

Peterson Literary Fund Announces Literary Prize Shortlist

October 21, 2022

TORONTO – The [Peterson Literary Fund](#) at BCU Foundation is pleased to announce six books shortlisted for the **2022 Peterson Literary Prize**. The Peterson Literary Prize is a biennial international book prize recognizing original works of nonfiction written in English or Ukrainian. The prize recognizes books that promote a better understanding of Ukraine or the Ukrainian people, and whose subject matter is relevant to the global Ukrainian community.

The Peterson Literary Prize is valued at \$30,000 Canadian. The winning author will receive a prize of \$25,000 Canadian dollars. An additional \$5,000 CAD will be awarded to the book's publisher. Shortlisted Finalists will each receive \$5,000 CAD.

While the Peterson Literary Fund receives a high volume of English-language submissions from Europe and North America, according to Lisa Shymko, Chair of the Jury, “this year, notwithstanding the unimaginable challenges faced by authors and publishers in Ukraine resulting from Russia’s unprovoked war against Ukraine, we were pleased to receive an overwhelming number of nominations from Ukrainian publishers who are determined to remain viable and relevant in spite of this horrific war.”

The winner of the Peterson Literary Prize will be announced at a gala in Toronto hosted by the Peterson Literary Fund in cooperation with BCU Foundation on December 1, 2022.

2022 Peterson Literary Prize Shortlist

Books are listed in alphabetical order by title

Детокс [Detox]

Editor-in-chief: Larysa Ivshyna

Publisher: День. Українська прес-група [The Day. Ukraine Press Group]

Country: Ukraine Language: Ukrainian

This volume of articles, edited by the Kyiv-based Editor-in-Chief of Ukraine’s newspaper *Den* (The Day), strives to shatter the image of the Ukrainian people as chronic victims. The book traces the thread of Russian chauvinism from the Romanovs to Putin’s Russia, as it presents the unknown stories behind an array of vastly different historical figures, including Ivan Mazepa, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Mykola Skrypnyk, General Petro Grigorenko, and Mikhail Gorbachev. As alluded to by the book’s title, readers are challenged to detoxify themselves from the imperialist myths imposed on the Ukrainian psyche by centuries of toxic Russian authoritarianism and destructive colonialist policies.

Єврейсько-Українські відносини. ХХ сторіччя. [Jewish-Ukrainian Relations. The Twentieth Century]

Author: Alik Gomelsky

Publisher: Український Пріоритет [Ukrainian Priority]

Country: Ukraine Language: Ukrainian

The book’s Jewish Ukrainian author analyzes the most painful events in the history of the Ukrainian and Jewish peoples and focuses on the systematic efforts of Russia’s tsarist and Soviet empires to sow inter-ethnic conflict, employing disinformation and historical fabrications to create hatred and disfunction. Relying on recently declassified KGB archives from the Security Service of Ukraine (СБУ), as well as CIA and OUN archives, the author seeks to uncover buried facts about several 20th-century Ukrainian and Jewish historic figures, some of whom are connected to the most contentious moments in the history of Ukraine and Israel. The author views the common aspirations of the Jewish and Ukrainian peoples to preserve their own identity and fight for their independence — the will to survive — as the mutual bond that ties both nations together.

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Лицарі голодного Ренесансу [Knights of the Hungry Renaissance]

Author: Dmytro Horbachov

Publisher: Дух і Літера [Spirit and Letter Publishing House]

Country: Ukraine Language: Ukrainian

One of Ukraine's leading art historians examines the phenomenon of the "Ukrainian avant-garde" art movement, which the Western art world discovered relatively late, thanks to the 1973 exhibit in London known as "Tatlin's Dream." The art of the Ukrainian avant-garde was exceptional since it was produced during a relatively short period of profound historic turmoil — World War I, followed by the Bolshevik Revolution, the collapse of the Russian Tsarist empire, the birth of the Ukrainian Republic, revolutionary war, the destruction of religious institutions, brief Ukrainianization, followed by a forced famine and Stalinist political repression. The book profiles the leading artistic figures of the Ukrainian avant-garde and notes its profound influence on the nonconformists of the 1960's, including the Ukrainian cultural and political anti-Soviet dissident movement of the sixties.

Russian Nationalism and the Russian-Ukrainian War: Autocracy-Orthodoxy-Nationality

Author: Taras Kuzio

Publisher: Taylor & Francis/Routledge

Country: United Kingdom Language: English

This timely and relevant book places imperial nationalism and chauvinism at the centre of Putin's Russia and identifies them as the driving pretext for the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The book highlights a Tsarist White Russian imperial denial of the existence of a distinct Ukrainian nation, as reflected in Putin's obsession with Ukraine. The author traces the intensification of Russian chauvinism towards Ukraine and Ukrainians through three critical junctures in Putin's political career. The book investigates nationalism within the Russian Orthodox Church and pinpoints the dangerous rise of the red-white-brown (Soviet-Tsarist-fascist) nationalist coalition under Vladimir Putin.

Світлий Шлях. Історія одного концтабору [The Torture Camp on Paradise Street]

Author: Stanislav Aseyev

Publisher: Видавництво Старого Лева [The Old Lion Publishing House]

Country: Ukraine Language: Ukrainian

Abducted by Russian security forces in 2017, journalist Stanislav Aseyev survived the hell of imprisonment in a concentration camp operated by Russia's military proxies in eastern Ukraine. This intense book recounts the author's mental and physical struggle to survive imprisonment in a camp where horrific torture was employed to destroy countless lives. There are no laws behind the prison fence. Here, life consists of humiliation, unending fear, and agony— where wounds from electrical shocks and broken bones destroy a man's desire to live and distort one's ability to distinguish between faith, forgiveness, and hatred. By recounting his struggle to remain human in the most inhuman conditions, we come to understand how the darkness of his captivity forever altered the author's outlook on life.

Ukraine, the Middle East, and the West

Author: Thomas M. Prymak

Publisher: McGill-Queen's University Press

Country: Canada Language: English

Prior to the Soviet period, Ukraine enjoyed diverse contacts with its Islamic neighbours: the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman Empire and, likewise, with its central and western European neighbours, especially Poland and France. This book reintroduces Ukraine's long-overlooked connections beyond Eastern Europe and smashes old stereotypes about Ukrainian isolation. The author provides insight into Ukrainian travellers in the Middle East, from pilgrims to the Holy Land to political exiles in Turkey and Iran; Tatar slave raiding in Ukraine; the poetry of Taras Shevchenko and the Russian war against Imam Shamil in the High Caucasus. The book explores Ukrainian themes in relation to French writers Honoré de Balzac and Prosper Mérimée, as well as Rembrandt's mysterious painting *The Polish Rider*, and Ilya Repin's legendary work depicting Zaporozhian Cossacks writing their satirical letter mocking the Turkish sultan.

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About the Peterson Literary Fund

The Peterson Literary Fund was established by Ukrainian Canadian philanthropist, Stanley Peterson, whose generosity, and far-sighted vision created a literary fund that strives to benefit both Ukrainian and international readers. The Peterson Literary Fund operates under the auspices of the Toronto-based [BCU Foundation](#).

The Peterson Literary Fund seeks to promote a better understanding of issues related to Ukraine and Ukrainians for a broad audience and to recognize exceptional written works that are of interest to the global Ukrainian community. The Fund offers six distinct programs, including its cornerstone literary prize, as well as a translated book award, screenplay award, and several targeted grants for writers and translators.

Information on the Peterson Literary Fund and its prize, awards and grants programs, guidelines, and [Awards Jury](#) are accessible through the fund's website at [PetersonLiteraryFund.com](#)

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