On 19 January 2009, President Viktor Yushchenko issued a decree (no. 30/2009) on the recognition of a group of historians, archaeologists, architects, restoration specialists, state and museum employees, and philanthropists who have made a great contribution to the study and reconstruction of Baturyn, the capital of the Cossack Hetmanate (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). Among those honoured were two scholars from Canada: Dr. Zenon Kohut, director of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) and Canadian head of the Baturyn Project, and Dr. Volodymyr Mezentsev, a CIUS research associate who serves as executive director of the project, as well as co-manager of the Baturyn excavations. Both were awarded the Order “For Service,” Third Class.

Dr. Kohut is highly regarded for his research and writing on the Hetmanate, Ukrainian-Russian relations, and questions of identity in a historical context. A contributor to the founding of the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University, he taught at the University of Pennsylvania, Michigan State University, and the University of Alberta before becoming director of CIUS in 1994. Dr. Mezentsev, who has done extensive research on the history, archaeology, and architecture of Kyivan Rus' and the Hetmanate, was educated in Ukraine, completed his post-doctoral studies at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, and has lectured on Slavic civilization at the University of Toronto. The state awards were a great honour for these well-known historians, whose participation in this undertaking has helped determine its direction and ensured its steady progress. Over the last nine years they, together with colleagues from Chernihiv University, have successfully carried out archaeological, historical, and architectural research on Baturyn and disseminated their findings through publications, lectures, and press, radio and television interviews in Ukraine and the West.

Baturyn was burned to the ground and its Cossack garrison and civilian population massacred (a total of up to 14,000 people) by tsarist troops in 1708 during the uprising of Hetman Ivan Mazepa (1687–1709) against Russian control of Left-Bank Ukraine. Their aim was to quash the rebellion by the use of terror against Mazepa’s supporters. Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovsky (1750–64) restored the town, but after his death in 1803 it declined. All the same, the heroic defence and tragic destruction of Baturyn lived on in popular memory. The town became a symbol of armed struggle for Ukrainian independence. The heritage of Mazepa’s capital, a taboo subject as long as Ukraine was under imperial rule, has recently enjoyed a surge of popular interest and scholarly research.

In 1995, an archaeological expedition from Chernihiv University began the first excavations of Baturyn. Since 2001, Canadian and Ukrainian archaeologists and historians have jointly expanded the scope of study there thanks to support from CIUS, specifically through the Kowalsky Program for the Study of Eastern Ukraine (headed by Dr. Kohut). The Baturyn Project is also supported by the Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research (director, Dr. Frank Sysyn) and the Marusia Onyschuk and Ivanko Kharuk Memorial

Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies
Канадський Інститут Українських Студій
Institut Canadien d’Etudes Ukrainiennes

430 Pembina Hall • University of Alberta • Edmonton • Alberta • Canada • T6G 2H8
Telephone: (780) 492-2972 • Fax: (780) 492-4967
e-mail: cius@ualberta.ca • web: www.ualberta.ca/cius
Endowment Fund at CIUS (established by Petro Malofij of Edmonton). The Shevchenko Scientific Society in the United States (through its George Kusiw and Antin Savytsky funds) and the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (University of Toronto) have been sponsors of the project since 2001. The Ukrainian Studies Fund at Harvard University (director, Dr. Roman Procyk), the Prometheus Foundation (headed by Marika Szkambara) in Canada, the Buduchnist Credit Union in Toronto (Chrstyna Bidiak), the Pomich Ukraini Fund in Montreal (president, Bohdan Babiak) also assist with the study of Baturyn and the publication of materials about it through annual financial contributions. At the initiative of President Yushchenko, the government of Ukraine has subsidized the Canada-Ukraine Baturyn Excavation Project, notably in 2005 and 2008. This made it possible to expand the scope of the digs considerably. The large-scale archaeological research and the publication of its findings by members of the expedition, as well as the restoration of Baturyn’s seventeenth- and eighteenth-century architectural monuments, were important steps toward the official state commemoration of the 300th anniversary of the town’s destruction (2008).

Archaeologists analyze written sources and the findings of excavations in order to trace the historical development of Baturyn and prepare plans and drawings of its evolution during the Princely and Cossack eras. This has allowed them to reconstruct numerous buildings, resurrecting the majesty of this Cossack capital after three centuries of oblivion and neglect. The findings also shed light on the prosperity of the Cossack officer stratum and the culture of its everyday life, the extent of literacy and European influences in the town, the high level of crafts and trades there, and Baturyn’s extensive international commercial and cultural ties. The results of more than a decade of archaeological, historical, and architectural research appear in the book Батуринська старовина: збірник наукових праць, присвячених 300-літтю Батуринської трагедії (Baturyn Antiquities: A Collection of Scholarly Works Dedicated to the 300th Anniversary of the Baturyn Tragedy) (Kyiv: Olena Teliha Press, 2008). Copies of this publication can be ordered through CIUS (780-492-2972; cius@ualberta.ca; www.utoronto.ca/cius). Dr. Mezentsev has also produced and co-written the scripts (in both English and Ukrainian) of three documentary films about Baturyn’s historical legacy and the excavations. They were televised several times in Ukraine, Canada, and the United States between 2001 and 2007.

Regrettably, owing to the world-wide financial crisis, the government of Ukraine has not budgeted funds for continuing excavations and research on Baturyn. Benefactors who wish to assist the continuation of archaeological, historical, and architectural/aesthetic study of Mazepa’s capital, the restoration of its churches and Hetman-era palaces, and the dissemination of information about these matters are kindly invited to contact Dr. Zenon Kohut at: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 430 Pembina Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada T6G 2H8 (tel: 780-492-2973). Cheques should be made out to: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Re/Memo: Baturyn Project. Tax receipts will be issued to all donors in Canada and the United States. For additional information about the Baturyn Project, please contact Dr. Volodymyr Mezentsev (v.mezentsev@utoronto.ca; 416-766-1408).