedded in the minds of many Jews and Ukrainians, whether in Ukraine or in the diaspora. One may hope, however, that the reader who has made it this far into the text will agree that, for a proper appreciation of Jewish-Ukrainian relations, Jews need to know as much about Ukrainians as Ukrainians need to know about Jews.

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There is much that ordinary Ukrainians do not know about Jews and that ordinary Jews do not know about Ukrainians. There is perhaps as much that Jews and Ukrainians do not know about themselves. As for the general public, it knows even less, if anything, about these two peoples who have lived side by side for more than a thousand years in the lands that today comprise Ukraine. As a result of such factors, those Jews and Ukrainians who may care about their respective ancestral heritages usually view each other through distorted stereotypes, misperceptions, and biases.

This book cannot promise to change deeply embedded stereotypes, but it may represent the first step that will bring knowledge about Jews to Ukrainians and knowledge about Ukrainians to Jews. It may also be a welcome source of information for anyone interested in learning more about the fascinating land of Ukraine and two of its most historically significant peoples.

The story of *Jews and Ukrainians* is presented in an impartial manner through twelve thematic chapters. Among the themes discussed are geography, history, economic life, traditional culture, religion, language and publications, literature and theater, architecture and art, music, the diaspora, and contemporary Ukraine. The concluding reflective chapter considers the past as present and future.

The book's easy-to-read narrative is enchanced by 335 full-color illustrations, 29 maps, and several text inserts that explain specific phenomena or address controversial issues. Appended is a guide to further reading and a comprehensive index.

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