

UTL's Fight TO Save Ukrainian History AND Culture

LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARIES HAVE played a role in collecting and sharing Ukraine's history at moments of cultural peril. Today, teams of archivists and librarians across the globe are working once again to save Ukrainian content and preserve knowledge. The University of Toronto Libraries are no exception. Colleagues from across the libraries are finding creative strategies to protect and preserve Ukrainian Cultural Heritage both physically and digitally.

A WIKIPEDIA EDITING EVENT FOR UKRAINE

Through April and early May 2022, staff at the University of Toronto Libraries were joined by community members and facilitators from across Canada and the United States for a Wikipedia editing event for Ukraine. The event was free and open to the public and sought to improve the recognition and representation of Ukrainian history and culture on Wikipedia.

The event was motivated by a call from John Mokrynskyj, Metadata Creation Specialist, to preserve Ukraine's local history in Wikipedia. It was organised by Ksenya Kiebusinski, Head of the Petro Jacyk Central & East European Resource Centre and Slavic Resources Coordinator, and Alex Jung, Open Knowledge Specialist and former Wikipedian-in-Residence.

The organisers were joined by 33 editors through four virtual editing sessions which took place April 1, 8, and 29 with the final session concluding on May 6. The sessions consisted of Wikipedia 101 training and a facilitated venue for communal editing led by experienced editors from U of T and University of British Columbia. The many participants who were new to Wikipedia editing appreciated the format of the communal sessions, which allowed contrib-

utors to help one another and build editing ability in a supportive environment.

Together the group improved and created articles in English, Ukrainian, and Korean. The editing campaign added 18.6K words and 104 references across 39 articles. Edited topics include:

- Holodomor, also known as the Terror-Famine or the Great Famine
- Krestova, a community of around 150 people in the Kootenay region of British Columbia
- List of mayors of Lviv
- Nehrybka and Pikulice, villages now in southeastern Poland, close to the Ukrainian border
- Okhrim Sodomora, graphic artist, illustrator, and poster artist



Photo by Sima Ghaffarzadeh from Pexels

GLOBAL GUARDIANS

- Saint Sophie Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Montréal, Québec
- Valentina Kuryliw, historian of the Ukrainian Holodomor
- Volodymyr Sichynskyi, architect, graphic artist, and art historian
- Булатецька Людмила Іванівна, науковиця та педагогиня (Lyudmila Ivanivna Bulatetska, scientist and teacher)
- Євстіфеев Павло Федорович, вчитель-методист (Evsstifeev Pavlo Fedorovych, Methodist teacher)
- 마리우폴 (Mariupol, Ukrainian city under Donetsk People's Republic administration)

The organizers are grateful to the participants and facilitators who kindly shared their time to make this virtual editing campaign possible. The team plans to sustain and build on this effort in the coming months.

UKRAINIAN CATALOGUING PROJECT

There is currently a backlog of books and materials in the University of Toronto Libraries system that require professional cataloguing. This has been exacerbated during the pandemic as the university closed and librarians and staff adapted to working off premise.

For Slavic materials, the Metadata Services staff changed gears to prioritize Ukrainian cataloguing. Everyone felt it was critical to give ready access to Ukrainian materials in response to increased demand, as well as for awareness and research purposes. The materials range from books to newspapers to magazines to church pamphlets, all offering critical contents on Ukrainian history and culture that would benefit researchers, faculty and students studying the war or Ukrainian history, as well as community members.

It was not just the number of items which had to be urgently catalogued that posed a challenge: the accuracy of representing Ukrainian language both in the original Cyrillic script and in Roman trans-

literation was an important consideration. Colleagues at Metadata Services with native and scholarly knowledge of Ukrainian language have volunteered to join forces with the Slavic section staff and held working meetings to review cataloguing guidelines. As a result, since February 24, more than 800 Ukrainian titles were collectively catalogued, effectively bringing library holdings of current publications from Ukraine up to date. The Metadata Services Department continues to prioritize Ukrainian cataloguing especially for newly arriving books, as well as for older, often unique publications.

EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES FOR UKRAINIAN INSTITUTIONS


As the events in Ukraine unfolded, many at UTL looked for ways to assist researchers in Ukraine access materials for scholarship. They determined that an easy path forward was to ask publishers—who opened up content at the start of the pandemic—if they would be open to a similar response for Ukraine.

To date UTL colleagues have reached out to all library publishing partners and will create a list of participating publishers as they are confirmed.



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 One of the largest libraries in Ukraine, the Korolenko Scientific State Library in Kharkiv, was damaged by shelling on March 13

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BETWEEN THE PILLARS PODCAST

The March episode of *Between the Pillars* was centred around Ukraine. Ksenya Kiebusinski joined the podcast to talk about the Fisher Library's rich holdings of Ukrainian materials. Among the items highlighted were the first modern map of Ukraine, printed in the 17th century; an ornate-bound book that was once part of a collection housed in the library of St. Michael's Gold-Domed Monastery in Kyiv; and a children's storybook.

UPDATE TO STUDENT RESOURCE: HOW DO I SPOT MISINFORMATION?

As trained experts in evaluating information, academic librarians are perfectly poised to lead the way in challenging misinformation. Student Liaison Librarian Heather Buchansky has updated the misinformation resource guide for students and U of T community members that can be found on the UTL website.

PROVIDING DIGITAL SPACE TO SAVING UKRAINIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE ONLINE (SUCHO)

In partnership with universities in Canada and the United States, more than 1,000

volunteers are participating in the crowd-sourced project called Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (SUCHO) to preserve and secure digitized manuscripts, music, photographs, 3D architectural models and other publications.

Associate Chief Librarian for Digital Strategies and Technology Sian Meikle has offered the group backup storage space

(mirror site) in the amount of 100 terabytes. Currently UTL is hosting 35 terabytes of SUCHO data, which will grow weekly to 100TB over time

In addition, developers at UTL have also provided support to the volunteer community working with SUCHO on digital exhibits of Ukrainian heritage.



In a special episode of *Between the Pillars* celebrating Ukraine, Ksenya Kiebusinski, Head of the Petro Jacyk Central & East European Resource Centre and the Slavic Resources Coordinator for the University of Toronto Libraries, talked about the Fisher Library's rich holdings of Ukrainian materials. Watch the video at <https://youtu.be/pZl6zfHwNH8>.