



Zorya

Zorya, Inc., is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to increasing and inspiring awareness of the richness of Ukrainian history, culture, art and the sciences. The organization's unusual name Zorya means "star" in Ukrainian. In the spirit of the organization's cultural mission, Zorya offers itself as a guiding star by which all people may navigate to a higher level of appreciation and knowledge of the richness of Ukrainian history and culture through inspiration, patronage and guidance. We invite you to join us and explore the secrets of a civilization whose heritage dates back several thousand years as we reveal the mystery of Ukraine.

Ukraine is the largest country by territory within Europe. It is a beautiful land with rich black earth producing oceans of golden wheat under a vast blue sky. The many natural resources of Ukraine have been the envy of its neighboring countries that ruled Ukraine for centuries. Ukraine, with a population of approximately 50 million, is located in Eastern Europe between Poland and Russia and north of the Black Sea. Ukraine's previous lack of political independence and autonomy has resulted in little understanding and appreciation for this country's rich intellectual and literary heritage. The fascinating heritage of the Ukrainian people is a vital part of civilization. Zorya reveals the accurate history of Ukraine, bringing to light the significant intellectual and cultural contributions of Ukrainians throughout the ages. Zorya was founded in 2001, by Zorianna L. Altomaro, an American of Ukrainian descent, to ensure the continuation of her Ukrainian heritage and in memory and tribute to her family. Dr. Vitaly Chernetsky is the current President of Zorya. Zorya presents the multi-faceted history of Ukraine through exhibitions, publications, films and documentaries. The organization establishes and promotes projects that are seen by the public, some for the very first time. These projects and others allow Zorya to portray the accurate history of Ukraine and are critical to revealing the richness of a nation and its people.

Since its founding, Zorya has launched several important initiatives, including the preservation of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., and the Royalty book series, which details the significant role that Ukrainian royalty played in influencing European history. The book-length study by Andrew S. Gregorovich on Ukraine's royalty, has a particular focus on Kniahynia Anna Yaroslavna from Kyiv, the capital city of Ukraine, who was crowned Queen Anne of France in 1051. Zorya supports the Baturyn archeological excavations, which uncovered the capital city of Ukraine during the 17th and 18th centuries. In 2003, Zorya launched Zorya Fine Art gallery. Zorya Fine Art is dedicated to drawing international attention to Ukrainian art. Zorya Fine Art introduced Ukrainian art at Sotheby's with paintings by Vasyl Hryhorovych Krychevsky, the founder and first president of the prestigious Ukrainian Academy of Art in Kyiv (a.k.a. Kiev), Ukraine. The Academy was established in 1917, its other founding artists included Abram Manevich, David Burliuk and *Mykhailo Boichuk, leader of the Boichuk art movement. In December 1917, at the early stage of Ukraine's struggle for independence, the Ukrainian Academy of Fine Arts was established, led by several prominent artists of the era, the brothers Fedir and Vasyl Hryhorovych Krychevsky, Oleksandr Murashko, Heorhii Narbut, Mykola Burachek, Mykhailo Boichuk, Abram Manevich and others, who produced an active impact on the development of fine arts education in Ukraine. The Academy leadership's views brought about a cardinal change compared to the conditions in the nineteenth century when to hope for development of artistic education during Ukraine's colonial condition was simply unrealistic. It should be borne in mind that after the Bolshevik coup of 1917 and the defeat of Ukraine's struggle for independence during 1917–1920, a significant number of artists were forced to emigrate. Nevertheless, they could not conceive of their life and creative work without ties to Ukraine and continued working for, and in the name of, the cause of Ukrainian art and freedom of expression. Beginning in the 1930s, the Bolshevik system forcibly imposed within the art world the style of the so-called socialist realism, establishing absolute pressure over the development of the arts and the lives of the artists, as well as the entire creative process as such. The Bolsheviks also turned the direction of artistic thinking back towards nineteenth-century naturalism and the schematic declarations of the Russian peredvizhniki artists. But notwithstanding the totalitarian oppression, one could observe the development of the Ukrainian strain of modern art, and sense a palpable yearning for innovative forms of creativity.

*From the 1910s through the early 1930s, the Boichuk School was the most influential group of modernist painters in Ukraine. It was named after its founder and leader, the prominent artist Mykhailo Boichuk (1882–1937). Boichuk's work reflected his extensive art training in Paris and incorporated Byzantine icon painting tradition and Ukrainian folk art. Boichuk's friends, associates, and students, who came to be known collectively as the Boichuk School, created an original movement in art by uniting elements of monumentalism and expressionism. The works rivaled that of great masters of their time such as Diego Rivera, David Siqueiros, and Clemente Orozco. The Boichuk School artists received high acclaim both in the USSR and internationally. Their aesthetic independence quickly proved undesirable to the Bolshevik regime and as a result most of the members of the Boichuk School perished during the Stalinist terror in the late 1930s. The overwhelming majority of their masterful works, especially murals and oil paintings, were physically destroyed.

The Zorya, Inc., Foundation
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- Sponsors projects designed to enlighten the public, enhancing appreciation for and creating awareness of Ukraine and its culture.
- Produces exhibitions, publications, films and documentaries that promote understanding of Ukrainian history, culture, art and the sciences.
- Supports the preservation and restoration of rare and historically significant documents, architecture and artifacts relating to Ukraine.
- Initiates scholarly research that educates the public about Ukraine's rich and complex history and recognizes the cultural, artistic, and scientific contributions of Ukrainians.
- Collaborates with institutions and organizations that complement Zorya's mission.
- Builds international bridges of knowledge and understanding between Ukraine, the United States, and nations worldwide.
- Establishes global connections for sharing Ukrainian information and resources, while encouraging the exchange of ideas internationally.
- Incorporated in Connecticut in 2001 as a not-for-profit cultural organization.
- Governed by a Board of Directors comprised of a distinguished group of community and business leaders from a variety of backgrounds, who share a common interest in preserving Ukrainian history, culture, art and the sciences.
- Established affiliation with the prestigious Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences of America and recognized as Friends of the Academy.
- Collaborating with the Ukrainian Academy to plan and support the restoration and preservation of the historic New York landmark building, which houses the Academy.
- Sponsoring the Academy Project to preserve, restore and endow historically significant archival and documentary holdings crucial to the preservation and revelation of the history of Ukraine.
- Sponsored the debut presentation of groundbreaking research "New Archeological Discoveries from Baturyn." Baturyn was the capital city of Ukraine during the 17th and 18th centuries. The expedition has led to the discovery of palaces, weapons, tools and priceless icons from the Cossack Hetman State prior to its devastation. [Additional information](#)
- Creating an on-line presence for Zorya Fine Art and Zorya Inc.
- Sponsored research to publish a book-length study by Andrew S. Gregorovich, a noted Unkraining historian and author, on Ukraine's royalty, with particular focus on Kniahynia Anna Yaroslavna from Kiyv, the capital city of Ukraine, who was crowned Queen Anne, the first Queen of France in 1051.
- Launched Zorya Fine Art, specializing in Twentieth Century Masters and Contemporary Art. Zorya Fine Art cooperates with Zorya Inc., by placing and exhibiting works by acclaimed and emerging Ukrainian artists in private and public collections.

The Mystery of Ukraine

Ukraine is a mystery. How did a nation of 50 million people suddenly appear on the map of Europe in 1991? Ukraine's roots and heritage go back over 3,000 years. It is located in Eastern Europe between Poland and Russia, north of the Black Sea. It is the largest country by area inside Europe. Archeologists say the oldest house in the world is the 16,000 year-old Mezhirich mammoth bone house in Ukraine. The world's first known horseman rode in Dereivka, Ukraine, about 4350 B.C. Ukrainian has the second largest number of speakers among Slavic languages; it ranks 14th among the languages of the world. By the 1970s, the consensus among language historians singled out the banks of the Dnieper River in central Ukraine as the likely original home of the Indo-European family of languages, which includes almost all the languages of Europe. It is believed that the Ukrainian people are autochthonous, descendants of the original inhabitants of this territory which 3000 years ago was called Cimmeria, then Scythia. Greek legend says Hercules is the father of Scythia, and describes the Scythians and the Amazons as neighbors.

The oldest map in the world, discovered in Ukraine in 1966, is from about 12,000 B.C. Inscribed on a mammoth tusk, it was found in Mezhirich, Ukraine. It has been interpreted to show a river with dwellings along a river. The earliest known musical instruments according to some scholars also were found in Mezhirich. They were made of decorated mammoth bones. A mammoth skull was used as a kind of drum-like instrument. The Scythians of Ukraine some 2,500 years ago used the bones of eagles and vultures to make excellent flutes. Jewelry was used by the Stone Age hunters of Europe and Asia by 30,000 B.C. A bracelet, dating about 20,000 B.C. and carved from a single piece of mammoth ivory found at Mezin, Ukraine, has a magnificent design which can be found to this day in the embroidery of Ukrainian costumes and cloths.

The History of Ukraine

The southern border of Ukraine, including Crimea, is formed by the Black and Azov Seas. The countries bordering it, starting in the west, are Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland; Belarus is north and Russia is east of Ukraine. In ancient times, Ukraine was named Cimmeria, then Scythia, Sarmatia, and finally the Kingdom of Rus, pronounced "roos." Ukrainian wheat fed ancient Greece for centuries from circa 700 B.C. So Herodotus, Plato, and Socrates probably ate bread made from wheat imported from Scythian Ukraine. Golden wheat gave Ukraine the title of the "breadbasket of Europe." Just as the legend of the founding of ancient Scythia has three brothers there are three brothers who founded the capital city of Kyiv (a.k.a. Kiev). The three brothers Kie (or Kyi), Shchek and Khoriv arrived at the Dnieper River with their beautiful sister, Lybid. They crossed the blue river and went upon the green hills where they settled. They chose the eldest, *Kniaz Kie, as monarch and in his honor named the city of Kiev, founded in 482 A.D., after him. Ever since then, the last beautiful weekend in May is called Kiev Day and is celebrated by all of Ukraine.

The medieval Kingdom of Rus, with its royal capital of Kiev, was the largest in Europe a thousand years ago. Because of its prestige, the Kiev royal family intermarried with the royal families of France, Byzantium, Scandinavia, Poland, Germany and Hungary. The Ukrainian *Kniahynia Anna Yaroslavna was crowned Queen Anne I of France in the XIth century. Queen Elizabeth II of England has a Ukrainian ancestor, Kniaz Vladimir Monomakh. The Ukrainian slave girl Roxolana, or Khurrem, in 1520 became the wife of Suleiman the Magnificent, the greatest ruler of the Turkish Empire.

Kiev in the 11th century was one of Europe's greatest cities. In 988 Kniaz Vladimir made Rus-Ukraine a Christian country. In 1036 the mother church of Ukraine, St. Sophia, was built and stands today with its gold cupolas. It is a century older than Notre Dame in Paris and two centuries older than Westminster Abbey in London. In 1187, the name Ukraine, meaning "borderland," was first used to designate the southern region of Rus below Kiev. In 1240, the Mongol Tatar armies, originally founded by Genghis Khan, captured Kiev and ended the state of Rus or Ruthenia. Cossack Ukraine won its independence in 1648 but later came under Russian rule. In the last 764 years, Ukraine has only known 25 years of independence as of 2004. After the Mongol invasion over the centuries, it fell under complete Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, and German rule and partly under Tatar-Turkish, Austrian, Hungarian, Czechoslovak and Romanian domination. On August 24, 1991, Ukraine announced its Declaration of Independence from Soviet Russia. These last 13 years is the longest period that it has enjoyed independence in three-quarters of a millennium. *The kings and queens of medieval Rus-Ukraine used the title "Kniaz" and "Kniahynia." The words 'kniaz' and 'kniahynia' trace back to the Gothic and old German word "Kuningas" which means 'King.'

Ukrainian Royalty

The Royal history of Ukraine is fascinating and complex. The country's unique geographical location and the richness of its land historically placed Ukraine at the center of many wars and battles. The heritage of Rus-Ukraine consequently became deeply linked to many other cultures throughout the world.

Many kings and one queen have ruled on the territory of Ukraine the past 2,500 years. One of the most interesting kings was King Ataias of ancient Scythia. King Ataias minted coins with his image, galloping on a horse with his bow and arrow, which represented Scythian power. On the reverse of the coin was the head of Hercules in a lion skin inspired by a Greek legend that he was the father of Scythia. At the age of 90, King Ataias united the three kingdoms of Scythia and went to war against Macedonian King Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great. King Ataias was killed in 339 B.C. in the battle near the Danube River. Kniaz Kie, or Kyi, about 482 A.D. founded the city of Kyiv (Kiev). With a population of 3 million, this is the capital city of Ukraine today. The founder of the Kingdom of Rus, or Ruthenia, which is the medieval name of the lands now comprising Ukraine and Belarus, was Kniaz Oleh about the year 860 A.D. The single woman ruler, Kniahynia Olha (d. 969), ruled Kievan Rus and was baptized a Christian thus becoming the first Christian ruler of Rus or Ruthenia. In 980, Kniaz Vladimir (Volodymyr in modern Ukrainian) took the throne in Kyiv and adopted the trident as his royal coat of arms. Kniaz Vladimir's trident is the national coat of arms of Ukraine today. In 988, Kniaz Vladimir decided to adopt Christianity from Constantinople as the religion of his state and as a result the Byzantine or Eastern Rite became the Divine Liturgy for both the Ukrainian Orthodox and the Ukrainian Catholic (also known as Greek Catholic) or Uniate churches. He became beatified by acclaim as Saint Vladimir and today many Ukrainian churches around the world carry his name. St. Vladimir's son, Kniaz Yaroslav, was an exceptional monarch who ruled in 1019–1054. He was known as Yaroslav the Wise because of his brilliant reign, which included the founding of the first library in Kyiv and a code of laws. Kniaz Yaroslav built the St. Sophia Cathedral, the mother church of Ukraine, in 1037. He also built the famous Golden Gates of Kyiv which are depicted with grandeur as the Great Gate of Kiev in a musical composition by Mussorgsky. Kniaz Yaroslav married Ingigerd, daughter of the Swedish king, and after her death he married Anna, the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor. Kniaz Yaroslav was known as the "father-in-law" of Europe because his children married into so many royal European families. Queen Anne I of France, Kniahynia Anna Yaroslavna of Kyiv, was the daughter of Kniaz Yaroslav and married the French King Henri the First in 1049. Queen Anne I of France's son, Philippe the First, became King of France on the death of his father in 1060. Yaroslav's oldest daughter, Elisabeth, became the Queen of Norway when she married King Harald Hadrada the Bold who died in 1066 at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in an attempt to rule England. Yaroslav's youngest daughter, Anastasia, became Queen of Hungary after she married King Andrew the First whom she met when he lived in exile in Kyiv. Yaroslav's eldest son married a Polish princess, the sister of King Casimir of Poland. Casimir had married Kniaz Yaroslav's sister; and another son of Yaroslav married a German princess. Prince Vsevolod married a Greek princess of the Byzantine house of Monomach. Many royal families found refuge in Kyiv. For example, from England came the two Princes Aethelred the Unready and Edward the Confessor. Norwegian King Olaf the Saint and his son Magnus fled to Kyiv from the Danish King Canute the Great.

The dynasty of Kniaz Vladimir Monomakh (1099–1125) was united with Byzantium, Scandinavia, and England. His English connection makes him an ancestor of Queen Elizabeth of the United Kingdom and he is officially recorded in Debrett's Peerage. His son, Mstislav, had among his sons-in-law the Kings of Sweden and Denmark and the royal family of Byzantium. In 1240, the Mongol and Tatar armies, set in motion by Genghis Khan, destroyed Kyiv and ended the royal family there. But in western Ukraine, Kniaz Danylo, or Daniel (founder of the city of Lviv which he named after his son Prince Lev), and other rulers survived until Lithuania became the ruler of most of the lands of Rus-Ukraine in the 14th century. In the 16th century, Poland assumed control of Ukraine. An amazing woman, Roxolana, the daughter of a Ukrainian Orthodox priest from the town of Rohatyn, was captured by the Tatars as a teenager. She was taken to Crimea and sold on the slave market. She must have been quite remarkable because she ended up in the harem of the greatest Turkish Sultan, or Emperor Suleiman the Magnificent. Suleiman was so captivated by her joyful character and beauty that he married her and became the first Sultan to marry a slave concubine. As a result, she became a powerful presence behind the throne in the Ottoman Turkish Empire. Roxolana lived in Topkapi Palace in Istanbul and is buried in a magnificent tomb next to Suleiman. Ukraine's Crimea and southern Ukraine was under Tatar rule and Turkish sovereignty in her time so in effect she ruled part of her homeland. Her son Selim succeeded Suleiman as Sultan of the Turkish Empire. Probably the last true Ukrainian to carry a royal title was Hetman Ivan Mazepa of Cossack Ukraine, who became a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire in 1708. Prince Mazepa united with King Charles XII of Sweden to fight for the independence of Ukraine but was defeated by Russian Tsar Peter the First (the Great) at the Battle of Poltava in 1709. The Zorya organization would like to explore Ukraine's unique historical influence on civilization as well as its intriguing relationship to nations around the world. The full mystery of Ukraine has yet to unfold and be told in its entirety.

The Preservation, Restoration and Endowment
of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.

One of our key projects is the preservation of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S. The Academy is heir to the tradition of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences originally established in Kyiv (Kiev) in 1918, and currently maintains one-of-a-kind museum-archival holdings, representing the most extensive collection of Ukrainica outside of Ukraine. The archival documents include data that sheds significant light on the Ukrainian-Soviet experience, an era that needs to be understood from perspectives other than the official Soviet interpretation. They provide an important, unique and extensive source for understanding Ukraine's true heritage.

The collection provides documentation of the Ukrainian-American experience of prominent Ukrainian immigrants for more than a century, with particular emphasis on the post-World War II era. This collection includes writers, artists, historians as well as political figures. Located in New York City, the Academy, a not-for-profit organization, is an association of scholars dedicated to the promotion and advancement of Ukrainian studies and culture in the United States. Although the geographic center of Europe lies in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine, Europe and the West have perceived Ukraine as a marginal province of European culture, with little familiarity and understanding of Ukraine's history and rich intellectual and literary heritage. As one of its key projects, Zorya, Inc. is committed to working in cooperation with the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S. to help bring to light and preserve the accurate, factual history of Ukraine. The Academy's holdings document a substantive chapter in world history that would be lost without them. The restoration and preservation of the Academy's archival and documentary holdings is crucial to the preservation of the complex history of Ukraine as well as to the informed understanding of Ukrainian-American history. Zorya is committed to gathering the resources necessary to make this possible. For additional information visit the Academy website: www.uvan.org/about.