

Introduction to “The Conflict in Ukraine: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives”

Howard Louthan
University of Minnesota

The situation in Ukraine has riveted the world’s attention since the invasion of Russia in February 2022. What many people thought would be a quick victory by Putin’s troops has turned into a surprising series of setbacks for the Russians as a resilient Ukrainian military first ably defended Kyiv and then have continued to claw back territory in the east and south of the country.

The *Central Europe Yearbook* has devoted a portion of this issue to the conflict and its impact both in Ukraine and beyond. **Anne Stackpole** (Leiden University), who is based in Warsaw, has conducted an interview with a group of Ukrainian refugees who recount their harrowing escape from the Russians in the days immediately following the invasion. **Kristalena Herman** (University of Cambridge), a Peace Corps volunteer in Ukraine from 2019 to 2020, considers the experience of men and women who continue to live in Ukraine, some very close to the frontlines. She features interviews with a CEO of a medical facility in Mykolayiv, a city pummeled by Russian artillery, and a director of a non-profit organization offering desperately needed assistance in this conflict. **Mikołaj Dueholm** (University of Minnesota) explores the situation in Poland with a thoughtful interview with Justyna Janiszewska, the Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission in Poland. Here they discuss the scope and activities of the Polish Fulbright Program, bi-lateral relations with the US, and also the repercussions and echoes of the war both on the program and the country. Finally, **Rusty Allison** (Auburn University) talks with Dr. John Fahey on his forthcoming book, *Przemyśl, Poland: A Multiethnic City Before and After a Fortress, 1867-1939*. In this interview, Dr. Fahey provides insights into how the history of Przemyśl can help us understand the present conflict in Ukraine.