

## From the Editor-in-Chief: Russia's War against Ukraine

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# From the Editor-in-Chief: Russia's War against Ukraine

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**T**he current issue of *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* appears at a time when Ukraine—the thematic focus of the journal—has been under Russian bombardment for over a month. Russia's war against Ukraine, started on 24 February 2022, has developed into one of the largest humanitarian crises in Europe since the end of World War II—a multitude of civilian deaths, millions of refugees, and capital destruction of Ukrainian infrastructure. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine follows in the footsteps of an eight-year-long proxy/hybrid war that Russia waged in Ukraine's east. A current thematic issue, guest edited by Mark R. Andryczyk of Columbia University, addresses this antecedent war. Titled "Ukrainian Culture and the War in the Donbas," it features six articles that stem from a conference held in 2019 in New York. The contributors discuss the impact of the Russo-Ukrainian war in Ukraine's east on Ukrainian culture—be it film, art/performance, popular songs, or works of literature—and strive to confront Russian disinformation.

The present issue also features a short reflective article on the intellectual origins of Russia's war against Ukraine, a translation of a study previously published in Ukrainian, and an array of book reviews that appraise recent works in Ukrainian studies. The issue also introduces a new section for the journal—Distinguished Lectures—with a written text of the 2021 Bohdan Bociurkiw Memorial Lecture delivered at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS). Finally, the issue offers an obituary for Marian J. Rubchak—a scholar of Ukrainian culture, history, and women's studies in contemporary Ukraine.

Future publications of EWJUS will include two thematic issues: one dedicated to the city of Odesa and one focusing on the city of Zaporizhzhia (companion volumes to EWJUS's [earlier special issue on Kharkiv](#)).

EWJUS is making every effort to continue with the English-Ukrainian translation project launched last year. More information about this initiative can be [accessed on the EWJUS site](#). This is a cooperation between EWJUS and the MA Translation program at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. The project, headed on the Ukrainian side by Prof. Lada Kolomyiets and

Dr. Olena Pidhrushna, entails the translation of EWJUS articles into Ukrainian. The translation work is performed by senior graduate students in the program. Prior to the start of the present Russian war on Ukraine, articles from the most recent issue of EWJUS (vol. 8, no. 2, fall 2021) were commissioned to be translated. I am proud of the supervisors and student translators who remain committed to work on this project during a time of war! I hope to publish these translations in the fall on the EWJUS website under "[Translations](#)." This webpage already features articles (from vol. 7, no. 2, fall 2020) that were translated and published last year.

The publication of the present volume (vol. 9, no. 1, spring 2022) was made possible by the generous support of the Anna and Nikander Bukowsky Endowment Fund at the CIUS. I am grateful to the guest editor for this issue, Mark R. Andryczyk, our book review editor, Tania Stech (CIUS, Toronto Office), our two copyeditors, Marcia Craig (Edmonton, AB) and Ksenia Maryniak (CIUS), our editorial assistant, Cossette Massa (MacEwan University), and the director of CIUS Press and scholarly publications, Marko Stech, for his continuous support of EWJUS. I am also thankful to Heather Coleman (University of Alberta) for commissioning the text of the distinguished lecture published in this issue.

EWJUS unequivocally condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine. EWJUS is a CIUS-sponsored publication that is affiliated with the Canadian Association for Ukrainian Studies (CAUS). Its views fully align with the two statements, published by the CIUS and the CAUS on Russia's war against Ukraine, which are reprinted below.

As the editor of EWJUS, I sincerely hope that our authors and readers are safe, or at least as safe as they could be in these difficult times. Ukraine will prevail!

March 25, 2022

## **Statement from the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies on Russia's War Against Ukraine ([published on the CIUS website](#))**

As the democratic world is watching in disbelief at the Russian army's full-scale military assault on sovereign Ukraine, the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta stands united with Ukraine and Ukrainians in these critical times.

The world is currently in the midst of the worst and greatest security crisis in Europe since World War Two. On 24 February 2022, 5:00 a.m. Kyiv time, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation launched a massive and ferocious invasion of Ukraine. Fatalities and other casualties are rapidly mounting as a humanitarian catastrophe of unprecedented proportions unfolds. The advantages of science and technology are being applied to destroy democracy, annihilate lives, and impose the will of an aggressor.

The military aggression against Ukraine is simultaneously an assault on democracy and the values that Ukraine embraced during its development as a sovereign state since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The authoritarian regime that Vladimir Putin has built in the Russian Federation has global ambitions and is inspired by long discredited policies that drove empires to conquer peoples and expand their territories at huge human costs. The recent speech in which Mr. Putin denied Ukraine the very right to exist contradicts the modern democratic principles the world adopted after World War II. Indeed, the invasion of Ukraine should serve as a warning to the rest of the world that Ukraine may not be the end goal, and that there may be other sovereign nations that Mr. Putin may label as historical fiction and then proceed to invade.

The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta has been closely following developments in Ukraine and especially so since the beginning of the Russian occupation of Ukrainian territories in 2014. Established in 1976, CIUS has accumulated knowledge about Ukraine and possesses globally recognized expertise in all areas related to the study of Ukraine and its relations with other nations and cultures. Our scholars have commented on past tragedies and acts of aggression in this part of the world, such as the Famine of 1932-33 (Holodomor), World War II, the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and others. We have strong and long-established partnerships with colleagues in many countries, including Ukraine's immediate neighbours to the west but also those to the north and east, in Belarus and Russia, the countries that have launched the attack on Ukraine.

CIUS strongly condemns the war that Mr. Putin has unleashed on the territory of Ukraine and expresses its deepest concern for the people of Ukraine, and for all our colleagues and partners in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, and around the world. As academics, we have the power to effectively

contribute to the ongoing struggle for democracy in the world. A series of CIUS events that will address the war in Ukraine, including its current and historical contexts, is being planned. Stay connected with CIUS, follow our social media, and join us in our efforts to bring peace to Ukraine, Europe, and the globe.

### **Statement from the Canadian Association for Ukrainian Studies**

The Executive of the Canadian Association for Ukrainian Studies condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's unprovoked, brutal invasion of Ukraine, which has come eight years after its occupation of the Crimea and the start of the Russian-sponsored war in the Donbas. We call on our colleagues in Canada and around the world to follow up on their statements in support of Ukraine, which we greatly appreciate, by incorporating the topic of Russian aggression into their courses, hosting teach-ins or talks about the Russian Federation's war against democratic Ukraine, and engaging with the media and politicians in all countries. We call on the Canadian government to step up its support of Ukraine and its measures against the Russian Federation. We stand with the heroic people of Ukraine who are fighting the Russian aggressor.