

# Editor's Note

**This semester, we decided to collaborate with *The Tempus: The Harvard College Historical Review*. The idea came from a quote in a speech President Kennedy gave in 1962 at Memorial Stadium on the campus of the University of California, Berkeley. “It is a disturbing fact to me, and it may be to some of you, that the New Frontier owes as much to Berkeley as it does to Harvard University.” As part of our exchange, we received a faculty profile with Professor Serhii Plokhii of the Harvard University History Department. To view our faculty profile with Professor Alexei Yurchak, visit them at their website: [tempusharvard.org](http://tempusharvard.org). Also, be sure to check out their podcast *Tempus Talk* for more niche historical insights available now on Spotify!**

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**Thank you *Tempus* staff!**

# Ukrainian History: Serhii Plokhii

## An Interview by *The Harvard Tempus*

**Serhii Plokhii is Mykhailo S. Hrushevs'kyi Professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard University and Director of the Ukrainian Research Institute. His work has been the recipient of numerous awards and draws a large international readership, having been translated into sixteen languages. His works include *The Russo-Ukrainian War: The Return of History*, *Chernobyl: The History of a Nuclear Catastrophe*, *Lost Kingdom: The Quest for Empire and the Making of the Russian Nation*, and *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*. His focus is modern Eastern European History.**

HT: It's a pleasure having you to interview today. I wanted to begin by asking about the development of Ukrainian nationalism prior to the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. Specifically, the Ukrainian state that existed between 1917 and 1921. Could you tell us about the attempt to establish Ukrainian statehood in the aftermath of World War I?

SP: Sure, absolutely. Thank you for this invitation and questions. Ukraine acquired independence in 1991—the state that exists today—and that was the fifth attempt in the course of the 20th century. So, the first one was in January of 1918, and then there would be another one, and another one, and another one. So, there were a number of attempts. The declaration of independence—the first one—in January of 1918, that was happening in the middle of, on the one hand, the revolution in the Russian Empire, and on the other hand, the First World War. That declaration was really a response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine that started in January of 1918, when the Bolshevik government of Russia really declared war on the Ukrainian People's Republic. The key figure at that time in Ukrainian history,

the head of the Ukrainian Parliament—it was called the Central, rather—was a prominent Ukrainian historian. His name was Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, and his name is in my full title as professor of Ukrainian history here at Harvard because the chair is named after Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, historian and first leader of independent Ukraine.

**What happened to the Ukrainian nationalist and intellectual movement after the collapse of this initial Ukrainian state and its transition to a Soviet Socialist Republic? What happened to Hrushevs'kyi and other figures of Ukrainian nationalism?**

The Russo-Ukrainian war that started in early 1918 really put an end to one particular period in Ukrainian and also intellectual history. It ended the parliamentary stage in the development of the Ukrainian political project. Out of that, in the course of the 1920s and 1930s, came two different trends. One was called national communism, and that was the idea supported by the left parties in Ukraine. The idea was that through communism and communist transformation, not only social liberation can be achieved, but also national lib-

eration. That trend was pretty much crushed by Stalin in the 1930s. The trick is that after the revolution and after failed attempts of Ukrainians to acquire their independence, Ukraine was divided between four different countries. The Soviet Union was just one of them. Poland was another one. Part of the Ukrainian territory was within Romania. Another part was within Czechoslovakia. In the Polish part, and to a degree also in the Romanian part, radical Ukrainian nationalism started to develop of the sort that you see in other countries during the interwar period, and particularly the 1930s. So, you have national communism that is being crushed. You had then radical nationalism that became especially popular with the start of World War II. And Ukrainian liberal nationalism survived, but it wasn't actually any more as powerful a force, or as deciding a force, as it was in the middle of the Revolution of 1917 and before. So, Hrushevs'kyi in that sense really became a symbol of this liberal nationalism of the early era. He was in immigration, then returned to Kiev, which was under Soviet occupation. He was arrested and exiled first to Moscow, and then died under suspicious circumstances.

es in 1934. So, really, with him we see an end of a particular stage in the Ukrainian nationalist movement.

**You made a differentiation between liberal nationalism and the nationalism that developed in the Romanian and Polish parts of Ukraine. What exactly is the difference between the nationalisms that became popular at the dawn of the Second World War and the liberal nationalism that began to die out with the advent of the Soviet Union?**

What you see during the interwar period is a rise of authoritarian regimes. This is true for Poland. This is true for Romania. And the response to those regimes was also basically authoritarian in the form of radical nationalism. During the Second World War in the Ukrainian case, the organization was called the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, which also became a driving force in the military struggle against the Nazis and then against the Soviets. They also get engaged in the ethnic clans and in war with other ethnic groups, including Poles. The story is really a continuation of the struggle now against the Soviets into the early 1950s, and really, we see the end of radical nationalism as a very influential and powerful ideology in Ukraine.

**You have spoken in previous interviews and texts on the narrative of Ukrainian national identity as having derived from medieval Kievan Rus', but you also suggest the importance of the 17th-century Zaporozhian Cossacks who founded their own independent state. What role do these two histories play in the imagination of Ukrainian nationality?**

If you look at the Ukrainian coat of arms today, the central part of that coat of arms is a trident. The trident is a symbol of Rus', the medieval state that was created by the Vikings. This was the first historically documented state on the territory of Ukraine. The center was in Kyiv. It is essential for Ukrainian history and for the Ukrainian historical narrative. Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi put a lot of emphasis on the history of Kievan Rus', and that's considered to be the origins of the Ukrainian state, if not Ukrainian nation. The tradition of Eastern Christianity as a religion comes from that period. So, extremely important. The founding block in Ukrainian history and Ukrainian historical identity. Then you move into the 17th century and the history of the Cossacks. Their state exists for a short period of time as an independent state, but mostly as an autonomy within the Russian Empire, and it would be crushed eventually by the end of the 18th century. A few decades later, in the 19th century, you see the rise of romantic nationalism. One variety of nationalism, now already the fourth that we are talking about. We had liberal nationalism, we had national communism, we had radical nationalism. It starts with romantic nationalism for people who are key figures in that story. One of them is historian Mykola Kostomarov. Another is Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. For them, the Cossacks really are an embodiment of the ideals that, at that time, were associated with the French Revolution. This equality, this egalitarianism, that they say that Ukrainians had because of. So, they were more prepared in that sense for democracy and for republican ideas, which were very important at that time. So, all of that is being, one way or another, embodied in a very

particular region of Cossack history. You look at Jewish relations with the Cossacks and the massacres, it would be a very different one. You look at the Polish region of the Cossacks, who are considered to be the force that ruined the greatness of the Polish state, it would be another reading. For Ukrainian national romantics, the fathers of the modern Ukrainian national project, Cossacks were the embodiment of freedom and equality. And they function till today in Ukrainian historical memory, specifically in that way—as fighters for independence, as the embodiment of freedom and equality. So, all these things became very important for Ukrainian society in the last few years in the middle of this war.

**You just spoke of a romanticization of the ideals of the French Revolution, of republicanism, equality, and fraternity. Would you say the Ukrainian nationalist movement was very much in line with the rest of Europe during that period?**

You mentioned the term fraternity, right? That's also how the Cossacks of the 17th century were imagined by the nation builders, the awakeners of the 19th century. And if you go today to the frontline in Ukraine, *pobratim*<sup>1</sup> is the way soldiers refer to each other. So, that's a continuation of the story that starts with the French Revolution and receives a Ukrainian incarnation in Cossack history, Cossack mythology. But in the 19th century, Ukraine went through a period that is quite common in the 19th-century history of the region. We have a Polish uprising of 1830 in the Russian Empire, where the Poles came up with—a crazy idea as it looked at that time—the anthem that has the words, “Poland is not

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<sup>1</sup> Translation: blood brother

dead, as long as we are alive.” That means Poland is alive, so that your national identity and your nation can continue even if they lose the state. The Ukrainian borrows from the Polish. The Ukrainian anthem starts with the words, “Ukraine is not dead yet.” That’s exactly what the Polish anthem is saying. The idea is that, okay, we can be a nation without a state. Sometimes very difficult to understand in the American context where a nation is a state, whereas in the European context, state and nation are two different categories. Sometimes they coincide, and sometimes they do not. They didn’t coincide in the Ukrainian case because the state was two empires that ruled over Ukrainian territories at that time. One was Austria-Hungary, before the Habsburg Empire. Another was the Russian Empire. And the Ukrainian project came as a project that was questioning and undermining the existing borders in 19th-century Europe. The borders between empires. That is a story that is common for smaller nations, or nations that didn’t have borders or states of their own in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Poles are in the same category. You look at the Balkans, and there in the 19th century was the war against the Ottoman Empire and also with each other at the beginning of the 20th century. So, it is very much a European, or an East-Central European story. There seems to be influence from both sides. Both from Poland in terms of the idea that the nation state cannot exist, but the people make up a nation through their existence, because they exist regardless of the state which they’re contained in, Polish or Ukrainian. But there also seems to be overlap, at least I find, in the historical nar-

ratives, or the themes of historical narratives that Russia and Ukraine both have in terms of Russia also seeing itself as a successor to Kievan Rus’. There’s also a romanticization within Russia of the Cossacks. I think of Ilya Repin’s *Reply of the Zaporozhian Cossacks* that’s considered a great Russian masterpiece. And there’s also a romanticization of other parts of what was then the Russian Empire, like the Islamic Caucasus and things like that.

**Maybe in modern times it might be more apparent, but historically, why do you think that overlap has existed?**

The overlap goes even deeper, and sometimes it’s even more on the surface than one can imagine. I mentioned Ilya and the particular popularity of the Cossacks in the Russian Empire, that was the most expensive painting of Cossacks writing a letter to the Ottoman Sultan that was ever produced or sold in the Russian Empire. The trick is that those are Ukrainian Cossacks, and Ilya Repin is basically of Ukrainian background. In Finland, they just recently changed. That’s where he died. He refused to go to the Soviet Union, to Bolshevik Russia. They removed a sign that insisted he was a Russian artist and put up a Ukrainian one.

There is a lot of overlap historically and in terms of identity between the Russian interpretation of what a nation is and what Ukrainians claim as their own. Kievan Rus’ is a battleground. You look at how Russian history is presented in today’s official pronouncements of the Russian leaders, and they would start the narrative with Kievan Rus’. We are in the same situation as, let’s say, the Holy Roman Empire, over which the German nation was claiming its

right. Just as you have a periphery claiming its right over Rome, you have Russia, which emerged in the periphery of the Kievan Rus’ state, now claiming Kiev as its city, its origins. This is not something particularly Russian... Then fast forward to the 19th century and the way the Cossacks are treated. The only Cossacks that ever had a state were the Ukrainian Cossacks. They’re central for Ukrainian identity. We discussed these ideas of fraternity, brotherhood, equality, and freedom. In the Russian narrative, there is a very different understanding of who the Cossacks are. For the Russian narrative, the state, and in particular the imperial state, is the cornerstone. That’s what is most important. In the traditional narrative, the Cossacks can be admired, but they’re also considered a negative, anarchic force that undermines the state at the moment when the state needs it. Russian traditional historiography is very focused on the state. That’s where the differences are. In the 19th century the Russian official ideology was that Ukrainians didn’t exist as a separate nation. That’s what Putin is saying today.

This echo of imperialist ideology that they constituted a subdivision of the big Russian nation, and from that point of view, that’s where we see Repin’s painting of the Zaporozhian Cossacks—that are a cornerstone of Ukrainian identity—presented as Russian Cossacks in a Russian painting. They were Zaporozhian Cossacks from the Dnieper River. The artist who did the painting is from Eastern Ukraine, from Chuhuiv, the battleground of today’s war. They’re being appropriated by the Russian Empire as part of this idea of “a greater Russia,” which includes not just ethnic Russians, but also Belarusians and Ukrainians.

**So, in that vein, writers like Gogol would be claimed by the Russian state as being Russian.**

Yes. More than that. Gogol is considered to be the founding father of the Russian novel, who was writing in Russian but included Ukrainian words with a long glossary for Russian readers of what those terms were, and quite often was writing on topics of Ukrainian history, and Cossack history in particular. *Taras Bulba* is one of his masterpieces. Of course, it's about the Ukrainian Cossacks and their leader. Current Russian nationalist narratives, I would argue, find some of their roots in pan-Slavism—this idea that Ukrainians and Belarusians are a subgroup of Russians.

**There has been an adoption of this view, at least I find, by people who are against the war in Ukraine, especially in the U.S., who are of the alternative right, let's say, as evidenced by Tucker Carlson's interview with Putin, where Putin was able to express Russian nationalist narratives about Ukraine and present them as unadulterated fact. Why do you think there has been this movement towards Russian nationalist narratives in the U.S.?**

Tucker Carlson becomes my favorite American reporter—especially after that interview—because he exposed so many things that actually were not clear for the public in general. So, we have this line about the war being the result of American imperialism, right? The war as provoked by NATO. Then he goes to the author of this war—more than anybody else—and is exposed to 30 minutes of historical lecture, and he has no clue geographically where these places are or who those people were. That is

the reality. The guy is obsessed with history and issues of identity. Everyone who is running around trying to discuss big geopolitics among other things, I beg you, watch Tucker Carlson's interview with Putin, and generally watch Tucker Carlson. He exposes things and presents them in a way that no one is able to do otherwise. So, I like the guy enormously for basically showing what it is we are dealing with. Regarding the left and the right position. I want to see one person from the right that actually listened to Putin's lecture for 30 minutes and could make any sense out of that. But still, they are prepared to embrace him because he is a strong and terrifying and horrible leader. And the right is certainly, if maybe, paying lip service to the ideals of democracy and democratic institutions of this country, but they're out there to undermine it. It's all about the strong authoritarian leaders, and those leaders can say whatever. It doesn't matter. Even if it's a 30-minute lecture where they don't understand what it is. They see that leader and that's what they aspire to. So, it's this anti-democratic message that makes the far-right love Putin and Putin's Russia and undermines the foundations of American democracy. But again, I would be very surprised if anyone who is characterized in general terms as MAGA supporters would understand 10 percent of what Putin was trying to say. You could see Tucker Carlson's confusion when he said, "Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth." He was not hiding how perplexed he was.

**When it comes to decolonizing Ukrainian history, as in removing it from the long-standing ideological and cultural influence of Russia, do you find that other institutions in Ukraine are undergoing that process?**

I think particularly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, its movement away from the Russian liturgical calendar, and I believe they removed Alexander Nevsky recently as one of the saints in the calendar. This is one of the really institutional examples where Ukraine frees itself from the former imperial narratives and formal imperial structures, because the Russian Orthodox Church had very difficult times under the communist regime. It survived by becoming insulated and divorced from reality. What that meant is that, in terms of its own name—its institutions, liturgical practices, and so on and so forth—it remained very much the Russian Imperial Church of what was called the Russian Communist Party. The Russian Orthodox Church never changed its name or its vision of Russia being a group consisting of Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. Putin for the first time said that Russians and Ukrainians were one and the same people in the presence of the Patriarch Kirill of Moscow. What is happening now are very painful processes of splits within the Orthodox community within Ukraine. But there are clearly even those that are not completely split and divorced from the Russian Orthodox Church centered in Moscow. Even those that are still under the jurisdiction of Moscow are trying to distance themselves as much as they can from Moscow to a degree that there is once this all-out war started in 2022. The leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Moscow Patriarch was writing to Putin, really accusing him in soft terms, in religious terms, but accusing him of a fratricidal war and of the sin of Cain.

**You brought up the Russian Orthodox Church. Due to it becoming insulated and retreating into itself**

**during the communist period, it maintained the old imperial narratives. You could argue this is reflected in its love of Imperial Russia.**

It's the sanctification of former royals. Yes. You could describe the wars in Ukraine—2014 and the present one—as being a continuation of the disintegration of the Russian Empire. Of course, Imperial Russia died out in 1917, but its continuation was through the Soviet Union.

**What exactly do you mean by that? And maybe you could give some other instances of this long-standing clash between empire and the postcolonial space?**

This is a process. This is not an event. The British Empire really lost most of its possessions, or at least the last stage was in the 1960s in Africa. Before that, of course, there was India, but before all of that, there was the American Revolution. It's all part of the same process. We can look at them from different perspectives, but one of those perspectives is that this is the same process of disintegration of the British Empire. And we don't know yet what will happen with the Scots. And we don't know yet what will happen with Welsh and Ireland. Northern Ireland became independent in the 20th century. When we look at the Ottomans, the story of the weakening and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire started in the late 17th century. The Balkan Wars of the 1990s, that's still an attempt really to reconfigure the former Ottoman space. What is happening today... This is still the story of the imperial area... not being fully politically settled. So, this is a long array of processes, and from that point of view, the disintegration of the Russian Empire is not particularly different from

the British case or Ottoman case. The empire fell apart in 1917-1918 to the same degree that the Ottoman Empire did. Austria-Hungary fell apart. But the Bolsheviks stitched it together, partially by force, partially by the new internationalist ideology. Then it fell apart again in 1991. The death of empire, in a sense of falling apart according to the ethnic and ethnocultural borders, the way they were imagined at the beginning of the 20th century. The big surprise in the fall of the Soviet Union was that it didn't end in a nuclear war, and it didn't end with major military conflicts. The largest empire in the world. One sixth of the Earth fell apart without major conflict... What we see now is that the war was just postponed. It wasn't that the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union died the death of empire. It is a prolonged process. That's the particular historical paradigm that I look at and try to understand as a historian. Of course, you would probably have a different perspective coming from a different field, but that's the perspective that history can offer. This disintegration of empire not only offers the possibility of nationalism—states based on ethnic identity, national identity, and self-determination—but it also offers the reintroduction of the introduction of new empire.

**At points in your former interviews and in your book, you discuss the idea that there's been a cementation of Ukrainian identity because of this war. That prior to it, there was a less solid state of Ukrainian national identity—of Ukrainian nationalism—and that this war has cemented it. And your books are actually quite popular in Ukraine. When the war finally does come to an end, do you think that Ukrainian national identity**

**will have become all the more concrete? And what role do you think this war will play in that narrative?**

One of the biggest strategic mistakes Vladimir Putin made was starting the all-out war in 2022 believing that Ukraine was still where it was in 2014 when the first stage of the war started, and that Ukraine was divided politically and otherwise. We got a very different picture of Ukraine with the start of this war in 2022. The expectation on the Russian side was that there would be a number of nationalist battalions that would fight back, but the rest would welcome Russian troops as liberators with flowers. That didn't happen... What happened in the last two years accelerated the processes that were already underway in Ukraine, making Ukrainians in mass volunteer to risk their lives in defense of their independence in their state, and now more and more of their culture. So, there is also an embrace of culturalization because the country, given its long imperial history, speaks both Russian and Ukrainian, and there is regionalism, and so on and so forth. The cultural and otherwise political differences between regions, between groups, are becoming smaller and smaller as a result of this war, this existential threat... What role will this war play in the future? It already in these two years provided more material for national myth-making. More heroes, more records of suffering, of self-sacrifice, and so on and so forth, than in probably the previous 50 to 60 years, and those sorts of narratives will resonate 100 years from now, 150 years from now. We saw that in the past. That's one sort of moment in the history of Ukraine. And Ukraine is not unique in that way. That's what wars are. They're a thread. They

bring nations together. They provide foundations for national mythology for a long period of time.

Just part of the conflict, as it was in 2014, were disputes over what Russia, to my understanding, initially claimed, has always claimed, about the unity of the Slavic people in terms of Belorussia and Ukraine and Russia itself. There was also the narrative that was propagated in 2014 that parts of Ukraine were never meant to be given to Ukraine, and that there was a mistake of Soviet border-drawing. This narrative is not as popular as it used to be, given the all-encompassing nature now of everything in Ukraine being accidentally given to Ukraine in a bizarre formulation.

**Could you say more about myth-making and the belief that Donbass and Crimea were in reality always Russian and that it was a mistake of Soviet border-drawing that they ended up being “given” to Ukraine?**

Well, this is the imperialist narrative. According to it, certainly the United States shouldn't exist. Alaska certainly shouldn't be one of the states because, let's say, in the 16th century or in the 19th century, that was part of the Russian Empire, or that was part of the British Empire. You look at the map of the world today, you look at the globe, the majority of the states that existed at the end of the 20th century didn't exist at the beginning of the 20th century. They didn't exist 100 years ago. They all came into existence in the ruins of empires. So, that argument undermines generally the international order and the legitimacy of any state to exist. So, that is one point that I wanted to make. More specifically, looking at the borders of Ukraine,

they came into existence like most borders in Europe, particularly, Central and East-Central European states. The foundations are the linguistic maps of the 19th century, and those linguistic maps became the footprint for the nation-building projects of the 19th century. Out of that comes the Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Poland, Romania, and so on and so forth. Not out of the old borders of the Polish state or borders of Bohemia before that, but out of the linguistic map. Parts of the Ukrainian territory where the Ukrainians constituted the majority in the 19th century were not included into the Ukraine of the 20th century because, by that time, Ukrainians were not the majority. Some historic Ukrainian Cossack territories were given to Russia because, by the year 1918-1919, the settlers from Russia constituted the majority there. So, the map of Ukraine today is pretty much the linguistic and ethnic map of that part of the world during the first decades of the 20th century. There is one exception. Donbass is not an exception. Donbass is the rule. The eastern part of Ukraine. The exception was Crimea, where after the Crimean War of the mid-19th century, there was a tremendous increase of Russian settlers. Russians started to constitute the majority. Crimea was turned from the Russian Federation to Ukraine in the 1950s to help economically develop the region because Crimea is a peninsula. Peninsulas depend on the mainland. Think about Cape Cod. How successfully could it develop if Boston and Plymouth were part of a different country? The borders of the Soviet Union were just internal borders, and that's how the change took place. Now, in 1990 Crimea received autonomy within Ukraine. In 1991, the majority of Crimeans

voted for Ukrainian independence. Crimea became part of independent Ukraine, or the Ukrainian map, unlike other regions, on the basis, first, of the economic considerations linked to geography, and second, on the basis of the wish of the majority of the Crimean population.

**One of the last questions I want to ask is on myths... Are there any myths or misconceptions that are popular at the moment that you could speak to or debunk for us?**

Of course. One of the absolutely mythological things that is pushed by Russian propaganda and gets traction here in the West... I was talking about historical narratives. Those are too difficult to understand, so they don't get too much traction, or they're too bizarre, in the sense that the map of the world should look like it looked in the 19th century and every state that emerged from the collapse of the empire has no legitimacy. Those don't get much traction. What gets traction is that Ukraine is the land of the Nazis and nationalists, and that is rooted in parts of Ukrainian history. One thing people probably don't realize is that Ukraine is one of the very few, maybe the only country in Europe, where nationalism or radical nationalism is not represented in the parliament. So, we'll look at France and the popularity of the nationalist and right parties there. We'll look at what is happening in Hungary. We'll look at what is happening in Poland. The assumption is that Ukraine is probably worse than that, but the truth is that there are no nationalist parties in the Ukrainian parliament because none of them were able to cross the 5% barrier. None of them. So, the nationalists are not present in the Ukrainian Parliament as a re-

sult of Ukrainian democracy. Not because there was a dictator who said nationalists should not be there, and it would be bad for the image of Ukraine and the United States... That's one thing. Another is Volodymyr Zelensky, probably one of the most popular and inspiring political leaders in the world today.<sup>2</sup> He was elected by a landslide: 73 percent of Ukrainians. In a country that is very often still represented—and that narrative is being pushed by Russia—as being a Nazi and anti-Semitic state. He was elected and continues to be the most popular political figure in Ukraine today, which is just also a marker of the political culture and society that exists in Ukraine today. It's a major transformation from the quite unpleasant and bloody history of relations between Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, and so on and so forth. This is the new reality. Ukraine is still on the world map today, and fights as effectively as it fights today, because Ukrainians learned to cross borders between languages, cultures, and religions. The war on the Ukrainian side is fought in both Ukrainian and Russian. The commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, General Syrskyi, is an ethnic Russian born in Russia. The Minister of Defense is a Muslim Crimean Tatar. So, this is a place where if one really wants to see how the political nation looks, she or he should go to Ukraine.

**My final question, do you have any recommendations for textbooks, sources, for someone who might not be knowledgeable of Ukrainian history who wants to learn about it, a source that's accurate and doesn't have misinformation or possibly a confusing counter narrative?**

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<sup>2</sup> President Zelensky is one of the only presidents of a country outside of Israel with a Jewish background.

Well, let me promote the institution I represent here because we really deal with these issues and try to create content people can trust. We have a publication division at the Ukrainian Research Institute here at Harvard University.

