

Section 2

YOUNG UKRAINIAN SCHOLARS

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INTRODUCTORY WORD

This 7th issue of the Grinchenko-Seton International Journal of Young Scholars included articles from the 14th All-Ukrainian Scientific and Practical Conference of Young Scholars with International Participation “*Ukrainian Past: Wars for Identity and Independence*”. It took place online on the Google Meet platform in Kyiv and was prepared and held by the History of Ukraine Department, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University on April 23, 2026, together with Seton Hall University, which co-hosted the conference.

The section “*Young Ukrainian Scholars*” included research by young Ukrainian scholars who, together with their American colleagues from Seton Hall University, spoke at the conference in Section 3 “*Freedom 250: The International Dimension of Democracy and Security*” with reports and presentations on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the USA

Olha Saraieva, Ph.D. in History, an Associate Professor in the Department of Ukrainian Philology and Intercultural Communication at Kharkiv National University of Urban Economy named after O.M. Beketov (Kharkiv) together with **Mariia Saraieva**, a first-year student in the specialty “Philology: English, German” at the same university, studied *sociocultural self-organization and corporate ethics of zemstvo intelligentsia in the Donetsk region in 1860s – 1917*.

Their article is devoted to the study of the activities of local self-government bodies of the Donetsk region, which acted as strategic agents of the region's comprehensive modernization. They paid special attention to the fact that the main instrument of these transformations was the zemstvo intelligentsia – the so-called “third element” (teachers, doctors, agronomists, statisticians), whose everyday activity directly depended not only on the level of professional training, but also on the degree of their social protection. They emphasized that the zemstvos’ introduction of innovative mechanisms of social insurance, housing autonomy, and corporate solidarity at the time made it possible to form a stable regional elite capable of resisting the destructive influences of society's radicalization and marginalization. They noted that the experience of the zemstvos is useful in the conditions of the formation of today’s civil society.

Veronica Shtonda, a second-year student, majoring in History and Archaeology, at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University wrote the study “*Women’s socio-political movement in Galicia: Moscophiles and Narodovtsi*”. She notes that the women’s socio-political movement in Galicia in the 19th – 20th centuries was a distinctive phenomenon that combined the struggle for women’s rights with the aspiration to preserve the Ukrainian language, traditions, and culture under conditions of statelessness.

This important theme demonstrates how women became active participants in public life and helped safeguard national identity amid the pressures of Polonization and Russification. The study compares the two opposing currents within the women’s movement, the Moscophile and the Narodovtsi, and their impact on women's roles in society. Veronica used the historical-comparative method, integrating the analyses of scholarly works and of the activities of women’s organizations, education, and women’s economic participation. The sources include the magazines “Lada”, “Rusalka”, and “Persnyi vinok”, along with foundational studies by contemporary historians, in particular Marta Bohachevsky-Chomiak, Stepan Kost, and Liliia Sholohon.

A notable feature of the work is that the Narodovtsi movement integrated education, active female participation in public life, and national interests, while the Moscophiles adhered to a conservative model in which women remained mostly at home, engaging only in charity and church activities without a broader national dimension. The study shows that the Narodovtsi trend ultimately won out and shaped the image of an educated, active, and nationally conscious woman. This contributed to the formation of Ukrainian women’s organizations, the advancement of education and the economy, and the laying of the groundwork for future Ukrainian statehood. The women’s movement in Galicia became a vital component of nation-building and social transformation, preparing the ground for the creation of the “Soyuz Ukrainok” /”Union of Ukrainian Women” – the most powerful women’s organization in interwar Europe.

Marko Miliutin, Marko Miliutin, a MA Graduate from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Senior Researcher at the Museum of Prominent Figures of Ukrainian Culture; Leading Archaeographer at the Department of Source Studies of Modern Ukrainian History, M. S. Hrushevsky Institute of Ukrainian Archaeography and Source Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in study “*Mykola Lysenko: reconstructing physical health through narrative sources*” devoted his research to reconstructing physical health of the Ukrainian composer, pianist, conductor, teacher, collector of folk songs, public figure Mykola Lysenko based on narrative sources from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, ego-documents – correspondence, memoirs, and recollections of the composer himself and entourage.

Health is considered not only a medical or biological category, but also a component of everyday experience, closely connected to professional activity, family circumstances, psychological stress, and the sociocultural context of the imperial era. The article analyzes Lysenko’s major illnesses as well as therapeutic practices typical of the period: sanatorium treatment, climate-related travel, and restrictions on physical activity.

Special attention is paid to the family dimension of health – the illnesses of children and close relatives, epidemics, the psychological impact of losing his wife, and the mechanisms for emotionally overcoming traumatic events through creative work. It is shown that the illnesses and deaths of members of the intellectual milieu were perceived as a collective experience of the community and were reflected in private discourse. Marko emphasizes the heuristic potential of

ego-documents for studying the history of everyday life and the private dimension of the lives of figures in Ukrainian culture.

Mykhailo Mishyn, a second-year postgraduate student at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University wrote the study “*Under the musical and academic influence of Viacheslav Petr: the intellectual origins of Klyment Kvitka’s scholarly worldview*”. He explores the intellectual connections between the Ukrainian folklorist and musicologist Klyment Kvitka and director of the Kyiv-Pechersk Gymnasium and an outstanding Ukrainian-Czech educator, philologist and music theorist Viacheslav Petr. The study highlights V. Petr’s impact on K. Kvitka’s scientific worldview through the analysis of epistolary sources and bibliographic records. Central to the research is K. Kvitka’s letter to Olena Pchilka, where he explicitly acknowledges being “under the musical and academic influence” of V. Petr, while also noting the shared academic lineage of musicologist Mykola Hrinchenko. The paper further demonstrates how the mature K. Kvitka integrated V. Petr’s theories on ancient musical scales into his own studies. The findings illuminate V. Petr’s important role as an educator, proving that the gymnasium was a powerful intellectual environment where the academic worldview of the European elite was forged.

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Stepan Vasylyshyn, Ph.D in History, the Head of the Humanitarian Department of the Kopychynets City Council, a history teacher at the Lyceum of Hadynkivtsi, Kopychynets City Council, Chortkiv District, Ternopil Region wrote the research “*The teacher in interwar society: professional mission and social challenges in the Ternopil Voivodeship (based on the materials of Echo Nauczycielskie)*”. He conducted a comprehensive analysis of teachers’ professional mission and the socio-economic challenges that shaped their activities in 1921 – 1939, based on periodical materials, archival sources, and regulatory legal acts in Polish.

Stepan established that the teaching profession in the Ternopil Voivodeship during the interwar period performed functions far broader than those envisaged by the official educational policy of the Second Polish Republic. The teacher acted not only as a transmitter of knowledge but also as a key agent of socio-economic stabilization in local communities, combining pedagogical, administrative, and as civic roles.

Stepan explores how chronic underfunding of the education sector, along with the transfer of responsibility for school maintenance to communes, has led to the emergence of an informal practice of teachers’ financial participation in supporting the educational process. This situation effectively transformed the social status of the teacher, turning him into a “community resource”, which undermined the material well-being of teachers’ families and contributed to professional burnout. Despite these difficult conditions, the teaching profession demonstrated a high level of self-organization and civic activism. The activities of the Society for the Support of Public School Construction indicate that teachers were the driving force behind the modernization of school

infrastructure, ensuring the implementation of large-scale construction projects through community mobilization mechanisms. The organization of “Public School Weeks”, cultural and educational events, and the mobilization of financial resources of the population indicate the effectiveness of grassroots initiatives in overcoming the structural limitations of state policy.

Myroslav Sakal, a third-year student, majoring in History and Archaeology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, wrote the study *“The Soviet elections in Transcarpathia according to press materials: public mood and the position of the Ukrainian insurgents”*. He explores the conduct of Soviet election campaigns in the territory of the Transcarpathian region within the Ukrainian SSR during 1946 – 1947. The study focuses on the region's mountainous settlements, using the Svaliava district as a representative administrative-territorial unit of that period.

Myroslav selected the local periodicals as the primary source, which allows for a more detailed micro-historical investigation. Through careful analysis of contemporary periodicals and archival materials, Myroslav identified events that were covered not only through an ideological prism, but also through the lens of local social conflicts, administrative decisions, and public reactions. This study allows us to trace whether the level of censorship in the local press was truly as extensive as often believed. Even Soviet publishing houses had editors and authors who could criticize local officials. However, this dynamic could work both ways. The article analyzes the methods of Soviet political integration, as well as the public reaction and the resistance efforts of the Ukrainian underground.

Roman Podat, studying for a master's degree at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, in his study *“Industrial modernization of the Ukrainian SSR at the micro level: the development of the Darnytsia Chemical-Pharmaceutical Plant in the 1950s – 1960s”*, in his research examines industrial modernization in the Ukrainian SSR using the example of the Darnytsia Chemical and Pharmaceutical Plant in the 1950s – 1960s. Based on annual financial reports, construction materials, and union minutes from the company's archives, Roman reconstructs the plant's transformation from a postwar branch of a research institute into a large pharmaceutical enterprise. The study argues that micro-level modernization was contradictory: growth in production, mechanization, and product range coexisted with dependence on imported technology, chronic planning distortions, and difficult working conditions.

Olena Kazimirenko, Head of the Department of Fine Arts and Design at the Applied College “Universum” of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, wrote the article *“Forty years since the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant accident through the posters of student designers”*.

She noted that April 26, 1986, divided the life of the then Soviet Ukraine into the period before and after the accident at the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant. In 2026, students of the Applied College “Universum” of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, majoring in “Design”, investigated the public's views on the historical aspects of the events and on modern life in the radiation-contaminated zone. The article presents the students' posters as an illustration of their research.

Artem Pavliuk, a first-year undergraduate student at the Educational and Research Institute “Horlivka Institute of Foreign Languages of Donbas State Pedagogical University” (relocated to Bakhmut), wrote the study *“Marcus Luttrell's interpretation of the events of operation “Red Wings”: a historical and critical analysis”*. He examines the interpretation of the events of

Operation “Red Wing” by U.S. Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell and compares his version of events with alternative sources, including journalistic investigations, veteran testimonies, and historical analyses.

The study argues that many elements of Luttrell’s memoir “Lone Survivor” were exaggerated or distorted, particularly regarding the number of Taliban fighters, the conduct of the battle, and the operational circumstances. The article also analyzes the planning failures and command decisions that contributed to the tragedy and further mythologizing of the operation. Particular attention is devoted to the impact of these distortions on historical memory, military ethics, and the perception of the dead service members.

Daryna Osetianova, a second-year student majoring in History and Archaeology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, in her essay “*The Stolen Youth of My Generation*,” notes that her generation learned too early what violence is. Daryna writes about how the Russian-Ukrainian war during 2014 – 2026 stole the childhood and youth of Ukrainian children, how quickly and terribly the reality and attitude towards the reality of yesterday’s students changed, how quickly they grew up and stood up for the defense of the Motherland, about the perception of news from the front, about volunteer activities that Ukrainian society has established, about communication with children of displaced persons from Eastern Ukraine in a Kyiv school, and about the feeling that something is being prepared on the eve of Russia’s full-scale invasion of a sovereign and independent Ukraine.

Daryna recollects the first days of the beginning of a full-scale war, when the only shelter was a barracks that had turned into a bunker and the rule of two walls, about the sounds of artillery fire, the vibration from explosions on the northern outskirts of Kyiv, about how adult men and Kyiv were preparing for resistance, about the self-organization of people and the month of March when people tried to survive, about the smell of a burning city, the rustle of missiles overhead, the sounds of explosions that did not let us forget that we were in the center of the war, about the spring sun, nature waking up after winter, and the warmth that inspired hope, about the streets of Kyiv blocked by checkpoints and anti-tank hedgehogs.

Daryna thinks of April 2, 2022 – the day of her 16th birthday, when the de-occupation of Kyiv and Kyiv region was announced and the horrors of Bucha and Irpin were made public to the world, about distance learning in Kyiv at school since the fall of 2022, about getting used to the power outage schedules in Kyiv and throughout Ukraine, about the first three days without electricity, mobile communication and water, about the gradual adaptation of society to life and learning in the new realities of life, about the rapid growth of children during the war. She talks about her preparation for the National Multi-Subject Test during 2024 in conditions of frequent power outages and air strikes, about graduating from Kyiv school with honors and successfully passing the NMST without a break during the air raid, and about the rocket falling into the residential building opposite and the force of the blast wave.

Daryna remembers about the targeted rocket attack which occurred on July 8, 2024, on the largest children’s hospital in Ukraine, “Okhmatdyt National Children’s Specialized Hospital in Kyiv”, where children from all over Ukraine with extremely serious diagnoses are treated, about the feeling of indescribable horror, and the understanding that Ukrainian schools, hospitals, kindergartens, and residential buildings are “NATO bases” and “military facilities” for the

aggressor. She shares the realization that the enemy has no morality, conscience, or humanity. She talks about entering the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Grinchenko University, majoring in History and Archaeology, the beginning of her student life during wartime, new friends, falling in love with history, hours spent in a university shelter during alarms, and donations to support the Ukrainian army. Daryna talks about how close and familiar civilians became soldiers, about weaving camouflage nets within the walls of the university, and about the first losses and injuries in a large family.

Daryna recalls the heavy shelling of Ukraine by the Russian aggressor since the beginning of 2026 during the cold winter without heating and hot water, in conditions of constant power outages, the Russian enemy's brutal shelling of energy facilities in Kyiv and Ukraine and the enemy's destruction of Kyiv's centralized heating system, taking exams in the winter session under these conditions, and the fact that each new shelling of Kyiv was worse than the previous one.

Daryna talks about the bombing of hospitals and museums in Kyiv, in particular the National Museum "Chernobyl" on May 24, 2026, and the loss of 40% of unique exhibits, as well as the massive rocket attack on Kyiv on June 15, 2026 and the damage to many historical monuments and cultural objects – the cultural spaces of the Ukrainian House, the Mystetsky Arsenal, the Dovzhenko Film Studio, where the largest and oldest collection of costumes in Ukraine (3 million pieces) was burned in a fire caused by the rocket strike.

Daryna describes the attack on the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra National Reserve, where she was doing the archaeological practice in the summer of 2025, the destruction of the architectural and religious monument of the Assumption Cathedral, which was built in the 11th century, when Russia did not even exist yet, and the fact that the aggressor is waging a war in Kyiv, as well as throughout Ukraine, against residential buildings, hospitals, universities and schools, kindergartens, maternity hospitals, bookstores, museums, temples, antique markets, even a McDonald's on Lukyanivka.

Daryna writes about the terrible shelling of Kyiv by ballistic missiles on June 2, 15, 25 and July 1-2, 6, 8, 11, 14, 16, 19, 24, 2026 and that since 2022, more than 425 people have died in Kyiv alone as a result of shelling, and as of July 6, 2026, 2,236 alarms have been registered in Kyiv since February 24, 2022. In total, they lasted 2,642 hours and 11 minutes, which is equivalent to 110 full days. Since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, more than 4,000 residential buildings have been damaged in Kyiv as a result of Russian shelling, which is approximately a third of the capital's housing stock, and 70 residential buildings have been severely damaged or completely destroyed.

Hanna Hedo, a first-year student, majoring in History and Archaeology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, in her essay "*Donetsk*" recalls her childhood in Donetsk, adorned with flowerbeds of thousands of roses, her generation of children of steel and flowers, the sense of home security, and the beauty of her hometown. Hanna's reflections on the Soviet term "Donbas" as a geographical, geological, and industrial term, a tool for erasing the complex identity of the region, which did not take into account cultural and national identity. Reflections on the city of Yuzivka, built by the Welshman John Hughes in 1869, from which modern Donetsk grew. Reflections on the metallurgical experience of British engineers and managers, their architectural ideas, on the British philosophy of urban planning, on Donetsk as a Western-oriented project implemented on Ukrainian soil, a

place of new ideas and different nationalities, with a rich history of entrepreneurship, trade and international relations. Reflections on Donetsk as a promising European city, which until 2014 hosted large-scale international events.

Hanna's understanding as a historian of what happened to Donetsk after May 26, 2014, during 12 years of russian occupation. Hanna's reflections on "memocide" – as a planned, systematic killing of the city's memory, a method of erasing Ukrainian culture, history, and people's sense of self-awareness, leaving behind an empty shell that can be filled with the ideology of the occupier. About the goal of memocide – to cause deep social amnesia, to force the occupied region to doubt its own Ukrainian past and its own life experience, its Ukrainian identity.

Hanna's memories of leaving Donetsk at the age of seven are like losing a part of her childhood, of becoming a "refugee" at the age of seven, and the words "occupation" and "war" are too small to contain the pain of what was lost. Hanna's reflections on finding her weapon in the profession of a historian, understanding her life mission, taking a serious attitude towards mastering the craft of a historian to prevent the enemy from writing the history of her native land, and protecting and restoring historical memory. Hanna's reflections on writing as a historian's weapon and healing the memory of Donetsk after the victory in the war and the liberation of her native land, on the spirit of Donetsk that lives inside and waits for us to bring home its true history.

Daria Romanenko, a first-year master's student, majoring in History and Archaeology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, wrote the essay *"From a European pearl to a militarized enclave: a twelve-year retrospective of the occupation of Crimea"*. Daria reminds us that thanks to its temperate climate, extraordinary natural beauty, and strategic maritime location, Crimea has always been historically much more than just a peninsula. For many, it was the pinnacle of aesthetic and cultural wealth.

A native of Sevastopol who survived the initial stage of the russian occupation, Daria examines the transition of the Crimean peninsula from European prosperity in 2013 to systemic decline in 2026, exploring how Ukrainian Crimea, from a European pearl and center of gravity for international tourism and European integration, after its occupation by the russian aggressor on February 20, 2014, more than 12 years of rule by russian invaders, has transformed into a militarized enclave.

Daria recalls the beginning of the occupation in February 2014, the rapid, coordinated russian military maneuvers aimed at undermining local self-government, the transfer of Sevastopol under russian control on February 23, the culmination of civil resistance on February 26, when thousands of supporters of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, together with pro-Ukrainian citizens, surrounded the regional parliament in Simferopol to block separatist legislation, the seizure of the Supreme Council of Crimea and the Council of Ministers of Crimea at night by russian special forces units – soldiers without insignia, who are called "little green men", the occupation by the russian aggressor of all key administrative buildings on the peninsula by March 7. Daria recalls the cutting off of vital transit routes to mainland Ukraine, the complete blockade of Ukrainian military garrisons, the change in the physical and cultural landscape of the peninsula, the fact that Sevastopol has turned a stagnant relic of the Soviet era, devoid of real urban development, the rapid changes carried out by the russian invader in the education system as the main tool of russification, the severing of cultural ties with mainland Ukraine in order to present the Ukrainian state as an enemy of the Crimean people, the psychological tension in society, the systemic repression of the Crimean Tatar community and the targeted destruction of its cultural heritage.

Daria notes that after the large-scale invasion of Russian troops on February 24, 2022, into the independent and sovereign state of Ukraine, Crimea became an important military bridgehead for attacks on the Southern Ukraine and the launch of missiles, strike Shaheds, and drones throughout Ukraine. This tragedy is deepened by the fact that the local Ukrainian population of the peninsula is now illegally mobilized into the ranks of the occupation army that controls their home. Daria believes that only Ukraine's victory in the war, the restoration of Ukrainian sovereignty, and the de-occupation of the Crimean peninsula are the only ways to release political prisoners, preserve Crimea's cultural heritage, restore natural resources, and rebuild Crimea as a European pearl.

We are sincerely grateful to all the authors of the 7th issue of the “Young Scholars Grinchenko – Seton International Journal” for their articles.