

## HISTORY OF UKRAINE

Period Prior to Kyivan State|

Period of Statehood (879-1360)|

**Period of Lithuanian & Polish Rule (1360-1599)|**

Cossack Period (1599-1712)|

Decline of Ukrainian Statehood & Culture (1712-1783)|

Ukrainian Renaissance (1783-1913)|

Ukraine-1914 Onward

Ukraine or "The Ukraine"

### **III. PERIOD OF LITHUANIAN AND POLISH RULE (1360-1599).**

The Lithuanian princes were reasonable rulers. In some cases they were assimilated where they adopted the local customs, language and religion. People did not resist them and appreciated their protection from Poland, Moscow and the Tatars. However, under Polish rule, western Ukraine was subjected to exploitation and colonization by an influx of people from Poland and Germany, who were taking over the property and offices from local boyars.

During the period of 1393-1430 the Grand Duke of Lithuania was ruled by the Grand Duke Vytautas, who also is named Vytautas the Great for all the political and military achievements he brought to Lithuania. During his reign, the push eastward by the German Order was broken. In 1410 Vytautas, along with his cousin Yahaylo the King of Poland, won the Battle of Grunwald (Germany), against the might of the Order that way finishing almost 200 years of war. He also brought the Christianity to the pagan Lithuania. At the end of his era, Lithuania became one of the strongest states in Europe, stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.

In 1400 Lithuania, together with its Ukrainian principalities, separated under king Vytautas- Yahaylo's cousin. Yahaylo's younger brother, Svytryhaylo, opposed this arrangement. Ukrainian principalities under Vytautas were losing their national character and independence to Polish influences.

In 1413 a decision was made to allow only Catholics to occupy important government positions ("Horodlo Privilege"). Wide-spread discrimination against the Orthodox population followed. Nearly all Ukrainians in those days were Orthodox, therefore Ukrainian princes and boyars ended up helping Svytryhaylo in his fight with Vytautas. After Vytautas died in 1430, Svytryhaylo defended himself from Poles, but by the year 1440 his sphere of influence was reduced to the Volynj principality.

There was a period of hostilities between Lithuania and Moscow, when about 1480 Moscow annexed several principalities in eastern Ukraine. Also several popular uprisings took place. In 1490, a rebellion under Mukha, occurred in western Ukraine. Mukha sought help from neighboring Moldova. In 1500 in eastern Ukraine, there was an uprising under Prince Mykhaylo Hlynskiy, who expected help from Moscow and the Tatars. However Poland and Lithuania, at that time, were very strong and all uprisings were squashed.

Meanwhile, in the South, marauding Tatar hordes converted a large area of the country into wilderness, without any law or order. It was a very rich part of Ukraine with productive soil, wild animals and rivers full of fish. It attracted many adventurous people, who although they had to fight the Tatars there, would be free from suppression by the Polish and Lithuanian overlords. They began to organize under Hetmans, thus originating Cossack society.

To defend themselves from the Tatars, they constructed forts called "Sitch" and amalgamated them into a sort of union, with Zaporizhia as a centre. It was downstream of the Dnipro river cascades.

In 1552, one of Ukrainian princes, Dmytro Wyshnevetskyi, being among the Cossacks, built a castle on the island Khortytsya. From there, the Cossacks conducted raids on Crimean towns sometimes with help from Moscow. Dmytro wanted to develop Zaporizhia, with help from Lithuania and Moscow, into a powerful fortress against Tatars and Turks. Being unable to achieve this goal, he left Zaporizhia in 1561, became involved in a war in Moldova and was captured and executed by the Turks in 1563.

In 1569, with the Union of Lublin, the dynastic link between Poland and Lithuania was transformed into a constitutional union of the two States as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Most of Ukraine became part of Poland. The settlement of Polish nationals followed and Polish laws and customs became dominant.

Polish nobles replaced most of Ukrainian princes and boyars, except for a few— notably Ostrozkyis and Wyshnevetskyis. Peasants lost their land ownership and civil rights and gradually became serfs, exploited as manpower in agriculture and forestry, by the new landowners. Suppression of the Orthodox Church retarded the development of Ukrainian literature, arts and education. Preferential treatment of Catholics inhibited the economic and political advancement of Ukrainians.

In spite of that there was a modest revival of Ukrainian culture later in 16th century. Church schools and seminaries were set up, based at first on the properties of Ukrainian magnate Hryhoriy Khodkovych and later on the holdings of Ostrozkyi princes. A printing industry began, culminating in the publication of the Bible in a print shop ran by Ivan Fedorovych. Trade and church brotherhoods sprang up. Schools were established and hospitals became centers of defense of the Orthodox Church and the fight for justice and equality.

Such a situation was the main cause, which multiplied the influx of people to Cossack territory, increasing the Cossack's strength. The Tatars were pushed out into Crimea and the Cossacks became more daring in their raids on Turkish cities.

While Ukrainian Cossacks defended not only Ukraine, but also the whole of eastern Europe from the Turks and Tatar hordes, they were causing diplomatic problems for Poland because Turkey used Cossack situation as an excuse for wars against Poland. When Cossack leader, Ivan Pidkova, conquered Moldova in 1577, the Poles captured and executed him in order to appease the Turks. They tried to control the Cossacks by recruiting some of them into the Polish military system as, so called, Registered Cossacks, but they could never really tame them.

With decreasing danger from the Tatars, Polish nobles and Ukrainian princes loyal to the king, were granted possessions in territory controlled by the Cossacks and began to introduce their freedom limiting, unpopular laws. Dissatisfied with such

treatment Cossacks, under Kryshtof Kosynskyi, rebelled about 1590, and by year 1593 controlled most of eastern Ukraine. After Kosynskyi, Hryhoriy Loboda became Cossack Hetman in 1593.

Another section of Cossacks, numbering about 12000, under Semeryn Nalyvayko, were recruited by the Pope and the German Kaiser for war against the Turks. They conquered Moldova and in 1595 returned to Ukraine to fight against Polish rulers and to defend the Orthodox population from the Jesuits, who were instigating amalgamation with the Catholic Church. In 1596 at a synod of Brest, the Kyivan metropolitan and the majority of bishops signed an act of union with Rome. The Uniate church thus formed recognized supremacy of the pope but retained the Eastern rites and the Slavonic liturgical language.

Also in year 1596 Polish king, Sigismund III Vasa, ordered Field Marshal Stanislav Zholkewski to subjugate the Cossack forces. After several months of fighting, Zholkewski surrounded Cossacks, led by Nalyvayko, Loboda and Shaula, at river Solonytsya near Lubny. There were about 6000 Cossack fighters and just as many women and children facing a much more superior force. The prolonged siege, lack of food and fodder, internal squabbles (Loboda was killed in one of the fights between sections of Cossacks) and intensive cannon fire destroyed defenders' capacity to resist. In order to save their families, Cossacks agreed to Zholkewski's terms to let them go free in exchange for handing over their leaders. However, after surrender, the Poles did not keep their word; they attacked and started to massacre defenseless and disoriented Cossacks. Only a section under leadership of Kremtskyi broke through and joined with troops of Pidvysotskyi, who were coming to the rescue of the besieged Cossacks.

Zholkewski, exhausted by prolonged fighting, decided to abandon the idea to conquer the Cossacks. He returned to Poland, where he tortured and executed the captured Cossack leaders. The most severe punishment was handed to Nalyvayko, who was tortured for about a year prior to a brutal execution.