

## From the Editors

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The current (2022), tenth issue of *Vivliofika*, is special in a couple of different ways. First, it marks a significant milestone for the annual publication itself, which was founded as an open access, international, scholarly journal exactly a decade ago. Second, in fulfilment of the journal's initial charge—to cover the length and breadth of the eighteenth-century Russian Empire, its many peoples, experiences, diverse histories, religions, and cultures—this issue features recent Ukrainian scholarship on the eighteenth century. Needless to say, the circumstances in which the issue now appears have been dramatically impacted by the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The world is a very different place than it was less than a year ago, much less ten years ago, most painfully of course on the ground in Ukraine, where millions of people—our colleagues included—struggle daily to defend their country and to sustain their very lives against the onslaught that began with the illegal annexation of Crimea, back in 2014.

Back in 2020, long before any of us imagined what was to come, the editorial board of *Vivliofika* redoubled its efforts to expand the journal's coverage of the non-Russian peoples of the empire, especially in light of the flowering of scholarship on the long eighteenth century that has taken place in several of the former Soviet republics. Imperial Russia would still constitute the primary geopolitical *space*, but within that space were multiple histories, no one of which was reducible to the empire itself, not even as *Росси́йский*.<sup>1</sup> The present volume, which includes a special forum on Ukraine and one masterful article on the non-Orthodox peoples of the Volga-Ural region, is a deliberate, if only initial step in that process for our journal.

The special forum came about largely thanks to the generosity and resilience of our Ukrainian colleagues. In particular, the editors of *Vivliofika* are grateful to [Maksym Yaremchenko](#), a Professor of History at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, and a significant scholar of eighteenth-century Ukraine, who briefly joined the editorial board and accepted the responsibility of organizing an issue based upon the scholarship that a new generation of historians had been producing since Ukraine's declaration of

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<sup>1</sup> "From the Editors: Вивліофіка 2.1," *Вивліофіка: E-Journal of Eighteenth-Century Russian Studies*, vol. 8 (2020): i-ii. <https://iopn.library.illinois.edu/journals/vivliofika/article/view/799/675>

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independence from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991. It is through his efforts that the current issue of *Vivliofika* features a selection of the papers delivered at the [First Conference](#) of the Ukrainian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, which was hosted by the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv between June 23-25, 2021. In the ecumenical spirit for which *dixhuitiemisme* has long prided itself, the organizers of that conference invited scholars from throughout Europe and North America. This issue of *Vivliofika* is, in part, a testament to the extraordinary commitment of the Ukrainian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies and its partners (the Department of History, Ukrainian Catholic University, the Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research, the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, and the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, University of Alberta) to international academic cooperation. It is also a sobering reminder of the fragility of institutions that support the academic republic of letters and of the dangers of taking such a commitment for granted.

Almost immediately after Russia’s full-scale invasion, in late February 2022, our profession was torn apart in ways that will be excruciatingly familiar to all readers of *Vivliofika*, nearly all of whom experienced them directly in one way or another. Collaborative work in our field became logistically difficult and politically fraught, if not downright impossible. Numerous Ukrainian academics, experiencing the dislocations and trauma of the war first-hand, understandably refused to remain a part of organizations or initiatives in which scholars from the Russian Federation played a role, and this decision had a direct impact upon our e-journal, most immediately the current issue. When Professor Yaremenko stepped down from *Vivliofika*’s editorial board and two of his fellow contributors withdrew their papers from publication, it seemed that the journal’s projected special forum on Ukraine would never materialize. Luckily for us, and for our readers, the remaining contributors somehow managed to transform their conference papers into peer-reviewed publications under unimaginable wartime conditions, a scholarly feat of which we are in awe and for which we are grateful beyond words. The resulting collection of articles is thematically eclectic. As readers of this issue will see, they constitute a pluralistic approach to the study of the individuals, groups (ethnic, confessional, social), and institutions of the eighteenth-century Russian Empire, including of the state and metropole—two familiar actors that no longer appear as the primary agents of history. None of the contributions indulge in overarching model-building, but they implicitly present a much more complicated and multi-faceted picture of life in this eighteenth-century imperial space.

We deeply thank the contributors for persevering, and we hope and expect that their essays will generate a good deal of discussion. Let us also hope this scholarly conversation continues in the spirit of peace and prosperity encapsulated by the allegorical cartouche that dominates the upper-left section of the eighteenth-century map of Ukraine that was selected as the cover image for the current issue of *Vivliofika* (Figure 1). And may we all be able to attend the [Second Conference](#) of the Society for Eighteenth-Century Ukrainian Studies, which is scheduled to take place in Poltava, Ukraine, between April 19-21, 2023. [Volodymyr Sklokin](#), one of the contributors to the current, special issue of *Vivliofika*, is also one of the principal organizers of this

upcoming conference, as well as co-editor of the forthcoming collection of articles on eighteenth-century Ukraine,<sup>2</sup> which we hope to review in the next issue of our e-journal.

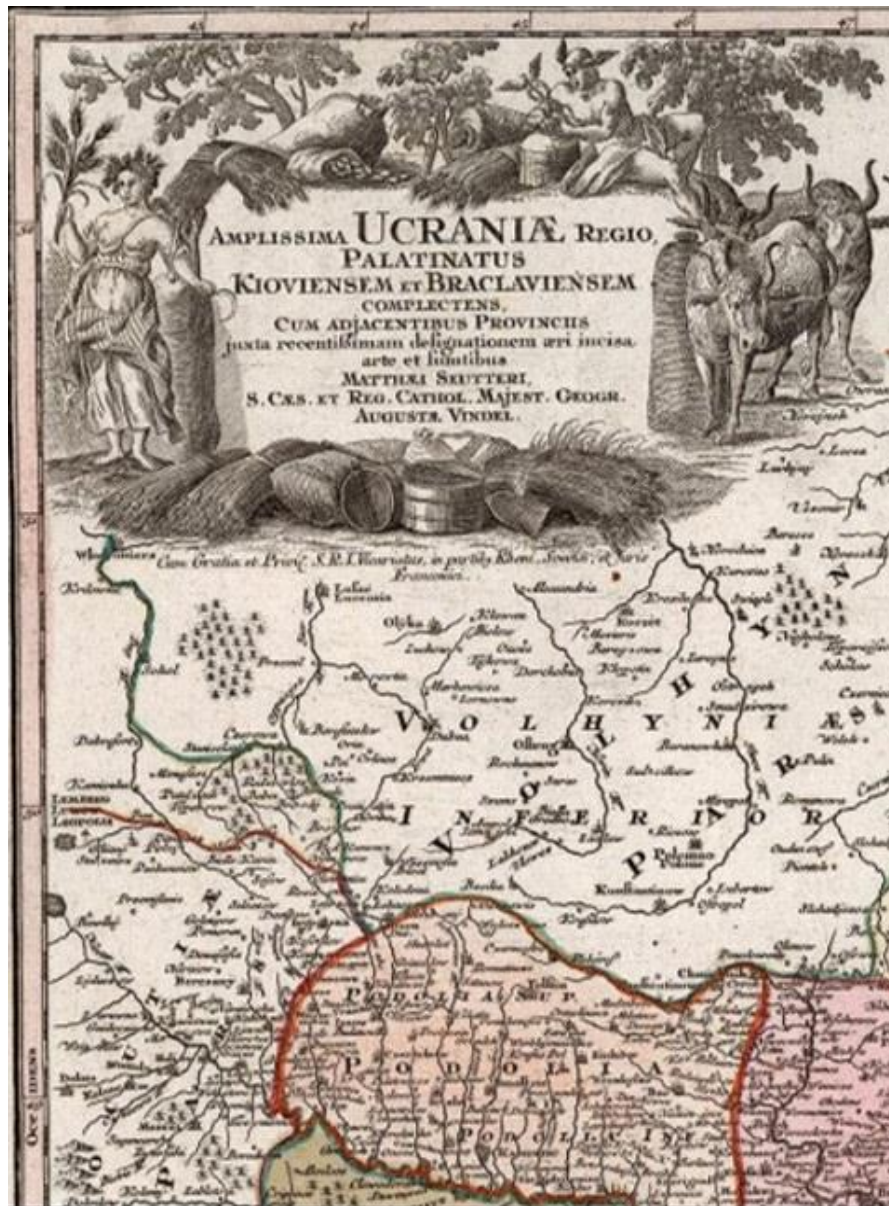


Fig. 1: Cartouche from Matthäus Seutter (1678-1756), *Amplissima Ucraniæ Regio, Palatinatus Kioviensum et Braclaviensum* (Augsburg, 1740).

David Rumsey Map Collection, David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford Libraries.

<sup>2</sup> *Eighteenth-Century Ukraine: New Perspectives on Social, Cultural, and Intellectual History*, edited by Zenon E. Kohut, Volodymyr Sklokin, and Frank E. Sysyn with Larysa Bilous [The Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research Monograph Series, no. 13] (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press; Edmonton, Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, forthcoming 2023). Five of the articles in this collection (those by Frank Sysyn, Zenon Kohut, Volodymyr Sklokin, Natalia Iakovenko, and Oksana Mykhed) are freely available on the website of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies: <https://www.ualberta.ca/canadian-institute-of-ukrainian-studies/news-and-events/news-at-the-cius/2020/april/eighteenth-century-ukraine.html>.