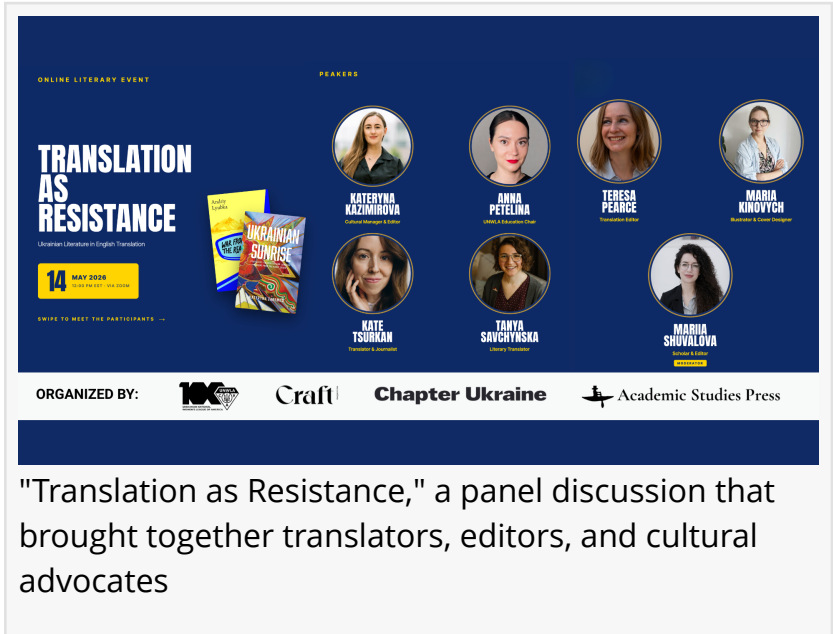


UNWLA Hosts 'Translation as Resistance' Panel to Advance Ukrainian Literature on the Global Stage

Translation is resistance. UNWLA united translators & advocates working to put Ukrainian literature on global shelves — one book, one library at a time.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Ukrainian National Women's League of America ([UNWLA](#)) hosted "Translation as Resistance," a panel discussion bringing together translators, editors, and cultural advocates to examine how Ukrainian literature moves from the page into the hands of a global readership – and what it costs to get it there. The event was co-organized with Craft Magazine, Chapter Ukraine, and Academic Studies Press.



“

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Anna Petelina, UNWLA Chair of Education

The panel is part of UNWLA's annual Ukraine Decolonization Month, established in May 2025 and growing in scope each year. The initiative is rooted in a conviction that Ukraine's authentic literary and cultural tradition must be disentangled from the distorted lens of Russian imperialism and made visible to the world on its own terms. A cornerstone of that effort is the UNWLA [Book Club](#), which focuses on Ukrainian literature available in English translation. Opening these works to non-Ukrainian readers is not a secondary goal – it is the point. Every reader who discovers Ukrainian poetry, fiction, or nonfiction through these pages encounters a culture that

is ancient, distinct, and alive, not a simplified version imposed by its colonizer.

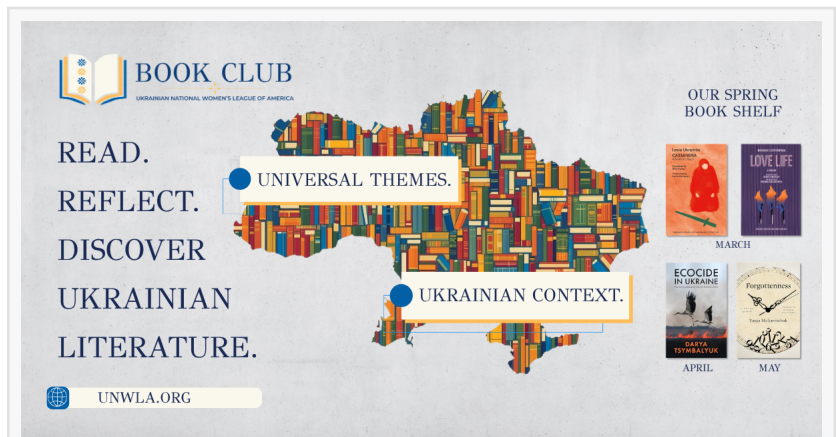
The panel was grounded in two recent books that exemplify what is at stake. "Ukrainian Sunrise" – stories from the Donetsk and Luhansk Regions from the Early 2000s" by Dr. Kateryna Zarembo dismantles the myth of a russian-speaking, russia-aligned Donbas. Drawing on four years of field research conducted up to February 2022, Zarembo documents the Ukrainian civil society that existed in Donetsk and Luhansk – activists, artists, pastors, students – a world the war has since occupied or destroyed.

"War from the Rear" by Andriy Lyubka follows the author and his volunteer team as they raised \$1.5 million and delivered over 4,000 vehicles to soldiers on the front lines. It is, deliberately, a Ukrainian book with a happy ending – something nearly unheard of in wartime literature. Both authors are now serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and their books speak to the roots of Ukraine's resilience in the face of a much larger aggressor.

Getting Ukrainian literature translated into English is only the first obstacle. Translator Tatiana Sachchinska, who translated "Ukrainian Sunrise," faced over a dozen rejections from publishers despite the book's rigorous scholarship. Publishers worried about market timing and whether Anglophone audiences would sustain interest – the window that opened briefly after February 2022 was already closing.

"Ukraine is a treasure trove of stories," Sachchinska said. "It is our responsibility as translators and agents of translation to get these stories across — even when there are obstacles on the road."

Translation editor Teresa Pearce spoke to the demands of this work – the false linguistic friends,



UNWLA Book Club: books are one of the most powerful ways to hear a nation's voice, understand its values, and connect across cultures.



UNWLA prepared 13 unique read-alike posters showcasing Ukrainian and International books

the untranslatable cultural references, the difference between a technically correct English sentence and one that actually lands. Her goal is not to fix mistakes but to bring Ukraine closer and make the leap of imagination easier for readers encountering Ukrainian culture for the first time.

Cultural advocate Kateryna Kazimyrova presented Chapter Ukraine, a platform that maps all available Ukrainian titles in translation and gives readers tools to create curated book lists to share directly with local libraries and bookstores. More than 2,000 such lists have been shared since the platform's launch.

UNWLA Chair of Education Anna Petelina outlined the community's parallel work with libraries, building relationships with librarians and connecting Ukrainian titles to existing thematic displays.

"There is a tremendous opportunity for Ukrainian literature in local U.S. libraries," Petelina said. "By building relationships with librarians, connecting thematic displays to national moments, and making the case — book by book — Ukrainian literature belongs on every shelf and in the hands of American readers."

To support this effort, UNWLA has released a special outreach toolkit and a set of [read-alike](#) posters designed for display in local libraries, giving librarians and community advocates ready-made tools to introduce Ukrainian books to new readers.

The panel took place following another night of relentless Russian attacks on Ukrainian cities. Several panelists joined after little to no sleep. Translation is resistance because Ukraine's fight is not only military – it is a fight to ensure that Ukrainian stories are told truthfully, in full, and by Ukrainian voices. In a war that targets culture as deliberately as it targets infrastructure, every book that reaches a new reader is an act of reclamation: proof that Ukraine's intellectual tradition is alive, sovereign, and impossible to erase.

About UNWLA: The Ukrainian National Women's League of America (UNWLA) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization founded in 1925. Through education, cultural programming, humanitarian aid programs, and advocacy, UNWLA works to preserve Ukrainian heritage and support Ukraine's people and independence. Learn more at unwla.org

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